

LITERACY, KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOPMENT

South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People



UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (UIL)
AND MEXICAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ADULT EDUCATION (INEA/CONEVYT)

Edited by Madhu Singh and Luz María Castro Mussot



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This publication contains the results of the conference *South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People* that took place in Mexico City in 2005. Articles were written by participants who presented their national programmes from the governmental perspective, which were reflected in the literacy policies, but there were also important contributions on basic education and competence recognition.

Dialogue was a very relevant forum for developing countries to exchange experiences on successful policies and educational problems. Actually, it gave a very first chance to talk among equals with similar educational needs.

Accent was put on the experiences of four countries that were considered as locomotives of development in the field: Brazil, India, South Africa and Mexico. Nevertheless, dialogue was also enriched by information provided by other African, Asian and Latin American countries: Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Thailand, China, Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Arab States as a whole.

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Preface

The follow-up activities of CONFINTEA V (the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, held in Hamburg in 1997) have highlighted the value and importance of selected national programmes in different regions as comprehensive and integrated responses to the education of adults and youth. To promote the exchange of experience and innovative models, a South–South policy dialogue was held on 15–17 June 2005 in Mexico City. The meeting was hosted by the Mexican National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) and the National Council on Education for Life and Work (CONEVyT), in collaboration with the UNESCO office in Mexico City and the Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC).

The meeting was very successful. It provided a unique opportunity for countries from all regions to engage in a conversation about four main programmes—from Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa. To benefit from the presence of the other country representatives, other national examples were presented briefly as well. This yielded an outlook that was not only regional but also global in scope. An important outcome of the policy dialogue was the achievement of a consensus on a framework for countries to shape and improve their adult learning policies and implementation with a focus on systematizing quality criteria in three thematic areas: a) content and curriculum; b) recognition, validation of non-formal and informal learning; and c) planning, evaluation and financing.

Through the active participation of educational planners and managers from ministries of education, South–South cooperation was secured on a sustainable and long-term basis. Thirty-two delegates from sixteen countries participated. These included participants

from Angola, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Lebanon, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, South Africa, Tanzania, and Thailand. The conference was also enriched by the attendance of state directors of the INEA, as well as by the presence of other organizations involved in literacy and education for adults and youth.

The delegates regarded the international meeting not only as a chance to improve the profile of adult education, and to improve adult learning policies and their implementation in their respective countries, but also to undertake pilot projects and feasibility studies on a South–South basis.

The Mexico City meeting has indeed set the tone for increasing coverage and integrating more countries in an even broader South–South policy dialogue on quality education for adults and youth. The next step in disseminating innovations will include China, Thailand and Namibia, to mention just a few countries.

We hope that this publication will be very useful input for the United Nations Literacy Decade follow-up and for the preparation of CONFINTEA VI in 2009.

Adama Ouane
Director UIL

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is their varied and rich experience and their substantive professional contributions to the policy dialogue that have made this publication possible.

The editors wish to acknowledge Jessica Price Heredia of the International University of Bremen for the time and effort that she generously contributed to this publication during her one-month internship at the UIE. They would also like to thank Bojan Bilic, from the Jacobs University Bremen, for his meticulous work on the subject, country and author indexes. And last but not the least, Marcus Brainard deserves special mention for his excellent formatting and painstaking editing.

We also want to acknowledge María Luisa de Anda, Patricia Martínez, Aidé Medina, Filiberto Herrera, Roció Piñón, Karla Mendoza, Carmen Cano, Laura Sainz and Felipe Sierra for their invaluable support reviewing Spanish version.

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The dialogue was highly successful in meeting the objectives it had set for itself, namely strengthening South–South co-operation, exchanging information and views on outstanding national programmes and innovative examples from Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa, and systematizing quality criteria with a view to helping countries to improve their adult learning policies.

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I Overview

Introduction

Madhu Singh

Countries in the South are becoming increasingly concerned about their ability to become competitive in a globalized economy. But can they face the new technological challenges and promote knowledge societies without tackling social inequalities and building literate societies from the grassroots? At the conference ‘South–South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People’, held in Mexico City, 15–17 June 2005, sixteen countries and regional representatives from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Arab States discussed, disseminated and exchanged information on four outstanding national programmes of literacy and basic education for adults and youth (from Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa). To profit from the presence of other country representatives, further national programmes were also discussed (Thailand, Bangladesh, China, Tanzania, Namibia, Mozambique, Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Arab States). All this fostered a regional outlook on the issues under discussion. Special emphasis was placed on successful policies, useful content, innovative approaches to assessment, and recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

This introduction will attempt first, very briefly, to conceptualize the theme of literacy, knowledge and development from the perspective of lifelong and life-wide learning; it will then highlight some aspects of the national programmes and some regional accents; finally it will examine three cross-cutting themes, namely assessment and recognition, curricular issues, and financing and implementation.

The right to knowledge and development

Learning at all levels has a key role to play in meeting the challenges of the modern world and in closing the gap between the so-called “haves” and “have-nots”. In the domain of learning, important changes are taking place. The critical use of knowledge is becoming increasingly crucial, as is the significance of learning as a lifelong process. These changes are radically affecting educational and learning systems. There is a shift from mere educational policies to *integrated lifelong and “lifewide” learning policies*, including policies aimed at fostering citizenship, social inclusion, employability, personal development and intercultural understanding. The provision of motivation and removal of barriers to learning are becoming central to reformulating educational policies from a lifelong and “lifewide” perspective. Educational and learning systems affirm that the path to reform consists in thinking alternatively and developing complementary programmes. They maintain that such alternative visions of education do not in fact lie outside the mainstream system but rather seek to go beyond entrenched binary dichotomies—including formal versus informal, local versus global, education versus training, standardization versus innovation and oral versus written communication. Indeed, the aim is to achieve synergies between formal, non-formal and informal education, and a “dialogue of knowledges”, which includes local and indigenous knowledge.

Originally the education of adults was thought to offer the means of catching up socially or of vocational retraining. However, in the 1970s adult learning came to be seen as part of a broader vision of lifelong learning, with learning and education viewed as a “continuum from cradle to grave”. From then on, adult education and learning were viewed as bearing on the concerns not only of industrialized countries but also of developing countries, which regarded adult learning as a means of empowerment and meeting basic learning needs. Such a vision inspired the reflections of the Faure Report (UNESCO 1972). Based on the insight that initial education was inadequate and incomplete and should henceforth be regarded simply as a basis of learning, lifelong learning for all has come to be regarded as crucial to the full life of each and every human being. Indeed, education concerns the whole of life, and needs to be seen as a combined effort that strives towards working on all human knowledge;

it should be all-embracing and universal, thereby showing the deep connectedness between individuals, communities and the whole of humanity. UNESCO is continuing to play a role in nurturing the idea of *learning society and lifelong learning society* (UNESCO 2005).

Literacy and basic education are foundations of lifelong learning. In today's world, literacy cannot mean only literacy and numeracy but also communication skills, information and computer technology (ICT) skills, citizenship skills and skills to manage one's own long-term learning path. Those who will lack such a foundation will continue to be marginalized and find themselves even pushed out of the mainstream of learning societies. Therefore, policy needs to target people with low incomes, ethnic minorities, migrants, youth who underachieve at school, the unemployed, poorly qualified, low-skilled workers, and disabled and isolated older citizens.

To impart critical skills, it would be helpful to distinguish between two groups of adults and youth over 15 years of age who have dropped out of the formal education system and lag behind others from an educational point of view. On the one hand, adults and youth without the benefit of schooling who do not have sufficient command of the written word; on the other hand, those who have attended school but whose literacy and education does not allow them to meet the basic requirements of their social, cultural, personal and professional development.

The national programmes of education for adults and youth treated in this volume stress the central importance of expanding literacy and basic education for development and learning for life. Seen from a lifelong and life-wide learning perspective, education for adults and youth is meaningful for personal, cultural and social development. In fact development is crucial to the promotion of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UN 1948). Shashi Tharoor (1999–2000) makes this point succinctly: 'Without development, human rights could not be truly universal, since universality must be predicated upon the most underprivileged in developing countries achieving empowerment. We can not exclude the poorest of the poor from the universality of the rich.' So if literacy and basic education are to be promoted within the rights framework, they must be connected with and reflect the actual conditions of human life and address the concrete availability of political and civil rights, which

enable people to participate fully in economic, social and political activities, as well as to demand action from their governments to provide education to those segments of its population that are living in precarious circumstances and thereby recognize diversity and specific individual needs.

The discussions of the national programme also voiced deep concern for preserving and developing local and national cultural identities. Literacy and basic education will remain but abstractions so long as each individual is not treated as a valuable member of society, which requires that his or her specific individual and cultural identities are taken into account. Shiv Vishwanath terms the sensitivity to such culture “cognitive justice” (Vishwanath 2001: 65–66), asserting the legitimacy and validation of many “knowledges” or “literatecies”, including tacit, embodied and alternative knowledge, indigenous models offering alternative lists of diversity, possibilities and epistemologies. Similarly, Gandhi noted that any *culture of the mind*, which includes education, is subservient to the *culture of the heart*, which Gandhi understood as moral and ethical behaviour deeply rooted in traditional knowledge and culture (Singh 2007a). Bearing this in mind, reform initiatives aimed at the creation of learning and knowledge societies should ensure that transformation of relationships occurs on a more equal footing. Indeed, there should be a “dialogue of knowledges” and a creation of synergies between formal and informal knowledge. How, for example, can the literacy and basic education of adults and youth promote their latent capabilities, meaning-making potential, creative capacities and resourcefulness? How can this be capitalized upon and exploited for employability, citizenship and poverty reduction, and how can these hidden potentialities be made visible and be used to complement the formal knowledge production systems used in schools and tertiary education?

Lack of literacy and basic education is not only a source of social backwardness but a major obstacle to economic development. According to Amartya Sen (2004: 144):

Literacy and numeracy help the participation of the masses in the process of economic expansion (well illustrated from Japan to Thailand). To use the opportunities of global trade, “quality control” as well as “production to specification” can be quite crucial, and they are hard for illiterate or innumerate labourers to achieve and maintain.

However, Sen stresses that the complexity of development cannot be reduced to a mere management of economic parameters. Rather, he points out that human development must go hand in hand with freedom of expression, and it is the role of education to help the individual achieve this freedom, including the expression of his or her own aspirations and choices. He argues that literacy and basic education widen one's scope of vision, and, on a more mundane level, help to disseminate knowledge about family planning. Educated women tend to have greater freedom to exercise their agency in family decisions, including matters of fertility and childbirth (Sen 2004: 9).

Four national models of adult and youth education: Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa

(1) Literacy and basic education are pre-eminent social challenges in **Brazil**, where people view knowledge as a factor of development and productivity. Yet 16 million Brazilians over 15 years old are unable to read and write, and 65 million adults and youth over 15 years old have not completed elementary school. Of these 65 million, 33 million have not completed Grade 4, and 14.6 million are illiterate. Given this state of literacy, the Ministry of Education, through its Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (MEC/SECAD), launched the programme "Literate Brazil" (*Brazil Alfabetizado*) in 2003; it seeks to promote inclusion, diversity and continuity in learning. In 2003 the programme served 1.67 million adults and youth with resources amounting to US\$68.3 million and covered 3,661 out of 5,563 Brazilian municipalities. The goal is to reach 10 million adults and youth by 2006. The targets recognize the specific literacy situation in each municipality, which is assessed using the Index of Fragility in Adult and Youth Education (IFEJA).

Currently the government's priority is to link literacy to basic and continuing education. The focus is on the literacy process, articulation with the labour market, links to the local and cultural context, creation of conducive learning environments, the targeting of special groups and municipalities with fragile populations, and training literacy professionals on site. The government sees lifelong learning as an expression of human development, democratic values and human rights. According to Henrique and Ireland of MEC/SECAD, literacy is a means of access to citizenship. The Making School Programme

is aimed at those who have not had access to or had the chance to complete primary education at the “proper” age (7–14 years old). It seeks to redress low levels of schooling in the poorest of municipalities, where most of the adults and youth who have not completed basic education are concentrated.

According to Ricardo Henriques and Timothy Ireland in Chapter 3 below, because the distribution of literacy coincides with regional, social and ethnic divisions, the major challenge for “Literate Brazil” (*Brazil Alfabetizado*) is not poverty but rather social inequality. The other challenge is articulating social and economic policies with educational policies. The Ministry of Education is promoting policies that transfer income directly to poor families. Through its family scholarship programmes, it is encouraging children to remain in school. MEC/SECAD is building a new institutional base for adult education, which centres on the process of dialogue and agreement with other ministries; on the level of the civil society, the National Literacy Commission has been broadened to include adult and youth education; and from the point of view of programme supply, permanent links have been established with federal, state and municipal governments. MEC/SECAD’s newest proposal is to create a new Fund for the Development of Basic Education (FUNDEB), which will include adult and youth education.

(2) An important element of knowledge society policy discourse in **India** is the clear recognition of the tension between the goal of a competitive knowledge society and the goal of social inclusion (Singh 2007b). Thus, while the major focus is on access to knowledge for the creation of added economic value, Indian government officials and scientists are also trying to empower the masses in Indian villages. However, many of these projects do not yield the desired outputs due to the very low literacy rates, low knowledge absorption capacity, and limited local participation, especially of disadvantaged groups. Another issue is the task of preserving and promoting cultural diversity, including multilingualism in a country with 30 languages and 2000 dialects.

It is against this backdrop that one must view the second national model, the National Literacy Mission of India. Established in 1988, this programme has evolved a three pronged strategy of literacy, post-literacy and continuing education. In a country with 304 million

illiterates needing basic literacy,¹ which equals 33% of the world's illiterate population, the NLM has been an example of success in coverage. According to Satish Loomba in Chapter 4, as of 2005 the NLM has been able to cover 587 of the 600 districts. The programme has involved 125 million learners and 12 million volunteers in continuing education. As a result, 98.15 million adults have become literate, 61% of whom are women. Census figures have shown a reduction in the gender gap. In fact, the fertility decline in successful Indian states has been linked particularly to women's empowerment, especially their education. Loomba points out that while there are still enormous challenges regarding coverage, it is changes in policy planning that have been key to the programme's success. Greater emphasis has been placed on devolving power to local authorities, as well as on making literacy sustainable by viewing it as part the "learning continuum" in which learners go beyond basic literacy. Policy planning has sought to "expand the circle" by giving a greater role to NGOs and harnessing ICTs, media, banks and private enterprises to reach out to adults.

While 65.38% literacy is no doubt an improvement over the 1951 rate of 18.33%, imparting literacy to adults outside the school is still not an easy task. On the other hand, the more recent success of literacy measures has been due to the fact that the NLM links up with the life-realities of the people. India's continuing education programme is realized in Continuing Education Centres, which are located throughout the country as providers of lifelong learning. Although policymaking concerning literacy and adult education has not consisted of tidy steps, phases or cycles, the appeal to chronological stages or phases of the Indian example nevertheless proves to be a useful heuristic device, not least for showing how aspects of policy often relate to the wider economic climate and have been influenced by important events and documents.

(3) In **Mexico** the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) is the chief institution within the educational sector trying to integrate out-of-school adults and youth by developing a series of programmes at all levels: in schools, in communities and even beyond Mexico's borders, reaching out to illiterate Mexicans in the

1. The number of illiterates in the age group 7+, according to the 2001 census, is 304 million. According to desegregated data released, illiterates in the age group 15–35 numbered 100 million, and in the age group 35–50, approximately 75 million.

United States and Canada. To meet the challenge of addressing the learning needs of around 32 million people lacking basic education, INEA has developed the Mexican government's flagship programme, Educational Model for Life and Work (MEVyT). It has developed a curricula which departs radically from the traditional curricula by working with learning modules based on life and work themes—such as “Youth and Work”, “My Business”, “Homes without Violence”, and “Numbers and Counting for Trading”—delivered with the help of new ICTs. Also noteworthy is their Community Halls Programme (*Plazas Comunitarias*). According to Ramón de la Peña Manrique, former president of CONEVyT and former director of INEA, 2.5 million adults and youth were served in 2004, of whom 633,511 graduated. The INEA initiative is the most systematic in monitoring learners, through its Automated Follow-up and Accreditation System (SASA). INEA serves around 3 million people per year with about 120,000 facilitators.

Some of the challenges facing Mexico are: expanding education for workforce development, developing distance learning by using ICTs, and taking into account new communication languages that promote access to an open knowledge society and lifelong learning. Mexico will continue to direct almost its entire education offerings to adults and youth through INEA.

(4) The debates in **South Africa** relating to the literate society are closely linked to its achievement of democracy, globalization and its position within the global economy (Walters 2006). These highly politicized discussions take place within South African discourse on policy development and implementation with the aim of assuring that the vast majority of its citizens are accorded greater equality, justice, humanity and human dignity. However, as Nelson Mandela (2002) has pointed out, institutions as systems of elements or rules are only expressions of democratic intent. Core social values do not propagate on their own; it is necessary to remind adults and youth of those values and to instil them in children (pp. ix–x). As South Africa embraces a new future, experiences from different parts of the world show that education, the core of which is literacy, is not merely an exterior aid to personal development but changes the very way we perceive, record and think, or structure our experience. Literacy in this broader sense holds the key to what Jonathan Sachs (2002: 125)

has called the democratization of human dignity. Seen as part of the larger transformations taking place in South Africa, Morongwa Ramarumo and Vernon Jacobs give an account in Chapter 6 of the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI), which was established as a literacy campaign between 1999 and 2001 by the Ministry of Education. This initiative targeted one million people, or 25% of the illiterate population. In 2002–2003, SANLI entered into a partnership with the Adult Basic Education and Training Institute of the University of South Africa (UNISA). This enabled SANLI to increase in both size and capacity; for example, 10,000 graduate ABET educators from UNISA volunteered to set up literacy classes. Learners were assessed throughout the project to ensure that, upon exiting, they had achieved a certain level of literacy and numeracy. SANLI has been particularly successful in reaching people who were totally illiterate and who had no prior or very little schooling; learners' literacy was tested prior to their enrolment in classes; the classes were provided free of charge and where learners lived, making it possible for all to take part. Learners' success created a demand for learning that went beyond the project itself, and many of them wanted to advance from the non-formal SANLI Basic Literacy Programme to the more formal, state-run ABET programmes. However, this transition from non-formal to formal education did not occur because the classes were inaccessible to the learners. For example, while SANLI provided the classes where learners resided, the ABET classes were offered only at certain locations, which meant that participants in the ABET programmes had to travel long distances, usually at high cost, and mostly after dark because classes took place after working hours. Another hindering factor was the formal programme's focus on examinations; learners were dissatisfied with the use of the formal examinations as the main method of assessment in ABET classes.

Notwithstanding these problems of delivery, the SANLI and ABET programmes are making knowledge accessible to all—in keeping with their vision and mission—as a basis for a free and democratizing society. Another key aspect of their guiding vision and mission is viewing literacy from the perspective of lifelong learning, where literacy is grasped as the groundwork for the sustained learning of new ideas, concepts and creative skills throughout the one's life (Odora Hoppers 2005: 32–40).

Regional accents

Below are some regional perspectives from country representatives who also exchanged and disseminated information on their national education programmes for adults and youth.

Asia

In the Asian context, which faces the huge task of ensuring that 614 million illiterate adolescents and adults and over 60 million out-of-school children are accorded their right to education, the capacity-building of human resources, including basic literacy, is being implemented at all levels so as to create a knowledge society.

Thailand's policy and practice concerning literacy and non-formal education (NFE) accords with the development vision expressed in its Ninth National Economic and Social Development plan from 2001. The plan contains a clear definition of a knowledge society: 'Thai society should be a knowledge-based and learning society. Learning opportunities should be created for all Thai people, designed to promote logical and critical thinking and lifelong learning, so that people will be able to cope with changing conditions.' Thai policy sees literacy as the foundation of civil society insofar as it is regarded as the means of helping the Thai people to absorb knowledge, as well as to redefine and extract meaning from technology, including ICTs, and to supplement appropriately local wisdom and national traditions, culture and religion in Thailand.

To keep step with changes in the era of globalization, the first National Education Act was passed in 1999. This act aims to provide guidelines for education throughout the country; it is revolutionary in its approach since it acknowledges the importance of all types of education—formal, non-formal and informal education. Thailand has developed strategies in NFE which address the needs of a wide range of disadvantaged groups, such as prison inmates, the disabled, the elderly, ethnic minority groups, and even Thai people living overseas. Thailand makes a distinction between NFE programmes that are linked to basic education, those that are vocational in content, and those that use various media to enable people pursue informal education.

In **Bangladesh**, a country with 30 million illiterates, successful experiences have been taking place thanks to the creative partner-

ships between the government, international aid organizations and local non-profit NGOs. However, the biggest challenge for Bangladesh is to help an estimated 40 million illiterate adults—including neo-literates who relapse into illiteracy, a projected increase of 10 million illiterate adolescents and youth, and another 6 million school-age children who remain out of school and will join the pool of illiterate adults—to achieve literacy by 2015. According to Ahmadullah Mia and Wolfgang Vollmann in Chapter 7, Bangladesh’s current strong emphasis on “just literacy” will not be sufficient to achieve that goal. The Government of Bangladesh will have to do more, such as create conducive learning environments to sustain poor people’s motivation to learn. In addition, it will have to treat NGOs not merely as sub-contractors but as partners following mutually accepted criteria and quality assurance norms, and it will have to develop an effective professional support service system.

China’s priorities and actions include the integration of agriculture, science and education in rural areas and the overall planning of basic, vocational and adult education. Flexible teaching methods, such as the Literacy TV Series programmes and the use of ICTs, are being applied to education and teaching. However, China—the world’s fastest expanding economy, its foreign trade having increased by 35.4%—still has a long way to go before the nation as a whole becomes literate. According to the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005* (UNESCO 2004), 11% of China’s population (or 62 million people) is still illiterate. China regards education for adults and youth as an important component of its education strategy to enhance its competitiveness internationally and improve the quality of its labour force.

China has introduced many social and economic changes that have increased the power of women. For example, by raising female literacy and expanding female participation in the labour force, China has strengthened to women’s agency.

Challenges vary, of course, from country to country in the Asian region. While China has been able to meet the Dakar literacy goal (which includes achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults), more efforts are still needed from other countries, especially in the South Asian region. While

local initiatives generally yield better results, since they are more attentive to local cultural, social and linguistic needs, national-level responsibility is strategically more important than ever (Vollmann 2004: 66). Each central government's moral and political responsibility to develop and implement literacy programmes, especially at the local level, requires that the government also promote national and sub-national debates on literacy, NFE and adult learning, as well as on their links with other fields of education, particularly basic education. Support from the international community is also required, especially in connection with the launching of the UN Literacy Decade, which is playing a considerable role in terms of both advocacy and observance.

Africa

In Africa the absolute number of illiterates (aged 15 years and over) is 182 million (UNESCO 2002), 137 million of whom live in the sub-Saharan region. Despite increases in enrolment in formal schools, a large number of children are still excluded from schooling, primarily because over half the population lives below the poverty line. An important trend in Africa, however, is the unprecedented growth of NFE. This is the result of both the insufficient number of school places in the formal system and extreme poverty. Non-formal schools provide flexible education for many. In the region, there is growing recognition of the importance of supporting NFE in order to provide opportunities for lifelong learning.

Tanzania is one country that has come to see the importance of NFE. Its Ministry of Education and Culture has established a department to coordinate NFE and now has an NFE policy. In 1998, Tanzania had 2.5 million children not attending school; to correct this situation, it developed a long-range National Strategy for Adult Education and Non-formal Education, which has led to the development of the Complementary Basic Education (COBET) and the Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE) programmes. COBET lasts three years and caters to primary-school-aged children and youth who are out of school. ICBAE has reached 466,018 learners aged 11–18 years; it provides basic education and life skills to adults and youth.

Namibia is attempting to raise its adult literacy rate to 90% by 2015 by means of a literacy programme that emphasizes mother tongue education and functional literacy. The literacy programme also seeks to link up with the adult upper-primary education curriculum. Connected to that programme, the Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment (ASDSE) programme seeks, with international support, to help the unemployed and underemployed by providing credit and managerial training. Community learning and development centres have been established in all thirteen regions of Namibia in order, among other things, to keep people from relapsing into illiteracy. Another innovative programme is the Family Literacy Programme, which at the moment is limited to one school and one community per region. It aims to help parents and care providers to support their children during the first five years of primary school.

Similarly, in **Angola** efforts are being made to enable people to access literacy programmes by offering them 3–6 months courses. The main targets include special groups, such as war veterans, former military staff and soldiers. This initiative was started only about three years ago; external support remains essential to its success, especially during this crucial phase of strengthening local infrastructure and competencies.

In **Mozambique**, literacy, adult education and NFE took centre stage in 1975, when it gained independence. At that time, the country had the world's highest illiteracy rate, about 93%, and had no experience in adult education. In 1976 the National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education was created. Yet despite massive literacy campaigns, adult education gradually declined from 450,000 to about 46,225 enrolments per year. This drop was caused by the civil war, but also by the irrelevance of the curriculum, formal teaching methods, strict calendars and timetables, and the exclusive use of the Portuguese language.

Although Africa provides an prime example of the growth of NFE, much more still needs to be done. It is necessary to open more learning spaces and to coordinate non-formal learning institutions across the various ministries. Currently there is no data bank of all existing NFE in order to facilitate planning and policy implementation. Coordination of NFE initiatives would be more feasible if the parliament were to establish a national commission for NFE under

the Ministry of Education, which could lead the way on planning and monitoring the quality of NFE programmes. Likewise, a national qualifications framework should be set up to enable NFE learners to re-enter the formal school system (Mwiria 2005: 2)

Latin America

With its history of limited access to education, Latin America must respond to the almost 200 million Latin Americans over the age of 15 who have not completed basic education, and among whom approximately 14% cannot read or write (Pieck 2005: 25). The exchange of information on useful, low-cost adult learning programmes aimed at poverty reduction is a necessary precondition for creating sustainable development. Mexico has shared information on its successful programmes with Bolivia and Nicaragua. And Brazil has made efforts to replicate the Brazilian experience in Portuguese-speaking African countries. Guatemala and Nicaragua discussed and learned about alternative ways of reaching out to specific target groups, such as indigenous women in rural communities, “maquila” employees, sex workers and the HIV-positive population, by running programmes in prisons, churches, squares and markets.

In **Guatemala** the gains in literacy need to be seen in the context of the peace accord of 29 December 1996 between the Government of Guatemala and the URNG (*Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca*). It was a significant step towards the recognition of the contribution of education to promoting the right values within a multilingual and multicultural society. However, it is estimated that every year 83,000 new illiterates are produced. Of that number, 50,421 register for primary school but discontinue schooling after the first year. The remaining 32,414 never enter the school system. In Chapter 11, Ida Moran de Garcia and Otto Rivera highlight the importance of complementary policies that take into account both adult and youth learning, and basic education. Given that 52% of the population is 18 years old or younger, there is continuing high demand on the formal system to create places for potential new students. The Directorate of Extra-Mural Education has developed strategies to widen access for those out-of-school children and youth who want to continue or re-enter the formal education system. Literacy training is provided through the National Literacy Council

(CONALFA), which operates under the leadership and coordination of the Ministry of Education. Together with the Directorate for Extra-Mural Education, CONALFA develops specific education programmes aimed at allowing 9–14-year-olds that enrol in CONALFA literacy training to receive primary schooling in non-conventional programmes.

In Chapter 10, Nydia Verónica Gurdián and Elizabeth Navarro show that, like Guatemala, **Nicaragua** is a country with a young population, high levels of poverty and low productivity. Since the early 1990s, the percentage of the population aged 15–30 with less than five years of schooling has decreased from 49% to 37%. The adult basic education (ABE) programme, which operates under the aegis of the Youth and Adult Continuing Education Office (DECJA) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECD), offers versatile, flexible, alternative education services for persons over 15 years who, for a variety of reasons, either never entered school or dropped out early. One of these is the Nicaraguan Literacy and Adult Basic Education Programme (PAEBANIC).

New trends in adult learning in Latin America show a growing interest in ensuring that education programmes provide students with the tools for improving their skills and knowledge for the world of work. This is necessary in order to overcome the growing polarization between so-called “knowledge workers” and “unskilled workers”, which has resulted in alienation, social exclusion, unemployment and low productivity among youth, women and adults. There are also tendencies to conceptualize societies as being both “information societies” as well as “learning societies”. (While the use of the term “information societies” usually emphasizes the proliferation of ICTs, information processing, symbol communication and internet access, the term “learning society” entails a focus on the creation of a society where ‘all agencies within society shall become providers of education and all citizens should be engaged in learning’ [Faure et al. 1972: 5].) The learning society relies heavily on local communities possessing strong solidarity, and on communities which are cooperative as well as linguistically and culturally inclusive (Ferrada 2006).

The Arab States

In the **Arab States**, literacy has been one of the most pressing issues on the adult education agenda. Literacy training is increasingly regarded as involving more than teaching people to read and write so as to be better able to exercise their rights and to contribute to human and social development. Literacy programmes have also come to include life-skills training and vocational education, small industry management, health and nutrition, childcare, agriculture, micro-credit and money management, civic education, environment and democracy. Such training and education is helping people to find new work opportunities. Two significant developments in the region have been the formation in 1999 of the Arab Literacy and Adult Education Network, which comprises 80 Arab organizations, and the involvement of civil society in the field of literacy. While the NGOs and CBOs (community-based organizations) are the main providers of literacy and adult education programmes in the Arab States, they have yet to receive due recognition. Nor are their non-formal programmes always accredited. This not only affects motivation but also prevents them from a secure route for post-learners to go back to formal school or find job opportunities. Among the recommendations made in the Arab report, two are that adult education concentrate on literacy in the aforementioned broader sense and that EFA national plans to be incorporated into wider development frameworks.

Many Arab states are devising new literacy strategies to promote the concept of a new, integrated Arab human being. Emphasis is being placed not only on women's education but also on recognition of NFE programmes. However, according to Nour Dajani Shehabi, Seham Najem and Aisha Barki Bourgherbi in Chapter 16, many of these new literacy strategies are top-down and do not involve NGOs and CSOs in decision-making processes.

The *Arab Human Development Report 2002* (Fergany 2002) has concluded that in the Arab region little progress has been made on security and poverty, which has had a negative impact on adult education. In the region, 70 million of a population of 280 million are illiterate. In addition, about 10 million children aged 6–15 are out of school and will probably join the pool of adult illiterates unless literacy is tackled now.

Cross-cutting themes

This section is devoted to the themes of: 1) recognition, validation and accreditation of adult and youth education; 2) curriculum development policies; and 3) planning, implementation, evaluation and financing for the education of adults and youth. The workshop sessions treating these themes were moderated and facilitated by Franz Gerzte, María Luisa Jaúregui and Wolfgang Vollmann, respectively.

1) Valuing and capitalizing on all forms knowledge: Recognition, validation and assessment of non-formal and informal learning and experience

Lifelong learning has become the key organizing principle for education and training systems, and for the building of the “knowledge society” of the twenty-first century. While there are concerns that lifelong learning is driven by demands from the market, “lifelong learning” is in fact a much broader concept of education that aims at bridging and establishing linkages between a number of learning areas, including formal, non-formal and informal, and recognizing learning outcomes from different settings and contexts. Rosa-María Torres (2002) introduces the term “Adult Basic Learning and Education” (ABLE) in contrast to “Adult Basic Education” (ABE) to stress learning that takes place in the family, in the community, at work, with friends, and through mass media, as well as learning by observing and doing and by participating.

The aim of quality education for adults and youth is that learning, skills and competencies acquired outside formal education and training become visible and accorded value. This has led a number of countries to develop and establish ways to recognize learning that has taken place outside the formal education structure. Some countries are implementing or experimenting with the identification, assessment and recognition of non-formal and prior learning. National qualifications frameworks have been developed for designing and issuing qualifications and certificates. Ministries recognize this as a vehicle for the transformation and empowerment of individuals. Since this area is new and not all countries are at the same level in the development of their systems, sharing the different meanings and perceptions was indeed beneficial.

Systems of recognition of prior learning and experience are based on educational concepts that emphasize competencies and learning outputs rather than conventional syllabi and teaching theories. Whereas the latter raise the question of what material students should deal with, the learning-outcome approach asks which problem-solving strategies, action-oriented concepts, and abilities they should possess. It is more relevant to ask what adults should be learning rather than what they should be taught. A further advantage of the learning-outcome approach is that material to be learned can be chosen with relative freedom. And learning takes place according to the learners' prior knowledge, their motivation, and their local and individual daily experiences—all of which helps to stimulate the learners' interest in the new subject matter to be learned. "Learning outcomes" cannot be reduced to cognitive competencies; they contain cognitive, emotional, motivational and social components, as well as behavioural issues, general attitudes and elements of self-consciousness. Because competencies are focused on goals, intentions and tasks, they must manifest themselves in individuals' actions. Competencies therefore can be formulated in educational standards as "outcomes" and their acquisition can be evaluated (Weinert 2001). This understanding of the notions of competencies and learning outcomes is fundamental, then, to Education for All (EFA). They emphasize the individual's "agency" as a participant in economic, social and political activity, and accord with Sen's (2004) view that literacy and basic lifelong learning for all promotes freedom, enabling people to help themselves and to influence the world. Freedom is the basis for someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of his or her own values and objectives, whether or not we also assess them in terms of some external criteria.

Mexico has committed to recognizing the outcomes of Adult Basic Education and Training. The trend is towards a more formalized system of assessment and certification of informal and non-formal learning, where criteria have been adopted to ensure their equivalence with formal systems of learning. Outcomes of informal and non-formal learning can thus be equated with learning outcomes in the formal sub-system. This approach blurs the traditional division between the various forms of learning while simultaneously correcting the frequent connotations of second-class status

that are associated with mainly informal and non-formal learning. Other mechanisms in place for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning are the centralized tests used throughout Mexico. About 600,000 tests in 45 different fields of study are processed annually. These tests are diagnostic and evaluate the candidate's grasp of what he or she is expected to know. Successful completion of a test allows for the continuation of studies at the next higher level. Yet another mechanism is accreditation, which enables the validation of learning programmes and the providers.

All ABET programmes in South Africa are integrated into both the National Qualifications Framework and a lifelong learning paradigm, which allows for certification of equivalence, vertical and horizontal access, and accreditation through various quality assurance mechanisms. Integral to this process is also an outcomes-based education that prescribes unit standards with outcomes by which learners measure their performance and thereby demonstrate their competence. While in theory ABET providers have the freedom to design their own learning programmes, and educators and teachers may use their own expertise in designing assessment methods, in practice this approach leaves many educators floundering when trying to cope with both the design of a learning programme and having to develop their own learner support materials. Problems are experienced at the "chalk face", especially when teachers find themselves unable to cope with the outcomes-based approach, which requires them to interpret and use the unit standards as a guide in developing a working curriculum.

In Brazil there is close collaboration between the "Literate Brazil" and the "Making Schooling" (*Fazendo Escola*) programmes, which aim at citizens who have not had access to or the chance to complete primary education at the "proper" school age. In Guatemala, the literacy programmes which CONALFA coordinates, have "accelerated education" curricula, which allow students to take the first six years of primary education in only four years. The first stage is equivalent to the first grade of primary school; the second stage, to second and third grades; the third stage, to fourth and fifth grades; and the fourth stage is equivalent to sixth grade. Study certificates and sixth-grade diplomas certified by CONALFA are shaped by qualifications frameworks and established under acts of relevant ministries.

In Angola the first level of certification follows an assessment of competency in reading, writing and arithmetic. One of the purposes of certification is to allow and facilitate continuation of learning at the next higher level. Thus certification at the first level is seen not as a certificated outcome per se but as a window of opportunity leading into the world of literacy. Validation of NFE takes on added importance because schools do not reach everyone.

The ongoing processes of globalization and economies as a result of liberalization policies and technological innovation are likely to have a serious impact on developing countries. It is often argued that low- and semi-skilled cheap labour cannot be a sustainable basis for competitiveness or for promoting knowledge economies and societies. This may be true from a long-term perspective. However, it is important to recognize that this very cheap labour, workers who are perceived as being illiterate and incapable of fending for themselves, is in fact the backbone of the economy and is feeding the expanding capitalist economy with their productive skills. Many adults with limited literacy and low levels of education are engaged in productive and community activities. Not only should the very notion of who are the so-called “illiterate” and those who are “literate” be reassessed, but the experiential learning of adults should be recognized and serve as a support in programmes for upgrading basic knowledge. In a perfect knowledge society, all forms of knowledge would be recognized and valued, and would benefit society. Countries need to recognize, value and capitalize on individuals’ and communities’ existing potentialities in order to identify forms of knowledge and skills that will work for the poor and promote equality and employability. Such recognition of skills and competencies, regardless of where they have been learned (formally, informally, at work, at home or in the community) is likely to improve lifelong learning for all. Growth has to be supported by ideas that combine an agenda for democratizing the promotion of the development of competencies and skills for the entire population, and that target adults and the so-called “cheap labour” by deepening their knowledge and skills needed to ensure cutting edge competence and renewal. Hence, avenues need to be created for knowledge development, supplemented by enabling policy frameworks, which give people opportunities to use the power of their local knowledge in conjunction with acquired knowledge and new skills to propel development.

2) *Centrality of cultural and linguistic diversity
in curriculum development policies*

The views expressed in the workshop suggested that in order to have quality education, it is most important to enable individuals to reach an effective level of communication; that would allow them to participate actively as citizens in their own development. Another important aspect mentioned was restoring the dignity and quality of the teacher. The relevance of the curriculum in relation to each country's situation was also emphasized: To what extent does curriculum build up the dignity of the people and build on the best elements of their culture?

The language in which literacy takes place has been at the heart of the debate on quality education. Learning does not occur if literacy is conducted in a language that has no meaning for the learner. Cognitive development is possible only when literacy is contextualized in the learner's mother tongue. A better exchange of experience and research on bilingual literacy is needed. Judging from the country models presented in this volume, there appears to be a conscious policy on the language of teaching-learning in adult literacy programmes. In India, the mother tongue is used in adult literacy programmes right from the beginning. In Total Literacy Campaign programmes, primers are used in six to seven languages, in keeping with the demographic composition and language preferences of the learners. Mexico is in the forefront of designing educational programmes for indigenous populations that incorporate bilingual strategies, such as simultaneous bilingual learning in indigenous mother tongues and Spanish, as well as bilingual learning of Spanish as a Second Language. These courses are available either as printed modules or on the internet.

Adult education is different from formal education in schools. It is therefore necessary to employ a broader approach to literacy, one that not only is based on a written system of literacy but also takes into account more complex communication and expressive requirements which help people to understand and transform the world in which they live. The potential of other media, such as radio, newspapers, theatre, video and IT, need to be capitalized on for the benefit of the enormous illiterate populations which are still marginalized, especially in rural areas. The language and content of media can be tailored to local needs and made more relevant to local practices,

traditions and culture, and used successfully in development programmes.

While a certain amount of centralization is initially important to ensure quality when establishing curricular policies, guidelines and quality criteria, decentralization is equally important: the main challenge is to build on the local knowledge of the people, as a concomitant of global knowledge and information. Materials should be developed in view of the local context, and special attention must be paid to vocational education in the material design for individuals who have recently acquired literacy. The latter is particularly important because this is a fundamental step in strengthening the learner's knowledge and making it relevant and sustainable. Adults and youth who have benefited from literacy programmes should also be encouraged to participate in the design and elaboration of these curricula and materials. Literacy, post-literacy, continuing education, vocational-technical education and life skills, must be harmonized and coordinated. More discussion is needed concerning common themes in adult and youth education, such as citizenship, health, human rights, gender, communications and access to a learning society.

Moreover, there must be a political willingness to invest in the training and formation of continuing education workers, who need to be committed, motivated and properly prepared for their job; likewise, continual support must be provided once the job has commenced. Training should not be oriented to pedagogical methodologies alone, but should also consider the integration into its programmes of such aspects as personal development and self-esteem.

3) Knowledge-based planning, implementation, evaluation and financing of education of adults and youth

Planning, implementation, evaluation and financing are central to the issue of quality education for adults and youth. Given their interrelation, it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach. However, it is first necessary to differentiate planning and implementation from "thinking" so as not to obscure the relationship between knowledge, attitudes and intentions on the one hand, and people's actions on the other. Being able to plan means being able to assess a chain of events on the basis of the necessary resources and their availability, and from the perspective of sustainability, it means being able to build up

networks of cooperation. Awareness of the quickly changing and non-definitive nature of the knowledge used in planning is an important factor in the development of planning competence; such awareness makes it possible to change or adjust plans more easily in view of new knowledge or altered conditions. Planning competence also requires a grasp of the relationship between the problematic situation and the approach to a solution, bringing to the fore a chain of cause and effect, as well as unintended consequences. Here too precise mapping and a good system of data collection and analysis are necessary. The very nature of adult education means that knowledge-based planning has to be carried out especially at lower levels, where the real action takes place. Civil society, in the form of NGOs and communities, plays a decisive role in enabling democratic planning, which reflects the needs of adult learners. The grassroots approach in planning is conducive to integrating specific learning issues, such as health, legal and environmental issues, which are not necessarily seen as important by those at the top level of the learning pyramid.

Implementation competencies include the active interest and commitment of all stakeholders, as well as the ability to engage in implementation-oriented planning. The key here is to be able to imagine goals that one would like to achieve directly. One of the main obstacles to the implementation of adult literacy programmes, especially post-literacy programmes, is that NGOs and government workers often operate in non-literate environments. Hence, the implementation of such programmes has to go hand in hand with efforts to create a literate environment in which those programmes will operate. Local or bottom-up considerations, rather than a top-down approach, should be central to planning implementation in such cases.

The implementation of adult learning programmes at the local level is a dialectical process, whereby local input to planning has to reach the top of the pyramid, feed into a longer policymaking process, and then, ideally, find its way back down to the grassroots. In addition to local planning and implementation, sustainability of results is also of central importance; it is promoted not only by a supportive literate environment but also by the staff and leadership needed to keep learners on track and fully motivated. Here it is necessary to highlight the decisive role that mid-level NFE management plays, namely those who operate just above local facilitators, who plan,

monitor and evaluate sometimes dozens of teachers but who are often ill-equipped to understand the needs and constraints of adult learning and teaching. These mid-level managers could greatly benefit from targeted and well-conceived training, an effort which in turn could enhance the quality of implementation at the local level.

The issue of evaluation, though crucial for good future planning, has received less attention. While monitoring appears to have entered adult learning programmes, evaluation is still lacking. The reasons for this are multiple, including a lack of qualified evaluators at the local level, a lack of funding for evaluation and the absence of an appropriate framework for evaluation. From start to finish in the implementation process, evaluation should be conducted; it should not be restricted to learning outcomes but should be used as a basic planning instrument to improve the performance of adult learning programmes.

The financing of adult learning programmes is the backbone of any policy. Three factors need to be highlighted here. One key factor in mobilizing funds is the harnessing of local funds for adult learning programmes. This helps to assure the sustainability of the project. However, it should be borne in mind that only when local communities perceive adult learning programmes to be relevant and to impact positively on their lives do they show a readiness to contribute funds. A second factor is the linking of bottom-up data collection and subsequent planning with financing. This has the advantage of aligning financial allotments to the real needs at the local level. A fine-tuned financial mechanism—at all levels (both at nationwide or sub-national levels) and reflecting especially the needs of learners—is essential. A third factor is the private sector's capacity to assist in financing adult learning programme. However, it is governments alone that must see it as their political responsibility to coordinate adult learning programmes and make sure that all players and stakeholders, including the private sector, contribute their share to the achievement of sustainable adult literacy levels.

South–South cooperation: A dialogical process

The 'South–South Policy Dialogue', where countries shared their experiences and discussed new ideas, proved to be a powerful instrument for mobilizing institutions, expertise and capabilities. The pol-

icy dialogue was fundamental in the decision to include the question of quality education for adults and youth on the agenda of nations. The dialogue articulated a series of international initiatives and declarations and promoted synergy instead of the usual dispersion of efforts. It also added knowledge to the many experiments that different actors in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Arab States are conducting.

The dialogue participants' expression of their renewed commitment to adult and youth education did not concern only offering literacy training or short-term schooling but also determination and assertion of the real meaning of adult education. The general consensus was that governments must commit to democratizing education systems and creating instruments that guarantee continuing education for all as a fundamental human right. Likewise, all agreed that literacy must be seen as a continuum, leading to continuing education and vocational skills acquisition, but especially to the improvement of learners' quality of life and opportunities to work.

Dialogue is integral to the mission of UNESCO, which aims to broaden and extend the right to education to the right to "quality education" for adults and youth, and to offer opportunities for first-hand experience in different regions.

The South-South dialogue offered a unique setting in which education planners found fertile ground for exchanges between policy leadership from different countries and regions. It was a mutual endeavour where imparting and taking on board good practices led to common understanding, leading to convergence in outlook. All this was conducive to creating dynamic, effective new partnerships. The South-South dialogue was relevant for promoting the idea of social diversity. It helped in avoiding discursive tendencies that look at developing countries as helpless, imprisoned and dependent societies. Rather, it ensured the opposite: respect for cultural, spiritual and social diversity.

The question that needs continued reflection is: why are practical measures, such as UNESCO's EFA goal, so difficult to achieve? One possible answer is that EFA is less about the systems planning, or even "fixing" the system, than about how education serves humanity in a much deeper way. Thus to answer the question "what kind of world are today's young people [and adults] going to inhabit;

and what skills and qualities will they need to thrive therein?” (Wells and Claxton 2002: 2) it will be necessary to reassess what we understand by knowledge and human potentialities rather than to seek answers in the structural redesign of educational systems alone (Johnson 2006).

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Adult Learning: Situation, Trends and Prospects

Chris Chinien

Globalization has created a new world order for doing business. New information and communication technologies (ICTs) have dramatically changed the way we live, learn, work and even think about work. The synergy of combining globalization with new technology has had dramatic economic and social impacts. It has created new opportunities as well as new challenges and uncertainties. Many workers have been dislocated, while a significant number of young people are structurally unemployed or underemployed. Skills polarization between so-called mind or knowledge workers and unskilled, low-knowledge workers has widened the gap in income. Youth, women and older workers are the groups most often affected.

In the “former new economies”, competitive advantages have included access to raw materials, natural resources and fertile lands. In an era in which knowledge is the important intangible asset, a national competitive advantage will increasingly be derived from an educated and empowered workforce able to adapt quickly to the dynamic requirements of a changing workplace (Ives 1992). Technology is said to be the driver of this new economy and human capital is its fuel (Moe and Boldget 2000). In the new economy, human capital is defined as workers’ knowledge that results in effective and efficient performance. The concept of “mind workers” or “knowledge workers” has emerged from this transformation of work, and it appears to be the fastest growing type of worker. Knowledge is not only beneficial to the worker’s well-being but is also viewed as a major competitive advantage for a country and a key element for ensuring

the country's national prosperity and social development. The perception of the role of human intervention in the economic transactions has also changed. Keursten and Kessels (2002: 1) have noted that the 'focus is shifting from appreciation of physical labour and the ability to coordinate and regulate to the ability to contribute to knowledge generation and application'.

Situation

There seems to be no consensus regarding the impact of technological change on the workplace and its effects on jobs and skills. Some believe that technology is de-skilling jobs, while others argue that technology is up-skilling them. Proponents of up-skilling would argue that, in this emerging knowledge-intensive economy, the proletariat is being replaced by a cognariat, where work is increasingly shifting away from manual tasks towards symbolic processing (Toffler and Toffler 1995). The country studies cited by the International Labour Organization (ILO 2001: 9) indicate that the introduction of ICTs can contribute both to up-skilling and de-skilling of workers: 'On the one hand, ICTs can downgrade skills and competence to single-task machine-tending and, on the other; it can upgrade skills and competence to multi-task work relying on greater creativity.'

For some people, work over the past decade has become technologically complex, demanding sophisticated work skills. Others, due to unemployment, have been denied the satisfaction and the sense of achievement that comes from working. The labour market has become sharply polarized by a simultaneous increase in jobs requiring post-secondary education and casual jobs for unskilled workers. This polarization of the labour force has contributed to widening inequalities in income and disparities in employment prospects between skilled and less skilled workers (Camdessus 1997).

As Tuijnman (1997: 4) has noted, 'Alienation, social exclusion, unemployment and slow productivity growth are among the consequences of the limited capacity of some countries to adapt and fully exploit the opportunities offered in the global knowledge economy.' Hobart (1997: 7) also has stressed that 'unemployment is one of the most pressing problems facing the world today . . . every government around the world has to grapple with this issue'. This economic dislocation is having devastating effects on young people who enter

the labour market without any marketable skills. They are being disproportionately affected by high unemployment, underemployment and credential inflation.

The ILO (2001) has estimated that there were 160 million unemployed workers at the end of 2000, most of whom were first-time job seekers, with as many as 50 million coming from industrialized countries. Moreover, many people are currently forced to accept low-skill, low-paid, part-time and non-permanent jobs. The ILO also reported that about 500 million workers, mostly from developing countries, do not earn enough to keep their families above the poverty line. Not even developed countries have been spared. As Maxwell (2000: 1) has noted, 'Despite all the talk about the explosion of knowledge-based economic activity and its contribution, two million adult Canadians work for less than \$10 an hour—about one in six employed people.' Surprisingly, many of these people are well educated: one-third has a post-secondary diploma or degree.

Effects of globalization and ICTs on skills

Contrary to popular belief, the decline of industrial jobs in advanced economies is only partly related to globalization; technological change has had more profound impact on the labour market: 'today's workplaces are often in multiple locations characterized by cultural diversity' (Lynch 2002: 7). Furthermore, in many organizations, relationships between competitors, suppliers and customers 'are complex and boundaries have blurred between organizations and their environments' (Hiniker and Putnam 2002: 8). Technological advances have helped to de-massify production, reduce economies of scale and boost industrial productivity and thereby de-industrialising economies and causing a movement of labour from industry to the service sector.

In their attempts to become and remain more competitive in this new world order brought about by globalization and technological developments, many countries of the North have adopted different approaches to human resource management and organizational practices, such as hiring and layoffs, altering work hours, using part-time and contract workers, subcontracting and outsourcing work, reducing hierarchical structures, adopting more fluid job designs, as well as implementing multi-tasking, multi-skilling, self-managed

teams and multi-functional teams (Betcherman and Chaykowski 1996).

Several countries have responded to these challenges by implementing major strategic alignment initiatives to transform their economy as well as their education and training systems. For example, in March 2000, the Lisbon European Council set the major strategic goal to make Europe 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' (Lisbon European Council 2000). This radical transformation is based on the EU's recognition that human resources are its main asset and that investment in people is as important as investment in capital and equipment to achieve growth and productivity. It is estimated that a one-year increase in the population's average educational attainment can yield a 5% increase in short-term growth and an additional increase of 2.5% in the long term. Furthermore, research has had some positive educational impact on employment, health, social inclusion and active citizenship (Council of the European Union 2004).

The more developed countries were able to make major cut-backs in health care, education and other social services and to reallocate the necessary resources to restructure national economies and meet these challenges. The least developed countries, which were already plagued by poverty, did not have that fiscal flexibility to cope with these challenges in the same way. Moreover, they did not have the necessary infrastructure or human capital to allow them to make swift changes to reap the benefits of globalization and technological development. Consequently, they were drawn deeper into poverty while having to bear the heavy burden of foreign debt. Poverty is undoubtedly the most crippling problem for the developing world (NetAid 2005).

Poverty

Although the right to education, work, health and well-being is entrenched in the UN's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948, millions of people today are still living in abject poverty, which prevents them from exercising these fundamental rights. In its statement on poverty, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights defined poverty as 'a human condition charac-

terized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights' (CESCR 2001). Poor people live in crippling conditions without adequate food, clean water, sanitation, health care and education.

According to the World Bank Global Poverty Monitoring (2003), the distribution of poor people in various regions of the world is as follows: Sub-Saharan Africa, 46%; South Asia, 40%; Latin America, 15.6%; East Asia and China, 15.3%; Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 5.1%. Additional statistics are useful to understand the crippling effects of poverty on people from the developing world: 1.2 billion people live on less than US\$1 per day (UK Secretary of State for International Development 2000); over half the world's population—3 billion people—lives on less than US\$2 per day; every evening, 800 million people go to bed hungry (MPH 2005); 70% of the world's poor are women; every day, poverty kills 50,000 people worldwide, including 30,000 children; every year, 6 million children die from malnutrition before their fifth birthday; over 11 million children die each year from preventable causes (NetAid 2005).

Poverty reduction through education

The general consensus among our world leaders is that the more developed countries need to assist the developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty. There are two compelling reasons supporting the urgency to sustain foreign aids to developing countries. The first is essentially based on the spirit of generosity and humanitarianism: Assisting developing countries to move out of the vicious circle of poverty is also seen as a smart thing to do in the wake of the 11 September 2001: 'if we ignore the problems and struggles of people who live halfway across the globe, we do so at our own peril. Those who feel locked out of our global village can make the world a dangerous place' (Morrison 2003).

UNESCO has undertaken several international initiatives to raise awareness of the effects of poverty on human conditions and dignity. The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, or CONFINTEA V (UNESCO 1997), was particularly significant in that it took place within the context of an intensifying process of

globalization. The conference participants proposed a vision of adult learning which is firmly rooted in a framework of human development and social justice (Singh and McKay 2004).

The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have now given world leaders a common framework in which they can contribute to the fight against poverty, illiteracy, mortality, discrimination against women and environmental degradation. One of the key priorities of the MDGs is to reduce by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 (Preece and Singh 2003). This can be achieved by means of a four-pronged approach (MPH 2005):

1. Meet the UN foreign aid contribution target of 0.7% of Gross National Income.
2. Bind foreign aids to poverty reduction initiatives.
3. Implement trade rules that are facilitating to poverty reduction.
4. Support the immediate and unconditional elimination of 100% of multilateral and bilateral debts of the poorest nations.

The *Dakar Framework for Action* (UNESCO 2000) identifies education as an important instrument for combating poverty. Education, starting with care and education of young children and continuing through lifelong learning, is central to individual empowerment, the elimination of poverty at the household and community levels, and broader social and economic development. At the same time, the reduction of poverty facilitates progress towards achieving basic education goals. There are evident synergies between strategies for promoting education and those for reducing poverty.

The UNESCO Education for All (EFA) movement also promotes education for poverty reduction. On the occasion of the launch of the United Nations Literacy Decade, Secretary-General Kofi Annan (2003) said: 'literacy is the key to unlocking the cage of human misery; the key to delivering the potential of every human being; the key to opening up a future of freedom and hope.'

Evidence supporting education for poverty reduction

Given that so much hope, energy and resources are being invested in the education of children and adults, some scholars have started to

look for evidence-based information in support of education for development and poverty reduction. Despite the scarcity and limitation of solid evidence from published studies, John Oxenham (2003) has been able to draw several conclusions, which are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Contributions of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) to the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

ABET can indeed help with poverty reduction – MDG 1.
Women participation in ABET impacts positively on children’s school enrolments, perseverance and completion – MDG 2.
Women have a higher participation rate in ABET programmes and seem to make important gains in confidence – MDG 3.
The limited evidence available suggests that ABET has a positive outcome on mortality and well-being – MDGs 4 and 5.
While research indicates a strong relationship between participation in literacy programmes and knowledge of infection prevention, there is little evidence to demonstrate whether this knowledge leads to positive changes in behaviour – MDG 6.

Source: Oxenham 2003.

Despite these seemingly positive outcomes of ABET, Oxenham (ibid.) cautions against raising expectations of miraculous, rapid transformations because:

- a) of the uncertainty between the cause-and-effect relationship between information, attitudes and behaviour;
- b) only a minority of ABET participants tend to demonstrate measurable change in attitudes and behaviour within a few years; and
- c) following basic laws of learning, much of what is learned through ABET will be wasted without proper support to use and sustain the knowledge and skills acquired.

Taking stock of accomplishments

Various mechanisms have been put in place to monitor the progress of UNESCO's EFA and the MDGs. The *Human Development Report 2001* (UNDP 2001) provides a summary of the achievements towards the Human Development Goals (see Table 2). While it is encouraging to observe that some significant progress has been made, the results suggest that it is important to redeploy more efforts to meet many challenges that are still ahead. The international donor community of the North must remember that 6,500 Africans die every day of HIV/AIDS, while another 6,500 die of malaria and mosquito bites every day.

Trends

As part of its efforts to conduct the *CONFINTEA V Mid-Term Review 2003*, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) asked the national commissions to submit a report taking stock of significant trends and development in adult education since 1997. Although only 25% of the national commissions submitted their reports, it was still possible tentatively to identify some very informative trends (UIE 2003b), which include the following.

First, for developing countries, priorities are focused on basic EFA, including literacy development for youth and adults, the empowerment of women, and education for sustainable development. By contrast, the priorities in more developed countries are on skills development to meet changing labour market conditions, lifelong learning, the use of ICTs to support learning, and education focused on disadvantaged target groups.

Second, there is general interest in more developed countries to use lifelong learning as an overarching framework for adult education. A few developing countries are also moving in that direction. There is growing interest in developing partnerships between all key stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, NGOs and CSOs, in framing adult education and training initiatives. There is also growing interest in prior learning assessment and recognition. And there is increased participation of women in adult education.

Third, the decentralization of decision making to increase the degree of relevance of adult education to local needs is not function-

Table 2. A balance sheet of human development – goals, achievements and unfinished path. UNDP, Human Development Report 2001.

GOALS	ACHIEVEMENTS	UNFINISHED PATH
Halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty.	Between 1990 and 1998 the proportion of people living on less than \$1 (1993 PPP US\$) a day in developing countries was reduced from 29% to 24%.	Even if the proportion is halved by 2015, there will still be 900 million people living in extreme poverty in the developing world.
Halve the proportion of people suffering from hunger.	The number of undernourished people in the developing world fell by 40 million between 1990–92 and 1996–98.	The developing world still has 826 million undernourished people.
Enrol all children in primary school. Achieve universal completion of primary schooling.	By 1997, more than 70 countries had primary net enrolment ratios over 80%. In 29 of the 46 countries with data, 80% of children enrolled reach Grade 5.	In the next 15 years, provision must be made for the 113 million children now out of primary school and the millions more who will enter the school-age population.
Reduce infant mortality rates by two-thirds.	In 1990–1999, infant mortality was reduced by more than 10%, from 64 per 1,000 live births to 56.	Sub-Saharan Africa has an infant mortality rate of more than 100 and an under-five mortality rate of more than 170. It has been making slower progress than other regions.
Reduce under-five mortality rates by two-thirds.	Under-five mortality was reduced from 93 per 1,000 live births to 80 in 1990–99.	
Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.	In a few countries, such as Uganda and possibly Zambia, HIV/AIDS prevalence is showing signs of decline.	Around 36 million people are living with HIV/AIDS.

Source: UIE 2003a: 4; UNDP 2001.

ing well in developing countries, due to the lack of human and financial resources at the local level to support the initiatives. There is an increased interest in the use of ICTs to expand access, reduce cost and improve the quality of adult education. Developing countries are lagging behind in integrating ICT-mediated learning, mostly due to the lack of financial resources and qualified staff.

Fourth, adult education is research-poor. Hence there is very limited evidence-based information for policy formulation and decision making; many countries are using the framework of EFA and MDGs as pillars of action for the development of adult education.

Fifth, there seems to be very limited attempt to initiate international co-operation in adult education, including South-South cooperation.

On the other hand, based on an extensive review of international literature on research in adult education in the South, Torres (2004) identified a trend for associating adult education in the South with remedial education for the poor. She argued that even the ambitious goal of *eradicating* illiteracy has been downsized to *reducing* literacy primarily among youth and women. She concluded that the education and learning needs of adults have been ignored by major international policy framework documents, including UNESCO's Education for All, the UN Millennium Development Goals, and the World Bank's Fast Track Initiative. Although the North has fully embraced the critical importance of adult education for skills development, international cooperation agencies still give priority to children's primary education for the South.

Perspectives

This brief review of the field of adult education has focused on the past and present, successes and failures, and the identification of challenges and opportunities. In this section, these insights gained from the foregoing will be used to contemplate some perspectives on the future landscape of adult education in the South. It is hoped that these will fuel debate and discussions that will enable countries of the South, international agencies and donor countries with critical background to refocus their reach in adult education.

Insufficient progress

Estimates point to the inability of many developing countries to meet the minimum targets of EFA and MDGs. The corrective action must be reframed in strategic alignment with three key elements: the purpose, the result to be achieved, and the massive actions necessary to achieve the results. The purpose of EFA and MDGs did not take sufficient account of adult education. Critics have argued that adult education has been sidelined and ignored by those international initiatives and that the expected results were minimal. There is some evidence that too often the expected outcome of adult education was limited to basic literacy development, and Torres concludes that the educational needs of adults in the South are being ignored at the expense of primary education. There is a lack of massive action geared to the education and training needs of adults. There is definitely a need for a more comprehensive strategy adult learning.

Quality of education

While there is an official discourse about the need for lifelong learning, accessibility still remains a major issue. John Daniel (2002: 1), the former Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO, recently noted:

The problem in education today is that hundreds of millions of the world citizens do not receive it. Many more do not get enough of it. Over 100 million children never see the inside of a school. As many more do not stay in school long enough to gain useful skills. 800 million adults have their lives blighted by illiteracy.

Daniel views the effectiveness of education within a framework encapsulating three key elements: access, costs and quality. He defined quality as: 'fitness for purpose at minimum cost to society' (2002: 2). This framework is extremely useful in any consideration of accessibility. When the basic challenge of education is expressed in terms of this triangle of forces, one uncomfortable fact is clear: traditional methods of teaching and learning cannot produce the changes required. Daniel (*ibid.*) put it this way:

Try putting more students in each class. Access may go up, cost may go down, but everyone will accuse you of lowering

quality. Traditional ways of improving quality tend to reduce access and raise costs. There is clearly a problem. Throughout history, education has made an insidious link between quality and exclusivity. You can only have high quality if you exclude many people from access to it.

Yet evidence shows, he noted further, that technology can increase access, improve quality and lower cost all at the same time.

Relevant in this connection is research conducted by Curtin (2002: 6), who identified three models currently in use in Australia to achieve cost-effective outcomes in online delivery: reduce costs while maintaining current levels of effectiveness and volume; improve learning effectiveness while maintaining current cost and volume; and increase volumes while maintaining current levels of cost and effectiveness.

In commenting on the use of ICTs to increase access to education, Haddad and Draxler (2002: 8) noted:

It is going to be very difficult—if not impossible—for countries to meet the objective of effective learning, for all, anywhere, anytime. Our inability to meet this challenge, however, is self-inflicted because we tend to think of linear scaling, that is, using the same model of education (a school constrained by space and time) but more of it and on a larger scale. What we really need is to think differently and radically. The education model developed for the Industrial Age cannot achieve educational empowerment effectively in the Information Age. With ICT tools, we should be able to evolve the components of the conventional model into the corresponding components of the new model.

Given the scope and scale of the effort necessary to meet the education and training needs of adults in the South, the full potential of ICTs must be exploited in order to meet this challenge.

Bridging the cognitive divide

Learning to know is becoming a major priority in the attempt to achieve the goal of EFA. To prevent exclusion, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) must be not only physically accessible to all but also cognitively within the reach of all. Research indicates that many students lack the essential cognitive literacy skills to succeed in a learning environment. For instance, Oxenham (2003:

7) has noted that better understanding of information processing may help to improve learning effectiveness.

To learn successfully a student must possess a repertoire of intellectual skills that meet the cognitive demand of the learning task (Letteri 1985). The skills that predict success and contribute most to effective learning include (Chinien et al. 1997):

- *Analysis*: the ability to break down complex tasks into component parts.
- *Focus*: the ability to deploy attention on relevant information with intensity.
- *Reflectivity*: the ability to reflect on problems and consider alternative solutions.
- *Narrowness*: the ability to accurately and consistently categorize new information.
- *Complexity*: the ability to organize information in a usable and functional framework.
- *Sharpness*: the ability to make accurate distinction between categories to avoid confusion or overlapping.
- *Tolerance*: the ability to cope with ambiguous information and ill-defined problems.

These seven cognitive skills provide teachers with a very powerful framework for infusing learning how to acquire skills in their teaching and learning activities. This is consistent with Delors's second pillar of learning—*learning to know*—which he described as a type of learning that is 'concerned less with the acquisition of structured knowledge than with the mastery of learning tools . . . such study encourages greater intellectual curiosity, sharpens the critical faculties and enables people to develop their own independent judgments' (Delors 1996: 1). The UNEVOC-Canada Centre has accordingly developed the project LEARN (Learning Enhancement for Adults' Retraining Needs), which is a prototypical instructional CD-ROM designed to improve the information processing skills of adult learners (Chinien et al. 2001).

Learning to live together

Progress towards meeting the EFA goals and the MDGs in post-conflict countries has been hampered by insecurity, poverty, deteriorat-

ing economic conditions, economic sanctions and the destruction of educational infrastructures. *Learning to live together*, Delors's fourth pillar of learning, has today become one of the greatest challenges facing humankind. During the 20th century, 60 million people were killed in wars, and most of them were non-combatant women and children. Of those killed, 80% were civilians, mostly women and children. In the last decade, 1.5 million children were killed in wars, 4 million disabled and 10 million traumatized.

Peace education helps people to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to work and live together in peace and harmony. UNESCO has the mandate to use education as leverage for promoting a culture of peace among nations. Given the current unrest in the world, the critical skills to promote a culture of non-violence—skills that include tolerance, the prevention of violent behaviour and the peaceful resolution of conflict—must be embedded in education and training programmes for adults and youth (INEE 2002).

Lifelong learning

Workers of the future may expect to work on short-term assignments, on a contract basis, or within several project teams. They may have to work for more than one employer at any given time or even in new careers several times. Additionally, it is estimated that 50% of technical workers' skills will become obsolete within three to seven years. Lifelong learning is the only way to prevent obsolescence and remain competitive in a job market where work is becoming increasingly knowledge-intensive. One of the challenges regarding lifelong learning is to provide recurrent opportunities for access to education and training throughout the life of a person in the form of: lifelong learning, self-paced learning, on-site education, just-in-time education (any place and at any pace), innovation and learning to learn.

ICT-mediated learning

Once the cohort of learners who have benefited from the EFA movement completes its basic education, ICTs will be expected increasingly to provide innovative approaches to deliver more responsive, cost-effective and timely education and training programmes to all. ICTs can contribute to poverty reduction and social inclusion, while also

allowing for a pedagogical approach which is constructivist, collaborative, interactive and self-directed. ICTs also provide the flexibility to accommodate learners' unique cognitive and learning styles. However, the adoption of ICTs requires a carefully balanced decision-making process, which takes account of known advantages and challenges in conjunction with a particular country's strategic, pedagogical, organizational and technical ICTs readiness. The advantages of ICTs include: open and distance learning, just-in-time/anytime-and-anywhere learning, cost effectiveness and learning effectiveness. However, before adopting ICT-mediated learning, careful consideration should be given to several major challenges, including the fact that a lack of access to ICTs creates or reinforces the digital divide between the "haves" and "have-nots" (not only between countries but also within countries), the majority of Web sites on the Internet are still in English, and the cost of maintaining ICT-mediated learning will continue to rise.

Other critical conditions also must prevail before ICT-mediated learning can be successfully implemented in TVET, chief among which are: *strategic readiness*, which includes the vision, mission, values, objectives, strategies, timeframe and the evaluation scheme of the ICTs initiative; *pedagogical readiness*, which focuses on the fit between ICT-mediated learning and the teaching and learning practices in current use; *organizational readiness*, which focuses on teachers' empowerment for integrating ICT-mediated learning in TVET; and *technical readiness*, which addresses issues related to infrastructure requirements for ICT-mediated learning.

ICTs should therefore be part of a comprehensive national development strategy. However, to make ICT more sustainable both within and between countries, consortiums should be established to reduce costs by pooling resources. ICT-mediated learning holds great promise for narrowing the disparity between the North and the South and for achieving the goal of EFA. More developed countries have a key role to play in assisting developing countries to integrate the use of ICT in education and training through bilateral or international agreements focused on infrastructure development and capacity building.

Health literacy

A healthy lifestyle is critical for achieving the goals of sustainable development. In some countries, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is having devastating effects on already scarce human resources, which constitutes a critical pillar of economic development. It is important to prevent this pandemic from blocking the achievement of the MDGs and EFA. Education must raise awareness about the importance of responsible behaviours regarding HIV/AIDS. While education and literacy are important determinants of health, health literacy as a discrete form of literacy is becoming increasingly important for social and economic development (Kickbusch 2001). Health literacy is defined as ‘the cognitive and social skills which determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health’ (WHO, cited by Nutbeam 1998).

Integrating vocational education and adult education

Countries of the North have grasped the importance of the human capital for economic development and social cohesion and inclusion. The “haves” are still taking massive action to ensure that a skilled workforce will drive innovations and maintain competitiveness in world trade. These same countries have a double standard for countries of the South, which is visible in the formers’ advocacy of literacy development at the expense of skills development. The World Bank used to grant up to 40% of its education loans for the development of TVET in developing countries. Today, however, education loans for TVET accounts for only 8–9% of loans.

China and India are becoming the powerhouses and their skilled labour force is attracting many blue-collar jobs from the United States and Europe. Mohan Perera, the Head of UNESCO’s Section for TVET (Ochtet 2005: 5) argues that by ‘substantially investing in TVET, these countries laid a major plank in their economic foundations.’ The World Bank’s move to fund primary education at the expense of TVET has been detrimental to the economic development of many developing countries. The ILO’s education and training expert, Trevor Riordan, recently said that ‘international strategies intended to reduce poverty completely ignored the need

to develop skills . . . we are now seeing a skill-divide emerging . . . with the least developed countries falling further and further behind, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia' (ibid.). In commenting on this issue, Wataru Iwamoto, Director of UNESCO's Division of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, noted: 'this is a time-bomb waiting to happen as hundreds more kids finish primary school and look for secondary education or work opportunities which do not always exist' (ibid.). Only 16% of African students are enrolled in TVET as compared to 50% in Europe. Participants in the UNESCO International Experts Meeting on 'Learning for Work, Citizenship and Sustainability', held in Bonn on 24–28 October 2004, concluded that if education is the key to poverty reduction, then TVET is the master key to the improvement of human conditions.

Entrepreneurship

Another issue that requires attention is entrepreneurship. In some countries, the economy will be unable to generate enough jobs for all young people who are eligible to enter the workforce. Almost every government around the world has to grapple with unemployment and underemployment. The education of entrepreneurs is therefore becoming equally vital in TVET; estimates indicate that 50% of the graduates from the current education and training programmes will not be able to secure employment. Self-employment appears to be the only hope of economic independence for many young people. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (1988: 5) stated that 'when considering their careers, young people may no longer think about who they want to work for, but rather how to go about working for themselves'. There is a lot of optimism that self-employment could be part of the solution (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995). Entrepreneurship is therefore becoming a centrepiece of the TVET system. As a result, TVET teachers are now expected to be able to equip students with the necessary skills for self-employment.

Sustainable development skills for adult workers

Education for sustainable development is the next major issue facing the education of adult and youth. It is important to remember that

the human economy already consumes around 50% of the planet's natural production every year. If this trend is maintained, we will soon need many more planets to support our needs. Therefore, development must become more sustainable to guarantee our quality of life and that of future generations.

Moving towards the goal of sustainable development requires fundamental changes in human attitudes and behaviour. These changes can be achieved only through education and training. Adult education will have to reorient itself to satisfy the four basic axiomatic assumptions of sustainable development: social progress for all, effective protection of the environment, prudent use of natural resources, and maintenance of a well-educated workforce.

The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) hosted the Seoul + 5 Conference, 'Learning for Work, Citizenship and Sustainability', in October 2004. The meeting was focused on orienting TVET for sustainable development in the context of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005–2015. A recent study conducted by the National Centre for Workforce Development has identified the essential sustainable development skills required by the workforce to contribute to sustainable development. The skills profile generated by this study consists of six unifying skill clusters (Chinien et al. 2003):

1. *Ethics and values*: Attitudes needed to behave and act ethically.
2. *Integrated decision making*: Knowledge and skills needed to process information effectively and efficiently.
3. *Responsible use of resources*: Knowledge and skills needed to use resources responsibly.
4. *Valuing diversity*: Knowledge and skills needed to contribute and support diversity.
5. *Safety and well-being*: Knowledge and skills needed to maintain workplace health and safety.
6. *Continual improvement*: Knowledge and skills needed to improve quality of life.

These six skill clusters are valid for all workers, regardless of job function, sector of activity, and level of education and training. The skills must be instilled in the education and training of adults and youth.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Although adults spend a considerable amount of time on employment-related training, educational institutions fail to recognize the knowledge and skills acquired outside formal institutions. This is another unsustainable practice at a time when we are experiencing critical skill shortages and educational resources are scarce. Many nations, including Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, the UK and the US, have embraced the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) concept. While PLAR has many benefits, there are also some major issues and concerns associated with its implementation (Singh 2005: 21–22), some of which are:

1. The danger of transferring highly developed structures of recognition, validation and certification of prior learning and experience to developing countries.
2. Who should set the standards for assessment?
3. The lack of communication and mutual recognition among the different validation systems.
4. The need to maintain a balance between broadening competencies and keeping them relevant to the local context.
5. The existence of social bias against learning experience outside school in both developing and highly developed countries.
6. The need to identify, utilize and recognize traditional knowledge and wisdom as an integral part of the lifelong learning process.
7. The need to adopt a more holistic approach to validate competencies so that their identification is not driven by the labour market.
8. The need to maintain a balance between school-focused and life-focused programming so that non-formal learning can maintain its traditionally democratic and radical function.
9. The identification of national frameworks of qualification and the need to keep the stakeholders informed about these frameworks.
10. The identification of individual and systemic barriers to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

Convergence of TVET – HRD and adult education

The last issue for our consideration here relates to the convergence of TVET, human resources development (HRD) and adult education. These three areas operate as distinct fields. Each developed its own professional associations, body of literature, research and best practices. This division is unnecessary and has hampered the effectiveness of these fields. In the recent years, these fields have increasingly converged under the umbrella of “workforce development”. The co-operation of professionals from these fields would result in a convergence of very powerful paradigms, principles and philosophy, as well as the cross-fertilization of ideas and perspectives on: theories of adult education; human capital development theory and labour economics; sociology of work, family and community; career development theory and practice; and workforce development public policy (Gray and Walter 2001).

Human resources development (HRD)

One could argue that education contributes to poverty reduction or that improved economic conditions provide for increased access to quality education. Irrespective of which standpoint is taken, adult education must form an integral part of the national development strategy and the human resources development strategy. Figure 1 provides the analytical framework for understanding education and training quality in adult education. This framework includes four critical elements:

1. The national development strategy.
2. The country-specific context and input.
3. The purpose and outcomes of education and training initiatives.
4. The designated target groups.

As shown in Figure 1, the analysis of each of these four elements enables education planners to determine who will receive education and training, for what purpose, how this training contributes to the priorities of the national development strategy, and the extent to which it will reflect the country’s specific circumstances and resources. These four sets of information can then be used to formulate the adult/youth education development strategy, which

Figure 1. Analytical framework for understanding education and training quality in adult education

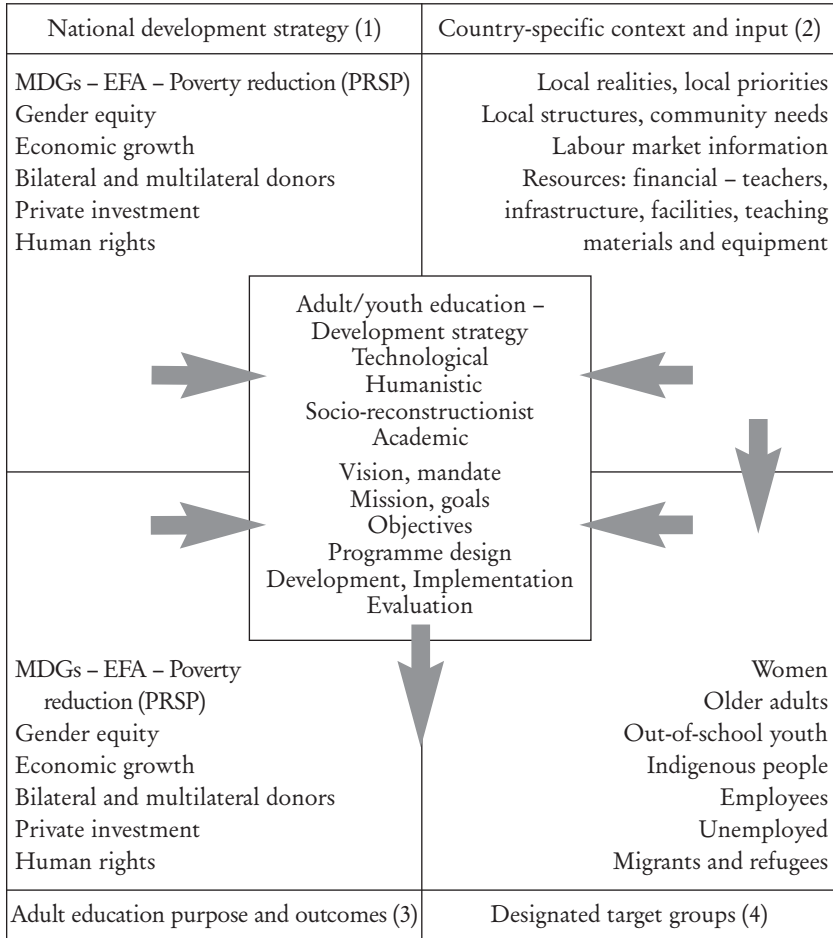


Table 3. Alignment of adult education purpose and strategies

Purpose of adult/youth education and training	Strategies
Workforce development	Enabling legislation Budget allocation Establishment of sector councils Providing labour market information Scoping to establish occupations and occupational clusters Developing occupational standards National qualification framework Developing training standards Establishing PLAR Training provision Testing and certification

will include the vision, mandate, mission, goals, objectives, programme design, development and evaluation, as well as the financial, organizational, pedagogical and infrastructure readiness. Table 3 illustrates how this framework can be used to develop adult education strategies to achieve specific training outcomes.

Some countries, according to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (Betcherman and Chaykowski 1996), are establishing sector councils to identify and address current and anticipated human resource, skills and learning challenges and to implement long-term, human resources planning and development strategies for their respective sectors. These sector councils are organizations within a defined area of economic activity that are led by a partnership of representatives from business, labour, education, other professional groups and government. The objectives of sector councils are to:

- define and anticipate skills requirements;
- promote lifelong learning in the workplace;
- facilitate mobility and labour market transitions;
- help workers to get the skills and knowledge needed to drive innovation and to sustain a competitive advantage in the changing economy; and
- encourage the private sector to take ownership and invest in solutions that address skills challenges.

Many developed countries, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, the UK and the US, are heavily engaged in the development of occupational standards. A few among the middle-income developing countries, such as Chile, Malaysia, Romania, Philippines and Turkey, are also developing their own standards. These occupational standards are used for developing national qualification frameworks, training standards, benchmarks for establishing prior learning assessment and recognition of skills acquired on a non-formal and informal basis, and for training provision and certification. This type of systematic approach to workforce development is necessary in a world economy characterized by trading blocks, such as NAFTA, the EU and ASEAN.

Lifelong learning

Too much energy is perhaps being invested in contemplating lifelong

learning for adults in the most deprived countries of the South. Research conducted by the OECD (2003: 8) in the Nordic countries has clearly shown that participation in ‘adult learning is highly unequal among specific population subgroups’. The participation rate in learning is higher among those with higher educational attainment and employed in high-skilled occupations. This group also has more access to learning opportunities, and benefits more from participation in lifelong learning. Developing countries must take these issues and concerns into consideration before committing scarce resources in the pursuit of goals that may not yield any benefit to the people targeted by EFA and MDGs.

Research

Adult education in countries of the South appears to be scarce and to lack theoretical underpinning and rigour. More robust research must be undertaken in adult education to provide evidence-based information to guide decision making and practice.

Conclusion

I would like to end with a quote from John Oxenham (2003), a long-time consultant for the World Bank on education for poverty reduction. He suggests that adult education programmes must be ‘viewed as a kind of yeast, which can help gradually increasing numbers of people move out of poverty’. If adult education is the yeast for the elimination of poverty, let us use the wisdom of all the dedicated people gathered here at this workshop to identify the other critical ingredients and all the supporting conditions necessary to activate that yeast. Let us also determine how to turn the heat on to allow that yeast to rise to full expectations, so that in the near future members of a family in some part of world will not have to sit around a piece of bread and take turns eating. Let us put our souls to this task so that our deliberation and conclusions will contribute to a world free of death due to poverty, starvation, disease and conflict.

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Model Programmes

Brazil's National Programme for Adult and Youth Education

Ricardo Henriques and Timothy Ireland

The Brazilian education system is one of the most important instruments for promoting development with equality in the country. At present, it still does not provide a quality service that responds to the demands of democratization. The various levels of the education system are marked by regional, social and ethnic inequality, which appears to perpetuate the inequality of Brazilian society by means of education. More than 96% of our children are enrolled in primary education, but its quality is still too low. Secondary education is restrictive and lacks concrete results. Technical and vocational education is still not available to the great majority of young people who should be able to benefit from it. Higher education has increased the supply of places for students without guaranteeing high-quality education and at this level, the federal system, though quite competent, faces huge restrictions both in funding and in terms of autonomy.

An analysis of Brazilian education indicates the urgent need for renewing the agenda and improving performance on the part of society and the various levels of government in order to overcome its obvious and widely identified limitations. It is worth recalling that the education system is organized according to complementary levels of responsibility. Therefore, the agenda for Brazilian education should also be the result of a broad articulation between the three levels of government (federal, state and municipal) in order to co-ordinate efforts with a view to producing results as quickly as possible.

Changing education is a task that takes generations to complete, but the future must begin today.

Certain principles govern the policy guidelines being implemented in the field of education:

- Education is a common good and a strategic factor for the nation, enabling it to give value to its past, strengthen its present and create its future.
- Education, as an individual right, is a key factor in bringing about personal change and participation in citizenship, and should be available to all at every stage of life.
- Education should be a decisive factor in achieving social justice, offering equality of opportunity to all citizens, by contributing to reducing regional, social and ethnic-cultural inequalities.
- Quality is vital to guaranteeing the social and political role of education.

Discussion of the renewal of the Brazilian educational agenda means confronting those elements that maintain inequality in the country. This extreme and persistent inequality stems from the marked variations in the distribution of high-quality education among Brazilians throughout the country's history. Discussion of education therefore implies discussing the fundamentals of a national project and a mode of development.

The Ministry of Education (MEC) is organising its action strategy along four main axes, which, in association with other elements of the working agenda, clarify the political and institutional priority for creating new bases of an educational model for the country:

1. The establishment of a quality agreement for basic education associated with a re-definition of its funding.
2. The links between educational inclusion and literacy define a priority approach to overcoming the high level of inaction historically towards redressing educational inequality.
3. Technical and vocational education takes on a new role in response to the demands of the knowledge society.
4. The reform of higher education is presented as a re-ordering of the fields of knowledge production and the definition of the benchmarks of a process of sustainable development.

These four axes for action are linked together and combine in a virtuous circle of change based on the principles set out above. It is vital that education should be understood as a system, both in the progress of each individual at each level and in the need for connections between those levels. This system also makes clear the requirement for a distribution of constitutional responsibilities between federal bodies (Genro 2004). However, it is also vital to understand education as a continuous process that accompanies the individual throughout his or her life. Without diminishing the importance of the educational system and the right of access to it at any time in life, the MEC recognizes that learning takes place in many other social spaces and that an education policy must recognize the continuous dimension of the learning process and its importance as a basic human need. Such a policy should offer incentives and seek to foster innovative ways of encouraging learning while also fostering an understanding of its inseparability from democratic life in society.

Literacy and educational inclusion

Literacy data

The Brazilian Government recognizes that, although the country has made significant progress in recent years in the field of education, especially in adult and youth education (AYE), there is still much to do, particularly in confronting the various types of illiteracy: in education, culture, politics and citizenship. In this connection, statistics on educational exclusion are staggering. There are 65 million young people and adults aged 15 years or more who have not completed primary education. Of these 65 million, 33 million are functionally illiterate and have not even completed Grade 4, while 14.6 million are completely illiterate (PNAD 2003). It is precisely in the cohort aged 15–24 years—an important generational group that will provide the country's future critical mass—that 19 million young people have not finished primary education and almost 3 million are completely illiterate. These numbers illustrate the need to rescue the idea of education for all as a right of all those young people and adults who have been excluded from the education system. At the primary level, for every 100 pupils who enter, only 51 finish Grade 8. About 60% of children finishing Grade 4 cannot read properly. And this is the national average.

If we exclude state capitals and some of the larger municipalities from the sample, this indicator reaches even more disturbing levels. Regarding secondary education, we find 42% of those finishing secondary schooling are at critically low levels of development in reading ability. According to the latest INAF (National Indicator of Functional Literacy) study, only 26% of the Brazilian population aged 15–64 years are fully literate (IPM 2005). This situation—which reflects cultural, economic, employment and housing limitations—indicates a potential demand for AYE by 60 million Brazilians.

Illiteracy data are not homogenous, however. Differences become apparent when these figures are analysed by region, ethnicity/race and age. The highest rates of illiteracy are found in Northeast Brazil. The average level of illiteracy in Brazil among blacks (12.9%) is more than twice as high as among whites (5.7%). This problem is worse in the Northeast, however, where one in five black people cannot read or write. Illiteracy rates are also significantly higher among older age cohorts: 32% of the total illiterate population is over 60 years of age. In terms of gender, great differences are not found: 52% of all illiterates are female.

It was in view of this state of affairs, that President Lula identified literacy as a political priority in the beginning of his term of office. Literacy is seen as the means of access both to full citizenship and to education as a right for all at any stage in life. For those young people and adults who have not had access to school, a brief period of literacy teaching is unacceptable. Literacy is now directly articulated with the increase in AYE.

Between 2003 and 2005, the most significant policy changes concerned the recognition both of the right of all citizens to education as a fundamental human right and that at certain moments special provisions are required for those segments of the population living in precarious social conditions. The concept of education as a right for all and the ethical and historical considerations which underpin it, demand recognition of the diversity of realities and subjects. Consequently, educational policies require co-operation between society and public power to re-define the sense of partnership that has been lost over the years: education seen as part of the process of building a conscious and active sense of citizenship, respecting the plurality and the specific needs of individuals.

To achieve this, the agenda for Brazilian education is being built on the large-scale collaboration between the three levels of government and society as a whole, so that joint efforts can produce results in the shortest possible time in response to the main challenges posed by the country's long-standing educational deficit. This response cannot be limited to one-off, short-term solutions, but must be defined from the perspective of lifelong education, establishing commitments to democratize education systems and to create instruments which guarantee education for all.

In organizing its action strategy, the MEC has given priority to the articulation between educational inclusion and literacy. In addition to being a *right*, the connection between literacy and programmes of social inclusion is strategic and re-defines the horizons of citizenship. Links within the federal sphere, as well as with local, state and municipal programmes, and links between literacy and the Income Transfer (*Bolsa Família*) programme permit an important focus on those living in extreme poverty. The literacy and AYE agenda forms the structural base of *inclusion*. The articulation with vocational courses expresses the role of literacy as a gateway to inclusion and citizenship.

The special treatment given to AYE, with a focus on literacy and the whole process of learning (both formal or informal), is the expression of the government's aim to link improved quality of education systems to the construction of a foundation for equity and educational inclusion, giving priority to that diversity which characterizes the Brazilian population.

In this sense, as an initial measure and for the first time in the history of its administrative structure, the MEC has created a secretariat dedicated to this field. The Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (SECAD) translates the organizational axes into action. In this name, "continuing education" expresses the focal point of the agenda for youth and adults; it goes beyond the limits of formal schooling and emphasizes the idea of lifelong education, above all for the millions of Brazilians who have not yet benefited from access to school. "Literacy" expresses the political priority placed on citizenship, and "diversity" represents the powerful concept not only of educational inclusion but, above all, of respect for, proper treatment of and full value for the multiple aspects of diversity in Brazil.

In order to explain the actions that are being carried out within this conceptual framework and the ways in which they are being conceived, we present below the various actions and their results, which are now beginning to be perceived.

The Literate Brazil programme: Inclusion and continuity

Literate Brazil (Brasil Alfabetizado)

Through SECAD, the MEC has been gradually investing in programmes, projects and actions aimed at giving young and adult Brazilians the chance to enter school and complete basic education. As representative of the Union, the MEC is bound to carry out redistributive¹ and collaborative action by the Law of Guidelines and Foundations of National Education, Law No. 9,394/96 (Brasil 1996).

To this end, one of the MEC's strategies is to provide financial support for literacy programmes for youth and adults, in collaboration with state secretariats for education, municipal councils, NGOs, higher education institutions and private enterprises, in all the states of the Brazilian Federation through the Literate Brazil programme. Launched by the Brazilian Government in 2003, the programme's main objective is to achieve educational inclusion by means of effective literacy teaching (reading, writing, oral expression and mathematics) for young people and adults over 15 years of age who have not had access to such courses. At the same time, it aims to promote the notion of education as a right. The programme is intended as a gateway to citizenship and to further educational opportunities for youth and adults, for access to education for all is held to be a lifelong right.

Resources for developing this programme are transferred directly to institutions (in the case of public bodies) and by means of legal agreements (in the case of NGOs, higher education institutions and private companies) after teaching programmes have been approved and learners, literacy teachers and co-ordinators have been registered. The plan finances literacy courses lasting 6–8 months, providing US\$49 for the training of each teacher (US\$16 for initial training and

1. Redistributive action by the Union implies financial support for educational programmes, projects and actions aimed at reducing economic, political and social inequalities.

US\$32.50 for further training), a basic floor of US\$49 per month for all teachers, and a further US\$3 per student per month. This means that the pay of literacy teachers varies in relation to the size of the class (classes with 20–25 students with different rules for classes whose students have special needs and classes in prisons and in the countryside). As a measure of comparison, the minimum wage in Brazil is US\$122.

It is the responsibility of partner institutions to train teachers, enrol learners and organize the whole teaching process, which includes: classroom space, teaching materials, supervision and monitoring. Institutions are free to use the teaching method that best suits the specific communities in which they are working, as long as they guarantee that learners will be able to read, write, understand and interpret texts and carry out basic mathematical operations by the end of the course. As shown in Table 1 below, in 2003 1.67 million young people and adults participated in the Literate Brazil programme. In 2004, the number rose to 1.7 million, resident in 3,661 Brazilian municipalities, with resources totalling US\$68.3 million, which represented an increase of 34% compared to the number of municipalities covered in the previous year. The important innovation in 2004 was precisely a change of perspective in which literacy was developed as an integral part of continuing education. This gave rise to the policy of preferential funding for public education authorities (states and municipalities) which are able to offer primary education to students completing literacy classes.

In 2005, the programme intends to cover 2.2 million youth and adults, investing a total of US\$89.5 million. The programme's strategy of universal territorial coverage has resulted in defining a specific target in 2005 for each of the 5,563 Brazilian municipalities, targets which respect existing budgetary restrictions but recognize the particular situation of illiteracy in each municipality. Based on the Index of Fragility in Adult and Youth Education (IFEJA),² these targets accounted for 70% of the programme's funding and challenged

2. A composite index made up of:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| <i>I_ANALF</i> | Absolute rate of illiteracy: those over 15 years of age unable to read or write a simple note; |
| <i>I_FUNC</i> | Rate of functional illiteracy: those over 15 years of age with less than four years of formal schooling; |

all states and municipalities to formulate their local literacy plans.

Table 1. Evolution of coverage of national literacy programmes

YEAR	BENEFICIARIES	MUNICIPALITIES	US\$ MILLION
2003	1,668,253	2,729	62.1
2004	1,717,229	3,661	68.3
2005	2,200,000*	5,563	89.5
Total	5,585,482	–	219.9

Source: MEC/SECAD, 2005. *Target established by the Ministry

Among the principal guidelines proposed by MEC/SECAD for carrying out the programme, we highlight the following:

- a) The executive partners must take great care in evaluating the results so that, at the end of the literacy process, learners are able to produce, read, understand and interpret texts and perform mathematical operations.
- b) The literacy classes should have a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 25 students (classes in rural areas and those offered to prison populations may have a minimum of five students), and the classes should last 2 hours per day, making a total of 10 hours of class per week (projects with different numbers of hours will be permitted as long as they are justified according to the specific needs of the classes). Each course should total at least 240 classroom hours.
- c) They should give priority to the process of training literacy teachers and should supervise the whole of the educational

I_FUND Percentage of those over 25 years of age with less than eight years of formal schooling. This represents the percentage of the population which has not concluded primary education.

IFEJA The Index of Fragility in Adult and Youth Education is calculated using the following formula:

$$IFEJA = \frac{I_ANALF + I_FUNC + I_FUND}{3}$$

process. It is suggested that the training should be held on a regular basis and contain discussion of policy elements that refer to social inclusion and continuing education, as well as techniques concerning the acquisition of writing skills, in which the theory and practice of literacy are clearly integrated.

- d) The methodology and thus the materials for teaching young people and adults to read and write should be based on learners' interests and socio-cultural context, being directly related to local conditions.

In addition to the methodological plurality which is permitted to all partners throughout Brazil, the MEC has signed technical co-operation agreements with the Cuban and Spanish governments to promote the exchange of experiences and technology used in literacy programmes for young people and adults. Such agreements provide a means of increasing the possibilities of confronting the many faces of illiteracy in a country such as Brazil, with all its diversity.

The Making School (Fazendo Escola) programme

Given its position that literacy programmes should not be an end in themselves, the MEC has adopted a concept of AYE that aims at the kind of continuity that guarantees increased schooling for the Brazilian population.³ In this connection, and in close collaboration with the Literate Brazil programme, the MEC has also been developing the Making School (*Fazendo Escola*) programme. Aimed at citizens who have not had access to or the chance of completing primary education at the "proper" school age (7–14 years old), the objective of this new programme is to combat illiteracy and low levels of schooling in those pockets of poverty in Brazil where most of the young people and adults who have not finished primary education are concentrated.

The MEC offers this supplementary funding programme to state and municipal governments, where the level of support it provides is calculated according to the number of students enrolled in a given

3. Although the absolute majority of children aged 7–14 years (97%) have regular access to school, less than 70% manage to finish Grade 8 of primary school, which contributes to lowering the average number of years of schooling of the population (IPEA 2005).

system. SECAD is responsible for formulating policies to improve the quality of AYE, stimulating and monitoring the introduction of AYE in state and municipal education systems, and advising local managers on decisions on the use of resources.

Financial assistance may be used to acquire textbooks for adult learners seeking to complete primary education (Grades 1–8), pay teacher salaries in state and municipal education authorities, hire temporary teachers whenever necessary to increase staff numbers, provide in-service teacher-training, acquire ingredients for school meals. The executive organs of this programme are the state, represented by the State Secretariat of Education, and the municipality, represented by the local government. The state is responsible for dealing with schools in the state system, and the municipality, with those in the municipal system.

In 2003, at a cost of US\$102 per student per year and with a budget of US\$157,419,100, over 1.5 million students in 2,015 municipalities benefited from this programme, which abandoned the criterion of poverty and increased assistance to other municipalities which were creating their own public systems of AYE. In 2004, Law No. 10,880 (Brazil 2004) introduced new criteria for assistance, which, in addition to helping those students already provided for in 2003, benefited students in state and municipal education systems who had completed the Literate Brazil programme. Thus in 2004, the programme covered over 1.8 million students in 2,292 municipalities, representing a total investment of US\$171 million.

In 2005, the strategy for increasing the chances of continuity between literacy training and AYE led to a conceptual re-definition which made it possible to achieve the necessary compatibility between the principles of universalization and differentiation in the field of AYE—“universalization” in the sense that, for the first time in the history of AYE, the MEC guaranteed financial support to all students enrolled in the Brazilian School Census; and “differentiation” in the sense that the MEC assumes responsibility for identifying the different degrees of educational fragility in municipalities and states and thus provides financial support on the basis of a differentiated transfer of funds for federal entities according to the extent of educational fragility and according to recent investment efforts in AYE. In the service of this strategy, the IFEJA has been used to establish a

ranking of municipalities and states. Based on this ranking, four levels of funding were defined, the highest destined for the most fragile group of municipalities and states in terms of a composite educational indicator related to the programme objective. In addition, two factors for correcting values were created: the first established a ceiling for growth of the variation of amounts transferred, while the second laid down a premium for municipalities and states that had invested most in AYE in recent years (indicating an incentive for stable strategies in increasing local investment in AYE).

Thus in 2005, the Making School programme increased its scope to cover all 27 states and the 4,177 municipalities that registered enrolments in classroom-based AYE in the Brazilian School Census. This meant that, with a budget of US\$526 million to cover all students enrolled in AYE at primary level, 3,342,531 youth and adults in municipal and state education systems began receiving financial support from the Federal Government. Table 2 below illustrates these figures.

Table 2. Coverage of adult/youth primary education programmes

YEAR	BENEFICIARIES	MUNICIPALITIES	US\$ MILLIONS
2003	1,548,879	2,015	157
2004	1,834,235	2,296	171
2005	3,342,531	4,178	198
Total	6,725,645	–	526

Source: MEC/SECAD 2005.

Among the main challenges that MEC/SECAD faces in the field of literacy today are:

- programmes and projects that are condensed and fragmented, without any reference to the real subjects of educational processes;
- a lack of articulation with education systems in terms of the demands of continuity;
- managers, supervisors, co-ordinators and teachers whose own training is insufficient to allow them to manage programmes

and develop methodologies, curricula, teaching materials and methods of evaluation;

- programmes with no supervision, monitoring or evaluation;
- high dropout rates from short literacy programmes;
- a high rate of *regression*⁴ to illiteracy (above all because of the lack of support for reading and writing in various parts of the country); and
- older students who have more difficulty in remaining in courses.

More serious is that literacy practices still exist which employ diverse forms of provision, often operate without any legal cover, and induce participants to experience constant failures, which strengthen the stigma deriving from a series of experiences of exclusion.

The evaluation system of the Literate Brazil programme

When we examine literacy programmes for young people and adults in Brazil, we find there exists a lack of information concerning the results of the different types of teaching that have been used until now. Clearly, in order to suggest more radical ways to re-design literacy teaching methods that will significantly increase the quality of the programmes, it is necessary to review the current results so as to move forward by learning from past mistakes.

Due to these concerns, MEC/SECAD and the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) have been developing since 2004 an evaluation system for the Literate Brazil programme. The components of this system are: i) the evaluation plan for the Literate Brazil programme; ii) the establishment of a specialist committee and other groups to validate and oversee the planning and execution of the evaluation programme; and iii) the definition of an institutional framework to bring together specific competencies from different scientific areas in order better to evaluate the programme.

1) The first component of the evaluation system of the Literate Brazil programme is the *evaluation plan*. Its aim is to plot the quantity of possibilities for analysis, which include aspects related to man-

4. The widely accepted expression is used here not so as to express agreement with the commonly used meaning but to indicate that learners who have learned to read and write have *regressed*.

agement, the institutional nature of the programme, and pedagogical and social questions, as well as the views of different participants in this action, that is, managers, teachers and students. Thus far this effort has resulted in identifying 38 specific evaluation items in the programme, including: evaluation of the central management of the programme; analysis of the functions and behaviour of partners; analysis of the demand for literacy training; evaluation of the impact of the Literate Brazil programme; immediate evaluation of the impact of literacy teaching based on secondary information; and diagnostic evaluation of the Literate Brazil and Making School programmes. Given the existence of many restrictions, such as time and human and financial resources, the effort to construct an evaluation plan for the Literate Brazil programme has demonstrated its relevance on at least two levels. First, this plan has provided MEC/SECAD with more information—from preliminary analyses of the main problems of programme design as well as its main obstacles—on which to base its decisions about the level of priority to be accorded to the different evaluations. Secondly, the evaluation plan has increased opportunities to complement different evaluations. Integrated implementation of different evaluations reduces costs by taking advantage of at least three types of synergy:

1. Improving a single and integrated information system, a vital aspect of both reducing costs and also raising the quality of evaluations and monitoring.
2. The specialization and division of labour which not only reduces costs but also raises quality. In this way, specialised teams can be used to discover primary information concerning instruments for collection, sampling, fieldwork and recording data that are inquired by all the evaluations.
3. Complementary use of evaluations, since it is frequently necessary to relate results of more than one evaluation to each other in order to make recommendations for improving the design or working methods of the programme. In these cases, coordination between evaluations increases the benefits of each of them.

Moreover, it is worth pointing out that the endeavor to creating an evaluation plan for the Literate Brazil programme contains a careful review of the realizable possibilities of evaluating the programme;

for any informative evaluation of a programme will have to include information about the way the programme works. For example, to discover primary information about those who benefit from Literate Brazil, it is necessary to ascertain when the courses begin and end, where they are held, numbers of students in each class, and other data that permit the participants to be located for interview. In addition, evaluations that require documentary analysis depend on the level of prior organization of programme documentation.

2) A second important component of the system for evaluating the Literate Brazil programme is the existence of a *committee of specialists* who are invited not only to evaluate the plan's technical content but also to supervise its implementation at regular intervals. Based on the committee's contribution, it is hoped that the initial technical framework of evaluation can be preserved and potentially necessary adjustments can be validated. This committee is composed of Brazilian researchers and specialists with extensive experience in AYE and/or the evaluation of social programmes.

In addition, the evaluation system also seeks to identify the different stakeholders in the programme and its evaluation—in other words, those parties who are interested in each of the evaluations—and establish a dialogue with them. This is achieved internally by identifying the co-ordinating functions within MEC/SECAD (that is, monitoring, pedagogical supervision and programme management) that are directly linked to each evaluation component. Externally, this procedure is carried out through meetings of bodies such as the National Council of Secretaries of Education, the National Union of Municipal Directors of Education, State Forums for Adult and Youth Education and the National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Education. Those aspects of evaluation involving some form of randomising will be submitted to a Commission of Research Ethics in order to ensure that no evaluation violates any ethical principle.

3) The third and last important component of the evaluation system of the Literate Brazil programme is the *institutional framework of the evaluation system*. The nature of the evaluation of educational programmes is intrinsically multi-disciplinary because it is necessary to have competencies in the fields of education, psychometry, economics, sociology, statistics and data collection.

By means of a technical co-operation agreement, MEC/SECAD invited IPEA to design the plan and co-ordinate its execution. The other partners in this evaluation are public and private institutions, as well as researchers from different areas of expertise, all of whom are well respected and experienced in their particular field of evaluation.

The National School of Statistical Sciences (ENCE) is responsible for drawing up the various samples to be used in the evaluation. The evaluation instruments have been developed by researchers with experience in a specific topic; for example, the test of efficiency in literacy and numeracy is the responsibility of the Centre of Literacy, Reading and Writing at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (CEALE/UFMG), while the responsibility for the instrument to measure the supply of course vacancies lies with the Estácio de Sá University (UNESA) research team. Fieldwork will be carried out by the Paulo Montenegro Institute (PMI), a non-profit foundation linked to the IBOPE Group that has wide experience and a sound reputation in the area of literacy and numeracy, not least due to its responsibility for the National Indicator of Functional Illiteracy (INAF).

Mapping initiatives

One of the aspects of evaluation in the Literate Brazil programme that is already bearing fruit is the national mapping of initiatives for teaching literacy to young people and adults. Such mapping permits, among other things, the evaluation of the programme's capacity to mobilize physical and human resources to achieve its aims. Some of the principles behind this instrument are:

- The lack of knowledge in Brazil about: literacy initiatives for adults and young people and their results; the many forms these initiatives take at the local level; the social actors involved; the ways in which they participate in these initiatives; and the scope of the actions and funding actually invested in this effort.
- The non-inclusion of such programmes among the target-actions of the Brazilian School Census, MEC and INEP, which complicates the identification of those initiatives in each municipality for the relevant authorities.

- The decline in the tradition of systematic evaluation (in all its forms) in the field of social policies. The cost of using complex methodologies is the reason usually given to justify this trend, which suggests the need for a careful diagnosis.

Within this scenario, the aim of the mapping process is to create a continuous record of those involved in the literacy training efforts, to understand the production network for services within this initiative, and to estimate the amount of public and private resources spent on the actions developed so far. The hope thereby is to contribute at the three levels of government to defining policies and tailoring them to the task of offering high-quality social education to all those who have the right to it.

Considering the diversity of actors and functions, as well as the scope of activity in the area of teaching literacy to adults, the mapping is being carried out in two stages:

Stage I: Mapping, by units of the Federation, programmes/projects, of government (federal, state and municipal) and non-government executing institutions, and of institutions that support or provide services to the executing institutions, as well as of responsibilities taken on and global resources invested.

Stage II: Mapping, by municipality, other activities developed by each literacy teaching unit, functions carried out, and resources invested.

Thus far MEC/SECAD has received registration details of more than 1,000 bodies, which 2 million students in almost 3,000 Brazilian municipalities attended in 2004. In spite of still not being complete, the mapping instigated by the Literate Brazil programme's evaluation system already provides data concerning the offer of places by bodies that are teaching and supporting literacy for young people and adults in Brazil. These preliminary results will soon be published to increase the visibility of this initiative and to improve the scope of the mapping, since it will encourage those institutions that still have not registered to do so and to provide managers and civil society with information concerning the programmes in their neighbourhood.

Diagnostic evaluation

Another stage, which was concluded in the course of evaluating the Literate Brazil programme, is the diagnostic evaluation of the Literate Brazil and Making School programmes, which MEC/SECAD carried out in partnership with UNESCO between October 2004 and April 2005. This evaluation was designed in conjunction with a group of researchers specialising in AYE and linked to various institutions, especially Brazilian public universities.

A qualitative study using interviews, focus groups and local observation in six states and ten municipalities provided more information on learners, trainers, managers and those responsible for projects financed by Literate Brazil, which included several government and non-government institutions.

Though this evaluation, MEC/SECAD gathered a large amount of qualitative data on the workings of the Literate Brazil and Making School programmes. This data is being used as reference material by the other evaluation teams of the Literate Brazil programme.

Changes and innovations

The cumulative experience gathered over the years in AYE is considerable. The breadth of experience in teaching reading and writing and AYE; the ways in which studies and research in Brazilian universities have given focus to the area, organising specific working groups and the presentation of theoretical production at annual research meetings; the shared experiences in movements, such as the Forums of Adult and Youth Education, which exert important influence on the training of social activists and on the formulation of public policy—all this has proven to be a rich source of knowledge and ideas, which have helped those government officials who are capable of listening and have the sensitivity to grasp their meaning and significance. SECAD has worked very closely with such officials, seeking to create a lively dialogue with all of them and endeavouring to build effective state policy for the public area.

New Fund for Basic Education

The Brazilian Government's new proposal, which was presented by the MEC, is to create a new *Fundo de Desenvolvimento da Educação*

Básica (FUNDEB: Fund for the Development of Basic Education). It is to include AYE. The proposal is being discussed at the legislative level after a long process of negotiation and debate at various levels of social and political representation. The most intense discussion of the inclusion of AYE has concerned the value attributed to the cost per pupil, which some experts, as well as some public officials and politicians, have argued is potentially less than other levels and educational segments.

Actions, projects and programmes

In recognizing the importance of training critical and creative readers, as well as of education as the primary means of promoting skills and reading habits, MEC/SECAD is endeavouring to implement a Reading and Book Policy to encourage reading activities among young people and adults who have recently learned to read and write, thus consolidating the literacy strategy developed by the Literate Brazil programme.

The purposes of the Reading-Action (*Leituração*) programme are to encourage the creation of works written specifically for new adult readers, to make reading material available to new readers by means of the reading agents in the Brazilian Post Office, to train teachers as mediators of reading material, and to strengthen and stimulate the creation of social spaces for reading. As a result of this policy, the MEC is financing the production, publication and distribution of an almanac whose central theme is 'constructing peace in diversity', as well as starting the process of selecting new titles to be published in the period up to 2006. A national 'Literature for All' writing competition is being launched in 2005 with the aim of stimulating the production of different genres of text specifically for new young and adult readers. Prize winners will receive a monetary prize and have their work published and included in the Reading-Action programme.

Also in an effort to cater to the specific needs of those in AYE, SECAD is implementing collaborative actions and projects for rural workers, fishing communities and those young people and adults in conflict with the law.

According to PNAD data (2001), about 29.8% of the rural adult population is illiterate. For this reason, in accordance with the law

(Resolution No. 01/2002 of the CNE/CEB), and in recognition of the right of rural people to basic education as well as of their specific characteristics and needs—in addition to the plural dimension of such needs (of gender, ethnicity and race, culture, age, politics and economic and territorial situation)—SECAD has planned a set of educational activities for young people and adults living in rural areas. The activities are designed to offer them the chance to complete primary education and to take part in initial and continuing vocational training.

MEC/SECAD and the special Secretariat for Aquaculture and Fisheries of the Office of the President of the Republic (SEAP/PR) have created the Fishing for Letters programme. It is designed to attend to the needs of men and women in the fishing industry in municipalities which have the Literate Brazil programme and where there is a demand from self-employed fishery workers who cannot read or write. Among Brazil's fishing communities, there is about 40% illiteracy and 79% functional illiteracy.

Furthermore, MEC/SECAD, the Ministry of Justice, the Special Secretariat for Human Rights and the respective representatives of these areas in individual states, are creating guidelines for educating young people and adults in conflict with the law. The aim is to provide training courses in the elaboration of specific methodologies and teaching materials for those professionals working with these populations so as to provide services for young people in secure units who are participating in social-educational programmes, as well as for adults in prisons.

Another action of the MEC in partnership with UNESCO has been the launching of the collection entitled *Education for All*, which provides an opportunity to publish texts, official documents, research studies, reports of events, and studies commissioned from researchers, academics and Brazilian and international educators, as a means of widening the debate on education for all. The first volume in this collection appeared in 2004 and was entitled *Educação de Jovens e Adultos: uma memória contemporânea (1996–2004)* (Adult and Youth Education: A Contemporary Memoir, 1996–2004). In 2005, five more volumes have been published so far: *Educação Anti-Racista: caminhos abertos pela Lei Federal nº. 10.639/03* (Anti-Racist Education: Paths Opened by Federal Law No. 10,639/03); *Construção Coletiva: contribuições à educação de jovens e adultos* (Collective Con-

struction: Contributions to Adult and Youth Education), in partnership with the Support Network for Literacy Action in Brazil (RAAAB); *Educação Popular na América Latina: diálogos e perspectivas* (Popular Education in Latin America: Dialogue and Prospects), in partnership with the Latin American Council for Adult Education (CEAAL); and *Ações afirmativas e combate ao racismo nas Américas* (Affirmative Action and Combat against Racism in the Americas) and *Educação como exercício de diversidade* (Education as a Practice of Diversity), in partnership with the National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPED). Another four titles are planned for publication in 2005.

SECAD has developed a series of projects based on the theme 'Adult and Youth Education and the Marketplace'. They will lead to the formulation of training processes which integrate literacy and/or increase schooling (primary school) and basic vocational training. The scheme seeks to make an effective link between literacy teaching, continuing studies and raising the level of schooling, with activities that generate employment and income through entrepreneurship, solidarity economics, the formal labour market and community action. Outstanding examples in this area are: the *Programa Nacional de Inclusão de Jovens – Educação, Qualificação e Ação Comunitária* (ProJovem: National Programme for the Inclusion of Young People – Education, Qualification and Community Action); the *Projeto Formar* (Training Project) co-ordinated by the Ministry of Planning and Management in partnership with the MEC; and the *AlfaInclusão* (Literacy-Inclusion) project, the fruit of a partnership between the BB Educar Foundation and the MEC. Other joint actions related to the world of work are the joint analysis of projects carried out by MEC/SECAD and the Ministry of Labour and Employment's National Secretariat for Solidarity Economics to encourage and develop strategies and actions that integrate AYE in solidarity economics; and the attempt to bring the State Forums of Adult and Youth Education and the State Forums of Solidarity Economics closer together.

a) The *National Program for the Inclusion of Young People – Education, Qualification and Community Action (ProJovem)* is a collaborative project between the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the MEC and the National Youth Secretariat, to provide integral education for young people by means

of an effective association between raising levels of schooling to allow more people to complete primary education, vocational qualification with a certificate of initial training, and the promotion of community action of public interest. It is aimed at young people aged 18–24 years, initially in state capitals and the Federal District, who have finished Grade 4 of primary education and are not formally employed.

b) The objective of the *Training Project (Projeto Formar)*, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Planning and Management in partnership with the MEC is to offer federal civil servants and those working in autarchies the basic minimum education necessary for further professional training, for developing the quality of public service offered to the citizen and for the exercise of their own citizenship.

c) The *Literacy-Inclusion* project is the result of a partnership between the BB Educar Foundation and the MEC, and its aim is to create a methodology for literacy teaching linked to training for entrepreneurial activity with a view to generating income and sustainability. The pilot project is in the development stage, working with four groups who are learning to read and write (25 students in each group) in Arinos, a rural town in Minas Gerais, and in Brazlândia, an urban area in the Federal District.

Training literacy teachers and educators

The training activities for literacy teachers and educators of adults and youth are financed by MEC/SECAD through the decentralization of specific funds mainly in the Literate Brazil and Making School programmes. However, MEC/SECAD understands that its responsibility is to prepare strategies and carry out actions to meet the challenges of training teachers for AYE. To this end, it has tried to build up a network of partner universities to discuss training AYE teachers both within courses leading to undergraduate teaching certificates, as well as in university extension courses, identifying all the higher education institutions in the country that develop such actions. It also finances the preparation of specific materials for training AYE teachers at the secondary school teacher-training level (*magistério*) through the *Proformação* programme and the preparation of printed material, in partnership with the NGO Vereda.

SECAD is also preparing a proposal for a distance learning course, *Educação na Diversidade* (Education in Diversity), to train

teachers and managers working in the field of diversity. In addition, it is contributing to the preparation of a computerized platform for disseminating knowledge called the *Observatório da Inclusão Educacional* (Observatory of Educational Inclusion) in partnership with universities and UNESCO, which will host the distance learning course being prepared.

It is also co-ordinating the management of international co-operation projects whose specific focus is on training teachers. This it is doing in partnership with UNESCO (using resources donated by the Japanese Government), whose aim is to help to reduce illiteracy rates among young people and adults in Brazil by means of sustainable training activities in literacy teaching and continuing education in four Brazilian states (Goiás, Paraíba, Ceará and Rio Grande do Sul). The project, which focuses on the prison system, involves initiatives for training teachers in the formal and informal education systems; reproduction and dissemination of material for literacy training (publications, training tools and teacher support); and evaluation of the practices and methodologies being developed. For its part, SECAD has contributed financial resources and technical training for the implementation of an AYE network in Mozambique, where it is involved in a technical co-operation project to train trainers and teachers.

As one of its direct actions, SECAD has maintained a series on AYE within the broad programme entitled *O Salto para o Futuro* (Leap into the Future).⁵ This is part of TVEscola's (TV School, the MEC's television channel) contribution to guaranteeing a qualified space for training distance-learning teachers, giving content to previous policies that provided schools with technological equipment for transmitting closed-circuit television programmes by satellite.

Evaluating the Literate Brazil programme

The set of actions for evaluating the Literate Brazil programme have helped MEC/SECAD to re-design the programme's own information system. The main objective of this action is to increase the via-

5. As part of its structure, the Leap into the Future programme organizes thematic series composed of five programmes together with a printed booklet. It is transmitted live, at which time three invited experts on the theme under

bility of analysing the programme, bearing in mind that the absence of some information concerning partner organizations and their respective classes would invalidate the evaluation of the programme. It should be noted that this information has also been useful to the educational monitoring and supervision team, which will have the benefit of new information from now on.

Another important result of the evaluation is the publication of the first figures from the national mapping of the supply of literacy programmes for young people and adults. This mapping has already recorded more than 1,000 registered institutions in more than 3,000 Brazilian municipalities, with about 2 million students. These data are currently being validated and will become available on the Internet for all managers and researchers in AYE in Brazil. The main objective is to make available a better information base to local AYE programme managers for diagnosing and designing policies in this field.

In addition to these initiatives, the evaluation team is working on the first volume of a report on the evaluation of the Literate Brazil programme which will present the consolidated results obtained from the first 12 months of evaluation. The publication's main themes will be: evaluation of the ability to mobilize the programme, based on the mapping data; evaluation of the impact of reading and writing on human development, based on data from the PNAD, PPV and PNDS; evaluation of the demand for literacy training programmes, also based on secondary data collected from the PNAD; and an analysis of the evaluation system itself.

Linked actions among federal bodies

One of the major aims of the current government has been the effective use of public resources. To this end, the MEC has entered into co-operative agreements and protocols of intent in order to link the federal government's actions to policies for AYE. The legal instruments for joint action are embodied in the various projects and programmes which—though aimed mainly at bringing education closer to the realities of vocational training—try to make it possible

discussion are present. This allows for a degree of interaction between experts and trainee teachers in “telecentres”, by telephone, fax, e-mail and sometimes broadcasts in real time.

to meet other needs found among those served by Literate Brazil.

A support project for Literate Brazil is being implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Health which will enable students in the programme to have their eyes examined and receive eyeglasses if necessary. In connection with the campaign for civil registration led by the Ministry of Justice's Special Secretariat for Human Rights, the MEC has published a literacy teacher's manual, *Orientações para obter o registro civil* (How to Register Yourself Officially). The manual stresses the importance of the literacy teacher's work for learners and their communities inasmuch as the teachers help them to obtain those basic official documents which are essential for the exercise of citizenship.

Another joint action which is important for the progress of the Literate Brazil programme has been the *Fórum das Estatais pela Educação* (Education Forum of State-owned Companies). It was set up to develop ways of giving additional support to public educational policies promoted by the Federal Government and the MEC through partnerships with Brazilian state-owned companies. The forum has defined four lines of action, one being initiatives to teach young people and adults to read and write. The support of state-owned companies for the Literate Brazil programme is given in the form of complementary actions, such as providing learners with school materials, together with meals, eyeglasses, transportation to and from school, and supervision—all of which are intended to improve the quality of projects being carried out by states and municipalities.

Its agreement to co-operate with the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), which is connected to the Ministry of Planning, is further evidence of MEC/SECAD's endeavour to establish effective links with other federal bodies in order to make feasible the execution of research projects of mutual interest. In this case, joint action is focused on the evaluation of the aforementioned Literate Brazil programme.

In addition, MEC/SECAD has forged a partnership with the Ministry of Social Development in order to include in the evaluation questionnaire of the *Bolsa Família* (Income Transfer) programme a special module to evaluate factors determining the demand for literacy programmes and continuing education among young people and

adults. In addition to enabling a substantial savings, including this module in the questionnaire has made it possible to estimate the extent to which AYE programmes and important social programmes in Brazil, such as the *Bolsa Família*, complement each other.

Another linkage sought with official bodies is that between the MEC and the INEP. As of March 2005, the Brazilian School Census included questions concerning literacy training for young people and adults and a more detailed section on AYE. This change will allow better supervision of both programmes within the official education system.

*Constructing a public policy for adult and youth education:
Collaborative administration*

Building a structure to provide AYE also requires regular collaboration between the various components of the Federation: the Union, states and municipalities. To achieve this, MEC/SECAD is promoting wide-ranging links between bodies so as to achieve responsible decentralization. Hence, both in recognising the importance that the National Council of Secretaries of Education (CONSED) and the National Union of Municipal Directors of Education (UNDIME) have acquired over the years in leading the sectors they represent and in an ongoing attempt to improve the qualification of public representatives of education, MEC/SECAD has developed a policy of consulting these entities on specific issues which imply and involve public resources and collaborative actions.

Dialogue with civil society

An important feature to be highlighted is the “democratization” of the formulation, monitoring and assessment of policies on AYE through the creation of the National Literacy Commission in 2003. With 14 members representing different institutions of civil society and presided by the Minister of Education, the National Literacy Commission is a consultative body designed to assist the government in defining programmes and policy. In addition, it ensures the transparency and social control of funding mechanisms and accompanies the development and results of policies and programmes in process. In July 2005, in line with the MEC’s emphasis on a broader concept

of literacy, the Commission's mandate was broadened to encompass AYE, which is reflected in its new name, The National Literacy and Adult and Youth Education Commission.

Alternative social action has nevertheless played a fundamental role in the revival of AYE in Brazil and today works with MEC/SECAD to move policies forward in this field. Thus civil society in Brazil is playing an extraordinary role in consolidating rights concerning AYE by means of the State Forums of Adult and Youth Education, the first of which was created in the state of Rio de Janeiro in June 1996, during the national preparatory process for the 5th International Conference of Adult Education (CONFINTEA V). Today there are 25 state and 19 regional forums, plus one in the Federal District (Brasília); together they constitute an extremely important national network for discussion of and debate on AYE policy.

Co-operation between MEC and UNESCO

The MEC and UNESCO Brazil have strengthened their strong cooperative bonds to establish a national policy for AYE in Brazil. This co-operation has been particularly evident, for example, in the technical support UNESCO Brasil provided for the qualitative evaluation procedures for the Literate Brazil and Making School programmes. As mentioned above, the UNESCO office in Brasília has contributed by picking a team of national specialists to carry out a diagnostic evaluation of both programmes, the results of this evaluation are currently being edited and will soon be co-published by UNESCO Brazil and the MEC.

In addition, the basic concern about high rates of functional illiteracy and the frequent rates of young people and adults reverting to illiteracy have led to joint, concerted actions throughout the country to create incentives to read. To this end, the MEC and UNESCO are working together to create a programme called Reading-Action (*Leituração*). Recognising the strategic importance of this action, UNESCO Brazil is complementing these efforts with a project using Japanese funds (Japanese Fund-in-Trust), which is intended to contribute to reducing illiteracy among young people and adults in conflict with the law.

Finally, in light of the significant initiatives to promote AYE that Brazil has developed, UNESCO Brazil has endeavoured to

replicate the Brazilian experience in other developing countries, especially in Portuguese-speaking African countries. Currently, steps are being taken towards a co-operative agreement between the cluster office of UNESCO in Namibia, and the Angolan Ministry of Education in order to execute a project with Italian funding (Italy Fund-in-Trust) to strengthen the Angolan literacy strategy for young people and adults. A staff member of UNESCO Brazil is working part-time on this project to ensure that Angola can benefit from the experience Brazil has built up in literacy teaching.

A new institutional format for adult and youth education

After years of stagnation, a new institutional design for literacy and AYE as a whole is being built, and it is being constructed on the basis of a wide-ranging dialogue which indicates the need for a more public re-structuring of AYE. Even though it is aware of the distance that typically separates planning and practice, the MEC is currently focusing on literacy and AYE from the perspective of continuing education and lifelong learning. It recognizes the inter-sectorial nature of this modality and aims to incorporate it into the national education system due to the impossibility of treating it separately from (formal, government-organized) education systems, and also because it is not reasonable to exclude NFE due to the many possibilities and wealth of opportunity this important area of education offers.

To deal with this approach to literacy and AYE, the MEC is guided by an agenda that endeavours to link increased quality in teaching to building bases for equity and educational inclusion, giving priority to the diversity of the Brazilian population.

To understand the MEC's commitment, it is helpful to quote from the *Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning* (UIE 1997):

The objectives of youth and adult education, viewed as a lifelong process, are to develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in their communities, in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society in order to face the challenges ahead.

To achieve this, MEC/SECAD is building a new institutional base for AYE founded on the process of connection, agreement, recognition and dialogue with a group of organs, entities and social actors who perform different roles in the field. At the government level, it is formulating actions together with the Ministries of Labour and Employment, Health, Social Development, and Justice, as well as with the Secretariats of Aquaculture and Fisheries, Youth, and Human Rights. At the level of civil society, in 2003 it created the National Literacy Commission and later broadened its scope to include AYE. From the viewpoint of supply, a basic element in consolidating AYE is the necessary orchestration between the activities of federal, state and municipal governments linking up with representative organs, such as the MEC, CONSED and UNDIME, as partners in constructing public policy for AYE. In addition to prioritising federal resources directed to this area, this implies seeking the collective construction of alternatives to expand AYE, as well as reconfiguring this modality of education to attend to the specific needs of young people and adults.

Such links are not confined to federal bodies; on the contrary, links are also sought with allies who, over the years, have worked in AYE, recognising that the real protagonists of the history of this modality of education in Brazil, as well as the young people and adults themselves, are collective: government representatives, NGOs, international organs, workers and employers, trade unionists and social movements—all of whom are in some way contributing to AYE within the complex and diverse conditions of Brazil. These collective bodies are very well represented by the State Forums of Adult and Youth Education.

On the other hand, the MEC is trying to improve professional competence in the area through research, evaluation, documentation, communication, training and publications. At the same time, it is making efforts to train a new generation of professional workers in AYE at federal, state and municipal levels, providing funding mechanisms for this purpose that give autonomy in the design of local projects responding to the requirements of modern life and in their conception of teacher training, which for many years was established by national associations. The Brazilian Government is convinced that after a long period of neglect of and disbelief regarding literacy and

adult and youth education, a spirit of revitalization and renovation now exists. Broader concepts and practices which include new elements are competing within the broad scenario of education and learning, challenging conventional paradigms in all areas and recognising that the scope and needs of individuals and social groups have changed profoundly in recent years and that it is therefore necessary to re-create literate environments and societies accordingly.

Thus international meetings, such as the 'South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People', have been decisive in reinforcing the inclusion of the question on the agenda of nations, articulating a series of international initiatives, declarations and commitments, seeking synergy in place of the continuous dispersion of efforts. In short, the correct practice of international cooperation for development between countries of the South should be based on the principle of collaboration in the quest to add knowledge to the many experiments that are being developed by different actors in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The central challenges for MEC/SECAD today are in repaying an enormous historical debt in terms of education, committing itself to democratising education systems and creating instruments that guarantee education for all as a basic human right. It is not only a question of offering literacy training or short-term schooling but of affirming the real meaning of AYE set out in Hamburg, which sees education as the key to the 21st century and considers the humanization of subjects to be the result of a learning process that lasts for the whole of a person's life.

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India's National Adult Education Programme

Satish Loomba and A. Mathew

The nationwide programme of adult education initiated under the aegis of National Literacy Mission (NLM) is now more than fifteen years old. Starting in 1989–90, the mass literacy campaigns, called Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs), have covered 596 of India's 600 districts, and two-thirds of them have moved on to post-literacy (PL) and continuing education (CE) stages, towards lifelong education and creating a learning society. In its move from the TLC to PL and CE stages, the adult education movement strove to reach out to every section of non-literate youth and adults, mainly in the 15–35 age group and harness policy priorities that had not been consistently high across different states and throughout the three Five Year Plan periods. Still, in vision, strategies, implementation modalities, in learners' participation, learning achievement, and neo-literates' efforts to transform and improve their condition, there may be few parallels to the Indian adult education movement. The range of insights and experiences of that movement has been so varied that any aspect of adult education can be elucidated in the light of the Indian experience. Bearing in mind the range of issues slated for consideration in this "Policy Dialogue", in what follows here we shall present a brief overview of Indian adult education programmes and experiences.

Historical background

The origins of adult education in India could be traced to the oral tradition in ancient society. The tradition of advanced learning, however, remained the preserve of a small elite section. The Western

education system introduced under British rule did attempt to bring education to all, irrespective of caste and class distinctions, but it had only limited success. Consequently, post-Independence India inherited a system of education characterized by large-scale, inter- and intra-regional disparities. Educational inequality was aggravated by socio-economic, gender and other inequalities. So much so that the country's literacy rate in 1947 was 14% and female literacy at an abysmally low rate of 8%.

Adult education in the post-independence phase

The eradication of illiteracy has been one of the major national concerns since gaining independence. Some of the significant programmes developed to eradicate illiteracy have been:

- **Social Education:** Implemented in the First Five Year Plan (1951–56), it emphasized literacy, extension, general education, leadership training and social consciousness.
- *Gram Shikshan Mohim:* A movement for literacy in rural areas that started first in Satara district of Maharashtra in 1959 and later extended to other parts of the state, it sought to impart basic literacy skills within a period of four months.
- **Farmer's Functional Literacy Project (FFLP):** Started in 1967–68 as an inter-ministerial project for farmers' training, it aimed to improve agricultural productivity and functional literacy.
- **The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP):** Launched in 1978, it was the first nationwide and time bound programme aimed at making 100 million literate in the 15–35 age group within a period of five years.
- **Rural Functional Literacy Project (RFLP):** It imparted functional literacy to all illiterates in 15–35 age group in rural areas.
- **Mass Programme of Functional Literacy (MPFL):** Launched in 1986, it enlisted university and college students in the National Service Scheme and National Cadet Corps to give literacy classes to illiterates in their vicinity or service areas.

*The 1986 National Policy on Education:
Unqualified priority of eradication of illiteracy*

Recognising illiteracy as India's sin and shame, as Mahatma Gandhi urged, and convinced that literacy is an essential pre-condition for meaningful participation in national reconstruction, in 1986 the Government of India (GOI) framed the National Policy on Education (NPE), in which it resolved that: 'The whole nation must pledge itself to eradication of illiteracy, particularly in the 15–35 age group. The Central and State Governments, political parties and their mass organizations, the mass media and educational institutions must commit themselves to mass literacy programmes of diverse nature' (MHRD 1986a). The NPE's Programme of Action (POA), also from 1986, spelled out the operational strategy of covering an estimated 100 million non-illiterates, by 1995. However, given the magnitude of the target and also the urgency, the POA proposed the eradication of illiteracy to be made a "mission"—a technical and societal mission aimed at both harnessing the advances in S&T to improve teaching-learning and involving not only the government but also mass organizations, media, educational institutions and the entire society (MHRD 1986b).

Launching of National Literacy Mission: Objectives and special focus

In pursuance of the NPE resolution, the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched on 5 May 1988 as a technology mission to impart functional literacy to 100 million non-literates in the 15–35 age group in a time-bound manner (MHRD 1988).

After trying out different methods and approaches to lend mass character to adult education efforts, the NLM came to adopt a mass literacy campaign model, which had met with dramatic success in the Ernakulam District of Kerala State in 1989–90. The Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs), as the illiteracy eradication drives came to be known in India, have been launched not only to spread literacy (in fact, functional literacy) but also to promote family welfare, immunization, mother and child health care, conservation of environment, communal harmony, social cohesion, national integration, etc. The major thrust of the TLCs from the start has been the promotion of literacy among women, as well as among the socio-economically dis-

advantaged groups, including the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes and other backward classes.

Functional literacy

The NLM conceptualized “functional literacy” as acquiring a clearly defined level of proficiency in reading, writing and numeracy, and also the ability to apply the literacy skills in daily life situations requiring the use of literacy skills. Specifically, “functional literacy” was defined as: achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy; becoming aware of the causes of their deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their condition through organization and participation in the process of development; acquiring skills to improve their economic status and general well-being; absorbing the values of national integration, conservation of environment, women’s equality, observance of small family norms; and the like.

Adoption of Total Literacy Campaign as dominant strategy: Rationale

The Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) has been adopted as the principal strategy of NLM for eradicating illiteracy due to its proven positive features, such as being area-specific (generally, the unit is the district, which is targeted in one go), time-bound, participative, volunteer-centred, cost-effective and outcome-oriented. Although the TLC emphasizes the achievement of predetermined levels of literacy and numeracy, it also involves other allied activities, such as campaigns for universal enrolment and retention of children in schools, immunization, conservation of environment and women’s empowerment.

Planning and management: Different phases and emphasis in strategies

The initial TLCs, which were sanctioned for a duration of one year, have gradually been extended for to last 12–18 months. They have been implemented by an autonomous body, called the District Literacy Society (DLS) or the *Zilla Sakshratha Samiti* (popularly known as ZSS), under the chairpersonship of the District Collector/Magistrate. A TLC comprises broadly two stages, the preparatory phase and the teaching-learning phase. The preparatory phase involves the creation of an environment that is supportive of the literacy, which includes

the propagation of the literacy message through multimedia, seminars, rallies, meetings, song and drama performances, generally using the folk and popular cultural medium of communication with a telling effect. This environment-building phase attempts to motivate and mobilize educated and socially progressive individuals from all walks of life to participate in the TLC as volunteers, resource persons or in any other capacity, and non-literates to join as learners.

A three tier organizational structure is created at the village, block and district levels, which is socially representative and also includes various human resources at different levels, such as teachers, elected local body (called *Panchayats*) members, etc., to oversee the planning and management of the TLCs.

The preparatory phase includes a door-to-door survey to identify potential learners as well as volunteers who could act as volunteer teachers or resource persons. Based on the given number of non-literates targeted, the number of volunteers required is determined, generally at a teacher-learner ratio of 1:10–15. A cascade model of training is followed in TLCs (as in PLPs and CEPs), where resource persons training the master trainers, who, in turn, train the volunteers. A set of three graded primers (literacy teaching materials) that is used for teaching-learning in literacy centres also forms the basis of training the resource persons, master trainers and volunteer teachers.

Upon completion of these preparatory tasks, learners are matched and batched with volunteer teachers, and learning centres and class times are identified at the outset of the teaching-learning phase which are convenient to both the learners and the volunteer teachers.

Experience has shown that it is easy to devise a conducive environment for literacy at the macro-level, a phase which entails a good deal of visibility and social participation, but it is far more difficult to sustain the learners' and volunteers' motivation and morale through the grind of teaching-learning every day, day after day, over a period of 6–9 months. For the non-literate rural and urban poor, who are caught up in the struggle for survival, the pen or pencil would seem heavier than the plough after a day of hard manual labour. It is here that the three-pronged organizational structure's motivational, monitoring and supervisory role is crucial, as taken on by the (i) village literacy committee, (ii) literacy volunteers who

manage the literacy centres in the villages; and (iii) TLC full-timers/government functionaries from sub-block or district levels.

The set of three primers has built-in exercises and tests at the end of each lesson, and each primer helps to ascertain each learner's progress. The final evaluation of each primer and all three primers indicates the level of literacy the learner has achieved. An external evaluation of the learning outcome and other aspects of a given campaign (TLCs, PLPs and CEPs) determines the achievement of the programme.

Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes

Irrespective of whether post-literacy (PL) phase was combined with continuing education phase or not, the PL phase will always be taken up on the completion of the TLC phase. Based on the initial experience of first five to six years, when a PL programme was implemented in a campaign mode such as the TLC, generally for a period of one and a half to two years, it was changed into a programme mode and its duration was reduced to one year. But there was no substantial change in its objectives and programme scope.

One of the objectives of the post-literacy programme (PLP) is to enable neo-literates to learn to apply their new literacy skills as a problem-solving tool, so that learning becomes relevant to living and working—thus achieving functional literacy in the true sense of the term. This was originally the objective of the TLC, but could not be addressed adequately due to the TLC's brevity, as well as its pre-occupation with making as many people in the target group literate as possible.

Another major objective of the PLP continues to be what is called the "mopping up" operation, for instance, enabling the slow learners as well as the drop-outs to reach the level of literacy prescribed by the NLM.

But the most important objective of the PLP remains the retention, consolidation and upgrading of the fragile literacy levels achieved during the TLC, and enabling the neo-literates to attain greater self-reliance by providing them, through library services, with a variety of supplementary and graded reading materials.

Also conscious of agendas not addressed by the TLC, for instance, improving their living and working conditions, PLPs aim to

integrate skill development programmes. The agency implementing a PLP, as in the case of the TLC, remains a specific DLC.

PLPs were conceived, as noted above, mainly to help neo-literates to consolidate and apply their literacy skills to their actual living and working conditions. However, experience has shown that, in the face of persistent social and economic problems, it remains difficult for neo-literates to apply and utilize their newly acquired literacy skills. The NLM recognized that the literacy processes therefore have to be continued and sustained if people are to realize their potential and improve their personal, social and economic conditions. So CE was added to the agenda. It is meant to provide learning opportunities on a continuing basis and improve the living conditions of the people. On the other hand, CE targets not only the neo-literates from the TLCs and PLPs but anyone who needs it or who is outside of basic literacy and primary education.

The main objectives of the Continuing Education Scheme (CES) and its activities include (NLM 1996: 10):

- provision of facilities for retention of literacy skills and CE, beyond the basic literacy stage;
- creating scope for the learners' application of their literacy skills to help to improve their living conditions and quality of life;
- dissemination of information on development programmes and widening and improving participation of the deprived sections;
- creating awareness about national concerns and values and sharing common problems of the community;
- organising short-term training and orientation programmes to upgrade vocational skills and thereby to improve the beneficiaries' economic conditions;
- provision of library and reading room facilities to create an environment conducive to literacy and a learning society; and
- organising cultural and recreational activities with effective community participation.

The main programme that the CES envisioned was the setting up of Continuing Education Centres (CECs), which could serve as a venue and forum for the coordination and convergence of a variety

of programmes with educational inputs implemented by several ministries and departments of central and state governments, local self-governing agencies and NGOs. Besides, the CECs could also provide a comprehensive range of programmes suited to the interests and needs of the people for lifelong learning.

Thus the CECs were expected to function as libraries and reading rooms with learning and reading materials; learning centres for variety of CEPs; literacy centres for the remaining non-literates and neo-literates; training centres for brief training programmes to upgrade skills; composite information windows about various development programmes; *Charcha Manda* (discussion forums) for sharing ideas and solving problems; development centres or venues for extension facilities of different government and non-government agencies; and cultural and recreation centres. As envisioned in the CES, in addition to the CEPs, the CECs also provide facilities for various target programmes, including equivalency, quality of life improvement, income generation and individual interest promotion.

Under the CES, a CEC is sanctioned for a population of 2,000–2,500 and one Nodal Continuing Education Centre for every 10–15 CECs to provide them with resource support as well as to monitor and oversee each CEC's activities.

The funding system for adult education programmes in India is different from other countries. In the case of Total Literacy Campaigns (based on a per learner cost ranging from Rs. 90–180) and PLPs (on a per-learner cost of Rs. 90–130), the cost is shared between the central and state governments on 2:1 basis. In the case of CE, however, a cent-per-cent central share in first three years and 50:50 sharing basis during fourth and fifth years of the CES is the funding system. Each CEC (with an annual assistance of Rs. 25,000) and Nodal Continuing Education Centre (with Rs. 45,000) provides for the recurring and non-recurring costs. The State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA), the counterpart of the NLM at the state level, has been authorized to sanction CEPs in their states, which routes the funds to the DLS to run the CEPs.

Having started in 1995, so far (i.e., in 2005), 284 of the 596 districts covered under the TLC and PLPs have moved on to the CE stage.

Assessment of literacy achievement: Approaches and methods

To conduct an objective assessment of literacy acquisition and to have a uniform yardstick for estimating the success of the TLC, the Government of India (GOI) constituted a committee in 1992 under the chairmanship of R. H. Dave. The Dave Committee adopted the guiding principle that learner evaluation should be simple, intelligible and non-threatening, as well as systematic, technically sound and universally applicable. In the light of the basic literacy skills defined in the NLM objectives, and the elements of learning defined under “functional literacy” such as “functionality” and “awareness”, the Committee spelled out the competencies and the testing design to estimate the learning achievement. With a view to giving practical guidance on the evaluation framework and each competency a relative weight, the Committee also proposed the blueprint of a test. The test was focused on basic literacy and numeracy skills alone and consciously left out aspects like “functionality” and “awareness”. These components, it was felt, would be developed automatically if the primers had a shaper thematic focus on contemporary socio-economic concerns, and were properly covered during teaching-learning process itself. In the matter of evaluating the learners’ learning achievement, the Dave Committee eschewed the dichotomous categorization of “pass” or “fail”, and suggested a certain minimum score (50%) in each of the three competencies (for instance, reading, writing and numeracy), and an aggregate (70%) to be qualified as “literate”. The *Arun Ghosh* Committee, which was established in 1994, went into issues related to sampling design, which is now being adopted quite uniformly in all external evaluations of TLCs (NLM 1992; Rao 2002: 279–80; NLM 1994).

Through a series of regional and national consultations and workshops, the NLM has also developed guidelines for the final evaluation (by external agencies) of PLPs as well as CEPs. Each external evaluation of PLPs and CEPs, unlike evaluations of TLCs, assesses the outcome of all the objectives set for the programme.

The literacy movement: Brief overview

The literacy movement that began with the TLC in the early 1990s has covered, by early 2005, 596 of the 600 districts in India by means

of TLCs and other adult education programmes. Of those districts, 139 are still in the TLC stage, 173 in the PLP phase and 284 in the CE stage. Based on the NLM figures, more than 150 million non-literates, mainly in the 15–35 age group, have been involved in literacy campaigns and other adult education programmes, and over 118.25 million have become literate. Doubtless, the steep increase in the literacy rate from 52% to 65% in the previous decade, as well as the significant reduction in the gender and rural-urban disparity in literacy, is due (at least in part) to the literacy movement.

As a major social intervention effort, the literacy movement in India has witnessed many expected and unexpected outcomes. The mass-campaign approach led to a massive social mobilization, mainly of the educated, to join the campaign for literacy on a voluntary basis. More than 12 million volunteers, mainly school and college students and educated youth, participated in the literacy campaigns, and another 3–4 million people worked as academic resource persons and organizers at different levels, extending from the village to the district. Well over 63% of the learners targeted were women, who were enrolled and made literate. The literacy movement has been instrumental in gaining access to women and enabling them to participate more in society, which has no parallel in any other sphere of social endeavour.

The NLM perspective on PLPs and CEPs

This level of social participation, especially of women, was due partly to the hopes and aspirations raised in the process of the literacy campaign about improving women's socio-economic conditions with the successful completion of the TLCs. However, given their brevity, the TLCs could address only the literacy component. Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (PL&CE) were initially introduced as a composite programme not only to consolidate learners' newly won though still fragile literacy but also and especially to address their aspirations and expectations for improvement which remained largely un-addressed during a TLC (Chatterjee 1996).

However, the first six years of this composite programme showed that—both regarding the acquisition of basic literacy, upgrading it to the level of self-reliance and further learning on a continuing basis, and regarding the issue of its application in daily life to im-

prove the learners' living conditions—even using PL&CE as a combined programme (without reference to the TLC) was inadequate (NLM 1996). It was realized that bifurcating PL&CE, and creating a system of institutionalized CE was the only answer. Consequently, providing learning opportunities on a continuing basis and improving people's, especially the neo-literates', living conditions and quality of life of the people became the NLM's major objective for the CEPs (NLM 1996). But to institutionalize CE for lifelong learning, a distinct, preparatory phase that could function as a runway for CE to take off, was deemed essential.

*Operation Restoration:
Precursor to residual illiteracy eradication campaigns*

Although TLCs were designed and implemented as a mass movement in different parts of the country, in many cases a number of campaigns stagnated due to natural calamities, lack of political will, frequent transfer of the District Collectors, etc. "Restoration" of the stagnated TLCs became essential, and the NLM began sanctioning an "Operation Restoration" phase quite early in the 1990s. Even those districts that moved on to the PL and CE stages without achieving high levels of literacy, continued to be burdened by their residual illiteracy.

The NLM's concern with residual illiteracy has partly been in deference to the global EFA concerns of reaching the un-reached, and also synchronized with the "revamping" of the NLM thrust areas approved by the Cabinet in 1999, and endorsed by the Tenth Five Year Plan (MHRD 2003: 85). The 2001 Census of India also confirmed the NLM's apprehension about the continuing concentration of residual illiteracy in the low-literacy states, and especially in districts where female literacy was below national average. Thus what began as special measures for residual illiteracy eradication drives is now generally permitted for use in districts where female literacy is less than 30%, regardless of the district's degree of involvement in the PL and CE stages. And in keeping with the global EFA concerns, the focus in the residual illiteracy eradication programmes continues to be on women and members of disadvantaged groups. The funding and implementation system for residual illiteracy eradication programmes continues to be the same as for TLCs.

*Accelerated Female Literacy Project:
Special focus on low female literacy districts*

Based on 2001 census figures, 47 districts with a female literacy rate of less than 30% were identified and selected for launching the special Accelerated Female Literacy Project (AFLP). This new project was introduced in at least 32 of those districts in three states, including Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh (Singh 2005). Together, the AFLPs are reported to have helped nearly 2.3 million non-literate women to achieve literacy.

*Techno-pedagogic and capacity-building support structures:
State Resource Centres and Institutes of People's Education*

The State Resource Centres (SRCs) were conceived to provide academic and technical support to the adult education programmes; they existed even prior to the launch of the NLM. With the rapid expansion of TLCs, PLPs and CEPs, the SRCs have been strengthened and their numbers increased so as to meet the techno-pedagogic support requirements of the emerging literacy movement. The SRCs have sought to develop learning materials, provide training to adult education personnel, and participate in on-going and end-of-programme evaluation of adult education programmes. There are 26 SRCs, entirely funded by NLM, in different states.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (Institute of People's Education)

The scheme of the *Jan Shikshan Sansthan* (JSS), known until recently as *Shramik Vidyaapeeth*, was initially launched as a polyvalent or multifaceted adult education programme aimed at improving the vocational skills and quality of life of workers and their family members. The JSS was conceived as a response to the educational and vocational training needs of adults and young people living in urban and industrial areas—mostly in areas deficient in facilities for education and vocational training. With the emergence of millions of neo-literates from TLCs starting early in the 1990s, and also in view of the rapid pace of economic change and the penetration of IT in rural areas, a need was perceived to enlarge the scope of the JSS to cater to the needs of new vocational and life enrichment skills of neo-literates, as well as the educated unemployed, in the rural areas.

While the initial goal was to have at least one JSS in each district, today there are 156 JSSs, which offer a large number of vocational training programmes from tailoring to computer courses; they turn out more than 1.5 million youth and adults, women being nearly two-thirds, trained in various vocational programmes. At least 25% of them, in accordance with the NLM mandate, have been neo-literates.

Open Basic Education for adults through open schooling

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)—with its counterparts, state open schools, in ten states—offers Open Basic Education (OBE) equivalent to Grades 3, 4 and 8 for children aged 6–14 years who missed schooling, and adults over 14 years of age. The NIOS also offers secondary and senior secondary education for youth aged 14–18 years, as well as for adults, through the open schooling system. There is a clear need for open schooling for both basic education and secondary and senior secondary education. The Constitution of India enjoins the state to provide universal compulsory elementary education to all children up to the age of 14 years, and it has now become a fundamental right of every child. Yet there are already nearly 100 million, out of nearly 280 million children aged 6–18 years, who are out of school. Similarly, India also has the dubious distinction of having one-third of world's illiterates. Therefore, the GoI and the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), when renaming the National Open School as NIOS, spelled out its mandate as providing 'opportunities for continuing education to those who have missed opportunities to complete school and developmental education through courses and programmes of general, life enrichment and vocational education from primary to pre-degree level' (Pant 2004: 22).

OBE acts as an alternative educational programme for both children and adults. For adults, it goes beyond the narrow confines of the classroom due to its a vision of lifelong learning. The OBE programme aims to provide a learning continuum based on graded curriculum, which will ensure the quality of education for children, neo-literates, school dropouts/left outs, and those who have completed non-formal education (Pant 2004).

The levels and scheme of studies offered in the OBE programme are three: A, B and C—where A is equivalent to Standard III of the formal school system; B is equivalent to Standard V; and C is equivalent to Standard VIII. The curricular framework is closely aligned with the curriculum of formal education to enable parity and continued higher education if the NIOS “graduates” choose to study further (NIOS n.d.: 2). The still young OBE programme is implemented through State Open Schools, in alliance with NIOS-accredited NGOs and DLCs.

Policy commitments and goals for adult education

Literacy in 2003 EFA-National Plan of Action:

Continuation of “revamped” directions and re-focus in strategies

In view of EFA goals and targets established in the *Dakar Framework for Action* and clearly aligned with social and gender equity thrusts, the NLM felt it necessary to re-focus some of the strategies it has pursued since 1999. The *EFA-National Plan of Action’s* new “thrust areas” in literacy include (MHRD 2003: 85):

- achievement 75% literacy by 2007;
- a multi-pronged strategy to address regional, social and gender disparities in literacy;
- refocusing TLCs, PLPs and CEPs to increase and strengthen women’s participation, so as to bridge gender gap in literacy;
- encouraging PL and CE districts to pay special attention to the mobilization and organization of women into neo-literate and self-help groups;
- special attention to socially disadvantaged groups, such as scheduled castes/scheduled tribes and women;
- employ a multi-pronged strategy to raise female literacy in 45 districts with female literacy rates of less than 30%;
- special stress on DLCs to highlight specific strategies to undertake literacy and skill upgrading programmes especially for scheduled castes/scheduled tribes and women.

The overriding priority of the NLM in the last few years has been to address the 45 districts with low female-literacy rates, and residual illiteracy in other areas, which broadly coincides with illiteracy concentration among socio-economically disadvantaged sections and

pockets. And it has now been proposed to launch residual illiteracy eradication drives covering all the 150 districts with the lowest literates, targeting 36 million non-literates, beginning on 8 September 2005. Some of the other specific strategies of NLM for the immediate future include:

- launching local, context-specific campaigns for literacy, in accordance with learner needs;
- developing partnerships with NGOs/CSOs;
- strengthening district-level implementation teams (by obtaining services of committed people on secondment basis, from private and government sector);
- convergence with other schemes, including *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, *Mahila Samakhya*, *Nehru Yuva Kendras* and *Swarana Jayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana*; and
- monitoring by *Zilla Saksharata Samiti* (District Literacy Society) or PRIs and other stakeholders.

Long-term commitments and objectives for literacy:

From literate to knowledge societies – Examples from two states

As part of its commitment to make Andhra Pradesh not just a literate state but a knowledge society, the GOI's primary goal since 2000 has been to increase the overall literacy level to over 95% by 2005. Taking stock of the literacy scenario in 2000, and with a view to accelerating the pace to achieve the 2005 literacy target, a statewide (district-wise) massive, community-based literacy campaign, called the *Akshara Sankranti* Programme (ASP), was launched in October 2000. On actual count, the numbers enrolled in the first round itself (6 million) turned out to be more than the initial assessment of 5 million in 2000. Including the subsequent mopping-up rounds that covered the leftouts, dropouts and slow learners of earlier rounds, according to official reports, 11.85 million illiterates were enrolled, 6.45 million of whom were made literate between 2000 and 2003 (NIEPA-UNESCO 2003: 27–28). This programme still continues, seeking to help residual illiterates. Andhra Pradesh is the only state in India that has moved beyond five-year CE envisioned by the NLM to conceptualising an institutional framework for lifelong learning. This it has done by establishing a Community Learning Centre (CLC) in each village—*Gram Panchayat* (local self-government unit). The CLC is

intended to be a nodal point at which all activities of open schooling, libraries and CECs are to converge. The CLC scheme is still in its infancy (NIEPA-UNESCO 2003: 28).

Another state, Madhya Pradesh, has developed its own strategy for promoting literacy, thereby moving away from the standardized national model. The new strategy is grounded on the principle of collectivity and the creation of incentives, as well as the linking of literacy with nascent economic activities—bearing in mind that the literacy achieved in each case will be sustained by means of PLPs and CEPs. This new programme is called the Literacy Improvement Campaign (*Padbna Badbna Andolan*) and is conducted by the society known as *Padbna Badbna Samiti* (PBS), which is a group, consisting of the learners and their instructors (popularly known as *gurujis*) and registered with Block Panchayat Office, which arranges the learning materials for learners and training for *gurujis*. Started in 1999, Madhya Pradesh reported 217,000 PBS, which enrolled 5.18 million learners, 2.98 million of whom passed the external evaluation. Subsequently, 57,000 of the 217,000 PBS (over 90% of them being women's groups) were re-constituted as self-help groups, taking up their literacy consolidation and savings, and moved from the PL to the CE stage. A scheme very similar to PBA was the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), wherein the government guaranteed a school and a teacher within 90 days to any habitation with at least 20 children, not served by a school, that placed a demand with Block Panchayat. As a result of its vigorous efforts through the EGS and PBA, Madhya Pradesh recorded an unprecedented jump in literacy of 20% in 1990s, with the 2001 Census reporting a literacy rate of 64.11%, nearly lifting the state out of its erstwhile educationally backward status. Madhya Pradesh also has the unique distinction of being the first and only state of introducing adult education provisions as an integral part of education as a fundamental right (NIEPA-UNESCO 2003: 118–22).

Language in adult literacy

As a matter of policy, the language of teaching-learning or the medium of instruction in adult literacy programmes has been the learners' mother tongue from the beginning. After the TLC became the dominant approach and strategy, the NLM chose to leave the issue of the

language of instruction to each DLC—due to the learners' language preference, their numbers, the feasibility of developing literacy primers and the ease of conducting classes. In many states there are languages and dialects with or without a written script that are spoken by a sizeable number of people. TLCs, in many cases, have used primers in six or seven languages, in accordance with their demographic composition and the learners' language preferences. In cases where the learners who do not know their regional language – the official language of administration – but are keen to become literate in that language, do get instruction in the regional language. In those districts with large tribal populations that speak a dialect that may or may not have a written script, learners are initiated into literacy by using the first primer in the local dialect and then switching to the regional language in the second and third primers in the TLC. The reading materials used in PL and CE stages are generally in regional languages.

Literacy achievements in India

As noted earlier, the outreach of NLM programmes (TLCs, PLPs and CEPs) so far have covered 596 of the 600 districts; this had led to 118.20 million people having achieved literacy. This perhaps is reflected in the literacy rate reported in the 2001 Census of India. The 2001 census figures also indicate that:

- The literacy rate in India increased from 52.21% in 1991 to 64.84% in 2001. The increase of 12.63% in one decade is the highest in the five decades since India gained independence.
- The increase in female literacy by 14.38% has been far higher than that of males, which was 11.13%.
- The gender gap in literacy has also decreased by more than 3% over the last decade, though it still continues to be high, at 21.50%.
- There are wide variations in the gender gap in literacy across different states, but this gap is likely to be bridged within this decade. The gender gap in literacy in the State of Mizoram is 3.79%, in Meghalaya it is 5.83%, and in Kerala, 6.52%.
- For the first time in last six censuses, there has been a decline in the number of illiterates.

Table 1. Literacy scenario in states and union territories of India, 2001

High-literacy states (>80%)	%	> National-average states (>64.8%)	%	< National-average states (<64.8%)	%
Kerala	90.86	Daman and Die	78.18	Chattisgarh	64.66
Mizoram	88.80	Maharashtra	76.88	Madhya Pradesh	63.74
Lakshadweep	86.66	Himachal Pradesh	76.48	Assam	63.25
Goa	82.01	Tamil Nadu	73.45	Orissa	63.08
Chandigarh	81.94	Tripura	73.19	Meghalaya	62.56
Delhi	81.67	Uttranchal	71.62	Andhra Pradesh	60.47
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	81.30	Manipur	70.53	Rajasthan	60.41
Pondicherry	81.24	Punjab	69.65	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	55.52
		Gujarat	69.14	Uttar Pradesh	56.27
		Sikkim	68.81	Jammu & Kashmir	55.52
		West Bengal	68.64	Arunachal Pradesh	54.34
		Haryana	67.91	Jharkhand	53.56
		Karnataka	66.64	Bihar	47.00
		Nagaland	66.59		

Innovative programmes

While the objectives, the approach and strategies for the adult education movement have been clearly articulated in policy documents and programme guidelines, there was no ambiguity left as regards flexibility to dovetail the implementation modalities and processes as per the contextual specificities of the districts. This was the case regarding TLCs, PLPs and CEPs. The history of the literacy movement in India leaves no doubt about the fact that the TLCs, PLPs and CEPs in each district have witnessed certain special features in respect of their design, implementation and learners' participation. An illustration is provided here to underline the variety and richness in

Indian literacy movement in the matter of approaches to implementation modalities and people's participation.

Continuing Education in the West Godavari District (Andhra Pradesh): Embodiment of a people's programme

West Godavari was one of the premier districts to employ the CES in 1997, having started preparations for doing so already in 1996. West Godavari-CEP was conceived primarily as a people's programme in which community participation, ownership and management of CECs and their activities would be the central features. The role of DLC, the implementing agency at the district level, was seen as that of catalyst and facilitator, conceptualising the critical parameters of people's ownership and the management characteristics of the CES, and facilitating its operation through financial, technical and academic resource support to CECs (ZSS-West Godavari 1997 [in Telegu]). Adopted from state government policy, these critical parameters included:

- Forming a village core group of persons committed to a social cause like literacy and continuing education and to organizing neo-literates to participate in the CEP.
- Forming an association of neo-literates (*Akshar Sangam*) by paying a membership fee of Rs. 10 per annum. Each *Akshar Sangam* seeking a CEC must have at least 250 members. A nine-member education committee must be elected from among *Akshar Sangam* members, five of whom are neo-literates and four, women.
- Collection of a Corpus Fund of not less than Rs. 10,000 for each village. After it has fulfilled this formality, an *Akshar Sangam* can apply to a DLC for a CEC.
- Specific provisions for de-recognition and discontinuation of funding and closing down of any CEC the DLC finds to be unsatisfactory.
- Opening and maintaining a separate bank account for the *Akshar Sangam* which is maintained jointly by the president and the convener (a headmaster of the village primary or middle school), where money can be withdrawn only by decision of the *Akshar Sangam*.

- The village CE committee, not, as elsewhere, the DLC, selects and appoints *Preraks* (Facilitators); each *Prerak* is accountable to its *Akshar Sangam*, which deals directly with the DLC. *Preraks* are not functionaries of a DLC but part-time volunteers.
- An *Akshar Sangam* entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DLC promises to abide by its rules, such as conducting DLC-prescribed weekly activities in CECs, submitting quarterly utilization certificates of funds received from DLCs, etc.
- Each *Akshar Sangam* is allowed by its DLC to organize activities of their choosing for one week each month after having conducted DLC-prescribed activities for first three weeks.

The NLM has given DLCs the flexibility to devise CEPs and activities in harmony with local requirements. The West Godavari DLC passed that flexibility, in turn, to the *Akshar Sangam*, and thus went beyond the usual formalities, forging a partnership in CE with the community not only in terms of the ownership and management of the CEC but also in terms of designing its programmes (Mathew 2002).

Continuing education activities in the West Godavari District

Based on NLM guidelines, the West Godavari DLC devised five types of programmes and activities (see Table 2), some of which were compulsory and others of which optional.

Indian adult education experience: Relevance to quality education

The objectives and strategies adopted in the adult education programmes in India (TLCs, PLPs and CEPs) adequately address many of the key questions slated for consideration in this Policy Dialogue. The guidelines provided by the NLM, except in such matters as literacy achievement levels and expenditures, are basically suggestive and leave a great deal of flexibility for bodies to dovetail with local needs. For instance, the NLM programmes focus on the socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged, such as women and the scheduled castes/scheduled tribes. The entire motivation behind and mobilization strategy employed in the TLCs, the organization of neo-literates into self-help groups, youth groups, etc., the PLPs, and the literacy-linked awareness, skill-upgrading and improvement pro-

Table 2. Continuing education in the West Godavari District

Educational programmes	
i) Library and Reading Room	Commenced in 1997; Library and Reading Room activities continue to date in all 1,095 CECs.
ii) Literacy classes	As part of the CECs' regular activities, 2,910 sub-centres were opened to teach basic literacy to non-literates. These continued until 2000, when a second-generation TLC, <i>Akshar Sankeranti</i> , was initiated and for which the CEC volunteers (<i>Preraks</i>) were re-deployed for monitoring.
iii) <i>Varam Varam Vignanam</i> (VVV)	The VVV is a weekly lecture-cum-discussion programme on development issues by development departments. It was conducted for 108 weeks in all CECs until September 2000.
Awareness programmes	Publication of a neo-literate broadsheet, a biweekly newsletter, and distributing it to every CEC, was part of awareness programmes. Known as <i>Akshar Deeksha</i> , the four-page neo-literate newsletter had a circulation of over 5,000. The pride of WG-CE, <i>Akshar Deeksha</i> was the most effective means of communication and dialogue between CECs and DLCs. It received at least 100 letters every two weeks from readers and <i>Preraks</i> . The DLC had intended to make the newsletter self-financing by pricing it, but was unable to acquire subsidies necessary to fund the transition period.
Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIP)	QLIPs included activities on food and nutrition, health, hygiene and sanitation, expenditure and savings.
Skill Development Programmes (SDPs)	SDPs introduced in 830 CECs included preparation of pain balms, detergents, soaps, basket weaving, lace making, embroidery, candle making.
Recreational programmes	Sports and games and cultural competitions were organized, and national days and events were celebrated, by <i>Akshar Sangams</i> wholly through community initiative and contributions.

grammes in CE, are aimed at addressing the needs and interests of these special focus groups.

The planning and implementation of adult education programmes is calculated to involve various government and non-government development, extension and welfare agencies, including local self-governing bodies and other social resources, such as teachers. Convergence is a central feature of the PL and CE stages.

Special agencies, such as the 26 SRCs at the state level and the 156 JSSs at the district level, have been put in place to provide technopedagogic and training support to adult education programmes and their personnel. The express mandate of each JSS is to provide vocational and skill-upgrading programmes for neo-literates, as well as for educated, unemployed youth and illiterates. This takes place in addition to the academic and technical support provided by the DLC in implementing the adult education programmes.

Relevant content and availability of learning resources is a *sine qua non* for a nationwide programme such as the TLCs, PLPs and CEPs. The NLM has remained steadfast in its emphasis on the relevance of learning material content to meeting the objectives of national development and to the learners' life needs.

A key mandate of the DLCs and the SRCs has been to develop, produce and distribute learning materials, in sufficient quantity and prior to the commencement of any given training and teaching-learning process. This also applies to the learning materials used in the PL and CE phases.

On-going evaluation is seen as critical not only so that learners and organizers can know the extent of learning progress but also in the interest of programme efficiency. Besides the monthly progress report provided to the state by each district, there is also a concurrent evaluation and an external evaluation of the TLCs, PLPs and CEPs.

One of the reasons for the unprecedented response to these programmes on the part of the socially disadvantaged, especially women and the scheduled castes/scheduled tribes, has been the social consensus on desirability of their participation (in a social milieu not altogether conducive for social equity) which the literacy organizers managed to bring about, and the sense of value and dignity the disadvantaged experience in working with the volunteers and other full-time workers. The kind of alienation that children of socio-economi-

cally disadvantaged households experience in formal schools which leads to their dropping out would not be generally found in adult education programmes.

Conclusion

Adult education, all around the world, has been a marginal concern in policymaking and funding within education systems. Adult education in India has not been too different, with the exception of the NLM. However, a combination of fortuitous factors—such as the high policy priority given to adult literacy, the NLM's understanding of adult education not just as the 3R's but as an instrument of critical awareness, empowerment and improvement through collective action by the neo-literates, and the adoption of the TLC as the national approach for eradicating illiteracy—helped to convert what otherwise would have been a routine government programme into a mass movement.

A great deal of credit should be given to the NLM for having placed adult education on the centre stage of education policy discourse, for having made it a priority, and for rapidly expanding the TLCs to cover every part of India, and for following it with PL and CE phases.

The unparalleled 13% increase in the literacy rate within a decade was undoubtedly due partly to NLM endeavours, in partnership with the states and districts. But there are other facets of the adult education movement that are not so well acknowledged. One is the contribution of the literacy movement—with its larger agenda of raising the awareness of, empowering and improving the conditions of illiterates—to igniting learners' hopes and aspirations, and giving them a sense of self-dignity and value through their participation in literacy. This created a positive environment for literacy and education which made the UNESCO's EFA Decade flourish with an ease that would have been unthinkable without the literacy movement. The neo-literates from the adult education movement became the best assurance for enrolment and retention of their children in school. Social mobilization and motivation as the starters, community involvement as the anchor of externally funded primary education programmes in the 1990s, and the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, the national

campaign for universal elementary education since 2000, are the legacies of the literacy movement.

The policy perspective, strategies of programme implementation, the content of learning materials and its teaching-learning processes have all been aligned closely with the learners' interests, needs and aspirations in the TLC, PL and CE stages. The backup support for the movement provided through a clearly orchestrated monitoring and evaluation system and the techno-pedagogic resource network, such as SRCs and JSSs, has contributed greatly to the success thus far. The graduation of the movement through PLPs and CEPs under the banner of lifelong learning and the creation of a learning society, as well as a variety of programmes created in order to meet the needs of different groups, all have helped to keep the movement alive as a learning continuum both for the organizers and the participants.

Despite such positive contributions, however, it must also be admitted that the presence of nearly one-third of world's adult illiterates in India is a reminder of both the unfinished task and the need to fine-tune the strategies to reach the un-reached. The NLM's strategies are now geared to address the remaining tasks.

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Mexico's National Adult Education Programme

Luz-María Castro-Mussot and María Luisa de Anda

This chapter focuses on basic education for youth and adults in Mexico, which is legally defined in Article 43 of the *General Law for Education*. The article reads: 'Adult education targets individuals who are 15 years of age or older who have either not yet begun or not concluded basic education, and includes literacy, primary and secondary education, [. . .] with the appropriate characteristics for the particular population' (SEP 1993: art. 43). This definition was established to guarantee the provision of such education, since in Article 3 the *Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico* establishes a nine-grade basic education as compulsory and free of charge (SEP 1917; 2005).

Context

Mexico's official name is United States of Mexico, and it covers territory of 1,967,183 sq. km. As reported in 2000 by the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI) in the *12th General Population and Housing Census* (INEGI 2001), 25% of the population is concentrated in a megalopolis and two metropolises; 35% lives in more than 500 medium-sized cities, and the remaining 40% is spread throughout the country, in almost 177,000 little towns and villages. More than 20% of the population is said to be living in extreme poverty.

According to the second counting of population and housing conducted by INEGI in 2005, the country had 103 million people,

2 million less than expected because of several problems, including migration. Domestic and international migration affects Mexico's economic and social processes. Currently, 9.9 million emigrants, who were born in Mexico, are in the USA; 390,000 persons have migrated each year since 2000.

One of the largest problems Mexico faces is structural, social and economic inequality (Pieck 2001). On the basis of data from INEGI and the National Population Council (CONAPO), a reliable poverty indicator is the distribution of income, which presents a strong concentration in the richest 10% of the population. The poverty situation is also reflected in other factors: educational levels, access to basic services, such as drainage, water and electricity, the characteristics and conditions of homes, etc. Poor families are generally larger and tend to show a greater presence of children under the age of 12. The number of children who attend school is lower in these homes, whereas the proportion of working adolescents is larger. Furthermore, heads of poor households have lower educational levels, and poverty tends to be greater in homes with young family heads (see also SEDESOL 2002)

Also according to INEGI and CONAPO (1999; Corona and Tuirán 2001), access to educational opportunities have been unequal for different population groups. A difference of more than ten years of schooling can be observed between the lowest and the highest income decile. It is also possible to see the educational inequity between generations: higher schooling of youth than of adults. There are still differences between the levels of schooling reached by men and women, and among the country's regions. Such is the case with the southern states, in which more than 14% of the population characterizes itself as being "without instruction".

The "educational deficit"

Mexico can be said to comprise three countries demarcated by educational levels: About one-third is composed of youth going to school (from kindergarten to postgraduate programmes). Another third has at least a basic level of education, above Grade 9. But the last third, composed of 30.1 million people aged 15 years or older, has no basic education, and this figure is increasing each year despite the efforts of public policies and private education services.

Within the uneducated group, a fourth Mexico exists; it is composed of multi-ethnic indigenous groups who are in the most marginalized educative situation because it has been very difficult to construct relevant educational programmes which respect their cultures and at the same time empower people and communities. The indigenous population is located in 24 states and concentrated in 56 ethnic groups, mainly in the country's central and southern areas. These groups have a linguistic diversity of 62 languages and more than 130 linguistic variations.

This educational disadvantage in adult education is called the "educational deficit" or "educational backlog". The term "deficit" is not derogatory towards the individuals who have not completed basic education; rather, the term is appropriate since it refers to a task on the part of the education system: to eliminate the deficit and achieve a situation in which all individuals have acquired basic education (CONEVt 2006).

INEGI's second population and housing count in 2005 reported that Mexico's illiteracy rate was 8.4%, thus 5.7 million people. There were 9.8 million people without primary level education, and 14.6 million without secondary level education (Grade 9). In economic terms, it is commonly said that most of these people work in the informal sector, and many enterprises do not want to invest in training for these workers because they claim it is worthless. While nationally in 2005 the percentage of illiterate males was approximately 6.8%, for the indigenous population it exceeded 30%, and about 40% of indigenous women were illiterate, compared to a national average of nearly 10%.

If levels are differentiated in the groups with an educational deficit, women prove to have lower educational levels than men. While in 2005 women represented 61% of illiterate adults, men represented 47% of adults who had not completed secondary education. As for age, although 24% of people with an educational deficit were younger than 30 and 43% were younger than 40, the older groups showed greater educational deficits—reaching 71% for those aged 55–59, 78% for those aged 60–64, and 85% for those aged 65 or more. While two-thirds of illiterates were over 40, 57% of adults who had not concluded secondary education were younger than 40.

Given the high concentration of adults with high levels of illiteracy and a lack of completed basic education, one could say that the potential demand for basic education would come from this group. Another important point is that two-thirds of the potential demand for basic education comes from urban groups, another third from housewives. The potential demand for secondary education comes mainly from youth.

The demand for basic education from people who either never entered or were expelled from the school system is similar to that from students registered in initial education. This high demand from adults for basic education is even more significant when one considers that the size and diversity of this educational deficit presents a tough test for accreditation processes for basic education (CONEVyT 2006).

Mexico's Educational Model for Life and Work (MEVyT)

In Mexico the Secretariat for Public Education (SEP) has given the main responsibility for basic education for youth and adults (SEP 1975), as well as their certification (SEP 2005a–c), to the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA). It was created in 31 August 1981 (SEP 1981) as a decentralized organ of the federal government to provide literacy, primary and secondary education services, as well as non-formal training for work and community education to the population aged 15 and older who has not had access to or has been left out of the regular education system. From the outset, INEA has been charged with defining educational models to address the educational deficit, carrying out research on the matter, creating and distributing teaching materials, and recognizing and certifying basic education studies for adults and youth (SEP 1986: art. 2).

In 1995, INEA began a process to make its educational proposals more flexible and specifically to provide services to the most marginalized groups, such as the residents of rural areas, indigenous people, working mothers and the migrant population (INEA 1995). Thus INEA designed the Educational Model for Life (MEV) (INEA 1999, 2000a–c), implemented special programmes and began its decentralization process. In 2001, INEA launched the MEV, but because it subsequently gave a greater emphasis to the work dimension, it changed the model's name to the Educational Model for Life and Work (MEVyT) (SEP 2002; CONEVyT 2000a). Within this

model, basic education for adults and youth is considered the best way to promote literacy and continuing education (INEA 2005a–b).

The MEVyT was designed as an educational proposal that seeks to offer education that is more relevant to the conditions in which those with the aforementioned educational deficit live and work, in addition to representing an option for the rest of the population that wishes to continue learning. The main purpose of the MEVyT is to offer adults and youth educational options that bear on their needs and interests and are aimed at developing their competencies so that they can achieve better personal, family, working conditions (SEP 2005a–c).

This model accords with social, political, economic and technological transformations, as well as with international innovations and commitments, research and specific experiences and developments in the field of adult learning. In doing so, it makes use of UNESCO's concepts of learning to learn, learning to understand, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live with others (Delors 1996). It focuses on literacy and numeracy in order to help adults to fulfil their basic learning needs and to develop key competencies and basic skills.

Reading and writing, numeracy, oral expression and contextual understanding are considered to be essential learning tools. This is why the basic content of the MEVyT aims to foster the development of communication, problem-solving, reasoning and participation skills; they enable adults and youth to live and work with dignity, to continue to learn, to profit from job opportunities, to take care of their own and their family's health, to make their own fundamental decisions, and to become aware citizens. The MEVyT also takes account of various cross-cutting issues, including human rights, attitudes, values and ethics, human development, identity and diversity, gender, and sense of future. It is designed so that learners will:

- engage in a meaningful education, one that responds to their needs and interests and the country requirements;
- integrate competencies to improve their performance in different aspects of their lives;
- strengthen attitudes and values to enhance their personal, family and social development; and
- acquire skills that enable them to continue learning throughout their lives.

In this model adults and youth are considered persons who possess knowledge, competencies, experiences, skills and values on which they base new learning. They are human beings who are capable of learning from their experiences and errors, and from others, in different circumstances throughout their lives.

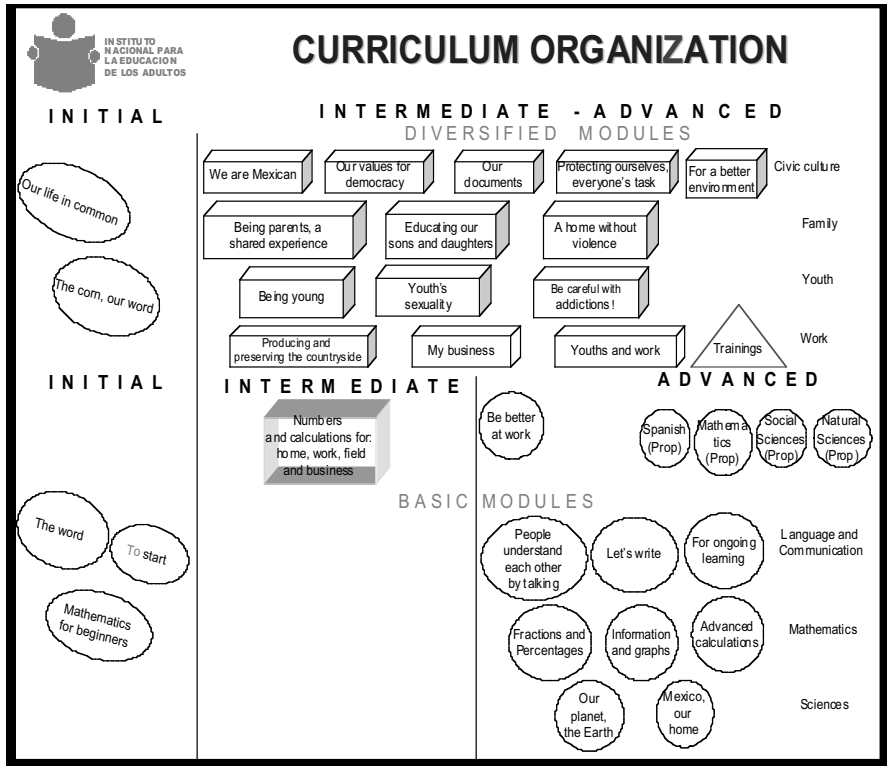
One of the chief aims of the MEVyT's curriculum is to stimulate the skills required for lifelong learning; hence, an attempt has been made to associate the acquisition of knowledge with the use of intellectual and reflective skills (INEA 2005s). The MEVyT's methodological arrangement, strategies, contents and materials give priority to adult life situations, which are used as starting points and are converted into educational situations. Additionally, what is undertaken is an education that contributes to strengthening the learner's dignity, his/her harmonious coexistence with his/her environment, respect for him/herself, others, and respect for the plurality of ideas, freedom of expression, the common good, and his/her inclusion in various social spheres.

According to the MEVyT, learning is a continuous social and cultural process that is inherent in all of us and is achieved through one's interaction with others and one's context. Deliberate learning is a process of reflection and reconstruction centred on experiences, knowledge and situations which allow one to understand reality and act on and within it, transforming it and oneself. The MEVyT proposes the treatment of contents and subjects derived from the learner's experiences, skills and knowledge; it places greater emphasis on learning than on teaching, because it recognizes that, throughout their lives, each person develops the ability to learn, and that each person lives that experience differently.

The construction of new learning is mediated by the individual's permanent activity, when the learner uses and applies learning contents. This orientation leans towards changes in learning, knowing, thinking, feeling, doing, acting and coexisting. Similarly, the MEVyT recognizes the diversity of educational practices. Consequently, it does not fix a singular and homogeneous method for all learning groups but seeks to diversify existing practices and accept that they are based on the people's own demands and characteristics.

MEVyT for the Spanish-speaking population

The MEVyT for the Spanish-speaking population (see 'Curriculum Organization' below) is modular, diversified, flexible, open, and integrated, and has well-defined educational objectives. Each of its modules integrates a collection of contents and activities in subject matter that bears on the learners' lives and is oriented towards the development of their competencies.



Modules are defined in terms of: fundamental or basic areas of knowledge (language and communication, mathematics, and sciences); priority sectors of the population, such as youth and women; and the learning interests of these populations focused on "hard" topics for life and work, such as family, children, health, rights and risks. The latter two are called diversified modules. In addition, there are regional modules that are developed by different states' experts in view of the needs peculiar to their state or region. Sometimes it is found that a regional module could be fruitfully employed nationally and thus should be tested in other states.

Modules are organized into three levels:

1. The *initial level* is for those who need or wish to learn to read and write, and basic mathematics, or need to develop these qualifications further to use them in a functional manner.
2. The *intermediate level* is for those who already know how to read and write, have a basic knowledge of mathematics, and wish to continue learning or to certify their primary education.
3. The *advanced level* is for those who wish to continue learning and strengthen some areas of knowledge or have their secondary education certified.

In addition, modules are being developed under the following headings: *Life and Health; Water; The Richness of Our Land; Our Mountain* (regional); *Citizenship: Let's Participate Actively; When We Face Delinquency – Justice within Our Reach; My Legal Defence; Life in Confinement* (regional); *Let's Learn from Conflicts; The Sinaloa I Wish* (regional); *Your Home, My Job* (on domestic work); *Teaching to Be; Growing Up: From 0 to 18 Months of Age; Growing Up: From 18 months to 3 Years of Age; Growing Up: From 3 to 6 Years of Age; Pregnancy: A Life Project; Out of Drugs; Our Life on the Border: We are Migrants* (regional); *Emotional Health; Do It for Your Procreative and Sexual Health; Credit for Your Business; Beating the Competition; Attitudes on Work; Organizing Your Pocketbook and Family's Finances; Maintaining, Upgrading and Fixing a Computer* (INEA 2005a).

To verify results, assessment of learning is considered a formative, permanent, and continuous process, which allows adults and youth to identify their progress and limitations in learning. Assessment for accreditation and certification purposes is conducted by people external to the educational process; it is a “third party” process to a certain extent. The final assessment, accreditation and certification depend on having fulfilled the following guidelines, which the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP 2005a) has specified:

1. Learners should receive credit for each MEVyT module after the evidence s/he presents in his/her educational materials has been reviewed and found to meet all requirements, and after having passed the exam for that particular module.
2. To take the module exam, the learner's materials for the entire module must have been reviewed and found to meet all

requirements, thus recognizing the young person's or adult's efforts during the learning process regarding the module in question.

3. To receive certification for primary education, learners must successfully complete the basic modules at the intermediate level and two diversified modules.
4. To receive certification for primary education, learners must successfully complete the basic modules at the advanced level and four diversified modules.

There is also a diagnostic exam that allows each learner to be placed at the level the best suits his/her abilities or to find out whether s/he has the knowledge and skills that correspond to basic education. If the person passes the sections of the diagnostic exam, s/he can receive credit for one or more modules or finish primary or secondary education and receive the corresponding certificate. This exam is only applied if the candidate can read and write. The diagnostic exam is applied in five sessions:

1. Language, communication and mathematics at the initial level are evaluated.
2. Language, communication and science at the intermediate level (primary) are evaluated.
3. Mathematics and science at the intermediate level (primary) are evaluated.
4. Language, communication and science at the advanced level (secondary) are evaluated.
5. Mathematics and science at the advanced level (secondary) are evaluated.

The MEVyT's operational settings

INEA offers the MEVyT for the Spanish-speaking population in different operational settings: study circles, meeting places and community halls. A multi-module and multi-level study circle is made up of students who get together to work with a facilitator at a time mutually agreed upon, regardless of differences in the students' levels or modules. However, a youth or adult can also opt to study independently. Adults and youth who study on their own take the exams once they have concluded the material for a given module.

A meeting place is a locale where various study circles gather and where users register, take exams and receive their certificates. A meeting place is overseen by a person who is charged with: promoting the incorporation of students; encouraging the continuing association, training or vocational education, and technical-pedagogical orientation of the facilitators; distributing educational materials; and dispensing bonuses to facilitators, according to the results they have achieved.

A community hall is an educational space where opportunities are offered for multiple learning, integral vocational education and vocational education for work. They recover the community spirit of the educational process and make use of new ICTs. In these halls, various means are used to access knowledge: direct learning facilitation with printed educational materials; computer technology, the Internet, digital libraries, the CONEVyT (National Council on Education for Life and Work) educational portal; and audio-visual aids, such as television through EDUSAT, and video libraries. By 2005, more than 2,300 community halls had been established throughout the country (CONEVt 2002b).

The purpose of community halls is to broaden the provision of basic education to the population lacking it by taking advantage of technological media in learning processes and opening options to access information and to innovative educational resources. At the same time, community halls seek to attract people within the community who are not yet actively involved in basic education in order to introduce them to the pedagogical use of new technologies and promote collective learning. A community hall offers education and training programmes, while not being limited to INEA's basic education programmes; they also participate in the CONEVyT project to coordinate diverse services, including guidance regarding self-employment and micro-loans, distance health, certification of vocational qualifications, and open upper-secondary education.

In the interest of fostering continuing learning, the community hall educational project seeks to combine direct education with distance education, group and individual work, and the search for information on the Internet. New technologies offer multiple opportunities to search, interpret and manage information, participate more actively in current formative processes, and set new forms of learning into motion, as well as to relate to, communicate, and solve some problems or needs from personal, labour, family, or social life.

One of the challenges of the community hall educational project is to help people to gain the skills necessary to learn with ICTs and to apply them in their daily lives and working environments. Community halls also mount activities that encourage people to cooperate with others and to participate in the halls' educational projects, and that strengthen non-formal education, which contributes to life-long learning.

Services for Mexican Communities Abroad

INEA, in coordination with SEP's General Directorate for International Relations and the Mexican Communities Abroad Programme under the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, delivers literacy, primary and secondary education services through the traditional open teaching system and the e-Mexico Community Halls Project in parts of the USA. The purpose of the programme is to contribute to the integration of Mexican citizens abroad through Spanish learning, as an additional bridge to the English language.

This service is aimed at Mexican and non-Mexican adults and youth who are at least 15 years old and are interested in: obtaining a primary or secondary education certificate, gaining more skills for their job, increasing fluency in their mother tongue, making learning a second language easier, stimulating their self-esteem and pride in their origins and culture, or supporting their children by example. The educational service abroad is provided in educational groups, in community halls and to independent students, with the support of a collaborating portal.

In the first case, people can learn and obtain a study certificate with the support of a trained facilitator. In group settings with the facilitator's guidance, students learn by exchanging ideas, experiences and knowledge, as well as with printed materials, in facilities set up by the organization that is collaborating with INEA.

In community halls youth and adults study with the support of learning facilitators, ICTs, the Internet, videos and education via satellite. Established or adapted by organizations abroad and equipped with computers, televisions, video recorders and the necessary furniture, these halls provided educational opportunities to Mexican communities and communities of Mexican origin abroad. In 2005, there were 78 community halls in different US cities.

Collaborating portals are the responsibility of public or private organizations abroad that host the contents of the CONEVyT portal in order to improve access for more people to the Internet and to online study. This portal is a resource for and source of academic and cultural collaboration, since the institutions involved contribute content to the portal.

As for independent students, they take exams once they have finished learning the material in a given MEVyT module. Those who choose this form of service can go to any community hall or educational group to receive learning assistance or guidance about taking the exams and to fill out any necessary documents.

Educational actions abroad are carried out in collaboration with consulates and public, private and non-governmental organizations abroad, which sign an agreement that defines the educational project, activities, commitments, responsibilities and the resources each institution will contribute. For such actions, INEA contributes the model and the educational material, the accreditation and certification services for primary and secondary education, and vocational education strategies for facilitators, instructors, administration staff and those responsible for community halls. For its part, the organization abroad provides facilities, furniture, computers, TVs, video recorders, DVDs, media libraries, Spanish-language libraries, furniture and, where appropriate, servers and the necessary equipment to host a portal, print books or record CDs. Likewise, it contributes facilitators, administrators and those responsible for the community halls. In short, the organization abroad provides the necessary human, financial and infrastructural resources, which are purchased if so required—especially if it decides to include other educational actions, such as health, communication or vocational education.

MEVyT online

To facilitate access for youth and adults to the educational materials, as well as to promote the users' training in new ICTs, digital versions of 17 printed modules were also prepared, making them easier to use and distribute on a CD or the Internet. Moreover, on the CONVEyT portal, it is possible to participate in 44 courses, which correspond to basic and diversified modules that belong to all axes of the three learning levels mentioned above.

MEVyT for the indigenous population

A special proposal has been designed for the education of the indigenous population. It includes the same educational levels as MEVyT for Spanish-speakers but with different learning pathways. This proposal employs an intercultural approach which incorporates bilingual pedagogical strategies and allows users to choose and move through different levels and modules and thereby develop processes of literacy and educational continuity.

The MEVyT for the indigenous population has two pathways by which members of particular ethnic groups can gain greater comprehension and increase their learning skills. One is the Indigenous Bilingual Integrated MEVyT (MIBI), which is designed for people who have an intermediate or efficient level of bilingualism (coordinated). Within the MIBI, the initial phase regards simultaneous bilingual work—in the indigenous mother language and in Spanish—as equivalent. Its focus on literacy is therefore more complex than the learning process aimed at Spanish-speakers (for they are working in only one language) but more suitable to ensure the efficiency of the educational process.

The second pathway for ethnic groups is the Indigenous Bilingual MEVyT with Spanish as a Second Language (MIBES). It targets monolingual people who are determined, by means of INEA instruments, to have little or no familiarity with Spanish. In the initial phase, MIBES focuses on developing literacy in the indigenous mother tongue, regarding Spanish as a second language. At first, Spanish is introduced orally. For these populations, simultaneous bilingual work on literacy, as in the MIBE pathway, would be inefficient and very demanding for its users. And that is why written Spanish is taught after the oral form.

Two new MIBES modules are already in operation in Tsetal and Raramuri, while the remaining ethnic groups are served with older materials. In addition, 15 MIBI and MIBES modules are being printed and another 27 are to be developed by 2006.

For the indigenous population, the MEVyT also suggests six additional strategies:

1. Continue working on the local development of modules and educational materials for both literacy pathways at the initial level.

2. Use a bilingual intercultural approach to contents and educational materials for the intermediate and advanced levels.
3. Revise basic modules for Spanish-speakers, adapting them to the respective indigenous culture and/or language.
4. Design diversified modules that cover the needs and interests of different ethnic groups.
5. Reintroduce MEVYT diversified modules as open and elective modules.
6. Develop dictionaries and glossaries appropriate to the respective indigenous language.

In addition to traditional services, indigenous groups also receive educational services through MIBI and MIBES. The initial levels of MIBI and MIBES foster in youth and adults the development of basic competencies in reading and writing (in their mother tongue and in Spanish), as well as in mathematics, to enable them to cope with diverse situations, interact in different contexts and continue learning. To date, these services are provided in 14 states to indigenous groups in the rural sector, even though there are also numerous indigenous groups in urban areas.

INEA's delivery system

As noted in the Automated Follow-up and Accreditation System (SASA), INEA has the mandate to serve about 3 million people each year nationwide, an average of 250,000 per month, with around 120,000 learning facilitators. INEA provides its services in the 32 Mexican states through institutes created as a result of decentralization or through state delegations that still depend on central offices. Against the backdrop of decentralization, INEA has continued to operate centrally—exercising its regulatory function, producing materials, conducting follow-ups, assessments and registration, processing information, and distributing resources at the central level—so that INEA's services within the states refer to a common working framework.

To support its delivery system, INEA designed and maintains SASA, which makes possible the systematization of statistical information derived from the services provided, while supporting the provision of diverse educational opportunities. SASA, which is used

throughout the country, both provides information to participants on their progress and optimizes the administration of services.

Educational services are provided and managed by state institutes or delegations. They operate and follow-up on the open educational services for adults and youth, recognize and certify learning, develop training processes for staff and support persons, create regionally relevant content and materials, agree on actions at the state and local levels to promote educational services, organize volunteers to provide service to adults, and integrate the state educational information system for adults through SASA.

There are 450 zone coordinators in the main municipalities, cities, towns, or subdivisions; they are responsible for coordinating and operating the educational services, as well as facilitating learning and training staff members in circumscribed regions according to service needs.

There are also 4,500 micro-regions, the responsibility for which is divided geographically among zone coordination offices. The offices are charged with enlisting volunteer facilitators, promoting the participation of different sectors of society in the education of adults and youth, and coordinating operations. Each office is headed by an educational technician, who, in the case of indigenous areas, must be fluent in the relevant indigenous languages. The educational technician must plan, negotiate, and set up operational units; promote the participation of the public, private and social sectors; distribute and supply educational materials; update SASA; and train the support persons and supervise their performance in the municipalities, cities, towns, or subdivisions assigned to them.

To monitor learning and competency development, INEA also has 14,000 application points where adults and youth take about 600,000 module exams monthly. Assessment is carried out by applying national standardized tests, which change every month. Because exam marking is computerized, scores, reports and certificates can be automatically delivered.

The solidarity network is made up of local organizations and volunteers who act as promoters and facilitators, provide services, enlist new students, and provide direct and solidarity service to adults and youth involved in the educational process. Volunteers participate as support persons, without remuneration or contract.

INEA works under the principle of social solidarity, which is why it establishes collaboration agreements with other institutions, organizations and private individuals to develop educational activities at the local level by borrowing facilities, such as schools, hospitals, cultural centres, companies, public offices, churches and private residences.

Likewise, INEA works with volunteers who act as facilitators. They have achieved a variety of schooling levels, ranging from upper secondary education (which is true of the majority) to higher education degrees (in some cases). Some of the volunteer staff carries out these activities as the part of their compulsory social service and do not receive remuneration, while other facilitators receive a monetary bonus.

The support personnel

Personnel who lend support to INEA's operations include:

Basic education facilitator: He/she is to motivate student participation in the programme, facilitate their learning through educational activities, and provide continuous guidance, whether in a group or individually. He/she also participates in the pedagogical, vocational education, and skills-upgrading programmes.

Bilingual facilitator: He/she is charged with attracting people from his/her ethnic group and speak his/her language, and conduct educational activities to ease the new students' learning in the study circle or individually. He/she also participates in the pedagogical, vocational education, and skills-upgrading programmes.

Educational counsellor: His/her function is to motivate 10–14-year-old students in primary education, promote educational activities and facilitate and guide group or individual learning. He/she also participates in training and skills-upgrading programmes.

Meeting place coordinator: His/her duties include the organization of study circles in physical spaces, where people can receive information, as well as educational and assessment services. In addition, s/he coordinates the performance of the services offered at the meeting place, delivers services, and acts as a liaison to provide any INEA supplies necessary.

Basic education promoter: His/her function is to organize the educational services provided in rural areas with dispersed populations, encourage students and facilitators to participate in study circles, to

arrange for facilities for learning facilitation or exam taking, and to coordinate the provision of educational materials to facilitators and students, and oversee document processing.

Community promoter: His/her duties involve promoting and disseminating educational services outside the community hall, enlisting facilitators and students, supporting the cooperation between the community hall and the institutional operational structure, as well as developing social and productive educational projects that promise to benefit the community hall users.

Bilingual promoter: His/her function is to enlist indigenous students and bilingual facilitators, to arrange for learning and exam facilities, to support the distribution of educational materials, and to receive and process students' official documents. He/she is a liaison with the institutional staff and connects them with indigenous community authorities to promote educational activities.

Bilingual support person: He/she is charged with carrying out translation and language-use educational actions, as well as interpreting for cultural comprehension in study circles in which Spanish-speaking facilitators and indigenous students interact.

Technical support person: He/she is to collaborate on the organization of activities in the community hall with a view to integrating the use of technologies into students', facilitators' and institutional figures' learning. He/she is responsible for guaranteeing the maximum integrity, performance and use of the equipment. Technical support persons can also enlist aid from social service workers and other volunteers in order to carry out the educational and non-formal activities.

Zone coordination office support personnel

Many support personnel aid the zone coordination office in performing its responsibilities, including:

Liaison promoter: His/her duties involve coordinating the necessary planning, educational services provision, administration, accreditation, and/or IT processes that impact on the operation and quality of services.

Support promoter: His/her function is to participate in the evaluation, accreditation, academic and administrative processes, among others, that will permit contribution to the certification of students' achievements.

Examiner: This person works for a zone coordination office on a temporary basis. He/she facilitates the certification process. He/she maintains control, discipline, and order during evidence reviews and examinations, and guarantees the reliability of results and compliance with established regulations.

Examiner supervisors: He/she coordinate and supervises a group of examiners during examinations, guaranteeing the correct use of materials and compliance with the established regulations and policies.

There are bonuses to motivate meeting-place, community-hall and study-circle support staff, as well as examiner supervisors, examiners, promoters and other support persons. There are also performance incentives for educational technicians and pay based on results from the meeting places, as well as for support persons and social service providers who participate in the educational process for youth and adults. To earn a performance incentive, an educational technician must fulfil objectives regarding service, accredited modules, and users who complete a level.

Challenges

Some of the challenges that face Mexico regarding adult and youth education are:

- Keeping the MEVyT alive when government changes.
- Reviewing the model so that changes respond to emergent and essential needs of people from different groups and regions.
- Expanding work-related education. Especially at the lower levels of qualification the goal should be reach full levels of basic education. The context for learning at this low level should be on key transferable skills, which enable better participation in social and work activities.
- Developing distance learning using IT. This aspect involves: re-engineering of the model; re-designing content in view of new communication languages; promoting access to an open knowledge society and to lifelong learning; and closing the digital gap between richest and poorest communities and regions by promoting technological literacy for the most marginalized groups.

- Generating new, different and diversified models for support person training, using IT so that they can become “professionalized”.

Trends

Based on the foregoing, a number of trends can be observed:

- The Mexican Government will continue directing almost all education provision to adults and youth through INEA.
- The quest to improve models and materials to serve those with an educational deficit will be on-going, so that they will be more relevant to the different target populations, particularly those that are marginalized and have more diverse characteristics than the rest of the population that will potentially require INEA's services.
- Research findings on education for adults and youth that permit the users of INEA's services to achieve meaningful learning will be disseminated.
- The permanent updating of materials corresponding to MEVyT modules will continue so that they are relevant to a given population.
- New modules will be created to respond to specific requests based on regional needs or specific problems in a certain period such as those concerning ICTs.
- Education for adults and youth will focus its actions both on young people aged 15–34 years who are soon to conclude their basic education, and the most marginalized social groups, especially indigenous people and migrants. Within the institution, services directed to the general population and to specific groups will continue to co-exist.
- Literacy of the indigenous population will guarantee that their starting point is their mother language and that their culture will be respected.
- A closer connection between educational and other social and/or economic development actions will be promoted.
- In addition to the production of printed materials, the use of ICTs will be intensified, both in the educational practice of youth and adults and in training facilitators and support persons, in order better to serve a growing number of users both

in the provision of materials and in the use of an alternative form of assessment.

- In the training of institutional staff and support persons, self-administered materials that support both workshop processes and training will be produced with the assistance of ICTs.
- The decentralization of education will conclude in the remaining states.
- A higher level of funding will be negotiated to support public policies on basic education for adults and youth. Most resources will continue to be provided by the federal government, even if operations are decentralized to the states.
- Given the budgetary limitations of the federal and state governments, funding from the international banking sector will be needed for priority programmes and project.

Conclusion

In general it can be said that seeking to redress the educational deficits in Mexico is not only an ethical but also an economic, political and social challenge for the country. No democracy is politically sustainable without equally balanced and democratic social structures, without opportunities available and accessible to all. Basic education for life, work and citizenship is one important pathway to achieving such equality and accessibility. But in a country like Mexico this kind of action needs financial support: Mexico will not be able to attend sufficiently to this problem without international support. It is not a matter of expanding the nation's budget but rather of making investments in the education of human beings and communities.

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South Africa's National Adult Education Programme

Morongwa Ramarumo and Vernon Jacobs

This chapter addresses adult and youth education (AYE) in South Africa with regard to formal programmes on the one hand and non-formal approaches on the other.

Prior to 1994, the South African education system was racially segregated and did not provide the Black majority with quality education. The consequence today is a legacy of approximately eight million adults who lack a sound basic education. This has meant that few citizens have had access to an educational foundation that enabled further learning, quality employment opportunities or even full and active participation in the economic, social and political life of the country.

In this pre-democracy period, the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programmes consisted mainly of night school classes which were presented to interested learners with the facilitation of teachers from the mainstream school sector. This situation resulted in a wide array of classes. Some focused on formal lessons through which learners were taught the mainstream school system curriculum with the goal of enabling such learners to register and sit for formal exams at the end of the academic year. Learners who attended these classes were a mixed group with different aspirations and figured among the following groups of learners.

Programmes focused on matriculation: These programmes included: 1) Youth who had failed matric (that is, to matriculate) the previous year and who felt that they needed to repeat the matric year but did not wish to be physically present in a formal school

while doing so. 2) Youth who had failed matric previously and were either unemployed or working casual jobs and felt they needed a matric pass to enhance their current living status. 3) Adults who had failed matric and who felt they needed to complete a matric qualification but could not go back to a formal school. 4) Adults who had never obtained a matric and felt they needed a matric pass as a means of basic entry into future learning and training opportunities.

Programmes focused on general education: Learners who attended these classes included those who had had very little schooling, had schooling up to a level lower than matric or had no schooling at all. This group of learners was given the same learning programmes as those for learners in the mainstream school system. Such programmes utilized the formal school syllabus and curriculum as the basis for lesson planning.

Neither of these kinds of ABET programme had any real relevance to adult learners. For the programmes were formal, academic and pedagogic in nature and did not consider either the adult learners' experiences or the needs which motivated them to participate in ABET classes. Many, if not all, of the teachers were not trained in andragogy, resulting in learners from the formal schooling system being utilized on adult learners. Learning programmes were assessed through formal classroom-based tests and exams (which were and still are intimidating to many learners) and, in the main, produced learners with higher academic qualifications, but who had not truly added value to their personal quality of life by attending ABET classes.

For these classes Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) were used. The LTSM were comprised mainly of formal school textbooks from the mainstream schools, and had a pedagogic basis. They were based on the assumption that learners had no prior experience or learning acquired through other formal (though not recognized) programmes such as which may have been presented by church groups, other community-based initiatives or non-government initiatives. Learners attending classes had to provide their own stationery and workbooks or were dependent on what scant resources the educator could access and provide to assist learners.

It must be noted, however, that these interventions were not necessarily disadvantageous to all learners who attended the classes.

Many who achieved high academic status as a result of attending these classes still speak nostalgically of “night school” and how these classes contributed to their personal development.

At a conference on ABET in the KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa, on 6–7 March 2005, the KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Mr. Sbu Ndebele, spoke of how, during their incarceration on Robben Island during the apartheid era, political prisoners used paper from cement bags as writing materials, writing with pieces of coal or chalk-like rock obtained from the island quarries in which they were forced to work. Other learners from the 1960s and even into the late 1970s speak of using “slates” (a tile shaped piece of shale) as writing materials.

Many educators from the “night school” era have become pioneers in the development and shaping of education policy in South Africa, making much needed steps towards the formulation of adult-focused—particularly basic—education programmes.

The democratic order: Policy formulation

The formulation of a policy for ABET has been part and parcel of a larger process taking place: the development of a new policy framework for all aspects of the education and training system in a democratic South Africa. The initiatives from the early 1990s were particularly important in generating the current concept of ABET in South Africa. The formulation of a policy for ABET was shaped by three policy frameworks, namely the *National Education Policy Act No. 27* (RSA 1996), the *White Paper on Education* (DOE 1995) and the *South African Qualifications Authority Act No. 58* (RSA 1995). In addition, the National Education Policy provides for an ABET system within which the various elements that impact on effective ABET delivery can be harnessed and articulated. It thereby recognizes the roles to be played by a multiplicity of stakeholders from public, non-governmental and private sectors. The ABET policy (DOE 1997a) developed by the ABET sector was to serve the needs of a wide range of learning constituencies, including organized labour in the formal economy, the self-employed and the underemployed, unemployed adults and youth in urban areas and settlements, the rural unemployed, and female heads of households in both urban and rural areas. Above all, the policy sought to develop an enabling

environment in which high quality adult basic education and training programmes would flourish throughout the country. These policies led to the promulgation of the *ABET Act No. 52* (RSA 2000), which provides for the establishment of governance structures for public and private ABET centres.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) allows for the accumulation of credits for learning in the ABET sector which will form the basis of learning careers. It is flexible enough to allow learning acquired outside the framework to form the basis for entry into a learning programme in accordance with learners' needs and choices. The NQF is seen as the requisite scaffolding upon which a system for accessible and equitable lifelong learning can be based.

The democratic order and transformation

The advent of a democratic order in South Africa has opened windows of opportunity for the majority of South Africans. Education is an essential component of the reconstruction, development and transformation of South African society. The *Bill of Rights* in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (RSA 1996) outlines the rights of citizens to 'basic education, including adult basic education and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.' The *White Paper on Education and Training* (DOE 1995) states that 'the right to basic education . . . applies to all persons, i.e. to all children, youth and adults. Basic education is thus a legal entitlement to which every person has a claim.'

Developments within the ABET sector

Together with the ABET sector (NGOs, parastatals, the private sector and other government departments), the DOE sketched a vision for ABET: it is to help to bring about 'a literate South Africa within which all its citizens have acquired basic education and training that will help them effectively to participate in socioeconomic and political processes to contribute to reconstruction, development and social transformation' (DOE 1997a).

The core values adopted for South Africa are human dignity, liberty, justice, democracy, equality and national development. For

many individuals, ABET offers a rare opportunity to improve their present conditions. To some it provides a chance to confront directly a world made difficult by the need to read, write and to do arithmetic. To others, the programme teaches them how to manage, indeed how to survive in, this world and to still others, the programme is about people coming together and to relate to each other.

Introducing a focus on basic literacy interventions

In the pre-democracy era, ABET was unstructured, as noted above, and learners attended classes based on their personal drive, needs and initiative. In the democracy era, those involved in the process of formalizing and structuring of a more stable and reliable system recognized the need for a dedicated focus on learners who are classified as totally illiterate. While the ABET map sought to enable all learners to navigate their way through life, the totally illiterate learners, having had no prior schooling, found themselves somewhat sidelined, for educators found it easier to cope with learners who had had some schooling and could read and write. The situation was even easier in the case of learners who wished to improve on their matric results and thus followed a formal school syllabus. The result of all this was that the folk people who had never been to school continued to be disadvantaged, even though the post-democracy order entitled them to the right to a quality education.

Between 1999 and 2001, the Department of Education established a mass literacy campaign, the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI). The purpose of this initiative was to attempt to reduce drastically the rate of illiteracy in South Africa by 2004. The 1996 census results had indicated that the number of people who had never been to school came to four million—at the time, 10% of a population of 40 million. The initiative targeted one million people in an attempt to reach 25% of the country's illiterates.

The campaign would rely on strong relationships with partners from the NGO sector, other government departments and partners from private provisioning. Staffing for the campaign would rely on volunteers, especially in areas close to where potential learners resided. This would make it possible for potential learners to be taught by persons with whom they were familiar, who understood and spoke their language, were familiar with local cultures, traditions

and needs, and who would not need to travel long distances. For their involvement, educators would be given a stipend to cover any incidental travel expenses incurred. This situation facilitated the provisioning of classes in such close proximity that learners would not necessarily require motorized transport to access classes. Learning programmes targeted for this campaign were not necessarily directly compliant with the new formal approaches being implemented or envisioned in the formal ABET programmes, but would provide a basis of education which would enable learners to access the formal programmes in the Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs).

The initial launch of SANLI involved pilot programmes begun in selected sites in two provinces. This was followed in February 2002 by the launch of the programme in all provinces. This component of the programme was run in partnership with the ABET Institute at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Funding the campaign

The SANLI campaign was funded primarily through donor funding, with initial funding provided by the British Department for International Development (DfID) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA). Government resources focused on galvanizing resources related to personnel and the provision of office space for the project in provinces where SANLI offices were established. DfID funds were used primarily to finance the UNISA-led programme while DANIDA funds were used to finance SANLI's KwaZulu-Natal Literacy Project.

Project achievements

At the launch of the SANLI/UNISA partnership in 2002, the target was to provide basic literacy classes to 75,000 learners between February 2002 and December 2003. By December 2002, however, the project had reached 100,000 learners and a target for reaching a further 100,000 learners was set. By the end of 2003, the project had reached a total of 332,000 learners.

The success of this programme is linked to a number of factors, one of which was that classes were provided where learners resided; so learners did not have to travel far to classes. A second factor was

that classes were free of charge. Often in the past, the abject poverty of the target groups resulted in limited learner participation in ABET and literacy programmes; the would-be learners simply did not have the money to pay for even minimal expenses. The abolition of this cost factor, made the programme accessible to many more learners than previously.

Yet another positive factor was that learners were not compelled to write a formal exam at the end of the programme. Learner progress was assessed through cumulative assessments.

Through DANIDA funding, the programme targeted 5,000 learners and reached at least 3,500 learners. Through internal funding of the SANLI programme, the programme targeted 5,605 learners and reached at least 4,000 learners.

Challenges

Notwithstanding the success of the SANLI/UNISA programme, the SANLI programme in its entirety was not a huge success. One of the major challenges in this regard was a lack of sufficient funding. By the end of 2003, DfID had begun to indicate that funds for continuing the programme would not be forthcoming. This led to a serious cut-back on targets set and greater reliance on the smaller funding from DANIDA and internal departments.

The programme also highlighted the importance of linking partnerships at one tier of government with all other tiers. In the SANLI programme, while its success has been favourably reported and documents to the effect of such success have been produced, the departmental officials who should have been responsible for the programme at the sites of implementation have not always been fully informed about the programme's implementation in the provinces and districts for which they were responsible. This has sometimes led to disputes over the veracity of claims made, since learners have not been seen to move to programmes which would effectively track their progress from non-formal basic literacy programmes to the more formal ABET programmes. A factor contributing to this can be linked, however, to the fact that learners tend to exit the system when they are required travel to attend classes, which would not have the case with the SANLI programme.

Another factor is that learners would now be participating in programmes in which assessment is more exam-focused. Learners who attend basic literacy and ABET classes have generally been found to have examination phobia and therefore are reluctant to attend classes where this is required.

A third factor is that the current programmes do not yet have space for ascertaining what it is that learners expect from the programmes. Hence, while some learners who may have achieved what they expected and then exited, it would likely be asserted of them, albeit inaccurately, that they had dropped out. The ABET programme is beginning to explore the possibility of including a pre-course counselling component that would attempt to ascertain learner aspirations and provide means for addressing the same.

The ABET Plan

In 2005, South Africa celebrated the 50th anniversary of the *Freedom Charter* (ANC 1955). The charter was a guiding light during the struggle for freedom in South Africa. In the section entitled ‘The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall Be Opened!’, the charter boldly asserts that: ‘Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan’. Over the past ten years, the DOE has developed such a plan in a response to the challenges surrounding ABET provision. Thus far more than a million adult learners in literacy programmes have been reached. The DOE, together with the ABET sector, developed a *National Multi-year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation* (DOE 1997b).

Through the Adult Education and Training Directorate, the DOE has initiated a number of activities to develop an ABET system that is based on principles and practices of equity, development, reconstruction, access, integration, partnership, sustainable use of resources, a flexible curriculum, outcome-based standards of attainment, the recognition of prior learning and cost-effectiveness.

Lifelong learning

The DOE sees ABET as both a part and the foundation of lifelong learning. Therefore, many of its policy concerns attempt to integrate ABET into lifelong learning as a sustainable level of literacy, numeracy, basic, general education and certified career paths.

Curriculum and assessment

The DOE has developed a broad national curriculum framework to assist the provision of quality ABET learning programmes within the provisions of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). SAQA has adopted an outcome-based approach to education and training, and its National Qualifications Framework (NQF) demonstrates where ABET fits in the overall education and training framework. ABET curriculum is unit standards-based and registered through SAQA.

Qualification prescriptions adopted by SAQA dispenses with the notion of “core curriculum”. Because the outcome-based approach is expressed in unit standards, ABET has no prescribed core curriculum. Thus ABET providers are given the freedom to design their learning programmes, and learners have equal freedom to choose their own routes for attaining learning outcomes. Practitioners, educators and teachers use their own expertise in assessment methods and the development of mechanisms to provide recognition of prior learning (RPL) in not in place yet.

The National Qualifications Framework

SAQA was established by the *South African Qualifications Authority Act No. 58* (RSA 1995). Its purpose was to oversee the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) through consensual and consultative decision-making.

The NQF enables both public- and private-sector education and training providers to establish accrediting bodies to develop appropriate national standards in their specialist fields. Thus programmes have to be recognized as according with such defined standards, and this will enable their learners to earn credits towards national qualifications.

The DOE's ABET programmes are accredited by Umalusi Quality Assurance. Here accreditation depends on whether learners are able to meet nationally registered unit standards. Quality assurance involves monitoring and moderation of assessment systems. For ABET, assessments will be conducted internally by national and provincial departments and externally by Umalusi.

Table 1. Explanation of the rules of combination for ABET GETC

Unit standards-based GETC		
Categories of learning	%	Credit
Fundamental <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language, literacy and communication • Mathematical literacy [Selection to include unit standards from both sub-fields of learning]	30	20 16 36
Core <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and culture • Economic management sciences • Human and social sciences • Life orientation • Mathematics and mathematical sciences • Natural sciences • Technology • An additional language [Selection of unit standards from a minimum of four learning areas (chosen in relation to elective if a learner is following that route) out of the specified learning areas.]	45	54
Elective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMME) • Ancillary health care • Tourism [Selection of unit standards from any of the 12 organizing fields or sub-fields of learning, including other electives developed for adult basic education.]	25	30
TOTAL	100	120

Moderation

Moderation is conducted to ensure that assessment is credible, fair, reliable and valid. It ensures that all assessors who assess a particular unit standard or qualification are using comparable assessment methods and making similar and consistent judgements about learners' performance. Moderation of assessment occurs at the level of both the provider (internal moderation) and Umalusi (external moderation). Umalusi also offers certification to learners who have completed learning areas and to those who have completed a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC).

GETC qualification

According to SAQA regulations, the GETC is awarded on the basis of credits, where a credit is described as recognition that a learner has satisfied a set of criteria within a specific area. The GETC when a learner has obtained 120 credits at ABET Level 4, which reflects a balanced and weighted spread over the fundamental, core and or elective classes. The ABET GETC is unit standards-based.

The Expanded Public Works Programme: The President's injunction

In line with the *Freedom Charter*, the President of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki, said in his State of the Nation address on 21 May 2004, 'The Department of Education will expand the reach of the Adult Basic Education and Training programme, ABET, aligning it with the training objectives of the EPWP' (Mbeki 2004). The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is one of government's short- to medium-term programmes aimed at reducing unemployment and thereby alleviating poverty.

The President's mandate to the DOE has two interrelated elements: expanding the reach of ABET, and aligning ABET with the training objectives of the EPWP.

The DOE's first task is to ensure that our adult basic education programmes reach a greater number of adults than is currently the case. The second task is to review the contents of the ABET programmes, and specifically to create an alignment between these programmes and the training objectives of the EPWP. To do the latter, it is necessary to develop a common understanding of the EPWP's training objectives. They are:

- To draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work to enable them to earn an income within the first five years of the programme.
- To provide unemployed persons with education and skills within the first five years of the programme.
- To ensure those participants in the EPWP are able to translate the experience and are enabled to set up their own businesses/services or become employed.
- To utilize public sector budgets to reduce and alleviate unemployment.

It can therefore be concluded that the training objectives of the EPWP to which President Mbeki referred in his 2004 State of the Nation address are encompassed in the second of the four objectives listed above.

Ministry of Education:

Working together with all government departments

The Ministry of Education, together with the Ministry of Science and Technology, focuses on mathematics, science and technology. The Ministry of Education has incorporated adult learners in the aforementioned programmes. The aim is to address scarce skills which the country requires for its economic development.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour developed the Human Resources Development Strategy, which addresses adult learning and skills shortages in the country. Both ministries have set up a quality assurance structure that ensures global competitiveness.

To ensure a better life for all South Africans, all government departments are working together in the implementation of urban and rural development. The integrated rural development and urban renewal strategy, which the President of South Africa initiated in 2001, is bearing fruit. The DOE has produced 7,800 skilled learners and 240 ABET educators who have been trained in small, medium and micro-enterprises and primary agriculture. Furthermore, the DOE and the Department of Labour's four Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) have trained adult learners in building construction, electricity, primary agriculture and tourism in 60 PALCs in the country as part of poverty alleviation. These people will become entrepreneurs, be self-employed and employ other in their small and micro-enterprises.

Conclusion

Since the inception of the Adult Education and Training Directorate, the DOE has been leading in ABET programme development. The DOE's adult education programmes focus not only on literacy and numeracy skills but also on self-development skills.

The Minister of Education recently commissioned the estab-

lishment of a Ministerial Committee on Literacy that will review other models of mass basic literacy delivery and prepare a report on the findings from their review, making recommendations for a renewed attempt at massifying the literacy programme in South Africa, to achieve goals implied in the *Dakar Framework for Action* (UNESCO 2000), *United Nations Literacy Decade* (UN 2002) and *Millennium Development Goals* (UN 2006).

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III Country Cases

Adult Literacy and Learning in Bangladesh: The UNESCO and NGO Experience

Ahmadullah Mia and Wolfgang Vollmann

The present chapter attempts: 1) to bring into sharp focus the situation of adult literacy and adult learning of the population aged 15 years and above in Bangladesh; 2) to give an account of how UNESCO is attempting to contribute strategically to literacy and adult learning by developing both pilot projects in key areas and policy-advice modules likely to improve the situation; and 3) to underscore the efforts of leading NGOs to impart literacy through quality programmes. This is important in view of the Government of Bangladesh's work towards *Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction* (GPRB 2005) pursuant to its commitment to Millennium Development Goals. At the same time, Bangladesh is committed to Education for All (EFA) and the goals set in the *Dakar Framework of Action* (UNESCO 2000) aimed at poverty reduction. In what follows, it should become clear that despite these commitments and the past initiatives undertaken in keeping with them, the current status of public sector efforts is ambivalent with respect to providing the adult population with literacy and learning skills and to "accelerating" its poverty reduction strategy. This situation would seem to pose a great challenge to Bangladesh's ability to fulfil its commitment to EFA. Against this backdrop, NGO intervention has become crucial to efforts to achieving the goals of adult literacy and learning. The role of NGOs in promoting non-formal education (NFE) in the past is a matter of record; this chapter will focus on some NGOs currently

involved in reviewing the prospect of significantly improving the situation of adult learning. The issue of adult literacy and learning will be considered here from the perspective of both “rights” and “development”. In do so, the chapter draws on information available in various papers and official documents and primary data collected on the current practices of ten NGOs which are implementing adult education programmes.*

Reflection on literacy status: The problem

The magnitude of the problem of literacy

Census reports and other sample surveys conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) usually report literacy information based on the self-reporting of household members. Table 1 shows the adult literacy rates by census year from 1974 through 2001. The estimated adult population aged 15–45, and the target adult population for literacy by 2000, was 25.6 million, as can be seen in Table 3 .

A careful look at universal primary education indicates that more than six million school-age children (6–11 years) will remain out of school and will join the pool of illiterate adults in the next eight to nine years. Still more will drop out early before earning basic literacy. In addition, a large number of neo-literates will fall back into the illiterate group because they will not have attained sustainable literacy due to the present poor quality of the literacy delivery system. The number of adolescents and youth—a priority group for literacy programme—will exceed ten million in the next five years. The draft of *Education for All – National Plan of Action II (2003–2015)* (GBRB 2003) proposed a target of 40 million illiterate adult population to be covered by 2015, which poses a great challenge to Bangladesh.

* These agencies have been identified by consulting CAMPE 2004. From a preliminary list, direct contact was made to ensure that the agencies have had an adult education programme for a longer period than has the Directorate of Non-formal Education (DNFE), supported temporarily (for nine months) through their own centres, and that they have offices in Dhaka so as to provide us with any information needed.

Table 1. Adult literacy rate of population aged 15 years and above by sex and locality, 1974–2001

Locality	1974			1981			1991			2001		
	M&F	M	F	M&F	M	F	M&F	M	F	M&F	M	F
Bangladesh	25.8	37.2	13.2	29.2	39.7	18.0	35.3	44.3	25.8	47.5	53.9	40.8
Urban	48.1	62.5	33.1	48.1	58.0	34.1	54.4	62.6	44.0	64.3	70.3	57.1
Rural	23.1	34.6	12.1	25.4	35.4	15.3	30.1	38.7	21.5	41.9	47.9	35.9

Source: BBS 2003; literacy data un-tested. *Education Watch 2002* (see CAMPE 2003), *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005* (UNESCO 2004) have set the literacy rate (15+) at 41.5% based on real literacy tests. The *Education Watch 2002* data should be considered real. According to the 2001 census (BBS 2003), 49% of those aged 15–49 were illiterate (the absolute number being 29.95 million people).

Table 2. Literacy status of adult population (aged 15–49) by sex and location

Locality	Male & Female			Male			Female		
	Total population	Literate	Illiterate	Total population	Literate	Illiterate	Total population	Literate	Illiterate
Bangladesh	61,186,640	31,236,620 (51%)	29,950,020 (49%)	30,597,560	17,361,780 (57%)	13,235,780 (43%)	30,589,080	13,874,840 (45%)	16,714,240 (55%)
Urban	16,139,960	10,838,660 (67%)	5,301,300 (33%)	8,728,780	6,321,500 (72%)	2,407,280 (28%)	7,411,180	4,517,160 (61%)	2,894,020 (39%)
Rural	45,046,680	20,397,960 (45%)	2,464,8720 (55%)	21,868,780	11,040,280 (50%)	10,828,500 (50%)	23,177,900	9,357,680 (40%)	13,820,220 (60%)

Source: BBS Population Census 2001: Literacy based on self-reporting. Illiterate population makes 41.5% of the total population of 15 and above age group, according to *Education Watch 2002*, based on testing.

Table 3. Estimated adult population and target for literacy (in millions), 2000

Year	Adult population	Target (NPA I)
1991	47.6	–
2000	59.8	25.6

Source: MPME 2003.

UNESCO's literacy/non-formal strategy in Bangladesh

The data available on the country's educational status determines UNESCO's literacy/non-formal strategy in Bangladesh. Especially in adult literacy, the data appear to indicate a very low literacy level—around 41% according to Education Watch, UNDP and the *Global Monitoring Report* (GMR) (see Chapter 1 above). Hence, UNESCO Dhaka has been developing strategic work plans over the past few years to enable the Government of Bangladesh (GPRB), as well as civil society through NGOs, to better measure the dramatic consequences of a low literacy rate, especially as it bears on the development process.

The first finding from UNESCO Dhaka's efforts is that, without a quantum leap in literacy, none of the EFA issues, especially primary education, will improve, and major development issues will be slowed down. The second finding is that the focus must continue to be on quality literacy education, especially in rural areas, and the empowerment of NGOs to deliver relevant literacy programmes.

As a consequence of its activities, UNESCO Dhaka frequently finds itself at the forefront in the battle to awaken those who are, and would rather remain, focused on primary education alone and to evaluate those literacy policies which do not reflect the real learning needs of adult illiterates. In a country with more than 55 million illiterates, the degree of denial of facts is often overwhelming, yet it causes UNESCO Dhaka (together with many NGOs) to remain constantly vigilant in reminding everyone in Bangladesh of the harsh and often unwelcome truth.

Armed with the aforementioned findings, as well as the EFA objectives adopted at the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, UNESCO Dhaka has sought to work out a two-pronged strategy, where both prongs unfold in tandem:

First, a number of pilot projects are being developed to obtain clearer and more precise insight into the real learning conditions and constraints encountered in rural and slum areas; in addition, these projects also provide information on learning needs and how best to meet them. A pilot project has to fulfil various criteria. It must:

- target crucial areas (geographically or population-wise) where illiteracy is highest and/or most resistant to educational efforts;

- promote the capacity-building of selected NGOs to ascertain where training is most needed;
- explore literacy strategies which may work and evaluate learning outcomes;
- explore new materials, such as ICTs, and assess their impact and learners' responses to them; and
- assess with NGOs and the GRPB where further action for literacy is required, and dialogue with donors and NGOs about other non-UNESCO experiences in the field of literacy.

Second, based on experience gained in pilot projects, policy dialogue and advice-related activities are taking place which target NGOs, donors and the GRPB. This also includes the commissioning of studies on key issues in literacy, based on project experiences, to obtain a better documented picture. Policy advice occurs in workshops and seminars attended by development partners and the GRPB, and is usually fruitful since UNESCO's considerations are recognized to be based on real field experience, scholarly studies and experience from abroad, including the international perspective.

Based on the framework for action sketched above, which basically reflects the mission assigned to a field office in a country with such a high illiteracy rate as Bangladesh (an E-9 country), UNESCO Dhaka is currently running ten strategically important pilot projects and pursuing policy dialogue through another ten major activities.

Policy: Dialogue and advice (NGOs, donors and the GRPB)

The following procedures have been conducted:

- A study was conducted on the *Economic and Social Impact of Literacy in Selected Rural Areas of Bangladesh* (Rahman 2005). The study's findings were shared with development partners, ministries, NGOs and other stakeholders.
- A comprehensive study was conducted on the *Reassessment of Literacy in Bangladesh* (Mia and Hassan 2004). It measured the current adult literacy level (15+) against data from a study that had been carried out four years earlier.
- A survey was conducted on the education, literacy and skill needs of rickshaw pullers in the Mirpur district of Dhaka City.

- Four divisional workshops were conducted to enhance the capacities of 100 government officers and NGO staff and to develop literacy and NFE monitoring indicators and a framework for the monitoring and evaluation of literacy and NFE projects and programmes.
- A workshop entitled ‘Reading for All’ was held to share experiences and ideas on continuing education for neo-literates with representatives from government departments and NGOs.
- A study was conducted on the impact of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) on rural people.
- Another study was carried out to identify the use of ICT materials and best ICT practices for literacy and basic education.
- An in-depth assessment was conducted on the educational use of ICTs in existing CLCs which offer literacy and/or NFE programmes. Assessment findings were presented at a two-day national workshop on ICTs and basic education policy in the presence of the Minister of Science and Information and Communication Technology.
- Mother-tongue Language Learning: Action research was conducted for the Oraon community involving development and testing of curriculum and materials in the local language for Grade 2.
- There has been active and critical participation in NFE Task Force of UN agencies and donors.
- A study was conducted on *Networks and Linkages of Community Learning Centres* (Hasan and Mia 2005).
- A Researcher’s Forum was held which focused on recent research and publications on literacy and NFE; and two issues of *Bangladesh Education Journal* were disseminated. The forum was intended as a contribution to strengthening the GPRB’s and NGOs’ knowledge on literacy. The publication is supported by UNESCO, Dhaka. A contribution towards strengthening the knowledge on literacy for the benefit of the GPRB and NGOs.

Pilot projects for influencing policy

1. In a UNESCO supported project Empowering Adolescent Girls to Become Agents of Social Transformation (EAST)

- run by the NGO Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), 1,300 adolescent girls and boys were trained from 2003 to 2005 in literacy, basic sciences, ICTs, and micro-finance in the two rural districts, Narsingdhi and Tangail.
2. In the slum area within the Dholpur district of Dhaka, 400 adolescent girls were provided literacy training, integrated health education, and capacity-building services.
 3. In the rural areas of two districts, Jessore and Jamalpur, 600 adolescent girls are being provided with literacy training and micro-finance skills.
 4. Skills and literacy training has been provided to 140 rickshaw pullers selected by a survey in the Mirpur district of Dhaka. Employable skills training was given in house wiring, refrigeration and air conditioning, dressmaking, embroidery and food processing. A extensive media campaign was conducted and a call was made to the government and donors in order to secure financing for additional, similar projects.
 5. Popular materials in the series 'Reading for All' have been developed as a follow-up to a 'Writers Workshop'.
 6. Easy-to-read materials for neo-literates have been developed about four national heritage sites.
 7. Five ICT-CLCs have been established in rural areas of Bangladesh. Each has internet connection, a printer and five computers with networking facilities. Rural people use these CLCs for literacy and skills training as well as to gain information on agricultural activities, health, family planning, the environment and human rights from internet and locally produced CD-ROMs.
 8. ICT materials have been developed for the use of the rural neo-literates. These include: 'Maintenance of Power Tiller', 'Fruit Processing for Jam/Jelly', 'Candle Making', 'Social Communication and Business Negotiation', 'Rural Hygiene', and 'Operational Aspects of Micro-credit'.
 9. A one-week national workshop was organized to provide orientation to 30 core trainers in literacy and NFE. Topics included: 'Planning and Management', 'Post-literacy Planning and Management', 'Materials Development', 'Monitoring and Evaluation', and 'Role of Teachers and Facilitators'.

Three international and five national resource persons facilitated the workshop. Five training modules have been developed in the five areas just noted. Divisional capacity-building workshops were also conducted for 150 literacy/NFE managers on those five themes.

Materials development and publications

Selected research studies conducted by UNESCO Dhaka in 2002–2003 have been published in the 2004 report, *Basic Education Studies in Bangladesh*. This 284-page document has been widely disseminated to reach all concerned within Bangladesh and UNESCO offices in the region. As mentioned above, five literacy modules on the literacy/NFE have been designed (see item 9 in the foregoing section). These modules are being used now and will be translated into English and published in CD-form for wider dissemination. In collaboration with the Department of Women Affairs and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL, formerly UIE), a training manual has been developed for organising life skills and livelihood skills training for disadvantaged women. The *Summary Report of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003–2004* (UNESCO-Dhaka 2004b), was translated into Bangla and printed. This version was widely disseminated within Bangladesh and to Bengali-speakers in West Bengal in India. The *Summary Report of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005* (UNESCO-Dhaka 2005) has been translated into Bangla and printed and will soon be disseminated within Bangladesh. The findings of the study on CLCs have been published in book-form as *Community Learning Centre: The Bangladesh Experience* (Rahman n.d.). It contains findings on the assessment of use of ICT offering literacy/NFE that were presented in a two-day national workshop on ICT and basic education policy in presence of the Minister of Science and Information & Communication Technology. Findings of the Chittagong Hill Tracts ethno-linguistic study were published in book-form as *Atlas of the Languages and Ethnic Communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts* (Rabbani 2004). And the study on *Economic and Social Impact of Literacy in Selected Rural Areas of Bangladesh* (Rahman 2005) has also been published.

UNESCO is not the only actor in the literacy adult learning scene; a large number of NGOs are providing considerable support

to programmes targeting youth and adults to help them to acquire basic literacy and skills.

The role of NGOs in adult literacy, education and learning delivery

In the following sections we shall describe the wide range of literacy and adult learning activities that leading NGOs currently implement in Bangladesh. While these activities address a wide range of learning needs and populations, there is currently no central government coordination of them. The newly founded Bureau for Non-Formal Education, which is within the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MPME) and has staff in each of the 64 districts, will be assigned the task of coordinating and monitoring NGO activities in literacy. It remains to be seen, however, whether this will really work as foreseen by the planners.

Adult literacy is an area in which NGOs have historically demonstrated their interest, even before the GPRB took any initiative, and particularly following the 1990 World Conference on Education. In the 1990s, support from the Bangladeshi Directorate of Non-formal Education (DNFE) has further enhanced NGO involvement in the NFE programme to achieve the goals of Education for All. A substantial part of the NFE programme was directed at adult literacy and adult learning activities. With the abolition of the DNFE in 2003 on the grounds of inefficiency and corruption, public-sector investment in the NFE programme on basic literacy, especially programmes for adults, has also been abandoned, since it was considered ineffective. NGO involvement in NFE, including programmes for adult literacy and adult education, has drastically declined in the absence of government involvement.

Findings of a rapid assessment survey of nine NGOs implementing adult literacy/education programmes

In this section we shall consider the role that NGOs are playing, the strategies and delivery mechanisms they are adopting, and the future prospects and challenges in the context of the national policy aimed at sustainable social and economic development for poverty reduction in Bangladesh. The NGOs studied here include the Bangladesh Association for Community Education (BACE), *Grameen Shiksha*

(rural education); Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES); *NIJERA Shikhi* (learn ourselves); *SAMATA* (equality); *SHURAVI* (fragrance); Dhaka *Absania* Mission (DAM); PROSHIKA – *Proshika Shiksha Kaj* (training, education and work); Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC); and Friends in Village Development (FIVD).

Objectives of the adult literacy programme

The objectives of the adult literacy programme that appear to be consistent with national policy include:

- Build sustainable literacy skills (including numeracy) among the non-literate/illiterate.
- Raise critical consciousness on issues related to their life and livelihood.
- Eliminate illiteracy from the organized members of the programme area.
- Enable them to solve their own problems and social problems as well.
- Provide post-literacy and continuing education by establishing CLCs for human development and also for addressing local social development issues by collective efforts and community development.
- Increase the role of ICTs in community development.
- Establish the link between sustainable literacy and income-generating skills training and micro-credit.

Which objectives are emphasized varies from one NGO to another—some provide reading, writing and numeracy skills, others provide livelihood skills along with literacy, and still others place greater emphasis on gender equality, human rights and women empowerment, etc.—they all nevertheless conform to national objectives, goals and strategies.

Mode of delivery

In most cases the approach is centre-based. Literacy service to a target population group is provided through a centre so that the maximum number of learners will be able to access it in the respective programme area. *Proshika* utilizes resource centres, as well as rented

houses in the community. *Grameen Shiksha* has established centres under the supervision of *Grameen Bank's* branch. *Proshika*, *Grameen Shiksha*, *SAMATA* and *DAM* provide literacy to their own group members through community centres.

For some NGOs the adult education programme is supplemented by other programmes dealing with such topics as micro-credit, poverty alleviation, health and sanitation, income-generating activities, skills training and community development. The *DAM* is a case in point. Its core activity is education, which it supplements with all the other, aforementioned components. *Grameen Shiksha* does the reverse. For them the credit group comes first, followed by supplementary or complementary interventions.

The number of learners in each centre per facilitator or teacher usually ranges from 20 to 30 and the number of centres under one supervisor ranges from 7 to 15. Each class lasts 12–15 hours per week (about two hours or two and a half hours per day). While one shift is the norm, *Proshika* and *Nijera Shikhi* have two shifts per day—with females attending the morning shift and males the evening shift. The learning materials are distributed among the learners in most cases; in a few instances, however, they are kept in the centre. *SURAVI* has adult learning programmes specially designed for domestic servants in urban areas. Here a more flexible approach based on the particular situation of *para/mahalla* (neighbourhood) is followed to reach this most underprivileged group.

Facilitators and learners

More than any other agencies, NGOs tend to place greater emphasis on women as learners and facilitators in adult literacy programmes—for example, in *FIVD* the male-female learner ratio is 3:5; in *Grameen Shiksha* all the learners are female.

The male-female facilitator ratio in the two organizations is 45:55 and 40:60, respectively. While there are no specific qualifications for volunteers from the respective community, paid facilitators normally have academic qualifications that vary from Grade 8 to Secondary School Certification (SSC), which comes after the completion of Grade 10. The duration of their basic training varies from six to 15 days. Refresher training lasts for one or two days every month during the programme period.

Supervisors and manager/coordinators

Supervisors and manager/coordinators are expected to have Bachelor's and Master's degrees, respectively. They are also expected to undertake 10–15 days of basic training and two refresher training classes, each of which lasts three days. Most of the NGOs have their own arrangements for training their staff. Very often they utilize the physical facilities of organizations such as the DAM and the *Palli Karma Shabayak* Foundation (PKSF; in English the name literally means 'rural employment assistance foundation'). For some large NGOs, middle and junior managers seek formal training in institutes and universities in the UK, Canada, Nepal and the Philippines.

Learners

Learners include: those who have never enrolled, school dropouts, NFE graduates, members of un-reached or hard-to-reach populations living in extreme poverty and facing other difficulties, and adolescents and adults requiring a more flexible system. They are also informal-sector workers, such as farmers, fishermen and rickshaw pullers. Some agencies include the physically disabled, members of ethnic minorities and women aged 15–25 years. For the DAM, working children are also one of the major target groups. Learners are usually 15–45 years of age. NGOs such as *Proshika*, *SAMATA*, *BACE* and *Grameen Shiksha* include learners aged 15–35 years.

The target populations that NGOs cover varies. The coverage is usually about 60–100% of the adult illiterate population in their respective catchments or age groups. *SAMATA*, for example, has been able to cover only 37% of the target group in the programme area. Several strategies are used to encourage the target groups to participate. *Grameen Shiksha* and *Proshika* adopt social mobilization, provision of skills training and income generating activities, as well as availing themselves of the services of motivated facilitators/supervisors as strategies for reaching the "never enrolled" and "irregular" and involving them in the programme. The learners who graduate are given basic and post-literacy and continuing education courses adapted to meet individual needs. Some NGOs, such as *CMES*, *SAMATA*, *BACE*, *SURAVI*, provide basic courses combined with vocational training and functional literacy.

Curriculum and learning materials

The basic course curriculum is covered in six to nine months. Literacy, which includes reading and writing, and calculation skills are among the fundamental objectives of the course. The course curriculum is designed around issues that are relevant to the learners' life situations and surroundings: social empowerment, developing communicative skills through writing, reading, speaking, and learning how to protect themselves from fraudulent practices. Continuing education takes place at home or in community centres, where learners can also find a *Gonokendra* or library with television, daily newspapers, and reading materials on social problems, such as dowries and the oppression of women. Here learners can develop linkages with livelihood enhancement programmes, such as integrated homestead farming, horticulture, agro-forestry, poultry and ducks, livestock, fish culture, carpentry, welding automobiles and house wiring. They are also exposed to issues such as women and child rights, HIV/AIDS, and health and sanitation.

Almost all NGOs develop materials themselves. However, some NGOs, such as the DAM, BRAC, CMES, FIVD, CAMPE, NCBT and DNFE, develop materials that are used by other NGOs. In a few cases, materials are acquired from the market and book stalls, etc. However, learning materials need to be reviewed with regard to quality and in relation to the standards and criteria set for achieving the learning goals.

Planning and implementation

Programme planning requires the community's and community representatives' participation in group meetings, workshops and seminars. It is also carried out with the guidance and involvement of technical experts and project staff. The latter is the practice of *Grameen Shikshas*. In some cases, the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach is used for programme planning. Implementation involves the community, local elite, social workers and representatives of the local government in the selection of learners as well as in sharing views on implementation in workshops, seminars and monthly meetings. *SAMATA* enlists people from target groups to involve them in programme implementation. In the case of the DAM, the manage-

ment committee is involved in resource mobilization and making arrangements for the use of a centre or house.

Monitoring of programme

Monitoring is conducted in order to provide supervisors with feedback. It is carried out by designated staff members, through periodical review meetings or with the aid of databases and follow up. Supervisors are directly responsible for programme implementation, whereas programme coordinators are responsible for coordination, monitoring and quality assurance, and managers are responsible for the overall implementation and management of operations.

Major challenges and difficulties

According to the NGOs, one of the major challenges and difficulties is delays—in the release of funds and in arrangements for project assistance as reported by the NGOs. Politicization also hampers implementation of the programme. Learning materials whose content do not sufficiently address learners' needs also pose difficulties. The NGO NIJERA *Shikhi* has noted that delays in the release of funds due to the DNFE's closure, as well as community inactivity due to political influences, have been major difficulties. DAM has pointed to difficulties due to the lack of: community ownership of the programme due to political influence, sufficient motivation and guidance among the concerned staff, timely deployment of project personnel, sufficiently skilled personnel, interest among learners due to absence of immediate results, perceived utility, and community acceptance.

Learning assessment

While there is no officially accepted indicator to measure learning outcomes, they are usually assessed by the level of literacy, improvement of livelihoods, the level of social awareness, and awareness of the importance of education. Most NGOs feel that literacy is achieved when literates are able to read, write and comprehend. There are different tests for assessing literacy, but the usual indicators are the ability to read the newspaper without difficulty, write a simple sentence and letter, and do a simple calculation. It remains nec-

essary, however, to find an appropriate authority at the national level that would be able to accord formal recognition to a parameter or standard in order to measure learning outcomes.

Programme outcomes

The adult literacy programme has direct linkages with micro-credit and livelihood programmes, poverty alleviation through skills development, income-generating activities, social and natural forestry, ecological balances, agriculture, health and sanitation. The programme outcomes therefore include changes in one's livelihood, increase in confidence, increase in participation in family and social life, women's empowerment within the family and community, increase in awareness of human rights, gender equity, and awareness of the importance of children's education. The learners' awareness of training and rehabilitation of disabled people, environmental degradation, and adverse effects of dowry and early marriage, and democratic rights, are treated as programme outcomes.

Research and evaluation

Evaluation and research are regular activities. But most of the NGOs surveyed have no institutional arrangement for undertaking evaluation and operation research. However, BACE's evaluation of *Gonabiddyalay* has been found effective and relevant to continuing education. *Proshika* found that neo-literates are an important and powerful group of beneficiaries within continuing education programmes that make people aware of their socio-economic rights. FIVD's policy research unit found that statements on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme provided important feedback that was useful for further revision and improvement of the programme.

Future programme potential and needs

There are plans to enrich programmes by further developing curriculum and learning materials based on advanced techniques and participatory methods in order to meet the challenges of twenty-first century. *SAMATA* plans to include income-generating activities, vocational training and the use of *Khas* land for vegetable cultivation and tree plantation to stave off environmental degradation. *Grameen*

Shikkah regards it as necessary to modify the programme in order for NGOs to reach the disadvantaged and underserved population segments and to cover the illiterate population of non-programme areas with the support of the *Grameen* Bank. The DAM has suggested that the implementation procedure be changed from the project approach (which lacks inter-project linkage and has poor institutional coordination) to the programme approach, with a single policy and expenditure programme. The post-literacy and continuing education programme will be introduced and strengthened to enable neo-literates to sustain their literacy; community libraries will be established where they can practice their new literacy skills in a group setting. NGOs will share their experiences with others and network with other NGOs and donors regarding the management and implementation of the adult literacy programme.

There are strong policy proposals to heighten awareness among the neo-literates about human rights. At present, NGOs want to continue the programme for a longer period, and they want the government to come forward to support long-term sustainability of the programmes. *SURAVI* has suggested that the post-literacy and continuing education programme should last at least twelve rather than nine months.

Views on country scenario, programme priorities and adult education

The literacy rate in Bangladesh is quite low even by Third World standards. It is the responsibility of the government and NGOs to establish mass-oriented, time-bound adult literacy programmes which involve livelihood enhancement, skills training, women's empowerment, and the alleviation of poverty. NGOs consider education the most essential ingredient in their development efforts and therefore are committed to building up an illiteracy free society. Given the challenges of EFA and the MDGs, adult education should be expanded and effectively implemented by focusing on problem-solving skills and vocational and life-oriented training programmes. In the future, curriculum and learning materials on adult education, along with vocational skills, will be designed to motivate learners to learn through literacy. As such, the slogan will be 'Education for Life'.

Future directions, needs, challenges

Concentration on mere literacy, as was the case in the campaign-styled Total Literacy Mission, was a mistake. It failed to motivate poor people, since it lacked in perceived benefit, or to have any long-term, sustainable impact on their life situation. Furthermore, the newly gained literacy was not sustained in many cases. Basic literacy, therefore, must be complemented and supplemented by other interventions, which are aimed at both making literacy itself sustainable and changing the each learner's life situation through establishment of a learning society.

It is essential to stress quality assurance and not to remain satisfied with the prevailing norm of somehow “making do”, as it has been done in order to hastily declare a number of districts “illiteracy free”.

Corruption, inefficiency and mismanagement have become the rule rather than the exception. However, the NGO sector appears to have fulfilled basic ethical expectations. The capacity of the NGO sector to work as a corruption-free and efficient program implementer must be utilized by building active partnerships—and not allow themselves to be viewed as sub-contractors, as has often happened during the implementation of the Centre-based Approach (CBA) and post-literacy and continuing education.

Rather, true public-private partnerships are based on cooperation and collaboration, which are themselves based on shared objectives, strategies and agreed criteria.

An effective, coordinated professional support service system must be provided by the Government of Bangladesh—the new BNFE—to enhance NGO capacity. In the foregoing, we have indicated that many NGOs do not have professional or technical expertise for programme design.

Continued support from the international community will be necessary not only in the form of funding, but even more through policy dialogue and action research. In this perspective, the activities that UNESCO has implemented have shown that the pilot project experience, once translated into policy advice and dialogue, is a credible strategy, especially when the reminders of the international experience can be brought into the picture.

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Thailand's National Programme of Adult and Youth Education

Roong Aroon and Wilaipan Somtrakool

The growth and the prosperity of Thailand today have been continuously spreading to all parts of the country. Capacity-building of human resources has been implemented at all levels to enable the country to become a knowledge society based on the paradigm of literacy.

Literacy is seen as a crucial indicator, one that reflects the capacity of the whole population of the country. It has immense power in mobilizing the economy and society. Literacy (or being able to read and write and doing basic numeracy) is the basic capacity to communicate, to search for knowledge by means of sophisticated technology, to think critically and to improve one's quality of life.

Thailand has been widely open to education. The country has recognized the significance and necessity of literacy and lifelong education for all Thai citizens. Learning outside the formal school system has long been valued: Buddhist monks, village elders, local craftsmen, folk artists, etc., have played important educational roles for the vast majority of the population even after a formal school system was established in the late nineteenth century. However, it was not until 1940, after the first national census revealed that over 68% of the Thai population was illiterate, that the government directed its attention to the out-of-school population. In the same year, it launched a national literacy campaign and, a few years later, established an Adult Education Division within the Ministry of Education (MOE) to manage the campaign and other programmes for individuals not in school. By the early 1970s, a broader concept of non-formal educa-

tion (NFE) had evolved. It became an indispensable component of the education system in developing the country's human resources and in creating opportunities for lifelong education. Since then, lifelong education and equal access to education for all have been focal points of the national economic and social development scheme. The term "non-formal education" (NFE), which referred to any educational activities organized outside school and classroom settings, has completely replaced the term "adult education".

In the 1970s, lifelong education and equal access to education started to attract the attention of non-formal educators in Thailand, as well as in many other countries. The increasing attention to these concepts was fuelled and reinforced by several factors. For instance,

the growth rate of school age population had increased rapidly while the expansion of formal education service through schools was in the opposite rate to the population growth rate. The subsequent situations were the discrepancy in the access to the state educational services between the rich and the poor, the urban and the rural which was one major cause of the rising numbers of neo-illiterates in the country. (NESDB 1982)¹

The government recognized the seriousness of these problems and considered NFE the means of remedying them. Thus the terms "lifelong education" and "adult continuing education" came to be strongly linked to "non-formal education" (NFE), which is any form of learning activity organized outside the formal school or classroom setting which aims to assist the out-of-school adult and youth population to acquire knowledge, skills and information that are essential for the improvement of the quality of their lives. The learning-teaching process seeks to enhance critical thinking and to empower individuals to achieve self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

Current situation

The policy and practice in literacy and non-formal education in Thailand is currently undergoing a major transition due to several factors, including economic crisis, structural adjustment, educational reform and government reorganization. To understand better the future role

1. As reported in *The Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan 1982-1986* (NESDB 1982), about 14.5% of Thai population was still illiterate.

and practices of NFE in Thailand, it is necessary to understand the factors that will contribute to coming changes.

Changes in educational policy

Due to the 1997 economic crisis, Thailand has undergone drastic change on various fronts. At that time, the government had sought to redress several socio-economic problems that had emerged. Structural adjustment and educational reform were two major components of the government's reform scheme. The reform of the national education system resulted in the promulgation of the *National Education Act of 1999* (ONEC), which subsequently led to the restructuring of the administrative system within the MOE a major shift in the policy and practice of literacy and non-formal education in Thailand. In addition, the Department of Non-Formal Education became the Office of the Non-formal Education Commission (ONFEC), which has been administered by the Office of the MOE Permanent Secretary since 7 July 2003.

Two major national policy frameworks that have affected the policy and practice of NFE in Thailand. The first is *The Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan of Thailand (2002–2006)* (NESDB 2001), which stated that:

The Thai society should be a knowledge-based and learning society. Learning opportunities should be created for all Thai people, designed to promote logical and critical thinking and lifelong learning, so that people will be able to cope with changing conditions. Science and technology should be strengthened, so that Thai society can benefit from local innovation, creativity, and the accumulation of intellectual capital, in order to increase international competitiveness and to appropriately supplement Thai local wisdom and national traditions, culture and religion.

The second framework is the National Education Policy. Section 4 of the *National Education Act of 1999* (ONEC 1999) stated that Thai education should be lifelong education, resulting from the integration of formal, non-formal and informal education so as to provide the means for the lifelong enhancement of people's quality of life. Chapter 3, section 15 of this act also emphasizes that:

There shall be three types of education: formal, non-formal and informal.

- 1) Formal education shall specify the aims, methods, curricula, duration, assessment, and evaluation conditional to its completion.
- 2) Non-formal education shall have flexibility in determining the aims, modalities, management procedures, duration, assessment and evaluation with regard to its completion. The contents and curricula for non-formal education shall be appropriate, respond to meeting the requirements, and meet the needs of individual groups of learners.
- 3) Informal education shall enable learners to learn by themselves according to their interests, potentialities, readiness and opportunities available from persons, society, environment, media, or other sources of knowledge.

To ensure the coverage of and the equal access to educational services of all target groups, the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the MOE has also incorporated some major principles from the *National Education Act of 1999* and the *National Scheme of Education (2002–2016)*, as well as from the *Dakar Framework for Action*, in the *National Education for All Plan of Action (2002–2016)* (OPS-MOE 2004). This plan not only places strong emphasis on ensuring equal access to good quality education for all Thais but also gives high priority to the development of feasible efforts, approaches and measures to achieve a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy, to guarantee the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and to achieve gender equality in education by 2015 (by focusing on ensuring full and equal access to and achievement in good quality basic education for girls and women) (OPS-MOE 2004).

The present stage of reform

As documented by the Bureau of Educational Evaluation, Office of the National Education Commission, there has been a growing demand for the reform of Thai education over the past decade so as to keep up with changes in the era of globalization. The economic crisis which has adversely affected Thai society since 1997 has underlined the urgent need for reform in education because it is recognized that Thailand's weak human resource base has been one of the major contributors to the economic downturn. Fortunately, the new Constitution promulgated in October 1997 provided challenging guide-

lines for educational reform in several provisions. In accordance with the requirement of Section 81 of the 1997 *Constitution*, the first *National Education Act* was promulgated and came into effect on 20 August 1999 to serve as master legislation on education in the country. In this act, "education" means the learning process for personal and social development through the imparting of knowledge. It means practice, training, transmission of culture, enhancement of academic progress, building a body of knowledge by creating a learning environment conducive to lifelong learning. In Section 6 of the act, it is stated that education will aim at the full development of the Thai people in all respects: physically and mentally, as well as regarding their health, intellect, knowledge, morality, integrity, and harmony with other people. Section 8 states that educational provision will be based on the principles of lifelong education for all, the participation of all segments of society in the provision of education, and the continuous development of the bodies of knowledge and learning processes. Section 10 states that all individuals will have equal rights and opportunities to receive state-provided, free basic education for the duration of at least twelve years.

To facilitate the reform of learning, the utilization of technologies for education has been greatly promoted. This will not only improve the quality of teaching and learning but also encourage lifelong education for all learners. It will undoubtedly be a key factor in transforming Thai society into a knowledge-based society. Learning reform through the learner-centred approach has been widely implemented, particularly the reform of curricula and of the learning process. The key factors in learning reform are teachers and faculty staff: the proposed reform relating to teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel will greatly contribute to the success of educational reform. At the same time, effective mobilization of resources and investment in education, allocation of budget and budget management are also essential to the success of educational reform.

A new system of educational quality assurance has also been introduced to ensure improvement of educational quality and standards for all learners. Both internal and external quality assurance mechanisms have been implemented in increasing numbers of basic and higher educational institutions. It is anticipated that the success of educational reform will result in higher achievements in Thai ed-

ucation in terms of access, quality and efficiency, leading to higher quality of life for the Thai people and a competitive advantage for the country. However, the reform introduced by the *National Education Act of 1999* was quite extensive, requiring not only the drafting of new laws, rules and regulations but also a complete change in the behaviour, attitudes and working methods of those in the various levels of education management. Particularly during this transitional period, cooperation, participation and contributions are needed from all stakeholders, as well as the general public, if the reform is to succeed.

Quality framework

Presently, the MOE has developed and issued a national curriculum which has been partly adjusted to be a guideline for developing local curriculum in view of local needs and situations. This national curriculum is now the solely valid guideline and conceptual framework for both formal and non-formal education in Thailand. The MOE had declared that any curricula used previously is now null and void. However, in their efforts to apply the national curriculum to NFE over the past year, practitioners encountered difficulties due to inflexibility and ambivalence.

Provincial-level practitioners have made strong demands on ONFEC to revise the existing NFE practices in keeping with the conceptual framework. Thus ONFEC has started to re-conceptualize NFE, reframe and redirect its policy, and redesign appropriate approaches.

Rights of learners

According to the *National Education Act of 1999*, all individuals are to have equal rights and opportunity to receive basic education provided by the state for the duration of at least twelve years. Such education, provided on a nationwide basis, shall be of good quality and free of charge. Therefore, persons with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communication and learning deficiencies, those with physical disabilities, or those unable to support themselves, as well as the destitute or the disadvantaged, are also to be accorded the rights and opportunities to receive basic education.

The learner-driven approach

The new education act believes that all learners are capable of learning and self-development. Learners are the centre of all educational activities. Provisions have been made for educational institutions to design their own curriculum to ensure that the need of learners and localities are met. Learners are encouraged to pursue their own course of study to satisfy their needs and situations. The primary role of the teacher is to facilitate adult learners to learn at their pace and to the best of their potentiality. The learners always have a say in the selection of the contents of study. In some cases, learners themselves, with the help of facilitators, design their own curriculum.

The curriculum

ONFEC has developed a curriculum framework for basic education. The framework comprises three major categories of subject areas: basic subjects, life experiences, and quality of life improvement. *Basic subjects* include Thai, mathematics, science and foreign languages. *Life-experience subjects* include social and community development, health education, arts, and career and information technologies. *Quality-of-life improvement subjects* require learners to engage in social work or self-development activities. For each of the subjects taken, learners are required to conduct a work project, which gives learners the opportunity to put into practice what they have learned or are learning.

As noted above, educational institutions develop their own curriculum within the national framework. This enables them to address local culture and content (where local wisdom and resources are integrated into the learning process), as well as local needs and interests. Furthermore, rather than teaching subjects in isolation from one another, an integrative approach and team-teaching are encouraged.

Teacher training

Traditionally a teacher-oriented approach was used, whereby teachers concentrated on transferring the substance of knowledge to the learners. At present, attempts are being made to help teachers to shift effectively to a learner-centred approach. Learners learn how to think, act and solve their own problems. Teachers are encouraged to

serve as facilitators and counsellors who provide learners with guidance on how to on their own from printed media, public libraries, learning centres, local wisdom, etc.

National assessment system

To ensure that national standards are met and that the quality of education is improved at all levels, the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) was established. Whereas each educational institution is responsible for its own internal quality assurance, each must undergo an external quality evaluation at least once every five years. ONESQA oversees these external evaluations.

Adult learning outcomes assessment is the responsibility of individual educational institutions. Apart from proficiency in each subject area, learners must be assessed in the following areas in order to graduate: quality of life, desired characteristics of the learner, and language proficiency. As for *quality of life*, learners are required to take part in either social work or self-development activities. Regarding *desired characteristics of the learner*, aspects of the learner's morals and values are evaluated. The *language proficiency* test assesses the learner's reading, writing, thinking and analytic skills. Furthermore, in the final semester, learners are required to take a national test to determine each learner's overall performance as well as the educational institution's performance.

Non-formal education: Innovative features

While formal education specifies from the outset the aims, methods, curricula, duration, assessment and evaluation required for its completion, NFE is more flexible regarding its aims, modalities, management and procedures. The contents and curricula for NFE can be adjusted to meet the needs of individual groups of learners.

Regarding the transfer of learning outcomes, the new *National Education Act* acknowledges the importance of all types of education, whether formal, non-formal or informal education. The act specifies that credits accumulated by learners will be transferable within the same type or between different types of education, regardless of whether the credits have been accumulated at the same or at

different educational institutions, including learning from non-formal or informal education, vocational training or work experience.

Attached to NFE system are also the informal learning activities which enable learners to learn on their own according to their interests, potential, readiness and the opportunities available from individuals, society, the environment, media or other sources of knowledge—such as libraries, museums and S&T centres, CLCs, village reading centres, sub-district NFE centres, sub-district health offices, sub-district agricultural offices, local wisdom, local media, families, community leaders and networking through cooperative activities, as well as by media, including radio, television, newspapers and magazines.

The range of opportunities is also expanded through a variety of adult and non-formal education programmes and activities. These programmes take into account the rights guaranteed in the current *Constitution*, which states that Thai citizens of all ages, regardless of gender, must have access to equal rights and opportunities. As the body directly responsible for the promotion and development of adult education, ONFEC has developed a variety of adult and non-formal education programmes: basic education (which includes literacy promotion, the basic education equivalency programme and continuing education based on the needs of the target groups), education for occupational development, education for life skills development, and education for community and social development.

Covering a wide range of disadvantaged groups, the programmes are based on the rights spelled out in the *Constitution*. There are programmes, for example, for the prison inmates, the disabled, the elderly, ethnic minority groups (including hilltribes and Thai Muslims in the South), the unreached in remote areas, and Thai citizens living abroad. The teaching-learning approaches are learner-centred, and learners participate fully in all activities. The curriculum is developed to meet the needs of each specific target group and aim to enhance learning success. And there are almost as many innovative ways of teaching and learning as there are different curricula. There are, for example, self-learning programmes using electronic media, distance-education programmes via satellite, credit-transfer programmes connecting formal, non-formal and informal education, as well as quality assurance, accreditation of the learners' experiences and home school programmes.

Three major non-formal programmes: Basic, vocational and information services

The key organization responsible for NFE in Thailand, ONFEC supports the services of non-formal and informal education to promote lifelong learning and capacity-building among the out-of-school population to enable them to improve their quality of life. Currently, ONFEC is expanding NFE services to cover more target groups throughout the country, including children, women, inmates, the labour force, the disabled, conscripts, agriculturists, the elderly (over 60 years of age), hilltribes, local leaders, slum dwellers, Thai Muslims, religious practitioners, people who have had no opportunity to further their studies in formal schooling after compulsory education, Thai people abroad, and students in formal schools. NFE programmes and activities provided by ONFEC fall into three categories: basic education, vocational education and skills training, as well as information services.

Basic education

Basic education programmes are provided to those who have not had any formal schooling or have dropped out and would like to come back to further their education. The programmes in this area are as follows:

Functional Literacy Programme: This programme has been implemented since 1971 to help adult learners to learn basic skills in reading, writing, calculating, as well as problem solving through the '*Khit-pen* Process', which focuses on academic knowledge, self-knowledge and environmental knowledge. Adult learners can choose to solve their problems by considering these three areas of knowledge. The curriculum is designed to be responsive to the target learners' needs and conditions; there is a specific curriculum for various NFE target groups. The Functional Literacy Programme has a curriculum equivalent to Grade 4 of the formal schooling system.

Hill Area Education Project: This project is specifically designed for the population that lives along the mountain ranges in the northern and western parts of the country. ONFEC intends to extend educational services which are responsive to the needs and problems of the hill-tribe community. Through this project, a number of hill-tribespeople have become literate.

Continuing Education Programme: The programme provides individuals with an opportunity to increase their knowledge and obtain certificates equivalent to those offered upon completion of Grades 6, 9 or 12 of general formal schools. The two learning approaches used in this programme are distance education and group study.

Vocational education and skills training

This area is designed to promote the public welfare or to upgrade individuals' quality of life through vocational development. To this end, four types of vocational education and skills training are offered:

Interest Group: The interest group programme aims to serve specific vocational skills needs and interests of various groups of people. A minimum of 15 persons may request to obtain specific skills training according to their interests. The course duration is not more than 30 hours. Group members have to pay for learning materials, while the government pays for resource person.

Short-term Vocational Course: This type of course ranges from 100 to 300 hours. Those interested in this area can register for any kind of skills training they need. Learners have to pay a nominal amount training materials. Most of the training is conducted at provincial and district NFE centres, as well as at CLCs.

Vocational Certificate Curriculum: This three-year vocational certificate curriculum programme is provided to those who have completed primary education or Grade 6 and would like to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world of work, self and society, or how to choose occupations suitable to the needs of individuals and their communities. The students who complete this programme obtain a certificate that is equivalent to Grade 9 or lower secondary education in the formal schooling system.

NFE Occupational Certificate Curriculum: This three-year NFE occupational certificate curriculum programme is provided to those who have completed lower secondary education and have been working in business sectors or have been self-employed for at least three years. This curriculum is designed especially to upgrade the vocational skills of learners who already have work experience and skills. Learners who complete this programme are awarded a vocational certificate equivalent to Grade 12 or upper secondary education in the formal schooling system.

Information services

Information services are provided for informal education or lifelong learning through various media to enable people to learn at times that are convenient to them. The main sites and activities organized in this area include:

Public Library: Public libraries are regarded as the academic resource centre where people can search for knowledge and information they require. There are 847 public libraries throughout Thailand.

Community Learning Centre: CLCs provide various kinds of knowledge for people and communities engaged in lifelong learning. The activities include basic education, vocational education, and skills training, information services, as well as activities for the promotion of quality of life. Currently, there are 8,057 CLCs in Thailand.

Educational radio and television programmes: The educational radio and television programmes are produced primarily by the Centre for Education Technology and Regional Non-Formal Education Centres. In addition, through the Thaicom Distance Education Centre, in cooperation with the Thaicom Foundation, ONFEC has initiated a satellite education project to improve the quality of the distance education programme with the aim to provide an equal opportunity for all Thais to acquire knowledge and up-to-date information.

National Science Centre for Education: The National Science Centre for Education in Bangkok provides knowledge about and exhibition on S&T for the public. Twelve additional science centres are located in other provinces.

Future trends of NFE policies and framework

On 22–23 May 2004, the Permanent Secretary of the MOE held a meeting with non-formal educators from higher education institutions, lecturers, NGO representatives and educational administrators to discuss the future of NFE. The meeting yielded the following suggestions for ONFEC to carry out in the future.

To play an active and efficient role in creating and strengthening a learning society, and in providing basic education, the goals and the policy framework of NFE in the future should include the following:

- Strengthening the community's self-reliance and empowering it so that it can become a learning society.

- NFE organizations should work together with their local and national government and NGO network.
- NFE should make use of all available means and technology to create new approaches and constantly update its models of programme implementation.
- NFE should assess and re-evaluate past accomplishments in order to re-formulate or adjust the structure of its institutional management to be ready for new dimensions of its operation.
- Urge the government to draft and pass a National Non-formal Education Act.

Based on these suggestions, the aforementioned team of non-formal educators has been drafting the framework, strategic plans and action plans for NFE in the future. Although it has not been finalized, a rough policy draft and an operational framework are given below.

Strategic plans for NFE

Based on the present system of educational reform, five strategic plans have been developed:

STRATEGY I: The identification of target groups should be clearly considered for the implementation of a variety of NFE activities which should be relevant to the significant needs of the particular target learners.

STRATEGY II: Learning resources should be managed and implemented by doing the following:

- Surveying and managing the Management Information System (MIS) to enable learners to access all needed information according to their interest.
- Promoting coordination among various learning sources or organizations to develop and transfer all needed knowledge and life experiences more widely—for instance, basic language skills and critical thinking, analytical, communication and vocational skills, as well as knowledge about health, art and music.
- Promoting development of ICTs to raise the effectiveness of lifelong learning among the learners.

STRATEGY III: Communities should be made “lifelong learner-centred” by:

- Setting a policy to make communities the starting-point for education by encouraging them to participate in the planning and implementation of community development activities.
- Improving and developing communities’ basic information resources, especially lifelong education resources, such as CLCs and ICT networks, and encouraging all parts of society to participate in community development activities.

STRATEGY IV: Budget allocations should be distributed to support local activities and serve the needs of target groups. The following supplementary measures should also be undertaken:

- A community learning fund should be raised as an additional means of supporting community learning activities that accord with the national policy to make local communities learner-centred.
- The local administrative organization will be responsible for allocating the appropriate funds to launch NFE and informal education and thereby to promote lifelong learning.

STRATEGY V: Management and administrative measures should be undertaken to promote collaborative and managerial skills among NFE staff, centres and networks to enable them to make them more effective roles.

Some outstanding programmes

Bilingual literacy

Reaching marginalized groups, such as rural poor villagers and ethnic minorities, is currently an important task of UNESCO APPEAL. A manual of learning material development for the Pwo Karen hill-tribes in the Omkoi District of Chiang Mai Province was prepared, and training for policymakers and practitioners from eight countries has been carried out. National pilot projects have consequently been developed and partially supported by UNESCO APPEAL. The bilingual approach has become the new framework for these projects. Mother tongues are learned first so that learners can have a bridge to profit from learning in the national language. With experience in

writing in their own languages, minorities are empowered and better able to preserve their cultural heritage.

In Thailand, learning the Thai language is one of the prerequisites of the non-formal elementary education programme for hilltribes, since it is used as the language of instruction. The lack of an appropriate language environment in some hilltribe villages has meant that no one in them can speak Thai. As a result, students there have been unable to move successfully through the learning system. This pilot project is aimed at finding ways to facilitate the learning of hilltribe learners by using a bilingual approach.

The target learners chosen for this project were members of the Pwo Karen hilltribe in the Omkoi District, Chiang Mai Province. Since they have no written language, the first step was to develop one in order to make the next step to Thai.

Through close cooperation with SIL International, an agency with expertise in minority languages, the working team has conducted a linguistic analysis of the Pwo Karen oral language, developed an alphabetical chart with the use of Thai script, designed learning materials, and conducted teacher training. This started with a visit to two Pwo Karen villages in the Omkoi District. In March 2003, a workshop was held for the development of community survey instruments and a plan for field data collection. The second workshop was on the phonemic analysis of Pwo Karen. The findings of previous study on Pwo Karen in the Srisawat District, Kanchanaburi Province, and the Hot District, Chiang Mai Province, were used as the basis for collecting words to illustrate the Omkoi Pwo Karen sound system. Roughly 360 words were selected for identifying the consonants, vowels and tones of Omkoi Pwo Karen. The key informants were three NFE Pwo Karen teachers in hilltribe learning centres from the Omkoi District.

In March 2003, the word list was brought to the target village for comparison with local Pwo Karen. These lists were checked and corrected by the hilltribes themselves. From May to July 2003, information was collected on cultural themes and the village calendar prepared. In August, a curriculum development workshop was organized. The first writer workshop was held at Pwo Karen villages in October 2003. Participants had the chance to practice by producing booklets, posters and other printed materials themselves. Computers,

printers and digital cameras were available for teachers and Pwo Karen learners so that they could better explore producing materials together.

Development of a learning family: The case of Na Noi

Ban Lim Tong of the Nang Rong District, Burirum Province, is similar to other rural villages in North-eastern Thailand. Villagers derive their main income from growing rice and raising livestock. Agricultural work is very risky for them because they have no suitable irrigation system and no negotiation power at markets.

In 1998 the Suksapatana Foundation and other partners, including the Department of Non-Formal Education, sent volunteer teachers, who had received special training in constructionism from Seymour Papert of the MIT Media Lab, to work with Na Noi. At the time, she had finished only Grade 4 of local elementary school, and her family was very poor and suffering under huge debt. The teachers encouraged her to keep a record of her reflections on family difficulties so that they would have concrete data for analysing root causes of family poverty.

Both sides agreed that she needed to learn about production planning. They started by setting a timeline and determining the money needed to invest for each vegetable plot the family grew. Production planning was later extended to financial family planning. The details of daily income and expenditures were recorded in full; so the book became an instance of “learner-generated learning materials”. An expenditure classification scheme was also established to facilitate financial analysis. At the end of each month, Na Noi calculated and compared all expenditure types and presented the results to her family for discussion. Family members spent time looking at the objective financial data and analysed it in view of: the amount of each type of expenditure, how reasonable it was, who should be responsible for some unreasonable expenditure items, such as buying canned coffee instead of using instant coffee. They also discussed how to reduce some types of expenditures and monitored the family financial situation accordingly. Through this learning process, Na Noi could supply objective and transparent financial data to facilitate family learning. She also had chance to practice literacy skills every day. In addition, she became a role model for her children regarding

the family and personal financial planning. In the course of the project, the family members achieved greater mutual understanding, as well as a solidarity that enabled them to work together to eradicate family poverty.

Na Noi was provided with a computer and training in Microsoft Excel at her house so that she could work with a more flexible classification scheme, rather than with a manual, time-consuming scheme. This arrangement also made it easier for her to contact some external agencies and ask for needed information, as well as to provide advice to and exchange experiences with other villagers who had similar problems and interests.

Currently, Na Noi and her daughter host a mini-computer club at her house, and she is teaching children and youth in her village basic computer skill, especially how to use Microsoft Excel to analyse family financial records. On January 2003, Na Noi declared that her family had no more any debt, and no longer needed intensive assistance as in the past.

Development of a learning community: The case of Ban Samkha

Poverty reduction can be effectively managed at the community level. Villagers of Ban Sikh, Mae Ta District, Lampang Province, wondered, after twenty years of government-led community development, why their community's economic situation had not improved. Almost every household had considerable debt. Thus they needed to know how much debt all 152 households (656 inhabitants) had, where it came from and how to help each other to overcome such community pressure. The first community debt survey showed that the total debt was about 18 million Baht, which was a lot higher than previously thought. This discovery put a great deal of pressure on the entire community. Started in 2001 in a village meeting—which is the most important mechanism of community decision-making process—they decided to do research to solve the problem themselves. The villagers formed a research team of fourteen members led by a chairperson. Every household then kept records of all daily income and expenditures. A scheme of data classification was decided upon. At the end of each month, a research committee, together with ten to fourteen households under his/her charge, analysed the group data and then research team consolidated the data from the entire community.

Community income and expenditure data were reported at the village meeting and discussed with a view to finding suitable ways of reducing expenditures and increasing income. The considerations about expenditures gave rise to some new occupations, which gave some villagers the chance to make some additional income. This would not have been possible if the individual-centred rather than community-wide approach to bookkeeping had been used here, as it had in Na Noi's case. Also this approach enabled villages to see that their debt was mainly the consequence of inappropriate mindsets and ways of living, especially their over-reliance on materials advertised in the media over the last twenty years. By comparing monthly income and expenditures, they were able to determine at what time of the year they needed to find extra income to cover their increased costs. The most important learning experience was that they needed more knowledge about management, rather than money or materials from the government, to solve their poverty problem.

Children and youth were the prime movers in Ban Samkha village to explore learning about computers and the Internet. A school teacher found some interesting information on the Internet and disseminated it through village broadcasting station, and offered free computer training for everyone, but this attempt was unsuccessful.

There were three activities in which nearly all villagers participated: community retail store, village trust fund and bookkeeping. When the transactions became larger, the community sought help from a professional accountant to revise the existing bookkeeping system. Siam Cement (Lampang) Ltd., National Electronics and Computer Technology and the NFE Department then cooperated in the development of three packages of computer software and provided training to local children and youth, who were then asked to train some responsible persons later. This was the starting point for adult villagers to see computers as functional tools for improving the effectiveness of community work.

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A System of Quality Education for Adults and Youth in China

Yuquan Qiao

To adapt to the new situation caused by China's entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the rapid development of economic globalization, China regards quality education for adults and youth as a key component of its education system. The provision of such education has been integrated into the overall plan for local economic and social development and made the basis of the national economy and social development. Promoting quality education for adults and youth is seen as an important way to implement China's strategy to 'develop the country through science and education', to facilitate the sustainable economic and social development and to enhance China's international competitiveness. Such quality education is necessary in order for the country to adjust its economic structure, improve the quality of its labour force and quicken development of its human resources. It is a crucial means to broaden the employment and promote the employment rate and redistribution of the labour force.

The five-year reform as development objective

Education for adults and youth aims primarily to promote: economic and technological progress, employment, agricultural development, the enrichment of rural areas and peasants, the achievement of the 'develop-the-west region strategy', and the development of a harmonious Chinese society. This kind of education provides vocational school education and training in various ways and at different levels

to: middle school and high school graduates, recent workers in urban and rural areas, the laid-off and unemployed, in-service personnel, and rural labour.

China's preliminary plan for a modern quality education system for adults and youth is adapted to the socialist market economy and integrates market demands and labour employment. The plan aims at developing an education system with an efficient structure, flexible and open styles of delivery, and several distinct and independent features.

Developmental plan and focus on work

Given the present reality, China has taken measures that are tailored to the local conditions in each case; its plans are designed to address the needs of different areas and different sorts of people. Priority is currently being given to rural areas and western China; the aim is to provide training so as to enhance the practical skills of those living in rural areas and in western China.

Rural areas: To meet the needs of modern agricultural development, as well as to make adjustments to the economic structure, China has consistently sought to integrate agriculture, the sciences and education into the planning of elementary, vocational and adult education. The idea is to promote vocational schools in rural areas that strengthen cooperation between enterprises, agricultural research institutes and centres of agricultural science and technology. By giving them a free hand stimulating and coordinating the cooperation of schools, enterprises and peasant households, these vocational schools are expected to make strides in the industrialization of agriculture and to promote professional excellence. The aim of "green certificate" education is to train a large number of S&T model households and entrepreneurial leaders. The state has taken several measures to support vocational education in rural areas, in the west, in areas with ethnic minorities and in poor areas. It has started a number of key vocational schools. From now on, the five-year vocational middle school will recruit 3.5 million students from rural areas each year. In every county, township and village, China will establish an education and training system for peasants which will include cultural and S&T education and will be open and practical in nature. Vocational and adult schools will form the basis of human resources development and tech-

nology training, as well as for mobilising the workforce mobility and helping the poor to improve their living conditions.

The west: China will promote the cooperation between eastern and western regions, large and medium-sized cities and rural areas in running schools. It will encourage headmasters and teachers of vocational schools in the east and large and medium-sized cities to assume posts and run schools in the west and rural areas. Schools in the east and large and medium-sized cities in the mid-west will recruit students from the west and rural areas, and waive tuition of students from poor families. Modern distance learning and training, as well as self-study exams, will be expanded for rural areas and the west. In five years, schools in the east will recruit 1.2 million students from the west.

At the same time, large and medium-sized cities and developed areas will actively expand higher vocational education by continuing to develop secondary specialized education and vocational training. Some municipalities and prefectures (administrative regions with ethnic minorities in a given province) satisfying relevant requirements may run comprehensive and community vocational polytechnic colleges.

Structural reform of management

Under the leadership of the state council, the management structure is being gradually improved. Management will entail managing at different levels, giving priority to local authorities, planning by the central government, and the participation of social groups. A multi-pronged school-management strategy will evolve under the guidance of state and local governments. It will rely on enterprises, as well as different trades and social groups. Efforts will also be made to encourage various social groups to initiate vocational education. Trades, enterprises, intermediate social organizations and mass organizations will play an active role in developing quality education for adults and youth.

In China many sectors govern education, run and administer schools, particularly technical and vocational schools and adult education, in conformity with legal provisions. The *Education Act of the People's Republic of China* and *Labor Law of the People's Republic of China*, as well as other relevant laws and rules have been promulgated. But more still needs to be done. The legal system dealing with

the transition to employment will have to be strengthened. Further, the law enforcement and supervisory system needs to be improved. Monitoring, instruction and inspection also have to be strengthened. Evaluation of the education system and its results must be also be improved and reinforced. The quality of education for adults and youth will be assessed in accordance with the demands of market forces, but at the same time the participation of social groups in the assessment process will be encouraged.

Various departments in the central government have set up inter-departmental meetings to discuss problems encountered at work. In intersectoral work, each department's responsibilities are clearly defined. The Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for overall planning, comprehensive coordination, and macro-administration.

Developing quality education for adults and youth is primarily the responsibility of local governments and communities. In townships where schools are managed in an inflexible and closed way, attempts will be made to bring about a change in the management system. Many channels will be mobilized for raising funds for vocational education by the people's government at the municipal and prefecture levels. The boundaries between different sectors and school types are being eliminated to increase efficiency.

Enterprises, trades and social groups running vocational schools and training classes will be organized, directed and supported. Enterprises will run vocational schools and training centres according to local and market needs. Enterprises may cooperate with schools to run them jointly in many forms. They may perform "demand-oriented" training and provide part-time teachers, practice facilities and equipment for schools. They may also set up R&D institutions and experimental centres for schools.

Trade organizations are being entrusted by governmental departments to carry out human resource forecasts for different trades, draft vocational education and training plans for trades, provide vocational education, train staff and workers, assess vocational skills for trades, and participate in compiling textbooks on relevant topics and training for teachers. Trade organizations may also run vocational schools and training centres.

Non-governmental vocational education will be encouraged and supported. Non-governmental, non-profit vocational schools

will enjoy favourable policies for initiating vocational education for a social cause and for the good of the public. State-run schools will be encouraged to import non-governmental mechanisms.

The system for granting academic certificates, training certificates and vocational credentials is being improved. Major efforts will be devoted to preparing workers for the labour market. This will entail enforcing strict control over employment entry by putting in place a system of labour security and supervision by personnel departments.

Vocational guidance and employment service will be reinforced. Students will be directed to change their employment outlooks. Education for starting a business will be promoted. Graduates will be encouraged to find jobs in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in small towns and rural areas or start their own businesses. The employment service system will be professionalized to offer job information, consultation and favourable conditions.

Educational and teaching reform

By the end of 2000, China realized the historic objective of universalizing nine-year compulsory basic education. As a result, the development of education in China entered a new stage. One key effort made was to reorient and improve the education system through innovative reform of basic education curriculum. Two new major objectives of basic education are: 1) universalising the nine-year compulsory education to realize the objective of education for all (EFA) and to improve the quality of life for all citizens, and 2) improving the quality of education with the aim of cultivating excellence and the spirit and ability of innovation and creativity for socio-economic progress and S&T advancement. In 1999, *The Action Plan for Invigorating Education Towards the 21st Century* was issued by the Chinese Government.

Curriculum reform of basic education

“The Project of Curriculum Reform of Basic Education” was arranged by Chinese Government and is regarded as a key project. The aim of the project is to design a new basic education curriculum system for the twenty-first century by renewing educational notions, including ideas about personal growth. It will improve the de-

sign and implementation of teaching and curriculum, placing greater emphasis on their response to changing social contexts, learners' needs, and parental and community expectations.

In 2001, the MOE issued the *Guidelines for the Curriculum Reform of Basic Education* and the curriculum standards for nine-year compulsory education. Since that time, a pilot project has been conducted in which one or more counties or districts in each province participates in the new curriculum reform experiment. At the same time, new teaching materials are introduced into the experiment schools. The proposed reform will be accomplished in two phases: In 2001–2004, the design of the new curriculum system was completed. After 2004, the aim has been to expand gradually the new practices throughout the country.

The curriculum reform mainly involves the following shifts:

- 1) from disciplinary segregation to well-balanced, integrated curriculum which is more adaptive to learners' choices;
- 2) from the systematic presentation of individual disciplines and excessive emphasis on traditional knowledge to closer integration of modern society, technological development and the learners' life;
- 3) from unified materials to alternatives for meeting the different needs of schools and students;
- 4) from passive learning modes (e.g. rote memorization, imitation) to active learning (e.g. participatory observation, hands-on practice, hands-on and peer group work);
- 5) from excessive emphasis on the memorization of facts and competitive examinations to an integrated assessment with dual focus on outcomes and learners' development and the improvement of teaching;
- 6) from highly centralized to a shared management, with responsibilities distributed across national, local and school levels.

Literacy education

By 2000 the literacy rate of adults over the age of 15 rose to 91.3% and the literacy rate of the adults aged 15–50 rose to more than 95%. The emphasis on implementing literacy education and popularising compulsory education is working.

The MOE requires that the local primary schools take on the responsibility of providing literacy education to all teenagers under 15 years of age. Middle and primary schools and adult schools in rural areas are expected to play an active role in eradicating illiteracy.

The MOE also requires that literacy education be combined with students' working and real-life activities. The content of courses includes not only cultural knowledge, such as literacy, reading, writing and keeping accounts, but also citizen education, career skills education, life knowledge and health education. Women's literacy education includes maternity, child care, and home education (e.g. management of personal affairs and home finances). The contents of literacy education in minority areas also treats folk customs and traditional culture.

Flexible modes of teaching have been adopted. In some cases, literacy is concentrated in central residential areas. In more sparsely populated areas, the rule is to have neighbourhood study groups. In very remote areas, teachers or more advanced primary school pupils provide literacy education. The China Education Television Station (CETV) regularly broadcasts nationwide television series produced by LiaoYuan Radio & TV School. The programmes are very popular because they teach practical knowledge and skills and help farmers to improve their standard of living and increase their income.

The MOE has developed curriculum programmes, such as the Literacy Education Syllabus and Rural Adult's Elementary Education Syllabus. Provincial education departments compile textbooks to supplement to the main and serve a variety of local needs. Given the high illiteracy rate among women, the Chinese Government has contracted experts to write more than 100 different kinds of literacy textbooks and to develop nearly 1,000 different pieces of teaching and reading material to promote women's continuing education.

The education and teaching reform is intent on reinforcing work ethic of adults and youth; it seeks to lay a more solid foundation for literacy, enhance work skills, strengthen physical and mental education, and foster the learner's development of his or her professional and practical skills, interest in learning, and entrepreneurial skills. The government intends to intensify its training of qualified and highly talented workers who are in the forefront of production.

A mechanism has been put in place for vocational schools to

maintain close ties with the labour market. In this way, training is geared more towards the demands of the economy, technological progress and changing labour market. Vocational education is designed to meet the needs of developing industries and modern service trades. Great efforts are being made to reinforce training for skilled workers, especially for senior skilled workers and technicians. Corresponding reforms of curriculum and textbooks have been undertaken. Curricula and textbooks in vocational education reflect new knowledge, technology, techniques and methods.

As for teaching practice, professionalism is being stressed. Teaching activities are integrated in production practice, social service, technology transfer and technological development. To ensure enough time for teaching practice, pre-service and in-service training and internships are being promoted. Training centres have been built which promote open and multi-functional education to meet societal needs.

IT is used increasingly in education and teaching, including in distance vocational education, data banks of vocational education resources and multi-media software of high quality for vocational schools and students.

The quality of education provided to adults and youth has been improved. Core teachers have been trained. Professionals, such as engineers, technicians, managerial personnel, and people with special skills, have been recruited as full-time or part-time trainers in their areas of expertise in enterprises and institutions. By this means, the number of qualified teachers and trainees has increased.

Both formal schooling and vocational training are given equal importance. School-running patterns and schooling systems are gradually becoming more flexible. Full-time schooling is being combined with part-time schooling; similarly, pre-job education is being linked to post-job education. Different durations of schooling and learning styles are also being put into practice. Flexible school systems, such as the credit system, are being established so as to create conditions that will enable students to participate in work-study programmes and to work and study, in turns as well as fulfil schooling in stages.

Links and exchanges between adult, vocational and regular education are being facilitated so as to build "bridges" for talented persons.

Thus far an experiment in the use of comprehensive curriculum at the high-school level has been conducted in which vocational and regular education were linked. The experiment's objective was to facilitate the link between secondary vocational education and higher specialized education.

Increasing financing

The central government has created a special fund for the promotion of quality adult and youth education (AYE). It is used to subsidize the training of teachers engaged in vocational education in rural areas and the mid-western region, as well as to support the development of textbooks, the replenishment of multimedia educational resources and the construction of model vocational schools. Local governments have also been called upon to increase their special fund for AYE. A surtax will also be levied in cities for education. All levels of government will at have to take account of rural workers' needs when allocating funds for the development of S&T, technology transfer and poverty alleviation in rural areas. Similarly, any government investment aimed to improve the agricultural infrastructure will also have to allocate funds for the construction of vocational and adult schools.

Various kinds of enterprises will need to bear relevant costs for implementing vocational education and personnel training. Normally an enterprise has an education and training fund of 1.5% of its total payroll. For enterprises which require more highly trained employees, involve a heavier training load and promise good economic returns, the training fund makes up 2.5% of the payroll. When enterprises update technology or import projects, they typically allocate a certain percentage of funds for technological training for their employees.

Various means (including financing from enterprises, taxation and donations) will be used to fund quality education for adults and youth. All segments of society will be encouraged to donate money to finance quality education for adults and youth. An additional incentive for enterprises, groups, and individuals to make such donations and payments for vocational education is that the money given will be tax-deductible.

Adult and Youth Education in Nicaragua

Nydia Verónica Gurdíán and Elizabeth Navarro

Nicaragua is a country with a young demographic structure, high levels of poverty and low levels of productivity. Of its 5.5 million inhabitants, more than 50% are younger than 20 years old. Of these youth, 45% are poor, have low levels of education and are therefore not productive. During the 1990s, the country's productivity suffered an average annual decline of 1.7%. This was three times higher than the average in Latin America during the same period.

Achievements and problem areas

The liberalization of trade since the 1990s has not had the expected positive impact on the employment of non-skilled workers and the well-being of the poorest segments of the population. The presence of non-qualified workers with incomplete primary education does not constitute an advantage for the Nicaraguan economy. Indeed, it can be argued that the unsatisfactory state of the economy, specifically regarding the country's competitiveness, is due in large part to the low level of education of its workforce.

The formal education system, comprising primary and secondary education, is under the control of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (Ministerio Educación, Cultura y Deportes: MECD), while the provision of technical education falls under the jurisdiction of the National Technical Training Institute (Instituto Nacional Tecnológico: INATEC). The adult education modality is directed to people over 15 years of age who, for diverse reasons, have not been able to access the formal education system or have dropped out prematurely. This modality is the responsibility of MECD's Directorate of Continuing

Education for Youth and Adults (Dirección de Educación Continua de Jóvenes y Adultos: DECJA), which develops flexible and diversified educational alternatives.

The average schooling of the population aged 15 or older is 4.8 years. In the rural sector, it decreases to an average of 3.5 years; and among the rural poor, it is below 2.4 years. Nevertheless, Nicaraguan educational policies over the last decade have made substantial progress in the development of human resources and in the efficiency of the educational sector (Adato and Roopnaraine 2004).

Parallel to the efforts to improve the formal education system, MECD has been developing—through DECJA and with the help of international organizations such as the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional: AECI) and the Organization of Iberoamerican States (Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos: OEI)—a basic education programme called the Programa de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Adultos de Nicaragua (PAEBANIC). Through this programme, it has reached 45,000 people each year, 35,000 of whom are 15–30 years of age. This coverage represents 17% of the targeted population in this age group. In rural areas, the participation of women in this age range is 41%. The graduation rate for each of the three levels of basic education exceeds 82%, which is high compared to the graduation and retention rates in regular primary education. (Republica de Nicaragua 2002).

There is increasing interest in developing educational programmes that provide instruments for the mobilization of acquired knowledge and skills in the world of work. This is a most important and relevant aspect of education policy in countries with low income and very restricted access to education. In the case of adult education (Educación de adultos: EDA), the link with the world of work is evolving into an open and immediate demand from the learners themselves, because they are generally at an economically active age and are part of the lowest economic stratum. Thus they are highly motivated to find better work and skills options.

In this sense, the adult basic education (Educación Básica de Adultos: EBA) provided by DECJA-MECD and the PAEBANIC programme tries to respond to the lack of technical training among this population by helping them to acquire skills and promoting their integration into the world of work as semi-qualified or self-

employed workers. In this way, the programme helps to improve the situation of widespread unemployment or underemployment. To this end, PAEBANIC has implemented extra-curricular courses in agricultural, industrial and service sector skills for the learners who take the third level of EBA. These courses take place in INATEC's Vocational Training Centres (Centros de Formación Profesional) or in private training centres (Centros de Capacitación Privados) recognized by INATEC. Between 1999 and 2002, 2,910 people were trained, and in 2003 (at the time of writing), 1,018 learners were being trained and would obtain the final official certification of technical skills in a selected modality.

To capitalize on this initial success, DECJA carried out a revision: Based on its most successful experiences and lessons learned, it has formulated a new education model with a relevant and innovative proposal on curricular reform entitled *Transformación Curricular de la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos con Orientación para el Trabajo* (MECD 2003b).

Recent developments and trends

The future development of Nicaragua requires vision regarding adult and youth education for it is the means for fighting poverty and confronting the challenges of globalization. Globalization is a reality that has transformed the life of the country and the citizenship requirements of adults and youth. It carries with it risks, insecurities and dangers, but also represents an opportunity to build a more stable country and provide its citizens with greater opportunities to compete in the global economy and with improved capacities for accessing information, knowledge and ideas. Adult and youth education can thus help to change the population's traditional values and to promote the country's development and put an end to poverty.

The new global scientific, technological, commercial and cultural networks establish links between countries that have something to contribute, while poor countries such as Nicaragua can feel excluded. If Nicaragua is not integrated quickly in the global dynamic, the knowledge divide will widen—with serious consequences.

The new approach to adult and youth education the country is striving for has to go beyond a utilitarian perspective and recognize that education is directed not merely towards a person as an eco-

nomic agent but towards the person's overall development (Delors 1996). Thus, by means of this curricular proposal, Nicaragua seeks to move towards the "practopia": the aim is unite, in an intelligent and wise manner, practical education with a vision of education that is based on continuous human development.

Global summits and agreements on education have introduced a new focus on and commitment to education. At the global and regional levels in recent decades, summits on education have reflected a new consensus and have reaffirmed that education is "decisive" for a nation's development. The agreements promote a form of education that is capable of anticipating and adapting to the challenges of the people, education goes beyond the walls of the school and helps citizens to improve the quality of their lives and to transform their attitudes and values.

The renewed commitment to education that has emerged in global meetings and declarations embraces the necessity of generating new ways of educating youth and adults. The *Hamburg Declaration* (UIE 1997) questions formal practices of education and calls for greater interaction between formal and non-formal modalities, as well as for the flexibility and creativity needed to make this possible. In concluding, it demands a new approach to adult and youth education:

The new concept of youth and adult education presents a challenge to the existing practices, because it calls for effective networking within the formal and non-formal systems, and for innovations and more creativity and flexibility. The ultimate goal should be . . . the creation of a learning society.

The implementation strategies and initiatives, such as the multi-phase Youth and Adult Basic Education Programme (Programa Multifase de Educación Básica para Jóvenes y Adultos) funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo: BID), aims to increase enrolment of Nicaraguan youth and adults, raise the educational achievement of adults who have never been to school or who dropped out of the formal education system after completing basic education, improve opportunities for work insertion of school leavers, increase the graduation rate from basic education for youth aged 10–15 years, and strengthen the system of management, monitoring and evaluation in the basic education sector for youth and adults.

In addition to the project with the BID, Nicaragua is also carrying out a project supported by the European Community through its Regional Programme for the Reconstruction of Central America (Programa Regional de Reconstrucción para América Central: PRRAC). This skills development project is aimed at youth and adults in the final phase of, or who have completed, the EBA programme run by the MECD. The project's activities aim to create and manage a support system for DECJA at the national and local levels, adapt and develop learning materials and aids, train instructors and facilitators, and develop, monitor and evaluate courses on skills development.

These projects are expected to deliver basic education for adults integrated with work-related activities. Specific outputs of these projects will include: courses regulated at the national and local levels, a report on curricular changes in continuing education for youth and adults with work experience, the development of ten specialized work-related courses, and the production of 18,000 units of teaching materials, covering lessons for tailoring, beauty care, auto mechanics, domestic electrician training, building construction, welding electrician training, cabinet-making, confectionary and bakery, agriculture and livestock rearing. A minimum of 40% of the 1,800 participants in 120 skills development courses should be women. In addition, Nicaragua offers adult education courses in work skills financed by local communities, technical committees and NGOs.

Recommendations

There is increasing interest in providing adult education programmes that impart knowledge and skills that are directly relevant to the world of work. This is especially the case in countries with low income and serious restrictions on access to education. In addition, there is growing awareness of the need to provide educational options that help young people to complete their education.

The link between adult education and the world of work is developing out of the open and immediate demand of learners, who are generally at an economically active age and belong to the lowest economic strata. The challenges involved in linking education to the world of work go hand in hand with the demand for improved NFE programmes for the most socially and economically disadvantaged people.

We recommend including a component on “education and work” in education programmes for youth and adults. This involves treating literacy education as part of a vision of social, cultural and economic development. We also recommend designing skills development projects and managing their financing in a way that takes account of which local resources are available and which are lacking, as well as of the supply and demand of the productive sector. These projects should consider a system of revolving credit to promote self-initiatives. In addition, one must also budget for carrying out impact evaluations.

Another recommendation is to establish agreements between institutions responsible for the training of youth and adults in order to ensure the relevance of the curricula. In time, a national survey should be conducted in which the labour requirements of the productive sector are considered. This would serve as a reference for youth- and adult-oriented educational projects.

Finally, educational projects for youth and adults designed to support a culture of work must also show special interest to the concerns of women, sustainable environmental practices, health care and the formation of a culture of peace and citizenship.

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Challenges in the Construction of a Policy for Quality Adult and Youth Education in Guatemala

Ilda Moran de Garcia and Otto Rivera

To put the challenges and perspectives for adult and youth education in Guatemala into context, it is instructive to review the various initiatives in the field of literacy which have been implemented since 1945. Eleven mass campaigns have been conducted by the National Program of Literacy, as well as the National Movement for Literacy, until 1982.

With the ratification of the *Constitution of the Republic* in 1985, in which literacy is declared a matter of national urgency, the National Committee for Literacy (CONALFA – *Consejo Nacional de Alfabetización*) was created. It was composed of entities from the private and the public sectors. However, although it has a state-allocated budget, its human and financial resources, even twenty years later, are still insufficient to meet the basic learning needs in the area of literacy.

On 29 December 1996, the Government of Guatemala and the *Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca* (URNG) signed peace accords that included the transformation of the country's education system as an important component. With these agreements, three and a half decades of armed conflict came to an end. In the new situation, it was necessary to evaluate the literacy model used to that point and to adapt it to a more multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual context, in order to respond to the new challenges for education in the new context and to support the consolidation of democracy and peace.

It is instructive to take stock of the development and history of CONALFA, especially since the formulation of the National Policy of Adult and Youth Education, and the support being provided to it by international agencies. Such an assessment can no longer be put off; all key actors in Guatemala's development will have to take part in it. Because the very present and future of its younger generations are at stake, it is hoped that this new national policy will become a reality in the medium term.

Background

A study of the International Institute for the Planning of Education, Buenos Aires (CEPAL-UNESCO 2005), on secondary education in Latin America notes that the most important tensions between youth education and development models appear to be those between:

1. the need to organize learning spaces for youth and limitations of budgets destined to youth education;
2. the demand for a diverse education and the demands for immediate training for jobs in the formal and informal economies;
3. the knowledge and skills required by globalization and open markets, such as the English language, and knowledge and skills which are required to ensure cultural diversity and the cultural identity of native peoples; and
4. the need to transform youth in secondary schools and the growing fear in many societies of youth violence.

These four challenges must be taken into account in the formulation of an adequate proposal for expanding and transforming secondary education in Guatemala.

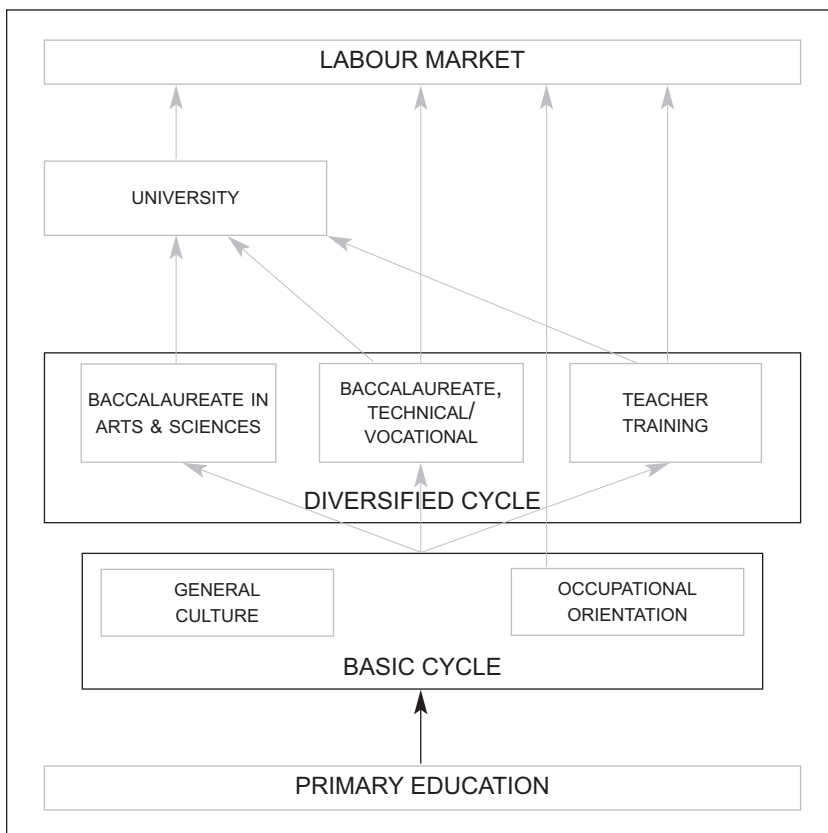
Secondary education follows primary education in Guatemala and comprises two levels—the basic and the diversified levels. Its current structure was defined in Article 67 of the *Law of Education* (12 January 1965, Decree No. 317) as

the stage which provides basic common culture to the learners and explores their aptitudes and interests in order to guide them in their vocations. It includes systematized studies of general and diversified character that are taught in primary and secondary schools.

The duration of secondary education is six years, divided evenly between the basic and the diversified levels (in some courses of study, it lasts an additional year). Those who complete the diversified level are awarded either a high school diploma (*Bachiller* in Spanish) or a technical degree, the *Perito*, for students who have focused on technical subjects. The Guatemalan model of middle education is similar to that in Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

Article 68 of the 1965 *Law of Education* established eleven objectives for secondary middle education. These objectives are meant to ensure the complete ‘formation’ of each youth, preparing him/her for his/her ‘civil and social’ life, developing his/her ethical values and so forth. Diagram 1 presents the current model of secondary education in Guatemala.

Diagram 1. Current model of secondary education in Guatemala



The new *Law of National Education* (Legislative Decree No. 12–91), which has been valid since 12 January 1991, does not fix a definition of secondary education; it simply identifies it as the fourth level of the school subsystem of formal education. Other parts of the law do not specify that the previous law has been abrogated, which suggests that the former law is still valid regarding the definition and organization of middle education.

Basic Secondary Education

Secondary education in Guatemala has two levels, basic secondary and diversified secondary. Basic secondary education provides three years of education to 13–15-year-olds who have completed Grade 6 of primary school. At this level, there is also a high percentage of over-age students which ranged from 11% to 17% between 1996 and 2000 (Anderson 2001: 19). Basic secondary education provides academic and technical education that is expected to prepare graduates, who cannot continue their secondary education, to join the labour force. Its main purpose is to give an opportunity to the students to get to know their aptitudes and acquire a general culture that would allow them to act in an efficient and intelligent manner in the world. The basic secondary level has two areas of concentration: general culture and occupational goals.

The 1991 *Law of National Education* specifies that the basic secondary level encompasses eight “study plans” (*pen sum*), which are differentiated according to the particular combinations of objectives (general culture, work preparation), teaching hours (day, night time), time when teaching takes place (weekends), location/means of teaching (at a centre, through television, radio, etc.), student ages (aged 12–16, or 18 and above), or according to the subjects covered—for instance, basic subjects (e.g. Spanish, mathematics, natural sciences, English, plastic arts, musical education, physical education) as well as other subjects (e.g. occupational areas, chemistry, biology and accounting). These study plans have not been revised for 25 years. However, the incorporation of “new study plans” (*Telesecundaria* or tele-secondary, weekend plans) involves more than new curricular proposals; there are also new cooperative schools that function mostly in urban areas. Both cooperative schools and “Telesecundaria”

were started to increase coverage at the basic secondary level (Anderson 2001).

Indicators of coverage, equity and internal efficiency

Despite the efforts to increase coverage, the net rate of coverage in both the basic and the middle levels has remained low. Statistics of the Guatemalan Ministry of Education (MINIDUC) suggest that, in 2003, the middle level of schooling reached just 23.15% of the 13–18-year-old population. This indicates that out of 100 individuals in this age group, approximately 68 are left out of the education system.

In 2002, 180,423 students graduated from Grade 6 of primary school, and out of these, only 54.44% entered the next level. In 2003, of 306,187 youth aged 12–13 years, only 97,719 (32%) were registered in the basic secondary level. This means that in 2003, secondary education failed to reach all secondary-school-aged youth.

The number of those who are over-age in basic secondary education is high. In 2003, the over-age rate in basic secondary level was 36.21%—for males (39.28%), the rate was 6.61% higher than for females (32.67%). These figures are indicative of the great deficiencies in the Guatemalan education system. The problem calls for a combination of educational strategies which can respond effectively to the current structural constraints.

Drop-out rates are high

Of those registered in 2003, approximately 8.47% left school. The drop-out rate at the basic level was 7.92%. The state has provided less secondary education in some regions of the country than in others. In fact, educational resources for the two levels have been allocated to some regions while others have been neglected. According to data provided by MINIDUC, six provinces have almost no educational services at these levels: Peten, Izabal, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Jalapa and Jutiapa. Whoever wants to continue their post-primary studies, and has the means to do so, must travel to other places. The data shows that 78% of the services are located in urban areas and only 22% in rural ones. In rural areas, schools are located mostly in the main cities of the provinces.

With regard to funding, private contributions for educational services are high at these levels, but they are offered mostly in large cities. Such contributions come to only 18% in rural areas, and then mostly in highly populated settlements. Cooperatives cover 18% of the financial burden in urban areas and 48% in rural areas, whereas the state contributes 26–33% of the funding.

In the six backward provinces mentioned earlier, there are practically no educational services. The highest deficit is in the rural areas, where only 24.5% of the institutions offering basic-level studies are located. This is quite shocking considering that more than 60% of the school-aged population lives in rural areas. In the municipalities where the rural population makes up 60% or more of the total population, only 21.6% of the school-aged population is covered. This deficit increases significantly in municipalities with 80% or more of their population located in rural areas. In such municipalities, the educational coverage is only 12.3%.

As for gender disparities, we see that, in 2003, there was no significant difference in educational coverage between males and females; in fact, in some provinces, females outdid the males, with more women being covered than men. Nevertheless, in general, net coverage is consistently low, regardless of gender. Coverage is even lower in those provinces with a high population of indigenous communities.

Regarding the private/state contribution to coverage, we find that, in 1996, 32.2% of enrolment at the basic level and 25.8% registration in the diversified level was recorded in state-run schools, while 45.1% and 73.9% of the enrolment, respectively, was recorded in private-run schools. The situation seven years later, in 2003, showed a trend towards the drastic reduction of state provision and an increase in private-sector provision. At present, the private sector is the largest provider of education in Guatemala.

An analysis of the expectations concerning the middle and secondary school levels in Guatemala must take account of the limited state provision. Middle and secondary schooling reaches only a limited group of youth in the country.

Diagram 2. Modalities of basic education: Types of centre offering secondary education

TYPES OF CENTRE	DEFINITIONS
1. Public (General)	Administered and financed by the state.
2. Private schools and institutes	They are administered by private initiatives and offer educational services in agreement with regulations and dispositions approved by the MOE.
3. Cooperatives	Non-profit educational institutions, within the city and municipal jurisdiction that respond to educational demands at the different levels of the school educational subsystem. They are financed with money from the municipality, parents groups and the MOE.
4. Experimental Institutions of Basic Education with Occupational Orientation (PEMEM)	They were created as part of the long-gone Program of Extension and Improvement of Middle Education (PEMEM) and have a public character.

Program of Extension and Improvement of Basic Secondary Education

PEMEM (Program of Extension and Improvement of Basic Secondary Education) centres were originally developed in the 1970s with the support of the World Bank. The new PEMEM institutes provide general and technical education geared towards preparing students to enter the labour force upon completion of their studies. In 1998, PEMEM institute enrolment constituted 28% of public sector enrolment at this level (Chang and Menendez 1998). They also provide courses that have a commercial orientation, such as marketing, advertising and organization of small or family businesses.

Local communities view the institutes positively. Parents perceive them as providing their children with an opportunity. Pupils learn working skills in specific areas, such as plumbing, carpentry, sowing, secretarial techniques, beauty parlour techniques, which allow them to contribute to the family budget.

The PEMEM institutes respond to social demands that go beyond their immediate utility to the labour market. The major justification is that students learn skills that allow them to support themselves or to start a small business. There are 45 PEMEM institutes in the country: 11 in Guatemala City, four in Quetzaltenango, two in

San Marcos and the remaining 28 in Suchitepéquez. Although MINIDUC's *Statistical Yearbook* does not offer specific information on enrolment, it is estimated that these institutes cater to a population of 8,000 students, which equals 6.6% of the students covered by the state.

However, this programme has several shortcomings. The infrastructure—comprising workshop rooms, classrooms, multipurpose halls—is extremely deficient and not properly maintained. Not even the most minimal equipment is available for practical experience. In many ways, the equipment is obsolete and fit to be seen as museum pieces of technical-professional training.

“Tele” High School

MINIDUC sought to increase coverage at basic secondary level through two different modalities: *Telesecundria* and cooperative schools. Based on a ministerial agreement from 3 March 1998, the Basic Secondary Level-“Tele” High School (*Telesecundria*) was created with the objective of increasing coverage. The idea was to have teaching supported by the use of audiovisual (television programmes) and additional materials written for teachers and students. The programme was established in a five-year experimental phase. It used infrastructure already available in local communities or at public schools at the basic secondary level. During the initial period, the programme was supervised by the System of Betterment of Human Resources and Curricular Adaptation (SIMAC).

In 2004, the programme expanded to the 22 educational states into which the country is divided. It enrolled 30,643 students at first, second and third levels of basic education. The students were also enrolled in ‘Tele Secondary Institutes’. The Tele Secondary project aimed to broaden the scope of these non-conventional mechanisms and offered a Tele High School Diploma.

The history of “Tele Secondary” in other countries needs to be studied and analysed to take full advantage of its potential. The model must also be compared and analysed in the context of new educational tendencies, in which education goes beyond a teacher-centred system of learning. New technologies, such as ICTs, likewise need to be considered.

In addition, there are several centres that have been established by other countries or private or foreign groups. Some of these cen-

tres, with their activities and educational products, exist in isolation and are not integrated into the education system; they do not form part of a common vision of education.

Cooperative schools

The General Direction of Out-of-school Education (DIGEEX), which has the responsibility of planning out of school education, promotes and oversees various programmes and actions, such as the cooperative schools. Cooperative schools function through a tripartite agreement between MINIDUC, legally organized parents' associations, and municipal authorities. MINIDUC provides a subsidy of the equivalent of US\$1,000 per section (20–25 students) per year; the parents agree to pay the equivalent of US\$2.7 per month; and the municipality agrees to apply the equivalent of US\$133 per section per year. In addition, the municipality may donate land and may contribute funds for school construction, and the parents also contribute funds and/or labour to build the school. In 2003, 765 centres offered secondary schooling; and out of these, 692 offered basic secondary schooling and 73 diversified secondary education.

Potential demand for the basic level of schooling

Looking at the current coverage of the education system, it is possible to extrapolate the number of students who will demand secondary education service ten years from now. If, in linear terms, we assume that growth is 5.4% per year, then in ten years this will mean that 108,948 students will require attention from the system. This figure is likely to increase if the population were to increase or primary-school provision were to improve. (In fact, the latter has already occurred due to the priority given to primary school provision, rather than secondary school provision.) Even if this projection were to be extended over ten more years, with the same parameters—whereby at the basic level only 50% of the potential population were attending schools, and at the diversified level only 19% of the population—4,000 new positions would still be required.

However, due to the recent efforts to “save” the first grade of primary school, it is likely that within a matter of five years the demand will increase so much that will be provide the necessary coverage and meet the same criteria that exists nowadays.

The official projections take account of the growth in the population as stated in the data provided by the National Institute of Statistics. These simulation charts assume that all children who are 7 years old will be mandated to attend Grade 1 and so on. Based on the linear projection from the percentage in 2003, it becomes possible to predict the coverage that will be needed in 2024.

The objective of this simulation is only to show the critical situation facing the formal educational system in Guatemala at all educational levels. These figures show an undeniable reality, specifically no government budget that will be able to respond to the current and future demands of the existing educational models. From a linear simulation of 5% annual growth, it can be seen that by 2014 the initial demand will be 59,311 students, with an estimated growth of 5,400. This will mean that the current situation of denying and ignoring rural areas will continue.

The potential demand will be much higher, of course, once the government's commitment to assuring mandatory education takes effect for the entire primary school population.¹

In Dakar in 2000, the international community agreed that our education systems must try to satisfy the educational needs of all young adults through the equal establishment of appropriate programmes, with an emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and life competences so necessary for make a living and participation in the political, social and cultural life of the community (UNESCO 2000). Because of this it is a fundamental concern of ministry authorities to broaden access to the basic level of education in the rural areas. On one side, this is about expanding the right to education and on the other side; it is about contributing to poverty reduction. According to ECLAC, a minimum of ten years of schooling are required in order to have the opportunity to exit poverty.

While low access is a big challenge, a greater challenge is the qualitative dimension of education at the basic level. Multiple strategies have to be considered for the expansion of basic education. This will include the public sector as well as joint efforts of the private sector and cooperatives; it will also include the formal and non-for-

1. According to the *Political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala*, Art. 74, "Education is Mandatory," Guatemalans have the right and the obligation to receive basic, initial, pre-primary, primary and basic education, within the limits established by the law.

mal systems, as well as the combination of distance and traditional learning. It will examine opportunities and advantages of incorporating new ICTs. Plans for financing will need to take account of issues involved in expansion, equity and quality, quantitative-qualitative changes, teacher training, and cultural diversity.

Literacy training

CONALFA's goal is to reduce the illiteracy rate—which in 1990 was estimated at 44.9% and in 2000 at 27.5%. However, a UNESCO study has estimated the illiteracy rate for 2000 to be 37% and a reduction to 32.14% in 2003 (USAID 2004). According to data from CONALFA (2004), the rate decreased slightly in 2004 to 30.54%.

In a society of approximately 12 million inhabitants, of which 52% are 18 years old or younger and 77% live in rural areas, and 1,931,407 of the total adult population are illiterate, it has been very difficult to measure with complete confidence the reduction in the real rate of illiteracy of youth and adults. According to the results of the MEDIR Project in 2003 and 2004 (USAID 2004), for instance, each year 83,000 new illiterates are produced out of which 50,421 are individuals who registered in the first year of primary school but failed and never re-entered the education system. The remaining 32,418 never entered the system in the first place. This situation requires that the profile of illiterate persons be redefined by taking account of the contexts and cultural diversity of the individuals and by adapting methods, techniques and modalities of delivery and materials to their educational and cultural contexts.

Content of adult education

In Guatemala, adult education takes place in selected adult “night schools”, which are part of the literacy and post-literacy programmes of CONALFA's Execution Unit, which coordinates the extracurricular programmes of the National Directorate of Extracurricular Education of MINIDUC and government organizations, as well as the literacy and post-literacy programmes of the NGOs.

The night schools conduct curricular programmes of “accelerated education” for adults which allow students to take the first six years of primary education in only four years. They work through four stages: the first is equivalent to Grade 1 of primary school; the

second is equivalent to Grades 2 and 3; the third stage is equivalent to Grades 4 and 5; and the fourth stage is equivalent to Grade 6. Extra-curricular education is supported through the “Family cores” of the Development of Education (NUFED). It is a programme that has been developed with a view to using alternative educational methodology by training through radio broadcasting.

To complete Grade 6 of the primary level, the student must pass through three stages: an initial phase, which corresponds to learning of reading and writing as well as basic numeric calculations, and then two post-literacy stages, which are equivalent to Grades 3 and 6 of primary school. The contents are distributed in the following areas: language and communication, applied mathematics, society and community, hygiene and health, economics and productivity, and natural resources. Each stage lasts up to eight months. Study certificates and the sixth grade diploma—which is equivalent to primary education—are certified by CONALFA in accordance with Ministry Agreement No. 225-96.

Policy planning and financing

Policy planning and programme financing is conducted directly by the Superior Bureau of the Ministry of Education, which works under the jurisdiction of MINIDUC

Regarding literacy and post-literacy programmes coordinated and executed by CONALFA, the process is as follows: The executing entity and its Technical Council designs policies and strategies. The National Literacy Committee then discusses and approves these in order to comply with Art. 8 of Decree No. 43-86 of the Literacy Law.

The budget of CONALFA (2000) is established in Art. 17 reformed by Decree No. 54-99. The process of literacy will be financially supported through the following sources:

- a) The National Budget for fiscal year 2001 assigned CONALFA 1% of tributary income of the current government, diminishing by one-tenth per year for the next seven fiscal years, thus until 2008.
- b) The budget assigned will be equivalent to no less than 1% of the General Budget of Expenses of MINIDUC for each fiscal year.

- c) Additional sources will be provided by donations from individuals or organizations, through transfers on behalf of a national or international donors.
- d) Any other sources of income, whether ordinary or extraordinary, will be designated specifically for the literacy or post-literacy process.

The budget is clearly not enough. Yet with the support of the international agencies and national organizations of CONALFA's Execution Unit, it has been possible to count on support for the reproduction of materials for specific projects, the training of professionals and technicians, the purchase and maintenance of equipment and vehicles, and economic compensation for some literacy workers.

The current curricular structure

At present the literacy programme consists of two stages: an initial stage, the core of which is the teaching of literacy (reading and writing) skills and numeracy (elementary "calculation") skills. This phase is equivalent to the Grade 1 of primary school.

The second stage corresponds to the first phase of post-literacy (equivalent to the Grade 3 of primary school) and the second phase of post-literacy (equivalent to Grade 6). In both stages, the subjects covered include: community and society, economy and productivity; applied math; language and communication; natural resources; and hygiene and health. These subjects have to be transformed at the curricular and pedagogical levels within the larger context of educational reform (PROASE-CONALFA 2003) and the strategy of betterment of educational quality promoted by MINIDUC.

Delivery modalities: Reviewing modalities and techniques

At the end of 2004, the modalities of delivering literacy services were diverse. Although they all had the same focus and used the same materials, their application became difficult depending upon the specific context in which they were used. Some of the elements of this diversity can be seen below:

1. Students in the last year of basic secondary education were trained as literacy workers; to receive their diploma at this level, they had to teach a minimum number of illiterates.

2. Agreements were made with NGOs.
3. Agreements were made with indigenous women in rural communities.
4. Agreements were made with *maquila* workers.
5. Literacy projects were conducted in private enterprises.
6. 'Educating Mom and Dad' – An initiative in which children committed to teach their parents and other adults to read and write (this programme has yielded very positive results).
7. Radio literacy programmes were conducted.
8. 'Adopt an Illiterate' – Housewives were enrolled as volunteer to promote literacy.
9. Bilingual literacy programmes were promoted.
10. Literacy programmes were conducted in jails and detention centres.
11. Literacy programmes were conducted in churches.
12. Literacy programmes were conducted in squares/markets.
13. Literacy programmes were directed to the HIV positive population and sex workers.
14. Literacy programmes were directed to individuals with ear/voice impairments (this initiative was developed with young girls who suffer some kind of impairment at this level).
15. General volunteering was also common.
16. Volunteers were trained to impart literacy to Guatemalans or other Latin Americans living in the US who did not know how to read and write.

This diverse list highlights the methodological challenges involved both in trying to develop a unique approach for use in very heterogeneous circumstances, and in retaining the methodological integration while promoting the application of similar materials for all contexts, particularly those that go beyond the simple traditional urban-rural dichotomy.² Unfortunately, the creation of official bodies that work in parallel to others, such as the National Movement for Literacy, MONALFA (2000–2004), has made it difficult to monitor and evaluate results to determine the efficiency and efficacy of different initiatives. This has weakened CONALFA institutionally, technically and financially. Currently, an enormous efforts are required to consolidate a wide-spectrum policy which would allow for the transition of activism towards action in favour of quality education for all.

Multicultural and multilingual literacy

In the context of the Guatemalan peace process, the signing of the *Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Guatemala 1995) marked Guatemalan society's recognition by of its diverse ethnic, cultural and linguistic heritage, which together with agreements on the socio-economic and the agrarian situation formed the parameters of educational reform, which promoted deep transformations in the national education system, transformations that bore directly on the pluralistic reality in the country.

Literacy was no exception. CONALFA began work on the implementation of indigenous languages, beginning with a re-definition of the concept of "illiterate" in the broader sense, which had designated those who do not read or write the official language; the new definition takes account of the other 23 languages which nowadays are also considered national languages (Guatemala 2003).

Bicultural biliteracy implied more than a simple use of indigenous languages (CONALFA n.d.). It involved opening up the debate and provoking a change in the way in which literacy is conceived. This was in agreement with statements made at the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, in particular that 'speaking and writing a language are key factors for the definition, implementation and measurement of literacy' (UNESCO 2000).

The central message in Dakar was that educational models had not been reviewed with sufficient depth; instead the deficiencies of these models were retained to the detriment of millions of youth and adults, who were taught in languages they did not comprehend. On the other hand, if these "literacy models" are to evolve in a different context, especially where poverty is rampant, they need to be integrated into a poverty reduction strategy.

Literacy for All: Immediate and future prospects

CONALFA is currently promoting two lines of action in cooperation with UNESCO's Guatemala office and Brazil's National Literacy Solidarity Program: planning policies on youth and adult educa-

2. During the government of President Alfonso Portillo (2000–2004) MONALFA was created, and this institution promoted the I Seminar on Methodological Integration in April 2003.

tion; and its evaluation regarding its technical and financial sustainability.

In the context of UNESCO's Literacy Decade and Education for All, the objective is to mobilize a series of actions at the decision-making levels which will allow for the mobilization of efforts and resources with the same objective, implementing long-term strategies with practical and efficient modalities, for the exchange of information and experiences at other levels, allowing for the betterment of techniques based on delivery modalities and designed with actors of the literacy process.

To achieve the objectives set in the *Dakar Framework for Action* and the Millennium Development Goals for 2015, a country such as Guatemala will have to make an investment equivalent to US\$23.4 million in 2005, US\$27.8 million in 2010, and US\$33.5 million in 2015 (CEPAL-UNESCO 2005). This task exceeds national capacities, and therefore requires the commitment and support of the international community.

As Rosa Maria Torres would put it, literacy cannot and should not be reduced to distributing pencils and notebooks, when the gap between functional illiteracy and digital illiteracy in our societies continues to grow.

States, educational communities and international organizations will need to help each country in need to fulfil its social responsibility and to face structural problems which produce poverty and illiteracy. Such collective action will enable the building of a future that starts with today's actions (UNESCO 2004).

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Namibia's Adult Literacy and Learning Programme

Beans Uazembua Ngatjizeko

At independence on the 21 March 1990, Namibia inherited an education system characterized by gross inequalities in the allocation of resources to schools for different ethnic groups. The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) recognized this challenge and the central role of education and training in the process of national development quite early on and has placed great emphasis on educating its people. Since independence, the government has allocated 25–30% of its annual budget to the Ministry of Education (MOE). To redress this imbalance, the MOE's Directorate of Adult and Basic Education (DABE) launched the National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) on the 5 September 1992; its aim is to provide education to the disadvantaged, marginalized or left-out. DABE's overall goal is to increase the adult literacy rate to 90% by 2015 while trying to live within its stated mission, which reads as follows:

DABE is dedicated to the provision of basic education to disadvantaged adults and out-of-school youth, with the aim of improving their quality of life and enabling them to contribute more effectively to community and national development. (ILO 1996–2007)

There are a great number of partners and stakeholders (public, private and NGOs) whose efforts complement those of DABE. Their contributions will be highlighted or reflected in this report. Despite these efforts, various surveys and studies conducted in recent years have indicated that the Namibian labour market still faces a shortage of educated, skilled and experienced workers.

DABE programmes

DABE has four main programmes: the National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN), the Adult Upper Primary Education (AUPE) programme, the Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment (SADSE) programme, and the Community Skills Development Centres (CLDCs) programme.

These programmes are carried out or implemented by the staff responsible for one of four main sub-divisions:

1. Sub-Division on Research, Planning and Programme Development: It conducts research and needs assessment and is responsible for programme assessment, identifying new programmes, and suggesting new directions.
2. Sub-Division on Materials Development: It is responsible for developing, printing and distributing learning and teaching materials in mother tongues and English, as well as for developing curriculum for literacy and post-literacy programmes.
3. Sub-Division on Training of Trainers: It organizes training programmes for staff (pre-service and in-service) and supports training of cooperating partners.
4. Sub-Division on Monitoring and Evaluation: It is responsible for monitoring the programmes through the collection of analysis of statistics as well as organizing programme evaluation exercises, yearly evaluation and assessment of learning achievements.

In addition, the Sub-Division on General Services is responsible for providing clerical, administrative, transport and other support and auxiliary services for the DABE.

Constant improvement on policies

The *National Policy on Adult Learning* (GRN 2003), which was approved by Cabinet in July 2003, provides an overall policy framework for adult learning. The policy addresses issues of programme development, resources, co-ordination, policy implementation and monitoring. It identifies the government's role within this framework. It recognizes the important contributions by the private sector and civil society in the promotion of adult learning, and indicates that the government wishes to maintain partnerships with both sectors.

On the other hand, the *Policy Guidelines for the Second Phase of the National Literacy Programme in Namibia, 1996–2000* (DABE 1997) is currently under review.

Another important development in Namibia is the *Strategic Plan for the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), 2005–2020* (GRN 2006), a 15-year educational roadmap which outlines the government's intention to improve educational provision to the nation. This "plan for a learning nation" has clearly delineated the MOE's plans to improve educational provision in Namibia.

Efforts in cultural diversity

Since Namibia has about thirteen indigenous languages, these need to be further developed and maintained so as to enrich and sustain the country's cultural diversity. Doing so has been a priority and a matter of language policy since independence; the MOE opted for mother-tongue or home-language instruction as the basic foundation during the first three years of formal education, with English (the official language) as a subject only until Grade 4 for full implementation.

DABE thus followed suit regarding non-formal education, where mother-tongue instruction has been the foundation of the first two stages of the adult literacy programme. Materials were thus developed in the indigenous languages, including those languages to which some referred as "minority languages". Quite recently, DABE, together with the Kwe People of Western Caprivi, initiated, developed and produced the Kwedam language stage 1 primer. Another primer for stage 2 will follow. The Kwe People, like other San-speaking communities, are part of the marginalized nomadic communities with a high rate of illiteracy.

Adult learners with disabilities benefit from DABE's programme as well. There has been significant progress in the integration of blind and deaf adult learners into the National Literacy Programme. DABE has been hard at work on ensuring that visually and hearing impaired adult learners in all thirteen regions of the country benefit from the programme. A variety of literacy materials in indigenous languages have recently been translated into Braille in South Africa.

Contributions of partners to quality adult and youth education

As has been mentioned in the background, there are a great number of partners and stakeholders who contribute significantly to the quality education of adults and young people in Namibia, but only some will be highlighted here.

Namibian College of Open Learning

The Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) has provided alternative secondary education to out-of-school youth since its creation by an Act of Parliament in 1997. NAMCOL is the largest provider of alternative secondary education, using both face-to-face and distance education modes for Grade 10 (Junior Secondary) and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), which is Grade 12. Apart from these courses, NAMCOL has been offering others, such as the Certificate in Education for Development (CED), which target adult educators and community or extension workers. Other courses offered treat computer skills and the Commonwealth Diploma in Youth in Development Work. NAMCOL's student intake for 2005 was 27,341.

Centre for External Studies (CES) at the University of Namibia

In keeping with section 4 of the *University Act* (GRN 1992), the University of Namibia (UNAM) aims, among other things, 'to provide extension services' and 'to further training and continuing education'. These clauses provide a statutory basis for the development and management of open and distance learning activities at UNAM. Set up in 1993, the CES is charged with developing flexible and open learning methods that cater to the educational needs of people who, for a variety of reasons, cannot come full-time to any of the university campuses to further their studies. The mission of the CES is therefore to provide accessible quality higher education and create opportunities for professional development to adult members of the community by the provision of open learning through distance and continuing education programmes. In 2003, the CES had a total of 4,128 students registered in the eight distance programmes available at UNAM. These programmes are: Bachelor of Education, Bachelor

of Business Administration, Bachelor of Nursing Science, Basic Education Teacher Diploma, Diploma in Education: Maths and Science, Diploma in Education: African Languages, Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development, and Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

Polytechnic of Namibia, Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning

According to section 4 of its charter (Nekongo-Nielsen 1995), the Polytechnic of Namibia is mandated to provide 'post-secondary career-education' and 'continuing education at a post-secondary school level'. The Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL) provides and coordinates delivery of distance programmes. COLL currently offers the following qualifications: National Certificate/National Diploma in Business Administration, National Certificate/National Diploma in Public Science, National Certificate/National Diploma in Accounting and Finance, National Certificate/National Diploma in Marketing; National Diploma in Human Resources Management, B. Tech in Nature Conservation, and B. Tech in Agricultural/Management.

The Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sports and Culture (MYNSSC)

MYNSSC has been created solely to redress the plight of youth by facilitating skills development that leads to job creation and poverty alleviation. MYNSSC continues to provide skills and entrepreneurial development through its Community Skills Development Centres, such as the one at Kainachas, Southern Namibia. Here youth receive skills training in trades such as bricklaying, welding, plumbing, hospitality and tailoring. Interestingly, this is a dual system, involving six months of theoretical and another six months of practical training.

Skills expansion programmes are also conducted in the multi-purpose centres which are spread virtually throughout the country. Here one-year tailoring courses are offered, as is basic computer training. With the National Youth Service Bill having passed through both Houses of Parliament, more market-related programmes will add value to MYNSSC's current programmes.

Creation of the Namibian Coalition for the United Nations Literacy Decade

Following the launch of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) in February 2003, the then Minister of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC), Mr. John Mutorwa, created the Namibian Coalition for the United Nations Literacy Decade (NCUNLD). MBESC set the process in motion, and in March 2004, the NCUNLD Committee emerged, following a two-day conference co-sponsored by MBESC and UNESCO.

It is important to note here that the UNESCO Windhoek Cluster Office has been instrumental in supporting the NCUNLD in its initial stages and it continues to play a vital role in the coalition's operations. One of the daunting and challenging task facing the coalition is resource mobilization (both national and international), since without financial support, the well articulated *Strategic Plan* could not be realized. UNESCO support, both financial and technical, has been commendable and will continue to be needed in future. Another challenge is to get all possible stakeholders, particularly the private sector, on board, as well as to maintain the momentum of this national initiative. The NCUNLD—representing a broad spectrum of government ministries, offices and agencies, NGOs, community-based organizations, parastatal corporations, private-sector enterprises, and private individuals—aims to promote Literacy for All. It functions as a sub-committee of the National Education for All Forum and recently launched its *Strategic Plan*.

In addition to its task of achieving 90% literacy by 2012, the NCUNLD also has the following objectives (as spelled out in its *Strategic Plan 2005–2006*):

- To monitor and influence the implementation of the policy framework related to literacy.
- To promote literacy at all levels.
- To eliminate gender disparities and promote gender equality.
- To improve the quality of literacy programmes and lifelong learning.
- To improve the quality of life of all Namibians.
- To secure sustainable partnership/networking among stakeholders.

- To advocate Literacy for All.
- To increase the availability of materials in local languages and in formats accessible to people with disabilities.
- To sustain the activities of the NCUNLD.

Strategic alliances have thus been created to take this process much further, even beyond the UNLD.

National Education for All Forum

The Government of Namibia has created a national forum with a clear *National Plan of Action 2001–2015* (GRN 2002). It has declared education as a first national 'priority among other priorities'. It has consistently worked to provide an education for all that facilitates development and social equity. This has to be seen against the background of government's development goals of 'sustaining economic growth, creating employment, reducing inequity in income distribution, and reducing poverty' (GRN 2002). This national forum, which consists of all stakeholders and partners, is being spearheaded and coordinated by Line Ministries of Education (Ministries of Education and of Gender Equality & Child Welfare). During the EFA Global Week (in April each year), EFA activities are arranged in one specific region with the same type of activities taking place simultaneously in all other twelve regions (Namibia has thirteen regions) of the country. All six Dakar Goals are emphasized during this period and reasonable success has been achieved on each one of them.

Areas of innovation

Adult Learners Week

Each year during Adult Learners Week (1–8 September), special emphasis is placed on the education of adults and out-of-school youth. Literacy programmes are strengthened through mobilization and support during this period. It is also at this time that certificates or awards are presented to successful learners and others who contributed to the success of the National Literacy Programme.

Family Literacy Programme

The MOE's reference group on the Family Literacy Programme was established to determine the best strategies for implementing this

programme. Data collectors were trained with assistance from the Association for the Development of Education in Africa Working Group and the Namibian Educational Research Association. A study was conducted to identify and assist parents and other care providers in Namibia to support their children in the first years of primary school and the resultant report was submitted to MOE authorities.

The study on family literacy was confined to one school and community per region. The pilot phase to be implemented as a result of this study will be limited to the same schools and community where the study was conducted. Family literacy promoters were recently trained with assistance from the Namibia Literacy Trust in order to start the pilot phase.

National research team on literacy and non-formal education

Following the First International Technical Workshop on Strengthening Literacy and Non-formal Education Policies and Practices within the EFA framework which UNESCO convened in Paris, 21–24 July 2004, the current director of DABE helped to set up a research team on literacy and NFE. The purpose of the research team is to identify research areas in literacy and NFE, carry out the research (provided that funding can be secured), and document and widely disseminate its findings. The first study on attracting more men to literacy and NFE programmes is due to be conducted.

*Constant improvement on monitoring and evaluation:
Identification of indicators*

DABE's monitoring and evaluation is constantly striving to improve on its data collection exercises and data analysis processes in order to meet international standards. This is done not only to continue reflecting and reporting on the number of learners in or graduates from the literacy programmes, but also to use the statistical information for planning purposes. Recently, DABE, in cooperation with the UNESCO Windhoek Cluster Office, conducted a pilot project on the identification of indicators, a project from which Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland have benefited and which will help Namibia to improve not only on its data collection and information analysis and dissemination, but also that of its partner organizations.

Conclusion

Though Namibia has made attempts to address quality of adult and youth education, much still needs to be done. Participating in international forums such as the South-South Policy Dialogue where countries share information helps nations such as Namibia to learn and improve their programmes.

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Mozambique's Literacy and Adult Education Programmes: A Sub-sector Strategy

Ernesto Muianga

This chapter is on Mozambique's national programme in literacy, adult education and non-formal education (NFE). The introduction draws on an article entitled 'Literacy in Mozambique: Education for All Challenges', written by Mouzinho Mário and Debora Nandja of Eduardo Mondlane University, which was submitted as a background paper for UNESCO's *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006: Literacy for Life*. The second section deals with the results of an evaluation study on literacy, adult education and NFE, conducted in 2000 by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the World Bank. The third section then deals with the national strategy proposed and implemented by the National Department of Literacy and Adult Education (Direcção Nacional de Alfabetização e Educação de Adultos: DNAEA). The chapter concludes with a consideration of some successes and challenges in literacy, adult education and NFE.

Introduction

With almost 19 million inhabitants, Mozambique has the largest population of Portugal's former African colonies. Its economy is based mostly on agriculture. Almost 80% of its public investment goes to the social sector (education, health and water supply) and to agriculture, transport and rural infrastructure. Mário and Nandja (2005: 1) state that Mozambique's greatest challenge. Although its structural adjustment and macro-economic stabilization programmes since 1987 have reduced poverty from about 69.4% in 1997 to about 54.1% in 2003, poverty in rural areas is still very high.

In close alignment with UNESCO's frameworks—the *Jomtien Declaration* (1990), the *Hamburg Declaration* (1997) and the *Dakar Framework for Action* (2000)—and in the context of the government's five-year plan, which stresses peace, stability and national reconciliation, the Government of Mozambique showed a renewed commitment to adult and youth education, in both informal and non-formal settings. Mário and Nandja (2005: 1) argue that the aim of this national engagement with literacy and adult education was to increase investment in adult literacy and, among other things, to raise the status of adult education in Mozambique.

Mário (2002) has identified chronological stages or phases in Mozambique's policies on literacy, adult education and non-formal education (NFE). Phase I constitutes the mid-1970s, when with Mozambique's independence, adult education and non-formal education took centre stage. In 1976, the National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education (*Direcção Nacional de Educação de Adultos: DNEA*) was created and charged with addressing adult literacy. Massive literacy campaigns combined with an explosion in school enrolment led to a significant reduction in the illiteracy rate, as was confirmed by the 1980 General Population Census: Adult illiteracy rates fell by almost 25%—from 97% in 1974 to almost 72% in 1982: 39.9% in urban areas and 78.2% in rural areas, and varying between 82% in Nampula and 28.5% in Maputo City (Mário 2002: 129–130).

In 1983, the National Education System (SNE) was created and adult education became one of its sub-systems and was accorded the same status and treatment as the other four sectors: general education, technical and vocational education, teacher training, and higher education. The mandate of the subsystem of adult education was to eradicate illiteracy and ensure access to technical and professional education for teachers at various levels.

The second phase is the period between 1985 and 1995; there was a substantial reduction in adult literacy and education activities. This was the consequence of the civil war, the destabilization war waged by the South African “apartheid” regime. In addition to the destruction of infrastructure and the loss of human life, the war was directly responsible for the influx of millions of Mozambican refugees into neighbouring countries and the internal displacement of millions more throughout the country. Adult literacy and education efforts

were confined mainly to the large cities. The only exceptions were the efforts of NGOs, religious institutions and private individuals who continued on a small scale and did innovative work, such as holding literacy classes in local languages (Mário and Nandja 2005: 2). Other reasons the lack of progress on literacy included the irrelevance of the curriculum, formal teaching methods, strict calendars and timetables, and the exclusive use of Portuguese in instruction.

The third phase focuses on the period from 1995 to the present when adult literacy and education was marked by a stage of rediscovery (Mário 2002). It is seen as an instrument of 'sustainable economic and social development'. In 1995, DNEA activities were assumed by the national Basic Education Department (Direcção Nacional do Ensino Básico: DNEB). Several political documents, legal instruments and development policies reflect the combined will of the government and society to ensure that literacy plays an ever-increasing role in poverty reduction and in the development of the country. The *Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique* of 1990 stipulates that every citizen has a right to education (Art. 88) and that education constitutes a means of achieving national unity, mastering science and technology, and providing citizens with moral and civil values (Art. 113). Law no. 6/92 modernized the National Education System (SNE), bringing it into line with the new economic and political model enshrined in the 1990 constitution. Also important is the 2001–2005 *Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty* (PARPA), which identified literacy and adult education as primary goals of the education programme. The National Strategy for Adult Literacy and Education and for Non-Formal Education was designed mainly to eradicate illiteracy in the country. Finally, the new government programme, PARPA II (2005–2009), reaffirmed the goal of reducing poverty by 10% (Mário and Nandja 2005: 2).

According to the National Strategy for Adult Literacy and Education and the Literacy Curricula Plan which Mozambique's Ministry of Education (MINED) adopted in 2000 and 2003, respectively: 'Literacy is regarded, on the one hand, as the acquisition of the basic options of reading, writing and numeracy, and on the other hand, as a process that stimulates participation in social, political and economic activities and lays the foundations for continuing education' (MINED 2003b: 57, cited in Mário and Nandja 2005: 3).

Continuing education, understood from the perspective of lifelong learning, is a prerequisite for human development and is discussed in the *Strategic Education Plan* (MINED 2005); the plan suggests direct links between reducing illiteracy rates, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Mozambique's illiteracy rates are higher than the average of 38% for Sub-Saharan Africa. According to data published by the National Institute of Statistics (INE 2004: 66, cited in Mário and Nandja 2005: 3), the average rate of illiteracy among adults nationwide is about 53.6%; it is higher in rural areas (65.7%) than in urban districts (30.3%) and more marked among women (68%) than men (37.7%). In a country as large and diverse as Mozambique, regional variations range from 15.1% in Maputo Province to 68.4% in Cabo Delgado Province. The figures for youth are alarming, with rates of up to 37.9% in the 15–19 age cohort and 59.7% in the 20–29 age cohort. Comparisons between men and women (24% in 1996 compared with 31% in 2004) show a widening gap. According to Lind (2000, cited in Mário and Nandja 2005: 3), one of the reasons for this is that women tend to be more interested in programmes designed to improve their lives and the well-being of their families. Those programmes that promote adult literacy and education as key components of poverty reduction are more successful than those that do not embed literacy in development projects that target women and rural areas (Lind 2000). The government will have to take additional steps to redress disparities in access and retention, where quite a bit still needs to be done to achieve gender parity. Available data for 2002 shows that 60% of the entrants at the first and second levels were girls, while at the third level the intake fell to 48% and the drop-out rate was approximately 40% (MINED 2003b).

During the 1990s, a period of peace and stability, adult literacy and education were regarded as necessary instruments for sustainable economic and social development centred on men and women (Mário 2002: 130). In the course of that decade, the following programmes were developed:

1. *Adult education and literacy*: It is a formal programme consisting of three-year course and an examination. The courses are taught by professional teachers and have the equivalence of Grade 5 of basic education.

2. *Teenagers' and children's literacy*: The target group is teenagers and children of at least 14 years old who have no access to formal education. Lectures take place in classrooms improvised in the communities, churches, primary schools and other social centres. The state and/or churches pay the expenses.
3. *Bilingual education* (local languages and Portuguese).
4. *Functional literacy*: It is a component of the Women Promotion Programme with the objective of improving living conditions in the economic, social and cultural sphere. The activities relate to the specific needs of the community.
5. *Non-formal education*: It is basically the domain of NGOs and is linked to productive activities, such as tailoring, agriculture, small animal husbandry, arts and crafts, and small business.
6. *Training of professional teachers*.

Literacy programmes are currently delivered by the government and national and international NGOs. The programmes have led to an increase in the number of participants and in the provision of literacy units. By 2004 there were a total of 5,000 literacy units (MINED 2004). However, the drop-out rate continues to be high, especially at the end of the first level of the three-year literacy courses. One of the reasons for this is the lack of adequate command of Portuguese among the Bantu population. To rectify this situation, the Programme of Literacy in Mozambican Languages was introduced in 1991 as part of the Women's Bilingual Education Project. Initially, two languages from the north of the country (*Emakhrwa* and *Nyandja*), two from the central region (*Sena* and *Ndau*), and one from the south (*Changana*) were selected. Similarly, the Strategy of the Adult Literacy and Education Sub-sector 2001–2005 (MINED 2001) acknowledged the relevance of national languages in the various learning settings. Local and vernacular languages were reviewed, and materials were produced in more Mozambican languages (see Mário and Nandja 2005: 5).

Evaluation of literacy, adult education and NFE programmes

Realizing that there was a lack of consistent information available to support the development of effective and efficient strategies for implementing literacy, adult education and NFE programmes in

Mozambique, MINED developed, in close co-operation with the World Bank, an evaluation of the programmes underway in the country. To carry out this evaluation, three provinces were chosen as sample cases: Nampula, Zambezia and Maputo.

The evaluation revealed that, on the one hand, there are big sub-sector problems; on the other hand, there is a great willingness among the population to seek education through programmes that would improve their lives, a willingness on the government's part to accomplish literacy, adult education and NFE objectives in the whole country, and an interest among donors in accompanying this process, as long as the government and MINED define clear, coherent and prioritized strategies that will allow for the sure development of these sub-sectors. The evaluation also confirmed that civil society has great influence on the development of literacy, adult education and NFE objectives, though civil society has not been involved in a consistent way in the development of education sub-sectors.

Taking into account the results and recommendations of this evaluation, as well as additional information that MINED gathered from previous experiences, a new strategy was developed. The strategy states that the implementation of literacy, adult education and NFE strategies must be carried out while simultaneously increasing access to quality basic education for children, youth and adults. Otherwise, there is considerable risk that the goals proposed for the decrease in nationwide illiteracy rates will not be achieved. It is therefore necessary to establish a mechanism that will allow for a critical and permanent dialogue between formal education and NFE experts. Such a dialogue will enable the coordination and exchange of information in the interest of achieving this joint objective.

*The Strategy for Literacy, Adult Education
and Non-formal Education (2001–2005)*

Mission and vision: The mission of the DNAEA, in coordination with civil society, is to promote, coordinate and guarantee equal access to basic education for youth and adults so as to eradicate illiteracy and promote social, economic and cultural development in Mozambique, thereby contributing to overall poverty reduction.

The vision of the literacy, adult education and NFE sub-sector was to promote over a five-year period (2001–2005) access to quality

basic education for youth and adults based on principles such as gender equity, lifelong learning, respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, and continuing institutional capacity development. To accomplish this vision, this sub-sector prioritized the following areas: institutional capacity development, continuing development of policies and strategies, articulation and coordination of efforts between civil society and other agents, curricular development, human resources formation, development of appropriate materials, increased financial support, mobilization and retention of female youth and women, sensitization and access promotion to literacy, adult education and NFE programmes, prevention of and fight against STDs and HIV/AIDS, development of systems for data collection and evaluation.

Priority areas: Regarding *access*, the strategy was to *sensitize* and promote access to literacy, adult education and NFE programmes, as well as to mobilize and retain female youth and women. In the case of *quality*, the following were emphasized: curricular development, the formation of human resources, development of appropriate materials, education for the prevention of and fight against HIV/AIDS, and the creation of systems for the treatment of statistic data and monitoring of literacy, adult education and NFE programmes. Regarding the *continued development of institutional capabilities* and the application of policies and strategies in the sub-sector, importance was placed on articulation and coordination with civil society, as well as other state, higher education and international institutions, and increased financial support.

DNAEA's National Strategy

In close coordination with civil society, DNAEA's 2001–2005 strategy (MINED 2001) is to increase the opportunities for youth and adults to access basic education, placing particular emphasis on women and youth. The aim thereby is to decrease the illiteracy rate by at least 10%. Achieving this would contribute to the following objectives: sustainable community development, respect for and recognition of cultural values, the development of a culture of peace, tolerance and democracy, the prevention of and fight against STDs and HIV/AIDS, and the reduction of absolute poverty.

The goals were: a) to help 1,200,000 individuals, of which 720,000 should be women and youth, to achieve greater literacy; b)

to increase literacy among the illiterate population aged 15–60 years, who are mostly from rural areas, women and/or disabled population; c) to increase literacy among the illiterate population projected for the year 2001 by 10%; of those who will benefit from these programmes, 60% should be women and children; d) to increase literacy among 15–19-year-olds who are out of the school system.

Strategic objective

For each one of the prioritized areas, strategic objectives were defined, as well as goals, actions and resources (see Table 1). In coordination and exchange with civil society actors, it was aimed to conduct diversified programmes designed for women's needs that would reach out to women and female youth, particularly in rural areas. These programmes sought to guarantee the access and retention of girls and women, as well as attitudinal change.

Key aspects of strategic planning were sensitizing and promoting access to literacy, adult education and NFE programmes. There was a need for such promotion and for a convincing strategy which made people aware of the socio-economic and cultural needs and specificities of the different communities and regions from rural and coastal areas of the country. Since successful implementation of adult literacy programmes could be jeopardized by the lack of proper understanding and information of the advantages for those participating in these programmes, it was necessary to ensure a positive disposition towards the programmes and its objectives, namely to 'diminish at 10 per cent a rate of illiteracy in the next five years' (MINED 2001).

Large scale actions will involve government institutions, local and district governments, municipalities, unions, NGOs, universities, media and additional CSOs which must coordinate with the MINED.

Sensitizing and mobilization campaigns will be designed to increase and retain the level of participation in literacy, adult education and NFE programmes. They will showcase actions that drive home the importance of literacy and lifelong learning. Particular attention will be paid to mobilizing women and girls, because they remain one of the most vulnerable groups and have less access to literacy, adult education and NFE programmes.

Table 1. Strategic objectives for each prioritized area (2001–2005)

GOALS	GENERAL ACTIONS	RESOURCES
1. Identify and evaluate specific learning needs of the population regarding socio-economic development. (Until September 2001.)	To design and apply a measurement instrument to diagnose and analyse specific learning and development needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activists (women). • Trainers, technical personnel. • Technical resources and assistance.
2. To establish mechanisms for the coordination of inter-institutional efforts between literacy, adult education and NFE and other organizations aimed at improving women's conditions. (Until November 2002.)	To identify organizations or institutions which develop programmes for women and the disabled and meet with them to coordinate efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media. • Local, regional and national technical forums with experts from DPEs and DDEs.
3. To train educators and community activists to stir up enthusiasm for actions oriented towards teacher training and literacy programmes. (Until November 2002.)	To train women activists at the local level to encourage literacy, adult education and NFE actions and to mobilize communities to participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators (technicians from DNAEA, DPEs, DDEs, INEA, CPFQs). • Training modules. • Financial resources.
4. To guarantee that at least 60% of those registered in the programmes under the scope of the strategy are women and youth. (Beginning in 2002.)	<p>To mobilize—through community leaders, women's groups, civil society organizations (CSOs), community development programmes and members of the business sector—the creation of "circles of common interest".</p> <p>To create literacy, adult education and NFE programmes aimed at women and youth, including elements of community development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media. • Technicians and experts. • Financial resources. • Community leaders. • DDEs, CSOs and literacy trainers.

Post-literacy component

This strategy foresaw that the design of literacy, adult education and NFE programmes involve two phases: one dealing with literacy and the other, with post-literacy components. The literacy phase provides learners with basic skills, such as reading, writing and numeracy, which are necessary for their full participation in society. Yet literacy by itself is not enough if the aim is to provide basic quality education for youth and adults, as is stressed in the mission and vision statements pertaining to this strategy. Thus a post-literacy phase for this programme had to be designed.

This post-literacy phase tackled how to avoid relapse into illiteracy, which is so frequent in many youth and adult education experiences because these programmes are monthly or short-term and tend not to provide solid knowledge in additional areas. Such knowledge which allow participants to develop skills and seek opportunities to better their social conditions. Prevention of relapse into illiteracy could be accomplished through NFE programmes that are merged into the post-literacy phase and focused on the specific needs of programme participants. The support of CSOs and government institutions working jointly with the literacy, adult education and NFE sectors will be essential here.

Such programmes are geared to the needs of their participants. They are framed in two modalities: one links literacy with economic development skills, such as agricultural training, fishing, small business and community development; the other involves strengthening reading and writing skills through the development of local mono-linguistic or multi-linguistic literature and with the support of local authors; special emphasis is placed on topics dealing with mother/child health, STDs and HIV/AIDS, local, regional and international stories dealing with water treatment, and other relevant issues.

For younger audiences, there are post-literacy programmes whose curriculum is designed to help young learners to continue into higher levels of formal education, depending on their specific needs.

Managing the implementation of the strategy

The literacy, adult education and NFE strategy began to be implemented in 2001. Due to the complexity involved in implementing

this strategy—first in some provinces and districts (as a pilot programme) and then its extension to the entire country—the management and administration of a wide variety of resources (human, material, financial) posed great challenges. To meet them, it was necessary to establish an efficient managerial, administrative and logistic system.

Management: DNAEA/MINED is directly responsible for the overall management of the strategy's implementation. It has established at central, local and district levels an efficient system for the management of resources and a "two-way" communication system which will allow the exchange and flow of information. This system should make decision-making, problem-solving and conflict management more effective.

At the province and district levels, the management of literacy, adult education and NFE programmes is gradually being shared with CSOs, which play a special role in the programmes' implementation and also have the capacity to channel resources.

An additional strategy for management was the creation of a Council for the Management of the AEA/ENF [literacy, adult education and NFE] Strategy, which is composed of MINED and CSOs and international organizations directly involved in the sub-sector programmes. A fundamental reason for the creation of this management council is that the strategy's objectives stress the importance of a close working relationship between CSOs and the government in implementing the strategy, such that all the sectors of Mozambique share in the implementation. The management council will function mainly as a body of reflection, critical analysis and guidance regarding matters related to the implementation of the literacy, adult education and NFE strategy.

Administration: Regarding resource administration in particular, a system was proposed that would facilitate its application at all levels and especially by CSOs. A system for fund management was to be defined together with MINED, CSOs and international donor agencies.

Logistics: Taking into account the magnitude of the task of carrying out successful literacy programmes to all provinces of the country and the majority of the districts, it was deemed necessary to meet the logistical challenges through proper preparation and planning by

programme coordinators. A “logistics plan” based on real data was proposed. This would enable the careful consideration of support points so that resources can become available as planned. It was also felt necessary to train personnel from MINED/DNAEA and CSOs so that they would be better prepared to carry out the specific functions of the national literacy programme.

Monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation

The expansion of the literacy, adult education and NFE strategy at the beginning of the pilot programme’s first phase (in the first semester of 2001) required a general scheme of monitoring and evaluation. This was necessary, first, to accompany the process of the pilot programme’s implementation and expansion and the overall strategy and, secondly, to evaluate the programme’s results and impact so as eventually to systematize positive results, mistakes and lessons learned, as well as to aid in the improvement of the existing programmes through necessary adjustments.

In the discussion of ‘Systems of Evaluation and Treatment of Statistical Data for AEA/ENF [literacy, adult education and NFE]’, the term “quality” is used in a twofold sense. On the one hand, it refers to monitoring and evaluation of the literacy, adult education and NFE programmes from the perspective of pedagogy. Evaluation of teaching-learning processes is characterized as: ‘the level of benefit and learning acquired by the learners, the performance of the trainers, the use and quality of the materials, the level of desertion and additional elements related to the teaching-learning process.’ On the other hand, “quality” refers to data collection and the treatment of statistical information on AEA/ENF centres and programmes which operate under the scope of the strategy.

Monitoring: The process of monitoring of the strategy’s implementation is the responsibility of the Advisory Council, which will be composed mainly of DNAEA/MINED entities, as well as individuals from CSOs and institutions. The functions of this advisory council will be to discuss and analyse the available information on processes, problems and results of implementing the literacy, adult education and NFE programmes in the provinces, as well as to make recommendations regarding management, administration and logistics of programmes, and suggestions for problem-solving.

Evaluation: To ensure the objectivity of the analysis, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations (whether intermediate or final), they are conducted by independent teams, composed mainly of evaluation specialists from both national and international literacy, adult education and NFE programmes. These specialists are charged with assessing, analysing and evaluating the results of the different phases of the strategy's implementation in a qualitative/quantitative manner, using the criteria of efficiency, efficacy, relevance, impact and sustainability, and presenting recommendations for improving and adjusting the strategy.

The teams have access to all available information on the different phases as well as the expansion of the pilot programme to all the provinces, as well as specific information on the programmes and centres at the province and district levels. The teams work directly with key entities—trainers and learners as well as CSOs—of the communities in which the programme has been implemented.

Uses and dissemination of information: DNAEA, as well as CSOs and international organizations working in the field, use the information generated from monitoring and evaluation to support areas and programmes that need to be strengthened or substantially improved. The outcome reports resulting from the evaluations will be widely disseminated at the MINED level, as well to CSOs and international agencies of donor countries committed to the literacy, adult education and NFE strategy.

General guidelines for the research component

The implementation of the literacy, adult education and NFE strategy is accompanied by a research component designed and applied by an autonomous entity, such as MINED, with the technical and scientific competency for this task—as much as a university or an institute. The investigation is regarded as an instrument which regulates the strategy's implementation and assures and validates each programme's scientific component through its inclusion in all levels of the strategy.

Throughout the implementation, personnel involved at different levels (literacy workers, trainers, supervisors, management personnel, material authors, civil society and others) have access to the partial results of the research in order to correct and adjust the strategy components should they show any weakness.

The first phase in this strategy was to start a pilot programme. It was expected that throughout this investigation, models could be identified which might be conducive to the success of the literacy, adult education and NFE programmes and might serve as a reference for the enlargement of this sector and help to increase knowledge about these programmes at the international level. To materialize this research component, it was considered necessary to consider curricular development of materials, formation, supervision, accompaniment, monitoring, evaluation, management and administration. All these aspects relate to teaching-learning processes.

Action plan

To implement the strategy of the literacy, adult education and NFE sub-sector, an action plan was created which defines goals, activities, deadlines, responsibilities, expected results and the budget for each strategy area. The first phase of implementation, the pilot plan and evaluation, consisted of the application and evaluation of education models and methodologies of teaching-learning, curricula and so on. It also involved the review and preparation of materials, as well as the review of the data collection system for literacy, adult education and NFE programmes and adopting a system of monitoring, evaluation and investigation.

It was necessary to select this implementation strategy in order to take account of differences in literacy rates, linguistic and social diversity, literacy materials in Portuguese and other languages, and literacy workers with varying levels of training. During this phase, literacy, adult education and NFE programmes in other provinces will be conducted with revised and locally produced materials.

In the second phase (2003–2005), the pilot programme was extended to the national level.

Conclusion

Mário and Nandja (2005: 6) make reference to an analysis in the proposed 2005–2009 Strategic Plan (MINED 2005) reviewed some successes and challenges in literacy, adult education and NFE, The successes included the expansion of literacy units and the development of a strategy for adult literacy and education. The challenges included

partnerships and inadequate coordination, a lack of relevance of the programmes, poor retention (particularly of women and girls), and inadequate supervision, monitoring and evaluation. The review points to shortcomings in the form of poorly trained staff, a lack of funding, and incompetence on the part of the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) in discharging its duties, especially regarding the implementation of payment regulations for literacy workers, which has diminished motivation for both literacy workers and learners.

Mário and Nandja (2005: 6) propose the following ways to address the challenges referred to above:

1. Implementing existing policies rather than formulating new policies and declarations of intent.
2. Increasing funding for literacy, adult education and NFE programmes. Recent data from the MINED (2005) have shown that 4.1% of the 2003 education budget had been earmarked for adult education. However, information provided by the DNAEA reveals that a mere 1% actually went to the adult education sub-sector (Mário and Nandja 2005: 6).
3. Incorporating adult Literacy in MDG and EFA goals. Mário and Nandja argue that, although literacy impacts on the MDGs, it is not included in the MDG Action Plan. The only reference made to it in this plan is universal primary education. In the same way, literacy has become secondary in EFA programmes, especially since the introduction of the Fast Track Initiative, whose activities are centred on gender equality and the completion of primary education, thus continuing to marginalize young and adult illiterates.
4. Translating government plans into action. MINED's Strategic Plan has yet to be implemented. MINED should play a greater role in the coordination of stakeholders in the implementation of adult and non-formal education programmes.

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Educating Adults and Youth in Tanzania: Complementary Basic Education (COBET) and Integrated Community-Based Adult Education (ICBAE)

Basilina Levira and Valentino Gange

Since independence the Government of Tanzania has made significant attempts to fight poverty, disease and eradicate ignorance and illiteracy. The guiding principle thereby has been that everyone has the right to personal development. Thus earlier efforts were targeted at universal primary education (UPE) and mass adult education. In 1970, for instance, a national literacy campaign was launched to make all adults literate by 1975. In addition, UPE was launched in 1974 to ensure that all school-age children (7–13 years) go to school by 1977.

Although there were impressive gains in the field of adult basic literacy over the last three decades following the establishing of mass functional and post-literacy, these gains could not be sustained for various reasons, including over-dependence on donor support, a centralized planning system and lack of motivation among facilitators (Mnjagila 2004). The adult illiteracy rate increased from 9.6% in 1986 to 16% in 1992, and the net enrolment ratio (NER) in primary schools dropped from 71.6% in 1983 to 59.6% in 1990 (Ministry of Education and Culture [MOEC] 1993). By 1998, it was estimated that 2.5 million school age children in Tanzania were not in school.

A large number of school-age children were left un-enrolled especially in the rural areas. Children were either forced into late enrolment because of lack of space or were not enrolled at all. Most of

those enrolled at an older age often became discouraged, were often truant or dropped out completely. They added to the already high number of illiterate adults. As a remedial measure, the government made an education paradigm shift in which a series of policies and reforms were initiated with the aim of ensuring that all citizens receive basic education.

This chapter focuses on the innovations Tanzania embarked on to ensure equitable access and quality provision of basic education to adults, out-of-school children and youth.

It should be noted from the outset that, in 2003, the Government of Tanzania developed a National Strategy for Adult Education and Non-Formal Education for implementation from 2003 to 2008. The strategy aims to implement educational programmes targeting adults, youth and out-of-school children. Two programmes—Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE) and Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET)—were given high priority. To ensure proper implementation of these programmes, Council Implementers have been trained to decentralise planning and management of adult and non-formal education programmes.

Complementary Basic Education (COBET)

COBET was initiated in Tanzania to cater to primary school-aged children and youth who are out of school. As mentioned earlier, over 2.5 million school-aged children did not have the opportunity to enrol in primary schools for various reasons. There was also a large number of children who, for one reason or another, dropped out of school before completing the seven-year cycle.

The COBET programme was designed in two versions for two age groups: Cohort I (11–13-year-olds) and Cohort II (14–18-year-olds). The programme is flexible in that it permits multiple entries and exits to other openings depending on the learner's abilities. It was also designed to meet the needs of out-of-school children in both rural and urban settings. Thus it is an intervention also intended to complement primary education.

COBET is built on a primary school curriculum with some modifications to meet the needs of out-of-school children, as well as to provide learners with eligibility to sit for primary school leaving examinations and gain equivalency. The COBET curriculum com-

prises of five subjects: communication skills, mathematics, general knowledge, vocational skills and personality development.

The duration of the programme is three years for both age cohorts. The programme for Cohort I takes students to Grade 5 after they have passed the Grade 4 National Examination, while the programme for Cohort II opens the doors of other forms of education, such as distance learning, vocational training and secondary education for those who pass the Primary School Leaving Examination.

COBET is one of the government's priority programmes for contributing to the achievement of EFA goals. To date, some 466,018 learners have been reached through this programme. Among these, 233,932—including 122,482 (52%) boys and 111,450 (48%) girls—are over-age children enrolled in Cohort I. On the other hand, 232,086 learners are youth enrolled in Cohort II. Of these, 116,081 (47%) are boys and 110,081 (53%) are girls (MOEC 2005b).



Human resource enhancement and development is crucial for the delivery of quality education to youth and adults. Above is group facilitators who participated in training at Makambako, Iringa Region.

Learners in COBET are being taught by 15,534 facilitators who have received two weeks of training in skills facilitation. Of these, 7,587 are professional teachers who also teach in primary schools, while 7,947 are volunteers. Both type of facilitators are paid a monthly honorarium of about US\$20 as compensation for their work. The money helps to sustain the motivation of the facilitators.

Similar training was conducted at Uyole in the Mbeya Region.



Teaching and learning materials for the COBET programme have been developed by the Tanzania Institute of Education, which also develops materials for formal education institutions providing basic education.



Female facilitators are not left out; they are trained together with their male counterparts.

An evaluation of the results of COBET after three years of implementation has revealed that learners in COBET achieve the same results as their counterparts who study for seven years in the formal primary school system. Up to 2003, for instance, a total of 46 (out of 282 learners) COBET Cohort II-learners from four pilot areas passed the Primary School Leaving Examinations and joined government secondary schools.

To ensure that children are accorded their right to education, the financing of the COBET programme is linked to a sector-wide financing mechanism whereby the government and development partners discuss and agree on the amount of money to be allocated for the different components of the education sector. This system has helped to ensure that adult and non-formal education receive a reasonable amount of funds with which to implement its programmes.

Integrated Community-Based Adult Education (ICBAE)

The Integrated Community-Based Adult Education (ICBAE) programme is designed to provide basic education and life skills to adults and youth. The ICBAE model was designed to redress the shortcomings of the previous adult education programmes and is more responsive to the adult learners' needs. The model aims to enable youth and adults to acquire permanent literacy and vocational and life skills in order to improve their living standards. Specifically, it promotes and strengthens the participation of the direct beneficiaries at the grass-roots level with specific attention to existing gender imbalances and

attitudes. It empowers youth and adults to make decisions on what to do, how to do it, why and when to do it for their own benefit.

Development of relevant curricula

With the help of their facilitators, learners themselves develop the ICBAE curricula. This is done at the beginning of the course, when learners discuss with their facilitator the issues they would like to learn about. The MOEC has trained professional leaders of adult education in the country's 114 councils/districts, providing them with the skills needed to train adult education facilitators on curriculum development. The MOEC has also developed a curriculum guide and copies of facilitator manuals to assist the facilitators in developing curricula appropriate and relevant to the target groups' needs and interests, as well as to local conditions. These manuals are on agriculture and micro-economics, health, REFLECT guidelines, simple bookkeeping and socio-political studies.



Facilitators of adult learners undergoing training on curriculum development at Sumbawanga, Rukwa Region.

Income-generating projects are meant to serve as participants' entry points and as necessary ingredients of literacy. Literacy skills training is therefore an integral part of the projects and targets those who have never learned to read and write (Bugeke 1997).

Studies done in the areas where the model is being piloted (Mbunda 1996; Mushi 1998; Swai 1999) have indicated that community members have responded well to the ICBAE programme. The 1997 evaluation showed that illiteracy rate in the pilot areas dropped from 25% when the programme started in 1995 to approximately 12%. The evaluation also indicated that the socio-economic situation of poor communities had improved and that there had been spill-over effects to the beneficiaries, such as the establishment of self-help income-generation projects (including fish ponds, poultry keeping,

piggery, agricultural and gardening projects, environmental conservation, construction of modern houses and rehabilitation).

To ensure its effective implementation, ICBAE is linked with other forms of education, such as distance learning, and also is supported by literacy programmes, such worker education, radio education and rural newspapers, which are often available at Community and Teachers' Resource Centres. Also 1,600 facilitator manuals have been developed, printed and distributed to the ICBAE centres.



An old man from Kivira Village, Rungwe district in the Mbeya Region, trying very hard to educate the younger generation by means of oral literacy.

Conclusion

The two educational innovations, ICBAE and COBET, have responded to some extent to the problems facing the adult education and non-formal education sub-sector in Tanzania. At the time of writing this chapter, a great deal of energy is being exerted to revamp adult education in the country. The current efforts are linked with the national strategy for poverty reduction. Capacity-building workshops for adult education leaders have been conducted. And a nationwide programme of training for learning centre facilitators has been implemented. The government hopes to have soon re-established the aforementioned programmes throughout the country. If this ambition is to be realised, the participation of other stakeholders—the communities themselves, development partners, NGOs and UN agencies—cannot be overemphasised. Everyone needs to play a part if Tanzania's objectives in this area are to be achieved.

Adult and lifelong learning can take place anywhere and at any time. Anyone can assume the role of facilitator at one time and that of a learner at another. The most important aspect of adult learning is respecting other people's point of views and local knowledge.

According to Mnjagila (2004) one of the challenges for initiatives in adult education is to sustain and maintain the vision that adult education is an instrument of empowerment. At the national level, support for this vision implies recognition of the long and wide scope and nature of adult basic education provision. At the local level, it implies working in partnership with all the agencies or organisations that deal with adults, whether they are the providers of learning or not. The greatest challenge that this new vision faces is in demonstrating the outcomes of the learning, or the difference that adult basic education provision has made to individuals and communities.

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The Context of Literacy Development and Adult Education in Angola

Juao Romeu and Luisa Grilo

Shortly after Portuguese colonialism had ended there in 1975, Angola established an education system based on democratic principles. At that time, in 1978, the country had to grapple with redressing the colonial legacy of 85% illiteracy. Although the new education system resulted in an explosion in student enrolment, especially in primary schools—the gross enrolment rate grew more than 200% (ANC 2003)—the system was rendered inefficient by the ensuing political-military instability that overtook the country in the 1980s.

Thirty years of civil war have left the education system in chaos. It has been estimated that 5,000 schools have been destroyed, and many parts of the country have become inaccessible due to “mine-infested roads” and destroyed bridges. Obviously under these circumstances it was next to impossible for children to attend primary school. This situation also affected the access of adults and youth to basic education. Even today one-third of all children—the largest portion of them girls—do not complete primary education; almost two-thirds of children in rural areas do not do so. Similarly, nearly one-third of adults are illiterate. In rural areas, 50% of women are illiterate (Ibis 2007).

As a consequence Angola is putting in place integrated and sustainable policies which see education as central to human development, the reduction of social disparities, socio-economic development and national reconciliation (ANC 2003). This holds equally of literacy. Enhancing literacy means more than just gaining the capability to read and write; it also involves strengthening one’s ability to

communicate and participate in society, which is fundamental for achieving sustainable peace.

Adult education within the New Educational Model

At present Angola is making a transition to a new education system, which was approved in 2001 and which replaces the system approved in 1977 and implemented since 1978. The main purpose of the current education reform has been to promote high quality teaching methods by means of a new educational structure and project. The reform is designed to initiate significant, desirable and valid change in the education system—and it is hoped it will make strides towards reducing the number of illiterate Angolans.

Adult education comprises two primary components: two-thirds literacy and post-literacy work (equivalent to adult primary education) and one-third work in Levels II and III of adult education. However, the education of adults is confronted with several problems, chief among them being limited access to education opportunities, low quality and equity, and the high costs of expanding access and improving quality (ANC 2003).

Within the New Educational Model, Angola has approved two important strategic instruments, which are crucial for improving living conditions and reducing poverty. First is the Basic Law of the Education System (Angola 2001), which defines adult education as an autonomous educational subsystem. The second instrument is the Integrated Strategy for the Improvement of the Education System, which specifies strategies and goals to be achieved by 2015 in adult education (ANC 2003). In addition, the former National Institute of Literacy (INA) and the National Direction of the Adults' Education (DNEA) were combined to create the National Institute of the Adult Education (INEDA) in June 2000. As the adult education policy agency within the Ministry of Education (MOE), INEDA is in charge of the regulation and pedagogical coordination of adult education, from literacy to the second cycle of secondary education. It is engaged in research, training, community development, documentation and information dissemination.

In connection with the education reforms in progress, the MOE has also adopted the following methodological instruments: the Statutes of the Adult Education Subsystem, the Evaluation System

for the Adult Education Subsystem, and the Statistic Information System.

Adult education is being implemented in 18 provinces, 163 Municipalities and 532 localities. As of 2003, there were 25,000 literacy and post-literacy lessons and 500,000 adults in Levels II and III of adult education (ANC 2003).

As for investments in adult education and literacy, funds are received from the government (15% of the funds allocated to the MOE) through bilateral and multilateral projects. The current education expenses within the adult education system is estimated at US\$25 per student.

The populations most in need of adult education are vulnerable women and girls, people with special education needs, out-of-school street children and adolescents, agriculturalists and fishermen, military and para-military persons, company employees, and low-skilled workers and prisoners.

Civil society and non-governmental organisations donate more than 60% of the funds necessary for the direct management of education activities.

The lack of proper preparation of adult educators has had a negative impact on the success of literacy and adult education programmes. Such educators are required to have at least completed Grade 8 of general education.

Historical background of adult literacy

At the time of independence on 11 November 1975, Angola had inherited a illiteracy rate of 85% (ANC 2003) among the economically active population. On 22 November 1976, the National Strategy for Illiteracy Eradication, known as the Battle for Literacy, took effect after its proclamation by Dr. Agostinho Neto (Collelo 1991). In keeping with the trends of the time and because it was difficult to find qualified primary school teachers, the military, workers and rural population were identified as beneficiaries for the execution of the strategy and had to support the teaching of reading and writing in the 1980s (*ibid.*). The National Commission for Literacy (with a multi-sectoral structure) and the National Centre for Literacy (executive structure) were created—with branches throughout the territory—to support the strategy.

During the Battle for Literacy, the teaching-learning process was structured in 6–8-month stages, each lasting two hours per day, Monday through Friday—before or after the working day. The classes were taught by volunteers known as “literacy fighters”, who had received non-professional technical-pedagogical training. From 2 November 1976 to 31 December 1997, a total of 2,417,094 citizens were taught to read and write through a 28-stage process. With 370,411 literacy teachers, the teacher-student ratio as 1:6. During the strategy’s 21 years of execution, 1,336,514 (73.90%) of the students were women. Teenagers and young adults represented 51% of the total number. These statistics reflect the fruit of a national effort by the Angolan people, especially churches, NGOs, the armed forces and worker centres. Since 1980, public institutions have been unable to provide 10% of the literacy specialisation programmes.

Meanwhile, teaching of other national languages (*Kimbundu, Kikongo, Cokue, Umbundu, Ngaguela* and *Octchikuanyama*) was implemented in coordination with the National Institute of National Languages. Unfortunately, this programme was unsuccessful and had to be shut down due to insufficient scientific content, inadequate teaching materials and the prevailing political-military instability, especially in rural areas. This was particularly unfortunate since only a very small portion of the population speaks Portuguese and thus was hindered from accessing education.

Starting in 1987–1988, assistance was increased for literacy specialisation programmes. However, even where this strategy was successful, there have been problems due to inadequate or insufficient resources, a lack of materials adapted to and addressing the learning needs of adults, unplanned courses with no relation to practical life, and a conflict between market-oriented goals and higher educational-cultural goals of citizenship, democratic participation and cultural diversity.

The Revitalisation Programme of the Literacy Process

In 1997 the Government of Angola started a Revitalisation Programme of the Literacy Process, which is facilitated by civil society and NGOs (ANC 2003). For this programme new mathematics textbooks were introduced which take in to consideration the adult learners’ psychology (*ibid.*). Greater effort will be exerted in the

countryside and particularly with regard to women. The literacy programme also teaches adults in local vernacular and eight national languages, which are: *Umbundu, Kimbundu, Kikongo, Tchokwe, Kwanyama, Nganguela, Ibinda*. *Nyaneka-Humbi* is in the phase of printing new books for the language.

In cooperation with the Eduardo dos Santos Foundation, the Angolan Government has set up a Literacy National Premium, which totals US\$5,000,000 and which is awarded on the National Educator Day (22 November) to “a social organisation having been best involved in the literacy process, according to the given regulation” (ANC 2003).

Current overview of adult education and literacy

Despite all the efforts of the government and civil society, today there are still 3.4 million illiterate people in Angola, which is half the population aged 15 years or older, and adult literacy and education rates are currently very low. The main reasons for this are the worsening political-military situation and the economic-financial recession.

Currently participants in the literacy programmes are war refugees, rural people, and older and young women, who until now have received very little education. The programmes seek to make literacy relevant to these groups, and in this connection the MOE considers churches and NGOs to be important. The MOE and its partners are also paying special attention to people with deficiencies. The programme and course contents have been updated to better adapt them to learners' needs. For this reason, this literacy programme is endeavouring to teach adults, once again, in their local vernaculars.

Involvement of civil society and NGOs in literacy programmes

One of the main providers of literacy programmes is the Angolan Council of Christian Churches (CICA), with the support of Church World Services (CWS). CICA thereby uses ProLiteracy's social change methodology, which combines literacy education with development efforts, offering people the opportunity to learn about peace, human rights, HIV/AIDS or financial programmes (CWS 2006). Local churches have started literacy campaigns in rural sectors, coordinating community-based literacy classes in ten provinces.

The programme aims to foster not only literacy (especially among Angolan women) but also social education, livelihood training and skills needed to participate in the post-conflict society (ibid.). In the rural communities people are keen on learning because they want to free themselves from dependence on other people's information transmitted orally and to gain access to information on their own. The result will be that a large segment will no longer be supplied with information from a few. Of course, the benefits of literacy are also more pragmatic, since it gives people the opportunity to start small businesses or to improve their trade, for instance in carpentry or masonry. The most concrete problem is how to find two hours a day for seven months in order to attend CICA classes.

Another literacy programme for adult learners is called Alfalit International, which is supported by USAID. Students are often women who originally came from rural areas in Angola's interior but fled during the war to Luanda. Thus far 804 informal learning centres have been set up in urban neighbourhoods. The programme aims to 'improve the quality of life and self-esteem of men, women, and their families by teaching basic reading, writing, and other life skills in a local community setting' (USAID 2006).

The educational level the students acquire is equivalent to Grade 4 of formal education and is often achieved in six months or less. The programme not only enables persons to read and write, but to also gain access to the public education system for further education (USAID 2006). Together with the Consortium of Mississippi (MCID), Alfalit International manages the US funding of literacy projects. UNICEF and UNESCO are co-funding agencies. The MCID is particularly 'involved in the development of projects of support to the training of trainers for the adults' educators and the construction and equipment of an Integrated Training centre for Women'. The Centro de Formação e Alfabetização para mulheres em Luanda (Centre for Education and Literacy for Women in Luanda) provides free literacy education to women who cannot read and write at all or who can do so only with difficulty.

Literacy with vocational training

As for vocational training for adults, there exist numerous institutions throughout the country offering practical experience (AAESMC

2007). In some urban and rural projects literacy education is combined with vocational training and provided to targeted populations, such as child soldiers, street children in Luanda, amputees, and 'internally displaced persons who have fled their home areas due to fighting'. Vocational programmes specifically for war-injured and landmine victims provide skills in tailoring, metalwork, carpentry and business.

Programmes in general adult education

From 1995 until 2000 DVV International (IIZ-DVV 2007) had its own project office in Luanda with the aim of building educational institutions and assuring quality education for adults. After the closure of that office, DVV International has continued to support programmes and activities in Angola through its Bonn office.

One of the organization's activities is teaching people to read and write. Especially single female traders with children were provided literacy and basic knowledge in business management, as well as small loans to assure a better future livelihood for their family. But the organization's main focus has been on issues of health, advancement of women, environment protection, and citizen and human rights. Information and teaching materials for the instruction of personnel of the Ministry of Health, of NGOs or church institutions was developed with the aim of stopping the spread of AIDS. Catholic nuns from the Missionárias Servas do Espírito Santo (MSES) also cooperated by communicating their knowledge of how homeopathy and botany can be utilized to derive medicine that can be cheaply sold to patients. Regarding women's empowerment, special material and concepts for teaching were elaborated to contribute to the reduction of prejudices against women and to involve them in a stronger manner in the planning of governmental and NGO projects. After the civil war, which still seems to smoulder, education for peace has become a prominent goal. Weekly Radio programmes are broadcast weekly which are intended to stimulate discussions on current topics.

Another important partner is the Associação Angolana para Educação des Adultos (AAEA: Angolan Association for Adult Education), which comprises 30 members from the adult education sector. The AAEA is responsible for administrative work and content which concerns the planning and implementation of education-

al measures. The AAEA's educational projects concentrate on equality, AIDS, literacy, environment, nutrition and political education.

Together with the MOE, the Instituto de Ciências Religiosas de Angola (ICRA: Angolan Institute for Religious Studies), and international organizations, the AAEA has implemented the Participatory School Governance Programme (PSGP), which supports the provision of adult education, as well as the development of democratic and proactive Parents and Guardians Commissions (PGCs) and the construction and rehabilitation of schools. Initiatives such as the Centres of Learning are being developed which promote ongoing teacher development, youth clubs focussing on HIV/AIDS and gender issues, and reading skills among learners (Ibis 2007). PSGP, in partnership with AAEA, supports adult education including literacy classes in marginalized communities. In 2005 in Kibala, 500 participants (mostly women) were organized into 25 adult education circles. Their curriculum ranged from basic literacy and numeracy skills to gender, HIV/AIDS and civic education.

Perspectives

Angola is working very hard to achieve the Dakar EFA goals.

Regarding EFA Goal 3 ('Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes'), efforts are being made to meet the learning needs of adults and youth by ensuring that they have equal access to an adequate learning process and a programme that prepares them for life.

To meet Goal 1 ('Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children'), a programme will be created that enable students to complete their primary schooling and develop their abilities and attitudes in order to execute their civil rights and promote their integration in society. Competence development will include:

- i) reinforcing the institutional capacity to create an open-system and flexible programmes for people who have been left behind by the formal education system;
- ii) implementing and standardizing literacy and post-literacy programmes through professional training;

- iii) increasing the number of local collaborators for adults education by 2015; and
- iv) creating a system for the recognition and certification of academic and professional competencies gained throughout the formal and informal learning processes.

In view of Goal 4 ('Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults'), the aim will be to increase the number of adults who are able to read and write, especially women, by 50% by 2015 in order to give them equal access to basic education and continuous training. In keeping with Goal 1, the government will attempt to increase the adult population's rate of reading/writing to 91% by 2015. Likewise regarding Goal 2 ('Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality'), the aim will be to decrease the illiteracy rate to a maximum of 10%. As for Goal 3, the aim will be to produce or acquire pedagogical materials, also in national languages.

To meet Goal 5 ('Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality'), the government will aim to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary studies by 2005, and to achieve greater gender equality in education by 2015 to ensure that girls have avail themselves of the full and equal right to have a high quality basic education. Goal 1 will be to increase the rate of school enrolment by 25%, and Goal 2 will be to increase the retention rate and the progress of girls attending school by 15%.

The Republic of Angola's National Action Plan of Education for All (NEPEFA) is an important device that complements its other instruments concerned with poverty reduction, development of women, enhancement of the national work force and education reform.

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Adult Education in the Arab Region

Seham Najem, Aicha Barki and Nour Dajani-Shehabi

Education . . . is the key to sustainable development and peace and stability within and among countries . . .

(UNESCO 2000: 8)

Education aims not only at providing individuals with equal learning opportunities but also at establishing a knowledge society based on quality education. Although the Arab States have expanded their provision of education quantitatively over the last few decades, resulting in higher literacy rates, it is still far from satisfactory. For, despite the success in decreasing illiteracy rates in the region, the absolute number of illiterates has increased. Unless quality is improved, quantity has no meaning.

Adult education contributes to the establishment of a knowledge society by creating a learning and literate environment. By educating adults, more children are likely to benefit from their educated parents. They are more likely to stay in school or return to school, and are less likely to join the pool of adult illiterates. Only under these circumstances will children be able to contribute to the sustainability of a knowledge society. When delivered effectively, adult education is potentially one of the useful methods not only for eradicating illiteracy but also for eliminating ignorance and misunderstanding about education and its necessity, and thus for creating a knowledge society. A society that lacks knowledge will have difficulties in achieving human and social development, as well as peace and stability, in the region.

Adult education in the Arab States

The foundations for literacy and adult education initiatives in the region are: the CONFINTEA V Recommendations (1997) and CONFINTEA Mid-term Review (2003), Education for All (EFA) Goals (2000–2015), United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI; 2000–2010), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs 2 and 3; 2000–2015) and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD; 2003–2012).

Literacy as the main issue

Literacy has been a pressing issue on the adult education agenda in the Arab States. The emphasis of adult education has been on literacy programmes and post-literacy follow-up. Literacy is the key to human and social development. It does not stop with the ability to read and write but enables human beings to exercise their rights, as well as to engage in all manner of creative activities which enrich themselves and their surroundings.

Since CONFINTEA V in 1997, the Arab States have intensified their commitment to education and have taken tangible steps to translate that commitment into action. In 1999, the Arab Literacy and Adult Education Network, which consists of 80 Arab organizations and CSOs working in the field of literacy, adult education and sustainable development, was established in Egypt as a major response to CONFINTEA V. The network's function was to support NGOs and public associations in their efforts to play an active role in the field. The network's two main objectives are: to encourage the establishment of new associations at the grassroots level (including concerned persons from target groups), and to connect the network's activities at the local, national and regional levels with similar activities at the regional and international levels.

Development of literacy programmes

EFA Goal 3 aims at 'ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes' (UNESCO 2000). While adult education programmes focus on eradicating illiteracy, they have also incorporated life skills training and necessary vocational education in order to aid adults in their personal and social development. For example, small industry management, health and nutrition, child

care, agriculture, micro-credit, banking and money management, have all become part of the literacy programmes. Moreover, a large number of countries incorporate issues such as the environment, civil education and democracy education in their literacy programmes. Such training and education contribute to post-literate learners' finding it easier to find work opportunities. The growing awareness of literacy as a tool for achieving a better and more productive life has played an important role in changing literacy programme curricula.

Modern media and other means are being employed to reach a maximum number of illiterates. Distance and open teaching, home schooling, local community schooling, and home schooling offer options that satisfy various needs of learners, especially in rural and remote areas.

Innovative projects in the region

Multi-purpose Community Learning Centres (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Camps, Syria and Yemen)

Multi-purpose Community Learning Centres (MCLCs) aim to empower marginalized groups and poor communities in villages and slums by providing literacy skills and diversified lifelong learning opportunities (post-literacy). Such skills and opportunities help to improve the learners' quality of life and to enhance sustainable development. They are established and managed by the local communities (local authorities, in cooperation with NGOs and the private sector), thus ensuring social ownership and contributing to capacity-building in planning and management of local communities and individuals. One of their activities is the integration of ICTs.

1. Friendly Schools for Children (Egypt)

The Friendly Schools project builds on the already existing One Classroom Schools and Community School projects implemented in poor areas in Egypt. The main beneficiaries are children in difficult circumstances, working children, street children aged 9–15. The school equips the children with literacy and basic learning skills in the elementary curricula. It imparts relevant skills in technical fields, promotes positive attitudes towards their families and society, and teaches life skills and positive social orientations so that the students can return to formal schooling and catch up with other students or

start working with their newly acquired skills. Because of its high degree of success, there are plans to extend this project to other countries in the region.

2. University Students for Literacy (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Yemen)

Under the slogan ‘Let one teach one’, each university student helps at least one person per year to climb out of illiteracy. In creating university-community partnerships, University Students for Literacy (UNILIT) allows universities to extend their commitment to educating the countries’ human capital in the service of development, and to providing educational services at different (non-traditional) levels of learning. The students, on the other hand, contribute to the communities by reducing illiteracy and creating literate environments and societies.

In Egypt, for example, UNILIT was adapted by the Ministry of Education and Council for Higher Education and will be implemented to accelerate the elimination of illiteracy especially among women.

3. Combating Illiteracy in Rural Areas (Sudan and Yemen)

This project focuses on strengthening the capacity of governmental bodies and NGOs to achieve EFA Goals 4 and 5, particularly in rural areas. It incorporates (post-literacy) skills of relevance to women farmers, such as poultry management, bee-keeping, and on-farm processing of vegetables and fruits.

Major problems in adult education

Illiteracy in the Arab States

EFA Goal 4 aims at reducing illiteracy rates by 50% by 2015. In the Arab region, around 70 million adults are still illiterate, in addition to 7.5 million out-of-school children aged 6–15 who could be the future illiterate adults unless illiteracy is tackled now. These people are concentrated mainly in poor, marginalized and highly populated areas and countries. Algeria, Morocco, Sudan and Yemen together have 30 million illiterates, while Egypt alone has around 20 million illiterate adults. These five countries together have 70% of the 70 million Arab illiterates.

Gender disparity

The situation of female adult literacy in these countries is the bleakest. Egypt, Iraq, Mauritania, Morocco and Yemen have female illiteracy rates of over 50%, and Sudan has 46.8% (UIS 2002). Gender disparity is a challenge especially in rural and remote areas. The causes are historically low primary school enrolment for girls (although it has improved), the shortage of girl-friendly schools, poverty, and male-dominated cultures and traditions.

EFA has given momentum to adult education, especially concerning education for women. EFA Goal 5 entails 'eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.' Most Arab States are currently working to eliminate the gender gap in enrolment and literacy rates. This momentum is also supported by MDGs, UNGEI and UNLD.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) for adult literacy now stands at 0.79 (based on UIS, 2005), whereas the GPI for youth literacy is 0.93. According to UNESCO's *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005*, the GPI for adult literacy was 0.56 and 0.71 for youth literacy in 1990 (UNESCO 2005). This clearly shows the success in narrowing the gap in literacy rates between the two genders in the Arab region.

Information and documentation gathering for monitoring and evaluation

Another main problem in adult education is the lack of reliable statistics and documentation due to the neglect of documenting, even though there are many successful programmes carried out in the region. This is clear particularly in the field of NFE, where CSOs and NGOs implement a large number of literacy and adult education programmes. This lack can be attributed to the shortage of centralized information and documentation gathering which leads in turn to a lack of evaluation tools, such as measurable indicators, to review the adult education programmes. This stems from the absence of frameworks dealing with the evaluation and improvement of curricula or the poor performance of these frameworks.

Though many countries' reports state that they do evaluate the

programmes and accordingly alter the curricula, programme content, teaching methodology and teacher training, few documents actually show the results of such evaluation or the changes made.

Results from evaluations could be used to advance the education system, to develop curricula and to improve the quality of education at national and regional levels. Evaluation is a tool for strengthening results-based management, to enable decisions and to establish policies for future strategic planning.

There is a strong need for capacity-building regarding documentation and statistics for monitoring and evaluation, as well as the actual establishment of regional information and documentation centres.

Recognition of CSOs and NGOs

One of the main problems is the lack of sufficient recognition of CSOs and NGOs in the field of education in most of the Arab States, even though they provide a large number of literacy and adult education programmes. The first resolution of the Fifth World Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) dealing with 'Adult learning and democracy: The challenges of the 21st century' stressed the importance of NGOs' participation and involvement in decision- and policy-making. However, this resolution has yet to be promoted. Though its recognition has been increasing, learners in programmes provided by the NGOs are not always accredited in most of the Arab States. This inevitably affects the motivation of learners, who find that they have no assurance of an educational or an occupational future even after attaining adequate literacy and other skills. Thus there is a clear need for recognizing NFE as a legitimate way of providing certificates to learners and job opportunities to post-literate learners. This issue also concerns the bridge between formal and non-formal education. There should be a secured route for the post-literate learners to return to formal education, especially when learners are young.

Conflict and instability

There are also other obstacles to achieving quality education. Armed conflict, occupation and economic stagnation in Iraq, Palestine, Sudan and Lebanon have prevented them from making progress over

the past years. The education of children in these countries constitutes one of the most important challenges to human development.

Policy planning and financing

Governments commitments

Arab States' commitments to the EFA goals include: reduction of the adult illiteracy rate by 50%, reduction of the drop-out rate, expansion of both formal and non-formal educational opportunities, improvement in girls' enrolment, and improvement in quality education. Though all these commitments are interconnected and pursued, the main focus of the adult education is on the reduction of adult illiteracy rate by 50%.

National EFA plans: National EFA plans should become part of a wider framework that aims to improve citizens' quality of life and putting an end to poverty. The essential activities for improving education lie at the national level; so it is necessary to establish national EFA forums which represent all concerned ministries, CSOs and NGOs. However, in the political decision-making process on educational national plans, the involvement and participation of CSOs is still minimal, except for in a few countries.

UNESCO has been trying to create bridges between governments and NGOs so that all stakeholders are involved in shaping national plans. The formation of thematic EFA/NGO coordinators in December 2004 and the ensuing EFA coordinators meeting in May 2005 of national EFA coordinators from governments and NGOs clearly showed the improvement in relations between governments and NGOs in giving a voice to NGOs and increasing their participation in the decision-making process.

Adult education in national plans: Two-thirds of the Arab States prepared a national plan following the guidelines of UNESCO regional bureaus and in view of EFA goals. The main plans, strategies and priorities for adult education are summarized below.

Some Arab States have drafted new literacy strategies based on the concept of civilization and the formation of an integrated Arab persons (e.g. in Kuwait). In the Gulf States, for example, emphasis has placed more on women's education, since the first literacy programmes had focused on male education. The use of computers, me-

dia and distance-learning tools (e.g. television) are promoted for adult education and literacy programmes. In addition, recognition and use of NFE (parallel education, continuing education, public and specialized education, modern technology instruction) was suggested. In terms of evaluation, national tests and standards for the measurement of achievement (every four years) were established in Egypt.

The Arab States in general have given greater emphasis to life skills in both formal and non-formal education. This has been particularly evident in the countries' attempts to link youth education, literacy and adult education programmes to vocational training and human rehabilitation.

However, plans have generally been prepared using top-down methods. As a consequence, there does not appear to be any clear ownership of the plans or commitment to them from stakeholders. Governments need to develop literacy programmes using bottom-up, learner-driven, needs-based approaches. For governments to be able to deliver such programmes, it is recommended that CSOs and NGOs participate in the national decision-making processes.

Financing

Public spending on education in the Arab region has declined since 1985. Budget allocations on education are also minimal in comparison to other expenditures. However, the quality of education depends on sufficient funding, just as do the improvement of society and the drive to end poverty. Since education is an investment in a country's development and its human resources, governments have to acknowledge the importance of this investment.

Partnership with donor countries and organizations is crucial to obtain funds for the necessary projects. Yet since donor countries usually prefer funding formal education improvement, it is very important that recipient countries stress the advantages, gains and necessity of adult education in terms of poverty reduction, health improvement, HIV/AIDS awareness, and education for future generations, which contribute to achieving not only EFA goals but also MDGs.

There is also a need to explore funding options from the private sector. However, to obtain funds, there should be a clear strategic

plan and implementation proposal. This requires information, statistics and analysis of the situation, as well as capacity-building for those who deal with information and establish accountability.

Conclusion

Adult education in the Arab States is a very important element not only to eradicate illiteracy but also to contribute to poverty reduction, health improvement, social and human development of their citizens and development of the state itself. Moreover, increasing women's literacy works as a main driving force towards the achievement of the MDGs. Therefore, governments need to invest in adult education, raise funds from the private sector and donor organizations, and improve their national plans by taking account of their citizens' needs and cooperating with CSOs and NGOs. Governments should collect information and statistics and document cases in the field of adult education, as well as build capacity for accurate monitoring and evaluation. It should disseminate information at the national and region levels.

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Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AFLP	Accelerated Female Literacy Projects
ALP	Adult Learning Programme
ANPED	National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Education
APPEAL	Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education
ASDSE	Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment
ASEAN	Association of South-Eastern Asian Countries
ASP	<i>Akshara Sankranti</i> Programme
AUPE	Adult Upper Primary Education
AYE	Adult and Youth Education
BACE	Bangladesh Association for Community Education
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BEDC	Basic Education Development Committee
BID	Banco Interamericano desarrollo
BNFE	Bureau of Non-formal Education
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CEAAL	Latin American Council for Adult Education
CEALE	Centre of Literacy, Reading and Writing
CEPAL	International Institute for Educational Planning, Buenos Aires
CEC	Continuing Education Centre
CED	Certificate in Education for Development
CEP	Continuing Education Programme
CES	Centre for External Studies, Namibia
CES	Continuing Education Scheme, India
CETV	China Education Television Station
CLC	Community Learning Centre

CLDC	Community Skills Development Centre
CMES	Centre for Mass Education in Science
COBET	Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania
CONAPO	National Population Council
COLL	Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning
CONALFA	National Literacy Council (Consejo Nacional de Alfabetización)
CONEVyT	National Council on Education for Life and Work, Mexico
CONFINTEA V	Fifth International Conference of Adult Education
CONSED	National Council of Secretaries of Education
CSO	Civil society organization
DABE	Directorate of Adult Basic Education and Training.
DAM	<i>Dhaka Ahsania</i> Mission
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DECJA	Youth and Adult Continuing Education Office, Nicaragua
DFA	<i>Dakar Framework of Action</i>
DfID	British Department of International Department
DIGEEX	General Direction of Out-of-School Education
DLC	District Literacy Centre
DLS	District Literacy Society
DNAEA	National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education, Mozambique
DNFE	Department of Non-formal Education
DOE	Department of Education
EAST	Empowering Girls to Become Agents of Social Transformation
EBA	Educación Básica de Adultos
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EDA	Educación de Adultos
EDUSAT	Educational Satellite, Mexico
EFA	Education for All
ENCE	National School of Statistical Sciences
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ERCERP	Estrategias reforzadas de reducción de pobreza
ETSIP	Strategic Plan for the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme

FIVDB	Friends in Village Development Bangladesh
FFLP	Farmers Functional Literacy Project
FUNDEB	Fund for the Development of Basic Education
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GOI	Government of India
GPRB	Government of the Republic of Bangladesh
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
HRD	Human resources development
IALS	International Adult Literacy Survey
IBOPE	Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística
ICBAE	Integrated Community based Adult Education
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IFEJA	Index of Fragility in Adult and Youth Education
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
ILO	International Labour Organization
INAF	National Indicator of Functional Literacy
INATEC	Instituto Nacional Tecnológico
INE	National Institute of Statistics
INEA	National Institute for Adult Education, Mexico
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics, Mexico
INEP	National Institute for Educational Studies and Research
IPEA	Institute of Applied Economic Research
JSS	Scheme of <i>Jan Shikshan Sansthan</i>
LEARN	Learning Enhancement for Adults' Retraining Needs
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
MBESC	Minister of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
MCLC	Multi-purpose Community Learning Centre
MDC	Ministry of Social Development, Brazil
MEC	Ministry of Education
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MECD	Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport
MEV	Educational Model for Life, Mexico
MEVyT	Education Model for Life and Work, Mexico
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resources Development

MIBES	Indigenous Bilingual Model of Life and Work with Spanish as Second Language, Mexico
MIBI	Indigenous Bilingual Integrated Educational Model of Life and Work
MINEDUC	Guatemalan Ministry of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MONALFA	National Movement for Literacy
MPFL	Mass Programme of Functional Literacy
MPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MTE	Ministry of Labour and Employment, Brazil
MTs	Master trainers
NAEP	National Adult Education Programme
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAMCOL	Namibian College of Open Learning
NCUNLD	Namibian Coalition for the United Nations Literacy Decade
NER	Net enrolment ratio
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board Thailand
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIEPA	National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
NIJERA <i>Shiki</i>	Learn Ourselves
NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling
NLM	National Literacy Mission
NLPN	National Literacy Programme in Namibia
NPE	National Policy of Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NUFED	Development of Education
OBE	Open basic education
OECD	Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development
OEI	Organization of Iberoamerican States
ONEC	Office of the National Education Commission
ONESQA	Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment

ONFEC	Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission
OPS	Office of the Permanent Secretary
PAEBANIC	Programa de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Jóvenes y Adultos
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
PBS	<i>Padhna Badhna Andolan</i> , Literacy Improvement Campaign
PENEM	Programme of Extension and Improvement of Basic Secondary Education
PLAR	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
PNAD	Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios
PNDS	Pesquisa Nacional sobre Demografia e Saúde
PKSF	<i>Palli Karma Shahayak</i> Foundation (Rural Employment Assistance Foundation)
PL&CE	Post-literacy and Continuing Education
PLP	Post-literacy Programme
PMI	Paulo Monte Negro Institute
POA	Policy of Education Program of Action
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PROSHIKA	<i>Proshika Shiksha Kaj</i> (Training, Education and Work)
PRRAC	Programa Regional de Reconstrucción para América Central
RAAAB	Support Network for Literacy Action in Brazil
RFLP	Rural Functional Literacy Project
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADSE	Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment
SANLI	South African National Literacy Initiative
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SASA	Automated Follow-up and Accreditation System, Mexico
SECAD	Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity
SEP	Secretaría de Educación Pública, Mexico
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SIMAC	System of Betterment of Human Resources and Curricular Adaptation

SLMA	State Literacy Mission Authority
SNE	National Education System
SRC	State Resource Centre
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TLC	Total Literacy Campaign
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UFMG	Federal University of Minas Gerais
UIE	UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal
UN	United Nations
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESA	Estácio de Sá University Brazil
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEVOC	International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
UNILIT	University Students for Literacy
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNLD	United Nations Literacy Decade
UNDIME	National Union of Municipal Directors of Education
UPE	Universal primary education
URNG	Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Gutemalteca
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VTs	Volunteer teachers
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZSS	<i>Zilla Sakshratha Samiti</i> (District Literacy Centre)

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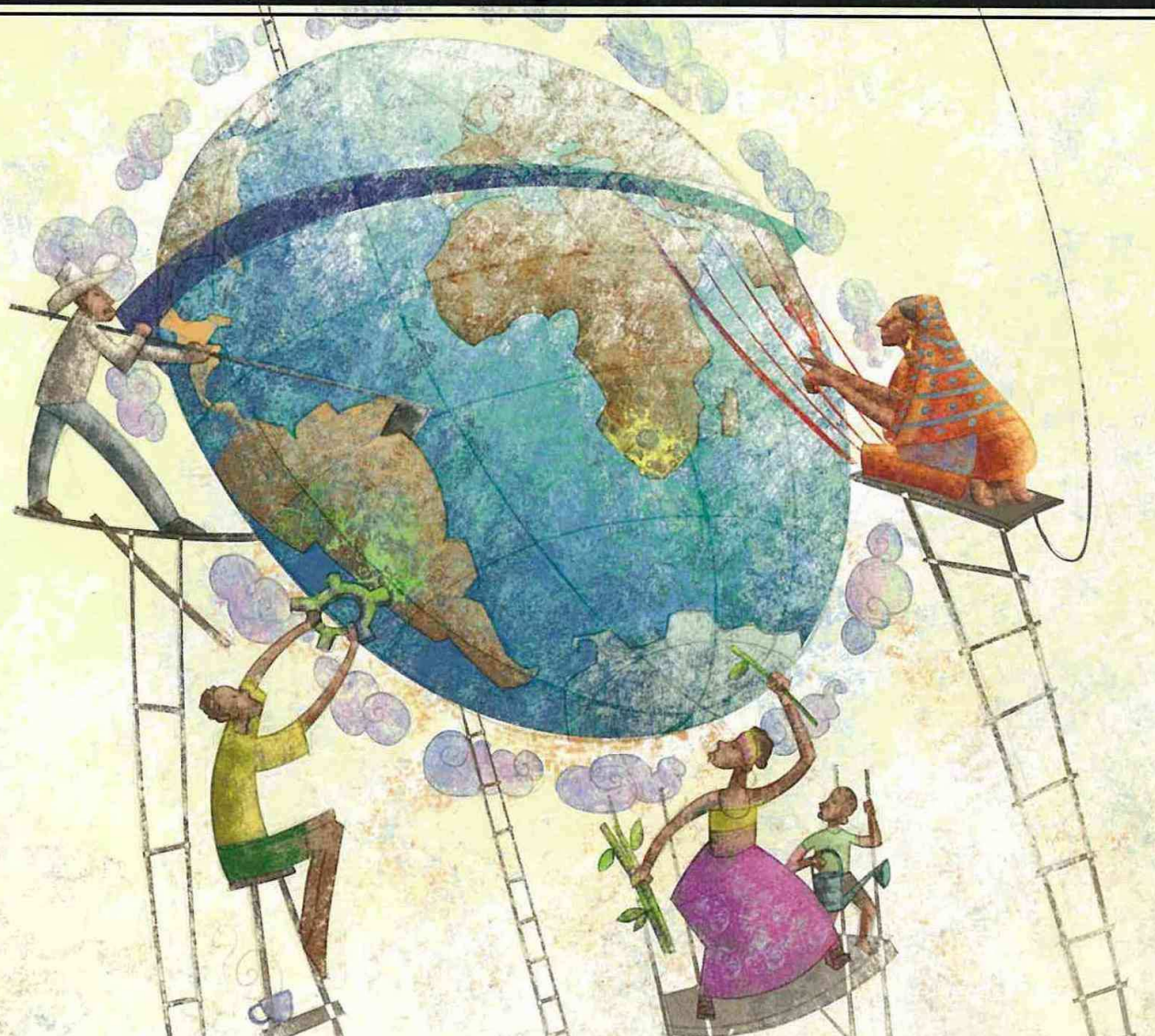
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ALFABETIZACIÓN, CONOCIMIENTO Y DESARROLLO

Diálogo Sur-Sur sobre Políticas Públicas en Materia
de Educación de Calidad para Jóvenes y Adultos



UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (UIL)
Y EL INSTITUTO NACIONAL PARA LA EDUCACIÓN DE LOS ADULTOS (INEA/CONEVYT)

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Esta publicación contiene los resultados de la conferencia Diálogo Sur-Sur sobre Políticas Públicas en Materia de Educación de Calidad para Jóvenes y Adultos, que se llevó a cabo en la Ciudad de México en 2005.

Los artículos fueron escritos por los participantes que presentan los programas nacionales desde la perspectiva gubernamental, los cuales se enfocaron principalmente en alfabetización, aunque hubo aportaciones importantes en materia de educación básica y reconocimiento de competencias.

El diálogo constituyó un foro muy importante para los países en vías de desarrollo, porque facilitó el intercambio de experiencias políticas exitosas y problemas para abordar. En realidad, constituyó una primera oportunidad de hablar entre pares con necesidades educativas similares.

En este libro se hace hincapié en las experiencias de los cuatro países considerados *locomotoras* del desarrollo educativo en el campo: Brasil, India, Sudáfrica y México. Sin embargo, es verdaderamente enriquecedora la información proporcionada por los demás países africanos, asiáticos y latinoamericanos: Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Tailandia, China, Guatemala, Nicaragua así como los Países Árabes en su conjunto.

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Prefacio

Las actividades de seguimiento de la CONFINTEA V (Quinta Conferencia Internacional en materia de Educación de Adultos, realizada en Hamburgo en 1997), han enfatizado el valor y la importancia de algunos programas nacionales selectos en diferentes regiones como respuestas amplias e integrales para la educación de jóvenes y adultos. Con el fin de alentar el intercambio de experiencias y modelos innovadores, se realizó el *Diálogo Sur-Sur sobre Políticas Públicas en Materia de Educación de Calidad para Jóvenes y Adultos* del 15 al 17 de junio en la Ciudad de México. Los anfitriones de la reunión fueron el Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos (INEA) y el Consejo Nacional para la Vida y el Trabajo (CONEVyT), en colaboración con la oficina de la UNESCO de la Ciudad de México y la Oficina Regional de Educación de la UNESCO para América Latina y el Caribe (OREALC).

La reunión tuvo gran éxito, pues ofreció una oportunidad única para que los países de todas las regiones participaran en un diálogo sobre cuatro programas principales –los de Brasil, India, Sudáfrica y México. Con objeto de aprovechar la presencia de los representantes de otros países, también se presentaron brevemente otros ejemplos nacionales. Esto dio pie a un panorama cuyo alcance no fue sólo regional, sino también global. Un resultado importante del diálogo sobre política fue que se logró el consenso de un marco para que los países puedan definir y mejorar sus políticas sobre aprendizaje de adultos e instrumentarlas, con un enfoque en sistematización de los criterios de calidad en tres áreas temáticas: a) contenido y currículo; b) reconocimiento y validación del aprendizaje no formal e informal; y c) planeación, evaluación y financiamiento.

Mediante la participación activa de planeadores y administradores educativos de los ministerios de educación, la cooperación sur-sur se aseguró sobre una base sustentable y a largo plazo. Participaron 32 delegados de 16 países con representantes de Angola, Bangladesh, Brasil, Chile, China, Egipto, Guatemala, India, Líbano, México, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Sudáfrica, Tanzania y Tailandia. La conferencia también se enriqueció con

la asistencia de los directores estatales del INEA, así como con la presencia de otras organizaciones que participan en alfabetización y educación para jóvenes y adultos.

Los delegados consideraron la reunión internacional no sólo como una oportunidad para mejorar el perfil de la educación de adultos y para mejorar las políticas de aprendizaje y su instrumentación en sus respectivos países, sino también para emprender proyectos piloto y estudios de viabilidad sobre una base sur-sur.

La reunión de la Ciudad de México, en efecto, ha marcado la pauta para ampliar la cobertura e integrar más países en un diálogo sur-sur aún más amplio sobre política en materia de educación de calidad para jóvenes y adultos. El siguiente paso en la difusión de innovaciones incluirá a China, Tailandia y Namibia, por mencionar sólo unos cuantos.

Esperamos que esta publicación sea una aportación de utilidad para el seguimiento de la Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas y para la preparación de CONFINTEA VI en 2009.

Adama Ouane
Director UIL

Junio de 2007

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Este trabajo no se podría haber concluido de no haber sido sin el apoyo de todos ellos.

El diálogo fue muy exitoso, ya que cumplió con los objetivos que se habían fijado, a saber, fortalecer la cooperación sur-sur, intercambiar información y puntos de vista sobre los programas nacionales sobresalientes y ejemplos innovadores de Brasil, India, Sudáfrica y México y sistematizar criterios de calidad con el fin de ayudar a los países a mejorar sus políticas sobre aprendizaje de adultos.

Madhu Singh y Luz María Castro Mussot

Visión general

Introducción

*Madhu Singh**

Los países del sur están cada vez más preocupados respecto a su capacidad de convertirse en una economía globalizada competitiva. Pero, ¿pueden enfrentar los nuevos retos tecnológicos y fomentar sociedades de conocimiento, sin hacer frente a las inquietudes sociales y sin construir sociedades alfabetizadas desde las bases? En la conferencia *Diálogo Sur-Sur sobre Políticas Públicas en Materia de Educación de Calidad para Jóvenes y Adultos*, llevada a cabo en la Ciudad de México del 15 al 17 de junio del 2005, 16 representantes nacionales y regionales de África, Asia, América Latina y los Estados Árabes analizaron, intercambiaron y difundieron información sobre cuatro programas excepcionales de alfabetización y educación básica para jóvenes y adultos (Brasil, India, México y Sudáfrica). A fin de aprovechar la presencia de los representantes de otros países, también se estudiaron otros programas nacionales (los de China, Bangladesh, los Estados Árabes, Guatemala, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Tailandia y Tanzania). Todo

* Traducción de Andrea González Uribe.

esto alentó una perspectiva regional sobre los asuntos a tratar. Se puso énfasis especial en las políticas exitosas, el contenido útil y los enfoques innovadores para la evaluación y el reconocimiento del aprendizaje no formal e informal.

Esta introducción primero intentará, de manera muy breve, conceptualizar el tema de la alfabetización, el conocimiento y el desarrollo desde un punto de vista del aprendizaje a lo largo y ancho de la vida; después hará hincapié en algunos aspectos de los programas nacionales y particularidades regionales; y por último estudiará tres temas transversales, a saber, la evaluación y el reconocimiento; los temas curriculares y el financiamiento y la instrumentación.

El derecho al conocimiento y al desarrollo

El *aprendizaje* en todos los niveles, tiene una función clave para satisfacer los retos de un mundo moderno y para cerrar la brecha entre los “ricos” y los “pobres”. En el campo del aprendizaje, se están llevando a cabo cambios importantes. El uso fundamental del conocimiento se está tornando cada vez más crítico, así como la importancia del aprendizaje como un proceso a lo largo de la vida. Estos cambios están afectando los sistemas educativos y de aprendizaje radicalmente. Hay un desplazamiento de políticas únicamente educativas a políticas *integradas de aprendizaje a lo largo y “a lo ancho” de la vida*, incluyendo políticas dirigidas a fomentar la ciudadanía, la inclusión social, la empleabilidad, el desarrollo personal y la comprensión intercultural. La motivación y la eliminación de barreras para el aprendizaje están llegando a ser fundamentales para la reformulación de políticas educativas desde una perspectiva del aprendizaje a lo largo y “a lo ancho” de la vida. Los sistemas educativos y de aprendizaje afirman que el camino a la reforma consiste en pensar alternativamente y crear programas suplementarios. Sostienen que dichas visiones alternativas de la educación en realidad no se encuentran fuera del sistema dominante, sino que buscan ir más allá de las dicotomías binarias arraigadas, incluyendo formal *versus* informal; local *versus* global; educación *versus* capacitación; normalización *versus* innovación; y la comunicación oral *versus* la comunicación escrita. En efecto, el propósito es lograr la sinergia entre la educación formal, no formal e informal, así como un “diálogo de conocimientos” que incluya conocimientos locales e indígenas.

Originalmente, se pensaba que la educación de adultos ofrecía los medios para la movilidad social o de recapitación para el trabajo. Sin embargo, en los años 70, el aprendizaje de los adultos se comenzó a ver como parte de una visión más amplia del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, ya que el aprendizaje y la educación se consideraban como un *continuum* de la cuna a la tumba. A partir de ese momento, se consideró que tan-

to la educación como el aprendizaje de los adultos estaban relacionados no sólo con las inquietudes de los países industrializados, sino también con las de los países en vías de desarrollo, los cuales consideraban que el aprendizaje de los adultos era un medio para empoderarse y satisfacer las necesidades básicas de aprendizaje. Dicha visión inspiró las reflexiones del Informe Faure (UNESCO 1972). Sobre la base del entendimiento de que la educación básica era inadecuada e incompleta y que, por ende, debería considerarse sencillamente como la base de la educación, el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida para todos ha llegado a considerarse como un aspecto fundamental en la vida plena de todo ser humano. En efecto, la educación incumbe a la vida entera y se debe conceptualizar como un esfuerzo combinado que busca trabajar sobre todo el conocimiento humano; debe ser integral y universal, mostrando así el vínculo profundo entre los individuos, las comunidades y la totalidad de la humanidad. La UNESCO continúa teniendo la función de fomentar la idea de *una sociedad de aprendizaje y una sociedad de aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida* (UNESCO 2005).

La alfabetización y la educación básica son las bases del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. En el mundo actual, la alfabetización no puede significar únicamente alfabetización y conocimientos básicos de aritmética, sino también habilidades para el uso de las tecnologías de la información y comunicación (TIC), habilidades de ciudadanía y habilidades para administrar su ruta de aprendizaje a largo plazo. Aquellos quienes carezcan de dicha base continuarán en la marginación e incluso se verán excluidos de la corriente principal de las sociedades de aprendizaje. Por lo tanto, es necesario que la política esté dirigida a la gente de bajos ingresos, minorías étnicas, migrantes, jóvenes con un bajo rendimiento académico, desempleados, personas con pocas calificaciones, trabajadores con pocas habilidades y ciudadanos mayores con alguna discapacidad o que estén aislados.

Para desarrollar habilidades críticas, sería de gran utilidad hacer la distinción entre dos grupos de jóvenes y adultos de más de 15 años de edad que han salido del sistema educativo formal y que están a la zaga de los demás desde el punto de vista escolar. Por un lado, se encuentran jóvenes y adultos que no están en la escuela y que no tienen un dominio suficiente de la lengua escrita; por otro, se encuentran aquellos que han asistido a la escuela, pero que su nivel de alfabetización y de educación no les permite satisfacer los requisitos básicos de su desarrollo social, cultural, personal y profesional.

Los programas nacionales para la educación de jóvenes y adultos que se abordan en este volumen, hacen especial hincapié sobre la importancia de ampliar la alfabetización y la educación básica para el desarrollo y el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Vista desde una perspectiva del aprendizaje a lo largo y a lo ancho de la vida, la educación para jóvenes y adultos es significa-

tiva para el desarrollo personal, cultural y social. De hecho, el desarrollo es primordial para promover la *Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos* (ONU, 1948). Shashi Tharoor (1999-2000) lo plantea de manera sucinta: “Sin el desarrollo, los derechos humanos no podrían ser realmente universales, ya que la universalidad se debe basar en los más desfavorecidos, en los países en vías de desarrollo que están logrando el empoderamiento. No podemos excluir a los pobres más pobres de la universalidad de los ricos.” Por lo tanto, si la alfabetización y la educación básica se han de fomentar dentro de un marco de derechos, deben estar vinculadas con y reflejar las condiciones reales de la vida humana, así como abordar los derechos políticos y civiles, los cuales permiten a la gente tener una participación total en actividades económicas, sociales y políticas, así como exigir que sus gobiernos actúen para proporcionar educación a aquellos segmentos de su población que viven en circunstancias precarias y, en tal forma, reconocer la diversidad y las necesidades individuales específicas.

Los análisis de los programas nacionales también expresaron las profundas inquietudes respecto a conservar y desarrollar identidades culturales locales y nacionales. La alfabetización y la educación básica continuarán siendo ideas abstractas mientras no se trate a cada individuo como integrante valioso de la sociedad, lo cual requiere que su identidad individual y específica se tome en cuenta. Shiv Vishwanath identifica la sensibilidad a dicha cultura como “justicia cognoscitiva” (Vishwanath 2001: 65-66), que afirma la legitimidad y validación de varios “conocimientos” o “saberes”, incluyendo los tácitos, los conocimientos incorporados y alternos, los modelos indígenas, y ofrece catálogos alternos de diversidad, posibilidades y epistemologías. Asimismo, Gandhi observó que cualquier *cultura de la mente*, la cual incluye la educación, está al servicio de la *cultura del corazón*, que Gandhi entendía como un comportamiento moral y ético profundamente arraigado en el conocimiento y en la cultura tradicional (Singh 2007a). Tomando esto en cuenta, las iniciativas de reforma dirigidas a la creación de sociedades de aprendizaje y de conocimiento deben asegurarse de que la transformación de las relaciones ocurra sobre una base más equilibrada. En efecto, debería haber un “diálogo de conocimientos” y una creación de sinergias entre los conocimientos formal e informal. Por ejemplo, ¿cómo puede la alfabetización y la educación básica de jóvenes y adultos fomentar sus capacidades latentes, su potencial para crear significado, sus capacidades creativas y su ingenio? ¿Cómo se puede capitalizar y explotar esto para lograr la empleabilidad, la ciudadanía y la reducción de la pobreza y cómo es que estas posibilidades se pueden hacer visibles y usarlas para complementar los sistemas formales de producción de conocimientos utilizados en las escuelas y en la educación superior?

La falta de alfabetización y de educación básica no es sólo una fuente de rezago social, sino que es un obstáculo principal para el desarrollo económico. De acuerdo con Amartya Sen (2004: 144):

La alfabetización y los conocimientos básicos de aritmética permiten que las masas participen en el proceso de expansión económica (como se demuestra desde Japón hasta Tailandia). Para aprovechar las oportunidades del comercio mundial, pueden ser fundamentales el “control de la calidad” y la “producción por pedido”, y es difícil que lo logren y mantengan los trabajadores que no tienen conocimientos de lectura, escritura o de cálculo.

Sin embargo, Sen enfatiza que la complejidad del desarrollo no se puede reducir a una simple administración de parámetros económicos. Más bien, señala que el desarrollo humano debe ir de la mano de la libertad de expresión y que la función de la educación es ayudar al individuo a lograr esta libertad, incluida la expresión de sus propias aspiraciones y elecciones. Argumenta que la alfabetización y la educación básica amplían el alcance de la visión propia y, a un nivel más banal, ayudan a difundir el conocimiento sobre la planeación familiar. Las mujeres educadas tienden a tener mayor libertad y a ejercer su propio juicio en las decisiones familiares, incluyendo cuestiones de fertilidad y nacimiento (Sen 2004:9).

Cuatro modelos nacionales de educación para jóvenes y adultos: Brasil, India, México y Sudáfrica

(1) La alfabetización y la educación básica son retos relevantes en **Brasil**, donde la gente ve el conocimiento como un factor de desarrollo y productividad. Sin embargo, 16 millones de brasileños de más de 15 años de edad no saben leer ni escribir y 65 millones de jóvenes y adultos mayores de 15 años no han concluido la educación primaria. De estos 65 millones, 33 no han terminado el cuarto año y 14.6 son analfabetas. Dado este estado de cosas, el Ministerio de Educación, a través de su Secretaría de Educación Continua, Alfabetización y Diversidad (MEC/SECAD), lanzó el programa *Brasil Alfabetizado* en 2003. Este programa busca fomentar la inclusión, diversidad y continuidad del aprendizaje. En 2003, el programa atendió a 1.67 millones de jóvenes y adultos con recursos por un monto de 68.3 millones de dólares y cubrió 3 661 municipios brasileños de 5 563. La meta es alcanzar 10 millones de jóvenes y adultos para el 2006. Los objetivos reconocen la situación específica de alfabetización en cada municipio, la cual se evalúa usando el Índice de Déficit Educativo de Jóvenes y Adultos (IFEJA).

Actualmente, la prioridad del gobierno es vincular la alfabetización a la educación continua. El foco está puesto en el proceso de alfabetización, la articulación con el mercado laboral, los vínculos con el contexto local y

cultural, la creación de entornos de aprendizaje conductivo, hacer que los grupos y municipios con poblaciones frágiles sean el objetivo y la capacitación *in situ* de profesionales de la alfabetización. El gobierno ve el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida como una expresión del desarrollo humano, los valores democráticos y los derechos humanos. De acuerdo con Ricardo Henriques y Timothy Ireland del MEC/SECAD, la alfabetización es un medio para acceder a la ciudadanía. El programa *Haciendo escuela* está dirigido a aquellas personas que no han ingresado a la educación primaria o que no han tenido oportunidad de terminarla a la edad “adecuada” (7-14 años de edad). Busca corregir los bajos niveles de escolaridad en los municipios más pobres, donde se encuentra la mayoría de los jóvenes y adultos que no han concluido la educación básica.

Henriques e Ireland afirman en el Capítulo II de esta publicación, que como la distribución de la alfabetización coincide con divisiones regionales, sociales y étnicas, el principal reto para *Brasil alfabetizado* no es la pobreza, sino la desigualdad social. El otro reto consiste en integrar las políticas sociales y económicas con las políticas educativas. El Ministerio de Educación está fomentando políticas que transfieren ingresos directamente a las familias pobres. A través de sus programas de becas familiares, está alentando a los niños a quedarse en la escuela. MEC/SECAD está construyendo una nueva base institucional para la educación de adultos, la cual se enfoca al proceso del diálogo y de acuerdos con otros ministerios; al nivel de la sociedad civil, la Comisión Nacional de Alfabetización se ha ampliado para incluir la educación de jóvenes y adultos y, desde el punto de vista de ofrecer programas, se han establecido vínculos permanentes con los gobiernos federal, estatales y municipales. La propuesta más reciente del MEC/SECAD es la creación del nuevo Fondo para el Desarrollo de la Educación Básica, el cual incluye la educación de jóvenes y adultos.

(2) Un elemento importante de la difusión de la política de la sociedad del conocimiento en la **India** es el reconocimiento claro de la tensión entre el objetivo de una sociedad del conocimiento competitiva y el objetivo de la inclusión social (Singh 2007b). Por ende, mientras el foco principal se ha puesto en el acceso al conocimiento para la creación de un valor económico agregado, los funcionarios del gobierno indio y los científicos también están tratando de empoderar a las masas en los poblados indios. Sin embargo, varios de estos proyectos no tienen los resultados deseados, debido a los índices de alfabetización sumamente bajos, la baja capacidad de absorción del conocimiento y la limitada participación social, especialmente de los grupos rezagados. Otro asunto es la tarea de preservar y fomentar la diversidad cultural, incluyendo el multilingüismo en un país que tiene 30 idiomas y 2000 dialectos.

Es en este escenario, que se debe ver el segundo modelo nacional, la Misión Nacional de Alfabetización (NLM, por sus siglas en inglés) de la India. Incorporado en 1988, este programa ha evolucionado tras una estrategia tripartita de alfabetización, posalfabetización y educación continua. En un país con 304 millones de analfabetas que necesitan alfabetización básica*, lo cual equivale al 33% de la población analfabeta del mundo, la NLM ha sido un ejemplo de éxito en cobertura. De acuerdo con Satish Loomba en el Capítulo 4, a partir de 2005 la NLM ha podido cubrir 587 dialectos de 600 distritos. El programa ha incluido a 125 millones de educandos y 12 millones de voluntarios en educación continua. El resultado es que 98.15 millones de adultos se han alfabetizado, de los cuales el 61% son mujeres. Las cifras del censo muestran una reducción en la brecha de género. De hecho, el descenso de la fertilidad en los estados indios exitosos se ha vinculado en particular con el empoderamiento de las mujeres, especialmente su educación. Loomba señala que aunque aún existen enormes retos respecto a la cobertura, son los cambios en la planeación de políticas los que han sido la clave para el éxito del programa. Se ha puesto mayor énfasis en ceder el poder a las autoridades locales, así como en lograr que la alfabetización sea sustentable al considerarla como parte del “*continuum* de aprendizaje”, en el cual los educandos superan la alfabetización básica. La planeación de políticas ha buscado “ampliar el círculo” al otorgar una mayor función a las ONG y aprovechando las TIC, los medios, los bancos y las empresas privadas para ayudar a los adultos.

Mientras que la alfabetización del 65.38% es, sin duda, una mejora del índice de 1951 de 18.33%, la alfabetización de los adultos fuera de las escuelas continúa siendo una tarea difícil. Por otro lado, los éxitos más recientes de las medidas de la alfabetización se deben a que la NLM se vincula con las realidades de vida de la gente. El programa de educación continua de la India se lleva a cabo en los Centros de Educación Continua, ubicados en todo el territorio nacional como proveedores de aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Aunque la determinación de políticas respecto a la alfabetización y a la educación de adultos no ha constado de pasos, fases o ciclos organizados, a pesar del interés por las etapas o fases cronológicas, el ejemplo indio muestra ser un dispositivo heurístico útil, nada menor al mostrar la manera en que los aspectos de las políticas a menudo se relacionan con un clima económico más amplio y que han sido infuñadas por eventos y documentos importantes.

(3) En **México**, el Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos (INEA) es la institución principal que trata de integrar a jóvenes y adultos que no ingresaron o fueron expulsados de la escuela mediante la creación de

* La cantidad de analfabetas en el grupo de más de siete años, de acuerdo con el censo del 2001, es de 304 millones. De acuerdo con la información desagregada disponible, los analfabetas en el grupo de 15 a 35 años sumaron 100 millones y el grupo de 35 a 50 años sumó aproximadamente 75 millones.

programas a todos los niveles: en escuelas, comunidades e incluso más allá de las fronteras mexicanas, para brindar apoyo a mexicanos analfabetas en los Estados Unidos y Canadá. Con el fin de cumplir el reto de atender las necesidades de aprendizaje de alrededor de 32 millones de personas que carecen de educación básica, el INEA ha creado el programa insignia del gobierno mexicano, el Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo (MEVyT). Con un currículo que se aparta radicalmente del currículo tradicional, ya que trabaja con módulos de aprendizaje basados en temas de la vida, tales como *Jóvenes y trabajo*, *Mi negocio*, *Un hogar sin violencia* y *Números y cuentas para el comercio*, los cuales se ofrecen también con la ayuda de las TIC. Asimismo digno de mención es su programa de Plazas comunitarias. De acuerdo con Ramón de la Peña Manrique, ex presidente del CONEVyT y ex director general del INEA, en 2004 se atendió a más de 2.5 millones de jóvenes y adultos, de los cuales egresaron 633 511. La iniciativa del INEA es la más sistemática para el monitoreo de educandos, a través de su Sistema Automatizado de Seguimiento y Acreditación (SASA). Al año, aproximadamente 120 000 asesores atienden a alrededor de 3 millones de personas.

Algunos de los retos que enfrenta México son: ampliar la educación para el desarrollo de la fuerza laboral, desarrollar la educación a distancia usando las TIC y tomar en cuenta los nuevos lenguajes de comunicación que fomentan el acceso a una sociedad del conocimiento abierta y al aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. México continuará brindando la mayoría de su oferta educativa para jóvenes y adultos a través del INEA.

(4) Los debates en **Sudáfrica** en torno a la sociedad letrada están estrechamente vinculados con su logro de la democracia, la globalización y su posición dentro de la economía global (Walters 2006). Estos debates, sumamente politizados, se llevan a cabo dentro del discurso sudafricano sobre el desarrollo y la implementación de políticas cuyo fin es asegurar que la gran mayoría de sus ciudadanos logren niveles más altos de equidad, justicia, humanidad y dignidad humana. Sin embargo, tal como lo ha señalado Nelson Mandela (2002), las instituciones, como sistemas de elementos o reglas, son sólo expresiones de la intención democrática. Los valores sociales centrales no se propagan por sí solos; es necesario recordar a los jóvenes y adultos estos valores e inculcarlos en los niños (pp. ix-x). Conforme Sudáfrica acepta un futuro nuevo, las experiencias de diferentes partes del mundo muestran que la educación, cuyo elemento central es la alfabetización, no es simplemente una ayuda externa para el desarrollo personal, sino que cambia la manera misma en que percibimos, registramos, pensamos y estructuramos nuestra experiencia. En este sentido más amplio, la clave para lo que Jonathan Sachs (2002:125) ha denominado la

democratización de la dignidad humana, está en la alfabetización. Vista como una parte de las transformaciones más grandes que se están llevando a cabo en Sudáfrica, en el Capítulo II Morongwa Ramarumo y Vernon Jacobs narran la Iniciativa Nacional Sudafricana de Alfabetización (SANLI, por sus siglas en inglés), que el Ministerio de Educación estableció como una campaña de alfabetización entre 1999 y 2001. La meta de esta iniciativa fue de un millón de personas o el 25% de la población analfabeta. Entre 2002 y 2003, SANLI se asoció con el Instituto de Educación Básica y Capacitación de Adultos de la Universidad de Sudáfrica (UNISA, por sus siglas en inglés). Esto le permitió a SANLI aumentar tanto su tamaño como su capacidad; por ejemplo, 10 000 instructores de EBCA egresados de la UNISA, ofrecieron sus servicios para organizar la alfabetización. Los educandos fueron evaluados a través del proyecto para asegurar que, al salir, hubieran logrado un cierto nivel de alfabetización y de conocimientos básicos de aritmética.

SANLI ha tenido un éxito particular respecto al apoyo otorgado a aquellas personas que eran completamente analfabetas y quienes carecían de o tenían escolaridad muy baja. Antes de que los educandos se matricularan en las clases, se evaluó su nivel de alfabetización; las clases se impartieron de forma gratuita en el lugar donde ellos habitaban, haciendo posible la participación de todos. El éxito de los educandos creó una demanda por aprender que fue más allá del proyecto mismo, y muchos de ellos querían avanzar del Programa no formal de Alfabetización Básica del SANLI a los programas más formales de EBCA que ofrecía el gobierno federal. Sin embargo, esta transición de la educación no formal a la educación formal no ocurrió, porque las clases eran inaccesibles para los educandos. Por ejemplo, mientras que SANLI ofrecía servicios en donde residían los educandos, los servicios de EBCA se ofrecían únicamente en ciertos lugares, lo cual significó que aquellas personas que participaron en los programas EBCA tuvieran que realizar largos recorridos, comúnmente costosos, y gran parte del tiempo después del anochecer, ya que las clases se impartían después de la jornada laboral. Otro obstáculo era el enfoque que tenían los programas formales en los exámenes; los educandos estaban insatisfechos con el uso de exámenes formales como el método principal de evaluación en las clases EBCA. No obstante, estos problemas, los programas de SANLI y EBCA están logrando que el conocimiento sea accesible para todos, en concordancia con su visión y misión como base para lograr una sociedad libre y democratizada. Otro aspecto clave de su visión y misión es ver la alfabetización desde la perspectiva del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, en el que la alfabetización se concibe como la base del aprendizaje sostenido de nuevas ideas, conceptos y habilidades creativas a lo largo de nuestra vida (Odora Hoppers 2005:32-40).

Particularidades regionales

A continuación se presentan algunas perspectivas regionales de los representantes que también intercambiaron y difundieron información acerca de sus programas nacionales de educación para jóvenes y adultos.

Asia

En el contexto asiático, que enfrenta la enorme tarea de asegurar que se garantice el derecho de educación a 614 millones de adolescentes y adultos analfabetas y a más de 60 millones de niños desertores, el desarrollo de capacidades de los recursos humanos, incluyendo la alfabetización básica, se está poniendo en marcha a todos los niveles a fin de crear una sociedad del conocimiento.

La política y la práctica de **Tailandia** respecto a la alfabetización y a la educación no formal (ENF) están alineadas con la visión de desarrollo expresada en su Noveno Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Económico y Social del 2001. El plan incluye una clara definición de una sociedad del conocimiento: “La sociedad tailandesa debe ser una sociedad basada en el conocimiento y el aprendizaje. Se deben crear oportunidades de aprendizaje para todos los tailandeses, diseñadas para fomentar el pensamiento lógico y crítico, así como el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, a fin de que la gente pueda manejar las condiciones cambiantes.” La política tailandesa considera la alfabetización como el basamento de la sociedad civil en la medida en que es un medio de ayudar a la gente tailandesa a adquirir el conocimiento, así como a definir y extraer el significado de la tecnología, incluyendo las TIC, y de complementar adecuadamente los saberes locales y las tradiciones nacionales, la cultura y la religión en Tailandia.

Para ir al ritmo que marcan los cambios en la era de la globalización, en 1999 se aprobó la primera Ley de Educación Nacional. Esta ley tiene como propósito proporcionar lineamientos de educación en todo el país; su enfoque es revolucionario ya que reconoce la importancia de todo tipo de educación formal, no formal e informal. Tailandia ha creado estrategias de ENF que abordan las necesidades de un amplio abanico de grupos rezagados, como los presos, personas discapacitadas y de la tercera edad, grupos de minorías étnicas e incluso tailandeses que radican en el exterior. Tailandia hace una distinción entre los programas de ENF que están vinculados con la educación básica, aquellos que tienen contenido de formación profesional y aquellos que usan varios medios para que la gente pueda lograr la educación informal.

En **Bangladesh**, un país con 30 millones de analfabetas, las experiencias exitosas se han estado llevando a cabo gracias a la asociación entre el gobierno, or-

ganizaciones internacionales de ayuda y las ONG sin fines de lucro locales. Sin embargo, el mayor reto que enfrenta Bangladesh es ayudar a aproximadamente 40 millones de adultos analfabetas —incluyendo neoalfabetizados que cayeron en el analfabetismo funcional, un aumento de aproximadamente 10 millones de adolescentes y jóvenes analfabetas y otros 6 millones de niños en edad escolar que siguen sin asistir a la escuela y que se convertirán en parte de los adultos analfabetas— para lograr la alfabetización en 2015. De acuerdo con Ahmadullah Mia y Wolfgang Vollmann en el Capítulo 7, el pronunciado énfasis de Bangladesh en “sólo alfabetizar” no será suficiente para lograr este objetivo. El gobierno de Bangladesh tendrá que realizar más esfuerzos, como crear entornos de aprendizaje que mantengan la motivación de la gente pobre por aprender. Además, el trato hacia las ONG no deberá ser el de simples subcontratistas, sino de socios, que siguen criterios de mutuo acuerdo y normas de aseguramiento de calidad, y tendrá que crear un sistema profesional eficaz de servicios de apoyo.

Las prioridades y acciones de China incluyen la integración de la agricultura, la ciencia y la educación en áreas rurales y la planeación general de la educación básica, vocacional y para adultos. Se están aplicando métodos de enseñanza flexibles, como las series de alfabetización por televisión y el uso de las TIC en la educación y la enseñanza. Sin embargo, China, la economía de expansión más rápida del mundo con un comercio internacional que ha aumentado en un 35.4%, aún tiene un largo recorrido antes de que el país, en su totalidad, esté alfabetizado. De acuerdo con el *Informe Mundial de Seguimiento de la Educación Para Todos 2005* (UNESCO 2004), el 11% de la población de China (o 62 millones de personas) aún es de analfabetas. China considera que la educación de jóvenes y adultos es un componente importante de su estrategia educativa para mejorar su competitividad internacional, así como también mejorar la calidad de su fuerza laboral.

Este país ha realizado varios cambios sociales y económicos que han incrementado el poder de las mujeres. Por ejemplo, al elevar el nivel de alfabetización de las mujeres y ampliar su participación en la fuerza laboral, China las ha fortalecido.

Por supuesto que los retos varían de país a país en la región asiática. Mientras que China ha podido cumplir con la meta de alfabetización de Dakar (la cual incluye el logro de una mejora del 50% de los niveles de alfabetización de adultos para el 2015, específicamente para mujeres, y acceso equitativo a la educación básica y continua para todos los adultos), aún se requieren de más esfuerzos de otros países, especialmente la región sudasiática. Mientras que las iniciativas locales, generalmente dan mejores resultados, debido a que están más atentas a las necesidades culturales, sociales y lingüísticas locales, la responsabilidad a nivel nacional es ahora más importante que nunca estratégicamente (Vollmann 2004: 66). La responsabilidad moral y política de cada gobierno central de crear y poner en marcha programas de alfabetización,

en especial a nivel local, requiere que el gobierno también fomente debates nacionales y subnacionales sobre la alfabetización, la ENF y el aprendizaje de adultos, así como sobre sus vínculos con otros campos de la educación, en particular con la educación básica. También se requiere del apoyo de la comunidad internacional, especialmente en relación con el lanzamiento de la Década de la Alfabetización de la ONU, que tiene una función importante en términos tanto de apoyo como de observancia.

África

En este continente, el número absoluto de analfabetas (de 15 años de edad o más) es de 182 millones (UNESCO 2002), de los cuales 137 millones viven en la región del Sub Sahara. A pesar de que ha aumentado la inscripción a escuelas formales, un gran número de niños aún está excluido de la escolaridad, lo cual se debe principalmente a que más de la mitad de la población vive por debajo del umbral de pobreza. Sin embargo, una tendencia importante en África es el crecimiento sin precedentes de la ENF. Esto se debe tanto a un número insuficiente de escuelas del sistema formal como a la pobreza extrema. Las escuelas no formales proveen educación flexible para muchos. En la región hay un creciente reconocimiento de la importancia de apoyar la ENF, a fin de ofrecer oportunidades de aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida.

Tanzania es un país que ha llegado a valorar la importancia de la ENF. Su Ministerio de Educación y Cultura ha creado un departamento para coordinar la ENF y ahora cuenta con una política en materia. En 1998, Tanzania tenía 2.5 millones de niños que no asistían a la escuela. Para corregir la situación, este país creó una estrategia nacional a largo plazo para la educación de adultos y la educación no formal, la cual condujo a la creación del programa Educación y Capacitación Básicas Complementarias (COBET, por sus siglas en inglés) y del programa de Educación Integrada de Adultos basada en la Comunidad (ICABE, por sus siglas en inglés). El programa COBET tiene una duración de tres años y está dirigido a niños y jóvenes en edad escolar de nivel primaria que no asisten a la escuela. El programa ICABE ha atendido a 466 018 educandos de entre 11 y 18 años y ofrece educación básica y habilidades para la vida a jóvenes y adultos.

Por su parte, **Namibia** intenta elevar su índice de alfabetización de adultos al 90% para 2015 y pretende lograrlo mediante un programa de alfabetización que hace hincapié en la educación en la lengua materna y en la alfabetización funcional. El programa de alfabetización también busca ligarse con el currículo de educación superior para adultos. En la misma línea, el programa para el Desarrollo de Habilidades de Adultos para el Autoempleo (ASDE, por sus siglas en inglés) busca, con apoyo internacional, ayudar a abatir el desempleo

y subempleo al proveer capacitación de crédito y gerencial. Se han establecido centros comunitarios de aprendizaje y desarrollo en las 13 regiones de Namibia para, entre otras cosas, evitar que la gente recaiga en el analfabetismo. Otro programa innovador es el Programa de Alfabetización Familiar, el cual, por el momento, está limitado a una escuela y a una comunidad por región. Se propone ayudar a los padres y las guarderías para mantener a sus hijos durante los primeros cinco años de la escuela primaria.

De la misma manera, en **Angola** se están realizando esfuerzos para permitir que la gente tenga acceso a los programas de alfabetización, ofreciéndoles cursos de entre 3 y 6 meses. Los destinatarios principales incluyen a grupos especiales, tales como veteranos, expersonal militar y soldados. Esta iniciativa comenzó hace tan sólo tres años; el apoyo externo continua siendo esencial para su éxito, especialmente durante esta fase crucial de fortalecer la infraestructura local y las competencias.

En **Mozambique**, la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la ENF se convirtieron en el centro de atención en 1975, cuando logró su independencia. En ese momento, el país tenía el índice de analfabetismo más alto del mundo, aproximadamente del 93% y no tenía experiencia con la educación de adultos. En 1976 se creó la Dirección Nacional de Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos. No obstante, a pesar de las campañas masivas de alfabetización, la educación de adultos disminuyó gradualmente de 450 000 a aproximadamente 46 225 matriculados por año. Esta caída se debió a la guerra civil, aunque también a la irrelevancia del currículo, los métodos formales de enseñanza, los calendarios y los horarios estrictos y al uso exclusivo del idioma portugués.

Aunque África ofrece un ejemplo primordial del crecimiento de la ENF, aún hay mucho por hacer. Es necesario abrir más espacios de aprendizaje y coordinar a las instituciones de aprendizaje no formal a través de los diferentes ministerios. Actualmente no existe un banco de datos que incluya toda la ENF que existe para poder facilitar la planeación y la puesta en marcha de políticas. La coordinación de las iniciativas de la ENF sería más factible si el parlamento estableciera una comisión nacional para la ENF que dependiera del Ministerio de Educación, lo cual marcaría la pauta para la planeación y el monitoreo de la calidad de los programas de ENF. Asimismo, es deseable establecer un marco nacional de calificaciones que permita que los educandos de la ENF reingresen al sistema formal escolar (Mwiria 2005:2).

América Latina

Con su historial de acceso limitado a la educación, América Latina debe responder a casi 200 millones de latinoamericanos de más de 15 años de

edad que no han concluido la educación básica y entre los cuales aproximadamente el 14% no saben leer y escribir (Pieck 2005:25). El intercambio de información sobre programas de educación de adultos útiles y de bajo costo dirigidos a reducir la pobreza es una condición previa necesaria para lograr un desarrollo sustentable. México ha compartido información sobre sus programas exitosos con Bolivia y Nicaragua. Brasil, por otro lado, ha realizado esfuerzos para replicar la experiencia brasileña en países africanos de habla portuguesa. Guatemala y Nicaragua han debatido y aprendido sobre maneras alternas de apoyar a grupos objetivo específicos, como mujeres indígenas en comunidades rurales, trabajadores en las maquilas, sexo servidores y población con VIH, al crear programas en reclusorios, iglesias, plazas y mercados.

En **Guatemala**, las ventajas de la alfabetización se necesitan analizar en el contexto del acuerdo de paz del 29 de diciembre de 1996 entre el gobierno de Guatemala y la Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG). Fue un paso significativo hacia el reconocimiento de la manera en que la educación contribuyó a fomentar los valores dentro de una sociedad multilingüe y multicultural. Sin embargo, se calcula que cada año hay 83 000 nuevos analfabetas. De ese número, 50 421 se registran en la escuela primaria, pero desertan después del primer año. Los 32 414 restantes nunca entran al sistema escolar. En el Capítulo IV, Ida Morán de García y Otto Rivera enfatizan la importancia de políticas suplementarias que toman en cuenta tanto el aprendizaje como la educación básica de jóvenes y adultos. Dado que el 52% de la población tiene 18 años o menos, se continúa exigiendo al sistema escolar que proporcione lugares para nuevos estudiantes. La Dirección de Educación Extramuros ha creado estrategias para ampliar el acceso para los niños y jóvenes que no asisten a la escuela que desean continuar o reingresar al sistema escolar formal. La instrucción elemental se ofrece a través del Comité Nacional de Alfabetización (CONALFA), que funciona bajo el liderazgo y la coordinación del Ministerio de Educación. Junto con la Dirección de Educación Extramuros, el CONALFA crea programas educativos específicos cuyo objetivo es permitir que los niños entre 9 y 14 años de edad que se inscriban en la instrucción elemental que ofrece el CONALFA, reciban educación primaria en programas no convencionales.

Nydia Verónica Gurdían y Elizabeth Navarro muestran en el Capítulo IV, que, al igual que Guatemala, **Nicaragua** es un país con una población joven, altos niveles de pobreza y baja productividad. Desde principios de los años 90, el porcentaje de la población de 15 a 30 años de edad con menos de cinco años de escolaridad, ha disminuido de 49% a 37%. El programa de educación básica para adultos (EBA), que funciona dependiente de la Dirección de Educación Continua de Jóvenes y Adultos (DECJA) del Ministerio de Educa-

ción, Cultura y Deportes (MECD), ofrece servicios de educación alternativos versátiles y flexibles para las personas mayores de 15 años de edad, quienes por diferentes razones nunca han ingresado a la escuela o la han abandonado. Uno de éstos es el Programa de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Jóvenes y Adultos (PAEBANIC).

Las tendencias nuevas del aprendizaje de adultos en América Latina muestran que va en aumento el interés por asegurar que los programas de educación provean a los educandos con las herramientas para mejorar sus habilidades y conocimientos para el mundo laboral. Esto es necesario a fin de superar la creciente polarización entre los llamados “trabajadores con conocimientos” y los “trabajadores no calificados”, lo cual ha dado como resultado marginación, exclusión social, desempleo y baja productividad entre jóvenes, mujeres y adultos. También hay tendencias para conceptualizar a las sociedades como pertenecientes tanto a las “sociedades de información” como a las “sociedades del aprendizaje”. (Mientras que el uso del término “sociedades de información” comúnmente enfatiza la proliferación de las TIC, el procesamiento de información, comunicación de símbolos y acceso a Internet, el término “sociedad del aprendizaje” implica centrarse en la creación de una sociedad donde “todas las agencias dentro de la sociedad se convierten en proveedoras de educación y todos los ciudadanos deben estar involucrados en el aprendizaje” [Faure et al. 1972:]). La sociedad del aprendizaje depende mucho de las comunidades locales que tienen una fuerte solidaridad y de comunidades que son cooperativas e incluyentes lingüística y culturalmente (Ferrada 2006).

Los Estados Árabes

En los **Estados Árabes**, la alfabetización ha sido uno de los temas más urgentes en la agenda de la educación de adultos. Cada vez más, se considera que la instrucción elemental implica más que enseñar a la gente a leer y escribir a fin de que puedan ejercer sus derechos y contribuir mejor al desarrollo humano y social. Los programas de alfabetización también han llegado a incluir instrucción de habilidades para la vida y formación vocacional, administración de pequeñas industrias, salud y nutrición, puericultura, administración de microcréditos y dinero, educación cívica, ambiente y democracia. Esta capacitación y educación están ayudando a la gente a encontrar nuevas oportunidades laborales. Dos impulsos importantes en la región han sido la creación de la Red Árabe de Alfabetización y Educación para los Adultos (que consta de 80 organizaciones árabes) y la participación de la sociedad civil en el campo de la alfabetización. Si bien las ONG y las OBC (organizaciones basadas en la comunidad) son las proveedoras principales de los programas

de alfabetización y educación de adultos en los Estados Árabes, aún están por recibir el debido reconocimiento. Y sus programas no formales tampoco cuentan con reconocimiento. Esto afecta no sólo la motivación, sino que también evita que los poseducandos tengan una ruta segura para regresar al sistema educativo formal o por encontrar oportunidades de empleo. Entre las recomendaciones que se hacen en el informe árabe, se encuentran dos: que la educación de adultos se concentre en la alfabetización en el amplio sentido anterior y que los planes nacionales de EPT se incorporen a los marcos de desarrollo más amplios.

Muchos estados árabes están creando nuevas estrategias de alfabetización para fomentar el concepto nuevo e integrado de un ser humano árabe. El énfasis se está poniendo no sólo en la educación de las mujeres, sino también en el reconocimiento de los programas de ENF. Sin embargo, de acuerdo con Nour Dajani Shehabi, Se-ham Najem y Aicha Barki (Capítulo VI), muchas de estas nuevas estrategias de alfabetización son de arriba hacia abajo y no incluyen a las ONG o a las CSO en el proceso de toma de decisiones.

El *Informe del Desarrollo Humano Árabe 2002* (Fergany 2002) ha concluido que en la región ha habido pocos avances respecto a la seguridad y la pobreza, lo que ha tenido un impacto negativo en la educación de adultos. Existen 70 millones de una población de 280 millones de personas, que son analfabetas. Además, aproximadamente 10 millones de niños entre los 6 y 15 años de edad no asisten a la escuela y es probable que se unan a los adultos analfabetas a menos de que se atienda la alfabetización ahora.

Temas transversales

Esta sección está dedicada a los temas de 1) reconocimiento, validación y acreditación de la educación de jóvenes y adultos; 2) políticas de desarrollo curricular; y 3) planeación, implementación, evaluación y financiamiento de la educación de jóvenes y adultos. Las sesiones de los talleres en los que se trataron estos temas fueron presididas y facilitadas por Franz E. Gertze, María Luisa Jaúregui y Wolfgang Vollmann, respectivamente.

1) Valoración y capitalización de todas las formas de conocimiento: Reconocimiento, validación y evaluación del aprendizaje y la experiencia no formal e informal

El aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida se ha convertido en el principio de organización clave para los sistemas de educación y capacitación, así como para la construcción de la “sociedad del conocimiento” del siglo veintiuno. Mientras existen inquietudes en torno a que el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida

responde a la demanda del mercado, de hecho el “aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida” es un concepto mucho más amplio que busca unir y establecer vínculos entre varias áreas de aprendizaje, incluyendo el formal, el no formal y el informal, así como reconocer los resultados del aprendizaje derivados de diferentes escenarios y contextos. Rosa María Torres (2002) introduce el término “Aprendizaje y Educación Básica para Adultos” (AEBA), a diferencia de la “Educación Básica para Adultos” (EBA), para hacer hincapié en el aprendizaje que se lleva a cabo en la familia, en la comunidad, en el trabajo, con amigos y mediante los medios de difusión, así como el aprendizaje a través de observar, hacer y practicar.

El fin de la educación de calidad para jóvenes y adultos es que el aprendizaje, las habilidades y las competencias adquiridas fuera de la educación y la capacitación formales sean visibles y se les dé valor. Esto ha llevado a varios países a desarrollar y establecer tácticas para reconocer el aprendizaje que se ha llevado a cabo fuera de la estructura de la educación formal. Algunos países están poniendo en marcha o experimentando la identificación, la evaluación y el reconocimiento de los aprendizajes previos y no formales. Se han creado marcos nacionales de calificaciones para el diseño y la emisión de calificaciones y certificados. Los ministerios reconocen esto como un medio para la transformación y empoderamiento de los individuos. Debido a que esta área es nueva y a que no todos los países cuentan con el mismo nivel de desarrollo de sus sistemas, el haber compartido los diferentes significados y percepciones fue, en efecto, un beneficio.

Los sistemas de reconocimiento del aprendizaje y de las experiencias previas se basan en conceptos educativos que enfatizan las competencias y los resultados del aprendizaje, en lugar del currículo y de las teorías de enseñanza tradicionales. Mientras que estas últimas plantean la pregunta de qué materiales deben utilizar los educandos, el enfoque en los resultados de aprendizaje pregunta cuáles son las estrategias de resolución de problemas, los conceptos orientados a acciones y qué destrezas deben tener. Resulta más relevante preguntar qué es lo que los adultos deben aprender, en lugar de qué es lo que se les debería enseñar. Una ventaja adicional del enfoque de resultados de aprendizaje es que el material por aprender se puede elegir con cierta libertad. Asimismo, el aprendizaje se lleva a cabo de acuerdo con el conocimiento previo de los educandos, sus motivaciones y sus experiencias cotidianas locales e individuales, las cuales ayudan a estimular el interés de los educandos en el nuevo material por abordar. Los “resultados del aprendizaje” no se pueden reducir a competencias cognitivas; incluyen componentes cognoscitivos, emocionales, de motivación y sociales, así como aspectos de comportamiento, actitudes generales y elementos de conciencia de identidad propia. Debido a que las competencias están enfocadas a los objetivos, intenciones y tareas,

se deben manifestar en las acciones de los individuos. Las competencias, por lo tanto, se pueden formular en normas educativas como “resultados” y su adquisición se puede evaluar (Weinert 2001). Por ende, este entendimiento de las nociones de las competencias y de los resultados de aprendizaje es fundamental en la Educación para Todos (EPT). Enfatiza la “acción” del individuo como participante en la actividad económica, social y política (y de acuerdo con el punto de vista de Sen (2004) de que la alfabetización y el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida para todos fomenta la libertad), permitiendo a la gente que se ayude a sí misma y que tenga influencia sobre el mundo entero. La libertad es la base para alguien que actúa y que provoca cambios y cuyos logros se pueden juzgar en función de sus propios valores y objetivos, ya sea que se les evalúe o no en función de algunos criterios externos.

México se ha comprometido a reconocer los resultados de la educación básica de adultos y de la capacitación. La tendencia va hacia un sistema más formalizado de evaluación y certificación del aprendizaje no formal e informal, por lo que se han adoptado criterios para asegurar su equivalencia con los sistemas formales de aprendizaje. Por lo tanto, los resultados del aprendizaje no formal e informal se pueden equiparar con los resultados del subsistema de educación formal. Este enfoque desdibuja la división tradicional entre las diferentes formas de aprendizaje, mientras corrige, simultáneamente, las connotaciones frecuentes del estado de segunda clase que están asociadas principalmente con el aprendizaje no formal e informal. Otros mecanismos establecidos para el reconocimiento del aprendizaje no formal e informal son los exámenes centralizados utilizados en todo México. Se procesan aproximadamente 600 000 exámenes en 45 campos de estudio diferentes al año. Estos exámenes son de diagnóstico y evalúan la comprensión del candidato sobre lo que se espera que él o ella deban saber. El concluir los exámenes con éxito permite la continuidad de los estudios al siguiente nivel. Asimismo, otro mecanismo es la acreditación, que permite la validación de los programas y de los servicios educativos.

Todos los programas de EBCA en Sudáfrica están integrados tanto al Marco Nacional de Calificaciones como al paradigma del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, lo cual da pie a la certificación de equivalencias, al acceso vertical y horizontal y a la acreditación mediante varios mecanismos de aseguramiento de calidad. Un elemento fundamental de este proceso es, también, una educación basada en resultados, que describe unidades de normas con resultados mediante los cuales los educandos miden su desempeño y, por lo tanto, demuestran su competencia. Mientras que, en teoría los proveedores de la EBCA tienen la libertad de diseñar sus propios programas y los educadores y maestros pueden utilizar su propio *expertise* en el diseño de métodos de evaluación, en la práctica, este enfoque deja a muchos educadores luchando por

mantenerse a flote, tratando de hacer frente tanto al diseño de un programa de aprendizaje como a tener que crear sus propios materiales de apoyo para los educandos. Los problemas se presentan en la operación, especialmente cuando los maestros se ven ante la incapacidad de manejar el enfoque basado en resultados, el cual exige que interpreten y usen las unidades de normas como guía al desarrollar un currículo de trabajo.

En Brasil hay una estrecha colaboración entre los programas “Brasil alfabetizado” y “Haciendo escuela” (*Fazendo escola*), que están destinados a ciudadanos que no han tenido acceso a o la oportunidad de terminar la educación primaria a la edad escolar “adecuada”. En Guatemala, los programas de alfabetización coordinados por CONALFA cuentan con un currículo de “educación acelerada”, que permite a los educandos cursar los primeros seis años de primaria en sólo cuatro años. La primera etapa equivale al primer grado de escolaridad primaria; la segunda etapa al segundo y tercer grados; la tercera a los grados cuarto y quinto; y la cuarta etapa equivale al sexto grado. Los certificados de estudio y los diplomas de sexto año, certificados por CONALFA, están formados por marcos de calificaciones y establecidos bajo las leyes de los ministerios relevantes.

En Angola, el primer nivel de certificación va seguido por una evaluación de las competencias de lectura, escritura y aritmética. Uno de los propósitos de la certificación es permitir y facilitar la continuidad del aprendizaje al siguiente nivel. Por ende, la certificación del primer nivel no se considera un resultado en sí, sino como una oportunidad que conduce al mundo de la alfabetización. La validación de la ENF adquiere una importancia adicional, ya que las escuelas no están al alcance de todos.

Es probable que los procesos continuos de globalización y de las economías, como resultado de las políticas de apertura y la innovación técnica, tengan un fuerte impacto sobre los países en vías de desarrollo. Con frecuencia se argumenta que la mano de obra barata poco calificada o semicalificada no puede ser una base sustentable para la competitividad o para promover economías o sociedades del conocimiento. Esto podría ser cierto desde una perspectiva a largo plazo. Sin embargo, es importante reconocer que esta mano de obra barata, de trabajadores que son percibidos como analfabetas e incapaces de valerse por sí mismos, es en efecto la columna vertebral de la economía y alimenta la creciente economía capitalista con sus habilidades productivas. Muchos adultos con alfabetización limitada y bajos niveles educativos están involucrados en actividades productivas y comunitarias. No sólo se debe reevaluar la noción misma de quienes son los supuestos “analfabetas” y quienes están “alfabetizados”, sino que el aprendizaje por la experiencia de los adultos se debe reconocer y servir como apoyo en los programas para mejorar el conocimiento básico. En una sociedad del conocimiento perfecta se recono-

cerían y valorarían todas las formas de conocimiento, lo cual sería un beneficio para la sociedad. Los países necesitan reconocer, valorar y capitalizar las potencialidades existentes de los individuos y comunidades, para identificar los tipos de conocimiento y habilidades que funcionarán para los pobres y fomentar la equidad y la empleabilidad. Es probable que tal reconocimiento de habilidades y competencias, sin importar dónde se hayan aprendido (de manera formal, informal, en el trabajo, en el hogar o en la comunidad) mejore el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida para todos. El crecimiento debe estar apoyado por ideas que combinan una agenda para democratizar la promoción del desarrollo de competencias y habilidades para toda la población, cuyo destinatario sean los adultos y la supuesta “mano de obra barata”, mediante la profundización de su conocimiento y de las habilidades necesarias para asegurar calificaciones de punta y su renovación. Por ende, se necesita crear caminos para el desarrollo del conocimiento, complementados por marcos de política facilitadores, que le den a la gente la oportunidad de usar el poder de su conocimiento local junto con el conocimiento y las nuevas habilidades adquiridas para impulsar el desarrollo.

2) La diversidad cultural y lingüística como centro de las políticas de desarrollo curricular

Las opiniones expresadas en el taller sugieren que, a fin de poder contar con educación de calidad, es de suma importancia permitir que los individuos alcancen un nivel eficaz de comunicación; esto les permitiría participar de manera activa como ciudadanos en su propio desarrollo. Otro aspecto que se mencionó fue restablecer la dignidad y la calidad del maestro. Asimismo, se hizo hincapié en la relevancia del currículo en función de la situación de cada país: ¿Hasta qué punto el currículo fortalece la dignidad de las personas y los mejores elementos de su cultura?

El lenguaje en el que se lleva a cabo la alfabetización ha sido el punto central del debate sobre la calidad de la educación. El aprendizaje no ocurre si la alfabetización se realiza en un lenguaje que no tiene significado para el educando. El desarrollo cognoscitivo es posible únicamente cuando la alfabetización se contextualiza en la lengua materna del educando. Se necesita un mejor intercambio de experiencias e investigación sobre la alfabetización bilingüe. A juzgar por los modelos nacionales presentados en este volumen, parece que hay una política consciente sobre el lenguaje utilizado en los programas de alfabetización de adultos. En la India se usa la lengua materna en los programas de alfabetización de adultos desde el comienzo. En los programas de la Campaña de Alfabetización Total se usan bases en seis o siete idiomas, de acuerdo con la composición demográfica y las preferencias lingüísti-

cas de los educandos. México está a la cabeza respecto al diseño de programas educativos para poblaciones indígenas que incorporan estrategias bilingües, como el aprendizaje simultáneo bilingüe en lengua materna indígena y en español, así como el aprendizaje bilingüe del español como segundo idioma. Los paquetes didácticos están disponibles en impreso.

La educación de adultos es diferente de la educación formal en las escuelas. Por lo tanto, es necesario emplear un enfoque más amplio de alfabetización, uno que no sólo esté basado en un sistema escrito de la alfabetización, sino que considere los requisitos de comunicación y expresión más complejos que le ayuden a la gente a entender y a transformar el mundo en el que viven. El potencial de otros medios, como la radio, los periódicos, el teatro, el video y las TIC, necesita capitalizarse para favorecer a las enormes poblaciones analfabetas que aún están marginadas, especialmente en áreas rurales. El idioma y el contenido de los medios se pueden adecuar a las necesidades locales y se pueden hacer más relevantes a las prácticas, tradiciones y cultura locales, al tiempo que se pueden usar exitosamente en los programas de desarrollo.

Mientras que de inicio es importante contar con cierto grado de centralización para asegurar la calidad al establecer políticas, lineamientos y criterios de calidad para el currículo, la descentralización es igualmente relevante: el reto principal es agregar el conocimiento local de la gente, como concomitante del conocimiento y la información global. Es conveniente crear materiales tomando en cuenta el contexto local y prestar especial atención a la formación vocacional en el diseño del material para individuos que se han alfabetizado recientemente. Lo anterior es de particular importancia, ya que es un paso fundamental para fortalecer el conocimiento del educando y hacerlo relevante y sustentable. A los jóvenes y adultos que se han beneficiado de los programas de alfabetización también se les debería alentar para participar en el diseño y la elaboración del currículo y los materiales. Deben armonizarse y coordinarse la alfabetización, la posalfabetización, la educación continua, la formación vocacional-capacitación y las habilidades para la vida. Necesita incrementarse el debate respecto a los temas comunes de la educación de jóvenes y adultos, como ciudadanía, salud, derechos humanos, género, comunicaciones y acceso a una sociedad del aprendizaje.

Aún más, conviene una disposición política para invertir en la capacitación y la formación de trabajadores por la educación continua, que estén comprometidos, motivados y preparados adecuadamente para su trabajo. Asimismo, es necesario proporcionarles apoyo sostenido una vez que hayan comenzado a trabajar. La capacitación no debe estar únicamente orientada a metodologías pedagógicas, sino que también debe considerar integrar a sus programas aspectos como el desarrollo personal y la autoestima.

3) La planeación, instrumentación, evaluación y financiamiento con base en el conocimiento de la educación de jóvenes y adultos

La planeación, la instrumentación, la evaluación y el financiamiento son elementos medulares para el tema de la educación de calidad para jóvenes y adultos. Dada la relación que tienen entre sí, es necesario adoptar un enfoque holístico. Sin embargo, primero es importante diferenciar la planeación y la instrumentación del “pensamiento”, con el fin de no confundir la relación entre el conocimiento, las actitudes y las intenciones, por un lado, y las acciones de la gente por el otro. Tener la capacidad de planear significa poder evaluar una concatenación de acontecimientos, con base en los recursos necesarios y en la disponibilidad de los mismos y desde una perspectiva de sustentabilidad, y significa poder construir redes de cooperación. Tener conciencia del cambio rápido y de la naturaleza no definitiva del conocimiento utilizado en la planeación es un factor importante en el desarrollo de la competencia de planear; dicha conciencia hace que sea posible cambiar o ajustar los planes con más facilidad en vista de nuevos conocimientos o condiciones cambiantes. La competencia de planear también requiere dominar la relación entre la situación problemática y la aproximación a una solución, que conlleva una cadena de causa-efecto, al igual que las consecuencias no intencionadas. Aquí también es necesario contar con un esquema preciso y un buen sistema de recopilación y análisis de datos. La naturaleza misma de la educación de adultos significa que la planeación basada en el conocimiento se debe realizar especialmente en los niveles bajos, donde se lleva a cabo la acción real. La sociedad civil, a través de las ONG y de las comunidades, tiene una función decisiva en facilitar la planeación democrática, que refleja las necesidades de educandos adultos. El enfoque comunitario de la planeación conduce a la integración de temas específicos de aprendizaje, como cuestiones de salud, derecho y asuntos ambientales, los cuales no consideran necesariamente aquéllos que están en la cima de la pirámide del aprendizaje.

Las competencias de instrumentación incluyen el interés y el compromiso activo de todos los participantes, al igual que la habilidad de comprometerse en la planeación orientada a la instrumentación. La clave aquí es tener la capacidad de imaginar metas que quisiéramos lograr directamente. Uno de los obstáculos principales respecto a la instrumentación de programas de alfabetización de adultos, especialmente los programas de posalfabetización, es que las ONG y los funcionarios de gobierno frecuentemente operan en entornos no letrados. Por ende, la instrumentación de dichos programas debe ir de la mano de los esfuerzos para crear un entorno letrado en el cual esos programas funcionarán. Las consideraciones locales o de abajo hacia arriba,

en lugar de un enfoque de arriba hacia abajo, debe ser el núcleo de la planeación instrumental en estos casos.

La instrumentación de programas de aprendizaje de adultos a nivel local es un proceso dialéctico, mediante el cual la aportación local a la planeación debe alcanzar la cima de la pirámide, alimentada en un proceso más largo de elaboración de políticas, y luego, idealmente, regresar a los grupos base. Además de la planeación e instrumentación locales, la sustentabilidad de los resultados también tiene una importancia medular; se fomenta no sólo a través del apoyo a un entorno letrado, sino también mediante el personal y el liderazgo que se necesitan para mantener a los educandos en el centro y completamente motivados. Aquí es necesario hacer hincapié en la función decisiva que tiene la administración de la ENF de nivel medio, a saber, aquéllos que operan justo arriba de los facilitadores locales, los que planean, monitorean y evalúan a decenas de asesores, pero que frecuentemente no están preparados para entender las necesidades y las limitaciones del aprendizaje y la enseñanza de adultos. Estos administradores de nivel medio podrían verse sumamente beneficiados por una capacitación dirigida a ellos y adecuadamente concebida; un esfuerzo que, a su vez, podría mejorar la calidad de la instrumentación a nivel local.

El asunto de la evaluación, a pesar de ser crítico para una buena planeación futura, ha recibido menos atención. Aunque parece que el monitoreo ha ingresado a los programas de educación de adultos, aún existe una carencia de evaluación. Hay múltiples razones por las cuales se presenta esta situación, incluyendo la carencia de evaluadores calificados a nivel local, la escasez de financiamiento para la evaluación y la ausencia de un marco adecuado para la evaluación. Ésta debe realizarse desde el inicio hasta el final del proceso de instrumentación; no debe restringirse a resultados del aprendizaje, sino usarse como un instrumento básico de planeación para mejorar los resultados de los programas de aprendizaje de adultos.

El financiamiento de los programas de aprendizaje de adultos es la columna vertebral de cualquier política. En este punto se deben enfatizar tres factores. Un factor clave de la movilización de fondos es el aprovechamiento de los fondos locales para los programas de aprendizaje de adultos. Esto ayuda a asegurar la sustentabilidad del proyecto. Sin embargo, no debe perderse de vista que únicamente cuando las comunidades locales perciban que los programas de aprendizaje de adultos son relevantes y tienen un impacto positivo en sus vidas, mostrarán disponibilidad para contribuir con recursos. Otro factor es la vinculación con el financiamiento, de la recopilación de datos de abajo hacia arriba y la planeación posterior. La ventaja de esto es la alineación de la distribución financiera a las necesidades reales a nivel local. Es fundamental contar con un mecanismo financiero afinado en todos los niveles (tanto a ni-

vel nacional como regional) que refleje, especialmente, las necesidades de los educandos. Un tercer factor es la capacidad del sector privado de ayudar en el financiamiento de los programas de aprendizaje de adultos. Sin embargo, los gobiernos son los únicos que deben considerar su responsabilidad política la coordinación los programas de educación de adultos y garantizar que todos los actores y participantes, incluyendo el sector privado, contribuyan con lo que les corresponda para el logro de niveles sostenibles de educación de adultos.

La cooperación Sur-Sur: Un proceso dialogístico

El *Diálogo*, en el que los países compartieron sus experiencias y debatieron ideas nuevas, mostró ser un poderoso instrumento para movilizar instituciones, evidenciar *expertise* y capacidades. Fue fundamental en la decisión de incluir la cuestión de la calidad de la educación para jóvenes y adultos en el programa de las naciones. El *Diálogo* expresó una serie de iniciativas y declaraciones internacionales y promovió sinergia, en lugar de la dispersión de esfuerzos tan común. También arrojó conocimiento a los múltiples pilotos que están realizando diferentes actores en América Latina, África, Asia y los Estados Árabes.

En el foro, los participantes expresaron que su compromiso renovado hacia la educación de jóvenes y adultos no sólo era respecto a la oferta de la educación elemental o la escolaridad a corto plazo, sino también una demostración y una afirmación del significado real del aprendizaje de adultos. El consenso general fue que los gobiernos deben comprometerse a democratizar los sistemas de educación y a crear instrumentos que garanticen la educación continua para todos como un derecho humano fundamental. Así también, todos acordaron que la alfabetización debe considerarse como un *continuum*, que conduzca a la educación permanente y a la adquisición de habilidades para el trabajo, y especialmente a mejorar la calidad de vida y las oportunidades de trabajo de los educandos.

El *Diálogo* es esencial para la misión de la UNESCO, cuyo fin es ampliar y extender el derecho a la educación al derecho a la “educación de calidad” para jóvenes y adultos y ofrecer oportunidades para que diferentes regiones reciban experiencias directamente.

Este acontecimiento ofreció un entorno único en el cual los encargados de planear la educación encontraron terreno fértil para el intercambio entre política y liderazgo de diferentes países y regiones. Ello conduce a crear nuevas sociedades dinámicas y eficaces. La experiencia fue relevante para promover la idea de diversidad social. Contribuyó a evitar tendencias discursivas que ven a los países en vías de desarrollo como sociedades desvalidas,

encarceladas o dependientes. Más bien, aseguró lo contrario: respeto por la diversidad cultural, espiritual y social.

La pregunta que requiere de reflexión continua es: ¿por qué resulta tan difícil lograr medidas prácticas como la meta de EPT de la UNESCO? Una respuesta posible es que la EPT se refiere menos a la planeación de sistemas o incluso de “arreglar” el sistema, que a cómo la educación sirve a la humanidad en una manera mucho más profunda. Por lo tanto, para responder a la pregunta “¿qué tipo de mundo habitará la gente joven [y los adultos] de hoy en día y qué habilidades y cualidades necesitarán para prosperar en el mismo?” (Wells y Claxton 2002:2), será necesario reevaluar lo que entendemos por conocimiento y potencialidades humanas, en lugar de buscar respuestas únicamente en el rediseño estructural de los sistemas educativos (Johnson 2006).

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Aprendizaje de adultos: Situación, tendencias y perspectivas

*Chris Chinien**

La globalización ha creado un nuevo orden mundial para hacer negocios. Las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC) han traído cambios dramáticos en la manera en que vivimos, aprendemos e incluso pensamos sobre el trabajo. La sinergia de combinar la globalización con nuevas tecnologías ha tenido impactos dramáticos económicos y sociales. Ha creado nuevas oportunidades, así como nuevos retos e incertidumbres. Si bien muchos trabajadores han sido desplazados, hay un número importante de gente joven que está estructuralmente desempleada o subempleada. La polarización de habilidades entre los supuestos trabajadores mentales o del conocimiento o los trabajadores no calificados o con bajos niveles de conocimiento, ha ampliado la brecha de ingresos. Los grupos afectados frecuentemente son los jóvenes, las mujeres y los trabajadores mayores.

En las “anteriores nuevas economías”, las ventajas competitivas han incluido acceso a materia prima, recursos naturales y tierras fértiles. En una época en la que el conocimiento es el activo intangible importante, una ventaja competitiva nacional se originará cada vez más de una fuerza laboral educada y empoderada capaz de adaptarse rápidamente a los requerimientos dinámicos de un lugar de trabajo cambiante (Ives 1992). Se dice que la tecnología es el impulsor de esta nueva economía y el capital humano es el combustible (Moe y Boldget 2000). En la nueva economía, el capital humano se define como el conocimiento de los trabajadores como resultado del desempeño eficaz y eficiente. El concepto de “trabajador de la mente” o “trabajador

* Traducción de Andrea González Uribe.

del conocimiento” ha surgido de esta transformación del trabajo, y parece ser el tipo de trabajador que está creciendo con más rapidez. El conocimiento no es sólo un beneficio para el bienestar del trabajador, sino también se considera una ventaja competitiva muy importante para un país y un elemento clave para asegurar la prosperidad y el desarrollo social del país. La percepción del rol de la intervención humana en las transacciones económicas también ha cambiado. Keursten y Kessels (2002:1) han notado que el “enfoque está cambiando de la apreciación del trabajo físico a la habilidad de coordinar y reglamentar la generación y apreciación del conocimiento”.

Situación

Parece no haber consenso en función del impacto que ha tenido el cambio tecnológico en el lugar de trabajo y sus efectos sobre el empleo y las habilidades. Algunos creen que la tecnología está inhabilitando los mismos, mientras que otros argumentan que la tecnología los está habilitando. Aquellos que proponen la habilitación argumentarían que, en esta economía emergente obsesionada con el conocimiento, el proletariado está siendo reemplazado por el cognetariado, donde el trabajo se aleja cada vez más de tareas manuales hacia el procesamiento simbólico (Toffler y Toffler 1995). Los estudios de país, citados por la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT 2001:9), indican que la introducción de las TIC puede contribuir tanto a la habilitación como a la inhabilitación de los trabajadores: “por un lado, las TIC pueden reducir las habilidades y las competencias a una sola tarea realizada mecánicamente, por el otro, pueden aumentar las habilidades y las competencias al trabajo multifunciones basándose en una mayor creatividad.”

Para algunas personas, en la última década, el trabajo se ha vuelto tecnológicamente complejo, demandando habilidades laborales sofisticadas. Para otros, debido al desempleo, les han sido negados la satisfacción y el sentimiento de logro que resulta de trabajar. El mercado laboral se ha vuelto sumamente polarizado por el aumento simultáneo de trabajos que requieren de educación posbachillerato y trabajos casuales para trabajadores no calificados. Esta polarización de la fuerza laboral ha contribuido al aumento de inequidades en ingresos y a discrepancias en prospectos de empleo entre trabajadores calificados y trabajadores menos calificados (Camdessus 1997).

Tal como lo ha identificado Tuijnman (1997:4), “El crecimiento de la marginación, la exclusión social, el desempleo y la lenta productividad son algunas de las consecuencias de la capacidad limitada de algunos países por adaptar y explotar plenamente las oportunidades que se ofrecen en la economía global del conocimiento.” Hobart (1997:7) también ha hecho hincapié en que “el desempleo es uno de los problemas más urgentes que enfrenta el

mundo hoy en día... cada gobierno alrededor del mundo tiene que lidiar con este asunto”. Esta desubicación económica está teniendo efectos devastadores en la gente joven que ingresa al mercado laboral sin ninguna habilidad comercializable. Están siendo afectados desproporcionadamente por los altos índices de desempleo, subempleo e inflación de acreditaciones.

La OIT (2001) calcula que a finales del 2000 había 160 millones de trabajadores desempleados, de los cuales la mayoría buscaba empleo por primera vez, y hasta 50 millones en los países industrializados. Por otra parte, en la actualidad, mucha gente se ve ante la necesidad de aceptar trabajos que requieren bajas calificaciones, poca remuneración, de medio tiempo y que no son permanentes. La OIT también informó que aproximadamente 500 millones de trabajadores, la mayoría de países en vías de desarrollo, no ganan lo suficiente para mantener a sus familias por arriba del umbral de pobreza. Ni los países desarrollados se han salvado. Tal como lo ha indicado Maxwell (2000:1), “A pesar de todo lo que se habla de la explosión de la actividad económica basada en el conocimiento y su contribución, dos millones de canadienses trabajan ganando menos de 10 dólares por hora —aproximadamente uno de cada seis empleados.” Resulta sorprendente que muchas de estas personas cuenten con una buena educación: una tercera parte tiene un título de educación superior.

Los efectos de la globalización y de las TIC sobre las habilidades

En contra de la creencia popular, la caída de trabajos industriales en economías avanzadas sólo tiene una relación parcial con la globalización; el cambio tecnológico ha tenido un impacto mucho más profundo en el mercado laboral: “los lugares de trabajo de hoy están frecuentemente ubicados en múltiples espacios y caracterizados por la diversidad cultural” (Lynch 2002:7). Además, en muchas organizaciones, las relaciones entre competidores, proveedores y clientes “son complejas y se han borrado los límites entre las organizaciones y sus entornos” (Hiniker y Putnam 2002: 8). Los avances tecnológicos han ayudado a desmasificar la producción, reducir las economías de escala y aumentar la productividad industrial y así *desindustrializar* las economías y causar un desplazamiento del empleo del sector industrial al sector de servicios.

En su intento por llegar a ser y continuar siendo más competitivos en este nuevo orden mundial provocado por la globalización y los desarrollos tecnológicos, muchos países del Norte han adoptado diferentes enfoques en la administración de los recursos humanos y las prácticas organizacionales, tales como contrataciones y despidos temporales, alteración de las horas laborales, usar trabajadores de medio tiempo y con contratos, subcontrataciones y contratación de servicios externos, reducción de estructuras jerárquicas y

la adopción de diseños laborales más fluidos, así como la implementación de equipos que realizan múltiples tareas con múltiples habilidades y autoadministrados y equipos multifuncionales.

Varios países han respondido a estos retos con la implementación de mejores iniciativas de alineamiento estratégico para transformar sus economías y sus sistemas de educación y capacitación. Por ejemplo, en marzo del 2000, el Consejo Europeo de Lisboa fijó la meta estratégica principal para hacer de Europa “la economía basada en el conocimiento más competitiva y dinámica del mundo, capaz de tener un crecimiento económico sustentable con más y mejores trabajos y más cohesión social” (Consejo Europeo de Lisboa 2000). Esta transformación radical se basa en que la UE reconoció que los recursos humanos son su mayor activo y que la inversión en la gente es tan importante como la inversión en capital y equipo para lograr crecimiento y productividad. Se calcula que un aumento de un año en la obtención promedio de educación de la población puede dar como resultado un aumento del 5% en el crecimiento a corto plazo y un aumento adicional del 2.5% a largo plazo. Además, la investigación ha tenido cierto impacto educativo positivo sobre el empleo, la salud, la inclusión social y la ciudadanía activa (Consejo de la Unión Europea 2004).

Los países más desarrollados pudieron realizar recortes importantes en servicios de salud, educación y otros servicios sociales y reasignar los recursos necesarios para reestructurar las economías nacionales y satisfacer estos retos. Los países menos desarrollados, los cuales ya están plagados con pobreza, no tuvieron tal flexibilidad fiscal para atender estos retos de la misma manera. Por otra parte, no contaban con la infraestructura o el capital humano necesario que les permitieran realizar cambios rápidos para cosechar los beneficios de la globalización y del desarrollo tecnológico. En consecuencia, se hundieron más en la pobreza, al mismo tiempo que tenían que soportar la enorme carga de la deuda externa. La pobreza es, sin duda, el problema más agobiante para el mundo en desarrollo (NetAid 2005).

Pobreza

Si bien el derecho a la educación, el trabajo, la salud y el bienestar están afianzados en la *Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos* de la ONU de 1948, hoy en día millones de personas continúan viviendo en la mayor miseria. En su declaración sobre la pobreza, el Comité de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales de la ONU definió la pobreza como “una condición humana caracterizada por la privación, sostenida o crónica, de recursos, capacidades, elecciones, seguridad y poder necesarios para gozar de un nivel de vida adecuado, así como otros derechos civiles, culturales, económicos,

políticos y sociales” (CESCR 2001). La gente pobre vive en condiciones precarias sin la alimentación, agua potable, condiciones de salubridad, asistencia médica y educación adecuadas.

De acuerdo con el Monitoreo de la Pobreza Global del Banco Mundial (2003), la distribución de la gente pobre en varias regiones del mundo es como sigue: África del Sub-Sahara, 46%; Asia del Sur, 40%; América Latina, 15.6%; Asia Oriental y China, 15.3%; Europa Occidental y Asia Central, 5.1%. Otras estadísticas adicionales son útiles para entender los agobiantes efectos que tiene la pobreza en la gente del mundo en vías de desarrollo: 1.2 mil millones de personas viven con menos de 1 dólar al día (Secretaría de Estado para el Desarrollo Internacional del Reino Unido 2000); más de la mitad de la población del mundo —3 mil millones de personas— vive con menos de 2 dólares al día; cada noche, 800 millones de personas se van a la cama con hambre (MPH 2005); el 70% de los pobres del mundo son mujeres; cada día, la pobreza mata 50 000 personas en el mundo entero, incluyendo 30 000 niños; cada año, 6 millones de niños mueren por desnutrición antes de cumplir cinco años; más de 11 millones de niños mueren al año de causas evitables (NetAid 2005).

Reducción de la pobreza mediante la educación

El consenso general entre los líderes mundiales es que los países más desarrollados necesitan ayudar a los países en vías de desarrollo en sus esfuerzos para erradicar la pobreza. Existen dos razones de peso que apoyan la urgencia de mantener la ayuda extranjera para los países en vías de desarrollo. La primera está fundamentalmente basada en el espíritu de generosidad y humanitarismo: ayudar a los países en vías de desarrollo a salir del círculo vicioso que es la pobreza también se considera un acto inteligente tras el 11 de septiembre del 2001: “si ignoramos los problemas y luchas de la gente que vive al otro lado del mundo, lo hacemos a nuestro propio riesgo. Aquellos que se sienten excluidos de la aldea global pueden hacer del mundo un lugar peligroso” (Morrison 2003).

La UNESCO ha emprendido varias iniciativas internacionales para crear conciencia de los efectos que la pobreza tiene sobre las condiciones y la dignidad humana. La Quinta Conferencia Internacional sobre la Educación de Adultos, CONFINTEA V (UNESCO 1997), fue de particular importancia en el sentido de que se llevó a cabo en el contexto de una globalización cuyo proceso va intensificando. Los participantes de la conferencia propusieron una visión del aprendizaje de adultos que está firme-

mente arraigada en un marco de desarrollo humano y justicia social (Singh y McKay 2004).

Los objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio de la ONU (MDG, por sus siglas en inglés), ahora han dado a los líderes del mundo un marco común en el cual contribuir para luchar contra la pobreza, el analfabetismo, la mortalidad, la discriminación en contra de las mujeres y el deterioro ambiental. Una de las prioridades clave de los ODM es reducir en un 50% la proporción de gente que vive en la pobreza extrema para el 2015 (Preece y Singh 2003). Esto se puede lograr empleando un enfoque cuatripartita (MPH 2005):

1. Alcanzar la meta de contribución extranjera a la ONU de 0.7% de Ingreso Nacional Bruto.
2. Comprometer la ayuda extranjera a las iniciativas de reducción de la pobreza.
3. Instrumentar reglas comerciales que faciliten la reducción de la misma.
4. Apoyar la eliminación inmediata e incondicional del 100% de deudas multilaterales y bilaterales de las naciones más pobres.

El *Marco de Acción Dakar* (UNESCO 2000) identifica la educación como un instrumento importante para combatir la pobreza. La educación, comenzando con el cuidado y educación de niños pequeños y continuando mediante el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, es un elemento central para el empoderamiento individual, la eliminación de la pobreza a niveles del hogar y de la comunidad y un desarrollo social y económico más amplio. Por el momento, la reducción de la pobreza facilita el avance hacia el logro de metas de educación básica. Hay sinergias evidentes entre las estrategias para fomentar la educación y aquellas para reducir la pobreza.

El movimiento de Educación Para Todos (EPT) de la UNESCO también impulsa la reducción de la pobreza. Con motivo del lanzamiento de la Década de las Naciones Unidas de la Alfabetización, el Secretario General, Kofi Annan (2003) dijo: “la alfabetización es la llave para abrir la jaula de la miseria humana; la clave para impulsar el potencial de todo ser humano; la llave para abrir un futuro de libertad y esperanza”.

Evidencia que apoya a la educación para reducir la pobreza

Dado que se está invirtiendo tanta esperanza, energía y recursos en la educación de niños y adultos, algunos intelectuales han comenzado a buscar información basada en evidencias de apoyo a la educación para el desarrollo y la reducción de la pobreza. No obstante la carestía y limitación de evidencia

concreta de los estudios publicados, John Oxenham (2003) ha podido llegar a varias conclusiones, las cuales se presentan a continuación.

Tabla 1. Contribuciones de la Educación Básica y la Capacitación de Adultos (EBCA) a los ocho Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio (ODM)

La EBCA puede, en efecto, ayudar a la reducción de la pobreza ODM 1.
La participación de las mujeres en la EBCA tiene un impacto positivo en la inscripción, perseverancia y conclusión de niños en la escuela ODM 2.
Las mujeres tienen un índice más alto de participación en los programas de EBCA y parece que tienen una mejora importante en la autoestima ODM 3.
La evidencia limitada disponible sugiere que la EBCA tiene un resultado positivo en la mortalidad y en el bienestar ODM 4 y 5.
Mientras que la investigación sugiere una estrecha relación entre la participación en los programas de alfabetización y el conocimiento de la prevención de infecciones, existe poca evidencia que demuestre si este conocimiento conduce a cambios positivos de comportamiento ODM 6.

Fuente: Oxenham: 2003

A pesar de estos resultados aparentemente positivos de la EBCA, Oxenham (ibíd.) advierte que no se deben formar falsas esperanzas de transformaciones milagrosas y rápidas, debido a:

- a) la incertidumbre de la relación causa-efecto entre la información, las actitudes y el comportamiento.
- b) que sólo una pequeña porción de los participantes en la EBCA tienden a mostrar cambios de actitud y de comportamiento medibles en pocos años, y
- c) que, al seguir las leyes básicas del aprendizaje, mucho de lo que se aprende por medio de la EBCA se desperdiciará sin el apoyo adecuado para usar y mantener el conocimiento y las habilidades adquiridas.

Hacer inventario de los logros

Se han puesto en marcha varios mecanismos para monitorear el avance de la EPT de la UNESCO y los ODM. El *Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2001* (PNUD 2001) ofrece un resumen de los logros en materia de los Objetivos del Desarrollo Humano (véase Tabla 2). Si bien está alentando que se observe que se han realizado algunos avances significativos, los resultados sugieren que es importante reorientar más esfuerzos para enfrentar muchos retos que aún están por venir. La comunidad de donación internacional del Norte

debe recordar que 6500 africanos mueren a diario por VIH, mientras que otros 6500 mueren todos los días por paludismo y por piquetes de mosco.

Tendencias

Como parte de sus esfuerzos para realizar la Revisión de Medio Camino del CONFINTEA V 2003, el Instituto de la UNESCO para el Aprendizaje a lo Largo de la Vida (UIL) solicitó a las comisiones nacionales que presentaran un informe haciendo inventario de las tendencias y desarrollos en la educación de adultos desde 1997. Si bien únicamente el 25% de las comisiones nacionales presentaron sus informes, aún fue posible, provisionalmente, identificar algunas tendencias muy informativas (IEU 2003b), los cuales incluyeron lo siguiente:

En primera instancia, las prioridades para los países en vías de desarrollo están enfocadas en la EPT básica, incluyendo el desarrollo de la alfabetización para jóvenes y adultos, el empoderamiento de las mujeres y la educación para el desarrollo sustentable. En contraste, las prioridades en los países más desarrollados son el desarrollo de habilidades para satisfacer las condiciones cambiantes del mercado laboral, el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, el uso de las TIC para apoyar el aprendizaje y la educación enfocada a grupos objetivo desfavorecidos.

En segundo lugar, existe un interés general en los países más desarrollados en el uso del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida como un marco básico para la educación de adultos. Algunos países en vías de desarrollo también están avanzando en esa dirección. Hay un creciente interés por crear relaciones entre todos los actores clave, incluyendo los gobiernos, el sector privado, las ONG y las OSC, para formular iniciativas para la educación y capacitación de adultos. También a la alza está el interés en la evaluación y el reconocimiento del aprendizaje previo, así como la participación de las mujeres en la educación de adultos.

En tercer lugar, la descentralización de la toma de decisiones para mejorar el grado de relevancia de la educación de adultos a las necesidades locales no está funcionando adecuadamente en los países en vías de desarrollo debido a la carencia de recursos humanos y económicos para apoyar las iniciativas a nivel local. El interés en el uso de las TIC para ampliar su acceso, reducir costos y mejorar la calidad de la educación de adultos va en aumento. Los países en vías de desarrollo se encuentran a la zaga en la integración del aprendizaje mediado por las TIC, principalmente debido a la falta de recursos económicos y a personal calificado.

Tabla 2. Balance general del desarrollo humano – metas, logros y trayecto inconcluso. Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2001 del PNUD.

METAS	LOGROS	TRAYECTO INCONCLUSO
Reducir en un 50% la proporción de gente que vive en pobreza extrema.	Entre 1990 y 1998, la proporción de gente que vivía con menos de 1 dólar (PPC 1993, en USD) al día en los países en vías de desarrollo se redujo de 29% a 24%.	Aún si la proporción se reduce al 50% para el 2015, todavía habría 900 millones de personas viviendo en pobreza extrema en el mundo en vías de desarrollo.
Reducir en un 50% la proporción de gente que padece hambre.	La cantidad de personas desnutridas en el mundo en vías de desarrollo se redujo en 40 millones entre 1990-92 y 1996-98.	En el mundo en vías de desarrollo aún hay 826 millones de personas desnutridas.
Inscribir a todos los niños en la escuela primaria. Lograr la terminación universal de la escolaridad primaria.	Para 1997, más de 70 países tenían índices netos de inscripción superiores al 80%. En 29 de los 46 países con datos, el 80% de los niños inscritos alcanzan el quinto año.	En los próximos 15 años, deben tomarse medidas para atender a los 113 millones de niños que en este momento no asisten a la primaria y a los millones más que entrarán a la población de edad escolar.
Reducir los índices de mortalidad infantil en dos tercios.	De 1990 a 1999, la mortalidad infantil se redujo en más del 10%, de 64 a 56 por cada 1 000 niños nacidos vivos.	África del Sub-Sahara tiene un índice de mortalidad infantil de más de 100 y un índice de mortalidad infantil de niños menores de cinco años de más de 170. Esta región ha logrado menos avances que otras.
Reducir los índices de mortalidad infantil de niños menores de cinco años en dos tercios.	La mortalidad infantil de niños menores de cinco años se redujo de 93 a 80 de cada 1 000 niños nacidos vivos entre 1990 y 1999.	
Detener y comenzar a dar marcha atrás a la propagación del VIH.	En algunos países, como Uganda y posiblemente Zambia, la preponderancia del VIH está mostrando señales de disminución.	Aproximadamente 36 millones de personas viven con VIH.

Fuente: IEU 2003a:4; PNUD 2001.

En cuarto lugar, existe poca investigación en materia de educación de adultos. Por ende, existe muy poca información basada en evidencia para la elaboración de políticas y para toma de decisiones; muchos países están usando el marco de EPT y los ODM como pilares de acción para el desarrollo de la educación de adultos.

En quinto lugar, parece haber un intento limitado por iniciar la cooperación internacional en la educación de adultos, incluyendo la cooperación sur-sur.

Por otro lado, con base en la extensa revisión de la información internacional sobre investigación de la educación de adultos en el sur, Torres (2004) identificó una tendencia para asociar la educación de adultos en el sur con educación remedial para los pobres. Argumenta que incluso la meta ambiciosa de *erradicar* el analfabetismo se ha disminuido a *reducir* el analfabetismo, en particular entre jóvenes y mujeres. La autora concluye que las necesidades de educación y aprendizaje de los adultos se han ignorado en los documentos internacionales del marco normativo más importantes, incluyendo la Educación Para Todos de la UNESCO, los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio de la ONU y por la Iniciativa Vía Rápida del Banco Mundial. Si bien el norte ha adoptado plenamente la importancia crítica de la educación de adultos para el desarrollo de habilidades, las agencias internacionales de cooperación aún dan prioridad a la educación primaria de los niños en el sur.

Perspectivas

Esta breve revisión del campo de la educación de adultos se ha enfocado en el pasado y el presente, en los éxitos y fracasos y la identificación de retos y oportunidades. En esta sección, la información obtenida se utilizará para considerar algunas perspectivas sobre el panorama futuro de la educación de adultos en el sur. Se espera que éstas aviven el debate y análisis que habilite a los países del sur, la agencias internacionales y los países donantes con antecedentes críticos para cambiar el enfoque de su investigación sobre educación de adultos.

Avance insuficiente

Los cálculos indican que muchos países en vías de desarrollo son incapaces de alcanzar los objetivos mínimos de la EPT y los ODM. La acción correctiva se debe reformular en alineación estratégica con tres elementos clave: el propósito, el resultado que se debe lograr y las acciones masivas necesarias para lograr el resultado. El propósito de la EPT y de los ODM no da suficiente consideración a la educación de adultos. Los críticos han argumentado que aquellas iniciativas internacionales han segregado o ignorado la educación de adultos y que los resultados esperados fueron mínimos. Alguna evidencia indica que frecuentemente, el resultado de la educación de adultos se vio limitada al desarrollo de la alfabetización básica, y Torres concluye que las necesidades educativas de los adultos del sur se están ignorando a expensas de la

educación primaria. Se carece de una acción masiva dirigida a las necesidades de educación y capacitación de adultos. Definitivamente, hay una necesidad de una estrategia más integral de aprendizaje de adultos.

La calidad de la educación

Aunque hay un discurso oficial sobre la necesidad del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, la accesibilidad continúa siendo un asunto principal. Recientemente, John Daniel (2002:1), exsubdirector General para la Educación de la UNESCO señaló:

El problema de la educación hoy en día es que miles de millones de ciudadanos del mundo no la reciben. Muchos más no la reciben en cantidades suficientes. Más de 100 millones de niños jamás ven una escuela por dentro. Otros, en la misma cantidad, no permanecen en la escuela el tiempo suficiente para adquirir habilidades útiles. El analfabetismo devasta la vida de 800 millones de adultos.

Daniel ve la eficacia de la educación dentro del marco que encapsula tres elementos clave: el acceso, los costos y la calidad. Definió la calidad como: “la aptitud para el fin al costo mínimo para la sociedad” (2002:2). Este marco es sumamente útil para cualquier consideración de accesibilidad. Cuando el reto básico de la educación se expresa en función de este triángulo de fuerzas, está claro que hay un hecho incómodo: los métodos tradicionales de enseñanza y aprendizaje no pueden producir los cambios necesarios. Daniel (ibíd.) lo explicó de la siguiente manera:

Intente poner más estudiantes en cada clase. El acceso se podrá elevar, pero todos lo acusarán de haber reducido la calidad. Las maneras tradicionales de mejorar la calidad tienden a reducir el acceso y elevar los costos. Está claro que hay un problema. A través de la historia, la educación ha creado un vínculo pernicioso entre la calidad y la exclusividad. La alta calidad únicamente se puede lograr si se excluye a muchas personas de acceder a ésta.

No obstante, continua señalando, la evidencia muestra que la tecnología puede incrementar el acceso, mejorar la calidad y reducir los costos, todo al mismo tiempo.

En este vínculo, resulta relevante la investigación realizada por Curtin (2002:6), quien identificó tres modelos que actualmente se utilizan en Australia para obtener resultados rentables en la provisión de servicios en línea: reducir los costos conservando los niveles actuales de eficacia y volumen; mejorar la eficacia del aprendizaje manteniendo los costos y volumen actuales, y; aumentar los volúmenes manteniendo los niveles actuales de costo y eficacia.

Al comentar sobre el uso de las TIC para aumentar el acceso a la educación, Haddad y Draxler (2002: 8) señalaron que:

Va a ser muy difícil, si no es que imposible, para los países alcanzar el objetivo de aprendizaje eficaz, para todos, en cualquier lugar, en cualquier momento. Sin embargo, nuestra incapacidad para cumplir con este reto es causada por nosotros mismos porque nuestra tendencia en pensar en la mejora lineal, es decir, usar el mismo modelo de educación (una escuela restringida por espacio y tiempo) pero en mayor proporción y a mayor escala. Lo que realmente necesitamos es pensar de manera diferente y radical. El modelo educativo desarrollado para la Era Industrial no puede lograr el empoderamiento educativo en la Era de la Información eficazmente. Con las TIC, deberíamos tener la capacidad para evolucionar los componentes del modelo tradicional a los componentes correspondientes del nuevo modelo.

Considerando el alcance y la escala del esfuerzo que se requiere para satisfacer las necesidades de educación y capacitación de los adultos en el sur, se debe explotar todo el potencial de las TIC para cumplir con este reto.

Unir la división cognoscitiva

El aprender para saber está llegando a ser la prioridad principal en el intento por cumplir con la meta de EPT. A fin de prevenir la exclusión, es necesario que la Educación y Capacitación Técnica y Vocacional (ECTV) no sólo sea físicamente accesible, sino que también esté al alcance cognoscitivo de todos. La investigación indica que muchos estudiantes carecen de las habilidades de alfabetización cognoscitivas esenciales para tener éxito en un entorno de aprendizaje. Por ejemplo, Oxenham (2003:7) ha observado que un mejor entendimiento del procesamiento de la información podría ayudar a mejorar la eficacia del aprendizaje.

Para aprender exitosamente, un estudiante debe poseer un repertorio de habilidades intelectuales que cumplan con la exigencia cognoscitiva de la tarea del aprendizaje (Letteri 1985). Las habilidades que pronostican el éxito y ofrecen la mayor contribución al aprendizaje eficaz incluyen (Chinien et al. 1997):

- *Análisis*: la capacidad de desglosar tareas complejas en partes componentes.
- *Enfoque*: la capacidad de poner atención a la información relevante con intensidad.
- *Reflexividad*: la capacidad de reflexionar sobre problemas y considerar soluciones alternas.

- *Estrechez*: la capacidad de clasificar nueva información de manera precisa y coherente.
- *Complejidad*: la capacidad de organizar la información en un marco utilizable y funcional.
- *Perspiciacia*: la capacidad de hacer una distinción precisa entre clasificaciones para evitar confusión o superposición.
- *Tolerancia*: la capacidad de manejar información ambigua y problemas mal definidos.

Estas siete habilidades cognoscitivas ofrecen a los educadores un marco muy poderoso para propiciar el aprendizaje sobre cómo adquirir habilidades en sus actividades de enseñanza y aprendizaje. Esto coincide con el segundo pilar de aprendizaje de Delors —*aprender a saber*— el cual describió como un tipo de aprendizaje que “tienden menos a la adquisición de conocimiento estructurado que al dominio de herramientas de aprendizaje... dicho estudio favorece el despertar de la curiosidad intelectual, estimula el sentido crítico y permite que la gente adquiera una autonomía de juicio” (Delors 1996:1). El Centro de UNEVOC-Canadá, por su parte, ha creado el proyecto Mejora del Aprendizaje para las Necesidades de Recapitación de los Adultos (LEARN, por sus siglas en inglés), el cual es un CD-ROM instructivo prototípico diseñado para mejorar las habilidades de procesamiento de información de educandos adultos (Chinien et al. 2001).

Aprender a vivir juntos

El avance hacia el logro de las metas de EPT y de los ODM en países posconflicto se ha visto obstaculizado por la inseguridad, la pobreza, las condiciones económicas en deterioro, las sanciones económicas y la destrucción de infraestructuras educativas. Hoy en día, *aprender a vivir juntos*, el cuarto pilar de aprendizaje de Delors, se ha convertido en uno de los mayores retos que enfrenta la humanidad. Durante el siglo XX, 60 millones de personas murieron en guerras y la mayoría de éstas fueron mujeres y niños que no participaron en la guerra. De éstos, el 80% fueron civiles, principalmente mujeres y niños. En los últimos 10 años, 1.5 millones de niños murieron en guerras, 4 millones se convirtieron en minusválidos y 10 millones resultaron heridos.

La educación para la paz ayuda a la gente a adquirir el conocimiento, actitudes y habilidades necesarias para trabajar y vivir juntos en paz y armonía. La UNESCO tiene el mandato de utilizar la educación como influencia para promover una cultura de paz entre naciones. Debido a los disturbios actuales en el mundo, las habilidades críticas para fomentar una cultura de habilidades no violentas, las cuales incluyen la tolerancia, la prevención de comporta-

miento violento y la resolución pacífica de conflictos, deben estar arraigadas en los programas de educación y capacitación para jóvenes y adultos. (INEE 2002).

Aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida

Posiblemente, los trabajadores del futuro esperen trabajar en tareas a corto plazo, con base en contratos o en varios equipos de proyecto. Quizá en algún momento tengan que trabajar para más de un patrón o varias veces incluso en nuevas ocupaciones. Así mismo, se calcula que el 50% de las habilidades de trabajadores técnicos serán obsoletas dentro de tres o siete años. El aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida es la única manera de prevenir la obsolescencia y permanecer competitivo en un mercado laboral donde el trabajo se está volviendo cada vez más intensivo en conocimiento. Uno de los retos con respecto al aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, es ofrecer oportunidades recurrentes para que una persona pueda tener acceso a la educación y la capacitación durante su vida a manera de: aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, aprendizaje a su propio ritmo, educación *in situ*, educación a tiempo (en cualquier lugar y a cualquier ritmo), innovación y aprender a aprender.

Aprendizaje mediado por las TIC

Una vez que el grupo de educandos beneficiados del movimiento de la EPT concluya su educación básica, la expectativa será que las TIC proporcionen cada vez más enfoques innovadores para proveer programas de educación y capacitación responsivos, rentables y oportunos para todos. Las TIC pueden contribuir a la reducción de la pobreza y a la inclusión social, mientras que también permiten un enfoque pedagógico que es constructivista, cooperativo, interactivo y autodirigido. Las TIC también ofrecen la flexibilidad para adaptarse a los estilos cognoscitivos y de aprendizaje únicos de los educandos. Sin embargo, la adopción de las TIC requiere de un proceso de toma de decisiones cuidadosamente equilibrado, el cual tome en cuenta las ventajas y retos conocidos, así como la preparación de una estrategia pedagógica, organizacional y técnica de un país. Las ventajas de las TIC incluyen: aprendizaje abierto y a distancia, aprendizaje a tiempo /en cualquier momento/en cualquier lugar, la rentabilidad y la eficacia del aprendizaje. Pero, antes de adoptar el aprendizaje mediado por las TIC, se deben considerar cuidadosamente varios retos importantes, incluyendo el hecho de que una carencia de acceso a las TIC crea o reafirma la división digital entre los “ricos” y los “pobres” (no sólo dentro de los países, sino también entre países), la mayoría de los sitios web aún están en inglés y el costo del mantenimiento del aprendizaje mediado por las TIC continuará aumentando.

Asimismo, hay otras condiciones críticas que deben prevalecer antes de que el aprendizaje mediado por las TIC se pueda poner en marcha exitosamente en la ECTV, entre las cuales destacan: *preparación estratégica*, la cual incluye la visión, misión, valores, objetivos, estrategias, marco cronológico y el esquema de evaluación de la iniciativa de las TIC; *preparación pedagógica*, la cual se enfoca en la manera en que se ajusta el aprendizaje mediado por las TIC y las prácticas de enseñanza y aprendizaje utilizadas actualmente; *preparación organizacional*, la cual se enfoca en el empoderamiento de los educadores para la integración del aprendizaje mediado por las TIC en la ECTV; y la *preparación tecnológica*, la cual atiende asuntos relacionados con los requisitos de infraestructura para el aprendizaje mediado por las TIC.

Por lo tanto, las TIC deben ser un elemento en la estrategia nacional integral de desarrollo. Sin embargo, a fin de que las TIC sean más sustentables, tanto dentro como entre países, se deben establecer consorcios para reducir costos con la reserva de recursos. El aprendizaje mediado por las TIC tiene grandes esperanzas de cerrar la disparidad entre el norte y el sur, así como para alcanzar las metas de la EPT. Los países más desarrollados tienen una función clave por ayudar a los países en vías de desarrollo a integrar el uso de las TIC en la educación y capacitación mediante acuerdos bilaterales o internacionales enfocados en el desarrollo de infraestructura y la construcción de la capacidad.

Alfabetización para la salud

Un estilo de vida sano es imperativo para lograr las metas de desarrollo sustentable. En algunos países, la pandemia del VIH está teniendo efectos devastadores sobre los recursos humanos que en sí ya son escasos, los cuales son un pilar crítico del desarrollo económico. Es importante prevenir que esta pandemia obstaculice el logro de los ODM y de la EPT. La educación debe elevar la conciencia de la importancia de comportamientos responsables con respecto al VIH. Si bien la educación y la alfabetización son factores determinantes de la salud, la alfabetización para la salud, como forma discreta de alfabetización, está llegando a ser importante para el desarrollo social y económico (Kickbusch 2001). La alfabetización para la salud se define como “las habilidades cognoscitivas y sociales que determinan la motivación y la capacidad de los individuos de obtener acceso a, entender y usar la información de forma tal que se fomente y mantenga una buena salud” (OMS, citado por Nutbeam 1998).

Integración de la educación vocacional y la educación de adultos

Los países del norte han entendido la importancia del capital humano para el desarrollo económico y la cohesión e inclusión social. Los “ricos” aún están llevando a cabo una acción masiva para asegurar que una fuerza laboral calificada conduzca las innovaciones y mantenga la competitividad en el comercio mundial. Los mismos países tienen un doble criterio para los países del sur, la cual es evidente en la propagación de los primeros del desarrollo de la alfabetización a expensas del desarrollo de habilidades. El Banco Mundial solía otorgar hasta el 40% de sus préstamos educativos para el desarrollo de la ECTV en los países en vías de desarrollo. Sin embargo, hoy en día, los préstamos educativos para la ECTV representan únicamente de 8 a 9% de los préstamos.

China e India se están convirtiendo en los líderes y su fuerza laboral calificada está atrayendo mucha mano de obra de los Estados Unidos y Europa. Mohan Perera, titular de la sección de ECTV de la UNESCO (Ochtet 2005:5) argumenta que al “hacer una inversión importante en la ECTV, estos países cimbraron una plataforma importante en sus bases económicas.” El hecho de que el Banco Mundial decidiera financiar la educación primaria a expensas de la ECTV ha sido perjudicial para el desarrollo económico de muchos países en vías de desarrollo. El experto en educación y capacitación de la OIT, Trevor Riordan, hace poco comentó que “las estrategias internacionales cuya intención es reducir la pobreza, han ignorado completamente la necesidad de desarrollar habilidades... ahora estamos presenciando el surgimiento de una división de habilidades... con los países menos desarrollados rezagándose cada vez más, especialmente el África del Sub Sahara y el sur de Asia” (ibíd.). Al comentar sobre este tema, Wataru Iwamoto, Director de la División de Educación Secundaria, Técnica y Vocacional de la UNESCO, señaló: “esto es una bomba de tiempo en espera de explotar, ya que cientos de niños más terminarán la primaria y buscarán educación secundaria u oportunidades de trabajo que no siempre existen” (ibíd.). Únicamente el 16% de estudiantes africanos están inscritos en la ECTV, en comparación con el 50% en Europa. Los participantes de la Reunión Internacional de Expertos convocada por la UNESCO sobre “Aprender para el Trabajo, la Ciudadanía y la Sustentabilidad”, llevada a cabo en Bonn del 24 al 28 de octubre del 2004, concluyeron que si la educación es la clave para reducir la pobreza, por ende, la ECTV es la llave maestra para mejorar las condiciones humanas.

Iniciativa empresarial

Otro tema que requiere atención es la iniciativa empresarial. En algunos países, la economía no tendrá la capacidad de generar suficientes empleos para toda la gente joven que cumple con los requisitos para entrar en la fuerza laboral. Casi todos los gobiernos del mundo tienen que luchar con el desempleo y el subempleo. La educación de empresarios, por lo tanto, está comenzando a tener la misma importancia en la ECTV; los cálculos indican que el 50% de los egresados de los programas actuales de educación y capacitación no podrán asegurar un empleo. Al parecer, el autoempleo es la única esperanza de independencia económica para mucha gente joven. La Cámara de Comercio Canadiense (1988:5) declaró que “al considerar su carrera, la gente joven podría dejar de pensar en para quién quieren trabajar, sino cómo lograr autoemplearse”. Hay mucho optimismo de que el autoempleo podría ser una parte de la solución (Fundación Canadiense para Jóvenes 1995). Expuesto lo anterior, la iniciativa empresarial está llegando a ser una pieza medular del sistema de la ECTV, por lo que ahora la expectativa es que los maestros de la ECTV tengan la capacidad para equipar a los estudiantes con las habilidades necesarias para el autoempleo.

Habilidades de desarrollo sustentable para trabajadores adultos

La educación para el desarrollo sustentable es el siguiente tema principal que enfrenta la educación de jóvenes y adultos. Es importante recordar que la economía humana ya consume aproximadamente el 50% de la producción natural del planeta al año. Si se conserva esta tendencia, pronto necesitaremos muchos más planetas para mantener nuestras necesidades. Debido a esto, el desarrollo debe llegar a ser más sustentable a fin de garantizar nuestra calidad de vida y la de las siguientes generaciones.

Avanzar hacia la meta del desarrollo sustentable exige cambios fundamentales en las actitudes y comportamientos humanos. Estos cambios únicamente se podrán lograr a través de la educación y la capacitación. La educación de adultos tendrá que cambiar su curso para satisfacer cuatro supuestos axiomáticos básicos del desarrollo sustentable: avance social para todos, protección eficaz ambiental, uso prudente de los recursos naturales y mantener una fuerza laboral bien educada.

El Centro Internacional para la Educación y Capacitación Técnica y Vocacional (ECTV) UNESCO-UNEVOC convocó a la conferencia *+5 Aprender para el trabajo, la ciudadanía y la sustentabilidad*, que se llevó a cabo en Seúl en octubre del 2004. El enfoque de la reunión fue la orientación de la

ECTV para el desarrollo sustentable en el contexto de la Década de la Educación para el Desarrollo Sustentable 2005-2015, de la ONU. Un estudio reciente, realizado por el Centro Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Fuerza Laboral, identificó las habilidades fundamentales que se requieren de la fuerza laboral para contribuir al desarrollo sustentable. El perfil de habilidades generado por este estudio, consiste en seis grupos de habilidades unificadoras (Chinien et al. 2003).

1. *Ética y valores*: Las actitudes que se necesitan para comportarse y actuar de manera ética.
2. *Toma de decisiones integrada*: El conocimiento y las habilidades necesarias para procesar información de manera eficaz y eficiente.
3. *Uso responsable de los recursos*: El conocimiento y las habilidades necesarias para usar los recursos de manera responsable.
4. *Valoración de la diversidad*: El conocimiento y las habilidades necesarias para contribuir y apoyar la diversidad.
5. *Seguridad y bienestar*: El conocimiento y las habilidades necesarias para mantener la salud y la seguridad en el lugar de empleo.
6. *Mejora continua*: El conocimiento y las habilidades necesarias para mejorar la calidad de vida.

Estos seis grupos de habilidades son válidos para todos los trabajadores, más allá de la función laboral, el sector de actividad y el nivel de educación y capacitación. Las habilidades deben inculcarse en la educación y capacitación de jóvenes y adultos.

Evaluación y Reconocimiento de Aprendizaje Previo (PLAR)

Si bien los adultos dedican una considerable cantidad de tiempo a la capacitación relacionada con el empleo, las instituciones educativas no reconocen el conocimiento y las habilidades adquiridas fuera de las instituciones formales. Esta es una práctica no sustentable más en un momento en el que estamos viviendo una carencia crítica de habilidades y en la que existe una escasez de recursos educativos. Muchas naciones, incluyendo Australia, Canadá, Francia, Nueva Zelanda, el Reino Unido y los Estados Unidos, han adoptado el concepto de Evaluación y Reconocimiento de Aprendizaje Previo (PLAR, por sus siglas en inglés). Mientras que el PLAR tiene muchos beneficios, también hay algunos asuntos e inquietudes importantes asociadas con su puesta en marcha (Singh 2005:21-22), algunas de las cuales son:

1. El peligro de transferir estructuras sumamente desarrolladas de reconocimiento, validación y certificación de aprendizaje y experiencia previa a los países en vías de desarrollo.
2. ¿Quién debe fijar las normas para la evaluación?
3. La falta de comunicación y reconocimiento mutuo entre los diferentes sistemas de validación.
4. La necesidad de conservar un equilibrio entre las competencias cada vez más amplias y que mantengan su relevancia con el contexto local.
5. La existencia de sesgo social en contra de las experiencias de aprendizaje adquiridas fuera de la escuela tanto en países en vías de desarrollo como en países altamente desarrollados.
6. La necesidad de identificar, utilizar y reconocer el conocimiento y los saberes tradicionales como una parte fundamental del proceso de aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida.
7. La necesidad de adoptar un enfoque más holístico para validar las competencias a fin de que su identificación no esté guiada por el mercado laboral.
8. La necesidad de conservar un equilibrio entre la programación enfocada a la escuela y la enfocada a la vida para que el aprendizaje no formal pueda conservar su tradicional función democrática y radical.
9. La identificación de marcos nacionales de calificaciones y la necesidad de mantener a los actores informados sobre estos marcos.
10. La identificación de obstáculos individuales y sistemáticos para el reconocimiento del aprendizaje no formal e informal.

Convergencia de ECTV – DRH y la educación de adultos

El último asunto que nos atañe aquí, está relacionado con la convergencia de la ECTV, el desarrollo de los recursos humanos (DRH) y la educación de adultos. Estas tres áreas operan como campos distintos. Cada una de ellas desarrolló sus propias asociaciones profesionales, materiales informativos, investigación y mejores prácticas. Esta división es innecesaria y ha obstaculizado la eficacia en estos campos. En los últimos años, estos campos han convergido cada vez más bajo la noción del “desarrollo de la fuerza laboral”. La cooperación de los profesionales de estas áreas podría derivar en una convergencia de paradigmas, principios y filosofía

extremadamente poderosas, así como la fertilización transversal de ideas y perspectivas con relación a: teorías de educación de adultos; teoría del desarrollo del capital humano y economía laboral; la sociología laboral, familiar y de la comunidad; la teoría y la práctica del desarrollo profesional; y política pública en materia del desarrollo de la fuerza laboral (Gray y Walter 2001).

Desarrollo de los recursos humanos (DRH)

Se podría argumentar que la educación contribuye a la reducción de la pobreza o que mejores condiciones económicas ofrecen más acceso a la educación de calidad. Independientemente de la postura que se tome, la educación de adultos debe formar parte esencial de la estrategia nacional de desarrollo y de la estrategia de desarrollo de recursos humanos. La imagen 1 ofrece un marco analítico para entender la calidad de la educación y de la capacitación en la educación de adultos. Este marco incluye cuatro elementos fundamentales:

1. La estrategia nacional de desarrollo.
2. El contexto y la aportación específica al país.
3. El propósito y los resultados de las iniciativas de la educación y capacitación.
4. Los grupos objetivo designados.

Tal como se muestra en la imagen 1, el análisis de cada uno de los cuatro elementos permite que los encargados de la planeación educativa determinen quién recibirá la educación y la capacitación, para qué fin, cómo contribuye esta capacitación a las prioridades de la estrategia nacional de desarrollo y el grado hasta el cual se verá reflejado en las circunstancias y recursos específicos del país. Estos cuatro grupos de información se pueden utilizar para crear la estrategia de desarrollo de educación de jóvenes y adultos, la cual incluirá la visión, mandato, misión, metas, objetivos, diseño de programas, desarrollo y evaluación, así como la preparación financiera, organizacional, pedagógica y de infraestructura. La tabla 3 ilustra la manera en que el marco se puede usar para crear estrategias de educación de adultos para lograr resultados específicos de capacitación.

Imagen 1. Marco analítico para entender la calidad de la educación y capacitación en la educación de adultos

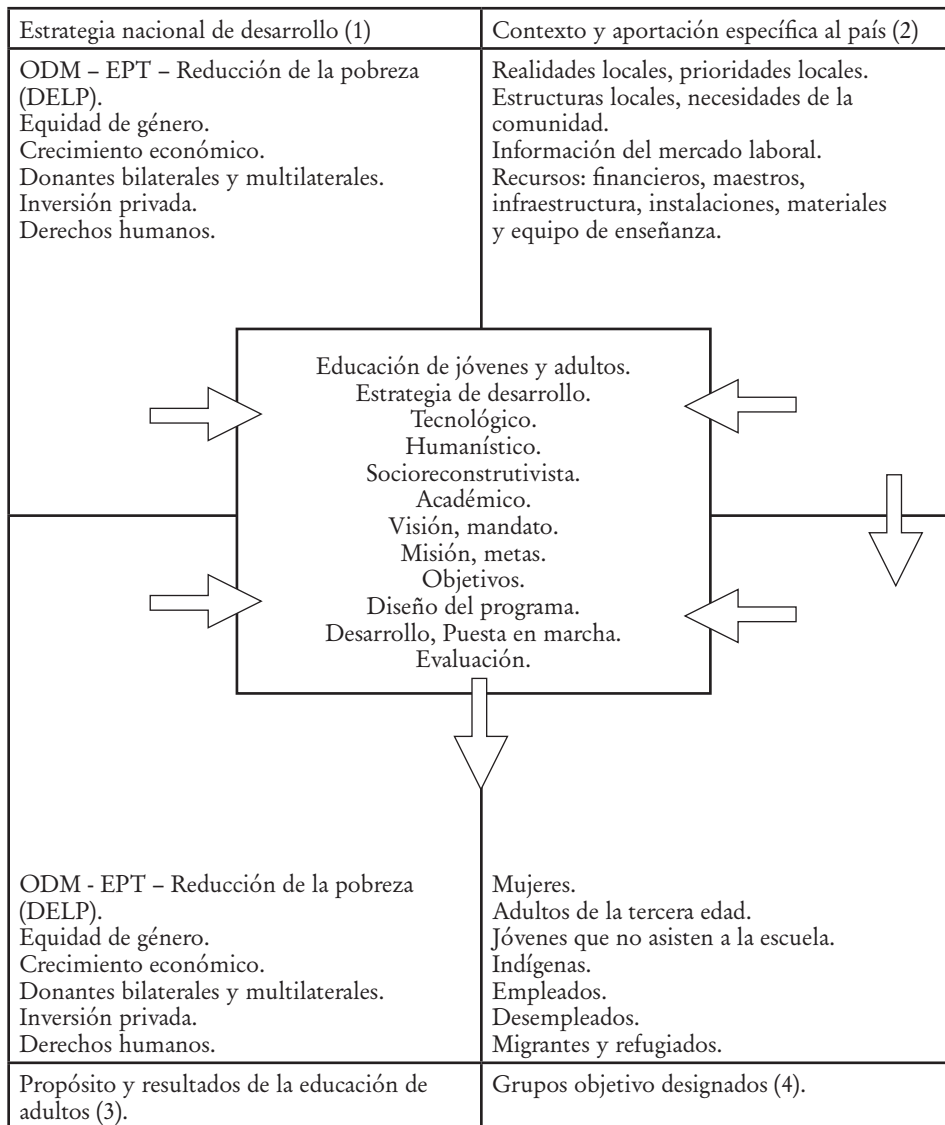


Tabla 3. Alineación de los propósitos y estrategias de la educación de adultos

Propósito de la educación y de la capacitación de jóvenes/adultos	Estrategias
Desarrollo de la fuerza laboral.	Ley habilitante. Asignación de presupuesto. Formación de consejos sectoriales. Proporcionar información del mercado laboral. Estudio conceptual para establecer ocupaciones y grupos ocupacionales. Desarrollo de normas ocupacionales. Marco nacional de calificaciones. Desarrollo de normas de capacitación. Establecer la PLAR. Proporcionar capacitación. Normalización y certificación.

De acuerdo con el Ministerio de Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos y Habilidades de Canadá (Betcherman y Chaykowski 1996), algunos países están creando consejos sectoriales para identificar y atender los retos actuales y previstos de recursos humanos, habilidades y aprendizaje, así como implementar estrategias de planeación de recursos humanos y de desarrollo a largo plazo para su sector correspondiente. Estos consejos sectoriales son organizaciones en un área de actividad económica definida, que dirige una sociedad de representantes de grupos comerciales, laborales, educativos y otros grupos profesionales, así como del gobierno. Los objetivos de los consejos sectoriales son:

- Definir y anticipar los requisitos de habilidades.
- Fomentar el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida en el lugar de trabajo.
- Facilitar la movilidad y la transferibilidad del mercado laboral.
- Ayudar a los trabajadores a obtener las habilidades y el conocimiento necesarios para impulsar la innovación y conservar una ventaja competitiva en la economía cambiante.
- Alentar al sector privado para que tome posesión e invierta en soluciones que atiendan los retos de habilidades.

Muchos países desarrollados, entre ellos Australia, Canadá, Dinamarca, Alemania, Japón, Los Países Bajos, el Reino Unido y los Estados Unidos tienen un fuerte compromiso para crear normas ocupacionales. Algunos que se encuentran entre los países en vías de desarrollo de ingreso medio, como Chile, Malasia, Rumanía, las Filipinas y Turquía, también están creando sus propias normas. Estas normas ocupacionales se utilizan para la creación de

marcos nacionales de calificaciones, normas de capacitación y puntos de referencia para establecer la evaluación y reconocimiento de aprendizaje previo de habilidades adquiridas de manera no formal e informal, así como para proveer capacitación y otorgar la certificación. Este tipo de enfoque sistemático para el desarrollo de la fuerza laboral, es necesario en una economía mundial que se caracteriza por bloques comerciales, tales como el TLC, la UE, y la ASEAN.

Aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida

Quizá se esté empleando demasiada energía en considerar el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida para los adultos en los países más desfavorecidos del sur. La investigación realizada por la OCDE (2003:8) de los países nórdicos ha mostrado claramente que la participación en “el aprendizaje de adultos es sumamente desigual entre subgrupos específicos de la población”. El índice de participación en el aprendizaje es más alto entre aquellos con un logro educativo más alto y que están empleados en ocupaciones que requieren de un alto nivel de calificaciones. Así mismo, este grupo tiene mayor acceso a oportunidades de aprendizaje y se favorece más de participar en el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Los países en vías de desarrollo deben tomar estos asuntos e inquietudes en consideración antes de comprometer los escasos recursos al logro de metas que posiblemente no produzcan ningún beneficio a la gente objeto de la EPT y los ODM.

Investigación

Aparentemente, la educación de adultos en los países del sur es escasa y carece de sustento y rigidez teórica. Se debe realizar una investigación más profunda de la educación de adultos para ofrecer información basada en la evidencia y guiar la toma de decisiones y la práctica.

Conclusión

Quisiera terminar con una cita de John Oxenham (2003), consultor por muchos años para el Banco Mundial en materia de la educación para reducir la pobreza. Sugiere que los programas de educación de adultos se debe “observar como un tipo de levadura, la cual puede ayudar a que, gradualmente, cada vez más personas salgan de la pobreza”. Si la educación de adultos es la levadura para eliminar la pobreza, utilicemos la sabiduría de todas las personas reunidas aquí en este laboratorio, para identificar los otros ingredientes críticos y todas las condiciones de apoyo necesarias para activar esa levadura. Consideremos, también, cómo podemos ejercer presión para permitir que

esa levadura llegue a cumplir con todas las expectativas, para que en un futuro próximo, los integrantes de una familia en alguna parte del mundo no tengan que sentarse alrededor de un pedazo de pan y turnarse la comida. Realicemos esta labor con corazón y alma para que nuestra discusión y conclusiones contribuyan a un mundo libre de muerte a raíz de la pobreza, el hambre, la enfermedad y el conflicto.

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Programas modelo

II

Programa Nacional para la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos de Brasil*

*Ricardo Henriques y Timothy Ireland***

El sistema educativo brasileño es uno de los instrumentos más importantes para fomentar el desarrollo equitativo en el país. Por el momento, aún no ofrece un servicio de calidad que responda a las exigencias de la democratización. Los diferentes niveles del sistema educativo están marcados por inequidad regional, social y étnica, las cuales parecen perpetuar la inequidad de la sociedad brasileña mediante la educación. Más del 96% de nuestros niños están inscritos en educación primaria, pero la calidad de la misma es demasiado baja. La educación secundaria es restrictiva y carece de resultados concretos. La educación técnica y vocacional aún no está disponible para la gran mayoría de la gente joven, quienes deberían poder obtener algún beneficio de la misma. La educación superior ha aumentado la cantidad de lugares para estudiantes sin garantizar educación de alta calidad a este

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nivel; el sistema federal, aunque es bastante competente, enfrenta enormes restricciones tanto en financiamiento como en términos de autonomía.

Un análisis de la educación brasileña señala la necesidad urgente de renovar los programas y mejorar el desempeño por parte de la sociedad y los diversos niveles del gobierno a fin de superar sus limitaciones obvias y ampliamente identificadas. Vale la pena recordar que el sistema educativo está organizado de acuerdo con niveles suplementarios de responsabilidad. Por lo tanto, los puntos importantes para la educación brasileña deberían también ser el resultado de una estrecha articulación entre los tres niveles de gobierno (federal, estatal y municipal) con el propósito de coordinar esfuerzos con miras a producir resultados lo más rápido posible. Cambiar la educación es una tarea que tarda varias generaciones en completar, pero el futuro debe comenzar hoy.

Algunos principios que rigen los lineamientos de política que se están implementando en el campo de la educación son:

- La educación es un bien común y un factor estratégico para la nación, permitiéndole otorgar valor a su pasado, fortaleciendo su presente y creando su futuro.
- La educación, como derecho individual, es un factor clave para originar el cambio personal y participación en la ciudadanía, y todos deben tener acceso a ésta en toda etapa de la vida.
- La educación debe ser un factor decisivo para lograr la justicia social, ofreciendo equidad de oportunidades para todos los ciudadanos mediante la contribución a la reducción de inequidades regionales, sociales y étnico-culturales.
- La calidad es vital para garantizar la función social y política de la educación.

El debate en torno a la renovación del programa educativo en Brasil significa enfrentar aquellos elementos que mantienen la desigualdad en el país. Esta desigualdad, extrema y persistente, surge de variaciones marcadas en la distribución de educación de alta calidad entre los brasileños, a lo largo de la historia del país. La discusión sobre la educación implica, por ende, el análisis de los aspectos fundamentales de un proyecto nacional y de un medio de desarrollo.

El Ministerio de Educación (MEC) está organizando su estrategia de acción con base en cuatro ejes principales, los cuales, junto con otros elementos del programa de trabajo, aclaran la prioridad política e institucional para crear nuevas bases de un modelo educativo para el país:

- Establecer un acuerdo de calidad para la educación básica en relación con una redefinición de su financiamiento.

- Los vínculos entre la inclusión educativa y la alfabetización definen un enfoque prioritario para superar el alto nivel de inactividad histórica hacia la corrección de la inequidad educativa.
- La educación técnica y vocacional asume una nueva función respondiendo a las demandas de la sociedad del conocimiento.
- La reforma de la educación superior se presenta como una reorganización de los campos de la producción del conocimiento y la definición de puntos comparativos de un proceso de desarrollo sustentable.

Estos cuatro ejes de acción están ligados entre sí y se combinan en un círculo virtuoso de cambio con base en los principios arriba expuestos. Resulta vital que la educación se debe entender como un sistema, tanto en el avance de cada individuo en cada nivel, como en la necesidad de vínculos entre ambos niveles. Este sistema también pone en claro la necesidad de la distribución de responsabilidades constitucionales entre los órganos federales (Genro 2004). Sin embargo, también es vital entender la educación como un proceso continuo que acompaña al individuo a lo largo de su vida. Sin restarle importancia al sistema educativo y al derecho de obtener acceso al mismo en cualquier momento de la vida, el MEC reconoce que el aprendizaje se lleva a cabo en muchos otros lugares especiales y que una política educativa debe reconocer la dimensión continua del proceso de aprendizaje y su importancia como necesidad humana básica. Tal política debe ofrecer incentivos y fomentar maneras innovadoras de alentar el aprendizaje, mientras también se fomenta un entendimiento de relación con la vida democrática en la sociedad.

Alfabetización e inclusión educativa

Datos de alfabetización

El gobierno brasileño reconoce que, pese a que el país ha tenido un avance significativo en los últimos años en el campo de la educación, especialmente en la educación de jóvenes y adultos (EJA), aún queda mucho por hacer, especialmente frente a varios tipos de analfabetismo: en educación, cultura, política y ciudadanía. En este sentido, la estadística respecto a la exclusión educativa es asombrosa. Hay 65 millones de personas jóvenes y adultos de 15 años de edad o más, que no han terminado la educación primaria. De estos 65 millones, 33 millones son analfabetas funcionales e inclusive, no han terminado el cuarto año, mientras que 14.6 millones son totalmente analfabetas (PNAD 2003). En la cohorte de 15 a 24 años de edad, un importante grupo generacional, que ofrecerá la futura masa crítica del país, ya que 19 millones de jóvenes no han terminado la educación básica y casi 3 millones son totalmente analfabetas.

Estos números indican la necesidad de rescatar la idea de la educación para todos como un derecho de todas las personas jóvenes y adultas que han sido excluidas del sistema educativo. A nivel primaria, por cada 100 alumnos que entran, únicamente 51 terminan el octavo grado. Aproximadamente el 60% de los niños que terminan el cuarto grado no saben leer adecuadamente, y este es el promedio nacional.

Si excluimos las capitales estatales y algunos municipios más grandes de la muestra, este indicador alcanza niveles aún más alarmantes. Respecto a la educación secundaria, encontramos que el 42% de aquellas personas que la terminan tienen niveles críticamente bajos de desarrollo en la capacidad de lectura. De acuerdo con el más reciente estudio del INAF (Índice Nacional de Alfabetización Funcional), únicamente el 26% de la población brasileña de entre 15 y 64 años de edad es totalmente letrada (IPM 2005). Esta situación, la cual refleja las limitantes culturales, económicas, laborales y de vivienda, señala una posible demanda de EJA de 60 millones de brasileños.

No obstante, los datos del analfabetismo no son homogéneos. Las diferencias son evidentes cuando estas cifras se analizan por región, etnia y edad. Los índices más altos de analfabetismo se encuentran en la región noreste de Brasil. El nivel promedio de analfabetismo en Brasil entre la población negra (12.9%) es de más del doble que entre los blancos (5.7%). No obstante, este problema empeora en el noreste, donde una de cada cinco personas de raza negra no saben leer ni escribir. Los índices de analfabetismo también son significativamente altos entre las cohortes mayores: el 32% del total de la población analfabeta tiene más de 60 años de edad. En cuestión de género, no se encuentran grandes diferencias: el 52% del total de analfabetos son mujeres.

Fue a raíz de estos asuntos de estado, que el Presidente Lula identificó a la alfabetización como una prioridad política al comienzo de su mandato. Esta es considerada tanto un medio de acceso a la ciudadanía plena como a la educación como un derecho para todos en cualquier etapa de la vida. Para aquellos jóvenes y adultos quienes no han tenido acceso a la escuela, es inaceptable que cursen un breve periodo de instrucción elemental. Ahora, la alfabetización está directamente articulada con el aumento de la EJA.

Entre 2003 y 2005, los cambios de política más importantes se dieron respecto al reconocimiento tanto del derecho de todos los ciudadanos a la educación como al derecho humano fundamental y que en ciertos momentos requiere de recursos especiales para aquellos segmentos de la población que viven en condiciones sociales precarias. El concepto de la educación como un derecho para todos y las consideraciones éticas e históricas que lo sostienen, exigen el reconocimiento de la diversidad de realidades y temas. Así pues, las políticas educativas requieren de la cooperación entre la sociedad y el poder público para redefinir el sentido de sociedad que se ha perdido a lo largo de

los años: la educación vista como parte del proceso de la construcción de un sentido consiente y activo de ciudadanía, respetando la pluralidad y las necesidades específicas de los individuos.

Para lograr esto, el tema prioritario para la educación brasileña se está construyendo sobre la colaboración a gran escala entre los tres niveles de gobierno y la sociedad en su totalidad, a fin de que los esfuerzos conjuntos puedan producir resultados en el menor tiempo posible en respuesta a los retos principales planteados por el antiguo déficit educativo del país. Esta respuesta no puede limitarse a soluciones únicas a corto plazo, sino que deben definirse desde la perspectiva de la educación a lo largo de la vida, estableciendo compromisos para democratizar los sistemas educativos y para crear instrumentos que garanticen la educación para todos.

Al organizar esta estrategia de acción, el MEC le ha dado prioridad a la articulación entre la inclusión educativa y la alfabetización. Además de ser lo *correcto*, el vínculo entre la alfabetización y los programas sociales de incorporación es estratégico y redefine los horizontes de la ciudadanía. Los enlaces entre la esfera federal, así como con programas locales, estatales y municipales, y los vínculos entre la alfabetización y el programa Transferencia de Ingresos (*Bolsa familia*), permite que se dé un enfoque importante sobre aquellos que viven en la pobreza extrema. El programa de la alfabetización y de la EJA forma una base estructural de *integración*. La articulación con cursos vocacionales expresa la función de la alfabetización como una entrada a la integración y a la ciudadanía.

El tratamiento especial que se le da a la EJA, enfocándose en la alfabetización y en todo el proceso de aprendizaje (tanto formal como informal), es una expresión de los objetivos del gobierno para vincular los sistemas educativos con calidad mejorada a la construcción de una base para la equidad y la inclusión educativa, dando prioridad a aquella diversidad que caracteriza a la población brasileña.

En este sentido, como medida inicial y por primera vez en la historia de su estructura administrativa, el MEC ha creado una secretaría dedicada a este tema: la Secretaría de Educación Continua, Alfabetización y Diversidad (SECAD) la cual convierte los ejes organizacionales a acciones. En su nombre, “educación continua” expresa un punto medular en lo prioritario para jóvenes y adultos; va más allá de los límites de la escolaridad formal y hace hincapié en la idea de la educación a lo largo de la vida, ante todo para millones de brasileños que aún no han recibido los beneficios de tener acceso a la escuela. La “alfabetización” expresa la prioridad política que se le da a la ciudadanía, y con “diversidad” representa el poderoso concepto no solo de la inclusión educativa, sino ante todo, el respeto por el tratamiento adecuado y el valor total de los múltiples aspectos de la diversidad en Brasil.

A manera de explicación de las acciones que se están llevando a cabo dentro de este marco conceptual y la manera en que se están concibiendo, a continuación presentamos las diferentes acciones y sus resultados, que se están comenzando a percibir.

El programa Brasil Alfabetizado: inclusión y diversidad

Brasil Alfabetizado

A través de la SECAD, el MEC ha realizado una inversión gradual en programas, proyectos y acciones dirigidas a proporcionar oportunidades para jóvenes y adultos brasileños para ingresar a la escuela y terminar la educación básica. Como representante de la Unión, el MEC está obligado a realizar acciones de redistribución* y colaboración a través de la Ley de Lineamientos y Bases de Educación Nacional, Ley No. 9,394/96 (Brasil 1996).

En este sentido, una de las estrategias del MEC es proporcionar apoyo económico para los programas de alfabetización para jóvenes y adultos, en colaboración con las secretarías de estado para la educación, consejos municipales, las ONG, instituciones de educación superior y empresas privadas, en todos los estados de la Federación Brasileña, a través del programa Brasil Alfabetizado. Lanzado por el gobierno brasileño en 2003, el objetivo principal del programa es lograr la inclusión educativa por medio de la enseñanza de alfabetización eficaz (leer, escribir, expresión oral y matemáticas) para gente joven y adulta con más de 15 años de edad quienes no han tenido acceso a dichos cursos. Al mismo tiempo, también busca fomentar la noción de la educación como un derecho. La intención del programa es ser una puerta a la ciudadanía y mejorar las oportunidades educativas para los jóvenes y adultos, ya que el acceso a la educación para todos se considera un derecho a lo largo de la vida.

Los recursos para el desarrollo del programa se transfieren directamente a las instituciones (en el caso de organismos públicos) y por medio de acuerdos legales (en el caso de las ONG, las instituciones de educación superior y las compañías privadas) luego de que los programas de enseñanza han sido aprobados y que los educandos, maestros de alfabetización y coordinadores se han registrado. El plan aporta recursos económicos para cursos de alfabetización que duran entre 6 y 8 meses y otorga 49 dólares para la capacitación de cada maestro (16 dólares para la capacitación inicial y 32.50 dólares para la capacitación adicional) y 3 dólares adicionales por estudiante al mes. Esto

* La acción de redistribución por parte de la Unión implica apoyo financiero para los programas, proyectos y acciones educativas cuyo objetivo es reducir las inequidades económicas, políticas y sociales.

significa que la remuneración a los maestros de alfabetización varía en relación con el tamaño del grupo (los grupos que tienen entre 20 y 25 estudiantes tienen diferentes reglas que aquellos para estudiantes con necesidades especiales y los de reclusorios y de las zonas rurales). A manera de comparación, el salario mínimo en Brasil es de 122 dólares.

La capacitación de los maestros, la inscripción de educandos y la organización de todo el proceso de enseñanza, el cual incluye: espacio del aula, materiales de enseñanza, supervisión y monitoreo, es responsabilidad de las instituciones asociadas. Las instituciones tienen la libertad de usar los métodos de enseñanza que mejor se adapten a las comunidades específicas en las que trabajan, siempre que garanticen que los educandos tengan la capacidad de leer, escribir, entender e interpretar textos y realizar operaciones de matemáticas básicas al concluir el curso. Tal como se muestra en la Tabla 1, en el 2003, 1.67 millones de personas jóvenes y adultos participaron en el programa Brasil Alfabetizado. En 2004, el número aumentó a 1.7 millones, residentes en 3 661 municipios brasileños, con recursos que sumaron 68.3 millones de dólares y que representaron un aumento del 34% en comparación con la cantidad de municipios cubiertos el año anterior. La innovación importante en el 2004 fue precisamente un cambio de perspectiva en la que la alfabetización se desarrolló como parte integral de la educación continua. De aquí surge la política de financiamiento preferencial para las autoridades de educación pública (estados y municipios), las cuales tienen la capacidad de ofrecer educación primaria a estudiantes que terminan la alfabetización.

Para el 2005, el programa intentará cubrir 2.2 millones de jóvenes y adultos con una inversión de 89.5 millones de dólares. La estrategia del programa de cobertura territorial universal ha dado como resultado la definición de metas específicas en el 2005 para cada uno de los 5 563 municipios brasileños. Dichas metas respetan las restricciones presupuestales, pero reconocen la situación particular de analfabetismo de cada municipio. Con base en el Índice de Déficit Educativo de Jóvenes y Adultos (IFEJA)*, estas metas recibieron el 70% del financiamiento del programa y desafiaron a todos los estados y municipios a formular sus planes locales de alfabetización.

* Un índice compuesto de lo siguiente:

I_ANALF Índice de analfabetismo absoluto: personas con más de 15 años de edad que no pueden leer o escribir una simple nota.

I_FUNC Índice de analfabetismo funcional: personas con más de 15 años de edad con menos de cuatro años de escolaridad formal.

I_FUND Porcentaje de personas con más de 25 años de edad con menos de ocho años de escolaridad formal. Esto representa un porcentaje de la población que no ha terminado la educación primaria.

IFEJA El Índice de Fragilidad Educativa de Jóvenes y Adultos se calcula usando la siguiente fórmula:

$$IFEJA = \frac{I_ANALF + I_FUNC + I_FUND}{3}$$

Tabla 1. Evolución de la cobertura de los programas nacionales de alfabetización

AÑO	BENEFICIARIOS	MUNICIPIOS	MILLONES DE DÓLARES
2003	1 668 253	2 729	62.1
2004	1 717 229	3 661	68.3
2005	2 200 000*	5 563	89.5
Total	5 585 482	-	219.9

Fuente: MEC/SECAD, 2005. *Objetivo fijado por el Ministerio

Entre los lineamientos principales propuestos por el MEC/SECAD para realizar el programa, destacamos lo siguiente:

- Los socios ejecutivos deben extremar precaución al evaluar los resultados a fin de que al final del proceso de alfabetización, los educandos puedan producir, leer entender e interpretar textos y realizar operaciones matemáticas.
- Las clases de alfabetización deben tener un mínimo de 10 y un máximo de 25 estudiantes (las clases en las áreas rurales y las que se ofrecen a los reclusos pueden tener un mínimo de cinco estudiantes), y sus clases durar 2 horas al día, para obtener un total de 10 horas de clase a la semana (los proyectos con alguna otra cantidad de horas estarán permitidos siempre que se justifiquen de acuerdo con las necesidades específicas de las clases). Cada curso debe tener un total de por lo menos 240 horas en el aula.
- La prioridad debe ser el proceso de capacitación de maestros de alfabetización y debe supervisarse la totalidad del proceso educativo. Se recomienda llevar a cabo la capacitación de manera constante y que incluya la discusión de elementos de política respecto a la inclusión social y la educación continua, así como técnicas en materia de adquisición de habilidades de escritura, en las cuales la teoría y práctica de la alfabetización se integran claramente.
- La metodología, y por ende, los materiales para enseñar a los jóvenes y adultos a leer y escribir deberán estar basados en los intereses y el contexto socio-cultural de los educandos, estando directamente relacionados con las condiciones locales.

Además de la pluralidad metodológica que se permite a todos los participantes en todo el territorio brasileño, el MEC ha firmado acuerdos de cooperación técnica con los gobiernos de Cuba y España para fomentar el intercambio de experiencias y tecnología usada en los programas de alfabetiza-

ción para jóvenes y adultos. Tales acuerdos ofrecen un medio para aumentar las posibilidades de hacer frente a los diferentes aspectos del analfabetismo en un país como Brasil, con toda su diversidad.

El programa Haciendo Escuela (Fazendo Escola)

Dado que el MEC ha tomado la postura de que los programas de alfabetización no deben ser un fin en sí mismos, el Ministerio ha adoptado un concepto de EJA cuyo objetivo es la continuidad que garantiza un aumento en la escolaridad de la población brasileña*. En esta relación, y en estrecha colaboración con el programa Brasil Alfabetizado, el MEC también ha estado desarrollando el programa Haciendo Escuela (*Fazendo Escola*). Siendo su objetivo los ciudadanos que no han tenido acceso a o la oportunidad de terminar la educación primaria a la edad escolar “adecuada” (entre los 7 y 14 años de edad), el propósito de este nuevo programa es combatir el analfabetismo y los bajos niveles de escolaridad en aquellos sectores específicos de pobreza en Brasil donde está concentrada la mayoría de personas jóvenes y adultos que no han terminado la educación primaria.

El MEC ofrece este programa de financiamiento complementario a los gobiernos estatales y municipales, donde el nivel de apoyo que ofrece se calcula de acuerdo con el número de estudiantes inscritos en un sistema en particular. La responsabilidad de la SECAD es crear políticas para mejorar la calidad de la EJA, estimular y monitorear la introducción de la EJA en los sistemas educativos municipales y estatales y asesorar a los administradores locales respecto a las decisiones del uso de los recursos.

La ayuda económica se puede utilizar para adquirir libros de texto para educandos adultos quienes buscan terminar la educación primaria (grados 1 a 8); pagar el salario de los maestros en las instancias de educación estatales y municipales; contratar maestros temporales cuando se necesite aumentar la plantilla docente; ofrecer capacitación para maestros *in situ* y adquirir ingredientes para las comidas escolares. Los organismos ejecutivos de este programa son el estado, representado por la Secretaría de Educación, y los municipios, representados por el gobierno local. La responsabilidad del estado radica en manejar a las escuelas en el sistema estatal y el municipio maneja a las escuelas en el sistema municipal.

En 2003, a un costo de 102 dólares por estudiante por año y con un presupuesto de 157 419 100 dólares más de 1.5 millones de estudiantes en 2015 municipios se vieron beneficiados por este programa, el cual abandonó el

* A pesar de que la mayoría absoluta de los niños entre 7 y 14 años de edad (97%) tienen acceso ordinario a la escuela, menos del 70% llega a terminar el octavo grado de escolaridad primaria, lo cual contribuye a la reducción del número de años promedio de escolaridad de la población (IPEA 2005).

criterio de pobreza y aumentó la participación en otros municipios que están creando sus propios sistemas públicos de EJA. En 2004, la Ley No. 10880 (Brasil 2004), introdujo un nuevo criterio de asistencia, el cual, además de ayudar a los estudiantes a quienes se les brindó apoyo en el 2003, favoreció a estudiantes en los sistemas educativos del estado y del municipio que han concluido el programa Brasil Alfabetizado. Por ende, en 2004 el programa cubrió a más de 1.8 millones de estudiantes en 2292 municipios, representando un total de 171 millones de dólares invertidos.

En 2005, la estrategia para aumentar las oportunidades de continuidad entre la instrucción elemental y la EJA condujo a una redefinición conceptual que posibilitó el logro de la compatibilidad necesaria entre los principios de universalización y la diferenciación. En el campo de la “universalización” de la EJA, por primera vez en la historia de la EJA, el MEC garantizó el apoyo financiero a todos los estudiantes inscritos en el Censo Escolar Brasileño; y respecto a la “diferenciación”, el MEC asume la responsabilidad de identificar los diferentes grados de déficit educativo en los municipios y estados y, por lo tanto, proporciona apoyo económico sobre la base de una transferencia de fondos diferenciados para las entidades federales de acuerdo con el grado de déficit educativo y de acuerdo con los recientes esfuerzos de investigación en materia de la EJA. En la realización de esta estrategia, el IFEJA acostumbra a establecer una clasificación de municipios y estados. Con base en esta clasificación, se definieron cuatro niveles de financiamiento, el más alto destinado a los grupos más frágiles de los municipios y estados en función del indicador educativo compuesto en relación con el objetivo del programa. Además, se crearon dos factores para la corrección de valores: el primero establece un tope de crecimiento de la variación de montos transferidos, mientras que el segundo fijó una prima para los municipios y estados que han realizado la mayor inversión en la EJA en los últimos años (indicando un incentivo por estrategias estables en la creciente inversión local en la EJA).

Por lo tanto, en 2005, el programa Haciendo Escuela amplió su alcance para cubrir los 27 estados y los 4177 municipios que registraron inscripciones basadas en el aula en la EJA en la Censo Escolar Brasileño. Esto significó que, con un presupuesto de 526 millones de dólares para cubrir todos los estudiantes inscritos en la EJA a nivel primaria, 3342531 millones de jóvenes y adultos en los sistemas educativos municipales y estatales comenzaron a recibir apoyo económico del gobierno federal. La tabla 2, a continuación, ilustra estas cifras.

Tabla 2. Cobertura de programas de educación primaria de jóvenes y adultos

AÑO	BENEFICIARIOS	MUNICIPIOS	MILLONES DE DÓLARES
2003	1 548 879	2 015	157
2004	1 834 235	2 296	171
2005	3 342 531	4 178	198
Total	6 725 645	-	526

Fuente: MEC/SECAD 2005.

Entre los retos principales que enfrenta el MEC/SECAD en el campo de alfabetización hoy en día, se encuentran los siguientes:

- Programas y proyectos que están resumidos y fragmentados, sin ninguna referencia a los sujetos reales de los procesos educativos.
- Una falta de articulación con los sistemas educativos, en función de las demandas de continuidad.
- Administradores, supervisores, coordinadores y maestros quienes, en sí, reciben capacitación insuficiente para permitirles administrar los programas y desarrollar metodologías, currículo, materiales de enseñanza y métodos de evaluación.
- Programas sin supervisión, monitoreo o evaluación.
- Altos índices de deserción de los programas cortos de alfabetización.
- Un alto índice de *retroceso** al analfabetismo (ante todo debido a la falta de apoyo para leer y escribir en varias partes del país).
- Estudiantes mayores a quienes se les dificulta más permanecer en los cursos.

Más serio es el hecho de que aún existan prácticas de alfabetización que emplean diversas formas de ofrecimiento, a menudo operando sin ningún respaldo legal y que induce a los participantes al fracaso constante, fortaleciendo el estigma que surge de una serie de experiencias de exclusión.

El sistema de evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado

Al analizar los programas de alfabetización para jóvenes y adultos en Brasil, encontramos que existe una falta de información respecto a los resultados de los diferentes tipos de enseñanza que se han utilizado hasta ahora. Es claro

* La expresión comúnmente aceptada se utiliza aquí, no con el fin de expresar conformidad con el significado usado comúnmente, sino para indicar que el educando que ha aprendido a leer y escribir ha sufrido un *retroceso*.

que a fin de recomendar maneras más radicales de rediseñar los métodos de alfabetización que aumentarán significativamente la calidad de los programas, es necesario revisar los resultados actuales para poder avanzar al aprender de los errores del pasado.

Debido a estas inquietudes, el MEC/SECAD y el Instituto de Investigación Económica Aplicada (IPEA, por sus siglas en portugués), han desarrollado, desde 2004, un sistema de evaluación para el programa Brasil Alfabetizado. Los componentes de este sistema son: i) el plan de evaluación para el programa Brasil Alfabetizado; ii) la creación de un comité especialista y de otros grupos que validan y supervisan la planeación y ejecución del programa de evaluación; y iii) la definición de un marco institucional para reunir calificaciones específicas de diferentes áreas científicas para poder evaluar mejor el programa.

- 1) El primer componente del sistema de evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado es el *plan de evaluación*. Su fin es determinar la cantidad de posibilidades para el análisis, el cual incluye aspectos relacionados con la administración, la naturaleza institucional del programa y preguntas pedagógicas y sociales, así como los puntos de vista de los distintos participantes en esta acción; es decir, los administradores, maestros y estudiantes. Hasta ahora, este esfuerzo ha dado como resultado la identificación de 38 aspectos específicos de evaluación en el programa, incluyendo: la evaluación de la administración central del programa; el análisis de las funciones y comportamientos de los participantes; el análisis de la demanda de instrucción elemental; la evaluación del impacto del programa Brasil Alfabetizado; la evaluación inmediata del impacto de la enseñanza de la alfabetización con base en información secundaria; y una evaluación de diagnóstico de los programas Brasil Alfabetizado y Haciendo Escuela. Dado que existen varias restricciones, tales como tiempo y recursos humanos y económicos, el esfuerzo de construir un plan de evaluación para el programa Brasil Alfabetizado ha demostrado su relevancia en por lo menos dos niveles. En primera instancia, este plan ha otorgando al MEC/SECAD más información de los análisis preliminares de los problemas de diseño del programa, así como sus principales obstáculos sobre los cuales debe basar sus decisiones respecto al nivel de prioridad que se le debe otorgar a cada evaluación. En segundo lugar, el plan de evaluación ha incrementado las oportunidades de complementar diferentes evaluaciones. La implementación integrada de diferentes evaluaciones reduce los costos porque se aprovechan por lo menos tres tipos de sinergias:

- Mejorar un solo sistema integrado de información, un aspecto vital tanto para reducir los costos como para también elevar la calidad de las evaluaciones y el monitoreo.
- La especialización y división laboral que no sólo reduce los costos, sino que también eleva la calidad. De tal forma, se pueden utilizar equipos especializados para hallar información preliminar respecto a los instrumentos para la recopilación, muestreo, trabajo de campo y registro de datos que son materia de todas las evaluaciones.
- Uso suplementario de las evaluaciones, debido a que con frecuencia se necesita relacionar los resultados de más de una evaluación con otras para poder hacer recomendaciones para mejorar el diseño o métodos de trabajo del programa. En estos casos, la coordinación entre evaluaciones aumenta los beneficios de cada una.

Por otra parte, vale la pena señalar que el esfuerzo para crear un plan de evaluación para el programa Brasil Alfabetizado contiene una revisión minuciosa de la factibilidad de evaluación del programa; ya que cualquier evaluación informativa tendrá que incluir información acerca del funcionamiento del programa. Por ejemplo, a fin de conocer la información preliminar de aquellos quienes se favorecerán de Brasil Alfabetizado, es necesario determinar cuándo comenzaron y terminaron los cursos, dónde se llevaron a cabo, cuantos estudiantes hubo en cada clase, y otros datos que permitan localizar a los participantes para entrevistarlos. Además, las evaluaciones que requieren de un análisis documental dependen del nivel de organización previa de la documentación del programa.

- 2) Un segundo componente importante del sistema para la evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado es la creación de un *comité de especialistas* invitados no sólo a evaluar el contenido técnico del plan, sino también para supervisar su puesta en marcha en intervalos constantes. Con base en la contribución del comité, se espera que el marco técnico inicial de la evaluación se pueda conservar y se puedan validar los posibles ajustes necesarios. Este comité está compuesto de investigadores y especialistas brasileños con cuantiosa experiencia en la EJA y/o en la evaluación de programas sociales.

Así mismo, el sistema de evaluación también busca identificar a los diferentes actores del programa y la evaluación de los mismos; es decir, aquellas partes interesadas en cada una de las evaluaciones y establecer un diálogo con ellos. Esto se logra internamente al identificar las funciones coordinadoras dentro del MEC/SECAD (esto es, monitoreo, supervisión pedagógica y ad-

ministración del programa) que están directamente vinculados con cada componente de evaluación. Externamente, este procedimiento se lleva a cabo por medio de reuniones de organismos como el Consejo Nacional de Secretarías de Educación, la Unión Nacional de Dirigentes Municipales de Educación, Foros Estatales para la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos y la Asociación Nacional de Estudios e Investigación en Educación de Postgrado. Los aspectos de la evaluación que implican alguna forma de aleatoriedad se remitirán a la Comisión de Ética de Investigación para asegurar que ninguna evaluación viole ningún principio ético.

- 3) El tercer y último componente importante del sistema de evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado es un *marco institucional del sistema de evaluación*. La naturaleza de la evaluación de programas educativos es intrínsecamente multidisciplinaria, ya que es necesario contar con calificaciones en los campos de educación, psicometría, economía, sociología, estadística y recopilación de datos.

Mediante un acuerdo de cooperación técnica, el MEC/SECAD invitó al IPEA a diseñar el plan y coordinar su ejecución. Los otros participantes en esta evaluación son instituciones públicas y privadas, así como investigadores de diferentes áreas, los cuales son respetados y cuentan con amplia experiencia en su campo específico de evaluación.

La Escuela Nacional de Ciencias de la Estadística (ENCE) es la responsable de preparar las diferentes muestras que se utilizarán en la evaluación. Los instrumentos de evaluación han sido creados por investigadores con experiencia en un tema específico; por ejemplo, la prueba de aptitudes en conocimientos de alfabetización y aritmética básica es la responsabilidad del Centro de Alfabetización, Lectura y Escritura de la Universidad Federal de Minas Gerais (CEALE/UFMG), mientras que la responsabilidad del instrumento para medir la existencia de vacantes recae en el equipo de investigación de la Universidad de Estácio de Sá (UNESA). El trabajo de campo lo realizará el Instituto Paulo Montenegro (IPM), una fundación sin fines de lucro vinculada al Grupo IBOPE, el cual tiene extensa experiencia y una sana reputación en el área de alfabetización y de conocimientos básicos de aritmética debido a que es el responsable del Indicador Nacional de Analfabetismo Funcional (INAF).

Identificación de iniciativas

Uno de los aspectos de evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado que ya está rindiendo frutos en la identificación nacional de iniciativas para la en-

señanza de la alfabetización a jóvenes y adultos. Permite, entre otras cosas, la evaluación de la capacidad del programa para movilizar recursos físicos y humanos para el logro de sus objetivos. Algunos de los principios detrás de este instrumento son:

- La falta de conocimiento en Brasil respecto a: iniciativas de alfabetización para jóvenes y adultos y sus resultados; las variadas formas que asumen estas iniciativas a nivel local; los actores sociales implicados; las maneras en que participan en estas iniciativas; y el alcance de las acciones y el financiamiento realmente invertido en este esfuerzo.
- La no inclusión de estos programas entre las acciones objetivo del Censo Escolar Brasileño, el MEC y el INEP, lo cual complica la identificación de esas iniciativas en cada municipio para las autoridades relevantes.
- La disminución en la tradición de la evaluación sistemática (en todas sus formas) en el campo de políticas sociales. El costo de usar metodologías complejas es la razón que se acostumbra dar para justificar esta tendencia, lo cual sugiere la necesidad de un diagnóstico minucioso.

Dentro de este panorama, el objetivo del proceso de identificación es crear un registro continuo de aquellos implicados en los esfuerzos de instrucción elemental para entender la red de producción para los servicios dentro de esta iniciativa, y para calcular la cantidad de recursos públicos y privados que se han empleado hasta el momento en el desarrollo de acciones. Así, la esperanza es la contribución de los tres niveles de gobierno para definir políticas y personalizarlas en la tarea de ofrecer educación social de alta calidad para todos aquellos que tienen derecho a ella.

Considerando la diversidad de actores y funciones, así como el alcance de la actividad en el área de la alfabetización a adultos, el proceso se realiza en dos etapas de identificación:

Etapas I: Por unidades de la Federación, programas/proyectos e instituciones de enseñanza de gobierno y no gobierno (federales, estatales y municipales) que se ofrecen por institución y que apoyan o proveen servicios a las instituciones de enseñanza, así como las tareas emprendidas y los recursos globales invertidos.

Etapas II: Por municipio, de otras actividades desarrolladas por cada unidad de enseñanza de alfabetización, las funciones que realizan y los recursos invertidos.

Hasta ahora, el MEC/SECAD ha recibido información detallada de registros de más de 1 000 organismos, lo cual significa dos millones de estudiantes en casi 3 000 municipios brasileños atendidos en 2004. A pesar de que aún está incompleta, la identificación promovida por el sistema de evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado ya ofrece datos respecto a la oferta de vacantes de organismos que están enseñando y apoyando la alfabetización para jóvenes y adultos en Brasil. Estos resultados preliminares se publicarán pronto para aumentar la visibilidad de esta iniciativa y para mejorar su alcance, ya que alentará a las instituciones que aún no se han registrado a hacerlo y proporcionará información a los administradores y a la sociedad civil respecto a los programas en su localidad.

Evaluación diagnóstica

Otra etapa que se incluyó en el curso de la evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado, es la evaluación diagnóstica de los programas Brasil Alfabetizado y Haciendo Escuela, que fue realizada por el MEC/SECAD en coordinación con UNESCO entre octubre de 2004 y abril de 2005. Esta evaluación se diseñó en alianza con un grupo de investigadores especialistas en EJA y vinculados con varias instituciones, especialmente las universidades públicas de Brasil.

Un estudio cualitativo, financiado por Brasil Alfabetizado y que incluyó varias instituciones gubernamentales y no gubernamentales, utilizó entrevistas, grupos de enfoque y observación local de seis estados en diez municipios para proporcionar información sobre educandos, capacitadores, administradores y responsables de los proyectos.

A lo largo de esta evaluación, el MEC/SECAD reunió una gran cantidad de datos cualitativos sobre la manera en que funcionan los programas Brasil Alfabetizado y Haciendo Escuela. Estos datos los están usando otros equipos de evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado como material de referencia.

Cambios e innovaciones

La experiencia acumulada en materia de EJA recopilada a lo largo de los años es considerable. La amplitud de la experiencia en la enseñanza de lectura y escritura y de la EJA; las maneras en que los estudios y la investigación de las universidades brasileñas le han dado enfoque al área, organizando grupos de trabajo y la presentación de la producción teórica en reuniones anuales de investigación; las experiencias compartidas en los movimientos, tales como los Foros de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos, los cuales ejercen una importante influencia sobre la capacitación de activistas sociales y sobre la formulación

de políticas públicas; todo esto ha mostrado ser una rica fuente de conocimiento e ideas, las cuales han ayudado a los funcionarios de gobierno que son capaces de escuchar y que tienen la sensibilidad de comprender su significado e importancia. La SECAD ha trabajado estrechamente con estos funcionarios, buscando entablar un diálogo animado con ellos y esforzándose por construir políticas de estado eficaces para el área pública.

Nuevo fondo para la educación básica

La nueva propuesta del gobierno brasileño, presentada por el MEC, es para la creación de un nuevo *Fundo de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica* (FUN-DEB: Fondo para el Desarrollo de la Educación Básica), y que también ha de incluir la EJA. Esta propuesta se está analizando a nivel legislativo después de un largo proceso de negociación y debate en los diferentes niveles de representación social y política. La discusión más intensa sobre la inclusión de la EJA se ha dado en materia del valor atribuido al costo por alumno, el cual algunos expertos, así como funcionarios y políticos, han argüido es potencialmente menos que en otros niveles y segmentos educativos.

Acciones, proyectos y programas

Al reconocer la importancia de capacitar lectores críticos y creativos, así como de la educación como el medio primario para fomentar habilidades y hábitos de lectura, el MEC/SECAD está intentando poner en marcha un Política de Lectura y Libros para alentar las actividades de lectura entre jóvenes y adultos que recientemente han aprendido a leer y escribir, y así consolidando la estrategia de alfabetización creada por el programa Brasil Alfabetizado.

Los propósitos del programa Lectura-Acción (*Leituração*) son alentar la creación de nuevos trabajos escritos específicamente para nuevos lectores adultos, lograr que los materiales de lectura estén disponibles para los nuevos lectores por medio de agentes de lectura en la oficina postal brasileña, capacitar maestros como mediadores del material de lectura y fortalecer y estimular la creación de espacios sociales para la lectura. Como resultado de esta política, el MEC está financiando la producción, publicación y distribución de un almanaque cuyo tema central es “construir paz en la diversidad”, así como comenzar el proceso de selección de nuevos títulos que se publicarán en el periodo hasta el 2006. Con el fin de estimular la producción de diferentes géneros de textos específicamente para nuevos lectores jóvenes y adultos, en el 2005 se lanzará una competencia nacional de escritura denominada “Literatura para todos”. Los ganadores recibirán un premio económico y su trabajo se publicará e incluirá en el programa Lectura-Acción.

Así mismo, en un esfuerzo por satisfacer las necesidades específicas de aquellos en la EJA, la SECAD está poniendo en marcha acciones y proyectos de colaboración para trabajadores rurales, comunidades pesqueras y para los jóvenes y adultos en conflicto con la ley.

De acuerdo con los datos de la PNAD (2001), aproximadamente 29.8% de la población adulta rural es analfabeta. Por esta razón, de acuerdo con la ley (Resolución No. 01/2002 del CNE/CEB), y en reconocimiento del derecho de la gente en zonas rurales a la educación básica y de sus características y necesidades específicas, además de la dimensión plural de dichas necesidades (de género, étnica y raza, cultura, edad, política y situación económica y territorial), la SECAD ha planeado un conjunto de actividades educativas para jóvenes y adultos que viven en áreas rurales. Las actividades están diseñadas para ofrecerles la oportunidad de terminar la educación primaria y para participar en formación profesional inicial y continua.

El MEC/SECAD y la Secretaría de Agricultura y Pesca especial de la Oficina del Presidente de la República (SEAP/PR) han creado el programa Pescando Letras. Está diseñado para atender las necesidades de hombres y mujeres en la industria pesquera en municipios que cuentan con el programa Brasil Alfabetizado y donde existe la demanda de trabajadores pesqueros auto-empleados que no pueden leer o escribir. Entre las comunidades pesqueras brasileñas hay aproximadamente 40% de analfabetismo y 79% de analfabetismo funcional.

Además, el MEC/SECAD, el Ministerio de Justicia, la Secretaría Especial para los Derechos Humanos y los representantes correspondientes de estas áreas en cada estado, están creando lineamientos para educar a jóvenes y adultos en conflicto con la ley. El fin es proporcionar cursos de capacitación con la elaboración de metodologías y materiales de enseñanza específicamente para aquellos profesionales que trabajan con estas poblaciones, a fin de ofrecer servicios para jóvenes en unidades seguras y que participan en los programas socio-educativos, así como para adultos reclusos.

Otra acción del MEC, en sociedad con la UNESCO, ha sido el lanzamiento de la colección titulada *Educación para todos* que ofrece una oportunidad para publicar textos, documentos oficiales, estudios de investigación, informes de eventos y estudios comisionados por investigadores, académicos y educadores brasileños e internacionales, como un medio para ampliar el debate referente a la educación para todos. El primer volumen de esta colección apareció en el 2004 y se tituló *Educação de jovens e adultos: uma memória contemporânea (1996-2004)* (Educación de jóvenes y adultos: una memoria contemporánea, 1996-2004). En 2005, se han publicado cinco volúmenes más, hasta el momento: *Educação anti-racista: caminhos abertos pela Lei Federal n.º. 10.639/03* (Educación antirracista: caminos abiertos por la ley

Núm. 10639/03); *Construção coletiva: contribuições à educação de jovens e adultos* (Contribución colectiva: contribuciones a la educación de jóvenes y adultos), en colaboración con la Red de Apoyo a la Acción de Alfabetización en Brasil (RAAAB); *Educação popular na América Latina: diálogos e perspectivas* (Educación popular en América Latina: diálogo y prospectos), en colaboración con el Consejo para la Educación de Adultos de América Latina (CEAAL); y *Ações afirmativas e combate ao racismo nas Américas* (Acciones afirmativa y combate contra el racismo en las Américas) y *Educação como exercício de diversidade* (Educación como ejercicio de diversidad), en colaboración con la Asociación Nacional de Investigación y Estudios de Postgrado en Educación (ANPED, por sus siglas en portugués). La publicación de otros cuatro títulos está programada para el 2005.

La SECAD ha creado una serie de proyectos con base en el tema “Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos y el Mercado”. Estos proyectos conducirán a la formulación de procesos de capacitación que integran la alfabetización y/o aumentarán la escolaridad (educación primaria) y la formación profesional básica. El esquema busca crear un vínculo eficaz entre la enseñanza de la alfabetización, la continuación de los estudios y elevar el nivel de escolaridad con actividades que generan empleo e ingresos mediante la capacidad empresarial, la economía solidaria, el mercado laboral formal y la acción comunitaria. Algunos ejemplos sobresalientes en esta área son: el *Programa Nacional de Inclusão de Jovens-educação, qualificação e ação comunitária (Pro Jovem: Programa Nacional para la Inclusión de los Jóvenes-Educación, Competencia y Acción Comunitaria)*; el *Projeto Formar* (Proyecto de Capacitación) coordinado por el Ministerio de Planeación y Administración en colaboración con el MEC; y el proyecto *AlfaInclusão* (Alfabetización Inclusión) que es el fruto de la colaboración entre la Fundación BB Educar y el MEC. Otras acciones conjuntas relacionadas con el mundo del trabajo son los proyectos conjuntos de análisis realizados por el MEC/SECAD y la Secretaría Nacional para la Economía Solidaria del Ministerio de Trabajo y Empleo para alentar y crear estrategias y acciones que integran la EJA en la economía solidaria; y el intento por lograr el acercamiento entre los Foros Estatales de la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos y los Foros Estatales de la Economía Solidaria.

- a) El Programa Nacional para la Inclusión de Jóvenes – Educación, Competencia y Acción Comunitaria (*Pro Jovem*) es un proyecto cooperativo entre el Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, el Ministerio de Trabajo y Empleo, el MEC y la Secretaría Nacional de la Juventud, que ofrece educación integral para jóvenes por medio de una asociación eficaz entre el aumento de los niveles de escolaridad con el fin de que más jóvenes terminen la educación primaria, la formación profesional con

un certificado de capacitación inicial y la promoción de la acción comunitaria de interés público. Su población objetivo son las personas jóvenes entre los 18 y 24 años de edad, en un principio en las capitales de los estados y en el Distrito Federal, que hayan terminado el cuarto año de educación primaria y que no tengan empleo formal.

- b) El objetivo del *Proyecto de Capacitación (Projeto Formar)*, coordinado por el Ministerio de Planeación y Administración en colaboración con el MEC, es ofrecer a los funcionarios federales y a las personas que trabajan en autonomías, la educación mínima básica para la capacitación profesional adicional, para desarrollar la calidad del servicio público que se les ofrece a los ciudadanos y para el ejercicio de su propia ciudadanía.
- c) El proyecto *Alfabetización-Inclusión* es el resultado de la colaboración entre la Fundación BB Educar y el MEC, y su propósito es crear una metodología para la enseñanza de la alfabetización vinculada a la capacitación para la actividad empresarial con miras a la generación de ingresos y sustentabilidad. El proyecto piloto está en la etapa de desarrollo, trabajando con cuatro grupos que están aprendiendo a leer y escribir (25 estudiantes en cada grupo) en Arinos, un pueblo rural en Minas Gerais, y en Brazlândia, un área urbana del Distrito Federal.

Capacitación de maestros y educadores de alfabetización

Las actividades de capacitación para los maestros y educadores de alfabetización de jóvenes y adultos están financiadas por el MEC/SECAD a través de la descentralización de fondos específicos, principalmente en los programas Brasil Alfabetizado y Haciendo Escuela. Sin embargo, el MEC/SECAD entiende que su responsabilidad radica en preparar estrategias y realizar acciones para cumplir con los retos de la capacitación de maestros para la EJA. En este sentido, ha intentado desarrollar una red de universidades asociadas para analizar la capacitación de maestros de la EJA tanto en cursos que tienen como fin la obtención de certificados en la licenciatura de enseñanza como en cursos de extensión, identificando todas las instituciones de educación superior del país que realizan esta acción. También financia la preparación de materiales específicos para la capacitación de maestros de EJA a nivel de capacitación de maestro de secundaria (*magistério*) a través del programa *Proformação* y la preparación de materiales impresos, en colaboración con la ONG Vereda.

La SECAD también está preparando una propuesta para el curso de aprendizaje a distancia, *Educação na Diversidade* (Educación en Diversidad), para capacitar maestros y administradores que trabajan en el campo de la diversidad. Además, contribuye a la preparación de una plataforma compu-

tarizada para difundir el conocimiento denominado *Observatório da Inclusão Educacional* (Observatorio de Inclusión Educacional), en colaboración con las universidades y la UNESCO que albergará el curso de aprendizaje a distancia que está en preparación.

También está coordinando la administración de proyectos internacionales de cooperación cuyo enfoque específico es la capacitación de maestros. Esta tarea la está realizando en colaboración con la UNESCO (utilizando recursos donados por el gobierno japonés) y su propósito es ayudar a reducir los índices de analfabetismo entre jóvenes y adultos en Brasil por medio de actividades sustentables de capacitación en materia de la enseñanza de la alfabetización y la educación continua en cuatro estados brasileños (Goiás, Paraíba, Ceará y Rio Grande do Sul). Este proyecto, cuyo enfoque es el sistema penitenciario, implica iniciativas para la capacitación de maestros en los sistemas educativos formal e informal; la reproducción y difusión de material para la instrucción elemental (publicaciones, herramientas de capacitación y apoyo para los maestros); y la evaluación de prácticas y metodologías en desarrollo. Por su parte, la SECAD ha contribuido con recursos económicos y capacitación técnica para la puesta en marcha de una red de EJA en Mozambique, donde participó en un proyecto de colaboración técnica para capacitar instructores y maestros.

Como una de sus acciones directas, la SECAD ha conservado una serie sobre la EJA con un amplio programa titulado *O Salto para o Futuro* (Un Salto Hacia el Futuro)*. Esto es parte de la aportación de TVEscola (TV Escuela, el canal de televisión del MEC) para garantizar un espacio calificado para la capacitación de maestros de educación a distancia y dar contenido a políticas anteriores que permitían proveer a las escuelas de equipo tecnológico para transmitir programas de televisión de circuito cerrado vía satélite.

Evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado

El conjunto de acciones para evaluar el programa Brasil Alfabetizado ha ayudado al MEC/SECAD a rediseñar el sistema de información del programa mismo. El objetivo principal de esta acción es aumentar la factibilidad de analizar el programa, tomando en cuenta que la ausencia de alguna información respecto a organizaciones asociadas y sus clases correspondientes, invalidaría la evaluación del programa. Cabe destacar que esta información también ha resultado útil para el monitoreo educativo y la supervisión de

* Como parte de esta estructura, el programa *Un salto hacia el futuro* organiza series temáticas compuestas de cinco programas con un cuadernillo impreso. Se transmiten en vivo con la presencia de tres expertos invitados relacionados con el tema en discusión. Esto permite un cierto grado de interacción entre los expertos y los maestros en capacitación en los "telecentros", vía telefónica, fax, correo electrónico y algunas veces transmisiones en tiempo real.

equipos, el cual contará con el beneficio de nueva información de ahora en adelante.

Otro resultado importante de la evaluación es la publicación de las primeras cifras de la localización nacional de programas de alfabetización para jóvenes y adultos. Ya se han registrado más de 1 000 instituciones inscritas y más de 3 000 municipios brasileños con aproximadamente dos millones de estudiantes. Actualmente, estos datos están en proceso de validación y estarán disponibles en internet para todos los administradores e investigadores de EJA en Brasil. El objetivo principal es que exista una mejor base de información disponible para los administradores del programa local de EJA para diagnosticar y diseñar políticas en este campo.

Aunado a estas iniciativas, el equipo de evaluación está trabajando en la realización del primer volumen de un informe sobre la evaluación del programa Brasil Alfabetizado, que presentará los resultados consolidados obtenidos de los primeros 12 meses de evaluación. Los temas principales de la publicación serán: evaluación de la capacidad para movilizar el programa, con base en los datos de identificación; evaluación del impacto de la lectura y la escritura en el desarrollo humano, con base en los datos del PNAD, PPV y PND; evaluación de la demanda de programas de instrucción elemental, también de los datos secundarios recopilados por el PNAD; y el análisis del mismo sistema de evaluación.

Acciones vinculadas entre organismos federales

Uno de los propósitos principales del gobierno actual ha sido el uso eficaz de los recursos públicos. En este sentido, el MEC ha celebrado acuerdos de cooperación y ha empleado protocolos de Internet para vincular las acciones del gobierno federal con las políticas para la EJA. Los instrumentos jurídicos para las acciones conjuntas están plasmados en los diferentes proyectos y programas que –aunque están principalmente dirigidos a acercar la educación a las realidades de la formación profesional– intentan que sea posible satisfacer las otras necesidades de aquellos que son atendidos por Brasil Alfabetizado.

Un proyecto de apoyo para Brasil Alfabetizado se está poniendo en marcha en colaboración con el Ministerio de Salud, el cual permite que los estudiantes del programa realicen exámenes de la vista y reciban lentes, de ser necesario. En relación con la campaña para el registro civil encabezada por la Secretaría Especial para los Derechos Humanos del Ministerio de Justicia, el MEC ha publicado un manual para maestros de alfabetización, *Orientações para obter o registro civil* (Orientación para obtener su registro civil). El manual hace hincapié en la importancia que tiene el trabajo del maestro de alfabetización para los educandos y sus comunidades, dado que los maestros les ayudan a obtener los documentos oficiales básicos que son vitales para el ejercicio de la ciudadanía.

Otra acción conjunta que es importante para el avance del programa Brasil Alfabetizado ha sido el *Fórum das Estatais pela Educação* (Foro de Empresas Estatales para la Educación). Este foro se organizó para buscar maneras de otorgar apoyo adicional a las políticas educativas públicas patrocinadas por el gobierno federal y el MEC mediante asociaciones con empresas estatales brasileñas, y ha definido cuatro líneas de acción, una de las cuales son iniciativas para enseñar a jóvenes y adultos a leer y escribir. El apoyo que las empresas estatales dan al programa Brasil Alfabetizado es a manera de acciones suplementarias (tales como proveer a los educandos con materiales escolares, comidas, lentes, transporte hacia y desde la escuela y supervisión) con la intención de mejorar la calidad de los proyectos llevados a cabo por los estados y municipios.

Su acuerdo de cooperación con el Instituto de Investigación Económica Aplicada (IPEA), que está relacionado con el Ministerio de Planeación, es evidencia adicional del intento del MEC/SECAD por establecer vínculos eficaces con otros organismos federales para que sea factible la ejecución de proyectos de investigación de interés mutuo. En este caso, la acción conjunta está enfocada en la evaluación del mencionado programa Brasil Alfabetizado.

Asimismo, el MEC/SECAD ha creado una sociedad con el Ministerio de Desarrollo Social a fin de incluir un módulo especial en el cuestionario de evaluación del programa *Bolsa família* (Transferencia de ingresos) para evaluar los factores que determinan la demanda de los programas de alfabetización y educación continua entre jóvenes y adultos. Más allá de facilitar un ahorro importante, la inclusión de este módulo en el cuestionario ha logrado que sea posible calcular la medida en que los programas de EJA y otros programas sociales importantes en Brasil, como *Bolsa família*, se complementan entre sí.

Otro vínculo que se busca con organismos oficiales es aquel entre el MEC y el INEP. A partir de marzo del 2005, el Censo Escolar Brasileño incluyó preguntas respecto a la instrucción elemental de jóvenes y adultos y una sección más detallada en cuanto a la EJA. Este cambio permitirá una mejor supervisión de ambos programas dentro del sistema educativo oficial.

La definición de una política pública para la educación de jóvenes y adultos: administración cooperativa

La construcción de una estructura para proveer la EJA también requiere de una colaboración constante entre los diversos componentes de la Federación: la Unión, los estados y los municipios. A fin de lograr esto, el MEC/SECAD está fomentando vínculos de gran alcance entre organismos para lograr una descentralización responsable. Por ende, al reconocer la importancia que han adquirido el Consejo Nacional de Secretarías de Educación (CONSED) y la

Unión Nacional de Dirigentes Municipales de Educación (UNDIME) con el paso de los años al dirigir los sectores que representan y en un esfuerzo continuo para mejorar la calificación de los representantes públicos de educación, el MEC/SECAD ha diseñado la política de consultar a estas entidades en relación con asuntos específicos que utilizan e implican recursos públicos y acciones de cooperación.

Diálogo con la sociedad civil

Una característica importante que debe destacarse es la “democratización” de la formulación, monitoreo y evaluación de políticas sobre la EJA a través de la creación de la Comisión Nacional de Alfabetización, en el 2003. Con 14 integrantes que representan diferentes instituciones de la sociedad civil y encabezada por el Ministerio de Educación, la Comisión Nacional de Alfabetización es un órgano consultivo diseñado para ayudar al gobierno a definir programas y políticas. Además, asegura la transparencia y el control social de los mecanismos de financiamiento y acompaña el desarrollo y los resultados de políticas y programas en proceso. En julio del 2005, en línea con el énfasis que colocó el MEC en un concepto más amplio de la alfabetización, el mandato de la Comisión se amplió para abarcar la EJA, viéndose reflejado en su nuevo nombre, La Comisión Nacional para la Alfabetización y Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos.

No obstante, la acción social alterna ha tenido una función primordial en el resurgimiento de la EJA en Brasil y hoy en día trabaja con el MEC/SECAD para lograr que las políticas avancen en este campo. Por lo tanto, la sociedad civil en Brasil tiene una función extraordinariamente importante en la consolidación de los derechos respecto a la EJA por medio de los Foros Estatales de la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos, el primero de éstos habiéndose creado en el estado de Río de Janeiro en junio de 1996 durante el proceso nacional de preparación para la Quinta Conferencia Internacional de Educación de Adultos (CONFINTEA V). Hoy existen 25 foros estatales y 19 regionales, más uno en el Distrito Federal (Brasilia); en conjunto, constituyen una red nacional de gran importancia para el análisis y el debate sobre la política de EJA.

La cooperación entre el MEC y la UNESCO

El MEC y la UNESCO Brasil han fortalecido sus fuertes lazos de cooperación para establecer una política nacional para la EJA. Esta cooperación ha sido especialmente evidente, por ejemplo, en el apoyo técnico que UNESCO Brasil ha proporcionado para los procedimientos cualitativos de evaluación

para los programas Brasil Alfabetizado y Haciendo Escuela. Como ya se ha mencionado, la representación de la UNESCO en Brasilia ha contribuido al seleccionar un equipo de especialistas nacionales para llevar a cabo una evaluación de diagnóstico de ambos programas; actualmente, los resultados de esta evaluación se están editando y pronto los copublicarán la UNESCO Brasil y el MEC.

Además, la inquietud básica sobre los altos índices de analfabetismo funcional y los índices constantes de jóvenes y adultos que recaen en el analfabetismo han conducido a acciones conjuntas y concertadas en todo el país para crear incentivos para la lectura. Para este fin, el MEC y la UNESCO están trabajando juntos para crear un programa llamado Lectura-Acción (*Leituração*). Al reconocer la importancia estratégica de esta acción, UNESCO Brasil está complementando estos esfuerzos con un proyecto usando fondos japoneses (fondo en fideicomiso japonés), cuya intención es contribuir a reducir el analfabetismo entre jóvenes y adultos en conflicto con la ley.

Por último, a la luz de las importantes iniciativas que ha creado Brasil para fomentar la EJA, la UNESCO Brasil ha intentado duplicar la experiencia brasileña en otros países en vías de desarrollo, especialmente en países africanos de habla portuguesa. Actualmente, se están realizando esfuerzos para concretar un acuerdo de cooperación entre la oficina multi-país de la UNESCO en Namibia y el Ministerio de Educación de Angola para ejecutar un proyecto con financiamiento italiano (fondo en fideicomiso de Italia) para fortalecer la estrategia de alfabetización angolana para jóvenes y adultos. Un integrante de la plantilla de UNESCO Brasil está trabajando medio tiempo en este proyecto para asegurar que Angola se favorezca de la experiencia que Brasil ha obtenido en la enseñanza de la alfabetización.

Un nuevo formato institucional para la educación de jóvenes y adultos

Tras años de estancamiento, ya se está construyendo un nuevo diseño institucional para la alfabetización y la EJA, y se está construyendo con base en un diálogo de gran alcance que indica la necesidad de una reestructuración de la EJA más pública. Aun cuando está consciente de la distancia que comúnmente separa la planeación de la práctica, actualmente, el MEC se está enfocando en la alfabetización y la EJA desde una perspectiva de la educación continua y el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Reconoce la naturaleza intersectorial de esta modalidad y aspira a incorporarla al sistema educativo nacional ya que le es imposible tratarla de manera independiente de los sistemas educativos formales organizados por el gobierno, y también porque no es razonable excluir la ENF en vista de la amplia gama de

posibilidades y oportunidades de riqueza que esta importante área de la educación ofrece.

Para manejar este enfoque a la alfabetización y a la EJA, el MEC está guiado por un programa que intenta vincular el aumento de la calidad en la enseñanza para construir bases para la equidad y la inclusión social, dando prioridad a la diversidad de la población brasileña.

Para entender el compromiso del MEC, resulta útil citar la *Declaración sobre la Educación de Adultos de Hamburgo* (UIE 1997):

Los objetivos de la educación de los jóvenes y de los adultos, considerada como un proceso a lo largo de la vida, son desarrollar la autonomía y el sentido de responsabilidad de las personas y las comunidades, reforzar la capacidad de hacer frente a las transformaciones de la economía, la cultura y la sociedad en su conjunto, y promover la coexistencia, la tolerancia y la participación consciente y creativa de los ciudadanos en su comunidad; en una palabra, entregar a la gente y a las comunidades el control de su destino y de la sociedad para afrontar los desafíos del futuro.

Para lograr esto, el MEC/SECAD está construyendo una nueva base institucional para la EJA, fundamentada en el proceso de vinculación, acuerdo, reconocimiento y diálogo con un grupo de organismos, entidades y actores sociales que desempeñan diferentes funciones en el campo. A nivel gobierno, está formulando acciones con los Ministerios de Trabajo y Empleo, Salud, Desarrollo Social y Justicia, así como con las Secretarías de Agricultura y Pesca, de la Juventud y de los Derechos Humanos. Al nivel de la sociedad civil, en 2003 creó la Comisión Nacional de Alfabetización y después amplió su alcance para incluir la EJA. Desde el punto de vista de la oferta, un elemento básico en la consolidación de la EJA es la necesidad de organización entre las actividades de los gobiernos federal, estatal y municipal vinculándose con los organismos representantes, tales como el MEC, CONSED y UNDIME, como colaboradores en la construcción de política pública para la EJA. Además de priorizar los recursos federales dirigidos a esta área, esto implica la búsqueda de alternativas colectivas de construcción para ampliar la EJA, así como reconfigurar esta modalidad de la educación para atender las necesidades específicas de jóvenes y adultos.

Estos vínculos no están limitados a los organismos federales; al contrario, también se están buscando vínculos con aliados que, al paso de los años han trabajado en la EJA, reconociendo que los verdaderos protagonistas de la historia de esta modalidad de la educación en Brasil, así como la gente joven y los adultos mismos, son colectivos: los representantes gubernamentales, las ONG, organismos internacionales, trabajadores y empleados, sindicalistas y movimientos sociales, todos quienes de alguna forma están contribuyendo a la EJA dentro de las complejas y diversas condiciones de Brasil. Estos

organismos colectivos están bien representados por los Foros Estatales de la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos.

Por otro lado, el MEC está intentando mejorar la calificación profesional en el área mediante la investigación, la evaluación, la documentación, la comunicación, la capacitación y las publicaciones. Por otra parte, está realizando esfuerzos para capacitar a una nueva generación de trabajadores profesionales en la EJA a los niveles federal, estatal y municipal, proporcionando mecanismos de financiamiento para este fin que dan autonomía en el diseño de proyectos locales que responden a los requerimientos de la vida moderna y a su conceptualización de la capacitación de maestros, la cual, por muchos años fue establecida por asociaciones nacionales. El gobierno brasileño está convencido de que, después de un largo periodo de descuido e incredulidad respecto a la alfabetización y a la educación de jóvenes y adultos, ahora existe un espíritu de estímulo y renovación. Conceptos y prácticas más amplios, incluyendo nuevos elementos, están compitiendo en el amplio panorama de la educación y del aprendizaje, retando los paradigmas tradicionales en todas las áreas y reconociendo que el alcance y las necesidades de los individuos y de los grupos sociales han cambiado profundamente en los últimos años, y que por lo tanto, es necesario recrear los entornos y las sociedades de la alfabetización.

Las reuniones internacionales como el “Diálogo Sur-Sur sobre Políticas Públicas en Materia de Educación de Calidad para Jóvenes y Adultos” han sido decisivas para reafirmar la inclusión del tema en la agenda de las naciones, articulando una serie de iniciativas, declaraciones y compromisos internacionales, buscando sinergia en lugar de la dispersión continua de esfuerzos. En resumen, la práctica correcta de la cooperación internacional para el desarrollo entre los países del sur debe estar basada en el principio de colaboración en la búsqueda de añadir conocimiento a los muchos pilotos que están llevando a cabo los diferentes actores en América Latina, África y Asia.

Los retos medulares para el MEC/SECAD, hoy en día, radican en pagar la enorme deuda histórica en función de la educación, comprometiéndose a democratizar los sistemas educativos y a crear instrumentos que garanticen la educación para todos como un derecho humano básico. No es sólo una cuestión de ofrecer instrucción inicial o escolaridad a corto plazo, sino de afirmar el significado real de la EJA establecido en Hamburgo, el cual ve la educación como la clave del siglo XXI y considera que la humanización de los sujetos, es el resultado de un proceso de aprendizaje que perdura a lo largo de toda la vida de una persona.

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Programa Nacional de Educación de los Adultos de India

*Satish Loomba y Anthony Matthew**

El programa de educación de los adultos a nivel nacional, que se inició bajo los auspicios de la Misión Nacional de Alfabetización (MNA), tiene ya más de 15 años de existencia. Desde sus inicios en 1989-90, las campañas masivas de alfabetización, llamadas Campañas de Alfabetización Total (CAT), han alcanzado una cobertura de 596 de los 600 distritos de India y dos terceras partes de ellas han avanzado a las etapas de Posalfabetización (PA) y Educación Continua (EC), hacia la educación a lo largo de la vida y la creación de una sociedad de aprendizaje. En esta transición de las CAT a las etapas de PA y EC, el movimiento de educación de adultos se ha esforzado por llegar a todos los segmentos de jóvenes y adultos analfabetas, principalmente a los del grupo de 15 a 35 años y en aprovechar las prioridades de las políticas a las que no se había dado importancia en forma consistente en los diferentes estados y a lo largo de los tres periodos del Plan de Cinco Años. De cualquier manera, en la visión, las estrategias, las modalidades de instrumentación, la participación de los educandos, los logros del aprendizaje y los esfuerzos de los neoalfabetizados por transformar y mejorar su situación, puede haber algunos paralelos con el movimiento indio de educación de los adultos. El rango de las percepciones y las experiencias de ese movimiento ha sido tan variado que cualquier aspecto de la educación de los adultos puede dilucidarse a la luz de la experiencia india. Teniendo presente el rango de los temas propuestos para su consideración en este *Diálogo sobre Políticas*, presentaremos a continuación un breve panorama

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general de los programas y experiencias indios en materia de educación de los adultos.

Antecedentes históricos

Los orígenes de la educación de adultos en India pueden rastrearse hasta la tradición oral en la sociedad de la antigüedad. No obstante, la tradición del aprendizaje continuó siendo el coto de un pequeño segmento de la elite. El sistema de educación occidental introducido bajo el gobierno británico intentó llevar la educación a todos, independientemente de las distinciones de casta y de clase, pero tuvo un éxito limitado. En consecuencia, la India de la posindependencia heredó un sistema educativo caracterizado por las desigualdades socioeconómicas, de género y de otro tipo, a tal grado que la tasa de alfabetización del país en 1947 era del 14% y entre las mujeres había alcanzado un nivel abismalmente bajo del 8%.

La educación de los adultos en la fase de la posindependencia

La erradicación del analfabetismo ha sido una de las más importantes preocupaciones nacionales desde el logro de la independencia. Algunos de los programas significativos que se desarrollaron para erradicar el analfabetismo han sido:

- Educación Social: Se instrumentó en el Primer Plan de Cinco Años (1951-56) y enfatizó la alfabetización, la extensión, la educación general, la capacitación para el liderazgo y la conciencia social.
- *Gram Shikshan Mohim*: Movimiento para la alfabetización en las áreas rurales que comenzó inicialmente en Satara, en 1959 y más tarde se extendió a otras partes del estado. Buscaba impartir las habilidades básicas de alfabetización en un lapso de cuatro meses.
- Proyecto de Alfabetización Funcional de los Campesinos (PAFC): Se inició en 1967-68 como un proyecto interministerial de capacitación de los campesinos, con el objetivo de mejorar la productividad agrícola y la alfabetización funcional.
- El Programa Nacional de Educación de los Adultos (PNEA): Lanzado en 1978, fue el primer programa a nivel nacional y con un plazo temporal; su objetivo era llegar a 100 millones de alfabetizados en el grupo de 15-35 edad en un periodo de cinco años.
- Proyecto Rural de Alfabetización Funcional (PRAF): Impartió alfabetización funcional a analfabetas del grupo de 15-35 años en las áreas rurales.

- Programa Masivo de Alfabetización Funcional (PMAF): Lanzado en 1986, inscribió a los alumnos universitarios en el Esquema del Servicio Nacional y el Cuerpo Nacional de Cadetes para brindar alfabetización a los analfabetas de sus inmediaciones o áreas de servicio.

La Política Nacional de Educación de 1986: La prioridad inválida de la erradicación del analfabetismo

Al reconocer al analfabetismo como pecado y vergüenza de India, como señaló Mahatma Gandhi, y convencido de que la alfabetización es una precondition esencial de la participación significativa en la reconstrucción nacional, en 1986 el Gobierno de India (GOI) formuló la Política Nacional de Educación PNE, en la cual resolvió que: “Toda la nación debe comprometerse a erradicar el analfabetismo, particularmente en el grupo de 15-35 años de edad. Los gobiernos central y estatales, los partidos políticos y sus organizaciones de masas, los medios de comunicación masiva y las instituciones educativas deben comprometerse con los programas de alfabetización masiva de distintos tipos” (MHRD, 1986a). El Programa de Acción (POA, por sus siglas en inglés) del PNE, que también data de 1986, planteó la estrategia operativa de alcanzar una cobertura estimada de 100 millones de alfabetizados para 1995. No obstante, dada la magnitud de la meta, y también su urgencia, el POA propuso que la erradicación del analfabetismo se convirtiera en una “misión”, una misión técnica y de la sociedad, dirigida a aprovechar los avances en ciencia y tecnología para mejorar la enseñanza-aprendizaje y en la que participaran no sólo el gobierno, sino también las organizaciones masivas, los medios de comunicación, las instituciones educativas y toda la sociedad (MHRD, 1986b).

Lanzamiento de la Misión Nacional de Alfabetización (MNA): Objetivos y enfoque específico

En cumplimiento de la resolución de la PNE, el 5 de mayo de 1988 se lanzó la MNA como una misión tecnológica para ofrecer una alfabetización funcional a 100 millones de analfabetas del grupo de 15-35 años, en un plazo determinado (MHRD, 1988).

Después de intentar diferentes métodos y enfoques para dar un carácter masivo a los esfuerzos de educación de los adultos, la MNA decidió adoptar un modelo de campaña masiva de alfabetización, el cual había tenido un éxito espectacular en el distrito de Ernakulam, estado de Kerala, en 1989-90. Las CAT, como se ha dado en llamar a los esfuerzos de erradicación del analfabetismo en India,

se lanzaron no sólo para difundir la alfabetización (en realidad, la alfabetización funcional), sino también para promover el bienestar familiar, las vacunaciones, la atención médica materno-infantil, la conservación del medio ambiente, la armonía de las comunidades, la cohesión social, la integración nacional, etcétera. La idea central de las CAT ha sido desde el principio la promoción de la alfabetización entre las mujeres, así como entre los grupos desfavorecidos desde el punto de vista socioeconómico, incluidas las castas y las tribus registradas oficialmente y otras clases atrasadas.

Alfabetización funcional

La MNA conceptualizó la alfabetización funcional como la adquisición de un nivel claramente definido de competencia en la lectura, la escritura y los conocimientos básicos de aritmética, así como la capacidad de aplicar las habilidades de alfabetización en situaciones de la vida cotidiana que exigen el uso de dichas habilidades. La alfabetización funcional se definió específicamente como: el logro de la autoconfianza en materia de alfabetización y conocimientos básicos de aritmética; el conocimiento de las causas de su ausencia y el avance hacia el mejoramiento de su situación a través de la organización y la participación en el proceso de desarrollo; la adquisición de destrezas para mejorar su situación económica y su bienestar general; la absorción de los valores de integración nacional, conservación del medio ambiente, igualdad de la mujer, cumplimiento con las pequeñas normas familiares; y demás.

La adopción de la Campaña de Alfabetización Total como estrategia dominante

Razonamiento

La CAT fue adoptada como la principal estrategia de la MNA para erradicar el analfabetismo, debido a sus probadas características positivas, como ser específica para las distintas áreas (generalmente la unidad es el distrito, que constituye un objetivo a alcanzar en un solo intento), tener un plazo definido, ser participativa, tener como centro a los voluntarios, tener un costo beneficio eficiente y estar orientada a resultados. Aun cuando la CAT enfatiza el logro de niveles predeterminados de alfabetización y conocimientos básicos de aritmética, también incluye otras actividades afines, como las campañas para la matriculación universal y la retención de los niños en las escuelas, la vacunación, la conservación del medio ambiente y el “empoderamiento” de las mujeres.

Planeación y dirección: Diferentes fases y énfasis en las estrategias

Las CAT iniciales, que fueron aprobadas para tener un año de duración, se han extendido gradualmente hasta alcanzar una duración de 12-18 meses. Han sido instrumentadas por un organismo autónomo, llamado Sociedad de Alfabetización de Distrito (SAD) o *Zilla Saksbratha Samiti* (conocida popularmente como ZSS), bajo la dirección del jefe/magistrado de distrito. Una CAT incluye en términos generales dos etapas, la fase preparatoria y la fase de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La fase preparatoria implica la creación de un ambiente propicio para la alfabetización, el cual incluye la propagación del mensaje de alfabetización a través de multimedia, seminarios, mítines, reuniones, espectáculos musicales y teatrales, generalmente utilizando el medio de comunicación de la cultura tradicional y popular con un efecto contundente. Esta fase de creación de un ambiente intenta motivar y movilizar a las personas preparadas y progresistas socialmente de todas las profesiones para que participen en la CAT en calidad de voluntarios, personas con recursos o personas con otras competencias y a los analfabetas para que participen como educandos.

Se crea una estructura organizacional de tres niveles: en las aldeas, manzanas y distritos, la cual es socialmente representativa y también incluye diversos recursos humanos a diferentes niveles, como maestros, miembros del cuerpo local electo (llamado *Panchayats*), etcétera, para supervisar la planeación y dirección de las CAT.

La fase preparatoria incluye una encuesta de puerta en puerta para identificar a los educandos potenciales así como a los voluntarios que pudieran participar en calidad de maestros voluntarios o personas con recursos. Con base en el número determinado de analfabetas que serán el objetivo, se determina el número de voluntarios necesarios, generalmente con una relación maestro-educando de 1:10-15. En las CAT se sigue un modelo de capacitación en cascada, igual que en el Programa de Posalfabetización (PPA) y en el Programa de Educación Continua (PEC), en el cual las personas de medios capacitan a los capacitadores maestros, los cuales, a su vez, capacitan a los voluntarios. El conjunto de tres textos básicos para los correspondientes grados (materiales de enseñanza para la alfabetización) que se usan para la enseñanza-aprendizaje en los centros de alfabetización también representa la base de la capacitación de las personas con recursos, los capacitadores maestros y los maestros voluntarios.

Una vez finalizadas estas tareas preparatorias, los educandos se asignan a los maestros voluntarios y se agrupan; en seguida, al inicio de la fase de enseñanza-aprendizaje, se identifican los centros de aprendizaje y los horarios de clases que se adapten tanto a los educandos como a los maestros voluntarios.

La experiencia ha mostrado que es fácil diseñar un ambiente propicio para la alfabetización a nivel macro, fase que implica una considerable visibilidad y participación social; pero es mucho más difícil mantener la motivación y el espíritu de los educandos y los voluntarios a lo largo del arduo trabajo de la enseñanza-aprendizaje cotidiana, un día tras otro, durante un lapso de 6-9 meses. A los analfabetas pobres, tanto rurales como urbanos, que están atrapados en la lucha por la supervivencia, el lápiz o la pluma les resultarían más pesados que el arado después de un día de trabajo físico pesado. Es aquí donde el papel de motivación, monitorización y supervisión de la estructura organizacional de los tres niveles es crucial, puesto que es asumido por (i) el comité de alfabetización de la aldea, (ii) los voluntarios alfabetizadores que dirigen los centros de alfabetización de las aldeas y (iii) las personas que trabajan de tiempo completo/los funcionarios gubernamentales de los niveles de submanzana o de distrito.

El conjunto de tres textos básicos contiene ejercicios y pruebas integrados al final de cada lección, y cada texto básico ayuda a determinar los avances de cada educando. La evaluación final de cada texto básico y de los tres textos básicos indica el nivel de alfabetización alcanzado por el educando. Los logros del programa se determinan mediante una evaluación externa de los resultados del aprendizaje y de otros aspectos de una determinada campaña.

Programas de Posalfabetización y de Educación Continua

Independientemente de si la fase de posalfabetización se combinó o no con la fase de educación continua, esta fase siempre se iniciará después de haber finalizado la CAT. Con base en la experiencia inicial de los primeros cinco a seis años, cuando el programa PL se instrumentó bajo la modalidad de una campaña como la CAT, generalmente durante un periodo de uno y medio a dos años, se le cambió a la modalidad de programa y su duración se redujo a un año. Pero no hubo ningún cambio sustancial en los objetivos ni en el alcance del programa.

Uno de los objetivos del Programa de Posalfabetización (PPA) es permitir que los analfabetas aprendan a aplicar sus nuevas habilidades de alfabetización como una herramienta para la solución de problemas, de manera que el aprendizaje sea pertinente para la vida y el trabajo y, por ende, se logre una alfabetización funcional en todo el sentido del término. Este era originalmente el objetivo de la CAT, pero no se pudo alcanzar adecuadamente debido a la brevedad de la CAT, así como a su preocupación por lograr alfabetizar al mayor número posible de las personas del grupo objetivo.

Otro objetivo principal del PPA sigue siendo lo que se llama operación “limpieza”, por ejemplo, permitir tanto a las personas de lento aprendiza-

je como a los desertores alcanzar el nivel de alfabetización prescrito por la MNA.

Pero el objetivo más importante del PPA sigue siendo la retención, consolidación y superación de los frágiles niveles de alfabetización alcanzados durante la CAT, y permitir a los neoalfabetizados alcanzar una mayor autoconfianza al proporcionarles, a través de los servicios bibliotecarios, una variedad de materiales de lectura complementarios y de diferentes niveles.

Además, conscientes de los temas no abordados por la CAT, como mejorar las condiciones de vida y trabajo, los PPA tienen la intención de integrar programas de desarrollo de destrezas. La dependencia que instrumenta el PAP, al igual que en el caso de la CAT, sigue siendo un Centro de Alfabetización de Distrito (CAD) específico.

Como se indicó anteriormente, los PPA se concibieron principalmente para ayudar a los analfabetas a consolidar y aplicar sus habilidades de alfabetización a sus condiciones actuales de vida y laborales. No obstante, la experiencia ha demostrado que, a la luz de los problemas sociales y económicos persistentes, sigue siendo difícil para los neoalfabetizados aplicar y aprovechar sus habilidades de alfabetización recientemente adquiridas. La MNA reconoció que, en consecuencia, los procesos de alfabetización tienen que continuarse y mantenerse si se quiere que la gente aproveche su potencial y mejore sus condiciones personales, sociales y económicas. En consecuencia, se agregó a la agenda la EC. Tiene el propósito de ofrecer oportunidades de aprendizaje en forma continua y mejorar las condiciones de vida de la gente. Por otro lado, la EC está dirigida no solamente a los neoalfabetizados de las CAT y los PPA, sino a cualquiera que la necesite o que se encuentre fuera de la alfabetización básica y la educación primaria.

Los principales objetivos del Esquema de Educación Continua (EEC) y sus actividades incluyen (MNA, 1996: 10):

- el proveer facilidades para la retención de las habilidades de alfabetización y la EC, más allá de la etapa de la alfabetización básica;
- la creación de un horizonte donde los educandos apliquen sus habilidades de alfabetización para ayudar a mejorar sus condiciones y su calidad de vida;
- la difusión de información sobre los programas de desarrollo, y la ampliación y mejoramiento de la participación de los grupos necesitados;
- la concientización sobre las preocupaciones y valores nacionales y el compartir los problemas comunes de la comunidad;
- la organización de programas de capacitación y orientación de corto plazo para mejorar las destrezas vocacionales y, de esa manera, mejorar las condiciones económicas de los beneficiarios;

- la provisión de facilidades en materia de bibliotecas y salas de lectura para crear un ambiente propicio para la alfabetización y una sociedad de aprendizaje; y
- organizar actividades culturales y recreativas con una participación efectiva de la comunidad.

El principal programa que visualizó el EEC fue la instalación de Centros de Educación Continua (CEC), los cuales podrían funcionar como sede y foro para la coordinación y convergencia de una variedad de programas con insumos educativos instrumentados por varios ministerios y departamentos de los gobiernos central y estatales, dependencias locales de autogobierno y organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONG). Además, los CEC también podrían proporcionar un rango completo de programas adaptados a los intereses y necesidades de la gente para el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida.

Se esperaba que los CEC funcionaran como bibliotecas y salas de lectura con materiales de aprendizaje y lectura; centros de aprendizaje para una variedad de Programas de Educación Continua (PEC); centros de alfabetización para los restantes analfabetas y neoalfabetizados; centros de capacitación con programas breves de capacitación para mejorar las destrezas; ventanas de información combinada sobre diversos programas de desarrollo; *Charcha Manda* (foros de discusión) para compartir ideas y resolver problemas; centros de desarrollo o sedes para las instancias de extensión de diversas dependencias gubernamentales y no gubernamentales; y centros culturales y recreativos. Como se visualizaba en el EEC, además de los PEC, los CEC también proporcionan facilidades para diversos programas objetivo, incluidos los de equivalencia, mejoramiento de la calidad de vida, generación de ingresos y promoción de los intereses individuales.

De acuerdo con el EEC, un CEC se autoriza para una población de 2000–2500 y un Centro de Educación Continua Nodal por cada 10 a 15 CEC, para proporcionarles apoyo en materia de recursos así como monitorizar y supervisar las actividades de cada CEC.

El sistema de financiamiento de los programas de educación de los adultos en India es diferente al de otros países. En el caso de las CAT (con base en un costo por educando en un rango de 90 a 180 rupias) y los PPA (con base en un costo por educando de 90 a 130 rupias), el costo lo comparten el gobierno central y los gobiernos estatales a una razón de 2 a 1. No obstante, en el caso de la EC, el sistema de financiamiento consiste en una participación del cien por ciento del gobierno central durante los tres primeros años y una participación de 50:50 durante el cuarto y quinto años del EEC. Cada CEC (con una ayuda anual de 25 000 rupias) y cada Centro de Educación Continua Nodal (con 45 000 rupias) pagan los costos recurrentes y no recurrentes. La

Autoridad Estatal de la Misión de Alfabetización (AEMA), la contraparte de la MNA a nivel estatal, ha sido facultada para autorizar los PEC en sus estados, los cuales canalizan los fondos a la SAD para operar los PEC.

A partir de su fundación, en 1995, y hasta el momento (es decir, en 2005), 284 de los 596 distritos cubiertos por la CAT y los PPA han avanzado a la etapa de EC.

Evaluación de los logros de la alfabetización: Enfoques y métodos

Con el fin de realizar una evaluación objetiva de la adquisición de la alfabetización y tener un criterio uniforme para estimar el éxito de la CAT, el GOI formó un comité en 1992 bajo la presidencia de R. H. Dave. El Comité Dave adoptó el principio rector de que la evaluación de los educandos debe ser sencilla, inteligible y no amenazadora, así como sistemática, técnicamente sólida y aplicable universalmente. A la luz de las habilidades básicas de alfabetización definidas en los objetivos de la MNA y de los elementos del aprendizaje definidos dentro de la alfabetización funcional como la funcionalidad y la conciencia, el Comité expuso las competencias y el diseño de la prueba para estimar los logros del aprendizaje. Con el propósito de dar una orientación práctica sobre el marco de la evaluación y asignar a cada competencia un peso relativo, el Comité también propuso un anteproyecto de prueba. La prueba se enfocó únicamente en las habilidades básicas de alfabetización y los conocimientos básicos de aritmética y excluyó conscientemente aspectos como la funcionalidad y la conciencia. Se pensó que estos componentes se desarrollarían automáticamente si los textos básicos tenían un enfoque temático más agudo de los problemas socioeconómicos contemporáneos, y si se abordaban adecuadamente durante el proceso mismo de enseñanza-aprendizaje. En cuestión de la evaluación del logro de aprendizaje de los educandos, el Comité Dave evitó la categorización dicotómica de aprobar o reprobar, y sugirió un cierto puntaje mínimo (50%) para cada una de las tres competencias (por ejemplo, lectura, escritura y conocimientos básicos de aritmética), y uno agregado (70%) con el fin de ser considerado como alfabetizado. El Comité *Arun Gosh*, establecido en 1994, abordó temas relacionados con el diseño del muestreo, el cual se está adoptando de manera bastante uniforme en todas las evaluaciones externas de las CAT (MNA, 1992; Rao, 2002: 279-80; MNA, 1994).

Por medio de una serie de consultas y talleres regionales y nacionales, la MNA también ha desarrollado lineamientos para la evaluación final (por dependencias externas) de los PPA y de los PEC. A diferencia de las evaluaciones de las CAT, cada evaluación externa de los PPA y PEC evalúa el resultado de todos los objetivos establecidos en el programa.

El movimiento de alfabetización: Breve panorama general

El movimiento de alfabetización que inició con la CAT a principios de la década de 1990 había cubierto, hasta principios de 2005, 596 de los 600 distritos de India mediante CAT y otros programas de educación de los adultos. De esos distritos, 139 todavía están en la etapa de la CAT, 173 en la fase de PPA y 284 en la etapa de EC. Con base en las cifras de la MNA, más de 150 millones de analfabetas, principalmente del grupo de 15-35 años, han participado en las campañas de alfabetización y otros programas de educación de los adultos, y más de 118.25 millones se han convertido en alfabetizados. No hay duda de que el pronunciado aumento en la tasa de alfabetización del 52% al 65% en la década previa, así como la importante reducción de la disparidad de género y rural-urbana en materia de alfabetización, se debe (cuando menos en parte) al movimiento de alfabetización.

En calidad de esfuerzo importante de intervención social, el movimiento de alfabetización en India ha presenciado muchos resultados esperados e inesperados. El enfoque de campañas masivas condujo a una movilización social masiva, principalmente de las personas preparadas, que se unieron a la campaña de alfabetización en forma voluntaria. Más de 12 millones de voluntarios, principalmente alumnos de escuelas y universidades y jóvenes preparados, participaron en las campañas de alfabetización, y otros 3 a 4 millones de personas del ámbito académico trabajaron como personas con recursos y organizadores a diferentes niveles, en las aldeas y en los distritos. Más del 63% de los educandos objetivo eran mujeres, las cuales se inscribieron y fueron alfabetizadas. El movimiento de alfabetización ha sido decisivo para tener acceso a las mujeres y permitirles participar más en la sociedad, hecho que no tiene paralelo en ninguna otra esfera del quehacer social.

La perspectiva de la Misión Nacional de Alfabetización sobre los PPA y PEC

Este nivel de participación social, especialmente de las mujeres, se debió en parte a las esperanzas y aspiraciones surgidas en el proceso de la campaña de alfabetización respecto al mejoramiento de las condiciones socioeconómicas de las mujeres con la conclusión exitosa de las CAT. No obstante, dada su brevedad, solamente pudieron abordar el componente de la alfabetización. Los esfuerzos de PA y EC fueron introducidos inicialmente como un programa no sólo para consolidar la alfabetización, todavía frágil, recientemente adquirida por los educandos, sino especialmente para abordar sus aspiraciones y expectativas de mejoramiento, las cuales habían permanecido, en gran parte, olvidadas durante la CAT (Chatterjee, 1996).

Sin embargo, los seis primeros años de este programa combinado mostraron que era inadecuado tanto en términos de la alfabetización básica, su mejoramiento hasta alcanzar el nivel de la autoconfianza y el aprendizaje adicional en forma continua, como respecto al tema de su aplicación en la vida cotidiana para mejorar las condiciones de vida de los educandos, incluso el uso de la PA y la EC como programa combinado (sin referencia a la CAT), (MHDR, 1966). Se dieron cuenta de que la bifurcación de la PA y la EC, y la creación de una EC institucionalizada era la única respuesta. En consecuencia, proporcionar oportunidades de aprendizaje en forma continua y mejorar las condiciones y la calidad de vida de la gente, especialmente de los analfabetas, se convirtió en el principal objetivo que la MNA estableció para los PEC. Pero se consideró que, para institucionalizar la EC para el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, era esencial tener una fase preparatoria que pudiera funcionar como pista que permitiera el despegue de la EC.

Operación Restauración: Precursora de las campañas de erradicación del analfabetismo residual

Aun cuando las CAT fueron diseñadas e instrumentadas como un movimiento masivo en diferentes partes del país, en muchos casos las campañas se estancaron debido a los desastres naturales, la falta de voluntad política, la frecuente transferencia de los recaudadores de distrito, etcétera. La restauración de las CAT estancadas se volvió esencial, y la MNA empezó a avalar una fase de Operación Restauración a principios de la década de 1990. Incluso los distritos que avanzaron a las etapas de PA y EC sin alcanzar niveles altos de alfabetización, continuaron teniendo que cargar con el analfabetismo residual.

La preocupación de la MNA por el analfabetismo residual ha sido en parte una deferencia a las inquietudes mundiales de Educación para Todos (ET) de llegar a los no atendidos, y también se sincronizó con la modernización de las áreas de impulso de la MNA aprobadas por el Gabinete en 1999, y fue respaldada por el Décimo Plan de Cinco Años (MHRD, 2003: 85). El Censo de 2001 de India también confirmó la aprensión de la MNA respecto a la continua concentración del analfabetismo residual en los estados de baja alfabetización, y especialmente en los distritos donde la alfabetización de las mujeres estaba por debajo del promedio nacional. Por ende, lo que empezó como una serie de medidas especiales para la erradicación del analfabetismo residual, se puede utilizar ahora en los distritos en que el analfabetismo femenino es inferior al 30%, independientemente del grado de participación del distrito en las etapas de PA y EC. Y, de acuerdo con las inquietudes mundiales de ET, el centro de los programas para la erradicación del analfabetismo residual siguen siendo las mujeres y los miembros de los grupos desfavorecidos. El sistema de

financiamiento e instrumentación de los programas para la erradicación del analfabetismo residual sigue siendo el mismo que para las CAT.

Proyecto de Alfabetización Acelerada de las Mujeres: Enfoque especial en los distritos con bajos niveles de alfabetización femenina

Con base en las cifras del censo de 2001, se identificaron 47 distritos con una tasa de alfabetización femenina menor del 30%, los cuales fueron seleccionados para lanzar el Proyecto Especial de Alfabetización Acelerada de las Mujeres (PEAAM). Este nuevo proyecto se introdujo en cuando menos 32 de esos distritos en tres estados, incluidos Bihar, Orissa y Uttar Pradesh (Singh, 2005). En conjunto, se informa que los PEAAM ayudaron a cerca de 2.3 millones de mujeres analfabetas a lograr la alfabetización.

Estructuras técnico pedagógicas y de apoyo al aumento de la capacidad: Centros de Recursos Estatales e Institutos para la Educación del Pueblo

Los Centros de Recursos Estatales (CRE) fueron concebidos para proporcionar apoyo académico y técnico a los programas de educación de los adultos, y ya existían incluso antes del lanzamiento de la MNA. Con la rápida expansión de los CAT, PPA y PEC, los CRE se han fortalecido y su número ha aumentado para cumplir con los requerimientos del apoyo técnico pedagógico del emergente movimiento de alfabetización. Los CRE han tratado de desarrollar materiales para el aprendizaje, proporcionar capacitación al personal de educación de los adultos y participar en las evaluaciones parciales y de fin de curso de los programas de educación de los adultos. Existen 26 CRE, financiados totalmente por la MNA, en diferentes estados.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (Instituto para la Educación del Pueblo)

El esquema del *Jan Shikshan Sansthan* (JSS), conocido recientemente como *Shramik Vidyapeeth*, se lanzó inicialmente como un programa de educación de los adultos polivalente o multifacético dirigido al mejoramiento de las destrezas vocacionales y la calidad de vida de los trabajadores y los miembros de su familia. El JSS se concibió como una respuesta a las necesidades de capacitación educativa y vocacional de los adultos y jóvenes que viven en las áreas urbanas e industriales, la mayoría en áreas con deficiencia de centros educativos y de capacitación vocacional. Con el surgimiento de millones de neoalfabetizados de las CAT iniciadas a principios de la década de 1990, y también en vista del rápido ritmo del cambio económico y la penetración de la informática a las áreas rurales, se percibió la necesidad de ampliar el alcance

del JSS para atender las necesidades de las nuevas destrezas vocacionales y de enriquecimiento vital de los neoalfabetizados, así como de los desempleados preparados, en las áreas rurales.

Aun cuando la meta inicial era tener cuando menos un JSS en cada distrito, actualmente hay 156 JSS, los cuales ofrecen un gran número de programas de capacitación vocacional, desde corte y confección hasta cursos de computación; atienden a más de 1.5 millones de jóvenes y adultos, dos tercios de los cuales son mujeres, que son capacitados en diversos programas vocacionales. Cuando menos el 25% de ellos, de conformidad con el mandato de la MNA, se han convertido en neoalfabetizados.

Educación Básica Abierta para los adultos

El Instituto Nacional de Educación Abierta (INEAb), junto con su contraparte, las escuelas estatales abiertas, ofrece en diez estados Educación Básica Abierta (EBA) equivalente a los grados 3, 4 y 8 a los niños de 6 a 14 años que no tuvieron educación y a los adultos mayores de 14 años. El INEAb también ofrece educación media y superior a los jóvenes de 14 a 18 años de edad, así como a los adultos, a través del sistema de educación abierta. Existe una clara necesidad de educación abierta tanto a nivel de la educación básica como de la educación media y superior. La Constitución de India ordena al estado proporcionar educación básica obligatoria universal a todos los niños hasta los 14 años de edad, lo cual se ha convertido en un derecho fundamental de todos los niños. Sin embargo, cerca de 100 millones, de los casi 280 millones de niños de 6-18 años, no van a la escuela. De manera similar, India tiene también la dudosa distinción de tener una tercera parte de los analfabetas del mundo. En consecuencia, el GOI y el Ministerio de Desarrollo de los Recursos Humanos (MHRD, por sus siglas en inglés), cuando cambiaron el nombre de la Escuela Nacional Abierta a INEAb, expusieron su mandato indicando que consistía en proporcionar “oportunidades de educación continua a quienes han perdido las oportunidades para terminar la escuela, y la educación para el desarrollo a través de cursos y programas de enriquecimiento vital general y educación vocacional desde el nivel de primaria hasta el nivel previo a la titulación” (Pant, 2004: 22).

La EBA actúa como programa educativo alternativo tanto para los niños como para los adultos. En el caso de los adultos, va más allá de los estrechos límites del salón de clases debido a su visión del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. El programa de la EBA está dirigido a proporcionar un continuo de aprendizaje con base en un programa de estudios por grados, el cual garantizará la calidad de la educación brindada a los niños, a los analfabetas, a

quienes desertaron/fueron excluidos de la escuela y a quienes concluyeron la educación no formal (Pant, 2004).

Los niveles y el esquema de los estudios que ofrece el programa de la EBA son tres: A, B y C, en donde A es equivalente al Estándar III del sistema escolar normal; B es equivalente al Estándar V y C es equivalente al Estándar VIII. El marco del programa de estudios está íntimamente alineado con el programa de estudios de la educación formal, con el fin de permitir la paridad y la continuación con la educación superior si los graduados del INEAb eligen seguir estudiando (NIOS, n.d.: 2). El aún joven programa de la EBA se instrumenta a través de las Escuelas Abiertas Estatales, en alianza con las ONG y CAD acreditadas por el INEAb.

Compromisos y metas en materia de políticas de la educación de los adultos

Plan Nacional de Acción de ET-Alfabetización en 2003: Continuación de los preceptos modernizados y reenfoque en las estrategias

En vista de las metas y objetivos de ET establecidos en el *Marco de Acción de Dakar* y claramente alineados con los esfuerzos por la equidad social y de género, la MNA consideró necesario reenfocar algunas de las estrategias por las que ha luchado desde 1999. Las nuevas áreas centrales del Plan Nacional de Acción de ET en materia de alfabetización incluyen (MHRD, 2003: 85):

- alcanzar una alfabetización del 75% para 2007;
- una estrategia multilateral para abordar las disparidades regionales, sociales y de género en materia de alfabetización;
- el reenfoque de las CAT, PPA y PEC para aumentar y fortalecer la participación de las mujeres, con el fin de cerrar la brecha de género en materia de alfabetización;
- exhortar a los distritos de PA y EC a prestar especial atención a la movilización y organización de las mujeres mediante grupos de neoalfabetizadas y de autoayuda;
- prestar especial atención a los grupos desfavorecidos socialmente, como las castas/tribus registradas oficialmente;
- utilizar una estrategia multilateral para aumentar la alfabetización femenina en 45 distritos con tasas inferiores al 30% y
- enfatizar de manera especial las CAD para destacar las estrategias específicas para llevar a cabo los programas de mejoramiento de la alfabetización y las destrezas, especialmente los dirigidos a las castas/tribus registradas oficialmente y a las mujeres.

La primera prioridad de la MNA en los últimos años ha sido dirigirse a los 45 distritos con bajas tasas de alfabetización femenina y el analfabetismo residual en otras áreas, lo cual coincide ampliamente con la concentración del analfabetismo entre los grupos y focos desfavorecidos desde el punto de vista socioeconómico. Y ahora se ha propuesto lanzar esfuerzos de erradicación del analfabetismo residual con una cobertura equivalente a los 150 distritos con el menor número de alfabetizados, con un objetivo de 36 millones de analfabetas, iniciando el 8 de septiembre de 2005. Algunas de las otras estrategias específicas de la MNA para el futuro inmediato incluyen:

- lanzamiento de campañas locales de alfabetización, para contextos específicos, acordes a las necesidades de los educandos;
- desarrollo de alianzas con ONG;
- fortalecimiento de los equipos de instrumentación a nivel de distrito (obteniendo los servicios de personas comprometidas de los sectores privado y gubernamental bajo la modalidad de adscripción en la comisión de servicios);
- convergencia con otros esquemas, incluidos *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, *Mahila Samakhya*, *Nehru Yuvak Kendras* y *Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana*; y
- monitorización por la *Zilla Saksharata Samiti* (Sociedad de Distrito de Alfabetización) o PRI u otras partes involucradas.

Compromisos y objetivos de la alfabetización en el largo plazo: –De las sociedades alfabetizadas a las sociedades del conocimiento– Ejemplos de dos estados.

Como parte de su compromiso para convertir a Andhra Pradesh no sólo en un estado alfabetizado, sino en una sociedad del conocimiento, la meta primaria del GOI desde el año 2000 ha sido aumentar el nivel general de alfabetización a más del 95% para 2005. Al examinar el escenario de la alfabetización en el año 2000, y con la visión de acelerar el ritmo para lograr el objetivo en 2005, en octubre de 2000 se lanzó una campaña de alfabetización masiva, a nivel estatal (por distritos) y comunitaria, llamada Programa *Akshara Sankranti* (PAS). El recuento directo mostró que el número de personas inscritas en la primera vuelta (6 millones) resultó ser mayor que la cifra de la evaluación inicial de 5 millones en el año 2000. Si se incluyen las vueltas de “limpieza” subsiguientes que cubrieron a los excluidos, los desertores y las personas de lento aprendizaje de las vueltas anteriores, de acuerdo con los informes oficiales se inscribieron 11.85 millones de analfabetas, de los cuales 6.45 millones se convirtieron en alfabetizados entre 2000 y 2003 (NIEPA-UNESCO, 2003: 27-28).

Este programa aún continúa, buscando ayudar a los analfabetas residuales. Andhra Pradesh es el único estado de India que ha avanzado más allá de la EC de cinco años que la MNA visualiza como la conceptualización de un marco institucional para el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Lo ha hecho estableciendo un Centro de Aprendizaje Comunitario (CLC, por sus siglas en inglés) en la *Gram Panchayat* (unidad local de autogobierno) de cada aldea. El propósito del CLC es constituir un punto nodal en el cual converjan todas las actividades de educación abierta, bibliotecas y CEC. El esquema de la AC todavía está en sus etapas iniciales (NIEPA-UNESCO, 2003: 28).

Otro estado, Madhya Pradesh, ha desarrollado su propia estrategia para la promoción de la alfabetización alejándose de esta manera del modelo nacional estandarizado. La nueva estrategia se fundamenta en el principio de la colectividad y la creación de incentivos, así como en la vinculación de la alfabetización con las actividades económicas emergentes, teniendo en mente que la alfabetización lograda en cada caso se mantendrá por medio de los PPA y PEC. Este nuevo programa se conoce como Campaña para el Mejoramiento de la Alfabetización (*Padhna Badhna Andolan, PBA*) y está a cargo de la sociedad llamada *Padhna Badhna Samiti* (PBS), la cual es un grupo formado por los educandos y sus instructores (conocidos popularmente como *gurujis*) y registrado ante la Oficina del Bloque Panchayat, encargada de organizar los materiales de aprendizaje para los educandos y la capacitación de los *gurujis*. En sus inicios, en 1999, Maya Pradesh reportó 217 000 PBS, las cuales inscribieron a 5.18 millones de educandos, de las cuales 2.98 millones aprobaron la evaluación externa. Posteriormente, 57 000 de las 217 000 PBS (más del 90% de ellas eran grupos de mujeres) se reorganizaron en forma de grupos de autoayuda, aprovechando su consolidación de la alfabetización y sus ahorros, y pasaron de la etapa de PA a la de EC. Un esquema muy similar al PBA fue el Esquema de Garantía Educativa (EGE), en el cual el gobierno garantizaba una escuela y un maestro en un lapso de 90 días a cualquier asentamiento que tuviera cuando menos 20 niños no atendidos por ninguna escuela y que presentara una solicitud ante el Bloque Panchayat. Como resultado de sus vigorosos esfuerzos a través del EGE y PBA, Madhya Pradesh registró un salto sin precedente en la alfabetización, del 20% en la década de 1990 a una tasa del 64.11% de acuerdo con el censo de 2001, lo que casi sacó al estado de la situación de atraso educativo que lo había caracterizado. Madhya Pradesh tiene también la distinción singular de ser el primero y único estado que introdujo disposiciones en materia de educación de los adultos como parte integral de la educación como un derecho fundamental (NIEPA-UNESCO, 2003: 118-22).

El idioma de la alfabetización de los adultos

Por cuestiones de políticas, el idioma de la enseñanza-aprendizaje o del medio de la instrucción en los programas de alfabetización de los adultos ha sido desde el principio la lengua materna de los educandos. Una vez que la CAT se convirtió en el enfoque y estrategia dominantes, la MNA decidió dejar que cada CAD decidiera el idioma de la instrucción, como consecuencia de la preferencia de los educandos en materia de lenguaje, su número, la factibilidad de desarrollar textos básicos para alfabetización y la facilidad para impartir las clases. En muchos estados hay idiomas y dialectos, con o sin un sistema de escritura, que habla un número importante de personas. En muchos casos, las CAT han usado textos básicos en seis o siete idiomas, de acuerdo con la composición demográfica y las preferencias de idioma de los educandos. Los educandos que no conozcan su idioma regional –el idioma oficial de la administración–, pero que estén deseosos de alfabetizarse en ese idioma, pueden recibir instrucción en el idioma regional. En los distritos con cuantiosas poblaciones tribales que hablan un dialecto que puede tener o no un sistema de escritura, se inicia a los educandos en la alfabetización usando el primer texto básico en el dialecto local y más adelante se cambia al idioma regional en el segundo y tercer textos básicos en la CAT. Los materiales de lectura utilizados en las etapas de PA y EC generalmente están escritos en los idiomas regionales.

Logros de la alfabetización en India

Como se indicó anteriormente, los programas de extensión de la MNA (CAT, PPA y PEC) han alcanzado hasta el momento una cobertura de 596 de los 600 distritos; esto se tradujo en 118.20 millones de personas alfabetizadas. Esto quizás se refleja en la tasa de alfabetización reportada por el Censo de India de 2001. Las cifras del censo de 2001 también indican que:

- La tasa de alfabetización en India aumentó del 52.21% en 1991 al 64.84% en 2001. El aumento del 12.63% en una década es el mayor registrado en las cinco décadas desde que India logró su independencia.
- El aumento del 14.38% en la alfabetización de las mujeres ha sido mucho mayor que el de los hombres, el cual fue del 11.13%.
- La brecha de la alfabetización entre los géneros también disminuyó más del 3% durante la última década, aunque sigue siendo elevada, del 21.50%.
- Existen amplias variaciones en la brecha del analfabetismo entre los géneros en los diferentes estados, pero probablemente esta brecha pueda cerrarse en esta década. La brecha del analfabetismo entre los géne-

ros en el estado de Mizoram es del 3.79%, en Meghalaya es del 5.83% y en Kerala, del 6.52%.

Por primera vez en los últimos seis censos ha habido una declinación en el número de analfabetas.

Cuadro 1. Escenario de alfabetización en los estados y territorios de la unión de India, 2001

Estados con altas tasas de alfabetización (> 80%)	%	> Estados por encima del promedio nacional (> 64.8%)	%	< Estados por debajo del promedio nacional (< 64.8%)	%
Kerala	90.86	Daman and Diu	78.18	Chattisgarh	64.66
Mizoram	88.80	Maharashtra	76.88	Madhya Pradesh	63.74
Lakshadweep	86.66	Himachal Pradesh	76.48	Assam	63.25
Goa	82.01	Tamil Nadu	73.45	Orissa	63.08
Chandigarh	81.94	Tripura	73.19	Meghalaya	62.56
Delhi	81.67	Uttaranchal	71.62	Andhra Pradesh	60.47
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	81.30	Manipur	70.53	Rajasthan	60.41
Pondicherry	81.24	Punjab	69.65	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	55.52
		Gujarat	69.14	Uttar Pradesh	56.27
		Sikkim	68.81	Jammu & Kashmir	55.52
		West Bengal	68.64	Arunachal Pradesh	54.34
		Haryana	67.91	Jharkhand	53.56
		Karnataka	66.64	Bihar	47.00
		Nagaland	66.59		

Programas innovadores

Aunque los objetivos, el enfoque y las estrategias del movimiento de educación de los adultos han sido expuestos claramente en los documentos de política y los lineamientos de los programas, no se dejó ninguna ambigüedad en términos de la flexibilidad para sincronizar las modalidades y procesos de la instrumentación de acuerdo con las especificidades contextuales de los distritos. Esto fue lo que ocurrió con las CAT, PPA y PEC. La historia del movimiento de alfabetización en India no deja lugar a dudas sobre el hecho de que en cada distrito las CAT, PPA y PEC han tenido ciertas características especiales respecto a su diseño, instrumentación y la participación de los educandos. Aquí se ofrece una ilustración para subrayar la variedad y la riqueza del movimiento indio de alfabetización en cuestión de los enfoques de las modalidades de instrumentación y la participación de la gente.

La Educación Continua en el Distrito de Godavari Occidental (Andhra Pradesh): Personificación de un programa del pueblo

Godavari Occidental fue uno de los primeros distritos en usar el EEC en 1997, después de haber iniciado los preparativos para hacerlo desde 1996. El PEC de Godavari Occidental se concibió primordialmente como un programa del pueblo, en el cual la participación comunitaria, la propiedad y la dirección de los CEC y sus actividades serían las características centrales. El papel del CAD, la dependencia instrumentadora a nivel de distrito, se visualizó como el de un catalizador y facilitador, conceptualizando los parámetros críticos de la propiedad del pueblo y las características directivas del EEC, y facilitando su operación a través del apoyo con recursos financieros, técnicos y académicos a los CEC (ZSS-West Godavari, 1997 [en Telegu]). Estos parámetros críticos fueron adoptados a partir de la política del gobierno estatal e incluyeron:

- Constituir un grupo nuclear de personas comprometidas con una causa social como la alfabetización y la educación continua y con la organización de los neoalfabetizados para que participen en el PEC.
- Formar una asociación de neoalfabetizados (*Akshar Sangam*) mediante el pago de una cuota anual de membresía de 10 rupias. Cada *Akshar Sangam* que busque tener un CEC debe tener cuando menos 250 miembros. Es necesario elegir un comité de nueve personas entre las del *Akshar Sangam*, cinco de las cuales deben ser neoalfabetizadas, y cuatro deben ser mujeres.

- Recaudar un Fondo Central de no menos de 10 000 rupias para cada aldea. Una vez que se haya cumplido con este trámite, el *Akshar Sangam* puede presentar la solicitud ante el CAD para obtener un CEC.
- Disposiciones específicas para dejar de reconocer y suspender los fondos y clausurar cualquier CEC que el CAD considere es insatisfactorio.
- Abrir y llevar una cuenta bancaria independiente para el *Akshar Sangam*, la cual deben llevar en forma conjunta el presidente y el convocante (el director de la escuela de educación primaria o media de la aldea), de la cual puede sacarse dinero sólo por decisión del *Akshar Sangam*.
- El comité de EC de la aldea –y no el CAD como en otras partes–, es quien elige y nombra a los *preraks* (facilitadores); cada *prerak* es responsable ante su *Akshar Sangam*, el cual trata directamente con el CAD. Los *preraks* no son funcionarios del CAD, sino voluntarios de tiempo parcial.
- El *Akshar Sangam* que firme un Memorando de Entendimiento (ME) con el CAD promete acatar sus reglas, como realizar las actividades semanales prescritas por el CAD y presentar los certificados trimestrales de utilización de los fondos recibidos de los CAD, etcétera.
- El CAD le permite a cada *Akshar Sangam* organizar las actividades de su preferencia durante una semana de cada mes después de haber realizado las actividades prescritas por el CAD durante las primeras tres semanas.

La MNA les ha dado a los CAD la flexibilidad de diseñar los CEP y las actividades en armonía con los requerimientos locales. El CAD de Godavari Occidental transfirió a su vez esa flexibilidad al *Akshar Sangam* y, por ende, fue más allá de los trámites formales, con lo que forjó una alianza con la comunidad en torno a la EC, no sólo en términos de la propiedad y la dirección del CEC, sino también en términos de diseñar sus programas (Mathew, 2002).

Actividades de educación continua en el distrito de Godavari Occidental

Con base en los lineamientos de la MNA, el CAD de Godavari Occidental diseñó cinco tipos de programas y actividades (ver el Cuadro 2), algunas son obligatorias y otras son optativas.

La experiencia india de educación de los adultos. Por lo que se refiere a la calidad de la educación, los objetivos y estrategias adoptados en los programas de educación de los adultos en India (CAT, PPA y PEC) abordan muchas de las cuestiones clave propuestas para su consideración en

este Diálogo sobre Políticas. Los lineamientos que ofrece la MNA, con excepción de cuestiones como los niveles de aprovechamiento y los gastos de alfabetización, son básicamente sugestivos y dejan una gran flexibilidad a los organismos para que hagan adaptaciones a las necesidades locales. Por ejemplo, los programas de la MNA están enfocados a los desfavorecidos socioeconómica y educativamente, como las mujeres de las castas/tribus registradas oficialmente. Toda la motivación detrás de las CAT y la estrategia de movilización usada en ellas; la organización de los neoalfabetizados en grupos de autoayuda, grupos de jóvenes, etcétera; los PPA, y la conciencia vinculada con la alfabetización, la superación de las habilidades y los programas de mejoramiento en EC, están dirigidos a satisfacer las necesidades e intereses de estos grupos de enfoque especiales.

Cuadro 2. Educación continua en el distrito de Godavari Occidental

Programa educativo	Características
i) Biblioteca y sala de lectura	Inició en 1997; la biblioteca y las actividades de las salas de lectura continúan hasta la fecha en 1095 CEC.
ii) Clases de alfabetización	Como parte de las actividades regulares del CEC, se abrieron 2910 subcentros para enseñar alfabetización básica a los analfabetas. Estos continuaron hasta el año 2000, cuando se inició una CAT de segunda generación, Akshar Sankranti, para lo cual se utilizó a los voluntarios del CEC (Preraks) para fines de monitorización.
iii) Varam Varam Vignanam (VVV)	El VVV es un programa semanal de lectura con discusión acerca de temas del desarrollo con la participación de los departamentos de desarrollo. Se llevó a cabo durante 108 semanas en todos los CEC hasta septiembre de 2000.
Programas de sensibilización	La publicación de un periódico de gran formato para neoalfabetizados, un boletín quincenal y su distribución a todos los CEC fueron parte de los programas de sensibilización. Conocido como Akshar Deeksha, el boletín de cuatro páginas para neoalfabetizados tenía un tiraje de 5 000. El orgullo de WG-CE, Akshar Deeksha, era el medio de comunicación y diálogo más efectivo entre los CEC y los CAD. Recibía quincenalmente cuando menos 100 cartas de los lectores y Preraks. El CAD pretendía convertir el boletín en autofinanciable asignándole un precio, pero no pudo conseguir los subsidios necesarios para financiar el periodo de transición.

Programas de Mejoramiento de la Alfabetización (PMA)	Los QLIP incluyeron actividades en materia de alimentos y nutrición, salud, higiene y saneamiento, gastos y ahorros.
Programas de Desarrollo de Destrezas (PDD)	Los PDD introducidos en 830 CEC incluyeron la preparación de bálsamos para el dolor, detergentes, jabones, tejido de canastas, fabricación de encajes, bordado, fabricación de velas.
Programas recreativos	Los Akshar Sangams organizaron deportes, juegos y competencias culturales y se celebraron los días festivos y eventos nacionales, en su totalidad a través de la iniciativa y las contribuciones de la comunidad.

La planeación e instrumentación de los programas de educación de los adultos está calculada para involucrar a diversas instituciones no gubernamentales y gubernamentales de desarrollo, extensión y beneficencia, incluidos los organismos locales de autogobierno y otros recursos sociales, como los maestros. La convergencia es una característica central de las etapas de PA y EC.

Se han establecido dependencias especiales, como los 26 CRE a nivel estatal y los 156 JSS a nivel de distrito, para proporcionar apoyo técnico, pedagógico y de capacitación a los programas de educación de los adultos y su personal. El mandato expreso de cada JSS es ofrecer programas vocacionales y de mejoramiento de las destrezas para los neoalfabetizados, así como para los jóvenes preparados, desempleados y analfabetas. Esto se lleva a cabo adicionalmente al apoyo académico y técnico proporcionado por el CAD en la instrumentación de los programas de educación de los adultos.

El contenido pertinente y la disponibilidad de recursos para el aprendizaje son una condición *sine qua non* de un programa nacional como CAT, PPA y PEC. La MNA se ha mantenido inmutable en su énfasis en la pertinencia de los contenidos del material para el aprendizaje fin de lograr los objetivos del desarrollo nacional y satisfacer las necesidades vitales de los educandos.

Un mandato clave de los CAD y los CRE ha sido desarrollar, producir y distribuir materiales para el aprendizaje, en cantidad suficiente y antes del inicio de todos los eventos de capacitación y los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Esto también se aplica a los materiales para el aprendizaje usados en las fases de PA y EC.

La evaluación continua se considera como crítica, no sólo para que los educandos y organizadores puedan conocer la magnitud de los avances del aprendizaje, sino también en beneficio de la eficiencia de los programas. Además del informe mensual de avances que cada distrito presenta al estado, se hacen una evaluación concurrente y una evaluación externa de las CAT, los PPA y PEC.

Una de las razones de la respuesta sin precedentes a estos programas de parte de las personas socialmente desfavorecidas, especialmente de las mujeres y las

castas/tribus reconocidas oficialmente, ha sido el consenso social sobre la conveniencia de su participación (en un medio social no totalmente propicio para la equidad social), mismo que los organizadores de la alfabetización fueron capaces de lograr, y el sentido de valor y dignidad que experimentan los desfavorecidos al trabajar con los voluntarios y otras personas que trabajan de tiempo completo.

El tipo de enajenación que los niños de los hogares desfavorecidos socioeconómicamente experimentan en las escuelas formales, la cual conduce a la deserción escolar, no se encontraría por lo general en los programas de educación de los adultos.

Conclusión

En todo el mundo la educación de los adultos ha sido una preocupación marginal en la formulación de políticas y en el financiamiento dentro de los sistemas educativos. La educación de los adultos en India no ha sido muy distinta, con excepción de la MNA. No obstante, una combinación de factores fortuitos, como la gran prioridad concedida a la alfabetización de los adultos en las políticas; el hecho de que la MNA considera a la educación de los adultos no sólo como las 3R, sino como un instrumento de conciencia crítica; el “empoderamiento” y el mejoramiento a través de la acción colectiva de los neoalfabetizados; y la adopción de la CAT como el enfoque nacional para erradicar el analfabetismo, contribuyeron a convertir lo que de otra manera hubiera sido un programa gubernamental de rutina en un movimiento masivo.

Debe darse considerable crédito a la MNA por haber colocado a la educación de los adultos en el centro del escenario del discurso sobre políticas educativas, por haberla convertido en una prioridad, por expandir rápidamente las CAT para alcanzar una cobertura total de India, y por haber incluido las fases de PA y EC después de aquellas.

El 13% de aumento sin precedente en la tasa de alfabetización en una década se debió sin duda alguna en parte a los esfuerzos de la MNA, en alianza con los estados y distritos. Pero hay otras facetas del movimiento de educación de los adultos que no se reconocen tan bien. Una de ellas es la contribución del movimiento de alfabetización con su agenda más amplia que incluía concientizar, empoderar y mejorar las condiciones de los analfabetas para avivar las esperanzas y aspiraciones de los educandos, y darles un sentimiento de autodignidad y valor a través de su participación en la alfabetización. Esto creó un ambiente positivo para la alfabetización y la educación, que hizo florecer la Década de ET de la UNESCO con una facilidad que hubiera sido impensable sin el movimiento de alfabetización. Los neoalfabetizados del movimiento de educación de los adultos se convirtieron en la mejor garantía de la matriculación y retención de sus hijos en la escuela. La movilización y motivación sociales como inicio, la participa-

ción comunitaria como el ancla de los programas de educación primaria con financiamiento externo en la década de 1990 y *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, la campaña nacional para la educación básica universal desde el año 2000, son los legados del movimiento de alfabetización.

La perspectiva de políticas, las estrategias de la instrumentación de los programas, el contenido de los materiales para el aprendizaje y sus procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje han estado, todos ellos, íntimamente alineados con los intereses, necesidades y aspiraciones de los educandos en las etapas de CAT, PA y EC. El soporte del respaldo al movimiento proporcionado mediante un sistema de monitorización y evaluación claramente orquestado y la red de recursos técnico pedagógicos, como los CRE y JSS, han contribuido importantemente al éxito alcanzado hasta ahora. La graduación del movimiento a través de PPA y PEC bajo la bandera del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida y la creación de una sociedad de aprendizaje, así como de una variedad de programas creados para satisfacer las necesidades de los diferentes grupos, han ayudado a mantener vivo el movimiento como un continuo de aprendizaje, tanto para los organizadores como para los participantes.

Sin embargo, a pesar de contribuciones tan positivas, también hay que aceptar que la presencia de casi una tercera parte de los analfabetas adultos del mundo en India es un recordatorio tanto de la tarea inconclusa como de la necesidad de afinar las estrategias para llegar a quienes no se ha llegado aún. Actualmente las estrategias de la MNA están dirigidas a abordar las tareas remanentes.

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Programa Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos en México

*Luz María Castro Mussot y María Luisa de Anda**

El capítulo se centra en la educación básica para personas jóvenes y adultas en México, la cual está definida legalmente en el artículo 43 de la Ley General de Educación, que dice: “la educación para adultos estará destinada a individuos de 15 años o más que no hayan cursado o concluido la educación básica, y comprende, entre otras, la alfabetización, la educación primaria y la secundaria, [...] con las particularidades adecuadas a dicha población” (septiembre de 1993). Esta definición fue establecida para garantizar la educación de los adultos, puesto que el artículo tercero de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos considera una educación básica de nueve grados como obligatoria y gratuita (septiembre de 1917; 2005).

Contexto

El nombre oficial de México es Estados Unidos Mexicanos y comprende un territorio de 1 967 183 kilómetros cuadrados. Según lo reportado en el año 2000 por el Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI) en el XII Censo de Población y Vivienda (INEGI, 2001), el 25% de la población se concentra en una megalópolis y dos metrópolis; el 35% vive en más de 500 ciudades de tamaño medio, y el 40% restante está distribuido a través del país en casi 177 000 pueblos y pequeñas comunidades. Más del 20% de la población vive en situación de pobreza extrema.

* Con la colaboración de Patricia Martínez Ascencio.

De acuerdo con el II Censo de Población y Vivienda llevado a cabo por el INEGI en 2005, el país contaba con 103 millones de personas, dos millones menos de los esperados, debido a diferentes circunstancias, incluyendo la migración. La migración doméstica e internacional afecta los procesos económicos y sociales de México. Actualmente, 9.9 millones de personas que nacieron en México están en los Estados Unidos; 390 000 personas han emigrado cada año desde 2000.

Uno de los problemas más grandes que México enfrenta es la desigualdad estructural, social y económica (Pieck, 2001). En la información generada por el INEGI y el Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO), un indicador confiable de la pobreza es la distribución del ingreso, que presenta una fuerte concentración en el 10% de la población. La situación de pobreza también se refleja en otros factores: niveles educativos; acceso a los servicios básicos, como drenaje, agua y electricidad; las características y las condiciones de los hogares; etcétera. Las familias pobres son generalmente más grandes y con una cantidad mayor de hijos por debajo de los 12 años de edad. El número de niños que acuden a la escuela es más bajo en estos hogares, mientras que la proporción de adolescentes que trabajan es mayor. Aunado a esto, los jefes de familia pobres tienen niveles de educación bajos y la pobreza tiende a ser mayor en hogares con jefes de familia jóvenes (véase también SEDESOL, 2002).

De igual manera, de acuerdo con el INEGI y CONAPO (1999; Corona y Tuirán, 2001), el acceso a las oportunidades educativas ha sido desigual para los diversos grupos de la población. Una diferencia de más de 10 años de escolaridad puede observarse entre el decil más bajo y el más alto de ingreso. Es también posible ver la inequidad educativa entre las generaciones: tienen un nivel de educación más alto los jóvenes que los adultos. Asimismo, existen diferencias en los niveles de escolaridad alcanzados por hombres y mujeres y entre regiones del país. Tal es el caso de los estados del sur del país, entre los cuales más del 14% de la población se caracteriza a sí misma como “sin instrucción”.

El rezago educativo

Se puede decir que México está dividido en tres grupos definidos por los niveles de educación. Cerca de un tercio de la población se compone de los jóvenes que van a la escuela (del preescolar a los programas de postgrado). Otro tercio tiene por lo menos el nivel básico de educación, más de nueve grados. Pero el último tercio, compuesto por 30.1 millones de personas de 15 años o más, no tiene la educación básica y esta situación se incrementa cada año a pesar de los esfuerzos de las políticas públicas y de los servicios privados de educación.

Dentro del grupo sin educación, existe un cuarto México que está integrado por los grupos indígenas multiétnicos, que están en la situación educativa más marginada, debido a que ha sido muy difícil estructurar programas relevantes que respeten su cultura y al mismo tiempo empoderen a las personas y a sus comunidades. La población indígena está situada en 24 estados y concentrada en 56 grupos étnicos, principalmente en las áreas centro y sur del país. Estos grupos tienen una diversidad de 62 lenguas y más de 130 variantes dialectales.

Esta desventaja en la educación para los adultos se conceptualiza como “rezago educativo”. El término “rezago” no es despectivo respecto a las personas que no han completado la educación básica; más bien se refiere a una tarea que no ha cumplido el sistema educativo: eliminar el rezago y alcanzar una situación en la cual todas las personas hayan concluido la educación básica (CONEVYT, 2005).

El II Censo de Población y Vivienda de 2005 reporta que la tasa de analfabetismo en México era de 8.4%, equivalente a 5.7 millones de personas. Asimismo, señala que ese año existían 9.8 millones de personas sin educación primaria y 14.6 millones sin secundaria (nueve grados). En términos económicos, se dice que la mayoría de esta gente trabaja en el sector informal y muchas empresas no desean invertir en la capacitación de estos trabajadores porque consideran que no vale la pena. Por otra parte, el porcentaje a nivel nacional de hombres analfabetas era aproximadamente de 6.8%, pero para la población indígena excedía el 30%, y cerca del 40% de mujeres indígenas eran analfabetas, mientras que el promedio total nacional era del 10% aproximadamente. Aunque no hay datos oficiales nuevos, la situación no ha cambiado mucho.

Por género, las mujeres muestran niveles de educación más bajos que los hombres. Mientras que en 2005 las mujeres representaron el 61% de los adultos analfabetas, los hombres representaron el 47% de los adultos que no habían terminado la educación secundaria. En cuanto a edad, aunque el 24% de las personas en rezago educativo era más joven de 30 años y el 43% era más joven de 40, los grupos de mayor edad mostraron mayor nivel de rezago: alcanzaron 71% aquéllos de entre 55-59 años de edad, el 78% entre 60-64 años de edad, y el 85% el grupo de 65 años de edad o más. Mientras que dos tercios de analfabetas eran mayores de 40 años, el 57 % de los adultos que no había concluido la educación secundaria era menor de esta edad.

Dados sus bajos niveles educativos y sus características, esta población constituye la demanda potencial de la educación básica para adultos. Es importante señalar también que dos tercios de la demanda potencial de educación básica proviene de grupos urbanos y un tercio de esta demanda está constituido por amas de casa. La demanda potencial de educación secundaria proviene principalmente de los jóvenes.

La demanda potencial de educación básica tiene su origen en las personas que nunca se inscribieron o fueron expulsadas del sistema escolar y es similar, en términos cuantitativos, a los educandos registrados en el sistema escolarizado. Asimismo, esta alta demanda potencial de educación básica para adultos es aún más significativa cuando se considera que el tamaño y la diversidad de este rezago representa una dura prueba para los procesos de acreditación de la educación básica (CONEVyT, 2005).

El Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo (MEVyT)

En México la Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) ha dado la responsabilidad principal de la educación básica para personas jóvenes y adultas (SEP, 1975), así como su certificación (SEP, 2005a-c), al Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos (INEA). Este fue creado el 31 de agosto de 1981 (SEP, 1981) como órgano descentralizado del gobierno federal para proporcionar los servicios de alfabetización, primaria y secundaria, así como capacitación no formal para el trabajo y educación comunitaria para la población de 15 años o más, que no haya accedido o haya quedado fuera del sistema educativo regular. Desde un principio, el INEA ha sido responsable de definir los modelos educativos para la población en situación de rezago, realizar investigaciones sobre la materia, elaborar y distribuir materiales educativos y reconocer y certificar los estudios de educación básica de personas jóvenes y adultas (SEP, 1986: Art. 2).

Hacia 1995, el INEA inició un proceso de reestructuración para flexibilizar sus propuestas educativas y atender de forma específica a los grupos más marginados, como los habitantes de zonas rurales, indígenas, madres trabajadoras y población migrante. Así, el INEA diseñó el Modelo Educación para la Vida (MEV), instrumentó programas especiales e inició su proceso de descentralización. En 2001, el INEA inició la implantación del MEV y posteriormente puso mayor énfasis en la dimensión del trabajo, por lo que cambió a Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo (MEVyT) (INEA, 2000c). Dentro de este modelo, la educación básica para personas jóvenes y adultas es considerada la mejor manera de promover la alfabetización y la continuidad educativa (CONEVyT, 2005).

El MEVyT fue diseñado como una propuesta que busca ofrecer educación que mejore las condiciones de vida y de trabajo de los grupos en rezago educativo y como una opción para el resto de la población que desea continuar aprendiendo. El propósito principal del MEVyT es ofrecer a personas jóvenes y adultas opciones educativas vinculadas con sus necesidades e intereses y encaminadas a desarrollar sus competencias para desenvolverse en mejores condiciones en su vida personal, familiar, laboral y social (SEP, 2005).

Este modelo coincide con las transformaciones sociales, políticas, económicas y tecnológicas, así como con las innovaciones y los compromisos internacionales, investigaciones y desarrollo de experiencias específicas en el campo de la educación de adultos. En este aspecto, el MEVyT hace suyos los conceptos de la UNESCO: aprender a aprender, aprender a entender, aprender a hacer, aprender a ser y aprender a vivir con otros (Delors, 1996). Se centra en la alfabetización y el cálculo matemático, para ayudar a los adultos a satisfacer sus necesidades y a desarrollar competencias claves y habilidades básicas.

La lectura y la escritura, la capacidad para calcular, la expresión oral y la comprensión del contexto se consideran herramientas esenciales del aprendizaje. Ésta es la razón por la cual el contenido básico del MEVyT apunta a fomentar el desarrollo de las habilidades de comunicación, de la solución de problemas y de razonamiento y participación, de modo que permitan a las personas jóvenes y adultas vivir y trabajar con dignidad, continuar aprendiendo, tener oportunidades de trabajo, cuidar de su salud y la de su familia, tomar decisiones fundamentales y convertirse en ciudadanos conscientes. El MEVyT también toma en cuenta temas relacionados, como derechos humanos; actitudes, valores y ética; desarrollo humano; identidad y diversidad; género y sentido del futuro (SEP, 2005).

Está diseñado de modo que los educandos:

- Se comprometan con una educación significativa, que responda a sus necesidades e intereses y a los requerimientos del país.
- Integren competencias para mejorar su desempeño en diversos aspectos de su vida.
- Consoliden las actitudes y los valores para mejorar su desarrollo personal, familiar y social.
- Adquieran las aptitudes que les permitan continuar aprendiendo a lo largo de su vida.

En este modelo, se considera que las personas jóvenes y adultas son personas que poseen conocimientos, competencias, experiencias, habilidades y valores en los cuales ellos basan nuevos conocimientos. Son seres humanos capaces de aprender de sus experiencias y de sus errores, así como de los demás, en las diversas circunstancias de su vida.

Uno de los principales objetivos del diseño curricular del MEVyT es estimular las aptitudes requeridas para el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida; por lo tanto, se ha hecho el intento de asociar la adquisición del conocimiento con el uso de las habilidades intelectuales y reflexivas. El criterio metodológico, las estrategias, los contenidos y los materiales dan prioridad a las situaciones

de la vida del adulto, que se utilizan como puntos de partida y se convierten en situaciones educativas. Adicionalmente, se ha emprendido una educación que contribuya a consolidar la dignidad del educando, su coexistencia armónica con el ambiente, respeto por sí mismo, por los otros, y respeto por la pluralidad de ideas, la libertad de expresión, el bien común, y su inclusión en varias esferas sociales.

De acuerdo con el MEVyT, el aprendizaje es un proceso social y cultural continuo, el cual es inherente a todos nosotros y se lleva a cabo mediante la interacción con los demás y el contexto. El aprendizaje intencionado es un proceso de reflexión y reconstrucción centrado en experiencias, conocimientos y situaciones que permiten entender y transformar la realidad y así mismo, actuar en consecuencia.

El MEVyT propone el tratamiento de contenidos y temas derivados de las experiencias del educando, habilidades y conocimientos; pone gran énfasis en el aprendizaje más que en la enseñanza, porque reconoce que, a través de su vida, cada persona desarrolla la capacidad de aprender y que cada persona vive esa experiencia de manera diferente.

La construcción de un nuevo aprendizaje está dada por la actividad permanente del individuo, cuando el educando utiliza y aplica el contenido que aprende. Esta orientación se inclina hacia cambios en el aprendizaje, el saber, el pensamiento, las sensaciones, el hacer, el actuar y la convivencia. De igual manera, el MEVyT reconoce la diversidad de las prácticas educativas. Por lo tanto, no fija un método singular y homogéneo para todos los grupos que aprenden, sino busca diversificar las prácticas existentes y aceptar que están basadas en demandas y características propias de las personas (CONEVyT 2005).

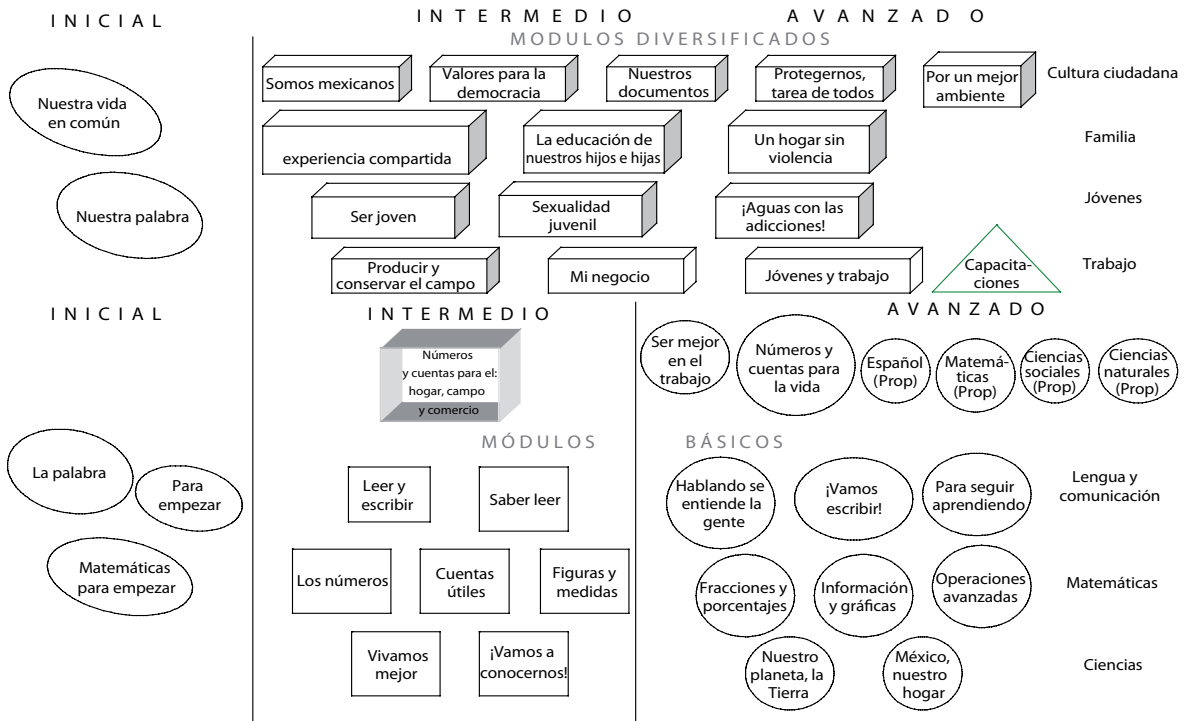
MEVyT para población hispanohablante

El MEVyT para la población hispanohablante (ver esquema curricular) es modular, diversificado, flexible, abierto e integrado, y tiene bien definidos sus objetivos educativos. Cada uno de los módulos incorpora contenidos y actividades de temas relacionados con la vida de los educandos y se orienta al desarrollo de sus competencias.



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Los módulos están definidos en términos de áreas básicas o fundamentales del conocimiento (Lengua y comunicación, Matemáticas y Ciencias), destinados a sectores prioritarios de la población, como jóvenes y mujeres; y en torno a los intereses de aprendizaje de esta población relacionados con temas de la vida y el trabajo, como familia, hijos y salud. Los últimos se llaman módulos diversificados. Asimismo, existen módulos regionales que desarrollan expertos estatales, de acuerdo con las necesidades de cada estado o región. Algunas veces se encuentra que un módulo regional se puede aprovechar a nivel nacional y, por lo tanto, se debe probar en otros estados.

Los módulos están organizados en tres niveles:

- El nivel inicial es para quienes necesiten o deseen aprender a leer y escribir, matemáticas básicas, o requieran desarrollar estas habilidades para usarlas en el futuro de manera funcional.

- El nivel intermedio es para aquéllos que ya saben leer y escribir, tienen un conocimiento básico de las matemáticas y desean continuar aprendiendo o quieren certificar su educación primaria.
- El nivel avanzado es para quienes deseen continuar aprendiendo y quieran reforzar algunas áreas del conocimiento o tener su educación secundaria certificada.

Además, se han desarrollado otros módulos con los títulos: *Vida y salud; El agua; Las riquezas de nuestra tierra; Ciudadanía: Participemos activamente; Cuando enfrentamos un delito... la justicia a nuestro alcance; Aprendamos del conflicto; Tu casa, mi empleo* (en trabajo doméstico); *Para enseñar a ser; Para crecer de 0 a 18 meses; Para crecer de 18 meses a 3 años; Para crecer de 3 a 6 años; Embarazo: Un proyecto de vida; Fuera de las drogas; Salud emocional; Hágalo por su salud sexual y reproductiva; Crédito para mi negocio; Para ganarle a la competencia; Ser mejor en el trabajo; Organiza tu bolsillo y las finanzas familiares; Vida en reclusión* (regional); *El Sinaloa que quiero* (regional); *K"kaax Nuestro monte* (regional); *Nuestra vida en la frontera: Somos migrantes* (regional) (CONEVyT, 2005).

Para verificar los resultados obtenidos, la evaluación del aprendizaje se considera como un proceso formativo, permanente y continuo, que permite a las personas jóvenes y adultas identificar su avance y sus limitaciones en el aprendizaje. Personas externas al proceso educativo conducen la evaluación con propósitos de acreditación y de certificación; es un proceso “de tercera parte” hasta cierto punto. La evaluación final, la acreditación y la certificación dependen del cumplimiento de las normas que la Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP, 2005c) ha especificado:

1. Los educandos acreditan cada módulo del MEVyT después de haber presentado las evidencias requeridas en sus materiales educativos, que se hayan revisado y se haya encontrado que cumplen con todos los requisitos para presentar el examen y haberlo aprobado.
2. Para presentar el examen de un módulo, los materiales del educando deben haberse revisado y haber cumplido con todos los requisitos. Asimismo, se deben considerar los esfuerzos de las personas jóvenes y adultas durante el proceso de su aprendizaje respecto al módulo en cuestión.
3. Para recibir el certificado de primaria, los educandos deben terminar con éxito todos los módulos básicos del nivel intermedio y dos módulos diversificados.
4. Para recibir el certificado de secundaria, los educandos deben concluir con éxito los módulos básicos del nivel avanzado y cuatro módulos diversificados.

Existe también un examen diagnóstico que permite ubicar a cada educando en el nivel que mejor se adapte a sus capacidades o encontrar que tiene el conocimiento y las habilidades que corresponden a la educación básica. Si la persona aprueba las sesiones del examen diagnóstico, puede recibir el crédito para uno o más módulos o terminar la educación primaria o secundaria y recibir el certificado correspondiente. Este examen se aplica únicamente si el candidato sabe leer y escribir.

El examen diagnóstico se aplica en cinco sesiones, que evalúan:

1. Lengua y comunicación y Matemáticas del nivel inicial.
2. Lengua y comunicación y Ciencias del nivel intermedio (primaria).
3. Matemáticas y Ciencias del nivel intermedio (primaria).
4. Lenguaje y comunicación y Ciencias del nivel avanzado (secundaria).
5. Matemáticas y Ciencias del nivel avanzado (secundaria).

Marco operativo del MEVyT

El INEA ofrece el MEVyT para la población hispanohablante en diferentes unidades operativas: círculos de estudio, puntos de encuentro y plazas comunitarias. Un círculo de estudio se compone de educandos que se reúnen para trabajar de manera conjunta con un asesor, sin importar las diferencias entre los niveles o los módulos de los educandos. Sin embargo, un joven o un adulto pueden también optar por estudiar en forma independiente. Los jóvenes y los adultos que estudian por su cuenta presentan los exámenes una vez que han concluido el estudio del material para un módulo dado.

Un punto de encuentro es un local donde varios círculos de estudio se reúnen y donde los usuarios se registran, presentan los exámenes y reciben sus certificados. Lo supervisa una persona que está a cargo de promover la incorporación de educandos y animarlos a continuar estudiando o capacitando; y de dar orientación técnico pedagógica a los asesores; de distribuir materiales educativos; y de pagar las gratificaciones a los asesores, de acuerdo con los resultados que hayan obtenido.

Una plaza comunitaria es un espacio educativo donde se ofrecen oportunidades para múltiples aprendizajes, una educación vocacional integral y capacitación para el trabajo. Las plazas recuperan el espíritu comunitario del proceso educativo y se hace uso de las tecnologías de información y comunicación (TIC). En estas plazas, se utilizan diferentes medios para acceder al conocimiento: materiales educativos impresos; informática, Internet, bibliotecas digitales, el portal educativo del Consejo Nacional de Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo (CONEVyT); y apoyos audiovisuales, como televisión

EDUSAT y videotecas. Para 2005, se habían creado más de 2 300 plazas comunitarias en el país (CONEVyT, 2005).

El propósito de las plazas comunitarias es ampliar la oferta de educación básica a la población que carece de ella, aprovechando los medios tecnológicos en los procesos de aprendizaje y abriendo opciones de acceso a la información y a recursos educativos innovadores. Al mismo tiempo, las plazas comunitarias intentan atraer a la gente de la comunidad que todavía no participa activamente en la educación básica para introducirla al uso pedagógico de nuevas tecnologías y promover el aprendizaje colectivo. Las plazas comunitarias ofrecen educación y programas de capacitación y no se limitan a los programas del INEA. También participan en el proyecto del CONEVyT para coordinar servicios diversos, incluyendo orientación para el autoempleo y micropréstamos, salud preventiva, certificación de competencias laborales y educación media superior abierta.

A fin de fomentar la continuidad educativa, el proyecto de plazas comunitarias busca combinar la educación directa con la educación a distancia, el trabajo individual y el de grupo, y la búsqueda de información en Internet. Las nuevas tecnologías ofrecen múltiples oportunidades de búsqueda, interpretación y manejo de la información, de una participación más activa en los procesos formativos actuales y de fijar nuevas formas de aprendizaje, así como lo relacionado con comunicación, y la solución de algunos problemas o necesidades personales, de trabajo, familiares o sociales.

Uno de los retos del proyecto educativo de plazas comunitarias es ayudar a las personas a desarrollar las habilidades necesarias para aprender con las TIC y aplicarlas tanto en su vida diaria como en su entorno de trabajo. En las plazas comunitarias también se organizan actividades que promueven la participación entre las personas y su participación en los proyectos educativos de las plazas, que ayudan a consolidar la educación no formal, la cual contribuye a un aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida.

Servicios para las comunidades mexicanas en el exterior

El INEA, en coordinación con la Dirección General de Relaciones Internacionales de la SEP y el Programa para las Comunidades Mexicanas en el Exterior a cargo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, ofrece alfabetización y servicios educativos de primaria y secundaria a través del sistema de enseñanza abierta tradicional y del proyecto de plazas comunitarias de e-México en distintas partes de los Estados Unidos. El propósito del programa es contribuir a la integración de ciudadanos mexicanos en el exterior a través del aprendizaje del español, como puente adicional al idioma inglés. Este servicio está dirigido a mexicanos y no mexicanos jóvenes y adultos que

tengan por lo menos 15 años y estén interesados en obtener un certificado de educación primaria o secundaria, así como para quienes deseen adquirir más habilidades para su trabajo, aumentar la fluidez en su lengua materna, hacer más fácil el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua, estimular su autoestima y el orgullo de sus orígenes y cultura, o apoyar a sus hijos, por ejemplo. El servicio educativo en el exterior se proporciona en grupos educativos, en plazas comunitarias y a educandos independientes, con la ayuda de un portal en colaboración. (CONEVyT, 2005)

La gente puede aprender y obtener un certificado de estudio con la ayuda de un asesor capacitado. En las sesiones de grupo, con la dirección del asesor, los educandos aprenden intercambiando ideas, experiencias y conocimientos, así como mediante el estudio de los materiales impresos, en las instalaciones facilitadas por la organización que está colaborando con el INEA.

En las plazas comunitarias, las personas jóvenes y adultas estudian con la ayuda de asesores, las TIC, Internet, videos y educación vía satélite. Estas plazas, establecidas o adaptadas por organizaciones en el exterior, y equipadas con computadoras, televisiones, videos y los instrumentos necesarios, proveen oportunidades educativas a las comunidades mexicanas y a las comunidades de origen mexicano en el exterior. En 2005, había 78 plazas comunitarias en diversas ciudades de los Estados Unidos.

Los portales en colaboración son responsabilidad de organizaciones públicas o privadas del exterior que reciben el contenido del portal del CONEVyT con el fin de mejorar el acceso a más personas, a Internet y al estudio en línea. Este portal es un recurso y una fuente para la colaboración académica y cultural, puesto que las instituciones implicadas contribuyen con el contenido del portal.

En cuanto a los educandos independientes, ellos pueden presentar los exámenes una vez que hayan terminado de estudiar el material del módulo del MEVyT. Aquéllos que eligen esta forma de servicio pueden acudir a cualquier plaza comunitaria o grupo educativo para recibir apoyo u orientación para presentar los exámenes y realizar cualquier trámite que se necesite.

Las acciones educativas en el exterior se realizan en colaboración con los consulados y organizaciones públicas, privadas y no gubernamentales, las cuales firman un acuerdo que define el proyecto educativo, las actividades, los compromisos, las responsabilidades y los recursos con que cada institución contribuirá. El INEA contribuye con el modelo y el material educativo, los servicios de acreditación y certificación para la primaria y la secundaria, y las estrategias de formación para los asesores, instructores, personal administrativo y responsables de las plazas comunitarias. Por su parte, la organización en el exterior proporciona las instalaciones, los muebles, las computadoras, los televisores, los videos, los DVD, las mediatecas, las bibliotecas en lengua

española, y, cuando sea apropiado, los servidores y el equipo necesario para mantener un portal, impresión de libros o quema de CD Asimismo, contribuye con los asesores, administrativos y los responsables de las plazas comunitarias. En resumen, la organización en el exterior proporciona los recursos humanos, financieros y de infraestructura necesarios, los cuales pueden adquirirse si así se necesita, especialmente si se decide incluir otras acciones educativas, como salud, comunicación o educación profesional.

MEVyT en línea

Para facilitar el acceso de los jóvenes y los adultos a los materiales educativos, así como para promover la capacitación de los usuarios en las nuevas TIC, se prepararon las versiones digitales de 17 módulos impresos, que hacen más fácil su uso y se distribuyen en un CD o en Internet. Por otra parte, en el portal del CONEVyT, es posible participar en 44 cursos, que corresponden tanto a los módulos básicos, de los tres niveles educativos mencionados, como a módulos diversificados.

MEVyT para la población indígena

Se ha diseñado una propuesta especial para la educación de la población indígena. Incluye los mismos niveles educativos del MEVyT para los hablantes de español, pero con diferentes rutas de aprendizaje. Esta oferta promueve un acercamiento intercultural que incorpora estrategias pedagógicas bilingües y permite a los usuarios elegir y transitar entre diversos niveles y módulos y de esta manera desarrollar procesos de alfabetización y de continuidad educativa (INEA, 2005a).

El MEVyT para la población indígena tiene dos rutas, mediante las cuales los miembros de grupos étnicos específicos pueden lograr una mayor comprensión y aumentar sus habilidades para aprender. Una es el MEVyT indígena bilingüe integrado (MIBI), el cual está diseñado para la población que tiene un nivel intermedio o eficiente del bilingüismo (coordinado). En el MIBI, el proceso del nivel inicial considera el trabajo simultáneo bilingüe en lengua indígena materna y en español como iguales, desde el momento de la alfabetización, lo cual es más complejo que el proceso de aprendizaje dirigido hacia los hispanohablantes, pero más adecuado para lograr la eficacia del proceso educativo.

La segunda ruta para grupos étnicos es el MEVyT indígena bilingüe con español como segunda lengua (MIBES), dirigido a personas monolingües con

un manejo del español nulo o incipiente. En la fase inicial, el MIBES se centra en la alfabetización en lengua materna y el español como segunda lengua. Al principio, el español se introduce oralmente. Para esta población, el trabajo simultáneo bilingüe en la alfabetización podría resultar poco eficaz y muy exigente para los usuarios, por lo que el español en forma escrita se aborda con posteridad al oral.

Dos módulos nuevos del MIBES están ya en lengua tsetal y rarámuri, mientras los grupos étnicos restantes son atendidos con materiales antiguos. Además, se están imprimiendo 15 módulos de MIBI y de MIBES y otros 27 están por ser desarrollados para 2006.

Para población indígena, en el MEVyT se plantea adicionalmente las siguientes estrategias:

- Continuar trabajando en el desarrollo local de módulos y materiales educativos para las dos rutas de alfabetización en el nivel inicial.
- Trabajar a partir de un tratamiento intercultural bilingüe de contenidos y materiales educativos para los niveles intermedio y avanzado.
- Retomar los módulos básicos del MEVyT para hispanohablantes correspondientes a esos niveles, para adaptarlos a la cultura y/o a la lengua indígena respectiva.
- Diseñar módulos diversificados que cubran las necesidades e intereses particulares de los grupos étnicos, por conducto de grupos técnico pedagógicos locales del INEA.
- Retomar los módulos diversificados del MEVyT para hispanohablantes como oferta abierta y optativa.
- Elaborar diccionarios y glosarios bajo el criterio etnia lengua, de modo que contengan palabras y expresiones correspondientes a las diversas variantes dialectales de la lengua en cuestión y sirvan como base para el trabajo con materiales educativos únicos para la misma etnia lengua, cuando sus características así lo permitan.

Además de los servicios tradicionales, los grupos indígenas también reciben servicios educativos a través del MIBI y del MIBES. El nivel inicial del MIBI y del MIBES fomenta en las personas jóvenes y adultas el desarrollo de competencias básicas de lectura y escritura (en su lengua materna y en español), así como de matemáticas, para permitirles hacer frente a situaciones diversas, interactuar en diversos contextos y continuar aprendiendo. Hasta 2005, estos servicios se proporcionan en 14 estados a grupos indígenas en el sector rural, aunque existen también numerosos grupos indígenas en áreas urbanas.

El sistema de atención de INEA

De acuerdo con los datos del Sistema Automatizado de Seguimiento y Acreditación (SASA), el INEA atiende a cerca de tres millones de personas cada año a nivel nacional, un promedio de más de 250 000 por mes, con alrededor de 120 000 asesores. El INEA proporciona sus servicios en las 32 entidades federativas de la República por conducto de los institutos creados como resultado de la descentralización o a través de las delegaciones estatales que aún dependen de las oficinas centrales.

En el contexto de la descentralización, el INEA ha conservado la función normativa a nivel central; la producción de materiales; el seguimiento, la evaluación y el registro; y el procesamiento de la información, así como la distribución de los recursos, de modo que los servicios del INEA en las entidades federativas estén referidos a un marco de trabajo común.

Para apoyar la operación, el INEA diseñó y mantiene en funcionamiento el Sistema Automatizado de Seguimiento y Acreditación (SASA), el cual permite sistematizar la información estadística derivada de la prestación de los servicios, así como apoyar la oferta de distintas oportunidades educativas. El SASA, que se ha generalizado a todo el país, por un lado, proporciona a los participantes información acerca de sus avances, y por otro, optimiza la administración de los servicios.

La operación de los servicios educativos se lleva por parte de los institutos y delegaciones estatales. Funcionan y dan seguimiento a los servicios educativos para personas jóvenes y adultas, reconocen y certifican aprendizajes, desarrollan procesos de formación para las figuras educativas y personal de apoyo, llevan a cabo la definición de contenidos regionales relevantes y la elaboración de materiales educativos, acuerdan acciones a nivel local y estatal que promuevan los servicios educativos, organizan voluntarios que proporcionen servicio a los adultos, e integran el sistema de información educativa para adultos a través de SASA.

Existen alrededor de 450 coordinaciones de zona en los principales municipios, ciudades, pueblos, o regiones; son responsables de coordinar y operar los servicios educativos, así como de facilitar el aprendizaje y la formación de las figuras educativas de su región.

Hay también 4500 microrregiones, la responsabilidad de cada una se atribuye geográficamente a las oficinas de su coordinación de zona. Las microrregiones están a cargo de reclutar asesores, promover la participación de diversos sectores de la sociedad en la educación de jóvenes y adultos, y coordinar la operación. Cada microrregión está dirigida por un técnico docente, que, en el caso de áreas indígenas, debe ser bilingüe. El técnico docente debe planear, negociar y concertar unidades operativas; promover la participación

de los sectores público, privado y social; distribuir y suministrar materiales educativos; actualizar el SASA; así como formar a las figuras solidarias y orientar su operación en los municipios, ciudades, localidades o colonias que se le asignen.

Para evaluar el aprendizaje y el desarrollo de competencias, el INEA también cuenta con 14 000 centros de aplicación donde los jóvenes y adultos presentan cerca de 600 000 exámenes mensualmente. La evaluación se realiza mediante la aplicación de pruebas nacionales estandarizadas, que cambian cada mes. Como los resultados de los exámenes son computarizados, dichos resultados, los informes y los certificados se pueden entregar automáticamente.

La red solidaria está integrada por las organizaciones y las personas voluntarias de la sociedad, que actúan como promotores y asesores, proveen los servicios, incorporan a los usuarios y atienden directa y solidariamente el proceso educativo de las personas jóvenes y adultas. El INEA trabaja bajo el principio de solidaridad social, por lo que establece acuerdos de colaboración con otras instituciones, organizaciones o individuos, para llevar a cabo actividades educativas a nivel local; solicita instalaciones prestadas, como escuelas, hospitales, centros culturales, compañías, oficinas públicas, iglesias y casas particulares.

Asimismo, el INEA trabaja con voluntarios que actúan como asesores, los cuales tienen niveles de escolaridad desiguales, desde educación secundaria en la mayoría de los casos hasta niveles altos en otros. Algunos de los voluntarios llevan a cabo estas actividades como parte de su servicio social obligatorio y no reciben remuneración alguna, mientras que otros asesores obtienen gratificación simbólica.

Figuras solidarias

La participación solidaria, voluntaria y sin remuneración salarial ni relación laboral, tiene las siguientes figuras:

- Asesor(a) de educación básica. Su función es motivar la participación de los educandos en el estudio y facilitar su aprendizaje mediante las actividades educativas y orientándolos en forma continua, ya sea grupal o individualmente. Participa, además, en los programas de formación y actualización pedagógicas.
- Asesor(a) bilingüe. Tiene como función promover la incorporación de las personas pertenecientes a su etnia y lengua y llevar a cabo actividades educativas para facilitar su aprendizaje, en el círculo de estudio o mediante atención individual. Participa además en programas de formación y actualización pedagógicas.

- Orientador(a) educativo(a). Su función es motivar a los educandos de la primaria 10-14, promover las actividades educativas, y facilitar y orientar el aprendizaje grupal o individualmente. Participa, además, en los programas de formación y actualización pedagógicas.
- Titular de punto de encuentro. Tiene como función organizar círculos de estudio en los espacios físicos, para que las personas puedan acudir a recibir información, así como los servicios educativos y de acreditación. Coordina, además, el funcionamiento de los servicios del punto de encuentro y atiende y sirve de enlace para suministrar los insumos necesarios que proporciona el INEA.
- Promotor(a) de educación básica. Su función es organizar la atención educativa en el ámbito rural con población dispersa: fomentar la incorporación de educandos y asesores a los círculos de estudio, gestionar la obtención de espacios físicos para las asesorías o la aplicación de exámenes, así como apoyar en el suministro de los materiales educativos para asesores y educandos y en la tramitación de documentos.
- Promotor comunitario. Tiene como función promover y difundir los servicios educativos al exterior de la plaza comunitaria, incorporar asesores y educandos, apoyar la gestión entre la plaza comunitaria y la estructura operativa institucional, así como desarrollar los proyectos educativos sociales y productivos de los que se pueda beneficiar la plaza comunitaria.
- Promotor(a) bilingüe. Su función es incorporar educandos indígenas y asesores bilingües, gestiona espacios físicos, apoya en la distribución de materiales educativos y en la recepción y tramitación de documentos oficiales de los educandos, es enlace con el personal institucional y lo vincula con las autoridades indígenas comunitarias para promover las actividades educativas.
- Apoyo bilingüe. Tiene como función realizar acciones educativas de traducción y uso de las lenguas, así como de interacción para la comprensión cultural en los círculos de estudio en que interactúen asesores que hablan español y educandos indígenas, cuando las condiciones de plurilingüismo lo requieran.
- Apoyo técnico. Su función es colaborar en la organización de las actividades dentro de la plaza comunitaria, en términos de integrar el uso de las tecnologías al aprendizaje de educandos, asesores y figuras institucionales. Tiene a su cargo el cuidado de la integridad, funcionamiento y aprovechamiento máximo de los equipos. El apoyo técnico se puede apoyar también en servicio social y en otros voluntarios para realizar las actividades educativas, así como las no formales.

Figuras solidarias de apoyo a la coordinación de zona:

- Promotor(a) de enlace. Tiene como función coordinar los procesos de planeación, prestación de servicios educativos, administración, acreditación y/o informáticos, que sean necesarios y repercutan en la operación y la calidad de los servicios.
- Promotor(a) de apoyo. Su función es participar en los procesos de evaluación, acreditación, académico y administrativo, entre otros, que permitan coadyuvar a los logros de acreditación y certificación de personas jóvenes y adultas.
- Aplicador(a) de exámenes. Es la persona que eventualmente presta sus servicios a una coordinación de zona para iniciar el proceso de acreditación. Tiene como función mantener el control, la disciplina y el orden durante la revisión de evidencias y la aplicación de exámenes, garantizando la confiabilidad y el cumplimiento de las normas establecidas.
- Coordinador(a) de aplicación de exámenes. Su función es coordinar a un grupo de aplicadores durante los eventos de aplicación de exámenes, garantizando el correcto uso de los materiales, así como el cumplimiento de las normas y políticas establecidas.

Existen gratificaciones para incentivar al personal solidario de los puntos de encuentro, plazas comunitarias y círculos de estudio, así como para los coordinadores de aplicación, aplicadores, promotores y demás figuras solidarias. Hay estímulos por desempeño para técnicos docentes y pago por resultados al punto de encuentro y a las figuras solidarias y prestadores del servicio social participantes en el proceso educativo de las personas jóvenes y adultas. Para hacerse acreedor al estímulo por desempeño, el técnico docente debe cumplir con sus metas de atención, de módulos acreditados y de usuarios que concluyen nivel (UCN).

Retos

Algunos de los retos que enfrenta México respecto a la educación de jóvenes y adultos son los siguientes:

- Mantener vigente el MEVyT con los cambios de gobierno.
- Revisar el modelo, de manera que los cambios respondan a necesidades nuevas y esenciales de las personas de diversos grupos y regiones.
- Expandir la educación relacionada con el trabajo.

- Tender a que los educandos en los niveles educativos más bajos, concluyan la educación básica. El énfasis del aprendizaje de estas personas se debe poner en las competencias clave transferibles, que permitan una mejor participación en las actividades sociales y laborales.
- Desarrollar la educación a distancia utilizando las TIC. Este aspecto implica la reingeniería del modelo; rediseñar los contenidos para los nuevos lenguajes de comunicación; promover el acceso a una sociedad del conocimiento abierta al aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida; y cerrar la brecha digital entre las comunidades y las regiones más ricas y más pobres, promoviendo la alfabetización tecnológica para los grupos más marginados.
- Generar modelos nuevos, diferentes y diversificados de apoyo a la capacitación utilizando las TIC, de modo que las personas se profesionalicen.

Tendencias

De acuerdo con los puntos precedentes, pueden observarse las siguientes tendencias:

- El Estado mexicano seguirá concentrando la gran mayoría de la oferta de educación para personas jóvenes y adultas de 15 años o más en rezago educativo, por conducto del INEA creado para tal fin.
- Se espera un incremento en la incorporación de personas jóvenes y adultas a los servicios que se ofrecen con el MEVyT, al igual que un número creciente de personas que obtienen su certificado de secundaria, esto es, que concluyen su educación básica.
- Será una constante la búsqueda permanente por mejorar los modelos y materiales para la atención del rezago educativo, de manera que sean pertinentes y relevantes para las distintas poblaciones por atender, en particular aquéllas más marginadas y con características más diferenciadas del resto de la demanda potencial de los servicios del INEA.
- Se promoverá la incorporación de los avances resultantes de las investigaciones en materia de educación para personas jóvenes y adultas que permitan lograr el aprendizaje significativo de los usuarios de los servicios del INEA.
- Se continuará con la actualización permanente de los materiales correspondientes a los módulos del MEVyT, de manera que sean pertinentes y relevantes para la población demandante.

- Se elaborarán módulos nuevos para responder a solicitudes específicas que correspondan a necesidades regionales o a problemas específicos propios de la época.
- La educación para personas jóvenes y adultas concentrará sus acciones tanto en jóvenes de 15 a 34 años a quienes les falta poco por concluir su educación básica, como en los grupos sociales más marginados, especialmente de indígenas y migrantes. En la institución continuarán coexistiendo los servicios destinados a la población en general con aquéllos para poblaciones específicas.
- La alfabetización de la población indígena asegurará que se parta de la lengua materna y que se respete la cultura de la etnia correspondiente.

En virtud de los resultados satisfactorios obtenidos en la coordinación con el programa Oportunidades, se promoverá una interrelación más cercana entre acciones educativas y otras acciones de desarrollo social y/o económico.

Además de la producción de materiales impresos, se intensificará el uso de tecnologías de la información y la comunicación, tanto en la práctica educativa de personas jóvenes y adultas como en procesos de formación de asesores y de figuras solidarias, de manera que se pueda cubrir a un número creciente de usuarios al contar con otra forma de acreditación alternativa.

Para la formación del personal institucional y de las figuras solidarias, se producirán materiales autoadministrables que apoyen tanto los procesos presenciales como la formación con apoyo de las tecnologías de información y comunicación.

Se concluirá el proceso de descentralización a todas las entidades federativas del país faltantes.

Se negociará un nivel más alto de financiamiento para respaldar las políticas públicas en el campo de la educación básica para adultos. La mayoría de los recursos seguirá siendo de procedencia federal, aunque la operación se descentralice totalmente a las entidades federativas.

Dadas las limitaciones presupuestales de los gobiernos federal y estatales, se buscará el financiamiento de la banca internacional para programas y/o proyectos prioritarios.

Conclusión

En general, se puede decir que el intentar abatir el rezago educativo en México no es sólo un reto ético, sino también económico, político y social para el país. Ninguna democracia es políticamente sustentable sin estructuras sociales equilibradas y democráticas así como sin oportunidades disponibles y accesibles para todos. La educación básica para la vida, el trabajo y la ciudadanía

es un camino importante para alcanzar dicha igualdad y accesibilidad. Pero en un país como México esta clase de acciones necesitan de ayuda financiera: México no podrá ser capaz de atender de manera efectiva este problema sin ayuda internacional. No sólo es cuestión de incrementar el presupuesto federal, sino de llevar a cabo inversiones en la educación de las personas y sus comunidades, en el contexto de proyectos de desarrollo.

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Programa Nacional de Educación para Adultos de Sudáfrica

*Morongwa Ramarumo y Vernon Jacobs**

Este capítulo habla de la educación para adultos y jóvenes en Sudáfrica respecto a programas formales por un lado y a métodos no formales por el otro.

Hasta 1994, Sudáfrica tuvo un sistema de educación segregada por razas y no ofrecía educación de calidad a la mayoría de raza negra. Hoy en día la consecuencia es un legado de aproximadamente ocho millones de adultos que carecen de una educación básica sólida. Esto significa que unos cuantos ciudadanos han tenido acceso a una base educativa que les permita seguir aprendiendo, tener oportunidades de buenos empleos o incluso participar activamente en la vida económica, social y política del país.

En este periodo de predemocracia, los programas de Educación Básica y Capacitación para Adultos (EBCA) básicamente consistieron en dar clases en escuelas nocturnas que impartían los maestros de las escuelas convencionales a las personas interesadas. Esta situación produjo una gran variedad de clases. Algunos se enfocaron en lecciones normales a través de las cuales se enseñó los alumnos el programa escolar convencional con la meta de hacer posible que esos alumnos se inscribieran y presentaran exámenes normales al final del año académico. Los alumnos que asistían a estas clases formaban un grupo heterogéneo con aspiraciones diferentes y figuraban entre los siguientes grupos de estudiantes.

Programas centrados en la inscripción: Estos programas incluían: 1) Jóvenes que no habían podido matricularse el año anterior y que sentían que

* Traducción de Beatriz León de la Vega.

necesitaban repetir el último año pero que no deseaban asistir a una escuela formal.

2) Jóvenes que no pudieron matricularse antes y que estaban desempleados o tenían empleos informales y sentían que necesitaban un comprobante de admisión para mejorar su nivel de vida.

3) Adultos que no habían podido matricularse el año anterior pero que sentían que necesitaban concluir un nivel pero no podían regresar a una escuela formal.

4) Adultos que nunca se inscribieron pero que sentían que necesitaban un comprobante de admisión como medio para aprovechar oportunidades de aprendizaje y capacitación en el futuro.

Programas centrados en la educación general: Entre los alumnos que asistían a estas clases se encontraban los que tenían muy poca escolaridad, hasta un nivel bajo o no tenían ninguna escolaridad. A estos educandos se les brindaban los mismos programas de aprendizaje que a las personas del sistema escolar convencional. Para preparar las clases, dichos programas se basaron en el plan de estudios de las escuelas formales.

Ninguna de estas clases de programas EBCA tenía una relevancia real para los estudiantes adultos. Los programas eran de carácter formal, académico y pedagógico y no consideraban las experiencias de los estudiantes adultos o las necesidades que los motivaban a participar en las clases de los programas EBCA. Muchos, si no es que todos, de los maestros no estaban capacitados en andragogía, lo que causó que los alumnos del sistema educativo formal fueran utilizados como estudiantes adultos. Las evaluaciones de los programas de aprendizaje eran las mismas pruebas y exámenes diseñados para el salón de clase (que eran, y siguen siendo intimidantes para muchos estudiantes) y, en general, los estudiantes obtenían niveles académicos más altos pero no tenían un auténtico valor agregado para su calidad de vida personal al asistir a las clases de EBCA.

Para estas clases se usaron materiales de apoyo para aprendizaje y enseñanza. Éstos comprendían principalmente libros de texto de las escuelas convencionales y tenían una base pedagógica. Se basaban en el supuesto de que los estudiantes no tenían experiencia previa ni conocimientos adquiridos a través de otros programas formales (pero no reconocidos) como los presentados por grupos parroquiales, otras iniciativas de la comunidad o iniciativas no gubernamentales. Los estudiantes que asistían a clases tenían que aportar sus propios útiles y cuadernos de trabajo o dependían de los escasos recursos con los que el educador podía ayudarles.

Sin embargo, cabe mencionar que estas intervenciones no necesariamente fueron una desventaja para todos los estudiantes que asistían a las clases.

Muchos de los que lograron un alto nivel académico como resultado de su asistencia a estas clases aún hablan con nostalgia de la “escuela nocturna” y de cómo estas clases contribuyeron a su desarrollo personal.

En una conferencia del 6 y 7 de marzo de 2005 sobre EBCA en la Provincia KwaZulu-Natal en Sudáfrica, el Sr. Sbu Ndebele, Ministro de KwaZulu-Natal, explicó que durante su encarcelamiento en Robben Island en la época del apartheid, los prisioneros políticos escribían usando el papel de bolsas de cemento y pedazos de carbón o rocas tipo yeso que obtenían de canteras de la isla donde los forzaban a trabajar. Otros estudiantes de la década de 1960 e incluso hacia fines de la de 1970 comentan que usaban “pizarras” (un pedazo de roca en forma de teja) para escribir.

Muchos educadores de la época de la “escuela nocturna” se convirtieron en pioneros del desarrollo y formación de la política educativa en Sudáfrica, tomando muchas medidas, necesarias para la elaboración de programas educativos para adultos, en particular programas básicos.

El orden democrático: preparación de una política

La elaboración de una política para los programas EBCA ha formado parte integral de un proceso más amplio: el desarrollo del marco de una nueva política para todos los aspectos del sistema de educación y capacitación en una Sudáfrica democrática. Las iniciativas de los primeros años de la década de 1990 fueron de particular importancia para generar el concepto actual de EBCA en Sudáfrica. La política para los programas EBCA se elaboró a partir de tres marcos, concretamente, las leyes: *National Education Policy Act No. 27* (RSA 1996), *White Paper on Education* (DOE 1995) y *South African Qualifications Authority Act No. 58* (RSA 1995). Además, la Política de Educación Nacional hace posible un sistema EBCA dentro del cual se pueden plantear y utilizar los diferentes elementos que afectan la implementación eficaz de la educación básica y capacitación para adultos. De este modo, reconoce las funciones a desempeñar por una multiplicidad de partes interesadas de los sectores público, no gubernamental y privado. La política de EBCA (DOE 1997a) desarrollada por el sector EBCA debía atender las necesidades de una amplia variedad de grupos de aprendizaje, incluidos los obreros sindicalizados en la economía formal, trabajadores independientes y subempleados, jóvenes y adultos subempleados y mujeres jefes de familia en áreas tanto urbanas como rurales.

Ante todo, la política intentó desarrollar y hacer posible un entorno en el que florecieran programas de educación básica y capacitación de alta calidad para adultos en todo el país. Estas políticas llevaron a la promulgación de la ley *EBCA Núm. 52* (RSA 2000), que estipula el establecimiento de estructuras gubernamentales para centros de EBCA públicos y privados.

El Marco Nacional de Calificación (MNC) permite la acumulación de créditos para aprendizaje en el sector EBCA que forman la base de las carreras profesionales. Es lo suficientemente flexible como para permitir que el aprendizaje logrado fuera de este MNC constituya la base de ingreso a un programa de aprendizaje de acuerdo con las necesidades y opciones del estudiante. El MNC se considera un requisito en el que se puede basar un sistema para el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida accesible y equitativo.

El orden democrático y la transformación

La llegada del orden democrático a Sudáfrica ha abierto oportunidades para la mayoría de los sudafricanos. La educación es un componente esencial de la reconstrucción, desarrollo y transformación de la sociedad sudafricana. La *Declaración de Derechos* de la *Constitución de la República de Sudáfrica* (RSA 1996) resume los derechos de los ciudadanos a la “educación básica, incluida la de adultos y educación preuniversitaria, que el estado a través de medidas razonables, debe hacer disponible y accesible en forma progresiva”. El informe del gobierno *White Paper on Education and Training* (DOE 1995) establece que “el derecho a la educación básica... corresponde a todas las personas, es decir, a todos los niños, jóvenes y adultos. La educación básica es por ende, un derecho legal el cual todas las personas pueden ejercer”.

Desarrollos dentro del sector EBCA

Junto con el sector EBCA (organizaciones no gubernamentales, paraestatales, el sector privado y otras departamentos de gobierno), el Departamento de Educación esquematizó una visión para la EBCA: es ayudar a dar lugar a “una Sudáfrica en la que todos sus ciudadanos adquieran una educación básica y capacitación que les permita participar eficazmente en los procesos socioeconómicos y políticos para contribuir a la construcción, al desarrollo y la transformación social” (DOE 1977a).

Los valores fundamentales adoptados para Sudáfrica son dignidad humana, libertad, justicia, democracia, igualdad y desarrollo nacional.

Para muchas personas, EBCA ofrece una oportunidad poco frecuente de mejorar su situación actual. Para algunos es una oportunidad para enfrentarse directamente a un mundo que se ha vuelto complicado por la necesidad de leer, escribir y saber aritmética. Para otros, el programa les enseña a manejar, incluso cómo sobrevivir, en este mundo e incluso otros, el programa se trata de personas que se unen y relacionan entre ellas.

Introducir el énfasis en intervenciones de alfabetización básica

En la época de predemocracia, EBCA no contaba con una estructura, los estudiantes asistían a clases por motivación, necesidad e iniciativa propias. En la época de la democracia, las personas involucradas en el proceso de formalizar y estructurar un sistema más estable y confiable reconocieron la necesidad de dar atención a los estudiantes que están clasificados como analfabetas. Aunque el objetivo de EBCA era que todos los estudiantes se abrieran camino en la vida, los analfabetas, al no tener escolaridad previa, se encontraron marginados, ya que para los educadores era más fácil tratar con los que sí tenían cierta escolaridad y podían leer y escribir. La situación era más fácil aún en el caso de los estudiantes que deseaban mejorar sus resultados de admisión a la educación superior y por consiguiente seguían un plan de estudios formal. El resultado de todo esto fue que la gente que nunca había ido a la escuela continuaba en desventaja, a pesar de que el orden posdemocracia les daba el derecho a una buena educación.

Entre 1999 y 2001, el Departamento de Educación estableció una campaña de alfabetización masiva, la Iniciativa de Alfabetización Nacional de Sudáfrica (IANS). El propósito de esta iniciativa fue tratar de reducir drásticamente la tasa de analfabetismo en Sudáfrica para 2004. Los resultados del censo de 1996 indicaron que el número de personas que nunca habían asistido a la escuela llegó a cuatro millones, en ese momento, el 10% de una población de 40 millones. La iniciativa se dirigió a un millón de personas en un intento de llegar al 25% de los analfabetas del país.

La campaña dependería de las relaciones sólidas con colaboradores del sector de organizaciones no gubernamentales, otras dependencias gubernamentales y proveedores del sector privado. La dotación de personal para la campaña dependería de voluntarios, en especial en áreas cercanas al lugar de residencia de los estudiantes potenciales. Esto haría posible que los educandos potenciales fueran asesorados por personas conocidas, que comprendían y hablaban su idioma, estaban familiarizadas con las culturas locales, tradiciones y necesidades, y que no necesitarían recorrer grandes distancias. Por su participación, los educadores recibirían una remuneración para cubrir cualquier gasto incidental de desplazamiento. Esta situación facilitó dar clases en las proximidades y los alumnos no necesitaban transporte motorizado para asistir a clases. Los programas de esta campaña no necesariamente cumplían directamente con los nuevos enfoques formales que se estaban implementando o previendo en los programas formales EBCA, pero proporcionarían una base educativa que permitiría a los alumnos tener acceso a los programas formales de los Centros de Educación Pública para Adultos (CEPA).

El lanzamiento inicial de IANS incluyó programas piloto iniciados en sitios seleccionados en dos provincias. Posteriormente, en febrero de 2002, se lanzó el programa en todas las provincias. Este componente del programa se puso en marcha en colaboración con el Instituto EBCA en la Universidad de Sudáfrica (UNISA).

Fondos para la campaña

La campaña de IANS reunió fondos principalmente a través de donadores, recibiendo el financiamiento inicial del Ministerio Británico para el Desarrollo Internacional (MBDI) y la Agencia Danesa para el Desarrollo Internacional (ADDI). Los recursos del gobierno se enfocaron a conseguir recursos relacionados con el personal y disponibilidad de espacio para el proyecto en las provincias donde había oficinas de IANS. Los fondos de MBDI se usaron principalmente para financiar el programa dirigido por UNISA mientras que los fondos de ADDI se usaron para financiar el Proyecto de Alfabetización de IANS en KwaZulu-Natal.

Logros del proyecto

Al lanzar la colaboración IANS/UNISA en 2002, el objetivo era ofrecer alfabetización básica a 75 000 educandos entre febrero de 2002 y diciembre de 2003. Sin embargo, para diciembre de 2002, el proyecto había alcanzado 100 000 personas y se estableció una meta de otras 100 000. Para fines de 2003, el proyecto había alcanzado un total de 332 000 alumnos.

El éxito de este programa se relaciona con una serie de factores, uno de los cuales fue que las clases se impartieron donde los alumnos residían; de manera que éstos no tenían que viajar lejos para asistir a clases. Un segundo factor fue que las clases eran gratuitas. En el pasado, a menudo la lamentable pobreza de los grupos objetivo limitaba la participación en los programas EBCA y de alfabetización; los futuros educandos no tenían dinero para pagar incluso los gastos mínimos. La eliminación de este factor costo, hizo al programa accesible a más alumnos.

Además, otro factor positivo fue que los alumnos no estaban obligados a presentar un examen formal escrito al final del programa. El avance del educando se evaluaba mediante evaluación acumulativa.

A través del financiamiento de ADDI, el programa se dirigió a 5 000 alumnos y consiguió llegar a por lo menos 3 500. Por medio del financiamiento interno del programa IANS, el programa pretendía 5 605 alumnos y alcanzó por lo menos 4 000.

Retos

Sin demérito de los resultados positivos de IANS/UNISA, el programa IANS no fue un gran éxito en su totalidad. Una de las más importantes en este aspecto fue la falta de fondos suficientes. Para finales de 2003, la ADDI había comenzado a señalar que no se ofrecerían fondos para continuar el programa. Esto llevó a un recorte de los objetivos establecidos y una mayor dependencia en otros recursos menores de ADDI y departamentos internos.

El programa también destacaba la importancia de vincular las colaboraciones en un nivel del gobierno con todos los demás niveles. En el programa IANS, aunque había informes favorables de su éxito y se habían elaborado los documentos para lograr ese éxito, los funcionarios que debían ser responsables del programa en la operación no siempre estaban totalmente informados sobre el desarrollo del programa en las provincias y distritos de los cuales eran responsables. Esto, en ocasiones, causaba disputas sobre la veracidad de los informes, ya que no se observaba que los estudiantes avanzaran de programas de alfabetización básica no formales a programas EBCA más formales. Sin embargo, un factor que contribuyó a esto puede relacionarse con el hecho de que los alumnos tienden a salir del sistema cuando se les pide que se desplacen para asistir a clases, lo cual no sucedería con el programa IANS.

Otro factor es que los alumnos estarían participando en programas con una evaluación más enfocada a exámenes. En general se ha observado que los alumnos que asisten a alfabetización básica y EBCA tienen fobia por los exámenes y, por lo tanto, se resisten a asistir a clases en las que es un requisito.

Un tercer factor es que los programas actuales aún no tienen espacio para confirmar qué es lo que los alumnos esperan de los programas. Así, aunque algunos alumnos podrían haber salido después de lograr lo que esperaban, es muy probable que se afirmara que habían desertado, aunque fuera una afirmación incorrecta. El programa EBCA está comenzando a explorar la posibilidad de incluir asesoría antes del curso para averiguar las aspiraciones de los alumnos y buscar un medio para atenderlas.

El Plan de Educación Básica y Capacitación de Adultos (EBCA)

En 2005, Sudáfrica celebró el 50° Aniversario de la Carta de la Libertad (*Freedom Charter*, Congreso Nacional Africano 1955). La carta fue una inspiración durante la lucha por la libertad en Sudáfrica. En la sección titulada “Se abrirán las puertas del aprendizaje y la cultura”, la carta asegura valientemente que: “El analfabetismo finalizará por medio de un plan de educación

masiva”. Durante los últimos diez años, el Ministerio de Educación ha desarrollado semejante plan en respuesta a los retos que rodean la provisión de EBCA. Por consiguiente se ha llegado a mucho más de un millón de alumnos adultos en los programas de alfabetización. El ministerio de educación, junto con el sector EBCA, desarrolló un *Plan Nacional de Implementación de Múltiples Años para la Educación y Capacitación de Adultos: Provisión y Acreditación* (DOE, 1997b).

Por conducto de la Dirección de Educación y Capacitación de Adultos, el Ministerio de Educación inició una serie de actividades para desarrollar un sistema EBCA que se basa en los principios y prácticas de igualdad, desarrollo, reconstrucción, acceso, integración, colaboración, uso continuo de recursos, un plan de estudios flexible, estándares de logro basados en resultados, reconocimiento de aprendizaje previo y rentabilidad.

Aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida

DOE considera la EBCA como una parte y como la base del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Por lo tanto, muchos aspectos de su política tratan de integrar la EBCA al aprendizaje permanente como un nivel sustentable de alfabetización, conocimientos aritméticos básicos, conocimientos generales y carreras certificadas.

Plan de estudios y evaluación

El ministerio de educación desarrolló un amplio marco nacional de planes de estudio para contribuir en la provisión de programas de aprendizaje de calidad dentro de las disposiciones de la Autoridad Sudafricana de Calificaciones (ASAC). La ASAC adoptó un método basado en resultados para la educación y capacitación y su Marco Nacional de Calificaciones (MNC) demuestra donde encaja EBCA en el marco de educación y capacitación global. El plan de estudios EBCA se basa en unidades y se registra por medio de SAQA.

Los cursos reglamentarios adoptados por SAQA prescinden de la noción del “plan de estudios común”. Ya que el método basado en resultados se expresa en estándares de unidades, EBCA no tiene un plan de estudios común reglamentario. Los proveedores de EBCA tienen la libertad de diseñar sus programas de aprendizaje y los alumnos tienen la misma libertad de elegir sus propias formas de aprender. Los practicantes, educadores y maestros usan su *expertise* sobre métodos de evaluación y desarrollo de mecanismos de reconocimiento de los aprendizajes previos, que todavía no se ha instrumentado.

Marco Nacional de Calificaciones

La ASAC se estableció por medio de la *Ley de Autoridad Sudafricana de Calificaciones No. 58* (República de Sudáfrica [RSA] 1995). Su objetivo fue supervisar el desarrollo del MNC a través de toma de decisiones concertadas.

El MNC hace posible que los educadores de los sectores público y privado establezcan organismos de acreditación para el desarrollo de normas nacionales adecuadas en sus campos de especialidad. Por ende, los programas deben estar reconocidos de acuerdo con los estándares definidos y esto permitirá que los alumnos obtengan créditos para las calificaciones nacionales.

Los programas de Educación Básica y Capacitación para Adultos del Ministerio de Educación están acreditados por Umalusi, el consejo que asegura la calidad de la educación. Aquí el reconocimiento depende de si los alumnos pueden cumplir con las normas de unidades registradas a nivel nacional. El control de calidad incluye el monitoreo y moderación de los sistemas de evaluación. Para educación básica y capacitación de adultos, las evaluaciones se realizarán en forma interna por departamentos nacionales y provinciales y en forma externa por Umalusi.

Tabla 1. Explicación de las reglas de combinación para educación básica y capacitación de adultos y el certificado general de educación y capacitación

GETC con base en estándares de unidades		
Categorías de aprendizaje	%	Créditos
Fundamental • Lenguaje, alfabetización y comunicación. • Nociones matemáticas (Selección para incluir estándares de unidades de subáreas de aprendizaje).	30	20 36 16
Tronco común • Arte y cultura. • Economía y ciencias administrativas. • Humanidades y ciencias sociales. • Orientación para la vida. • Matemáticas y ciencias matemáticas. • Ciencias naturales. • Tecnología. • Idioma adicional (Selección de estándares de unidades de un mínimo de cuatro áreas de aprendizaje [elegidas con relación a optativas si el alumno sigue esa vía] de las áreas de aprendizaje especificadas).	45	54

Optativas • Agricultura. • Pequeñas, medianas y micro empresas. • Atención médica secundaria. • Turismo (Selección de estándares de unidades de cualquiera de las 12 áreas o subáreas de aprendizaje, incluidas otras optativas desarrolladas para la educación básica para adultos).	25	30
TOTAL	100	120

Moderación

Ésta se hace para asegurar que la evaluación es convincente, justa, confiable y válida. Asegura que todos los asesores que evalúan un estándar de unidades en particular están usando métodos de evaluación comparables y haciendo juicios congruentes sobre el desempeño de los alumnos. La moderación de la evaluación ocurre en el nivel del proveedor (moderación interna) y Umalusi (moderación externa). Umalusi también ofrece certificación a los alumnos que hayan completado las áreas de aprendizaje y que hayan obtenido un Certificado General de Educación y Capacitación (CGEC).

Calificación CGEC

De acuerdo con los reglamentos de ASAC, el CGEC se otorga con base en créditos. Un crédito se define como el reconocimiento de que el alumno ha cumplido con una serie de criterios dentro de un área específica. El CGEC se otorga cuando el alumno ha obtenido 120 créditos en el nivel 4 de EBCA, lo cual refleja una variedad equilibrada de las asignaturas fundamentales, comunes y/u optativas. EBCA CGEC se basa en estándares de unidades.

Programa ampliado de obras públicas: mandato presidencial

De acuerdo con la Carta de la Libertad, el Presidente de Sudáfrica, Thabo Mbeki, afirmó en su discurso sobre el estado de la nación el 21 de mayo de 2004: “El ministerio de educación ampliará la cobertura del programa de EBCA, alineándolo con los objetivos de capacitación del programa ampliado de obras pública (PAOP) (Mbeki, 2004). Éste, es uno de los programas de corto a mediano plazo que tiene por objeto de reducir el desempleo y por consiguiente erradicar la pobreza.

La encomienda del presidente al ministerio de educación tiene dos elementos interrelacionados: ampliar la cobertura del programa EBCA, y alinearlo con los objetivos de enseñanza del PAOP.

La primera tarea del Ministerio de Educación es garantizar que nuestros programas de educación básica para adultos lleguen a un mayor número de adultos. La segunda tarea es evaluar el contenido de los programas EBCA y específicamente crear una alineación entre estos programas y los objetivos de capacitación del programa ampliado de obras públicas. Para hacerlo, es necesario desarrollar un entendimiento común de los objetivos de capacitación del PAOP. Éstos son:

- Dar participación en el trabajo productivo a un número significativo de desempleados para hacer posible que tengan ingresos en los primeros cinco años del programa.
- Proporcionar a las personas desempleadas educación y habilidades en los primeros cinco años del programa.
- Asegurar que los participantes de PAOP puedan aprovechar su experiencia y permitir que establezcan sus propios negocios /servicios o que tengan un empleo.
- Utilizar los presupuestos del sector público para reducir y disminuir el desempleo.

Ministerio de Educación:

Trabajando juntos con todos los ministerios

Podemos concluir que los objetivos de capacitación del PAOP aludidos por el Presidente Mbeki en su discurso sobre el estado de la nación de 2004 están incluidos en el segundo de los cuatro objetivos anteriores.

El Ministerio de Educación junto con el Ministerio de Ciencias y Tecnología, se centra en matemáticas, ciencia y tecnología. El primero ha incorporado alumnos adultos en estos programas. El objetivo es dirigir las escasas habilidades que necesita el país para su desarrollo económico.

El Ministerio de Educación y el Ministerio del Trabajo desarrollaron una estrategia de desarrollo de recursos humanos, que aborda la falta de aprendizaje y habilidades de los adultos en el país. Ambos ministerios han creado una estrategia de garantía de calidad que asegura la competitividad global.

Para asegurar una vida mejor para todos los sudafricanos, todos los ministerios del gobierno están trabajando juntos en la implementación del desarrollo urbano y rural. El desarrollo rural integrado y la estrategia de renovación urbana, que el presidente de Sudáfrica inició en 2001, está dando frutos. El DOE ha producido 7 800 estudiantes calificados y 240 educadores de EBCA que se prepararon en empresas pequeñas, medianas y micro y principalmente en agricultura. Asimismo, el Ministerio de Educación y las cuatro autoridades del sector educación y capacitación del Ministerio del Trabajo han capa-

citado a adultos en construcción, electricidad, agricultura y turismo en 60 centros de educación pública para adultos en el país como parte de la lucha contra la pobreza. Estas personas se convertirán en empresarios, trabajarán por cuenta propia y darán empleos a otras personas en sus pequeñas empresas o microempresas.

Conclusión

Desde la formación de la Dirección de Educación y Capacitación de Adultos, el Ministerio de Educación ha coordinado el desarrollo de programas EBCA. Los programas de educación de adultos del DOE se centran únicamente en alfabetización y nociones aritméticas pero también en habilidades de auto-desarrollo.

Recientemente, el Ministro de Educación solicitó la formación de un Comité Ministerial sobre Alfabetización que analizará otros modelos de alfabetización básica masiva y preparará un informe sobre los resultados de su evaluación, haciendo recomendaciones para un nuevo intento de extender el programa de alfabetización en Sudáfrica, para lograr las metas implícitas en el *Marco de Acción de Dakar* (UNESCO 2000), la *Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas* (ONU 2002) y las *Metas de Desarrollo del Milenio* (ONU, 2006).

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III Casos de países Asia

Alfabetización y aprendizaje de adultos en Bangladesh: la experiencia de UNESCO y las ONG

*Ahmadullah Mia y Wolfgang Vollmann**

El propósito de este capítulo es: 1) Destacar claramente la situación de la alfabetización y el aprendizaje de adultos de la población de 15 años en adelante en Bangladesh; 2) explicar la manera en que la UNESCO trata de contribuir estratégicamente a la alfabetización y aprendizaje de adultos desarrollando proyectos piloto en áreas clave así como módulos de asesoría sobre políticas capaces de mejorar la situación; y 3) enfatizar las iniciativas de destacadas organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONG) para alfabetizar a través de programas de calidad. Esto es importante en virtud de la labor del Gobierno de Bangladesh hacia el *Desbloqueo del potencial: Estrategia Nacional para la Reducción de la Pobreza Acelerada* (GPRB 2005) de conformidad con su compromiso con las Metas del Milenio. Al mismo tiempo, Bangladesh tiene la obligación de velar por la Educación para Todos (EFA) y las metas que establece el *Marco de Acción de Dakar* (UNESCO 2000) dedicado a la reducción de la pobreza. En lo sucesivo,

* Traducción de Beatriz León de la Vega.

debe quedar claro que a pesar de estas obligaciones y de las iniciativas anteriores emprendidas, el estado actual de los esfuerzos del sector público es ambivalente con respecto a la alfabetización y el aprendizaje de la población adulta y la “aceleración” de su estrategia para reducir la pobreza. Esta situación podría plantear un enorme reto a la capacidad de Bangladesh para cumplir con su compromiso de educación para todos. Desde esta perspectiva, la intervención de las ONG se ha vuelto crucial para lograr las metas de los proyectos de alfabetización y aprendizaje de adultos. La función de las ONG en la promoción de la educación no formal (ENF) en el pasado queda como constancia; este capítulo se enfocará en algunas ONG que actualmente participan en el análisis de la posibilidad de mejorar significativamente la situación del aprendizaje de adultos. El problema de la alfabetización y el aprendizaje de los adultos aquí se considerará desde la perspectiva de los “derechos” como del “desarrollo”. Con ello, este capítulo parte de la información disponible en diversos artículos y documentos oficiales así como datos primarios recopilados de las prácticas actuales de diez ONG que están implementando programas de educación de adultos*.

Reflexión sobre el nivel de alfabetización: el problema

La magnitud del problema de la alfabetización

Los informes del censo y otras encuestas por muestreo realizados por la Oficina de Estadística de Bangladesh (OEB) normalmente reflejan información de alfabetización proporcionada por los miembros de las familias. La tabla 1 presenta las tasas de alfabetización de adultos por años de censo de 1974 a 2001. La población adulta calculada entre 15 y 45 años de edad era de 59.8 millones de personas y la meta de alfabetización de la población adulta antes del año 2000, era de 25.6 millones, como se puede observar en la tabla 3.

Al examinar detenidamente la educación primaria universal se observa que más de seis millones de niños en edad escolar (6 a 11 años) seguirán sin enseñanza formal y formarán parte del índice de adultos analfabetas en los siguientes ocho a nueve años. Muchos más la abandonarán antes de obtener una alfabetización básica. Por otro lado, un gran número de personas recién alfabetizadas retrocederán al grupo analfabeta ya que no habrán logrado una alfabetización sostenible debido a la mala calidad del sistema de alfabetización actual. El número de adolescentes y jóvenes, un grupo prioritario para un programa de alfabetización, excederá diez millones en los siguientes cinco años. El anteproyecto de *Educa-*

* Estas agencias han sido identificadas consultando CAMPE 2004. A partir de una lista preliminar, se estableció comunicación directa para asegurar que las agencias tuvieran un programa de educación para adultos durante un periodo más largo que la Dirección General de Educación No Formal (DGENF), apoyado temporalmente (nueve meses) a través de sus propios centros y con oficinas en Dhaka para proporcionarnos la información necesaria.

ción para Todos – Plan de Nacional de Acción II (2003-2015) (GBRB 2003) propuso una meta de una población de 20 millones de adultos analfabetas a cubrir antes de 2015, lo cual representa un enorme reto para Bangladesh.

Tabla 1. Tasa de alfabetización de la población a partir de los 15 años de edad por sexo y ubicación, 1974-2001

Localidad	1974			1981			1991			2001		
	Total	H	M	Total	H	M	Total	H	M	Total	H	M
Bangladesh	25.8	37.2	13.2	29.2	39.7	18.0	35.3	44.3	25.8	47.5	53.9	40.8
Urbana	48.1	62.5	33.1	48.1	58.0	34.1	54.4	62.6	44.0	64.3	70.3	57.1
Rural	23.1	34.6	12.1	25.4	35.4	15.3	30.1	38.7	21.5	41.9	47.9	35.9

Fuente: OEB 2003; datos de alfabetización no comprobados. *Education Watch 2002* (véase CAMPE 2003), *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005* (UNESCO 2004) establecieron la tasa de alfabetización (15 +) en 41.5% con base en pruebas de alfabetización reales. Los datos de *Education Watch 2002* deben considerarse como reales. De acuerdo con el censo de 2001 (OEB 2003), el 49% de las personas entre 15 y 49 años de edad eran analfabetas (siendo 29.95 millones de personas el número absoluto).

Tabla 2. Nivel de alfabetización de la población adulta (entre 15 y 49 años de edad) por sexo y localidad (millones de personas)

Localidad	Población (P)			Hombres			Mujeres		
	P	Alfabetizada	Analfabeta	P	Alfabetizada	Analfabeta	P	Alfabetizada	Analfabeta
Bangladesh	61.2	31.2 (51%)	29.9 (49%)	30.6	17.4 (57%)	13.2 (43%)	30.6	13.9 (45%)	16.7 (55%)
Urbana	16.1	10.8 (67%)	5.5 (33%)	8.7	6.5 (72%)	2.4(28%)	7.4	4.5 (61%)	2.9 (39%)
Rural	45.1	20.4 (45%)	24.6 (55%)	21.9	11.1 (50%)	10.8 (50%)	23.2	2.6 (40%)	13.8 (60%)

Fuente: Censo de población 2001 de OEB: Alfabetización basada en autoinformes. La población analfabeta conforma el 42.5% de la población total del grupo de 15 años o mayor, de acuerdo con *Education Watch 2002*, datos constatados.

Tabla 3. Población adulta estimada y meta de alfabetización (en millones) 2000

Año	Población adulta	Meta (NPA I)
1991	47.6	-
2000	59.8	25.6

Fuente: MPEM 2003.

Estrategia de alfabetización y educación no formal en la UNESCO en Bangladesh

Los datos existentes del nivel de educación del país determinan la estrategia de alfabetización y educación no formal de la UNESCO en Bangladesh. Especialmente en la alfabetización de adultos, los datos indican un nivel de alfabetización muy bajo, alrededor del 41% de acuerdo con *Education Watch*, UNDP y *Global Monitoring Report* (GMR). De ahí que durante los últimos años UNESCO Dhaka haya desarrollado planes de trabajo estratégicos para hacer posible que el gobierno de Bangladesh, así como la sociedad civil a través de organizaciones no gubernamentales, midan mejor las consecuencias drásticas de la lenta tasa de alfabetización, en especial con relación al proceso de desarrollo.

El primer hallazgo de la iniciativa de UNESCO Dhaka es que, sin un gran avance en la alfabetización, ninguna de las cuestiones de la Educación para Todos, en concreto, la educación primaria, mejorará, y los principales aspectos de desarrollo se retrasarán. El segundo hallazgo es que se debe continuar dando interés a la alfabetización, en especial en áreas rurales y a la participación de las ONG en los programas de alfabetización relevantes.

Como consecuencia de sus actividades, UNESCO Dhaka a menudo se encuentra al frente de la batalla para sensibilizar a los que se centran, y a quienes preferirían continuar centrándose solamente en la educación primaria y evaluar aquellas políticas de alfabetización que no reflejan las necesidades reales de alfabetización de los adultos analfabetas. En un país con más de 50 millones de personas analfabetas, con frecuencia el grado de negación de los hechos es abrumador, ya que provoca que la UNESCO Dhaka (junto con muchas ONG) permanezca en constante alerta recordando a todos en Bangladesh la dura y a menudo incómoda realidad.

Armada de estos hallazgos, así como de los objetivos de la EFA adoptados en el Foro Mundial sobre la Educación en Dakar, UNESCO Dhaka ha intentado idear una estrategia de acción doble en la que dos líneas de acción se desarrollan conjuntamente:

Primero, se encuentran en desarrollo una serie de proyectos piloto para obtener un entendimiento más claro y más preciso de las condiciones reales de aprendizaje y las limitaciones encontradas en las áreas rurales y los barrios pobres; por otro lado, estos proyectos también dan información sobre las necesidades de aprendizaje y la mejor forma de satisfacerlas. Un proyecto piloto tiene que satisfacer distintos criterios. Debe:

- centrarse en áreas cruciales (geográficamente o población por población) con un mayor nivel de analfabetismo y/o una mayor resistencia a las iniciativas educativas;

- fomentar la capacidad de creación de ONG seleccionadas para determinar dónde hay más necesidad de capacitación;
- explorar estrategias de alfabetización que puedan funcionar y evaluar los resultados de aprendizaje;
- explorar materiales nuevos como los basados en tecnologías de la información y comunicación (TIC) para evaluar su repercusión en las respuestas de los alumnos a éstos; y
- evaluar junto con las ONG y GRPB si es necesario tomar más medidas para la alfabetización y dialogar con los donadores y las ONG acerca de otras experiencias ajenas a la UNESCO en el campo de la alfabetización.

Segundo, con base en la experiencia obtenida en proyectos piloto, se están llevando a cabo diálogos de políticas y actividades de asesoría dirigidas a las ONG, los donadores y GRPB. Esto también incluye encomendar estudios sobre los aspectos clave de la alfabetización, con base en las experiencias de los proyectos para obtener una visión mejor documentada. En talleres y seminarios a los que asisten socios de desarrollo y el GRPB se da asesoría sobre políticas, y generalmente es fructífero ya que las consideraciones de la UNESCO se basan en experiencias reales en campo, en estudios y experiencia académica del extranjero, incluida la perspectiva internacional.

Con base en el marco para esta acción, que básicamente refleja la misión asignada a una oficina local en un país con una tasa de analfabetismo tan alta como Bangladesh (un país E-9), la UNESCO Dhaka actualmente maneja estratégicamente diez proyectos piloto importantes y continúa dialogando sobre políticas a través de otras diez actividades clave.

Políticas: Diálogo y asesoría (ONG, donadores y el GRPB)

Se realizaron las siguientes acciones:

- Un estudio sobre el *Impacto económico y social de la alfabetización en áreas rurales específicas de Bangladesh* (Rahman, 2005). Los resultados se compartieron con asociaciones de colaboración para el desarrollo, ONG y otras partes interesadas.
- Un estudio integral sobre la *Reevaluación del analfabetismo en Bangladesh* (Mia y Hassan, 2004). Éste midió el nivel actual de analfabetismo (15+) contra los datos de un estudio que se había realizado cuatro años antes.
- Una encuesta sobre las necesidades de educación, alfabetización y habilidades de los conductores de *ricksshaw* (carros de dos ruedas tirados por una persona) del distrito de Mirpur en la Ciudad de Dhaka.

- Cuatro talleres divisionales para aumentar la capacidad de 100 funcionarios de gobierno y del personal de ONG y para desarrollar la alfabetización e indicadores de monitoreo de ENF y un marco de trabajo para dar seguimiento y evaluar los proyectos y programas de educación no formal.
- Un taller titulado “Lectura para todos” para compartir con representantes de las organizaciones gubernamentales y no gubernamentales las experiencias e ideas sobre educación continua para personas recién alfabetizadas.
- Un estudio sobre el impacto de los Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitario (CAC) con personas de áreas rurales.
- Otro estudio para identificar el uso de materiales y mejores prácticas en tecnologías de la información y comunicación para la alfabetización y educación básica.
- Se evaluó en detalle el uso de las TIC existentes en los CAC que ofrecen alfabetización y/o programas de educación no formal. Los resultados se presentaron en un taller nacional de dos días en presencia del Ministro de Ciencias y Tecnología de la Información y Comunicación.
- En materia de aprendizaje de la lengua materna se hicieron investigaciones en la comunidad de Oraon que incluyeron el desarrollo y pruebas de los planes de estudio y materiales en el idioma local para el segundo grado.
- La participación del grupo de trabajo de educación no formal de las agencias de la ONU y donadores ha sido activa y vital.
- Se realizó un estudio sobre las *Redes y Enlaces de Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitario* (Hasan y Mia 2005).
- Se llevó a cabo un Foro de Investigadores que se centró en investigación y publicaciones recientes sobre alfabetización y ENF; y se distribuyeron dos ediciones del *Blangladesh Educational Journal*. La finalidad del foro fue contribuir a consolidar los conocimientos sobre alfabetización del GPRB y las ONG. La publicación está respaldada por UNESCO Dhaka. Una contribución para aumentar el conocimiento sobre la alfabetización para el beneficio del GPRB y las ONG.

Proyectos piloto para influir en las políticas

1. En un proyecto apoyado por la UNESCO, Empoderamiento de Niñas Adolescentes para Convertirlas en Agentes de Transformación Social, organizado por la ONG Poder Joven en Acción Social, de 2003 a 2005; 1 300 adolescentes de ambos sexos recibieron capacitación en

- alfabetización, ciencias básicas, TIC y microfinanzas en dos distritos rurales, Narsingdhi y Tangail.
2. En los barrios pobres dentro del distrito de Dholpur de Dhaka, 400 niñas adolescentes recibieron alfabetización, educación sanitaria y servicios de desarrollo de capacidades.
 3. En las áreas rurales de dos distritos, Jessore y Jamalpur, se está enseñando a leer y escribir así como microfinanzas a 600 niñas adolescentes.
 4. En el distrito de Mirpur de Dhaka 140 conductores de *rickshaws* están siendo alfabetizados. Se dio capacitación en cableado doméstico, refrigeración y aire acondicionado, corte y confección, bordado y procesamiento de alimentos. Se realizó una extensa campaña mediática y se convocó al gobierno y donadores para asegurar fondos para más proyectos similares.
 5. Se han desarrollado materiales populares en la serie “Lectura para Todos” como seguimiento del “Taller de Escritores”.
 6. Se han desarrollado materiales de fácil lectura acerca de cuatro monumentos nacionales para las personas recién alfabetizadas.
 7. Se establecieron cinco centros de aprendizaje comunitario de TIC en áreas rurales de Bangladesh. Cada uno tiene conexión a internet, una impresora y cinco computadoras con participación en red. La gente de las áreas rurales usan estas TIC en el proceso de alfabetización y capacitación así como para obtener información sobre actividades agrícolas, salud, planeación familiar, ambiente y los derechos humanos por medio de la internet y de CD-ROMs producidos localmente.
 8. Se han desarrollado materiales con uso de las TIC para que los usen personas recién alfabetizadas de las áreas rurales. Éstos incluyen: “Mantenimiento de tractores”, “Procesamiento de fruta para mermeladas/jaleas”, “Fabricación de velas”, “Comunicación social y negociación comercial”, “Higiene rural” y “Aspectos operativos del microcrédito”.
 9. Se organizó un taller nacional de una semana para asesorar a 30 instructores en alfabetización y ENF. Los temas incluyeron: “Planeación y administración”, “Planeación y administración posalfabetización”, “Desarrollo de materiales”, “Seguimiento y evaluación” y “Función de los maestros y moderadores”.

Tres personas del plano internacional y cinco del nacional impartieron el taller. En las cinco áreas mencionadas se desarrollaron sendos módulos de capacitación. También se llevaron a cabo talleres de desarrollo potencial de división para 150 gerentes de alfabetización y ENF sobre esos cinco temas.

Desarrollo de materiales y publicaciones

El informe de 2004, *Estudios de Educación Básica en Bangladesh*, publicó estudios de investigación seleccionados que realizó la UNESCO Dhaka en 2002-2003. Este documento de 284 páginas se ha difundido ampliamente para llegar a todos los interesados dentro de Bangladesh y las oficinas de la UNESCO de la región. Como se menciona anteriormente, se diseñaron cinco módulos de alfabetización/ENF (véase el inciso 9 en la sección que antecede). Estos módulos ya se están usando y se van a traducir al inglés y a publicar en CD para darles una difusión más amplia. Con el fin de organizar la capacitación sobre habilidades de la vida y el trabajo, se desarrolló un manual de capacitación en colaboración con el Departamento de Asuntos de la Mujer y el Instituto para el Aprendizaje Permanente de la UNESCO. El *Informe de Síntesis del Reporte de Seguimiento Global de EPT 2003-2004* (UNESCO Dhaka 2004b), se tradujo al bengalí y se imprimió. Esta versión se difundió ampliamente en Bangladesh y a hablantes de bengalí en Bengala Occidental en la India. El *Informe de Síntesis del Reporte de Seguimiento Global de EPT 2005* (UNESCO Dhaka, 2005) se tradujo al bengalí y se imprimió y pronto se difundirá dentro de Bangladesh. Los resultados del estudio sobre CAC se publicaron en forma de libro como *Centro de aprendizaje comunitario: la experiencia de Bangladesh* (Rahman n.d.). Éste contiene los resultados de una evaluación del uso de TIC que ofrecen alfabetización/ENF y que se presentaron en un taller nacional de dos días sobre TIC y la política de educación básica en presencia del Ministro de Ciencias y Tecnología de la Información y Comunicación. Los resultados del estudio de etnolingüística de Chittagong Hill Tracts se publicaron con el nombre de *Atlas of the Languages and Ethnic Communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts* (Rabbani, 2004). También se publicó el estudio sobre *El impacto económico y social de la alfabetización en áreas rurales de Bangladesh* (Rahman, 2005).

La UNESCO no es el único actor en el escenario de la alfabetización de adultos; una gran cantidad de ONG apoyan en forma considerable los programas dirigidos a jóvenes y adultos para ayudarles a adquirir las habilidades básicas de lectoescritura.

La función de las ONG en la alfabetización, educación y aprendizaje de adultos

En las siguientes secciones vamos a describir la gran variedad de actividades de alfabetización y aprendizaje de adultos que las principales ONG están implementando hoy en día en Bangladesh. Aunque estas actividades atienden una amplia variedad de necesidades de aprendizaje y poblaciones, actualmente no hay una coordinación por parte del gobierno central. La recién fundada Direc-

ción para la Educación No Formal, que es parte del Ministerio de Educación Primaria y Masiva (MEPM) y cuenta con personal en cada uno de los 64 distritos, será responsable de la tarea de coordinar y dar seguimiento a las actividades de las ONG en la alfabetización. Sin embargo, falta observar si esto realmente funcionará como lo prevén los planes.

La alfabetización de adultos es un área en la cual las ONG siempre han demostrado su interés, incluso antes de que GPRB tomara alguna iniciativa, y en particular después de la Conferencia Mundial sobre Educación 1990. En la década de 1990, el apoyo de la Dirección General de Educación No Formal de Bangladesh aumentó la participación de las ONG en el programa de ENF para lograr las metas de Educación para Todos. Una parte sustancial del programa de ENF se dirigió a las actividades de alfabetización y educación de adultos. Con la abolición de la Dirección de ENF en 2003 con motivo de la ineficiencia y corrupción, la inversión del sector público en el programa de ENF en alfabetización básica, especialmente los programas para adultos, también se ha abandonado, ya que se consideró ineficaz. La participación de las ONG en los programas de ENF para alfabetización y educación de adultos, ha disminuido drásticamente en ausencia de la participación del gobierno.

Resultados de una encuesta de evaluación rápida de nueve ONG que implementaron programas de alfabetización y educación de adultos

En esta sección consideraremos la función que desempeñan las ONG, las estrategias y mecanismos de implementación que están adoptando y las futuras posibilidades y retos en el caso de la política nacional dedicada al desarrollo social y económico sustentable para la reducción de la pobreza en Bangladesh. Las ONG que aquí se analizan incluyen la Asociación para la Educación Comunitaria Bangladesh (AECB), *Grameen Shiksha* (educación rural); Centro para la Educación Masiva en Ciencias (CEMC); *NIJERA Shikhi* (Aprender nosotros mismos); *SAMATA* (Igualdad); *SHURAVI* (Fragancia); Misión Dhaka *Ahsania* (MDA); PROSHIKA – *Proshika Shiksha Kaj* (Capacitación, educación y trabajo); Comité de Progreso Rural de Bangladesh (CPRB); y Amigos en el Desarrollo Social (ADS).

Objetivos del programa de alfabetización de adultos

Los objetivos del programa de alfabetización de adultos que al parecer son congruentes con la política nacional incluyen:

- Desarrollar la capacidad de leer y escribir (incluidos los conocimientos aritméticos) entre las personas analfabetas.

- Despertar conciencia sobre los aspectos relacionados con su vida y ocupación.
- Eliminar el analfabetismo de los miembros organizados del programa.
- Permitir que resuelvan sus propios problemas así como los problemas sociales.
- Dar educación después de la alfabetización estableciendo CAC para el desarrollo humano y también para abordar asuntos locales de desarrollo social por medio de esfuerzos colectivos y desarrollo comunitario.
- Aumentar la función de las TIC en el desarrollo de la comunidad.
- Establecer el vínculo entre una alfabetización sustentable y capacidad de generar ingresos y microcrédito.

Los objetivos que se señalan varían de una ONG a otra, algunas desarrollan la lectura, escritura, nociones aritméticas; otras desarrollan habilidades para ganarse la vida junto con la alfabetización e incluso otras dan mayor énfasis a la igualdad de sexos, derechos humanos y participación de las mujeres, etcétera, no obstante, todos ellos conforman los objetivos, metas y estrategias nacionales.

Modo de impartición

En la mayoría de los casos el enfoque está basado en centros. El servicio de alfabetización para un grupo específico de la población se proporciona a través de un centro para que el máximo número de alumnos puedan tener acceso a éste en la respectiva área del programa. *Proshika* utiliza centros de recursos, así como casas rentadas en la comunidad. *Grameen Shiksha* estableció centros bajo la supervisión de una sucursal de *Grameen Bank*. *Proshika*, *Grameen Shiksha*, *SAMATA* y *MDA* alfabetizan a los miembros de su propio grupo en centros comunitarios.

Para algunas ONG, el programa de educación de adultos se complementa con otros programas que tratan temas como el microcrédito, alivio de la pobreza, salud e higiene, actividades generadoras de ingresos, capacitación de habilidades y desarrollo de la comunidad. *MDA* es un ejemplo claro. Su actividad primordial es la educación, la cual complementa con todos los componentes mencionados. *Grameen Shiksha* hace lo contrario. Para ellos el grupo de crédito es lo primero, seguido de intervenciones complementarias.

El número de alumnos en cada centro por instructor o maestro generalmente varía de 20 a 30 y el número de centros por supervisor varía de 7 a 15. Cada clase es de 12 a 15 horas por semana (alrededor de dos horas o dos

horas y media al día). Aunque la norma es tener un turno, *Proshika* y *Nijera Shikhi* tienen dos turnos por día, las mujeres asisten en el turno matutino y los hombres en el turno vespertino. En la mayoría de los casos, los materiales de aprendizaje se distribuyen entre los alumnos; sin embargo en contados casos, se conservan en el centro. *SURA VI* tiene programas de aprendizaje para adultos que están diseñados especialmente para sirvientes domésticos en las áreas urbanas. Aquí se sigue un método más flexible basado en la situación particular de *para/mahalla* (vecindario) para llegar a este grupo tan desfavorecido.

Facilitadores y educandos

Más que cualquier otro organismo, las ONG tienden a dar mayor énfasis a las mujeres como alumnas e instructoras en los programas de alfabetización de adultos, por ejemplo, en ADS la proporción hombres-mujeres es 3:5; en *Grameen Shiksha* todo el alumnado está compuesto por mujeres.

La proporción de instructores hombre-mujer en ambas organizaciones es 45:55 y 40:60, respectivamente. Aunque no hay requisitos específicos para los voluntarios de la comunidad correspondiente, los instructores asalariados normalmente tienen grados académicos que varían del octavo grado a certificado de escuela secundaria, que sigue después de terminar el décimo grado. La duración de su capacitación básica varía de seis a 15 días. Durante el periodo del programa, cada mes se toman cursos de revisión que duran uno o dos días.

Supervisores y gerentes coordinadores

Los supervisores y gerentes coordinadores deben tener un título de licenciatura o maestría, respectivamente. También deben tomar capacitación básica durante 10 a 15 días y dos clases de repaso, cada una dura tres días. La mayoría de las ONG tienen su propia forma de capacitar a su personal. Con mucha frecuencia utilizan las instalaciones físicas de organizaciones como DAM y la Fundación *Palli Karma Shabayak* (PKSF; que literalmente significa “fundación de asistencia al empleo rural”). Para algunas ONG grandes, los gerentes de nivel medio buscan capacitación formal en institutos y universidades de RU, Canadá, Nepal y las Filipinas.

Alumnos

Incluyen: personas que nunca se han inscrito, desertores escolares, graduados de ENF, miembros de poblaciones inaccesibles o de difícil acceso que viven en

pobreza extrema y enfrentan otras dificultades y adolescentes y adultos que necesitan un sistema más flexible. También hay trabajadores del sector informal, como granjeros, pescadores y conductores de *rickshaws*. Algunas organizaciones incluyen a personas con discapacidad física, miembros de minorías étnicas y mujeres entre 15 y 25 años de edad. Para DAM, trabajar con niños también es una de las principales metas. Los alumnos generalmente tienen de 15 a 45 años de edad. Las ONG como *Proshika*, *SAMATA*, AECB y *Grameen Shiksha* incluyen alumnos entre 15 y 35 años de edad.

Las poblaciones objetivo que cubren las ONG varían. La cobertura generalmente es alrededor del 60 al 100% de la población adulta analfabeta en sus respectivas zonas o grupos de edad. *SAMATA*, por ejemplo, sólo ha logrado cubrir el 37% del grupo objetivo en el área del programa. Se usan diversas estrategias para motivar a los grupos objetivo a participar. *Grameen Shiksha* y *Proshika* utilizan movilización social, capacitación de habilidades y actividades generadoras de ingreso y aprovechan los servicios de instructores/supervisores motivados, como estrategias para llegar a los que nunca se han inscrito e irregulares y los involucran en el programa. Los alumnos que se gradúan reciben cursos básicos y de posalfabetización y de educación continua adaptados para satisfacer sus necesidades individuales. Algunas ONG, como CEMC, *SAMATA*, AECB, *SURA VI*, proporcionan cursos básicos combinados con formación profesional y alfabetización funcional.

Plan de estudios y materiales de aprendizaje

La currícula del curso básico se cubre en un lapso de seis a nueve meses. El objetivo fundamental del curso de alfabetización es el aprendizaje de lectura, escritura y cálculo. El plan de estudios está diseñado en torno a los aspectos relevantes para las situaciones cotidianas y el entorno del alumno: participación social, desarrollo de habilidades de comunicación a través de la lectura, escritura, expresión verbal y aprender a protegerse de prácticas fraudulentas. La educación continua tiene lugar en casa o en centros comunitarios, donde los alumnos también pueden encontrar un *Gonokendra* o biblioteca con televisión, periódicos y materiales de lectura sobre problemas sociales, como las dotes y la opresión de mujeres. Aquí los alumnos pueden desarrollar conexiones con programas para mejorar su medio de vida, como agricultura integrada en fincas, horticultura, agrosilvicultura, aves de corral, ganadería, piscicultura, carpintería, soldadura de automóviles y cableado doméstico. También son expuestos a cuestiones como los derechos de las mujeres y niños, el VIH/SIDA y salud e higiene.

Casi todas las ONG desarrollan materiales por sí mismas. Sin embargo, algunas ONG, como MDA, CPRB, CEMC, ADS, CAMPE, NCBT

y DGENF, desarrollan materiales que son utilizadas por otras ONG. En contados casos, los materiales se adquieren en el mercado y stands de libros, etcétera. Sin embargo, es necesario revisar los materiales de aprendizaje con respecto a la calidad y en relación a las normas y criterios establecidos para lograr las metas de aprendizaje.

Planeación e implementación

La planeación de programas requiere que la comunidad y sus representantes participen en juntas, talleres y seminarios. Esto también se lleva a cabo con la orientación y participación de expertos técnicos y personal de proyectos. Esto último es la práctica de *Grameen Shikshas*. En ciertos casos, el método de Evaluación Rural Participativa se usa para planeación de programas. La implementación involucra a la comunidad, la elite local, trabajadoras sociales y representantes del gobierno local para seleccionar a los alumnos así como para compartir opiniones sobre la implementación en talleres, seminarios y juntas mensuales. *SAMATA* enlista personas de los grupos objetivo para involucrarlos en la implementación de programas. En el caso de MDA, el comité directivo participa en la movilización de recursos y organizar el uso de un centro o casa.

Monitoreo del programa

Se hace un monitoreo para proporcionar retroalimentación a los supervisores. Lo llevan a cabo los miembros del personal asignados, por medio de juntas de evaluación periódicas o con la ayuda de bases de datos y seguimiento. Los supervisores son directamente responsables de la implementación del programa, mientras que los coordinadores son responsables de la coordinación, monitoreo y aseguramiento de calidad, y los gerentes son responsables de la implementación global y administración de las operaciones.

Principales retos y dificultades

Según las ONG, uno de los principales retos y dificultades son los retrasos en la liberación de fondos y en trámites de asistencia para proyectos. La politización también obstaculiza la implementación del programa. Los materiales de aprendizaje cuyo contenido no aborde suficientemente las necesidades de los alumnos también plantean dificultades. La ONG NIJERA *Shikhi* comenta que las principales dificultades han sido los retrasos en la liberación de fondos debido al cierre de la DGENF, así como a la inactividad de la comunidad por influencias políticas. MDA señaló las dificultades a causa de la

falta de: propiedad comunitaria del programa debido a la influencia política, suficiente motivación y asesoría entre el personal, uso oportuno de personal del proyecto, personal suficientemente capacitado, interés entre los alumnos debido a la ausencia de resultados inmediatos, utilidad percibida y aceptación comunitaria.

Evaluación del aprendizaje

Aunque no hay un indicador aceptado oficialmente para medir los resultados de aprendizaje, generalmente se evalúan mediante el nivel de alfabetización, mejora en los medios de vida, el nivel de conciencia social y conciencia de la importancia de la educación. La mayoría de las ONG consideran que la alfabetización se logra cuando las personas alfabetizadas pueden leer, escribir y entender. Hay diferentes pruebas para evaluar la alfabetización, pero los indicadores comunes son la habilidad de leer el periódico sin dificultad, escribir una oración o carta, y hacer un cálculo simple. No obstante, sigue siendo necesario encontrar una autoridad adecuada a nivel nacional que pudiera conceder un reconocimiento formal a un parámetro o norma para medir los resultados del aprendizaje.

Resultados del programa

El programa de alfabetización de adultos tiene conexiones directas con los programas de medios de vida y alivio de la pobreza a través del desarrollo de habilidades, actividades generadores de ingresos, silvicultura comunitaria y natural. Por lo tanto, los resultados del programa incluyen los cambios en el medio de vida, mayor confianza, mayor participación en la vida familiar y social, participación de las mujeres dentro de la familia y comunidad, mayor conocimiento de los derechos humanos, equidad de género y conocimiento de la importancia de la educación de la niñez. La conocimiento del alumno de la capacitación y rehabilitación de las personas discapacitadas, el deterioro ambiental y efectos adversos de las dotes y matrimonios precoces y derechos democráticos, se tratan como resultado del programa.

Investigación y evaluación

La evaluación y la investigación son actividades comunes. No obstante, la mayoría de las ONG encuestadas no tienen organización institucional para iniciar evaluaciones e investigación de operaciones. Sin embargo, se ha observado que la evaluación de AECB de *Go-nabiddyalay* es eficaz y relevante para la educación continua. *Proshika* encontró que las personas recién alfabe-

tizadas son un grupo de beneficiarios importante y poderoso dentro de los programas educativos que hacen que la gente esté conciente de sus derechos socioeconómicos. La unidad de investigación de políticas de ADS encontró que los comentarios sobre las fortalezas y debilidades del programa proporcionaban una retroalimentación importante que era útil para seguir revisando y mejorando el programa.

Futuro potencial del programa y necesidades

Se tienen planes para enriquecer los programas al desarrollar más planes de estudios y materiales de aprendizaje basados en técnicas avanzadas y métodos participativos para satisfacer los retos del siglo veintiuno. *SAMATA* planea incluir actividades generadoras de ingresos, formación profesional y uso de terrenos *Khas* para cultivo de hortalizas y plantación de árboles para evitar el deterioro ambiental. *Gramee Shikkah* considera que es necesario modificar el programa para que las ONG lleguen a los segmentos desfavorecidos y marginados de la población y cubrir la población analfabeta de áreas ajenas al programa con el apoyo del Banco *Grameen*. *DAM* sugirió cambiar el procedimiento de implementación de un enfoque de proyecto (que carece de vinculación interproyecto y tiene una coordinación institucional deficiente) al enfoque de programa con una sólo política y programa de gastos. El programa posalfabetización y educación continua se introducirá y fortalecerá para hacer posible que las personas recién alfabetizadas mantengan su nivel de alfabetización; se establecerán bibliotecas comunitarias donde puedan practicar sus nuevas habilidades en un entorno de grupo. Las ONG compartirán sus experiencias con otros y establecerán contactos con otras ONG y donadores con respecto a la administración e implementación del programa de alfabetización de adultos.

Hay firmes propuestas de políticas para aumentar el conocimiento de los derechos humanos de las personas recién alfabetizados. Actualmente, las ONG desean continuar el programa durante más tiempo, y desean que el gobierno apoye la continuidad a largo plazo de los programas. *SURAVI* sugirió que el programa de posalfabetización y educación continua debe durar por lo menos doce meses en lugar de nueve.

Perspectivas del escenario del país, prioridades de los programas y educación de adultos

La tasa de alfabetización en Bangladesh es muy baja incluso para los niveles del tercer mundo. Es responsabilidad del gobierno y ONG establecer programas masivos de alfabetización de adultos, de duración limitada que incluyan

una mejora del nivel de vida, capacitación de habilidades, participación de las mujeres y alivio de la pobreza. Las ONG consideran a la educación como el ingrediente más esencial de sus iniciativas de desarrollo y por lo tanto están comprometidas a crear una sociedad sin analfabetismo. Dados los retos de Educación para Todos y las Metas de Desarrollo del Milenio, la educación de adultos debe extenderse e implementarse eficazmente al enfocarse en la solución de problemas y programas de capacitación profesional y de preparación para la vida. En el futuro, los planes de estudio y materiales de aprendizaje en la educación de adultos junto con las habilidades profesionales estarán diseñados para motivar a los alumnos a aprender a través de la alfabetización. Como tal, el lema será “Educación para la Vida”.

Direcciones, necesidades y retos futuros

Concentrarse solo en la alfabetización, como fue el caso de la Misión de Alfabetización Total, fue un error. No pudo motivar a las personas pobres, ya que carecían de percepción del beneficio o no percibían un impacto continuo a largo plazo en la situación de sus vidas. Además, en muchos casos la alfabetización recién adquirida no se mantenía. Por consiguiente, la alfabetización básica, se debe complementar con otras intervenciones, con el objeto de hacer la alfabetización misma sostenible y cambiar la situación de vida del alumno establecido en una sociedad de aprendizaje.

Es esencial enfatizar el aseguramiento de calidad y no permanecer satisfecho con la norma imperante de “arreglárselas” de un modo u otro, como se ha hecho para declarar precipitadamente un número de distritos “sin analfabetismo”.

La corrupción, la ineficiencia y la mala administración se han convertido en la regla en lugar de la excepción. Sin embargo, el sector ONG al parecer ha satisfecho las expectativas de ética básicas. La capacidad de las ONG para trabajar como implementador de un programa eficiente y sin corrupción se debe utilizar formando colaboraciones activas, y no permitiendo que se consideren como subcontratistas, como sucede frecuentemente durante la implementación de un Enfoque Basado en Centros (CBA), posalfabetización y educación continua.

Más bien, las alianzas entre el sector público y privado se basan en la cooperación y colaboración, que a su vez comparten objetivos, estrategias y criterios.

El gobierno de Bangladesh debe proporcionar un sistema de servicio de apoyo profesional eficaz, coordinado, el nuevo BNFE, para aumentar la capacidad de las ONG. En lo anterior, hemos indicado que muchas ONG no tienen experiencia profesional o técnica para diseñar programas.

Será necesario contar con el apoyo continuo de la comunidad internacional no sólo en la forma de aportación de fondos sino aún más por medio del diálogo sobre políticas e investigación de medidas. En esta perspectiva, las actividades implementadas por la UNESCO han demostrado que la experiencia de proyectos piloto, una vez traducida en asesoría y diálogo sobre políticas, es una estrategia convincente, en especial cuando se recuerda de la experiencia internacional.

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Programa Nacional para la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos de Tailandia

*Roong Aroon y Wilaipan Somtrakool**

En la actualidad, el crecimiento y la prosperidad de Tailandia se han diseminado continuamente en todo el país. Se ha instrumentado el fortalecimiento de las capacidades de los recursos humanos a todos los niveles para permitir que el país se convierta en una sociedad de conocimientos basada en el paradigma de la alfabetización.

La alfabetización se considera un indicador crucial que refleja la capacidad de toda la población del país. Tiene un poder inmenso en la movilización de la economía y la sociedad. La alfabetización (o el poder leer y escribir y tener conocimientos matemáticos básicos) es la capacidad básica para comunicarse, buscar el conocimiento por medio de tecnología sofisticada, pensar de manera crítica y mejorar la propia calidad de vida.

Tailandia ha estado muy abierta a la educación. El país ha reconocido la importancia y la necesidad de la alfabetización y la educación a lo largo de toda la vida para todos los ciudadanos tailandeses. Desde siempre se le ha dado valor al aprendizaje fuera del sistema escolar formal: los monjes budistas, la gente de la tercera edad de la aldea, los artesanos locales, los artistas folclóricos, etcétera, han desempeñado funciones educativas importantes para la gran mayoría de la población, aun después de que se estableció un sistema escolar formal a finales del siglo diez y nueve. Sin embargo, no fue sino hasta 1940, después que el primer censo nacional reveló que cerca del 68% de la población de Tailandia era analfabeta, que el gobierno dirigió su atención a la población no escolar. En ese mismo año, lanzó una campaña nacional de alfabetización y, unos cuantos años después, estableció una Divi-

* Traducción de Patricia Yáñez Ibáñez.

sión de Educación para Adultos dentro del Ministerio de Educación (MOE) para administrar la campaña y otros programas para personas que no asistían a la escuela. Para principios de la década de 1970, se había producido un concepto más amplio de la educación no formal (ENF). Se convirtió en un componente indispensable del sistema educativo para desarrollar los recursos humanos del país y para crear oportunidades de una educación a lo largo de toda la vida. Desde entonces, la educación a lo largo de toda la vida y el acceso equitativo a la educación para todos han sido los puntos centrales del esquema nacional de desarrollo económico y social. La expresión “educación no formal”, que se refería a cualquier actividad educativa organizada fuera del ámbito escolar y de las aulas, ha sustituido completamente a la expresión “educación para adultos”.

En la década de 1970, la educación a lo largo de toda la vida y el acceso equitativo a la educación empezaron a atraer la atención de los educadores no formales en Tailandia y en otros países. Varios factores alentaron y reforzaron la creciente atención a estos conceptos. Por ejemplo:

La tasa de crecimiento de la población en edad escolar se había incrementado rápidamente, mientras que la expansión de la educación formal en las escuelas tenía una tasa opuesta a la tasa de crecimiento de la población. Las situaciones subsecuentes fueron la discrepancia en el acceso a los servicios educativos estatales entre ricos y pobres, urbanos y rurales, lo que fue una de las principales causas del creciente número de neoanalfabetas en el país. (NESDB, 1982)*

El gobierno reconoció la gravedad de estos problemas y consideró a la ENF como el medio para remediarlos. Así que las expresiones “educación a lo largo de toda la vida” y “educación continua para adultos” se vincularon fuertemente con la educación no formal (ENF), que es una forma de actividad para el aprendizaje organizada fuera del ámbito escolar o las aulas para ayudar a la población adulta y juvenil a adquirir conocimientos, habilidades e información esenciales para mejorar la calidad de sus vidas. El proceso aprendizaje-enseñanza busca fortalecer el pensamiento crítico y facultar a las personas para que logren confiar en ellas mismas y sean autosuficientes.

Situación actual

Actualmente, la política y la práctica de la alfabetización y la educación no formal en Tailandia están pasando por una transición muy importante debido a varios factores, incluyendo la crisis económica, el ajuste estructural, la reforma educativa y la reorganización gubernamental. Para poder entender

* Como se informó en el *Quinto Plan Nacional para el Desarrollo Económico y Social 1982-1986* (NESDB, 1982), alrededor del 14.5% de la población tailandesa todavía era analfabeta.

mejor la función y las prácticas de la ENF en Tailandia, es necesario comprender los factores que contribuirán a los cambios en el futuro.

Cambios en la política educativa

Debido a la crisis económica de 1997, Tailandia ha cambiado drásticamente en diversos frentes. En esa época, el gobierno estaba tratando de solucionar varios problemas socioeconómicos que habían surgido. El ajuste estructural y la reforma económica eran dos componentes principales del esquema de reforma del gobierno. La reforma del sistema educativo nacional tuvo como consecuencia la promulgación de la *Ley Nacional de Educación de 1999* (ONEC – Oficina de la Comisión Nacional de Educación), que subsecuentemente llevó a la reestructuración del sistema administrativo dentro del Ministerio de Educación un cambio muy importante en la política y en la práctica de la alfabetización y de la educación no formal en Tailandia. Además, el Departamento de Educación no Formal se convirtió en la Oficina de la Comisión de Educación no Formal (ONFEC), que es administrada por la Oficina de la Secretaría Permanente del Ministerio de Educación desde el 7 de julio de 2003.

Existen dos marcos conceptuales importantes de la política nacional que han afectado la política y la práctica de la ENF en Tailandia. El primero es *El Noveno Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Económico y Social de Tailandia (2002-2006)* (NESDB, 2001), que señalaba que:

La sociedad tailandesa debe ser una sociedad fundamentada en el conocimiento. Deben crearse oportunidades de crecimiento para todo el pueblo tailandés, diseñadas para promover el pensamiento lógico y crítico y el aprendizaje de por vida, para que la gente pueda adaptarse a las condiciones cambiantes. Deben fortalecerse la ciencia y la tecnología para que la sociedad tailandesa pueda beneficiarse de la innovación y creatividad locales y de la acumulación de capital intelectual para incrementar la competitividad internacional y complementar adecuadamente la sabiduría local tailandesa y las tradiciones, cultura y religión nacionales.

El segundo marco conceptual es la Política Nacional de Educación. La sección 4 de la *Ley Nacional de Educación de 1999* (ONEC, 1999) señala que la educación tailandesa debe ser una educación a lo largo de toda la vida, como resultado de la integración de la educación formal, no formal e informal para proporcionar los medios para mejorar de por vida la calidad de vida de la gente. El capítulo 3, sección 15 de esta ley, también hace énfasis en que:

Habrán tres tipos de educación: formal, no formal e informal.

- 1) La educación formal especificará los objetivos, métodos, planes de estudio, duración, valoración y evaluación condicional una vez concluida.

- 2) La educación no formal tendrá flexibilidad para determinar los objetivos, modalidades, procedimientos administrativos, duración, valoración y evaluación con relación a su conclusión. Los contenidos y planes de estudio para la educación no formal serán adecuados, responderán al cumplimiento de los requisitos y satisfarán las necesidades de grupos individuales de estudiantes.
- 3) La educación informal permitirá a los alumnos aprender por ellos mismos –conforme a sus intereses, potencialidades, presteza y oportunidades disponibles– de las personas, la sociedad, el entorno, los medios y demás recursos de conocimiento.

Para asegurar la cobertura y el acceso equitativo a los servicios educativos de todos los grupos objetivo, la Oficina de la Secretaría Permanente del Ministerio de Educación también ha incorporado algunos principios prioritarios de la *Ley Nacional de Educación (2002-2006)*, así como del *Marco de Acción de Dakar*, en la *Educación Nacional para todos los Planes de Acción (2002-2016)* (OPS-MOE, 2004). Este plan no sólo pone énfasis en asegurar el acceso equitativo a educación de buena calidad para todos los tailandeses, sino también le otorga alta prioridad al desarrollo de esfuerzos, enfoques y medidas realizables para lograr un 50% de mejoría en todos los niveles de alfabetización en adultos, garantizar la eliminación de diferencias de género en la educación primaria y secundaria para el año 2005 y lograr igualdad de género en la educación para el año 2015 (enfocándose en asegurar el desarrollo y acceso completo y equitativo a la educación básica de buena calidad para niñas y mujeres) (OPS-MOE, 2004).

Etapas actuales de la reforma

Como lo documentó el Departamento de Evaluación Educativa, de la Oficina de la Comisión Nacional de Educación, en la última década ha habido una creciente demanda de la reforma de la educación tailandesa para ir a la par con los cambios en la era de la globalización. La crisis económica que ha afectado negativamente a la sociedad tailandesa desde 1997, ha subrayado la urgente necesidad de reformar la educación, ya que ha reconocido que la base débil de recursos humanos en Tailandia ha sido uno de los agentes que han contribuido a la desaceleración económica. Afortunadamente, la nueva Constitución, promulgada en octubre de 1997, estableció lineamientos estimulantes para la reforma educativa en varias disposiciones. De acuerdo al requisito obligatorio de la sección 81 de la *Constitución* de 1997, la primera *Ley Nacional de Educación* se promulgó y entró en vigor el 20 de agosto de 1999 como legislación maestra sobre la educación en el país. En esta ley, “educativa” significa el proceso de aprendizaje para el desarrollo personal y social a

través de la impartición del conocimiento. Significa la práctica, adiestramiento, transmisión de la cultura, mejoramiento del progreso académico, formación de un cuerpo de conocimiento al crear un entorno de aprendizaje que conduzca a un aprendizaje de por vida. En la sección 6 de la ley, se establece que la educación tendrá como objetivo el desarrollo total de los tailandeses en todos los aspectos: físicos y mentales, así como aquéllos relacionados con la salud, intelecto, conocimiento, moralidad, integridad y armonía con los demás. La sección 8 afirma que el proporcionar educación se basará en los principios de educación a lo largo de toda la vida para todos, la participación de todos los segmentos de la sociedad en la impartición de la educación y el desarrollo continuo de los cuerpos de conocimiento y de los procesos de aprendizaje. La sección 10 establece que todos los individuos tendrán iguales derechos y oportunidades para recibir educación básica gratuita proporcionada por el estado durante cuando menos doce años.

Para facilitar la reforma del aprendizaje, se ha promovido mucho el uso de tecnologías para la educación. Esto no sólo mejorará la calidad de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje, sino que también alentará a los estudiantes a estudiar de por vida. Indudablemente que será un factor clave para convertir a la sociedad tailandesa en una sociedad basada en conocimientos. El aprender por medio de un enfoque centrado en el estudiante se ha instrumentado ampliamente, en particular la reforma de los planes de estudio y del proceso de aprendizaje. Los factores clave en la reforma del aprendizaje son los profesores y el personal académico: la reforma propuesta con relación a los profesores y personal académico y educativo contribuirá notablemente en el éxito de la reforma educativa. Al mismo tiempo, la movilización eficaz de los recursos y la inversión en la educación y la asignación del presupuesto y su administración también son esenciales para el éxito de la reforma educativa.

También se introdujo un nuevo sistema de aseguramiento de la calidad educativa para asegurar el mejoramiento de la calidad de la educación y los estándares para los estudiantes. Se han instrumentado mecanismos internos y externos de aseguramiento de la calidad en gran cantidad de instituciones de educación básica y superior. Se prevé que el éxito de la reforma educativa dará como resultado mayores logros en la educación tailandesa en cuanto al acceso, calidad y eficiencia, lo que llevará a una mejor calidad de vida para los tailandeses y a obtener una ventaja competitiva para el país. Sin embargo, la reforma que introdujo la *Ley Nacional de Educación de 1999* fue bastante amplia, en donde se necesitó no sólo la redacción de nuevas leyes, reglas y reglamentos, sino también un cambio completo en la conducta, actitudes y métodos de trabajo de las personas en los diversos niveles de la administración educativa. En particular, durante este período de transición se necesitan la cooperación, participación y contribuciones por parte de

los interesados, así como del público en general, si se desea el éxito de la reforma.

Marco de calidad

En la actualidad, el Ministerio de Educación ha desarrollado y emitido un plan nacional de estudios que en parte se ha ajustado para que se considere como una guía para desarrollar el plan de estudios local considerando las necesidades y situaciones locales. Este plan nacional de estudios es ahora el único lineamiento válido y marco conceptual para la educación formal y no formal en Tailandia. El Ministerio de Educación ha declarado que cualquier plan de estudios que se utilizaba con anterioridad, ahora no tiene validez alguna. Sin embargo, en un esfuerzo por aplicar el plan de estudios nacional a la ENF en el último año, los que intentaron ponerlo en práctica se enfrentaron a dificultades debido a la inflexibilidad y ambivalencia.

Los profesores a nivel provincial han solicitado a la ONFEC que revise las actuales prácticas de la ENF para seguir el marco conceptual. Así que la ONFEC ha empezado a reconceptualizar la educación no formal, a reenmarcar y redirigir su política y a rediseñar los enfoques adecuados.

Derechos de los estudiantes

Según la *Ley Nacional de Educación de 1999*, todas las personas tienen los mismos derechos y oportunidades para recibir educación básica proporcionada por el estado durante cuando menos doce años. Dicha educación, a nivel nacional, será de buena calidad y gratuita. Por lo tanto, las personas con deficiencias físicas, mentales, intelectuales, emocionales, sociales, de comunicación y de aprendizaje, aquéllas con discapacidades físicas o las personas que no pueden mantenerse ellas mismas, así como los desvalidos o marginados, también merecen los derechos y oportunidades para recibir educación básica.

El enfoque dirigido a los estudiantes

La nueva ley educativa cree que todos los estudiantes tienen la capacidad de aprender y de tener un autodesarrollo. Los estudiantes son el centro de las actividades educativas. Se ha dispuesto que las instituciones educativas diseñen su propio plan de estudios para cerciorarse que se satisfagan las necesidades de los estudiantes y de las localidades. A los estudiantes se les alienta a seguir sus propios estudios para satisfacer sus necesidades y situaciones. La función principal del profesor es fungir como facilitador de los estudiantes adultos

para que aprendan a su ritmo y hasta donde les dé su potencial. Los estudiantes siempre tienen ingerencia en la selección de los contenidos. En algunos casos, los estudiantes mismos, con la ayuda de los facilitadores, diseñan sus propios planes de estudios.

El plan de estudios

La ONFEC ha desarrollado un marco curricular para la educación básica. El marco incluye tres áreas principales de materias: materias básicas, experiencias de vida y mejoramiento de la calidad de vida. Las *materias básicas* incluyen: tailandés, matemáticas, ciencias e idiomas extranjeros. Las *materias de experiencia de vida* incluyen: desarrollo social y comunitario, educación sobre la salud, artes y tecnologías para las carreras y la informática. Las *materias para el mejoramiento de la calidad de vida* obligan a los estudiantes a participar en trabajo social o en actividades de autodesarrollo. Para cada una de las materias, los estudiantes deben hacer un proyecto de trabajo, lo que les da la oportunidad de poner en práctica lo que han aprendido o lo que están aprendiendo.

Como se indicó anteriormente, las instituciones educativas desarrollan su propio plan de estudios dentro del marco nacional. Esto les permite incluir su contenido y cultura locales (la sabiduría y recursos locales se integran al proceso de aprendizaje), así como las necesidades e intereses locales. Aún más, en lugar de enseñar las materias de manera aislada, se insta a las instituciones a que tengan un enfoque integral y de enseñanza en equipo.

Capacitación para los profesores

Tradicionalmente se utilizaba un enfoque orientado hacia los profesores, en donde éstos se concentraban en transmitir la sustancia del conocimiento a los alumnos. En la actualidad, se están haciendo esfuerzos por ayudar a los profesores a cambiar de manera eficaz a un enfoque centrado en el estudiante. Los estudiantes aprenden a pensar, actuar y resolver sus propios problemas. A los profesores se les insta a que actúen como facilitadores o asesores que guíen a los alumnos sobre cómo aprender por ellos mismos a través de los medios, bibliotecas públicas, centros de aprendizaje, sabiduría local, etcétera.

Sistema Nacional de Evaluación

Para cerciorarse que se cumplan con las normas nacionales y que la calidad de la educación se mejore a todos los niveles, se estableció la Oficina Nacio-

nal de Normatividad Educativa y Evaluación de la Calidad (ONESQA). Aun cuando cada institución educativa es responsable de su propio aseguramiento de calidad interno, cada una debe pasar por una evaluación externa de calidad cuando menos una vez cada cinco años. La ONESQA supervisa estas evaluaciones externas.

La evaluación de los resultados del aprendizaje es responsabilidad de cada una de las instituciones educativas. Además de su competencia en cada materia, a los estudiantes se les debe evaluar en las siguientes áreas para poder graduarse: calidad de vida, características deseadas del estudiante y dominio del idioma. En cuanto a la *calidad de vida*, los alumnos deben realizar ya sea un trabajo social o actividades de autodesarrollo. Con relación a las *características deseadas del estudiante*, se evalúan los valores éticos y morales del estudiante. La prueba de *dominio del idioma* evalúa las habilidades de escritura, lectura, pensamiento y análisis del alumno. Por lo demás, en el último semestre, los estudiantes deben tomar un examen adicional para determinar su desempeño general, así como el desempeño de la institución educativa.

Educación no formal: características innovadoras

Aun cuando desde el principio la educación formal especifica los objetivos, metas, planes de estudio, duración y las evaluaciones necesarias para su conclusión, la educación no formal es más flexible en cuanto a los objetivos, modalidades, administración y procedimientos. El contenido y los planes de estudio para la educación no formal se pueden ajustar a las necesidades de grupos específicos de estudiantes.

Con relación a los resultados de transferencia del aprendizaje, la nueva *Ley Nacional de Educación* reconoce la importancia de todo tipo de educación, formal, no formal o informal. La ley especifica que los créditos acumulados por los estudiantes serán transferibles dentro del mismo tipo o entre diferentes tipos de educación, independientemente si los créditos se acumularon en la misma o en diferente institución educativa, incluyendo el aprendizaje en una educación no formal o informal, capacitación vocacional o experiencia en el trabajo.

Junto al sistema de educación no formal, existen actividades de aprendizaje informal que permiten a los alumnos aprender por ellos mismos –de acuerdo a sus intereses, potencial, presteza y las oportunidades disponibles– de las personas, la sociedad, el entorno, los medios u otras fuentes de conocimiento, tales como bibliotecas, museos y centros de ciencia y tecnología, Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitarios (CAC), centros de lectura de las aldeas, centros de educación no formal subdistritales, oficinas de salud subdistritales, oficinas agrícolas subdistritales, sabiduría local, medios locales, familias, líderes

comunitarios y redes a través de actividades de cooperativas, así como por los medios masivos, incluyendo radio, televisión, periódicos y revistas.

También se ha ampliado el rango de oportunidades a través de una variedad de programas y actividades de educación no formal y para adultos. Estos programas toman en cuenta los derechos que se garantizan en la actual *Constitución*, la cual establece que los ciudadanos tailandeses de todas las edades, independientemente del género, deben tener acceso a derechos y oportunidades iguales. Como organismo directamente responsable de la promoción y desarrollo de la educación para adultos, la ONFEC ha desarrollado una variedad de programas de educación no formal y para adultos: educación básica (que incluye la promoción de la alfabetización, el programa de equivalencia de educación básica y la educación continua con base en las necesidades de los grupos objetivo), educación para el desarrollo ocupacional, educación para el desarrollo de habilidades para la vida y educación para el desarrollo social y comunitario.

Al cubrir una amplia gama de grupos marginados, los programas se basan en los derechos expresados en la *Constitución*. Por ejemplo, hay programas para los internos en las prisiones, los discapacitados, la gente de la tercera edad, los grupos étnicos minoritarios (incluyendo tribus montañosas y musulmanes tailandeses en el sur), los inaccesibles en áreas remotas y los ciudadanos tailandeses que viven en el extranjero. Los enfoques de enseñanza-aprendizaje se centran en el estudiante, y éste participa completamente en todas las actividades. El plan de estudios se desarrolla para satisfacer las necesidades de cada grupo objetivo específico y su meta es mejorar el éxito del aprendizaje. Hay casi tantas formas innovadoras para enseñar y aprender como hay diferentes planes de estudios. Por ejemplo, existen programas de autoaprendizaje que utilizan medios electrónicos, programas de educación a distancia vía satélite, programas de transferencia de créditos que se conectan con la educación formal, no formal e informal, así como aseguramiento de la calidad, acreditación de experiencias de los estudiantes y programas escolares en casa.

Tres principales programas no formales: educación básica, educación vocacional y servicios de información

La organización clave responsable de la ENF en Tailandia, la ONFEC, respalda los servicios de la educación no formal e informal para promover el aprendizaje de por vida y el fortalecimiento de las capacidades entre la población que no va a la escuela, para permitirles mejorar su calidad de vida. En la actualidad, la ONFEC está ampliando los servicios de la ENF para cubrir más grupos objetivo en el país, incluyendo niños, mujeres, presos, fuerza laboral, discapacitados, conscriptos, agricultores, gente de la tercera

edad (de más de 60 años), tribus montañosas, líderes locales, habitantes de barrios bajos, musulmanes tailandeses, practicantes religiosos, gente que no ha tenido oportunidad de ampliar sus estudios con una educación escolar formal después de la educación obligatoria, tailandeses en el extranjero y estudiantes en escuelas formales. Los programas y actividades de educación no formal que proporciona la ONFEC, caen en tres categorías: educación básica, educación vocacional y adiestramiento de habilidades, así como servicios de información.

Educación básica

Los programas de educación básica se imparten a aquellos que no han recibido escolaridad formal o que han desertado de la escuela y desean regresar para mejorar su educación. Los programas en esta área son los siguientes:

Programa de Alfabetización Funcional: Este programa se ha instrumentado desde 1971 para ayudar a los estudiantes adultos a aprender habilidades básicas en lectura, escritura y cálculo, y para resolver problemas a través del Proceso *Khit-pen* que se enfoca en el conocimiento académico, conocimiento de uno mismo y conocimiento del medio ambiente. Los estudiantes adultos pueden elegir resolver sus problemas considerando estas tres áreas del conocimiento. El plan de estudios está diseñado para satisfacer las necesidades y condiciones de los estudiantes objetivo; existe un plan de estudios específico para diversos grupos objetivo de educación no formal. El Programa de Alfabetización Funcional tiene un plan de estudios equivalente al cuarto grado del sistema de escolaridad formal.

Proyecto de Educación del Área Montañosa: Este proyecto está diseñado específicamente para la población que vive a lo largo de las sierras montañosas en el norte y occidente del país. La ONFEC piensa ampliar los servicios educativos que satisfagan las necesidades y problemas de la comunidad montañesa. Por medio de este proyecto, algunos miembros de las tribus montañosas se han alfabetizado.

Programa de Educación Continua: El programa les da a las personas la oportunidad de incrementar su conocimiento y obtener certificados que son equivalentes a los que se dan después de concluir el 6°, 9° ó 12° grados en escuelas formales generales. Los dos enfoques de aprendizaje que se utilizan en este programa son: educación a distancia y estudio en grupos.

Educación vocacional y adiestramiento de habilidades

Esta área está diseñada para promover el bienestar público o para mejorar la calidad de vida de las personas a través del desarrollo vocacional. Para lograr este objetivo se ofrecen cuatro tipos de educación vocacional y adiestramiento de habilidades:

Grupos de Interés: El programa de grupos de interés tiene como objetivo satisfacer necesidades e intereses de habilidades vocaciones específicas de diversos grupos. Un mínimo de 15 personas pueden solicitar adiestramiento en habilidades específicas de acuerdo a sus intereses. La duración del curso es de no más de 30 horas. Los miembros del grupo deben pagar los materiales, mientras que el gobierno paga al instructor.

Cursos Vocacionales Breves: Este tipo de curso varía de 100 a 300 horas. Los interesados en esta área pueden registrarse en cualquier tipo de adiestramiento de habilidades que necesiten. Los estudiantes deben pagar una cantidad nominal para los materiales. La mayor parte del adiestramiento se lleva a cabo en los centros provinciales o de distrito de ENF, así como en los Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitarios.

Plan de Estudios con Certificado Vocacional: Este programa curricular con certificado vocacional cuya duración es de tres años, se le imparte a aquellos que han concluido la educación primaria o el 6° grado y que quisieran incrementar su conocimiento y entendimiento del mundo laboral, de ellos mismos y de la sociedad, o de cómo elegir ocupaciones adecuadas a las necesidades de las personas y de sus comunidades. Los estudiantes que concluyen este programa reciben un certificado que es equivalente al 9° grado o educación secundaria en el sistema escolar formal.

Programa Curricular con Certificado Ocupacional de ENF: Este programa curricular con certificado ocupacional cuya duración es de tres años, se le imparte a aquellos que han concluido la educación secundaria y que han trabajado en sectores comerciales o que han sido trabajadores independientes por lo menos tres años. Este plan de estudios está diseñado especialmente para mejorar las habilidades vocacionales de los estudiantes que ya cuentan con experiencia laboral y con habilidades en el trabajo. A los estudiantes que concluyen este programa se les otorga un certificado vocacional equivalente al 12° grado o preparatoria en el sistema escolar formal.

Servicios de información

Los servicios de información se dan para la educación informal y para el aprendizaje de por vida a través de diferentes medios para permitir que las personas aprendan en horarios que les convengan. Los principales sitios y actividades que se organizan en esta área son los siguientes:

Biblioteca Pública: Las bibliotecas públicas se consideran como el centro de recursos académicos en donde la gente puede buscar el conocimiento y la información que necesita. En Tailandia hay 847 bibliotecas públicas.

Centro de Aprendizaje Comunitario: Los Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitarios proporcionan diversos tipos de conocimiento a gente y comunidades que participan en el aprendizaje de por vida. Las actividades incluyen educación básica, educación vocacional y adiestramiento de habilidades, servicios de información y actividades para la promoción de la calidad de vida. En la actualidad, hay 8057 Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitarios en Tailandia.

Programas Educativos por Radio y Televisión: Los programas educativos por radio y televisión los produce principalmente el Centro de Tecnología de la Educación y los Centros Educativos Regionales No Formales. Además, a través del Centro de Educación a Distancia Thaicom, en cooperación con la Fundación Thaicom, la ONFEC ha iniciado un proyecto de educación vía satélite para mejorar la calidad del programa de educación a distancia con el objetivo de proporcionar a todos los tailandeses la misma oportunidad de adquirir conocimientos e información actualizada.

Centro Nacional de Ciencias para la Educación: El Centro Nacional de Ciencias para la Educación en Bangkok proporciona conocimientos sobre ciencia y tecnología, así como una muestra abierta al público. Hay doce centros de ciencia adicionales en otras provincias.

Tendencias futuras de las políticas y marco de referencia de la ENF

El 22 y 23 de mayo de 2004, la Secretaría Permanente del Ministerio de Educación celebró una reunión con los educadores no formales de instituciones de educación superior, catedráticos, representantes de ONG y administradores educativos para discutir el futuro de la ENF. De la reunión surgieron las siguientes recomendaciones para la ONFEC.

Tener una función activa y eficiente en la creación y fortalecimiento de una sociedad de aprendizaje y en la impartición de educación básica. Las metas y el marco político de la ENF en el futuro deben incluir lo siguiente:

- Fortalecer la independencia de la comunidad y facultarla para que se convierta en una sociedad de aprendizaje.
- Las organizaciones de ENF deben trabajar juntas con sus gobiernos locales y nacionales y con la red de ONG.
- La ENF debe usar todos los medios y tecnología disponibles para crear nuevos enfoques y actualizar constantemente sus modelos de instrumentación de los programas.
- La ENF debe evaluar y reevaluar los logros pasados para volver a formular o ajustar la estructura de su administración institucional y estar preparados para las nuevas dimensiones de su operación.
- Instar al gobierno a redactar y promulgar una Ley Nacional de la Educación No Formal.

Con base en estas sugerencias, el equipo antes mencionado de educadores no formales ha estado redactando el marco de referencia, planes estratégicos y planes de acción para la Educación No Formal en el futuro. Aun cuando no se ha terminado, a continuación se presenta un borrador general de la política y un marco operativo.

Planes estratégicos para la ENF

Con base en el sistema actual de la reforma educativa, se han desarrollado cinco planes estratégicos:

ESTRATEGIA I: Debe considerarse claramente la identificación de los grupos objetivo para la instrumentación de una variedad de actividades de ENF que deberán ser pertinentes a las necesidades significativas de los estudiantes objetivo específicos.

ESTRATEGIA II: Los recursos de aprendizaje deberán administrarse e instrumentarse al hacer lo siguiente:

- Estudiar y administrar el Sistema de Administración de Información para permitir a los estudiantes tener acceso a toda la información que necesiten de acuerdo a su interés.
- Promover la coordinación entre diversas fuentes u organizaciones de aprendizaje para desarrollar y transferir más ampliamente todo el co-

nocimiento necesario y experiencias de vida. Por ejemplo, habilidades básicas de lenguaje y habilidades de pensamiento crítico, analíticas, de comunicación y vocacionales, así como el conocimiento acerca de la salud, las artes y la música.

- Promover el desarrollo de tecnologías de la información y comunicación para aumentar la efectividad del aprendizaje a lo largo de toda la vida entre los estudiantes.

ESTRATEGIA III: Las comunidades deben estar “centradas en el estudiante a lo largo de toda la vida” al:

- Establecer una política para hacer de las comunidades el punto de inicio de la educación al alentarlas a participar en la planificación e instrumentación de actividades para el desarrollo de la comunidad.
- Mejorar y desarrollar los recursos básicos de información de las comunidades, especialmente los recursos de educación a lo largo de toda la vida, tales como los Centros de Aprendizaje Comunitarios y las redes de información y comunicación, e instar a todas las partes de la sociedad a que participen en las actividades para el desarrollo de la comunidad.

ESTRATEGIA IV: Las asignaciones presupuestarias deberán distribuirse para respaldar las actividades locales y para satisfacer las necesidades de los grupos objetivo. También deberán tomarse las siguientes medidas complementarias:

- Deberá crearse un fondo para el aprendizaje comunitario como un medio adicional para respaldar las actividades de aprendizaje de la comunidad de acuerdo con la política nacional de hacer que las comunidades locales se centren en el estudiante.
- La organización administrativa local será responsable de asignar los fondos correspondientes para promover la educación no formal e informal y, por ese medio, impulsar el aprendizaje a lo largo de toda la vida.

ESTRATEGIA V: Deberán tomarse medidas administrativas para promover las habilidades gerenciales y de colaboración entre el personal de ENF, los centros y las redes para permitirles desempeñar funciones más eficaces.

Algunos programas sobresalientes

Alfabetización bilingüe

Actualmente, una tarea importante del programa APPEAL de la UNESCO es llegar a grupos marginados, tales como los habitantes de poblaciones rurales pobres y minorías étnicas. Se hizo un manual para la preparación de material de aprendizaje para las tribus montañosas *pwo karen* en el distrito Omkoi, provincia de Chiang Mai, y también se han capacitado a legisladores y profesionales de ocho países. Por consiguiente, se han desarrollado proyectos piloto nacionales parcialmente auspiciados por el programa APPEAL de la UNESCO. El enfoque bilingüe ha sido el nuevo marco para estos proyectos. Primero se aprende la lengua materna, para que los estudiantes puedan contar con un puente para beneficiarse del aprendizaje en la lengua nacional. Con la experiencia que adquieren al escribir en su propio idioma, las minorías se sienten empoderadas y más capaces para preservar su patrimonio cultural.

En Tailandia, aprender el idioma tailandés es un requisito obligatorio del programa de educación elemental no formal para las tribus montañosas, ya que es el idioma que se utiliza para impartir las clases. La falta de un entorno adecuado de lenguaje en algunas aldeas de tribus montañosas ha sido la razón por la que ninguno de ellos puede hablar tailandés. Como resultado de esto, los estudiantes de estas aldeas no han podido avanzar exitosamente en el sistema de aprendizaje. El objetivo de este proyecto piloto es encontrar formas para facilitar el aprendizaje de estudiantes de las tribus montañosas por medio del enfoque bilingüe.

Los estudiantes objetivo que se seleccionaron para este proyecto eran miembros de la tribu montañesa *pwo karen* en el distrito Omkoi, provincia de Chiang Mai. Ya que no cuentan con un lenguaje escrito, el primer paso fue desarrollar uno para poder avanzar al siguiente paso hacia el tailandés.

A través de la cooperación con SIL Internacional, una agencia con experiencia en lenguajes de minorías, el equipo de trabajo ha realizado un análisis lingüístico del lenguaje oral *pwo karen*, desarrollado una tabla alfabética con el uso de escritura del tailandés, diseñado materiales de aprendizaje y realizado capacitación para profesores. Esto comenzó con una visita a dos aldeas *pwo karen* en el distrito Omkoi. En marzo de 2003, se realizó un taller para el desarrollo de instrumentos para encuestas de la comunidad y de un plan para la recolección de datos. El segundo taller fue sobre el análisis fonético del *pwo karen*. Los hallazgos de un estudio previo sobre el *pwo karen* en el distrito Srisawat, provincia de Kan-chanaburi, y en el distrito Hot, provincia de

Chiang Mai, se utilizaron como base para recopilar palabras para ejemplificar el sistema sonoro del *pwo karen* de Omkoi.

En marzo de 2003, la lista de palabras se llevó a la aldea objetivo para que se comparara con el *pwo karen* local. Estas listas las verificaron y corrigieron las tribus montañosas mismas. De mayo a julio de 2003, se recopiló información sobre temas culturales y se preparó el calendario para la aldea. En agosto, se organizó un taller para el desarrollo del plan de estudios. El primer taller para aprender a escribir se realizó en las aldeas *pwo karen* en octubre de 2003. Los participantes tuvieron la oportunidad de practicar al producir ellos mismos folletines, afiches y otros materiales impresos. Había computadoras, impresoras y cámaras digitales para los profesores y para los estudiantes de *pwo karen* para, de esta manera, poder explorar juntos los materiales que producían.

Desarrollo de una familia que aprendió. El caso de Na Noi

Ban Lim Tong del distrito Nang Rong, provincia de Burirum, es similar a otras aldeas rurales en el noreste de Tailandia. Los aldeanos obtienen su principal ingreso del cultivo de arroz y la crianza de ganado. El trabajo agrícola es muy aventurado para ellos pues no cuentan con un sistema adecuado de irrigación y no tienen poder de negociación en los mercados.

En 1998, la Fundación Suksapatana y otros socios, incluyendo al Departamento de Educación No Formal, enviaron profesores voluntarios que habían recibido capacitación especial en constructivismo por parte de Seymour Papert del Laboratorio de Medios de MIT, para trabajar con Na Noi. En esa época, ella sólo había terminado el 4º grado de la educación elemental, su familia era muy pobre y tenían una deuda muy grande. Los profesores la animaron para que llevara un registro de sus reflexiones sobre las dificultades familiares para poder contar con datos precisos y analizar las causas principales que provocaron la pobreza familiar.

Ambas partes acordaron que ella necesitaba aprender sobre planificación de la producción. Iniciaron estableciendo un calendario y determinando el dinero que se necesitaba invertir para cada lote de vegetales que cosechaba la familia. Posteriormente, la planificación de la producción se amplió a la planificación financiera familiar. Los detalles de los ingresos y gastos diarios se registraban totalmente; así que el libro se convirtió en un ejemplo de “materiales de aprendizaje generados por el estudiante”. También se estableció un esquema de clasificación de gastos para facilitar el análisis financiero. A finales de cada mes, Na Noi calculaba y comparaba todos los tipos de gastos y presentaba los resultados a su familia para discutirlos. Los miembros de la familia dedicaban tiempo a revisar los datos financieros objetivos y los analizaban con referencia a lo siguiente: monto de cada tipo de gasto, qué

tan razonable era, quién debería ser responsable de algunas partidas de gastos no razonables, como comprar café enlatado en vez de usar café instantáneo. También discutían cómo reducir algunos gastos y monitoreaban la situación financiera para lograrlo. A través de este proceso de aprendizaje, Na Noi pudo proporcionar datos financieros objetivos y transparentes para facilitar el aprendizaje familiar. También tuvo la oportunidad de practicar diariamente sus habilidades de alfabetización. Además, se convirtió en un modelo a seguir para sus hijos con relación a la planificación financiera de la familia y la personal. Durante el proyecto, los miembros de la familia se entendieron mejor y hubo una mayor solidaridad, que les permitió trabajar juntos para erradicar la pobreza de la familia.

A Na Noi se le proporcionó una computadora y se le capacitó en Excel de Microsoft en su casa para que pudiera trabajar con un esquema de clasificación más flexible, en lugar de un esquema manual que consume mucho tiempo. Este arreglo también le facilitó contactar a algunas agencias externas y solicitar la información que necesitaba, así como proporcionar asesoría a otros aldeanos e intercambiar experiencias con aquellos que tenían problemas e intereses similares.

En la actualidad, Na Noi y su hija tienen un mini club de computación en su casa, y ella les enseña a los niños y jóvenes de su aldea conocimientos básicos de cómputo, especialmente cómo utilizar Excel de Microsoft para analizar los registros financieros de las familias. En enero de 2003, Na Noi declaró que su familia ya no tenía deudas y que ya no necesitaban tanta ayuda como en el pasado.

Desarrollo de una comunidad que aprendió: El caso de Ban Samkha

La reducción de la pobreza se puede manejar eficazmente a nivel de la comunidad. Los habitantes de Ban Sikh, distrito de Mae To, provincia de Lampang, se preguntaban, después de veinte años de desarrollo económico de la comunidad por parte del gobierno, por qué la situación económica de su comunidad no había mejorado. Casi cada hogar tenía una deuda considerable. Por lo tanto necesitaban saber cuál era la deuda total de los 152 hogares (656 habitantes), de dónde provenía y cómo podían ayudarse entre ellos para sobreponerse a dicha presión de la comunidad. La primera encuesta sobre la deuda de la comunidad mostró que la deuda total era de aproximadamente 18 millones de *bahts*, que era mayor de lo que pensaban. Este descubrimiento ejerció mucha presión en toda la comunidad. Comenzando en 2001, en una asamblea de la aldea –que es el mecanismo más importante para la toma de decisiones de la comunidad– decidieron investigar para resolver el problema ellos mismos. Los habitantes de la aldea formaron un equipo de investigación con catorce miembros, dirigidos

por un presidente. Cada hogar llevaba registro de todos los ingresos y gastos diarios. Se decidió sobre un esquema de clasificación de datos. A finales de cada mes, un comité de investigación, junto con diez a catorce hogares bajo su cargo, analizaba los datos del grupo y después el equipo de investigación consolidaba los datos de toda la comunidad.

Durante la asamblea de la aldea, se informaba sobre los datos de los ingresos y gastos de la comunidad y se discutían con la finalidad de encontrar alguna forma adecuada para reducir los gastos e incrementar los ingresos. La consideración acerca de los gastos hizo surgir nuevas ocupaciones, lo que les dio la oportunidad a muchos habitantes de tener ingresos adicionales. Esto no hubiera sido posible si aquí se hubiera utilizado el enfoque centrado en los individuos en vez del enfoque que cubría a toda la comunidad, como sucedió en el caso de Na Noi. Este enfoque también le permitió a las aldeas ver que su deuda se debía principalmente a actitudes y formas de vida inadecuadas, especialmente su dependencia exagerada de productos anunciados en los medios de comunicación en los últimos veinte años. Al comparar el ingreso y gasto mensuales, pudieron determinar en qué época del año necesitaban encontrar ingresos extra para cubrir el incremento en los costos. La experiencia de aprendizaje más importante fue que se dieron cuenta que necesitaban saber más de administración, y no dinero o materiales por parte del gobierno, para resolver el problema de la pobreza.

Los niños y jóvenes fueron los primeros en tomar la iniciativa en la aldea de Ban Samkha para aprender a manejar las computadoras y usar el internet. Un profesor escolar encontró alguna información interesante en internet, la difundió a través de la estación de radiocomunicación de la aldea y ofreció capacitación gratuita de cómputo a todos, pero este intento no tuvo éxito.

Había tres actividades en las que casi todos los habitantes de la aldea participaban: la tienda al menudeo de la comunidad, el fideicomiso de la aldea y la contabilidad. Cuando las transacciones se hicieron muy grandes, la comunidad buscó ayuda de un contador profesional para que revisara el sistema contable que tenían. Siam Cement (Lampang) Ltd, National Electronics and Computer Technology y el Departamento de Educación no Formal cooperaron en el desarrollo de tres paquetes de cómputo y capacitaron a los niños y jóvenes de la localidad, a quienes se les pidió que, a su vez, capacitaran posteriormente a otras personas. Este fue el inicio para que los habitantes adultos de la aldea consideraran a las computadoras como herramientas funcionales para mejorar la efectividad del trabajo de la comunidad.

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Un sistema de educación de calidad para jóvenes y adultos de China

*Yuguan Qiao**

Con objeto de adaptarse a las nuevas situaciones derivadas de la entrada de China a la Organización Mundial de Comercio (OMC) y al acelerado desarrollo de la globalización mundial, esta nación considera que la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes es un componente clave de su sistema educativo. La impartición de dicha educación se ha incorporado al plan integral de desarrollo económico y social y constituye la base del desarrollo económico y social nacional. La promoción de la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes se contempla como una manera importante para instrumentar la estrategia de China que consiste en “desarrollar al país valiéndose de la ciencia y la educación”, facilitar el desarrollo económico y social sustentable y realzar la competitividad internacional de China. Es preciso contar con esta educación de calidad para que el país ajuste su estructura económica, mejore la calidad de su fuerza laboral y acelere el desarrollo de sus recursos humanos. Es un medio decisivo para acrecentar el número de empleos e impulsar la tasa de empleo y la redistribución de la fuerza laboral.

La reforma quinquenal como objetivo del desarrollo

El fin primordial de la educación para adultos y jóvenes es fomentar el avance económico y tecnológico, el empleo, el desarrollo agrícola, el enriquecimiento de las zonas rurales y de los campesinos, el logro de la “estrategia para el de-

* Traducción de María Estela Lapidus.

sarrollo de la región occidental” y el avance de una sociedad china armoniosa. Este tipo de educación proporciona la formación y capacitación en escuelas vocacionales en diferentes maneras y a distintos niveles para egresados de escuela secundaria y preparatoria, trabajadores recientes en zonas urbanas y rurales, los que han sido despedidos y los desempleados, personal en servicio y mano de obra rural.

El plan preliminar de China para contar con un sistema de educación de calidad moderno destinado a adultos y jóvenes, se adapta a la economía del mercado socialista e integra las demandas del mercado y el empleo de mano de obra. El objetivo del plan es desarrollar un sistema educativo que cuente con una estructura eficiente, estilos académicos flexibles y abiertos y diversas características distintivas e independientes.

Plan de desarrollo y enfoque en el trabajo

Debido a la realidad actual, China tomó medidas adaptadas a las condiciones locales en cada caso; sus planes se diseñaron para abordar las necesidades de diferentes zonas y diferentes tipos de personas. En la actualidad se da prioridad a las zonas rurales y al occidente del país; el fin es proporcionar capacitación con objeto de mejorar las habilidades prácticas de los habitantes de las zonas rurales y del occidente de China.

Zonas rurales: con objeto de cumplir con las necesidades del desarrollo agrícola moderno, así como hacer ajustes a la estructura económica, China ha buscado sistemáticamente integrar la agricultura, la ciencia y la educación en la planeación de la formación primaria, vocacional y de adultos. La idea es impulsar las escuelas vocacionales en las zonas rurales para fortalecer la colaboración entre empresas, institutos de investigación agrícola y centros de ciencia y tecnología agrícolas. Al darles libertad para estimular y coordinar la cooperación entre las escuelas, empresas y hogares de campesinos, se espera que estas escuelas vocacionales logren grandes adelantos en la industrialización de la agricultura y la promoción de la excelencia profesional. La meta de la educación con “certificado verde” es capacitar a un gran número de hogares modelo y dirigentes empresariales en ciencia y tecnología. El estado ha tomado varias medidas para apoyar la educación vocacional en las zonas rurales, en el oeste, en regiones con minorías étnicas y en áreas marginadas. Dio inicio a una serie de escuelas vocacionales clave. De aquí en adelante, la escuela secundaria vocacional de cinco años reclutará a 3.5 millones de alumnos de las zonas rurales cada año. En cada condado, población y aldea, China establecerá un sistema de instrucción y capacitación para campesinos integrado por educación cultural, en ciencia y tecnología; será de carácter abierto y práctico. Las escuelas vocacionales y de adultos constituirán la base

del desarrollo de recursos humanos y capacitación tecnológica, así como para movilizar a la fuerza de trabajo y ayudar a que los pobres mejoren sus condiciones de vida.

El oeste: China promoverá la cooperación entre las regiones del este y del oeste, ciudades grandes y medianas y zonas rurales para administrar a las escuelas. Alentará a los directores y maestros de escuelas vocacionales en el este y en ciudades grandes y medianas para que ocupen puestos y administren las escuelas en las áreas de occidente y rurales. Las escuelas en el este y las ciudades grandes y medianas en el medio oeste, buscarán alumnos en las zonas occidentales y rurales y subsidiarán las colegiaturas a los estudiantes provenientes de familias pobres. El aprendizaje y capacitación a distancia, así como los exámenes para enseñanza abierta, se extenderán en las zonas rurales y en el oeste. En cinco años, las escuelas del este reclutarán a 1.2 millones de alumnos del oeste.

Al mismo tiempo, las ciudades grandes y medianas y las regiones desarrolladas ampliarán en forma activa la educación vocacional superior al seguir desarrollando la educación especializada en la secundaria, así como formación vocacional. Algunos municipios y prefecturas (regiones administrativas con minorías étnicas en una provincia determinada), que cumplan con los requisitos pertinentes, podrán administrar instituciones politécnicas diversificadas y comunitarias.

Reforma estructural de la gestión

Bajo la dirección del consejo estatal, se mejora gradualmente la estructura de la gestión. La gestión implica administrar a diferentes instancias, dando prioridad a las autoridades locales, la planeación del gobierno central y la participación de grupos sociales. Bajo la guía de los gobiernos estatales y locales surgirá una estrategia de gestión escolar de múltiples elementos; dependerá de las empresas así como de diversos grupos gremiales y sociales. Asimismo, se realizarán esfuerzos para alentar a diversos grupos sociales a introducir la educación vocacional. Los gremios, empresas, organizaciones sociales intermedias y organizaciones masivas, desempeñarán una función activa en el desarrollo de la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes.

En China muchos sectores rigen la educación, manejan y administran escuelas, sobre todo escuelas técnicas y vocacionales y la educación de adultos, conforme a las disposiciones legales. Se promulgaron la *Ley de Educación de la República Popular China* y la *Ley del Trabajo de la República Popular China*, así como otras leyes y normativas pertinentes. Sin embargo, queda mucho camino por recorrer. Habrá que fortalecer el sistema jurídico que trata la transición al empleo. Más aún, es preciso mejorar los sistemas de procuración de justicia

y de supervisión. También es necesario fortalecer la vigilancia, la instrucción y la inspección. Se puede mejorar y reforzar la evaluación del sistema educativo así como sus resultados. La calidad de la educación para adultos y jóvenes se valorará de conformidad con las exigencias de las fuerzas del mercado, pero al mismo tiempo, tendrá que propiciarse la participación de los grupos sociales en el proceso de evaluación.

Diversas dependencias del gobierno central concertaron reuniones interdepartamentales para hablar de la problemática encontrada en el trabajo. En el trabajo intersectorial, se definen con claridad las responsabilidades de cada dependencia. El Ministerio de Educación (MDE) está encargado de la planeación global, la coordinación integral y la macroadministración.

El desarrollo de la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes es responsabilidad primordial de los gobiernos y comunidades locales. En poblaciones donde se administran las escuelas en una forma inflexible y cerrada, se procurará lograr un cambio en el sistema de gestión. El gobierno popular movilizará muchos conductos para obtener recursos para la educación vocacional a nivel de municipio y prefectura. A fin de aumentar la eficiencia se están eliminando los límites entre los diferentes sectores y tipos de escuelas.

Se organizará, dirigirá y apoyará a las empresas, gremios y grupos sociales que administren las escuelas vocacionales y las acciones de capacitación. Las empresas administrarán escuelas vocacionales y centros de capacitación de acuerdo con las necesidades locales y del mercado. Las empresas podrán colaborar con las escuelas para administrarlas conjuntamente de muchas maneras. Pueden realizar formación “orientada a la demanda” y proporcionar maestros de medio tiempo, instalaciones para las prácticas y equipo para las escuelas. Asimismo, podrán establecer instituciones de investigación y desarrollo y centros experimentales para las escuelas.

Las dependencias gubernamentales encomiendan a las organizaciones gremiales que efectúen pronósticos de recursos humanos para diferentes oficios, redacten planes de educación y capacitación vocacional para los gremios, proporcionen instrucción vocacional, formen al personal y a los trabajadores, evalúen las capacidades vocacionales para los oficios y participen en la recopilación de libros de texto sobre materias pertinentes y capacitación para maestros. Asimismo, las organizaciones gremiales podrán administrar escuelas y centros de capacitación.

Se alentará y apoyará la educación vocacional no gubernamental. Las escuelas vocacionales no gubernamentales y sin fines de lucro disfrutarán de políticas favorables para introducir la educación vocacional como una causa social y para el bien del público. Se fomentará que escuelas administradas por el Estado importen mecanismos no gubernamentales.

Se mejorará el sistema para otorgar certificados académicos, certificados de capacitación y acreditaciones vocacionales. Habrá esfuerzos importantes para preparar a los trabajadores para el mercado laboral. Esto entrañará la aplicación de un control riguroso sobre la incorporación a un empleo por parte de los departamentos de personal al establecer un sistema de seguridad y supervisión laboral.

Se realizarán las siguientes acciones: robustecer la orientación vocacional así como la atención al empleo. Instruir a los alumnos para que modifiquen sus perspectivas laborales. Promover la educación para iniciar un negocio. Alentar a los egresados a encontrar trabajo en pequeñas y medianas empresas (PYMES) en poblaciones chicas y en zonas rurales o iniciar sus propios negocios. Profesionalizar el sistema de atención al empleo para que ofrezca información, consulta y condiciones favorables.

Reforma educativa y de enseñanza

A finales del año 2000, China logró el objetivo histórico de universalizar el ciclo de nueve años de educación básica obligatoria. Como resultado, el desarrollo de la educación entró a una nueva etapa en China. Se realizó un esfuerzo clave para reorientar y mejorar el sistema educativo mediante una reforma innovadora en los planes de estudio de la educación básica. Los dos nuevos objetivos principales de la educación básica son: 1) universalizar la educación obligatoria de nueve años para lograr el objetivo de educación para todos (EPT) y mejorar la calidad de vida de todos los ciudadanos, y 2) mejorar la calidad de la educación a fin de cultivar la excelencia y el espíritu y la capacidad de innovación y creatividad para el progreso socioeconómico y el avance de la ciencia y la tecnología. En 1999 el gobierno chino expidió el *Plan de acción para darle un nuevo ímpetu a la educación en el siglo XXI*.

Reforma de los planes de estudio de la educación básica

El gobierno chino elaboró “El Proyecto de la Reforma del Plan de Estudios de la Educación Básica”, considerado como un proyecto fundamental. El propósito del proyecto es diseñar un nuevo sistema de plan de estudios para la educación básica del siglo XXI al renovar los conceptos educativos, integrando ideas sobre el crecimiento personal. Perfeccionará el diseño y la instrumentación de la enseñanza y de los planes de estudio haciendo mayor hincapié en su respuesta a los cambiantes contextos sociales, necesidades de los educandos y expectativas de los padres de familia y de la comunidad.

En 2001, el Ministerio de Educación expidió las *Directrices para la Reforma de los Planes de Estudio de la Educación Básica* y la normativa para la educación obligatoria de nueve años. Desde entonces, se puso en práctica un proyecto piloto en el cual uno o más condados o distritos de la provincia participan en el experimento de la nueva reforma de los planes de estudio. Al mismo tiempo, se introdujeron nuevos materiales didácticos en las escuelas experimentales. La reforma propuesta se llevó a cabo en dos fases: de 2001 a 2004 se terminó el diseño del nuevo sistema de planes de estudio. Después de 2004, el objetivo ha sido ampliar gradualmente las nuevas prácticas a lo largo de todo el país.

La reforma de los planes de estudio incluye los siguientes cambios:

- 1) De la segregación disciplinaria a un plan de estudios bien equilibrado e integrado que se pueda adaptar mejor a las opciones de los educandos.
- 2) De la presentación sistemática de disciplinas individuales y énfasis excesivo en los conocimientos tradicionales a una integración más estrecha de la sociedad moderna, el desarrollo tecnológico y la vida de los educandos.
- 3) De materiales unificados a alternativas para satisfacer las necesidades diferentes de las escuelas y los alumnos.
- 4) De formas de aprendizaje pasivas (por ejemplo, memorización e imitación) a un aprendizaje activo (por ejemplo, observación participativa, ejercicios prácticos y trabajo en grupo con los compañeros).
- 5) De hacer un hincapié excesivo en aprender los hechos de memoria y en los exámenes competitivos a una evaluación integrada con doble enfoque en los resultados y en el desarrollo de los educandos así como la mejoría de la enseñanza.
- 6) De la gestión sumamente centralizada a la compartida, donde se distribuyan las responsabilidades en los distintos niveles escolares nacionales y locales.

Alfabetización

Para el año 2000, la tasa de alfabetización de personas mayores de 15 años de edad se incrementó a 91.3% y la tasa de alfabetización de adultos entre 15 y 50 años de edad se elevó a más de 95%. Está funcionando el énfasis en la instrumentación de la alfabetización y en lograr que la educación obligatoria sea más popular.

El Ministerio de Educación establece que las escuelas de educación primaria locales se encarguen de brindar clases de alfabetización a todos los adolescentes menores de 15 años de edad. Se espera que las escuelas primarias y secundarias y las escuelas para adultos en las zonas rurales tengan un papel activo en la erradicación del analfabetismo.

Asimismo, el Ministerio de Educación prevé que la alfabetización se combine con las actividades de trabajo y de la vida real de los estudiantes. Los contenidos de los cursos no sólo incluyen conocimientos culturales, como alfabetización, aprendizaje de lecto-escritura y cuentas básicas, sino también educación cívica, habilidades profesionales, conocimientos de la vida y educación sobre la salud. La alfabetización de la mujer incluye educación sobre la maternidad, atención infantil y del hogar (por ejemplo, manejo de asuntos personales y finanzas domésticas). Los contenidos de los programas de alfabetización en zonas de minorías abordan las costumbres populares y la cultura tradicional.

Se adoptaron formas flexibles de enseñanza. En algunos casos, la alfabetización se concentra en áreas residenciales centrales. En zonas con menor densidad de población, la regla es establecer grupos de estudio en los vecindarios. En regiones muy remotas, los maestros o alumnos de escuelas primarias más avanzadas dan las clases de alfabetización. La Estación de Televisión Educativa China (CEVT, por sus siglas en inglés), transmite en forma regular a nivel nacional, series de televisión producidas por la Escuela de Radio y Televisión Liao Yuan. Los programas son muy populares, porque enseñan conocimientos y habilidades prácticos y ayudan a los campesinos a mejorar sus condiciones de vida e incrementar sus ingresos.

El Ministerio de Educación elaboró programas curriculares como el “Plan de Estudio de Alfabetización y el Plan de Estudios de Educación Primaria para Adultos en las Zonas Rurales.” Las dependencias de educación provinciales recopilan libros de texto para complementar al órgano principal y satisfacer una variedad de necesidades locales. En virtud de que existe una alta tasa de analfabetismo entre las mujeres, el gobierno chino contrató expertos para que escriban más de 100 tipos diferentes de libros sobre la alfabetización y crear casi mil piezas de material didáctico y de lectura a fin de impulsar la educación continua de la mujer.

La reforma educativa y académica procura reforzar la ética de trabajo de adultos y jóvenes; intenta colocar cimientos más sólidos para la alfabetización, perfeccionar las habilidades de trabajo, fortalecer la educación física y mental y fomentar el desarrollo de habilidades profesionales y prácticas de los educandos así como su interés en el aprendizaje y destrezas empresariales. El gobierno pretende intensificar la formación de trabajadores calificados y altamente talentosos que están a la vanguardia de la producción.

Se estableció un mecanismo para que las escuelas vocacionales mantengan vínculos estrechos con el mercado laboral. De esta manera, la capacitación se dirige más hacia las demandas de la economía, el adelanto tecnológico y el cambiante mercado laboral. La educación vocacional se diseñó para satisfacer las necesidades de las industrias en desarrollo y los círculos de servicios modernos. Se realizan grandes esfuerzos para reforzar la capacitación de obreros calificados, sobre todo los de mayor antigüedad y técnicos. Se han puesto en marcha las reformas correspondientes de planes de estudios y libros de texto. En la educación vocacional, estos últimos reflejan nuevos conocimientos, tecnología y métodos.

En lo que toca a la práctica de la enseñanza, se subraya el profesionalismo. Las actividades didácticas se incorporan a la práctica productiva, al servicio social, a la transferencia de tecnología y al desarrollo tecnológico. A fin de garantizar que haya suficiente tiempo para el ejercicio de la enseñanza, se promueven la capacitación previa y durante el trabajo así como internados. Se construyeron centros de formación que promueven educación abierta y multifuncional para satisfacer las necesidades de la sociedad.

La informática se emplea cada vez más en la educación y la capacitación que incluye educación vocacional a distancia, bancos de datos referentes a recursos de educación vocacional y software multimedia de alta calidad para escuelas vocacionales y alumnos.

La calidad de la educación impartida a adultos y jóvenes se ha mejorado. Se capacitaron maestros de educación básica. Empresas e instituciones contrataron como instructores de medio tiempo o tiempo completo, en sus áreas de conocimientos prácticos, a profesionales tales como ingenieros, técnicos, personal administrativo y personas con destrezas especiales. Por este medio, aumentó el número de maestros y capacitadores calificados.

Se concede la misma importancia a la escolaridad formal y a la capacitación vocacional. Los esquemas de administración de escuelas y los sistemas de escolaridad se tornan cada vez más flexibles. La escolaridad de tiempo completo se combina con escolaridad a medio tiempo; la educación previa al empleo se vincula con la educación posterior al empleo. Asimismo, se pusieron en práctica períodos de estilos de escolaridad y aprendizaje diferentes. Los sistemas escolares flexibles, como el sistema de créditos, se establecieron a fin de generar condiciones que permitan a los estudiantes participar en programas de trabajo-estudio y para trabajar y estudiar por turnos, así como cumplir con la escolaridad en etapas.

Se están facilitando vínculos e intercambios entre la educación para adultos, la vocacional y la regular, a fin de construir “puentes” para las personas con talento. Hasta ahora, se ha llevado a cabo un experimento en la aplicación de un plan de estudios exhaustivo a nivel preparatoria, en el cual se unieron la

educación regular y la vocacional. El propósito del experimento fue facilitar el vínculo entre la educación vocacional secundaria y la educación superior especializada.

Aumento de recursos financieros

El gobierno central creó un fondo especial para fomentar la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes (EAJ). Se emplea para subsidiar la formación de maestros que imparten educación vocacional en las zonas rurales y en la región del medio oeste, así como para apoyar el desarrollo de libros de texto, la reposición de recursos educativos multimedia y la construcción de escuelas vocacionales modernas. Asimismo, se hizo un llamado a los gobiernos locales para que incrementen su fondo especial para la EAJ. En las ciudades se aplicará un impuesto adicional para la educación. Todas las instancias de gobierno tendrán que considerar las necesidades de los trabajadores rurales al asignar fondos para el desarrollo de la ciencia y la tecnología, transferencia de tecnología y alivio a la pobreza en las zonas rurales. En forma semejante, cualquier inversión gubernamental dirigida a mejorar la infraestructura agrícola, tendrá que asignar fondos para la construcción de escuelas vocacionales y para adultos.

Empresas de diversos tipos tendrán que aportar costos pertinentes para instrumentar la educación vocacional y la capacitación de personal. Normalmente, una empresa cuenta con un fondo para educación y capacitación de 1.5% del total de su nómina. En empresas que precisan empleados con mayor capacitación, lo anterior implica una carga de capacitación más pesada y la promesa de buenos rendimientos económicos, entonces el fondo de capacitación representa el 2.5% de la nómina. Cuando las compañías actualizan sus tecnologías o importan proyectos, por lo general asignan cierto porcentaje de los fondos a la formación tecnológica de a sus empleados.

Se utilizarán diferentes medios (que incluyen financiamiento de empresas, gravámenes y donativos) para financiar educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes. Se alentará a todos los segmentos de la sociedad para que donen dinero para financiar la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes. Un incentivo adicional para que las empresas, grupos e individuos hagan donativos y pagos para la educación vocacional es que el dinero proporcionado será deducible de impuestos.

IV América latina

Educación de jóvenes y adultos en Nicaragua

*Nydia Verónica Gurdián y Elizabeth Navarro**

Nicaragua es un país con una estructura demográfica joven, con altos índices de pobreza y bajos niveles de productividad. De sus 5.5 millones de habitantes, más del 50% es menor a los 20 años de edad. El 45% de estos jóvenes son pobres, con bajos niveles de educación y, en consecuencia, no productivos. Durante la década de 1990, la productividad del país sufrió una baja en su promedio anual del 1.7%, cifra tres veces mayor que la promedio para América Latina durante el mismo periodo.

Logros y áreas problemáticas

La liberalización del comercio durante la década de 1990 no ha tenido el impacto positivo que se esperaba en el empleo de los trabajadores no calificados, ni en el bienestar de los sectores más pobres de la población. La presencia de trabajadores no calificados, con educación primaria inconclusa, no represen-

* Traducción de Elizabeth Navarro

tan ninguna ventaja para la economía nicaragüense. De hecho, podría argumentarse que el insatisfactorio estado de la economía –específicamente en lo que se refiere a la competitividad del país– se debe en gran medida al bajo nivel educativo de su fuerza laboral.

El sistema de educación formal, que incluye la educación primaria y secundaria, se encuentra bajo el control del Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes (MECD), en tanto que el Instituto Nacional Tecnológico (INATEC) es el responsable de impartir educación técnica. La modalidad de educación para adultos está dirigida a aquellas personas mayores de 15 años quienes, debido a razones diversas, no han podido acceder al sistema de educación formal o lo han abandonado en forma prematura. Esta modalidad es responsabilidad del Consejo Administrativo de la Dirección de Educación Continua de Jóvenes y Adultos (DECJA) del MECD, que desarrolla alternativas educativas flexibles y diversificadas.

La escolaridad promedio de la población mayor a los 15 años de edad es de 4.8 años. En el sector rural, ésta se reduce hasta un promedio de 3.5 años; y entre quienes son pobres dentro de este sector, la escolaridad se encuentra por debajo de los 2.4 años. No obstante, en la última década, las políticas educativas nicaragüenses para el desarrollo de recursos humanos y la eficiencia del sector educativo han logrado un avance sustancial (Adato y Roopnaraine, 2004).

En forma paralela a los esfuerzos destinados a mejorar el sistema de educación formal, el MECD ha estado desarrollando –a través de la DECJA y con la ayuda de organizaciones internacionales tales como la Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI) y la Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos (OEI)– un programa de educación básica llamado Programa de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Adultos de Nicaragua (PAEBANIC). El programa ha logrado llegar a 45 000 personas al año, de las cuales 35 000 se encuentran entre los 15 y los 30 años de edad. Esta cobertura representa el 17% de la población meta dentro de este grupo de edad. En las áreas rurales, la participación de las mujeres en este rango de edad es del 41%. La tasa de conclusión de cada uno de los tres niveles de educación básica excede el 82%, una cifra alta en comparación con los índices de graduación y retención en el sistema de educación primaria tradicional. (República de Nicaragua, 2002).

Existe un interés creciente en el desarrollo de programas educativos que ofrezcan instrumentos para la movilización de los conocimientos y habilidades adquiridos en el mundo laboral. Éste es un aspecto de gran relevancia en la política educativa de aquellos países con bajo ingreso y un muy restringido acceso a la educación. En el caso de la Educación de Adultos (EDA), su vinculación con el mundo laboral está respondiendo a la abierta e inmediata demanda por parte de aquellos deseosos de aprender, quienes por lo general

se encuentran en edad económicamente activa y forman parte del estrato social más bajo. En consecuencia, este sector de la población está sumamente motivado para buscar un mejor empleo y adquirir mayores habilidades.

En este sentido, la Educación Básica de Adultos (EBA) impartida por la DECJA-MECD y por el programa PAEBANIC, trata de responder a la falta de capacitación técnica, alentando a esta población a adquirir mayores habilidades y promoviendo su integración al mundo laboral como trabajadores semicalificados o autoempleados. De esta manera, el programa ayuda a mejorar la situación de enorme desempleo o subempleo. Es con este fin que el PAEBANIC ha implementado cursos extracurriculares que les permitan a quienes están cursando el tercer nivel de la EBA adquirir habilidades en el sector agrícola, industrial y de servicios. Estos cursos se imparten en los Centros de Formación Profesional del INATEC o en Centros de Capacitación Privados, reconocidos por el INATEC. Entre 1999 y 2002, se capacitó a 2 910 personas, y en 2003 (al momento en que se escribía este artículo), se estaba capacitando a 1 018 personas que obtendrían su certificado oficial en las habilidades técnicas de una cierta modalidad.

Con el objeto de capitalizar este éxito inicial, la DECJA llevó a cabo una revisión: con base en las experiencias más exitosas y lecciones aprendidas, se ha formulado un nuevo modelo de educación con una relevante e innovadora propuesta de reforma curricular titulada *Transformación Curricular de la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos con Orientación para el Trabajo* (MECD, 2003b).

Avances y tendencias recientes

El futuro desarrollo de Nicaragua requiere de una visión en lo que se refiere a la educación de adultos y jóvenes, ya que éste es el medio para combatir la pobreza y enfrentar los retos de la globalización. La globalización es una realidad que ha transformado la vida del país y los requisitos ciudadanos de adultos y jóvenes. La globalización implica riesgos, inseguridades y peligros, pero a la vez representa una oportunidad de construir un país más estable y ofrecer a sus ciudadanos mayores oportunidades de competir en una economía global con mejores capacidades de acceso a la información, al conocimiento y a las ideas. Así, la educación de adultos y jóvenes puede ayudar a transformar los valores tradicionales de la población, promover el desarrollo de la nación y poner fin a la pobreza.

Las nuevas redes globales a nivel científico, tecnológico, comercial y cultural establecen lazos entre los países que tienen contribuciones que hacer, en tanto que aquellas naciones pobres como Nicaragua se pueden sentir excluidas. Si Nicaragua no se integra rápidamente a la dinámica global, la brecha del conocimiento se hará mayor, dando como resultado graves consecuencias.

El nuevo enfoque hacia la educación de adultos y jóvenes por el que el país está luchando tiene que ir más allá de una perspectiva utilitaria y reconocer que la educación está dirigida no solamente a una persona en su calidad de agente económico, sino al desarrollo integral del individuo (Delors, 1996). Así, a través de esta propuesta curricular, Nicaragua busca moverse hacia la “practopia”: el objetivo es la unidad, de una manera sabia e inteligente; la educación práctica con una visión de educación que tenga como base el continuo desarrollo humano.

Las cumbres y acuerdos globales sobre educación han introducido un nuevo enfoque en torno a la educación, así como un compromiso con ella. En décadas recientes, y a nivel tanto regional como global, las cumbres sobre educación han reflejado un nuevo consenso y han reafirmado que la educación es “decisiva” para el desarrollo de una nación. Los acuerdos promueven una forma de educación que sea capaz de anticipar los desafíos de la gente y adaptarse a ellos. La educación va más allá de los muros de una escuela y ayuda a los ciudadanos a mejorar su calidad de vida y a modificar sus actitudes y valores.

El renovado compromiso con la educación que ha surgido de estas reuniones y declaraciones globales reconoce la necesidad de generar nuevas maneras de educación para jóvenes y adultos. La *Declaración de Hamburgo* (UIE, 1997) cuestiona las prácticas educativas formales y hace un llamado a una mayor interacción entre las modalidades formal y no formal, así como a la flexibilidad y creatividad necesarias para que esto sea una realidad. En su parte final, la declaración demanda un nuevo enfoque para la educación de adultos y jóvenes:

El nuevo concepto de educación para jóvenes y adultos impone un reto a las prácticas existentes, ya que requiere del efectivo establecimiento de redes dentro de los sistemas formal y no formal, así como de innovaciones y mayor creatividad y flexibilidad. El objetivo último debe ser la creación de una sociedad de aprendizaje.

Las estrategias de implementación y las iniciativas tales como el Programa Multifase de Educación Básica para Jóvenes y Adultos, financiado por el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID), tienen como finalidad incrementar el nivel de inscripción de jóvenes y adultos nicaragüenses, aumentar los logros educativos de aquellos adultos que nunca han asistido a la escuela o que han abandonado el sistema de educación formal después de terminar la educación básica, mejorar las oportunidades de trabajo para quienes han salido de la escuela, incrementar el número de egresados de educación básica entre las edades de 10 y 15 años y fortalecer el sistema de administración, monitoreo y evaluación en el sector de educación básica para jóvenes y adultos.

Además del proyecto con el BID, Nicaragua también está desarrollando un proyecto apoyado por la Comunidad Europea a través de su Programa Regional de Reconstrucción para América Central (PRRAC). Este proyecto de desarrollo de habilidades está dirigido a jóvenes y adultos que se encuentran en la fase final o que ya han concluido el programa EBA manejado por el MECD. Las actividades del proyecto tienen como fin crear y administrar un sistema de apoyo para la DECJA a nivel nacional y local, adaptar y diseñar materiales y medios de apoyo para el aprendizaje, capacitar a instructores y facilitadores y desarrollar, monitorear y evaluar cursos para el desarrollo de habilidades.

Se espera que estos proyectos ofrezcan a los adultos educación básica integrada a actividades relacionadas con el trabajo. Algunos de los resultados específicos de estos proyectos incluirán: cursos regulados a nivel nacional y local, un informe de los cambios curriculares en la educación continua de jóvenes y adultos con experiencia laboral, el desarrollo de diez cursos especializados relacionados con el trabajo y la producción de 18 000 unidades de materiales didácticos, con lecciones en sastrería, cultura de belleza, mecánica automotriz, capacitación para electricistas domésticos, construcción, capacitación para electricistas soldadores, carpintería, repostería y panadería, agricultura y cría de ganado. Un mínimo del 40% de los 1 800 participantes en estos 120 cursos de desarrollo de habilidades deberán ser mujeres. Por otra parte, Nicaragua ofrece también cursos educativos para la adquisición de habilidades laborales financiados por comunidades locales, comités técnicos y ONG.

Recomendaciones

Existe un creciente interés en ofrecer programas de educación para adultos que impartan conocimientos y desarrollen habilidades directamente relacionadas con el mundo laboral. Este es en especial el caso de aquellos países de bajos ingresos y serias restricciones en el acceso a la educación. Por otra parte, hay también una mayor conciencia de la necesidad de ofrecer opciones educativas que ayuden a los jóvenes a terminar su educación.

El vínculo entre la educación para adultos y el mundo laboral se está desarrollando como resultado de la demanda abierta e inmediata de quienes desean aprender, personas que, por lo general, se encuentran en edad económicamente activa y pertenecen a los estratos económicos más bajos. Los retos que implica el vincular la educación con el mundo laboral van de la mano con la demanda de mejores programas NFE para aquellas personas que sufren mayores desventajas tanto económicas como sociales.

Recomendamos incluir un componente de “educación y trabajo” en los programas educativos para jóvenes y adultos. Esto implica tratar la alfabetización como parte integrante de una visión de desarrollo social, cultural y económico. También recomendamos diseñar proyectos de desarrollo de habilidades y administrar el aspecto financiero de manera que se contemplen los recursos locales disponibles y no disponibles, así como la oferta y demanda del sector productivo. Estos proyectos deberán considerar un sistema de crédito revolvente para promover las auto-iniciativas. Por otra parte, también se deberá presupuestar la realización de evaluaciones de impacto.

Otra recomendación es la de establecer acuerdos entre las instituciones responsables de la capacitación de jóvenes y adultos con el fin de garantizar la relevancia de los planes de estudios. Posteriormente deberá realizarse una encuesta nacional en la que se consideren los requisitos laborales del sector productivo. Esto serviría de referencia para los proyectos educativos orientados a jóvenes y adultos.

Por último, los proyectos educativos para jóvenes y adultos diseñados para apoyar una cultura del trabajo deberán también poner particular énfasis en los intereses de las mujeres, en las prácticas ambientales sustentables, en el cuidado de la salud y en la formación de una cultura de paz y ciudadanía.

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Retos para definir una política para la educación de calidad de adultos y jóvenes en Guatemala

*Ilda Morán de García y Otto Rivera**

Para poner en contexto los desafíos y perspectivas de la educación de adultos y jóvenes en Guatemala, resulta ilustrativo revisar las diversas iniciativas que en el campo de la alfabetización se han implementado desde 1945. Hasta 1982, el Programa Nacional de Alfabetización y el Movimiento Nacional para la Alfabetización realizaron once campañas masivas.

Con la ratificación de la *Constitución de la República* en 1985, donde la alfabetización se declaró como un asunto de urgencia nacional, se creó el CONALFA, Consejo Nacional de Alfabetización, compuesto por entidades de los sectores público y privado. Sin embargo, aunque tiene un presupuesto asignado por el estado, sus recursos humanos y financieros, incluso veinte años después, siguen siendo insuficientes para cubrir las necesidades básicas de aprendizaje en el área de la alfabetización.

El 29 de diciembre de 1996, el Gobierno de Guatemala y la Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG), firmaron acuerdos de paz que incluían la transformación del sistema educativo del país como un componente importante. Tres y media décadas de conflicto armado llegaron a su fin con estos acuerdos. En la nueva situación, resultaba necesario evaluar el modelo de alfabetización usado hasta ese punto y adaptarlo a un contexto más multiétnico, multicultural y multilingüe, con el fin de responder a los nuevos retos educativos en el nuevo contexto y apoyar la consolidación de la democracia y la paz.

* Traducción de María Teresa Pérez Allende.

Resulta ilustrativo hacer un inventario del desarrollo e historia del, CONALFA, en particular desde la formulación de la Política Nacional para la Educación de Adultos y Jóvenes, y del apoyo que ha recibido por parte de agencias internacionales. Esta evaluación no puede postergarse más y todos los actores clave en el desarrollo de Guatemala deberán participar en ella. Considerando que el presente y futuro de sus generaciones jóvenes está en juego, se espera que esta nueva política nacional se convierta en realidad en el mediano plazo.

Antecedentes

Un estudio realizado por el Instituto Internacional para la Planificación de la Educación, Buenos Aires (CEPAL-UNESCO, 2005), sobre educación secundaria en América Latina, subraya que las tensiones fundamentales entre la educación de jóvenes y los modelos de desarrollo parecen ser las que existen entre:

1. la necesidad de organizar espacios de aprendizaje para los jóvenes y las limitaciones en los presupuestos para la educación de la juventud;
2. la demanda de una educación diversa y las demandas de capacitación inmediata para trabajos en las economías formal e informal;
3. el conocimiento y habilidades requeridos por la globalización y los mercados abiertos, como el idioma inglés, y los conocimientos y habilidades requeridos para garantizar la diversidad e identidad cultural de los pueblos nativos; y
4. la necesidad de transformar a la juventud en las escuelas secundarias y el creciente miedo en muchas sociedades a la violencia juvenil.

Estos cuatro retos deben tomarse en cuenta en la formulación de una propuesta adecuada para expandir y transformar la educación secundaria en Guatemala.

La educación secundaria sigue a la educación primaria en Guatemala y comprende dos niveles: el básico y el diversificado. Su estructura actual fue definida en el artículo 67 de la Ley de Educación (12 de enero de 1965, Decreto Núm. 317) como:

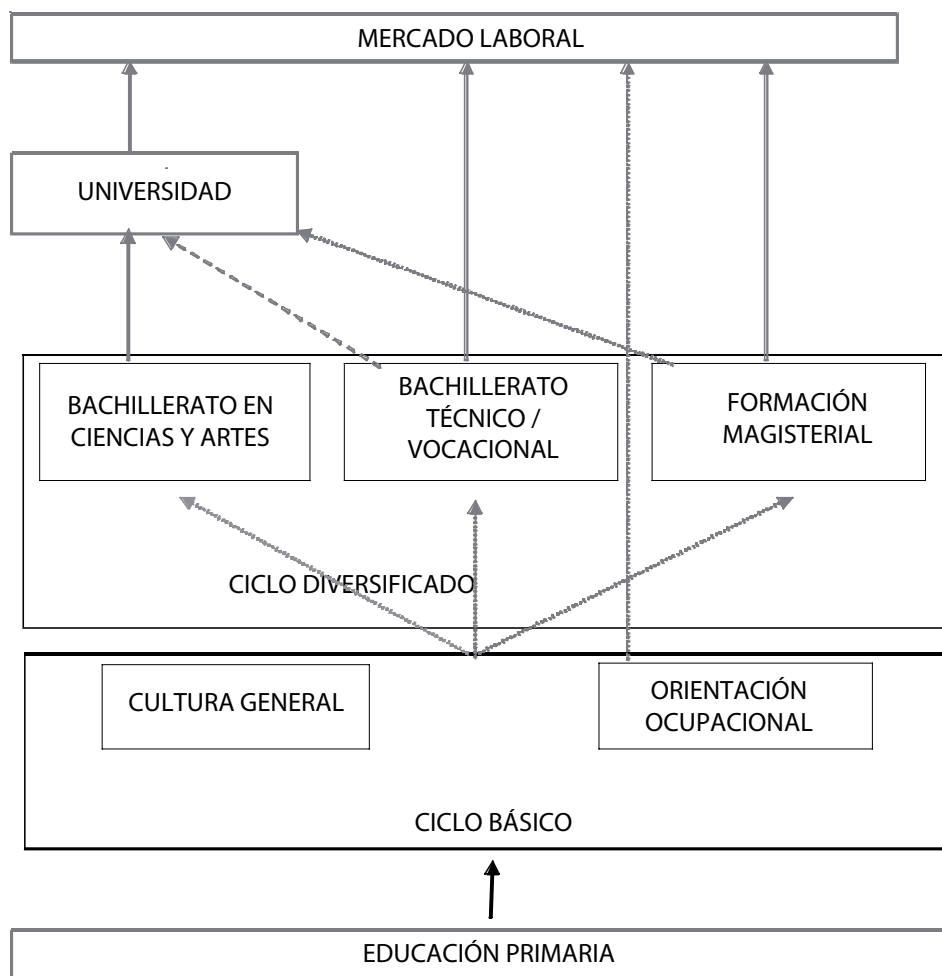
La etapa donde se proporciona una cultura común y básica a los educandos y se exploran sus aptitudes e intereses a fin de orientarlos en sus vocaciones. Incluye estudios sistematizados de carácter general y diversificado, que se enseñan en las escuelas primaria y secundaria.

La duración de la educación secundaria es de seis años, divididos en partes iguales entre los niveles básico y diversificado (en algunos cursos de estudio, dura un año adicional). Quienes completan el nivel diversificado reciben un

diploma de bachiller o un título técnico de perito, en el caso de los alumnos que se enfocaron en temas técnicos. El modelo guatemalteco de educación media es semejante a los que existen en Ecuador, México, Paraguay, Perú y Uruguay.

El artículo 68 de la Ley de Educación de 1965 estableció once objetivos para la educación secundaria media. Estos objetivos buscan garantizar la formación completa de cada joven, preparándolo para su vida civil y social, al desarrollar sus valores éticos y demás. El Diagrama 1 presenta el modelo actual de educación secundaria en Guatemala.

Diagrama 1. Modelo actual de la educación secundaria en Guatemala



La nueva Ley Nacional de Educación (Decreto Legislativo Núm. 12-91), que está vigente desde el 12 de enero de 1991, no da una definición de educación secundaria, simplemente la identifica como el cuarto nivel del subsistema escolar de la educación formal. En otras partes de la ley no se especifica que la ley anterior haya sido derogada, lo que sugiere que la ley anterior sigue teniendo validez respecto a la definición y organización de la educación media.

Educación secundaria básica

La educación secundaria en Guatemala tiene dos niveles: la secundaria básica y la diversificada. En la educación secundaria básica se brindan tres años de educación a jóvenes de 13-15 años quienes hayan completado el 6° grado de la escuela primaria. En este nivel, también hay un porcentaje más alto de estudiantes arriba del promedio de edad, que osciló de 11% a 17% entre 1996 y 2000 (Anderson, 2001: 19). En la educación secundaria básica se brinda una educación académica y técnica, que prepara a los egresados que no puedan continuar con su educación secundaria para unirse a la fuerza de trabajo. Su principal propósito es dar la oportunidad a los estudiantes de conocer sus propias aptitudes y adquirir una cultura general que les permita actuar de un modo eficaz e inteligente en el mundo. Este nivel de secundaria básica tiene dos áreas de concentración: cultura general y metas ocupacionales.

En la Ley Nacional de Educación de 1991, se especifica que el nivel de secundaria básica abarcará ocho planes de estudios (*pen sum*), que se diferencian según las combinaciones de objetivos particulares (cultura general, preparación laboral), horas de enseñanza (matutino, vespertino), tiempo en que se da la enseñanza (fines de semana), ubicación/medios de enseñanza (en un centro, por televisión, radio, etcétera), edades de los alumnos (entre 12-16, o 18 y más), o según las materias cubiertas, por ejemplo, materias básicas (es decir, español, matemáticas, ciencias naturales, inglés, artes plásticas, educación musical, educación artística), al igual que otras materias (es decir, áreas ocupacionales, química, biología y contabilidad). Estos planes de estudios no han sido revisados desde hace 25 años. Sin embargo, la incorporación de nuevos planes de estudio (telesecundaria, planes de fin de semana) involucra más que nuevas propuestas curriculares; también escuelas cooperativas nuevas que funcionan principalmente en zonas urbanas. Tanto las escuelas cooperativas como la telesecundaria se iniciaron para extender la cobertura básica en el nivel secundaria. (Anderson, 2001)

Indicadores de cobertura, equidad y eficiencia interna

A pesar de los esfuerzos por aumentar la cobertura, el índice neto de cobertura para los niveles básico y medio sigue siendo bajo. Las estadísticas del Ministerio de Educación de Guatemala (MINIDUC) sugieren que, en 2003, el nivel secundaria de escolarización llegó sólo al 23.15% de la población entre 13 y 18 años de edad. Esto indica que de cada 100 personas en este grupo de edad, aproximadamente 68 se quedan fuera del sistema educativo.

En 2002, 180 423 alumnos egresaron del 6° grado de la escuela primaria y sólo el 54.44% de ellos entraron al siguiente nivel. En 2003, de 306 187 jóvenes entre 12 y 13 años, sólo 97 719 (32%) fueron registrados en el nivel de secundaria básica. Esto significa que en 2003 la educación secundaria no logró cubrir a todos los jóvenes en edad escolar.

El número de alumnos por encima del promedio de edad en la educación secundaria básica es alto. En 2003, el índice de alumnos por encima del promedio de edad fue de 36.21% –en el caso de los hombres (39.28%), el índice fue 6.61% superior al de las mujeres (32.67%). Estas cifras son indicativas de las grandes deficiencias en el sistema de educación guatemalteco. El problema exige una combinación de estrategias educativas que puedan responder de manera efectiva a las limitaciones estructurales actuales.

Los índices de deserción son altos

De los registrados en 2003, aproximadamente 8.47% dejaron la escuela. El índice de deserción en el nivel básico fue de 7.92%. El estado ha proporcionado menos educación secundaria en algunas regiones del país que en otras. De hecho, los recursos educativos para los dos niveles se han asignado a algunas regiones, mientras otras se dejaron en el olvido. Según información proporcionada por el MINIDUC, existen seis provincias que casi no tienen servicios educativos en estos niveles: Petén, Izabal, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Jalapa y Jutiapa. Los que desean continuar sus estudios postprimaria y tienen los recursos para hacerlo, deben viajar a otros lugares. La información muestra que 78% de los servicios se localizan en zonas urbanas y sólo 22% en zonas rurales. En las zonas rurales, las escuelas se localizan mayormente en las principales ciudades de las provincias.

Respecto al financiamiento, las contribuciones privadas por servicios educativos son altas en estos niveles, pero se ofrecen mayormente en las grandes ciudades. Dichas contribuciones llegan sólo al 18% en zonas rurales y sólo en los asentamientos con alta densidad de población. Las cooperativas cubren 18% de la carga financiera en las zonas urbanas y 48% en las rurales, mientras que el estado contribuye con 26-33% del financiamiento.

En las seis provincias con atraso que se mencionaron antes, prácticamente no hay servicios educativos. El mayor déficit se encuentra en las zonas rurales, donde se localizan sólo 24.5% de las instituciones que ofrecen estudios de nivel básico. Esto resulta muy impactante si se considera que más del 60% de la población en edad escolar vive en zonas rurales. En los municipios donde la población rural comprende 60% o más de la población total, sólo 21.6% de la población en edad escolar está cubierta. Este déficit se incrementa significativamente en municipios con 80% o más de su población en zonas rurales. En dichos municipios, la cobertura educativa alcanza sólo el 12.3%.

Respecto a disparidades de género, vemos que en 2003 no hubo diferencia significativa en la cobertura educativa entre hombres y mujeres; de hecho, en algunas provincias las mujeres superaron a los hombres, con mayor cobertura femenina que masculina. Sin embargo, en general, la cobertura neta es consistentemente baja sin importar el género. La cobertura es incluso inferior en las provincias que tienen una alta población de comunidades indígenas.

Respecto a la contribución privada/estatal de la cobertura, encontramos que en 1996, 32.2% de las inscripciones en nivel básico y 25.8% de las de nivel diversificado se registraron en escuelas operadas por el estado, mientras que 45.1% y 73.9% de la matriculación, respectivamente, se registraron en escuelas privadas. Siete años después, en 2003, la situación mostró una tendencia hacia la reducción drástica de la prestación del servicio estatal y un incremento en la prestación del servicio en el sector privado. En el presente, el sector privado es el principal proveedor de educación en Guatemala.

Un análisis de las expectativas respecto a los niveles escolares medio y secundario en Guatemala debe tomar en consideración la limitada cobertura estatal. La escuela media y secundaria llega sólo a un grupo limitado de jóvenes en el país.

Diagrama 2. Modalidades de la educación básica: Tipos de centros que ofrecen educación secundaria

TIPO DE CENTRO	CARACTERÍSTICAS
1. Público (General)	Administrado y financiado por el estado.
2. Escuelas e institutos privados	Son administrados por la iniciativa privada y ofrecen servicios educativos de conformidad con las regulaciones y disposiciones aprobadas por el MOE.
3. Cooperativas	Instituciones educativas no lucrativas dentro de la jurisdicción de la ciudad y municipio que responden a las demandas educativas en los diferentes niveles del subsistema educativo escolar. Son financiadas con dinero de los municipios, grupos de padres de familia y el MOE.

4. Instituciones Experimentales de Educación Básica con Orientación Ocupacional (PEMEM)	Fueron creadas como parte del desaparecido Programa de Extensión y Mejora de la Educación Media (PEMEM) y tienen un carácter público.
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Programa de Extensión y Mejora de la Educación Secundaria Básica

Los centros del PEMEM (Programa de Extensión y Mejora de la Educación Secundaria Básica) fueron desarrollados originalmente en la década de 1970 con el apoyo del Banco Mundial. Los nuevos institutos de PEMEM proporcionan educación general y técnica orientada a preparar a los estudiantes para que se incorporen a la fuerza laboral al terminar sus estudios. En 1998, las inscripciones a los institutos de PEMEM constituyeron el 28% de las inscripciones en el sector público en este nivel (Chang y Menéndez, 1998). También ofrecen cursos con una orientación comercial, como mercadotecnia, publicidad y organización de pequeños negocios familiares.

Las comunidades locales ven estos institutos de manera muy positiva. Los padres de familia los perciben como un medio para dar a sus hijos una oportunidad. Los alumnos aprenden habilidades laborales en áreas específicas, como plomería, carpintería, siembra, técnicas secretariales y técnicas de belleza, que les permiten contribuir al presupuesto familiar.

Los institutos PEMEM responden a demandas sociales que van más allá de su utilidad inmediata para el mercado de trabajo. La razón principal es que los alumnos aprenden habilidades que les permiten mantenerse o iniciar un pequeño negocio. Hay 45 institutos PEMEM en el país: 11 en la ciudad de Guatemala, cuatro en Quetzaltenango, dos en San Marcos y los otros 28 en Suchitepéquez.

Aunque el Anuario Estadístico del MINIDUC no ofrece información específica sobre inscripciones, se estima que estos institutos atienden una población de 8 000 estudiantes, que equivale al 6.6% de los alumnos cubiertos por el estado. Sin embargo, este programa tiene diversas carencias. La infraestructura –que comprende salones para talleres, aulas, salas de usos múltiples– es extremadamente deficiente y no se le da el mantenimiento apropiado. No existe siquiera el equipo mínimo para la experiencia práctica. En muchos sentidos, el equipo obsoleto y más bien podría verse como piezas en un museo sobre educación técnica-profesional.

Telesecundaria

El MINIDUC buscó incrementar la cobertura de la secundaria básica mediante dos modalidades distintas: la telesecundaria y las escuelas cooperativas.

Con base en un acuerdo ministerial fechado el 3 de marzo de 1998 se creó el Nivel Básico de Secundaria-Telesecundaria con el objetivo de ampliar la cobertura. La idea era tener una enseñanza basada en el uso de audiovisuales (programas televisivos) y material adicional escrito por los maestros y alumnos. El programa se estableció en una fase experimental de cinco años. Utilizó, infraestructura disponible en comunidades locales o en escuelas públicas de nivel básico de secundaria. Durante el periodo inicial, el programa fue supervisado por el Sistema para la Mejora de Recursos Humanos y Adaptación Curricular (SIMAC).

En 2004, el programa se expandió a los 22 estados educativos en que se divide el país. Se inscribieron 30 643 estudiantes en el primero, segundo y tercer niveles de educación básica. También se inscribieron estudiantes en los institutos de telesecundaria. El proyecto de telesecundaria buscaba ampliar el alcance de estos mecanismos no convencionales y ofrecía un diploma de telesecundaria.

Para aprovechar cabalmente su potencial, debe estudiarse y analizarse la historia de la telesecundaria en otros países. El modelo también debe compararse y analizarse en el contexto de las nuevas tendencias educativas, donde la educación va más allá de un sistema de enseñanza centrado en el maestro. También deben tomarse en consideración las nuevas tecnologías, como las TIC.

Además, hay varios centros establecidos por otros países o grupos privados o extranjeros. Algunos de estos centros, con sus actividades y productos educativos, existen de manera aislada y no están integrados en el sistema educativo; no forman parte de una visión común de la educación.

Escuelas cooperativas

La Dirección General de Educación Extraescolar (DIGEEX), que fue la responsable de planear la educación extraescolar, promueve y supervisa diversos programas y acciones, como las escuelas cooperativas. Las escuelas cooperativas funcionan a través de un acuerdo tripartita entre el MINIDUC, asociaciones de padres de familia legalmente constituidas y autoridades municipales. El MINIDUC otorga un subsidio anual equivalente a 1 000 dólares por sección (20-25 alumnos); los padres de familia acuerdan pagar el equivalente a 2.7 dólares mensuales, y el municipio acuerda aplicar anualmente el equivalente a 133 dólares por sección mensualmente. Además, el municipio puede donar terrenos y otorgar fondos para la construcción de la escuela, los padres también contribuyen con fondos y/o mano de obra para construirla. En 2003, 765 centros ofrecían educación secundaria; de éstos, 692 ofrecían educación secundaria básica y 73 educación secundaria diversificada.

Demanda potencial del nivel básico de enseñanza

Analizando la cobertura actual del sistema de educación, es posible extrapolar el número de alumnos que demandarán el servicio de educación secundaria en diez años. Si, en términos lineales, se supone que el crecimiento es de 5.4% por año, entonces en diez años significará que 108 948 estudiantes requerirán atención del sistema. Es posible que esta cifra se incremente si la población creciera o si la oferta de escuela primaria mejorara. (De hecho, lo último ya ha ocurrido en vista de la prioridad dada a la oferta de la escuela primaria, más que a la de la escuela secundaria.) Incluso si esta estimación se extendiera diez años más con los mismos parámetros –en la cual en el nivel básico sólo el 50% de la población potencial asistiera a las escuelas, y de ésta sólo el 19% de la población fuera al nivel diversificado– se requerirían aún 4 000 nuevas plazas.

Sin embargo, debido a los recientes esfuerzos para “salvar” el primer año de la escuela primaria, es probable que dentro de cinco años la demanda crezca tanto que se ofrezca la cobertura necesaria y se cubran los mismos criterios que existen hoy en día.

Las estimaciones oficiales toman en cuenta el crecimiento de la población, como se asienta en la información proporcionada por el Instituto Nacional de Estadística. En las gráficas de simulación se presupone que los niños que tienen 7 años serán mandados a cursar el grado 1 y siguientes. Con base en la proyección lineal a partir del porcentaje en 2003, se hace posible predecir la cobertura que se necesitará en 2024.

El objetivo de esta simulación es sólo mostrar la situación crítica que enfrenta el sistema de educación formal en Guatemala en todos los niveles educativos. Estas cifras muestran una realidad innegable: no hay presupuesto gubernamental que pueda responder a las demandas actuales y futuras de los modelos educativos existentes. A partir de una simulación lineal de un crecimiento anual del 5%, puede verse que para 2014 la demanda inicial será de 59 311 estudiantes, con un crecimiento estimado de 5 400. Esto significará que prevalecerá la situación actual de negar e ignorar las áreas rurales.

La demanda potencial será mucho más alta, por supuesto, una vez que el compromiso del gobierno de asegurar educación obligatoria entre en vigor para toda la población de escuela primaria*.

En Dakar en 2000, la comunidad internacional acordó que nuestros sistemas educativos deben tratar de satisfacer las necesidades educativas de todos los adultos jóvenes mediante el equitativo establecimiento de los programas

* Según la Constitución Política de la República de Guatemala, Art. 74, “la educación es obligatoria”, los guatemaltecos tienen el derecho y la obligación de recibir educación inicial, preprimaria, primaria y básica, según los límites establecidos por la ley.

apropiados, con un énfasis en la adquisición de conocimiento y competencias de vida, tan necesarios para ganarse la vida y participar en la vida política, social y cultural de la comunidad (UNESCO, 2000). Por lo anterior, una preocupación fundamental de las autoridades ministeriales es la de extender el acceso al nivel básico de educación en las zonas rurales. Por una parte, se trata de expandir el derecho a la educación; por la otra, se trata de contribuir a reducir la pobreza. Según ECLAC, se requiere una educación escolar mínima de diez años para tener la oportunidad de salir de la pobreza.

Si bien el bajo acceso constituye un gran desafío, la dimensión cualitativa de la educación en el nivel básico es un desafío aún mayor. Deben considerarse estrategias múltiples para la expansión de la educación básica. Ésta incluirá al sector público, así como los esfuerzos conjuntos del sector privado y las cooperativas; también incluirá los sistemas formales y no formales, al igual que la combinación del aprendizaje a distancia y el tradicional.

Analizará las oportunidades y ventajas de incorporar nuevas TIC. Los planes de financiamiento deberán tomar nota de los problemas relacionados con la expansión, igualdad y calidad, cambios cuantitativo-cualitativos, capacitación magisterial y diversidad cultural.

Alfabetización

La meta del CONALFA es reducir la tasa de analfabetismo, que en 1990 se calculó en 44.9% y en 2000, en 27.5%. Sin embargo, un estudio de la UNESCO determinó que la tasa de analfabetismo de 2000 fue de 37% y bajó a 32.14% en 2003 (USAID, 2004). Según información del CONALFA (2004), la tasa se redujo ligeramente en 2004 a 30.54%.

En una sociedad de aproximadamente 12 millones de habitantes, de los que 52% tienen 18 años o menos y 77% viven en zonas rurales, donde 1 931 407 de la población total adulta es analfabeta, ha resultado muy difícil medir con absoluta confianza la reducción en la tasa real de analfabetismo entre jóvenes y adultos. Según los resultados del Proyecto MEDIR en 2003 y 2004 (USAID, 2004), por ejemplo, cada año se producen 83 000 nuevos analfabetas, de los que 50 421 son individuos que se inscribieron en el primer año de la escuela primaria, pero reprobaron y nunca reingresaron al sistema educativo. Los otros 32 418 nunca entraron siquiera al sistema. Esta situación requiere que se redefina el perfil de las personas analfabetas, tomando en cuenta los contextos y la diversidad cultural de los individuos y adaptando a sus contextos educativos y culturales los métodos, las técnicas, las modalidades de impartición, y los materiales.

Contenido de la educación para adultos

En Guatemala, la educación para adultos se da en escuelas nocturnas seleccionadas, que son parte de los programas de alfabetización y posalfabetización de la Unidad de Ejecución del CONALFA, que coordina los programas extracurriculares de la Dirección Nacional de Educación Extracurricular del MINIDUC y organizaciones gubernamentales, así como los programas de alfabetización y posalfabetización de las ONG.

Las escuelas nocturnas llevan a cabo programas curriculares de “educación acelerada” para adultos, que permiten a los estudiantes cursar los primeros seis años de la educación primaria en sólo cuatro años. Trabajan cuatro etapas: la primera es equivalente al primer grado de la escuela primaria, la segunda a los grados 2 y 3, la tercera etapa es equivalente a los grados 4 y 5, y la cuarta etapa es equivalente al grado 6. La educación extracurricular es apoyada a través de Núcleos Familiares para el Desarrollo de la Educación (NUFDE). Este programa fue desarrollado con miras a utilizar metodología educativa alternativa, al dar la instrucción a través de transmisiones por radio.

Para completar el 6° grado del nivel primaria, el alumno debe pasar a través de tres etapas: una etapa inicial, que corresponde a aprender a leer y escribir así como los cálculos numéricos básicos, y luego dos etapas posalfabetización, que son equivalentes a los grados 3 y 6 de la escuela primaria. Los contenidos se distribuyen en las áreas de: lenguaje y comunicación, matemáticas aplicadas, sociedad y comunidad, higiene y salud, economía y productividad y recursos naturales. Cada etapa dura hasta ocho meses. Los certificados de estudios y el diploma de sexto grado —equivalente a la educación primaria— son avalados por el CONALFA, de conformidad con el Acuerdo Ministerial Núm. 225-96.

Planeación de políticas y financiamiento

La planeación de políticas y el financiamiento del programa lo realiza directamente la Oficina Superior del Ministerio de Educación, que trabaja bajo la jurisdicción del MINIDUC.

Respecto a los programas de alfabetización y posalfabetización coordinados y ejecutados por el CONALFA, el proceso es como sigue: la entidad ejecutora y su consejo técnico diseñan políticas y estrategias. Luego, el Comité Nacional de Alfabetización las discute y aprueba, a fin de cumplir con el artículo 8 del Decreto Núm. 43-86 de la Ley de Alfabetización.

El presupuesto del CONALFA (2000) se establece en el Art. 17, reformado por el Decreto 54-99. El proceso de alfabetización recibirá un soporte financiero a través de los siguientes recursos:

- a) El Presupuesto Nacional para el año fiscal 2001 asignó al CONALFA el 1% del ingreso tributario del gobierno actual, reduciendo en una décima cada año durante los siguientes siete años fiscales, hasta 2008.
- b) El presupuesto asignado será equivalente a cuando menos el 1% del Presupuesto General para Gastos del MINIDUC para cada año fiscal.
- c) Se darán recursos adicionales mediante donaciones de personas y organizaciones, a través de transferencias a favor de donadores nacionales o internacionales.
- d) Cualesquiera otras fuentes de ingresos, ordinarias o extraordinarias, serán designadas específicamente para el proceso de alfabetización o posalfabetización.

El presupuesto es a todas luces insuficiente. Sin embargo, con el soporte de las agencias internacionales y las organizaciones nacionales de la Unidad de Ejecución del CONALFA, ha sido posible contar con el apoyo para la reproducción de materiales para proyectos específicos, la capacitación de profesionales y técnicos, la compra y mantenimiento de equipo y vehículos y la compensación económica para algunos alfabetizadores.

Estructura curricular actual

En la actualidad, el programa de alfabetización comprende dos etapas: una etapa inicial, cuyo centro es la enseñanza de las habilidades de alfabetización (leer y escribir) y las habilidades de matemáticas básicas (cálculo elemental). Esta fase es equivalente al 1^{er} grado de la escuela primaria.

La segunda etapa corresponde a la primera fase de la posalfabetización (equivalente al 3^{er} grado de la escuela primaria) y la segunda fase de la posalfabetización (equivalente al 6^o grado). En ambas etapas, las materias cubiertas incluyen: comunidad y sociedad, economía y productividad, matemáticas aplicadas, lenguaje y comunicación, recursos naturales e higiene y salud. Estas materias deben transformarse en los niveles curriculares y pedagógicos dentro del contexto más amplio de la reforma educativa (PROASE-CONALFA, 2003) y la estrategia de mejora de la calidad educativa promovida por el MINIDUC.

Modalidades de impartición: Revisión de las modalidades y técnicas

Al final de 2004, las modalidades para impartir los servicios de alfabetización eran diversas. Si bien todas tenían el mismo enfoque y usaban los mismos materiales, su aplicación difería según el contexto específico en que se usaban. A continuación pueden verse algunos elementos de esta diversidad:

1. Los alumnos que cursaban el último año de la educación secundaria básica eran capacitados como alfabetizadores; para recibir su diploma en este nivel, tenían que enseñar a un número mínimo de analfabetas.
2. Se llevaron a cabo acuerdos con varias ONG.
3. Se realizaron acuerdos con mujeres indígenas en comunidades rurales.
4. Se hicieron acuerdos con trabajadores de maquila.
5. Se realizaron proyectos de alfabetización en empresas privadas.
6. “Educando a Mamá y a Papá”, iniciativa donde los niños se comprometían a enseñar a sus padres y otros adultos a leer y escribir (este programa ha tenido resultados muy positivos).
7. Se realizaron programas de alfabetización por radio.
8. “Adopta un Analfabeta” las amas de casa se inscribían como voluntarias para promover la alfabetización.
9. Se promovieron programas de alfabetización bilingüe.
10. Se realizaron programas de alfabetización en cárceles y centros de detención.
11. Se llevaron a cabo programas de alfabetización en iglesias.
12. Se realizaron programas de alfabetización en plazas/mercados.
13. Se dirigieron programas de alfabetización a la población con VIH y sexoservidoras.
14. Se dirigieron programas de alfabetización a personas con discapacidades auditivas/voz (esta iniciativa fue desarrollada con niñas pequeñas que sufren algún tipo de discapacidad en este nivel).
15. El voluntariado general también fue común.
16. Los voluntarios fueron capacitados para alfabetizar a guatemaltecos y otros latinoamericanos que viven en Estados Unidos, los cuales no sabían leer ni escribir.

Esta lista diversa enfatiza los desafíos metodológicos que implica tratar de desarrollar un enfoque único para usarse en circunstancias muy heterogéneas y retener la integración metodológica, al tiempo que se promueve la aplicación de materiales similares para todos los contextos, en particular los que van más allá de la simple dicotomía tradicional urbano-rural.* Lamentablemente, la creación de cuerpos oficiales que trabajan en paralelo con otros, como el Movimiento Nacional de Alfabetización, MONALFA (2000-2004), ha dificultado el monitoreo y la evaluación de resultados que permitan determinar la eficiencia y la eficacia de las distintas iniciativas. Esto ha debilitado al CONALFA a nivel institucional, técnico y financiero. Actualmente, se

* Durante el gobierno del Presidente Alfonso Portillo (2000-2004) se creó el MONALFA, institución que promovió el I Seminario sobre Integración Metodológica, en abril de 2003.

requiere un esfuerzo enorme para consolidar una política de amplio espectro que permita la transición del activismo hacia una acción que favorezca una educación de calidad para todos.

Alfabetización multicultural y multilingüe

En el contexto del proceso de paz de Guatemala, la firma del *Acuerdo sobre la Identidad y Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas* (Guatemala, 1995) marcó el reconocimiento de la sociedad de Guatemala de su diversa herencia étnica, cultural y lingüística, que junto con los acuerdos sobre la situación socioeconómica y agraria formaron el parámetro de la reforma educativa, la cual promueve grandes transformaciones en el sistema educativo nacional; transformaciones que tuvieron un impacto directo en la realidad plural del país.

La alfabetización no fue la excepción. El CONALFA comenzó a trabajar en la implementación de idiomas indígenas, empezando con la redefinición del concepto de “analfabeta” en un sentido más amplio, que designaba a quienes no leían o escribían la lengua oficial; la nueva definición toma en consideración las otras 23 lenguas que en la actualidad también se consideran nacionales (Guatemala, 2003).

La alfabetización bicultural implicó más que el simple uso de las lenguas indígenas (CONALFA, n.d.). Involucró la apertura al debate y ocasionó un cambio en la forma en que se concibe la alfabetización. Fue un acuerdo con declaraciones hechas en el Foro Educativo Mundial 2000 en Dakar, en particular que “hablar y escribir una lengua son factores clave para la definición, implementación y medición de la alfabetización” (UNESCO, 2000).

El mensaje central en Dakar fue que los modelos educativos no se habían revisado con la profundidad suficiente; más bien, las deficiencias de estos modelos se habían conservado en detrimento de millones de jóvenes y adultos, a quienes se les enseñaba en lenguas que no entendían. Por otra parte, si estos “modelos de alfabetización” han de evolucionar en un contexto diferente, en particular donde prevalece la pobreza, deben integrarse dentro de una estrategia para reducirla.

Alfabetización para todos: Panorama inmediato y futuro

El CONALFA está promoviendo actualmente dos líneas de acción en colaboración con la oficina guatemalteca de la UNESCO y el Programa Nacional de Solidaridad para la Alfabetización de Brasil: planear políticas sobre educación para jóvenes y adultos, y evaluar su sustentabilidad técnica y financiera.

En el contexto de la Década de Alfabetización y Educación para Todos de la UNESCO, el objetivo es movilizar una serie de acciones en los niveles



Programa de Alfabetización y Aprendizaje de los Adultos en Namibia

*Beans Uazembua Ngatjizeko**

A raíz de su independencia el 21 de marzo de 1990, Namibia heredó un sistema educativo caracterizado por graves desigualdades en la asignación de recursos para escuelas de diferentes grupos étnicos. El Gobierno de la República de Namibia (GRN) reconoció este reto y el papel central que tiene la educación y capacitación en el proceso nacional de desarrollo y ha puesto mucho énfasis en educar a su gente. Desde su independencia, el gobierno ha asignado de un 25 a un 30% de su presupuesto anual al Ministerio de Educación (MOE, por sus siglas en inglés). Para compensar este desequilibrio, la Dirección para la Educación Básica de los Adultos (DABE, por sus siglas en inglés) del MOE lanzó el Programa Nacional de Alfabetización en Namibia (NLPN, por sus siglas en inglés) el 5 de septiembre de 1992; cuya finalidad es ofrecer educación a los desfavorecidos, marginados o excluidos. La meta general de DABE es aumentar la tasa de alfabetización a 90% para el 2015,

* Traducción de Andrea González Uribe.

mientras trata de funcionar de acuerdo con su misión declarada, que se lee como se indica a continuación:

DABE se dedica a ofrecer educación básica a adultos desfavorecidos y jóvenes fuera de la escuela, con el fin de mejorar su calidad de vida, permitiéndoles contribuir más efectivamente al desarrollo nacional y de la comunidad. (OIT 1996-2007)

Existen muchos socios y actores interesados (público, privado y ONG), cuyos esfuerzos complementan los de DABE. Subrayaremos o reflejaremos dichas contribuciones en este reporte. A pesar de estos esfuerzos, muchas encuestas y estudios realizados en los últimos años indican que el mercado de trabajo Namibio aún enfrenta una escasez de trabajadores educados, hábiles y experimentados.

Programas DABE

DABE cuenta con cuatro programas principales: el Programa Nacional de Alfabetización en Namibia (NLPN, por sus siglas en inglés), el programa de Educación Primaria Superior para Adultos (AUPE, por sus siglas en inglés), el programa de Desarrollo de Habilidades para Adultos para el Autoempleo (SADSE, por sus siglas en inglés) y el programa de Centros Comunitarios de Desarrollo de Habilidades (CLDC, por sus siglas en inglés).

Estos programas se llevan a cabo o son implementados por el personal responsable de alguna de las siguientes cuatro subdivisiones:

1. Subdivisión para la Investigación, Planeación y Desarrollo de Programas: Es la que conduce evaluaciones y evalúa los programas, identifica programas nuevos y recomienda nuevas orientaciones.
2. Subdivisión para el Desarrollo de Materiales: Es la responsable del desarrollo, capacitación y distribución de materiales educativos y de aprendizaje –en lenguas maternas y en inglés– así como del desarrollo del contenido curricular de programas de alfabetización y post-alfabetización.
3. Subdivisión para la Capacitación de los Capacitadores: Es la que organiza programas de capacitación para el personal (antes del servicio y durante el servicio) y apoya la capacitación de los socios cooperadores.
4. Subdivisión de Monitoreo y Evaluación: Es la responsable del monitoreo de los programas mediante la recopilación de análisis de estadísticas, asimismo organiza los ejercicios para la evaluación de los programas, las evaluaciones y estudios anuales de los logros de aprendizaje.

Adicionalmente, la Subdivisión de Servicios Generales es la responsable de proporcionar los servicios administrativos, secretariales, auxiliares y de transporte para DABE.

Mejora constante en las políticas

La *Política Nacional de Educación de los Adultos* (GRN, 2003), la cual fue aprobada por el Gabinete en julio de 2003, provee el marco de la política para el aprendizaje de los adultos. La política aborda los asuntos relacionados con el desarrollo de programas, recursos, coordinación, instrumentación y monitoreo de políticas; identifica el papel del gobierno dentro de este marco; reconoce las importantes contribuciones del sector privado y de la sociedad civil en fomentar el aprendizaje de los adultos, e indica que el gobierno desea mantener sociedades con los dos sectores.

Por otro lado, las *Directrices para la Política de la Segunda Fase del Programa Nacional de Alfabetización de la Política en Namibia, 1996-2000* (DABE, 1997) se encuentran actualmente bajo revisión.

Otro desarrollo importante en Namibia es el *Plan Estratégico para el Programa de Mejora del Sector Educativo y de Capacitación (ETSIP)*, por sus siglas en inglés, 2005-2020 (GRN, 2006), un esquema de trabajo educativo de 15 años que resume la intención del gobierno para mejorar su oferta de educación a la nación. Este “plan para una nación que está en vías de aprendizaje” define claramente los planes de MOE para mejorar su oferta de educación en Namibia.

Esfuerzos en diversidad cultural

Debido a que existen trece lenguas indígenas en Namibia, éstas tenían que ser desarrolladas y mantenidas aún más para enriquecer y sustentar la diversidad cultural del país. Llevar esto a cabo ha sido una prioridad y un asunto de política sobre lenguas desde su independencia; el MOE optó por la enseñanza en la lengua materna o idioma en casa, como el cimiento básico durante los primeros tres años de educación formal, en el que el inglés (el idioma oficial) se imparte como una materia únicamente hasta el 4º grado.

Por lo tanto, DABE siguió ese ejemplo con respecto a la educación no formal, en donde la enseñanza en la lengua materna ha sido el cimiento de las primeras dos etapas del programa de alfabetización de los adultos. Por ende, los materiales fueron desarrollados en las lenguas indígenas, incluyendo aquéllas lenguas referidas por algunos como “lenguas de las minorías”. Recientemente, DABE, junto con la Población Kwe de Caprivi Oriental, inició, desarrolló y produjo el libro de texto de la primera etapa de la lengua Kwedana. Posteriormente, vendrá otro libro de texto para la segunda etapa.

Los Kwe, así como otras comunidades con lenguas indígenas, son parte de las comunidades nómadas marginales con una tasa alta de analfabetismo.

Los educandos adultos con discapacidades también se benefician del programa de DABE. Ha habido un avance significativo en la integración de los educandos adultos ciegos y sordos en el Programa Nacional de Alfabetización. DABE ha estado trabajando arduamente para asegurar que los educandos adultos con discapacidades visuales y auditivas en las trece regiones del país se beneficien de este programa. Recientemente, una gran variedad de material de alfabetización en lenguas indígenas fue traducida al Braille en Sudáfrica.

Contribución de los participantes a la educación de calidad para adultos y jóvenes

Como se mencionó en los antecedentes, existen un gran número de socios y actores interesados que contribuyen de manera significativa a la educación de calidad de los adultos y jóvenes en Namibia; sin embargo, sólo mencionaremos algunos.

Colegio Namibio de Aprendizaje Abierto

El Colegio Namibio de Aprendizaje Abierto (NAMCOL, por sus siglas en inglés) desde su creación ha ofrecido educación secundaria alternativa a jóvenes fuera de la escuela por medio de un Acta de Parlamento en 1997. NAMCOL es el proveedor de educación secundaria alternativa más grande, utilizando modos de educación presencial, así como a distancia para el Grado 10 (Preparatoria) y para el Certificado General de Educación Preparatoria (IGSCE, por sus siglas en inglés), el cual es Grado 12. Además de estos cursos, NAMCOL ha venido ofreciendo otros cursos tales como el Certificado de Educación para el Desarrollo (CED, por sus siglas en inglés), cuyo objetivo son los educadores de adultos y los trabajadores comunitarios o de extensión. Otros cursos que se ofrecen tratan sobre habilidades computacionales y el Diploma de la Confederación de Jóvenes en Trabajo de Desarrollo. En 2005, 27 341 estudiantes fueron admitidos en NAMCOL.

Centro de Estudios Externos (CES, por sus siglas en inglés) en la Universidad de Namibia

De acuerdo con la sección 4 del Acta Universitaria (GRN, 1992), la Universidad de Namibia (UNAM, por sus siglas en inglés) busca, entre otras cosas, “ofrecer servicios de extensión” y “fomentar la capacitación y educación con-

tinua”. Estas cláusulas proporcionan una base estatutaria para el desarrollo y gestión de actividades abiertas y a distancia en la UNAM. Establecido en 1993, el CES se encarga de desarrollar métodos flexibles y abiertos de acuerdo con las necesidades educativas de la gente que, por diversas razones, no pueden asistir de tiempo completo a cualquiera de los recintos universitarios para continuar con sus estudios. La misión del CES es, por lo tanto, ofrecer educación accesible de mayor calidad y crear oportunidades para el desarrollo profesional a los miembros adultos de la comunidad, ofreciendo el aprendizaje abierto mediante programas de educación continua y a distancia. En 2003, el CES tenía un total de 4 128 estudiantes inscritos en ocho programas a distancia disponibles en la UNAM. Estos programas son: Licenciatura en Educación; Licenciatura en Administración de Negocios; Licenciatura en Enfermería; Diplomado de Maestro de Educación Básica; Diplomado en Educación: Matemáticas y Ciencias; Diplomado en Educación: Lenguas Africanas; Diplomado en Educación de Adultos y Desarrollo de la Comunidad; y Diplomado de Posgrado en Educación.

Politécnico de Namibia, Centro de Enseñanza Abierta y Permanente

De acuerdo con la sección 4 de su acta constitutiva (Nekongo-Nielsen, 1995), el Politécnico de Namibia tiene como mandato ofrecer “educación profesional posbachillerato” y “educación continua a nivel escolar de posbachillerato”. El Centro de Enseñanza Abierta y Permanente (COLL, por sus siglas en inglés) proporciona y coordina la entrega de programas a distancia. COLL actualmente ofrece las siguientes especialidades: Certificado Nacional/Diploma Nacional en Administración de Empresas, Certificado Nacional/Diploma Nacional en Ciencias Públicas, Certificado Nacional/Diploma Nacional en Contabilidad y Finanzas, Certificado Nacional/Diploma Nacional en Mercadotecnia; Diploma Nacional en Administración de Recursos Humanos, Licenciatura en Tecnología de Conservación de la Naturaleza, y Licenciatura en Tecnología de Administración de la Agricultura.

El Ministerio de la Juventud, Servicio Nacional, Deportes y Cultura (MYNSSC, por sus siglas en inglés)

MYNSSC ha sido creado únicamente para compensar la grave situación de los jóvenes propiciando el desarrollo de sus habilidades para que conlleve a la creación de trabajos y alivio de la pobreza. MYNSSC continúa ofreciendo el desarrollo de habilidades y empresarial mediante sus Centros de Adiestramiento Comunitarios, tales como el que se encuentra en Kainachas, al sur de Namibia. Aquí los jóvenes reciben capacitación de habilidades en ocupa-

ciones tales como albañilería, soldadura, plomería, turismo y corte y confección. Curiosamente, este es un sistema dual, el cual involucra seis meses de teoría y otros seis meses de entrenamiento práctico.

También se conducen programas de expansión de habilidades en los centros multipropósitos, los cuales se encuentran virtualmente en todo el país. Aquí se ofrecen cursos personalizados, tales como el entrenamiento básico de computación. Con la aprobación de la Ley Nacional de Servicio a Jóvenes en ambas Casas del Parlamento, más programas relacionadas con el mercado agregarán valor a los programas actuales de MYNSSC.

Creación de la Coalición Namibia para la Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas

Después del lanzamiento de la Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas (UNLD, por sus siglas en inglés) en febrero de 2003, el Ministro de Educación Básica, Deportes y Cultura, el Sr. John Mutorwa, creó la Coalición Namibia para la Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas (NCUNLD, por sus siglas en inglés). El MBESC puso en marcha el proceso y en marzo de 2004 se creó el Comité NCUNLD, después de una conferencia de dos días copatrocinada por MBESC y UNESCO.

Es importante resaltar aquí que la Oficina de la UNESCO en Windhoek ha sido una pieza clave en apoyar la NCUNLD en sus etapas iniciales y continúa teniendo un papel vital en las operaciones de la coalición. Una de las tareas más desalentadoras y desafiantes que enfrenta la coalición es la movilización de recursos (tanto nacionales como internacionales), ya que sin apoyo financiero, el bien articulado *Plan Estratégico* no se podrá llevar a cabo. El apoyo de la UNESCO, tanto financiera como técnica, ha sido importante y se seguirá necesitando en el futuro.

Otro reto es juntar todos los posibles actores interesados, particularmente del sector privado, así como mantener el impulso de esta iniciativa nacional.

La NCUNLD —representando un espectro amplio de ministerios, oficinas y agencias gubernamentales, ONG, organizaciones basadas en la comunidad, corporaciones paraestatales, empresas del sector privado e individuos— busca fomentar la Alfabetización para Todos. Funge como un subcomité del Foro Nacional de la Educación para Todos y recientemente lanza su *Plan Estratégico*.

Además de su tarea de lograr la alfabetización del 90% para el 2012, la NCUNLD también tiene los siguientes objetivos (según se describió en su *Plan Estratégico 2005-2006*):

- Monitorear e influir en la implementación del marco de políticas relacionadas con la alfabetización.
- Fomentar la alfabetización a todos los niveles.
- Eliminar las diferencias de género y fomentar la equidad de géneros.
- Mejorar la calidad de los programas de alfabetización y aprendizaje permanente.
- Mejorar la calidad de vida de todos los namibios.
- Asegurar la asociación y vinculación sustentable entre los actores interesados.
- Abogar por la Alfabetización para Todos.
- Incrementar la disponibilidad de los materiales en idiomas locales y en formatos accesibles a las personas con discapacidades.
- Sustentar las actividades de la NCUNLD.

Por lo tanto, se han creado alianzas estratégicas para llevar este proceso mucho más allá de la UNLD.

Foro Educación para Todos

El Gobierno de Namibia ha creado un foro nacional con un claro *Plan Nacional de Acciones 2001-2015* (GRN, por sus siglas en inglés, 2002). Ha declarado que la educación es su primera “prioridad entre las prioridades” nacionales. Ha trabajado arduamente para ofrecer una educación para todos que facilite el desarrollo y equidad social. Esto tendrá que verse contra los antecedentes de las metas de desarrollo del gobierno de “sustentar el crecimiento económico, crear empleos, reducir la inequidad en la distribución de los ingresos, y reducir la pobreza” (GRN, 2002). Este foro nacional, conformado por todos los actores interesados y socios, es encabezado y coordinado por los Ministerios de Educación (Ministerios de Educación e Igualdad de Géneros & Bienestar de los Niños). Durante la Semana Global de EPT (en abril de cada año), las actividades de EPT se coordinan en una región específica, sin embargo, el mismo tipo de actividades se llevan a cabo simultáneamente en todas las otras doce regiones (Namibia tiene trece regiones) del país. Se hace hincapié en las seis Metas Dakar durante este periodo y se ha logrado un éxito razonable en cada una de ellas.

Áreas de innovación

Semana de los Educandos Adultos

Cada año, durante la Semana de los Educandos Adultos (del 1 al 8 de septiembre), se pone especial énfasis en la educación de los adultos y jóvenes fuera

de la escuela. Los programas de alfabetización se refuerzan mediante la movilización y apoyo durante este periodo. También es el momento cuando se presentan los certificados o premios a los educandos exitosos y otros quienes contribuyeron al éxito del Programa Nacional de Alfabetización.

Programa de Alfabetización Familiar

El grupo de referencia del MOE acerca del Programa de Alfabetización Familiar se estableció con el fin de determinar las mejores estrategias para la implementación de este programa. Los recopiladores de datos fueron capacitados con la asistencia del Grupo de Trabajo de la Asociación para el Desarrollo de la Educación en África y la Asociación Namibia de Investigación Educativa. Se realizó un estudio para identificar y asistir a los padres y otros proveedores de servicios de cuidado infantil en Namibia para apoyar a sus hijos en los primeros años de escolaridad primaria y el reporte resultante fue enviado a las autoridades del MOE. El estudio acerca de la alfabetización familiar se circunscribió a una escuela y a una comunidad por región. La fase piloto, que se instrumentará como resultado de este estudio, se limitará a las mismas escuelas y comunidades en donde se realizó el estudio. Los promotores de la alfabetización familiar fueron capacitados recientemente con el apoyo del Fideicomiso de Alfabetización Namibia a fin de iniciar la fase piloto.

Equipo nacional de investigación sobre alfabetización y educación no formal

Después del Primer Taller Internacional de Trabajo Técnico sobre el Fortalecimiento de las Políticas y Prácticas de la Alfabetización y Educación No Formal dentro del marco de la Educación Para Todos convenido por la UNESCO en París, del 21 al 24 de julio de 2004, el director actual de DABE ayudó al establecimiento de un equipo de investigación sobre la alfabetización y educación no formal. La finalidad del equipo de investigación es identificar las áreas de investigación sobre la alfabetización y educación no formal, realizar la investigación (siempre que se puedan asegurar los fondos), y documentar y difundir su hallazgos ampliamente. El primer estudio para atraer más personas a los programas de alfabetización y educación no formal está por llevarse a cabo.

Mejora constante en monitoreo y evaluación: Identificación de indicadores

El monitoreo y evaluación de DABE está en la búsqueda constante de mejorar su ejercicio de recopilación de datos y proceso de análisis de datos con el fin de cumplir con normas internacionales. Esto no sólo se realiza para con-

tinuar reflejando y reportando acerca del número de educandos o graduados de los programas de alfabetización, sino también para usar la información estadística para fines de planeación. Recientemente DABE, junto con la Oficina de la UNESCO en Windhoek, llevaron a cabo un proyecto piloto sobre la identificación de indicadores, un proyecto del que Namibia, Lesotho y Swazilandia se han visto beneficiados y los cuales ayudarán a que Namibia no sólo mejore su recopilación de datos y análisis y difusión de información, sino también aquellos de sus organizaciones asociadas.

Conclusiones

A pesar de que Namibia ha hecho intentos para hacer frente a la calidad de la educación de los adultos y jóvenes, aún hay mucho por hacer. La participación en foros internacionales tales como el Diálogo de Política Sur-Sur, en donde países comparten información, ayuda a que las naciones tales como Namibia aprendan y mejoren sus programas.

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Programas de alfabetización y educación de adultos en Mozambique: Una estrategia de Subsector

*Ernesto Muianga**

Este capítulo trata acerca del programa nacional para la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la educación no formal (ENF) en Mozambique. La introducción se basa en un artículo titulado “*Literacy in Mozambique: Education for All Challenges*”, escrito por Mouzinho Mário y Debora Nandja de la Universidad Eduardo Mondlane, que se presentó a manera de artículo introductorio en el *Informe Global de Seguimiento EFA 2006* de la UNESCO: *Alfabetización para la vida*. La segunda sección se ocupa de los resultados de un estudio de evaluación sobre la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la ENF, realizado en 2000 por la Secretaría de Educación en colaboración con el Banco Mundial. La tercera sección versa sobre la estrategia nacional propuesta e implementada por la Dirección Nacional de Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos (Direcção Nacional de Alfabetização e Educação de Adultos: DNAEA). El capítulo concluye con el análisis de algunos de los éxitos y desafíos en la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la ENF.

Introducción

Con casi 19 millones de habitantes, Mozambique tiene la mayor población entre las antiguas colonias africanas de Portugal. Su economía se basa en gran medida en la agricultura. Casi el 80% de su inversión pública se destina al sector social (educación, salud, y suministro de agua), a la agricultura, al

* Traducción de Clara Bild Bayón.

transporte y la infraestructura social. Mário y Nandja (2005: 1) afirman que ese es el mayor reto que enfrenta Mozambique. Si bien sus programas desde 1987 de ajuste estructural y de estabilización macroeconómica han reducido la pobreza alrededor del 69.4% en 1997 a cerca del 54.1% en 2003, la pobreza en las zonas rurales aún es muy alta.

En estricto apego a los marcos de trabajo de la UNESCO —la *Declaración Jomtien* (1990), la *Declaración de Hamburgo* (1997) y el *Marco de Acción de Dakar* (2000)— y dentro del contexto del plan a cinco años del gobierno, que enfatiza la paz, la estabilidad y la reconciliación nacional, el gobierno de Mozambique mostró un renovado compromiso con la educación de adultos y jóvenes, tanto en ambientes informales como no formales. Mário y Nandja (2005: 1) argumentan que el objetivo de este compromiso nacional con la alfabetización y la educación de adultos fue aumentar la inversión en la alfabetización de adultos, y entre otras cosas, elevar el nivel de la educación de los adultos en Mozambique.

Mário (2002) ha identificado etapas cronológicas o fases en las políticas de Mozambique sobre alfabetización, educación de adultos y educación no formal (ENF). La primera fase se desarrolló a mediados de la década de 1970, cuando con la independencia de Mozambique, la educación de adultos y la educación no formal fueron el centro de la atención. En 1976, se creó la Dirección Nacional de Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos (Direcção Nacional de Educação de Adultos: DNEA) y se le encomendó la alfabetización de los adultos. Las masivas campañas de alfabetización, combinadas con una explosión en la inscripción a las escuelas condujeron a una importante reducción en la tasa de analfabetismo, como lo confirmaría el Censo General de Población de 1980: las tasas de analfabetismo cayeron casi en un 25% —del 97% en 1974 a casi un 72% en 1982: un 39.9% en las zonas urbanas y un 78.2% en zonas rurales y osciló entre un 82% en Nampula y un 28.5% en la Ciudad de Maputo— (Mário, 2002: 129-130).

En 1983, se creó el Sistema Nacional para la Educación (SNE) y la educación de adultos se convirtió en uno de sus subsistemas y se le confirió el mismo estatus y tratamientos que a los otros cuatro sectores: educación general, educación técnica y vocacional, capacitación del magisterio y educación superior. El mandato del subsistema de la educación de adultos fue erradicar el analfabetismo y garantizar el acceso a la educación técnica y profesional a los maestros en distintos niveles.

La segunda fase comprende el periodo entre 1985 y 1995; en él existió una reducción sustancial en la alfabetización y en las actividades educativas. Esto fue a consecuencia de la guerra civil, la guerra de desestabilización iniciada por el régimen sudafricano del *apartheid*. Además de la destrucción de la infraestructura y de la pérdida de vidas humanas, la guerra fue la responsable

directa del influjo de millones de refugiados mozambiqueños a los países vecinos y el desplazamiento interno de millones más por todo el país. Los esfuerzos de alfabetización y educación de adultos se restringieron principalmente a las ciudades grandes. Las únicas excepciones fueron los esfuerzos de las ONG, las instituciones religiosas y los particulares, quienes continuaron a pequeña escala y realizaron un trabajo innovador, como por ejemplo, la impartición de clases en los idiomas locales (Mário y Nandja, 2005: 2). Otros motivos para el estancamiento de la alfabetización comprenden la irrelevancia del plan de estudios, los métodos formales de enseñanza, los calendarios y horarios estrictos y el uso exclusivo de la enseñanza en portugués.

La tercera fase se centra en el periodo que abarca de 1995 al presente, cuando la alfabetización de los adultos estuvo marcada por una etapa de redescubrimiento (Mário, 2002). Se considera como un instrumento de “desarrollo económico y social sostenido”. En 1995, la Dirección Nacional de Educación Básica (Direcção Nacional do Ensino Básico: DNEB) asumió las actividades de la DNEA. En varios documentos políticos, instrumentos legales y políticas de desarrollo se refleja la voluntad combinada del gobierno y la sociedad de garantizar el desempeño de un papel cada vez mayor de la alfabetización en la reducción de la pobreza y en el desarrollo del país. La *Constitución de la República de Mozambique* de 1990 estipula que todos los ciudadanos tienen el derecho a la educación (Art. 88) y que la educación constituye un medio para lograr la unidad nacional, para llegar a dominar la ciencia y la tecnología y para inculcar a los ciudadanos valores morales y civiles (Art. 113). La ley no. 6/92 modernizó el Sistema Nacional para la Educación (SNE), al alinearlo con el nuevo modelo económico y político plasmado en la constitución de 1990. De igual importancia resulta el *Plan de Acción para la Reducción de la Pobreza Absoluta 2001-2005* (PARPA), que identificó la alfabetización y la educación de adultos como metas primarias para el programa educativo. La Estrategia Nacional para la Alfabetización y la Educación de los Adultos y la Educación No Formal se diseñó primordialmente para erradicar el analfabetismo en el país. Por último, el nuevo programa del gobierno, PARPA II (2005-2009), reafirmó la meta de reducir la pobreza en un 10% (Mário y Nandja, 2005: 2).

De acuerdo con la Estrategia Nacional para la alfabetización y la educación de los adultos y el Plan de Estudios para la Alfabetización, adoptados por la Secretaría de Educación de Mozambique (MINED) en 2000 y 2003, respectivamente: “La alfabetización se considera, por un lado, como la adquisición de las opciones básicas de lectura, escritura y habilidades matemáticas, y por el otro lado, como el proceso que estimula la participación en las actividades sociales, políticas y económicas y sienta las bases para la educación continua” (MINED, 2003b: 57, citado en Mário y Nandja, 2005: 3). La edu-

cación continua, entendida desde la perspectiva del aprendizaje durante toda la vida, es un prerrequisito para el desarrollo humano y se comenta en el *Plan de Educación Estratégica* (MINED, 2005); el plan sugiere vínculos directos entre la reducción de las tasas de analfabetismo, el desarrollo sostenido y la reducción de la pobreza.

Las tasas de analfabetismo en Mozambique son más altas que el promedio del 38% del África subsahariana. De acuerdo con los datos publicados por el Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE, 2004: 66, citado en Mário y Nandja, 2005: 3), la tasa promedio de analfabetismo entre los adultos de todo el país es de alrededor del 53.6%; es más elevada en las zonas rurales (65.7%) que en los distritos urbanos (30.3%) y más marcada entre las mujeres (68%) que entre los hombres (37.7%). En un país tan vasto y diverso como Mozambique, las variaciones regionales oscilan en un 15.1% en la Provincia de Maputo y un 68.4% en la Provincia de Cabo Delgado. Las cifras correspondientes a los jóvenes son alarmantes, con tasas de hasta un 37.9% en el grupo de 15 a 19 años de edad y del 59.7% el grupo de 20 a 29 años de edad. Las comparaciones entre hombres y mujeres (24% en 1996 comparado con un 31% en 2004) arrojan una brecha que se ensancha. De acuerdo con Lind (2000, citado en Mário y Nandja, 2005: 3), uno de los motivos es que las mujeres tienden a estar más interesadas en los programas diseñados para mejorar sus vidas y el bienestar de sus familias. Dichos programas que promueven la alfabetización y la educación de los adultos como componentes clave de la reducción de pobreza son más exitosos que los que no incluyen la alfabetización en proyectos de desarrollo que están dirigidos a mujeres y a las zonas rurales. (Lind, 2000). El gobierno deberá tomar las medidas adicionales para reparar las discrepancias en el acceso y la retención, si bien todavía se debe hacer algo para lograr la igualdad entre de géneros. Los datos disponibles de 2002 muestran que el 60% de los nuevos alumnos inscritos en el primero y el segundo nivel eran mujeres, en tanto que la entrada al tercer nivel cayó al 48% y la tasa de abandono de los estudios fue de alrededor del 40% (MINED, 2003b).

Durante la década de 1990, un periodo de paz y estabilidad. La alfabetización y la educación de adultos eran consideradas como instrumentos necesarios para el desarrollo económico y social sustentable, centrado en hombres y mujeres (Mário, 2002: 130). En el curso de esa década, se desarrollaron los siguientes programas:

1. *Educación de adultos y alfabetización*: Es un programa formal que consiste en un curso de tres años y un examen. Los cursos son impartidos por maestros profesionales y tienen una equivalencia de quinto grado de educación básica.

2. *Alfabetización de adolescentes y niños*: El grupo al que está dirigido es el de los adolescentes y niños de por lo menos de 14 años de edad que no cuentan con acceso a la educación formal. Las clases tienen lugar en aulas improvisadas en las comunidades, iglesias, escuelas primarias y otros centros sociales. El estado y/o las iglesias corren con los gastos.
3. *Educación bilingüe* (idiomas locales y portugués).
4. *Alfabetización funcional*: Es un componente del Programa de Promoción para Mujeres con el objetivo de mejorar las condiciones de vida en el ambiente económico, social y cultural. Las actividades se relacionan con las necesidades específicas de la comunidad.
5. *Educación no formal*: Es básicamente el dominio de las ONG y está ligado a las actividades productivas, como corte y confección, agricultura, cría de ganado, artesanías y negocios pequeños.
6. *Capacitación de maestros profesionales*.

Los programas de alfabetización son impartidos actualmente por el gobierno y las ONG nacionales e internacionales. Los programas han provocado un aumento en el número de participantes y en la impartición de unidades de alfabetización. Para 2004 había un total de 5 000 unidades de alfabetización (MINED, 2004). No obstante, la tasa de abandono de los estudios continúa siendo alta, en particular, al final del primer nivel de estos cursos de alfabetización de tres años. Uno de los motivos para ello es la carencia de un conocimiento adecuado del portugués entre la población Bantu. Para rectificar esta situación, se introdujo el Programa de Alfabetización en Idiomas Mozambiqueños en 1991 como parte del Proyecto de Educación Bilingüe para Mujeres. En un principio, se seleccionaron dos idiomas del norte del país (*Emakhwa* y *Nyandja*), dos de la región central (*Sena* y *Ndau*) y uno del sur (*Changana*). Del mismo modo, la Estrategia del Subsector de Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos 2001-2005 (MINED, 2001) reconoció la relevancia de los idiomas nacionales en los diversos entornos de aprendizaje. Se revisaron los idiomas locales y vernáculos y los materiales se produjeron en idiomas mozambiqueños (consulte Mário y Nandja, 2005: 5).

Evaluación de los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF

Al darse cuenta de que existía una falta de información consistente disponible para apoyar el desarrollo de estrategias eficaces y eficientes para implementar los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF en Mozambique, MINED desarrolló en estrecha cooperación con el Banco Mundial, una evalua-

ción de los programas en curso en el país. Para llevar a cabo esta evaluación, se eligieron tres provincias como casos muestra: Nampula, Zambezia y Maputo.

La evaluación reveló que, por un lado, existen grandes problemas en el subsector, por el otro, existe una gran disposición entre la población de procurar educación a través de programas que podrían mejorar sus vidas, una disposición por parte del gobierno de lograr los objetivos de la alfabetización, la educación de los adultos y la ENF en todo el país y un interés por parte de los donantes en acompañar este proceso, siempre y cuando el gobierno y MINED definan estrategias claras, coherentes y prioritarias que permitan el desarrollo seguro de estos subsectores. La evaluación también confirmó que la sociedad civil tiene una gran influencia en el desarrollo de los objetivos de la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la ENF, si bien la sociedad civil no ha participado de manera constante en el desarrollo de los subsectores de la educación.

Se desarrolló una nueva estrategia a partir de los resultados y las recomendaciones de esta evaluación, así como de la información adicional recabada por MINED de experiencias previas. La estrategia señala que la implementación de la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y las estrategias de la ENF deben llevarse a cabo al mismo tiempo que se aumenta el acceso a la educación básica de calidad para niños, jóvenes y adultos. De otra manera, existe un riesgo considerable de que las metas propuestas para disminuir las tasas de analfabetismo de toda la nación no se logren. En consecuencia, es necesario establecer un mecanismo que permita un diálogo crítico y permanente entre los expertos de la educación formal y de la ENF. Dicho diálogo hará posible la coordinación y el intercambio de información con el fin de lograr este objetivo conjunto.

*La estrategia de la alfabetización, la educación de adultos
y la educación no formal (2001-2005)*

Misión y visión: La misión de la DNAEA, en coordinación con la sociedad civil, es promover, coordinar y garantizar acceso equitativo a la educación básica para jóvenes y adultos de tal manera que se erradique el analfabetismo y se promueva el desarrollo social, económico y cultural en Mozambique, con lo que se contribuiría a la reducción general de la pobreza.

La visión del subsector de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF fue promover el acceso a la educación básica de calidad durante un periodo de cinco años (2001-2005) a jóvenes y adultos, con base en los principios tales como la igualdad de géneros, el aprendizaje permanente, el respeto por la diversidad lingüística y cultural, y el desarrollo continuo de la capacidad institucional. Con el fin de lograr esta visión, este subsector dio prioridad a

las siguientes áreas: desarrollo de la capacidad institucional, desarrollo continuo de políticas y estrategias, articulación y coordinación de esfuerzos entre la sociedad civil y otros agentes, desarrollo curricular, formación de recursos humanos, desarrollo de materiales adecuados, aumento de apoyo financiero, movilización y retención de mujeres jóvenes y adultas, sensibilización y acceso a los programas de promoción de la alfabetización, educación de adultos y de la ENF, prevención y combate a las enfermedades de transmisión sexual y VIH, desarrollo de sistemas para recopilación y evaluación de datos.

Áreas prioritarias: En lo que respecta al *acceso*, la estrategia fue *sensibilizar* y promover el acceso a los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF, así como movilizar y retener a mujeres jóvenes y adultas. En el caso de la *calidad*, se enfatizó lo siguiente: desarrollo curricular, formación de recursos humanos, desarrollo de materiales adecuados, educación para la prevención y combate del VIH y la creación de sistemas para el tratamiento de datos estadísticos y monitoreo de los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF. Con respecto al *desarrollo continuo de las capacidades institucionales* y la aplicación de políticas y estrategias en el subsector, se hizo hincapié en la articulación y coordinación con la sociedad civil, así como con otras instituciones de educación superior estatales e internacionales y se aumentó el apoyo financiero.

Estrategia nacional de la DNAEA

En estrecha coordinación con la sociedad civil, la estrategia de la DNAEA para 2001-2005 (MINED, 2001) es aumentar las oportunidades para los jóvenes y los adultos de acceso a la educación básica, con un énfasis especial en mujeres y jóvenes. De este modo, el objetivo es disminuir la tasa de analfabetismo por lo menos un 10%. La consecución de lo anterior contribuiría con los siguientes objetivos: desarrollo sustentable de la comunidad, respeto y reconocimiento de los valores culturales, desarrollo de una cultura de paz, tolerancia y democracia y la prevención y el combate de las enfermedades de transmisión sexual, VIH/SIDA y la reducción de la pobreza absoluta.

Las metas fueron: a) ayudar a 1 200 000 personas, de las cuales 720 000 debían ser mujeres y jóvenes, a lograr mayor alfabetización; b) aumentar la alfabetización entre la población analfabeta de 15 a 60 años de edad que proviene en su mayoría de zonas rurales, mujeres y/o población discapacitada; c) aumentar la alfabetización entre la población analfabeta, proyectada para el año 2001 en un 10%; de las personas beneficiadas por estos programas, 60% de las cuales debía estar constituido por mujeres y niños; d) aumentar la alfabetización entre personas de 15 a 19 años de edad que están fuera del sistema escolar.

Objetivo estratégico

Se definieron objetivos estratégicos, así como metas, acciones y recursos para cada una de las áreas prioritarias (consulte la tabla 1). En coordinación e intercambio con los actores de la sociedad civil, se pretendía realizar programas diversificados, diseñados para las necesidades de las mujeres, que pudiesen llegar a mujeres jóvenes y adultas, en particular en las zonas rurales. Estos programas buscaban garantizar el acceso y la retención de niñas y mujeres, así como un cambio de actitud.

Los aspectos clave de la planeación estratégica fueron la sensibilización, la promoción del acceso a los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF. Existía la necesidad de dicha promoción y de una estrategia convincente que concientizara a la gente acerca de las necesidades socioeconómicas y culturales y de las particularidades de las distintas comunidades y regiones de zonas rurales y costeras del país. En virtud de que la implementación exitosa de los programas de alfabetización podría estar comprometida por la falta de entendimiento e información adecuados de las ventajas de la participación en estos programas, fue necesario garantizar una disposición positiva hacia los programas y sus objetivos, a saber “disminuir en un 10% la tasa de analfabetismo en los próximos cinco años” (MINED, 2001).

Las acciones a gran escala comprenderán instituciones gubernamentales y gobiernos de los distritos, municipios, sindicatos, ONG, universidades, medios y OSC adicionales que deberán coordinarse con el MINED.

Las campañas de sensibilización y movilización estarán destinadas a incrementar y mantener el nivel de participación en los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF. Exhibirán las acciones que subrayan la importancia de la alfabetización y el aprendizaje continuo. Se prestará particular atención a la movilización de mujeres y niñas, ya que éstas siguen siendo uno de los grupos más vulnerables y tienen menor acceso a los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF.

Tabla 1. Objetivos estratégicos para cada área prioritaria (2001-2005)

METAS	ACCIONES GENERALES	RECURSOS
1. Identificar y evaluar las necesidades específicas de aprendizaje de la población con respecto al desarrollo socioeconómico (hasta septiembre de 2001).	Diseñar y aplicar un instrumento de medición para diagnosticar y analizar necesidades específicas de aprendizaje y desarrollo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activistas (mujeres). • Instructores, personal técnico. • Recursos y asistencia técnica.

2. Establecer mecanismos para la coordinación de los esfuerzos interinstitucionales entre la alfabetización, la educación de adultos, la ENF y otras organizaciones encaminadas a mejorar las condiciones de las mujeres (hasta noviembre de 2002).	Identificar las organizaciones o instituciones que desarrollan programas para mujeres y discapacitados y reunirse con ellas para coordinar esfuerzos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medios. • Foros técnicos locales, regionales y nacionales con expertos de DPE y DDE.
3. Capacitar a educadores y a activistas de la comunidad para crear entusiasmo por las acciones orientadas a la capacitación de maestros y a los programas de alfabetización (hasta noviembre de 2002).	Capacitar a las mujeres activistas al nivel local para promover las acciones de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF para movilizar a las comunidades a que participen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los facilitadores (técnicos de DNAEA, DPE, DDE, INEA, CPFQ). • Módulos de capacitación. • Recursos financieros.
4. Garantizar que cuando menos el 60% de los inscritos en los programas bajo el ámbito de la estrategia sean mujeres y jóvenes (comenzará en 2002).	Movilizar –a través de líderes comunitarios, grupos de mujeres, organizaciones de la sociedad civil (OSC), programas de desarrollo comunitario y miembros del sector de negocios– la creación de “círculos de interés común” para crear programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF dirigidos a mujeres y jóvenes, incluidos los elementos de desarrollo comunitario.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medios. • Técnicos y expertos. • Recursos financieros. • Líderes comunitarios. • DDE, OSC e instructores para la alfabetización.

Componente de posalfabetización

Esta estrategia previó que el diseño de los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF comprendiera dos fases: una que tratara la alfabetización y la otra los componentes posteriores a la alfabetización. La fase de alfabetización les provee a los educandos las habilidades básicas, como la lectura, la escritura y las habilidades matemáticas necesarias para su participación plena en la sociedad. A pesar de ello, la alfabetización por sí misma no es suficiente si el objetivo es ofrecer educación básica de calidad a jóvenes y adultos, como lo estipulan las declaraciones de la misión y de la visión que corresponden a esta estrategia. Así, era necesario diseñar una fase posterior a la alfabetización para este programa.

Esta fase de posalfabetización abordaba la manera para evitar recaer en el analfabetismo, que es tan frecuente en muchas experiencias de educación juvenil y adulta, debido a que estos programas son mensuales o a corto plazo y tienden a no proporcionar conocimientos sólidos en áreas adicionales.

Dicho conocimiento permitirá a los participantes desarrollar habilidades y buscar oportunidades para mejorar sus condiciones sociales. La prevención de la recaída en el analfabetismo podría lograrse a través de los programas de ENF que están fusionados con la fase de posalfabetización y enfocados en las necesidades específicas de los participantes en el programa. El apoyo de las OSC y de las instituciones gubernamentales que trabajan en conjunto con los sectores de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF, será esencial a este respecto.

Dichos programas están dirigidos a las necesidades de sus participantes. Están enmarcadas dentro de dos modalidades: una que vincula la alfabetización con habilidades de desarrollo económico, como capacitación agrícola, pesca, pequeñas empresas y desarrollo comunitario; la otra que comprende el fortalecimiento de las habilidades de lectura y escritura a través del desarrollo de literatura monolingüe local o literatura multilingüe y con el apoyo de los autores locales; se puso énfasis especial en temas relacionados con la salud madre/hijo, enfermedades de transmisión sexual, y VIH, cuentos locales, regionales e internacionales que abordan el tratamiento del agua y otros asuntos relevantes.

Para las audiencias más jóvenes, existen programas posalfabetización, cuyo plan de estudios está diseñado a ayudar a los educandos jóvenes a continuar con niveles superiores y educación formal, dependiendo de sus necesidades específicas.

Manejo de la implementación de la estrategia

La estrategia de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF comenzó a implementarse en 2001. Debido a la complejidad que implica la implementación de esta estrategia —primero en algunas provincias y distritos (como programa piloto) y después de su difusión a todo el país— el manejo y la administración de una gran variedad de recursos (humanos, materiales, financieros) planteó grandes retos. Con el fin de afrontarlos, fue necesario establecer un sistema gerencial, administrativo, y logístico eficaz.

Manejo: DNAEA/MINED es directamente responsable del manejo general de la implementación de la estrategia. Ha establecido un sistema eficiente a los niveles central, local y de distrito para el manejo de los recursos y un sistema de comunicación recíproca que permitirá el intercambio y el flujo de información. Este sistema deberá hacer más eficiente la toma de decisiones, la resolución de problemas y el manejo de conflictos.

A los niveles de provincia y de distrito, el manejo de los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF se comparte gradualmente con las

OSC, que juegan un papel especial en la implementación de los programas y que también cuentan con la capacidad de canalizar los recursos.

Una estrategia adicional para el manejo fue la creación del Consejo para el Manejo de la Estrategia AEA/ENF (alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF), compuesta por MINED, las OSC y las organizaciones internacionales directamente involucradas en los programas del subsector. Un motivo fundamental para la creación de este consejo de administración es que los objetivos de la estrategia destacan la importancia de una relación de trabajo estrecha entre las OSC y el gobierno en la implementación de la estrategia, de tal manera que todos los sectores de Mozambique tomen parte en la implementación. El Consejo de Administración funcionará principalmente como un cuerpo de reflexión, análisis crítico y orientación con respecto a asuntos relacionados con la implementación de la estrategia de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF.

Administración: Con respecto a la administración de recursos en particular, se propuso un sistema que podría facilitar esta aplicación en todos los niveles y en particular por las OSC. Se debía definir un sistema para la administración de recursos junto con MINED, las OSC y las agencias donadoras.

Logística: Tomando en cuenta la magnitud de la tarea de llevar a cabo con éxito los programas de alfabetización en todas las provincias del país y en la mayoría de los distritos, se consideró que era necesario enfrentar los desafíos logísticos a través de la preparación y programación adecuadas por parte de los coordinadores de los programas. Se propuso un “plan de logística” con base en datos reales. Esto establecería la cuidadosa consideración de los puntos de apoyo de tal manera que los recursos estuviesen disponibles tal como se planeó. También se sintió la necesidad de capacitar al personal de MINED/DNAEA y de las OSC para que estuvieran mejor preparados para desempeñar las funciones específicas del programa nacional de alfabetización.

Monitoreo y evaluación de la implementación de la estrategia

La difusión de la estrategia de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF en el comienzo de la primera fase del programa piloto (en el primer semestre de 2001) requirió de un esquema general de monitoreo y evaluación. Esto fue necesario, en primer lugar, para acompañar el proceso de la implementación y difusión del programa piloto y de la estrategia en general, y en segundo lugar, para evaluar los resultados del programa y el impacto para sistematizar a la postre los resultados positivos, los errores y las lecciones aprendidas, así como para ayudar en la mejora de los programas existentes mediante los ajustes necesarios.

En la discusión de los “Sistemas de Evaluación y Tratamiento de los Datos Estadísticos de AEA/ENF (alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF)”, el término “calidad” se usa en dos sentidos. Por un lado, se refiere al monitoreo y evaluación de los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF desde la perspectiva pedagógica. La evaluación del proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje se caracteriza como: “el nivel de beneficio y de aprendizaje adquirido por los educandos, el desempeño de los instructores, el uso y la calidad de los materiales, el nivel de deserción y los elementos adicionales relacionados con el proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje.” Por otro lado, “calidad” se refiere a la recopilación de datos y al tratamiento de la información estadística en los centros de AEA/ENF y a los programas que operan bajo el ámbito de la estrategia.

Monitoreo: El proceso de monitoreo de la implementación de la estrategia es responsabilidad del Comité Asesor, que estará compuesto principalmente por las entidades DNAEA/MINED, así como por personas de las OSC y de las instituciones. Las funciones de este comité asesor serán discutir y analizar la información disponible sobre los procesos, los problemas y los resultados de la implementación de los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF en las provincias, así como emitir las recomendaciones con respecto al manejo, la administración y la logística de los programas y las sugerencias para la resolución de problemas.

Evaluación: Con el fin de garantizar la objetividad del análisis, las conclusiones y las recomendaciones de las evaluaciones (ya sea intermedias o finales), éstas se realizan por parte de equipos independientes, compuestos principalmente por especialistas en evaluación de programas tanto nacionales como internacionales de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF. Estos especialistas están encargados de valorar y analizar los resultados de las distintas fases de la implementación de la estrategia de manera cualitativa/cuantitativa, con base en los criterios de eficiencia, eficacia, relevancia, impacto y sustentabilidad y de presentar las recomendaciones para mejorar y ajustar la estrategia.

Los equipos tienen acceso a toda la información disponible sobre las distintas fases así como la difusión del programa piloto a todas las provincias, y también información específica sobre los programas y los centros a los niveles de provincia y de distrito. Los equipos trabajan directamente con las entidades clave —instructores y educandos y con las OSC— de las comunidades en las cuales se implementa el programa.

Usos y difusión de la información: la DNAEA, las OSC y las organizaciones internacionales que trabajan en el campo, usan la información generada a partir del monitoreo y la evaluación para apoyar áreas y programas que requieren de fortalecimiento o de mejoras sustanciales. Los informes de

los resultados de las evaluaciones se diseminarán ampliamente al nivel de la MINED, las OSC y las agencias internacionales de países donadores comprometidos con la estrategia de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF.

Lineamientos generales para el componente de investigación

La implementación de la estrategia de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF está acompañada de un componente de investigación diseñado y aplicado por una entidad autónoma como MINED, con la competencia técnica y científica para esta tarea —al igual que una universidad o un instituto—. La investigación es considerada como un instrumento que regula la implementación de la estrategia y garantiza y valida cada componente del programa científico a través de su inclusión en todos los niveles de la estrategia. A lo largo de la implementación, el personal involucrado en los distintos niveles (trabajadores en la alfabetización, instructores, supervisores, personal administrativo, autores de materiales, la sociedad civil y otros) tiene acceso a los resultados parciales de la investigación con el fin de corregir y ajustar los componentes de la estrategia, en caso de que muestren algunas debilidades.

La primera fase en esta estrategia fue comenzar el programa piloto. Se esperaba que a lo largo de esta investigación, fuera posible identificar modelos propicios para el éxito de los programas de alfabetización, la educación de adultos y ENF y que éstos sirvieran como referencia para la ampliación de este sector y para ayudar a incrementar el conocimiento acerca de estos programas al nivel internacional. Para materializar este componente de investigación, se consideró que eran necesarios el desarrollo curricular de los materiales, la formación, la supervisión, el acompañamiento, el monitoreo, la evaluación y la administración. Todos estos aspectos se relacionan con los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Plan de acción

Se creó un plan de acción para implementar la estrategia de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF, que definiera las metas, las actividades, los plazos y las responsabilidades, los resultados esperados y el presupuesto de cada área estratégica. La primera fase de la implementación, el plan piloto y la evaluación, consistieron en la aplicación y evaluación de modelos y metodologías educativas de la enseñanza-aprendizaje, el plan de estudios y así sucesivamente. También comprendió la revisión y la elaboración de los materiales y la revisión del sistema de recopilación de datos de los programas de alfabetización, la educación de adultos y ENF y la adopción de un sistema de monitoreo, evaluación e investigación.

Fue necesario seleccionar la estrategia de implementación con el fin de justificar las diferencias en las tasas de analfabetismo, la diversidad lingüística y social, los materiales de alfabetización en portugués y otros idiomas y los instructores de alfabetización con diversos niveles de capacitación. Durante esta fase, los programas de alfabetización, educación de adultos y ENF en otras provincias, se llevarán a cabo con los materiales revisados y producidos localmente.

En la segunda fase (2003-2005), se difundirá el programa piloto a nivel nacional.

Conclusión

Mário y Nandja (2005: 6) hacen referencia a un análisis al Plan Estratégico 2005-2009 propuesto (MINED, 2005), revisaron algunos éxitos y desafíos en la alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la ENF, los éxitos incluyeron la difusión de las unidades de alfabetización y el desarrollo de una estrategia para la alfabetización y la educación de los adultos. Los desafíos incluyeron las sociedades y la coordinación inadecuadas, la falta de relevancia de los programas, mala retención (en particular en mujeres y niñas) y la supervisión, el monitoreo y la evaluación inadecuados. Los puntos de revisión incluyeron las deficiencias en forma de personal mal capacitado, falta de financiamiento e incompetencia por parte del Instituto Nacional para la Educación de Adultos (INEA) en el desempeño de sus obligaciones, en particular aquellas concernientes a la implementación del pago a los trabajadores de la alfabetización, lo que ha reducido la motivación tanto de éstos como de los educandos.

Mário y Nandja (2005: 6) proponen las siguientes maneras de enfrentar los desafíos antes mencionados:

1. Implementación de las políticas existentes en lugar de formular nuevas políticas y declaraciones de intenciones.
2. Aumentar el financiamiento de los programas de alfabetización, la educación de adultos y la ENF. Los datos recientes de MINED (2005) han demostrado que el 4.1% del presupuesto para la educación de 2003 había estado asignado para la educación de los adultos. No obstante, la información proporcionada por la DNAEA revela que en realidad sólo el 1% se destinó al subsector de educación de adultos (Mário y Nandja, 2005: 6).
3. Incorporación de la alfabetización de adultos en las metas de MDG y EFA. Mário y Nandja argumentan que, si bien la alfabetización tiene un impacto sobre las MDG, ésta no está incluida en el Plan de Acción de la MDG. La única referencia hecha a ella en este plan es la educación primaria universal. Del mismo modo, la alfabetización ha pasado a un

segundo plano en los programas de la EFA, en especial desde la introducción de la iniciativa por la Vía Rápida o *Fast Track Initiative*, cuyas actividades están centradas en la igualdad de géneros y completar la educación primaria, con lo que continúa la marginalización de analfabetas jóvenes y adultos.

4. Convertir los planes del gobierno en acciones. El Plan estratégico de la MINED aun debe implementarse. La MINED debe jugar un papel más importante en la coordinación de los interesados en la implementación de los programas de educación para adultos y de educación no formal.

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Educar a adultos y jóvenes en Tanzania: Educación Básica Complementaria y Educación Integrada de Adultos Basada en la Comunidad

*Basilina Levira y Valentino Gange**

Desde su independencia, el Gobierno de Tanzania ha realizado intentos significativos para combatir la pobreza y las enfermedades, y erradicar la ignorancia y el analfabetismo. Es por ello que el principio rector ha sido el que todos tengan derecho al desarrollo personal. Los esfuerzos anteriores estuvieron encaminados a la Educación Primaria Universal (EPU) y la educación masiva de los adultos. Por ejemplo, en 1970 se lanzó una campaña de alfabetización nacional para alfabetizar a todos los adultos para el año 1975. Además, se lanzó la EPU en 1974 para asegurar que los niños en edad escolar (de 7 a 13 años) asistieran a la escuela para el año 1977.

A pesar de que se tuvieron logros impresionantes en materia de alfabetización básica de los adultos en las últimas tres décadas después del establecimiento de la alfabetización masiva y funcional y la posalfabetización, estos logros no se pudieron sostener debido a varios factores, incluyendo la sobredependencia del apoyo de donantes, un sistema de planeación centralizado y la falta de motivación entre los facilitadores (Mnjagila, 2004). La tasa de analfabetismo aumentó de 9.6% en 1986 a 16% en 1992, y la tasa neta de inscripción en escuelas primarias cayó del 71.6% a 59.6% en 1990 (MOEC, 1993). Para 1998, se estimaba que 2.5 millones de niños en edad escolar en Tanzania no asistían a la escuela. Un gran número de niños en edad escolar no fueron

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inscritos, especialmente en las áreas rurales. Los niños se vieron obligados a inscribirse en forma tardía, debido a la falta de espacio o simplemente porque no los habían registrado. La mayoría de los niños que se inscribían a una edad mayor a menudo se desanimaban, faltaban a clases o abandonaban la escuela por completo. Se sumaron al alto número existente de adultos analfabetas. Como una medida correctiva, el gobierno realizó un cambio de paradigma en la educación, en la cual se dio inicio a una serie de políticas y reformas con el fin de asegurar que todos los ciudadanos recibieran educación básica.

Este artículo se enfoca a las innovaciones llevadas a cabo por Tanzania para asegurar el acceso equitativo y la oferta de educación básica de calidad a adultos, niños y jóvenes fuera de la escuela.

Cabe señalar desde un principio que en 2003, el Gobierno de Tanzania desarrolló una Estrategia Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos y Educación No Formal para su implementación del 2003 al 2008. La finalidad de esta estrategia es implementar programas educativos enfocados a adultos, jóvenes y niños fuera de la escuela. En Tanzania, se le dio alta prioridad a dos programas –Educación Integrada de Adultos Basada en la Comunidad y Educación Básica Complementaria–. Para asegurar la adecuada implementación de estos programas, los instrumentadores del Consejo fueron capacitados para descentralizar la planeación y gestión de los programas educativos para adultos y la educación no formal.

Educación Básica Complementaria (EBC)

EBC se inició en Tanzania para cubrir las necesidades de los niños en edad escolar primaria y jóvenes fuera de la escuela. Como se mencionó anteriormente, más de 2.5 millones de niños en edad escolar no tuvieron la oportunidad de inscribirse en las escuelas primarias por diversos motivos. También hubo un gran número de niños que, por un motivo u otro, abandonaron la escuela antes de terminar el ciclo de siete años.

El programa EBC fue diseñado en dos versiones para dos grupos de edad: Grupo I (11-13 años de edad) y Grupo II (14-18 años de edad). El programa es flexible, ya que permite múltiples entradas y salidas a otras posibilidades dependiendo de las habilidades del educando. También fue diseñado para cumplir con las necesidades de los niños fuera de la escuela, tanto en áreas rurales como en áreas urbanas. Por lo tanto, es una intervención cuya finalidad es también la de complementar la educación primaria.

EBC fue construido sobre el contenido curricular de las escuelas primarias, con algunas modificaciones para cubrir las necesidades de los niños fuera de la escuela, así como para ofrecerles a los estudiantes la posibilidad de asistir y presentar el examen final de educación primaria y obtener su equivalencia.

El contenido curricular de EBC está conformado por cinco materias: habilidades de comunicación, matemáticas, conocimientos generales, habilidades vocacionales y desarrollo de personalidad.

La duración del programa es de tres años para ambos grupos. El programa para el Grupo I lleva a los estudiantes al Grado 5 después de pasar el Examen Nacional del Grado 4, mientras que el programa para el Grupo II abre las puertas a otras formas de educación, tales como educación a distancia, formación vocacional y educación secundaria para aquéllos que pasan el Examen Final de Educación Primaria.

EBC es uno de los programas prioritarios del gobierno para contribuir al logro de las metas de Educación Para Todos (EPT). A la fecha, se ha podido atender a cerca de 466 018 educandos a través de este programa. Entre éstos, 233 932 –incluyendo 122 482 (52%) niños y 111 450 (48%) niñas– son niños mayores de edad inscritos en el Grupo I. Por otro lado, 232 086 de los estudiantes son jóvenes inscritos en el Grupo II. De éstos, 116 081 (47%) son niños y 110 081 (53%) son niñas (MOEC, 2005b).

Los educandos en EBC son atendidos por 15 534 facilitadores que han recibido dos semanas de capacitación en materia de enseñanza de habilidades. De éstos, 7 587 son maestros profesionales que también enseñan en escuelas primarias, mientras que 7 947 son voluntarios. Estos dos tipos de facilitadores reciben un sueldo mensual de aproximadamente 20 dólares americanos como compensación por su trabajo. Este dinero ayuda a mantener motivados a los facilitadores.

El material didáctico para el programa EBC fue desarrollado por el Instituto de Educación en Tanzania, el cual también desarrolla material para las instituciones de educación formal que ofrecen educación básica.

Una evaluación de los resultados de EBC después de tres años de plantación ha revelado que los educandos en EBC logran los mismos resultados que sus contrapartes, quienes estudian durante siete años en el sistema formal de educación primaria. Hasta el 2003, por ejemplo, un total de 46 (de 232 estudiantes) estudiantes de EBC Grupo II, de cuatro áreas piloto pasaron los Exámenes Finales de Educación Primaria e ingresaron a escuelas secundarias del gobierno.

Para asegurar que se les otorgue a los niños su derecho a la educación, el financiamiento del programa EBC está vinculado a un mecanismo de financiamiento sectorial, en el cual el gobierno y sus socios de desarrollo analizan y llegan a acuerdos acerca de los recursos que serán asignados a los diferentes componentes del sector de la educación. Este sistema ha ayudado para asegurar que la educación de los adultos y la educación no formal reciban una cantidad razonable de fondos para la implementación de sus programas.

Educación Integrada de Adultos Basada en la Comunidad (EIABC)

El programa EIABC está diseñado para ofrecer educación básica y habilidades para la vida a jóvenes y adultos.

El modelo EIABC fue diseñado para subsanar las deficiencias de los programas anteriores de educación para los adultos y adaptarse aún más a las necesidades del educando adulto. El objetivo del modelo es permitir que los jóvenes y los adultos adquieran alfabetización permanente y habilidades vocacionales y para la vida con el fin de mejorar sus niveles de vida. Específicamente, el modelo fomenta y fortalece la participación de los beneficiarios directos a nivel de básico con atención específica a las desigualdades y actitudes existentes entre géneros. Permite que los jóvenes y adultos tomen decisiones acerca de qué hacer, cómo hacerlo, por qué y cuándo hacerlo para su propio beneficio.

Desarrollo de contenido curricular relevante

Con la ayuda de sus facilitadores, los estudiantes mismos desarrollan el contenido curricular de EIABC. Esto se lleva a cabo al inicio del curso, cuando los estudiantes platican con sus facilitadores acerca de las materias que desean aprender. El MOEC ha capacitado a líderes profesionales de educación para los adultos en los 114 consejos/distritos del país, ofreciéndoles las habilidades necesarias para capacitar a los facilitadores de educación para los adultos acerca del desarrollo del contenido curricular. El Ministerio de Educación y Cultura ha desarrollado también una guía curricular y copias de los manuales del facilitador para ayudarlos a desarrollar un contenido curricular adecuado y relevante de acuerdo con las necesidades e intereses del grupo objetivo, así como con las condiciones locales. Los manuales tratan temas acerca de agricultura y microeconomía, salud, directrices REFLECT, contabilidad básica y estudios sociopolíticos.

Los proyectos que generan ingresos deben servir como puntos de entrada a los participantes y como contenidos necesarios para la alfabetización. La instrucción elemental de habilidades es, por lo tanto, una parte integral de los proyectos y va en busca de aquéllos que nunca aprendieron a leer ni a escribir (Bugeke, 1997).

Estudios realizados en las áreas en donde se lleva a cabo una prueba piloto del modelo (Mbunda, 1996; Mushi, 1998; Swai, 1999) han informado que los miembros de la comunidad han respondido bien al programa. La evaluación en 1997 mostró que la tasa de analfabetismo en las áreas piloto bajó del 25%, cuando inició el programa en 1995, a aproximadamente 12%. La evaluación también indicó que la posición socioeconómica de las comunidades pobres había mejo-

rado y que había habido un efecto multiplicador para los beneficiarios, tal como el establecimiento de proyectos de autoayuda para generar ingresos (incluyendo proyectos de estanques de peces, avicultura, porcicultura, agricultura y jardinería, conservación ambiental, construcción y modernización de casas.

Para asegurar su eficaz implementación, el EIABC está vinculado con otras formas de educación, tales como la educación a distancia, y también es soportado por programas de alfabetización, tales como educación para trabajadores, educación por radio y periódicos rurales, los cuales, a menudo, están disponibles en los Centros de Recursos Comunitarios y de los Maestros. Además, 1 600 manuales de facilitadores han sido desarrollados, impresos y distribuidos a los centros EIABC.

Conclusiones

Las dos innovaciones educativas, EBC y EIABC, han respondido hasta cierto punto a los problemas que enfrenta el subsector para la educación de los adultos y la educación no formal en Tanzania. Al momento de escribir este artículo, se está empleando mucha energía para reformar la educación en el país. Los esfuerzos actuales están entrelazados con la estrategia nacional para reducir la pobreza. Se han llevado a cabo talleres para la construcción de habilidades de los líderes de la educación. Además, se implementó un programa nacional de capacitación para los facilitadores de los centros. El gobierno espera reestablecer próximamente los programas anteriormente mencionados en todo el país. Si se logra esta meta, no se podrá sobre enfatizar la participación de otros actores interesados –las comunidades mismas, socios de desarrollo, ONG y agencias de las Naciones Unidas–. Todos tienen que desempeñar un papel, si se han de lograr los objetivos de Tanzania en esta área.

El aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida y el de los adultos pueden llevarse a cabo en cualquier lugar y en cualquier momento. Cualquiera puede asumir el papel de facilitador en algún momento y el de educando en otro. El aspecto más importante en la educación de los adultos es respetar los puntos de vista y conocimientos locales de otras personas.

De acuerdo con Mnjagila (2004), uno de los retos para las iniciativas en la educación de los adultos es sustentar y mantener la visión de que esta educación es un instrumento de autonomía. A nivel nacional, el apoyo a esta visión implica el reconocimiento del alcance largo y extenso y la naturaleza de la oferta de la educación básica de los adultos. A nivel local, implica trabajar en conjunto con todas las agencias u organizaciones que tratan con adultos, sean o no educadores. El reto más grande que enfrenta esta nueva visión consiste en demostrar los resultados del aprendizaje, o la diferencia que la oferta de educación básica de los adultos ha hecho en los individuos y en las comunidades.

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El contexto del desarrollo de la alfabetización y de la educación de adultos en Angola

Juao Romeu y Luisa Grilo

La educación general es el subsistema que se sitúa en la inmediata secuencia del subsistema preescolar y suministra las bases académicas necesarias al proseguimiento de los estudios, a la profesionalización de los ciudadanos y al ejercicio consciente de la ciudadanía. Este acontece entre los seis y los dieciséis años, para la enseñanza regular y, a partir de los quince, para el Subsistema de Educación de Adultos.

Reforma Educativa

Angola vive, actualmente, una etapa de transición del Sistema de Educación vigente, aprobado en 1977 e implementado en 1978, para un nuevo Sistema de la Educación aprobado en 2001.

Esta transición es el principal objetivo de la Reforma Educativa en curso, a fin de promover la calidad de la enseñanza a través de la oferta de una nueva estructura del Sistema y de un nuevo Proyecto Educativo.

En referencia a la Reforma Educativa en curso en el país, debe entenderse como un proceso que implica un cambio significativo, deseable y válido de un Sistema Educativo, de un estado inicial a un estado proyectado. Se trata de un proceso que se inscribe necesariamente en la óptica de un cambio para el bien, de una mejoría de la situación presente para una situación proyectada.

Comparación entre los dos Sistemas

La comparación entre los dos sistemas permite establecer las diferencias fundamentales entre ambos. Así se podrá observar la existencia de diferencias en su estructuración y terminología utilizada, en los objetivos, en los contenidos y en el sistema de evaluación aplicados.

En el Sistema vigente, la Enseñanza General se estructura en 3 niveles de Enseñanza de Base y los cursos preuniversitarios. Por tanto, $4 + 2 + 2 + 3$, totalizando 11 años de estudio, así distribuidos: el 1^{er} nivel de Enseñanza de Base comprende 4 grados (1^o, 2^o, 3^o, 4^o), es obligatorio y funciona en régimen de monodocencia. Los niveles 2 y 3 de la Enseñanza de Base tienen cada uno 2 grados (5^o y 6^o; 7^o y 8^o), mientras que los cursos preuniversitarios tienen 3 años (1^o, 2^o y 3^o) de duración.

En el Nuevo Sistema (en experimentación), la Enseñanza General abarca la Enseñanza Primaria, la Enseñanza Secundaria, $6 + 3 + 3$, totalizando 12 años de estudio. La Enseñanza Primaria comprende 6 grados (1^o, 2^o, 3^o, 4^o, 5^o y 6^o), es obligatoria y funciona en régimen de monodocencia. La Enseñanza Secundaria tiene 3 años en cada uno de sus dos ciclos (7^o, 8^o y 9^o para el 1^{er} ciclo y 10^o, 11^o y 12^o para el 2^{do} ciclo).

Histórico de la alfabetización de adultos

Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos

En la fecha de la Independencia, el 11 de noviembre de 1975, Angola se confrontaba con una tasa bruta de alfabetización de cerca de 85% de la población económicamente activa.

El 22 de noviembre de 1976, después de haber sido trazada y aprobada por los órganos competentes del Estado, la Estrategia Nacional de Erradicación del Analfabetismo, tiene inicio la Batalla de la Alfabetización, proclamada por el Presidente de la República, Dr. Agostinho Neto.

En el ámbito de la ejecución de esta Estrategia, los militares, los operarios, y los campesinos, fueron identificados como la población prioritaria, conforme las tendencias de la época.

Para soporte de esta Estrategia fue creada la Comisión Nacional de la Alfabetización (estructura multisectorial) y el Centro Nacional de Alfabetización (estructura ejecutiva) con la composición y representaciones análogas en todo el territorio nacional.

El tiempo de clases durante la Batalla de Alfabetización como proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje estaba estructurado en etapas con duración de 6 a 8

meses cada una, durante 2 horas diarias, antes o después de la jornada laboral, de lunes a viernes, impartido por individuos voluntarios designados “Alfabetizadores” con una preparación técnico metodológica incipiente.

Del 2 de noviembre de 1976 al 31 de diciembre de 1997, tuvieron lugar 28 etapas de la Alfabetización y fueron alfabetizados 2 417 094 ciudadanos por 370 411 alfabetizadores, lo que representa una proporción de alfabetizador/educando de 1/6.

Del efectivo total de alfabetizados en 21 años, destacamos 1 336 514 mujeres, que representan el 73.9%. La distribución de los alfabetizados nos revela que los adolescentes y jóvenes representan 51% del total. Esta cifra de alfabetizados refleja un esfuerzo nacional conjugado e integrado de muchas fuerzas vivas de la Nación, en especial de las iglesias, las ONG, las fuerzas armadas y los centros de trabajo. A partir de 1980, se presentó una incapacidad de las instituciones públicas de educación de adultos para atender al 10% de los diplomados en alfabetización.

Entretanto, en el campo de la alfabetización y la posalfabetización, a partir de 1987, se probaron algunas experiencias con el uso de lenguas nacionales, (kimbundu; kikongo; cokue; umbundu; ngaguela y octchikuanayama) en coordinación científico técnica con el Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Nacionales.

Esa experiencia, aunque se reveló saludable particularmente para las poblaciones rurales, fracasó por las siguientes razones:

- Insuficiente estructuración científica.
- Insuficiencia y carencia de la base material de estudio.
- Inestabilidad político-militar en el medio rural.

De acuerdo con las estadísticas disponibles, los mayores índices de eficiencia y de rendimiento del proceso de alfabetización se registraron en el sector campesino, sobretodo entre las mujeres y en el seno de las fuerzas armadas.

En reconocimiento a los notables progresos registrados en el proceso de la Alfabetización, la UNESCO atribuyó al país dos premios internacionales, siendo el premio NOMA en 1981 y el NADEDJA KROUPSKAIA en 1988.

Educación de Adultos

A partir del curso escolar 1987-1988, la atención a los diplomados en el proceso de Alfabetización, en un total de 75 093, aumentó cualitativamente. Sin embargo, aunque esa experiencia hubiera triunfado en su totalidad, quedó marcada por insuficiencias y carencias importantes, tales como:

- Falta de materiales ajustados a la psicología del adulto.
- Planes de estudios que no reflejaban en nada lo que la vida práctica exigía a los jóvenes y a los adultos.
- Conflicto entre las exigencias que ocurren del vínculo jurídico-laboral y las exigencias y las necesidades de elevación del nivel educativo cultural.

Situación actual de la alfabetización y educación de adultos

Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos

El estado actual de la alfabetización, en particular, y de la Educación de Adultos, en general, puede ser considerado como dramático, pues a pesar de los esfuerzos del Gobierno y de la sociedad civil, las tasas de escolaridad de la población adulta continúan muy bajas.

El agravamiento de la baja de las tasas de escolaridad de la población adulta se debe a dos factores principales:

- Recrudescimiento de la inestabilidad político-militar.
- Consecuente recesión económico-financiera.

Actualmente, la población prioritaria de los procesos de la alfabetización y de educación de adultos se encuentra en la condición de dislocados de guerra. El medio rural, elegido como prioritario de nuestra intervención en casi todo el territorio nacional no conoce acciones relevantes en los dominios de la alfabetización y de la educación de adultos, pues fue, en determinado momento, el medio geográfico de la mayor inestabilidad político militar.

Las Iglesias y las ONG, son consideradas parejas del Ministerio de la Educación. Las mujeres y las jóvenes constituyen la prioridad del encuadramiento y de la atención en los programas de Alfabetización y de Educación de Adultos (posalfabetización).

El proceso de detección de la demanda y atención a personas con deficiencias en los programas de alfabetización y de educación de adultos también ha sido preocupación del Ministerio de Educación y de sus equivalentes de la sociedad civil.

Los contenidos del programa y el plan de estudios de la Educación de Adultos fueron sujetos a la actualización científico-técnica en el sentido de procurar dar mejor respuesta a las preocupaciones y aspiraciones de los beneficiarios.

Así, los principales obstáculos de los procesos de alfabetización y de educación de adultos, son asumidos por:

- La situación político-militar.
- La recesión económica-financiera.
- La escasez de recursos.

Perspectivas

Como perspectivas de futuro, Angola se propone cumplir los objetivos y las metas de Dakar que son las siguientes:

Objetivo III

Responder a las necesidades de aprendizaje de todos los jóvenes y adultos, a través del acceso equitativo a un aprendizaje adecuado y al programa de preparación para la vida activa.

Meta 1. Creación de programas integrados que permitan a los alumnos que concluyan la Enseñanza Primaria, desarrollar capacidades, habilidades y actitudes relevantes para el ejercicio de la ciudadanía e inserción en la vida activa.

En el dominio del desarrollo de las competencias:

Meta 1. Refuerzo de la capacidad institucional par la definición de programas abiertos y flexibles para la recuperación del atraso escolar.

Meta 2. Implementación y generalización de programas integrados que combinen la formación general (alfabetización y posalfabetización) con la formación profesional.

Meta 3. Ampliación de la red de colaboradores locales para la Educación de Adultos hasta el 2015.

Meta 4. Creación de un sistema de reconocimiento y certificaciones de competencias académicas y profesional adquiridas en contextos de aprendizaje formal e informal,

En el dominio de la lucha contra las ITS y el VIH:

Meta 1. Implementación del Sistema de Enseñanza de la Política Nacional de prevención y combate a las ITS y el VIH.

En el dominio de Educación Ambiental:

Meta 1. Refuerzo institucional para la promoción y la implementación de una política de educación ambiental en el Sistema de Educación.

En el dominio de la Enseñanza en Lenguas Nacionales:

Meta 1. Refuerzo de la capacidad institucional para la promoción y generalización de las Lenguas nacionales como medio de enseñanza.

Objetivo IV

Aumentar en 50% hasta el año 2015 el número de adultos alfabetizados, en particular las mujeres, facilitando a todos los adultos un acceso equitativo a la educación básica y a la educación permanente.

Meta 1. Aumento de la tasa de alfabetización de la población adulta hasta 91% en 2015.

Meta 2. Fijación de la tasa de regresión en 10% al analfabetismo.

Meta 3. Producción/adquisición de materiales pedagógicos, incluyendo lenguas nacionales.

Objetivo V

Eliminar las diferencias de género en la Enseñanza Primaria y Secundaria, hasta 2005 y alcanzar en 2015 la igualdad de género en la educación, garantizando a las niñas un acceso pleno y equitativo a una educación básica y de buena calidad.

Meta 1. Aumento de la tasa de escolaridad líquida para el 25%.

Meta 2. Aumento de la tasa de retención y progresión para las niñas para el 15%.

Región Árabe

Educación de adultos en la región árabe

*Seham Najm, Aicha Barki y Nour Dajani**

La educación... es la clave para el desarrollo sostenible de la paz y estabilidad dentro de y entre países...
(UNESCO, 2000: 8)

La meta de la educación no sólo es proporcionarles a los individuos oportunidades de aprendizaje equitativas sino también buscar establecer una sociedad del conocimiento basada en una educación de calidad. Aunque los Estados Árabes han ampliado su oferta de educación de manera cuantitativa a través de las últimas décadas, dando como resultado índices más altos de alfabetización, aún están lejos de ser satisfactorios. A pesar del éxito en reducir las tasas de analfabetismo en la región, el número absoluto de analfabetas se ha incrementado. A menos de que se mejore la calidad, la cantidad no tendrá significado alguno.

* Traducción de Elizabeth Orozco

La educación de los adultos contribuye al establecimiento de una sociedad del conocimiento creando un ambiente de aprendizaje letrado. Al educar a los adultos, más niños se beneficiarán de sus padres educados. Habrá mayor probabilidad de que ellos continúen sus estudios en la escuela o que regresen a la escuela, y tendrán menor probabilidad de formar parte del grupo de adultos analfabetas. Sólo bajo estas circunstancias, los niños podrán contribuir a la sustentabilidad de una sociedad del conocimiento. Cuando se proporciona de manera efectiva, la educación de adultos es uno de los métodos más útiles no sólo para erradicar el analfabetismo, sino también para eliminar la ignorancia y los malos entendidos acerca de la educación y su necesidad, y por ende, para crear una sociedad del conocimiento. Una sociedad que carece de conocimiento tendrá dificultades para lograr el desarrollo humano y social, así como la paz y la estabilidad, en la región.

Educación de los adultos en la Región Árabe

Las fundaciones para las iniciativas de alfabetización y educación de los adultos en la región son: Las Recomendaciones de CONFINTEA V, 1997 y Evaluación Intermediaria de CONFINTEA, 2003; Educación para Todos (EPT), 2000-2015; Iniciativa de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación de las Niñas (UNGEI, por sus siglas en inglés), 2000-2010; Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio (ODM, 2 y 3, 2000-2015; y La Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas (UNLD, por sus siglas en inglés), 2003-2012.

Alfabetización como tema principal

La alfabetización ha sido un tema apremiante en la agenda de la educación de los adultos en los Estados Árabes. Se le ha dado énfasis a los programas de alfabetización y al seguimiento posalfabetización en relación con la educación de los adultos. La alfabetización es la clave para el desarrollo humano y social. No termina con la habilidad de leer y escribir, sino que permite a los seres humanos ejercer sus derechos; también les permite participar en todo tipo de actividades creativas para enriquecerse personalmente y enriquecer su entorno.

Desde CONFINTEA V en 1997, los Estados Árabes han intensificado su compromiso con la educación y han tomado pasos tangibles para traducir ese compromiso en acciones. En 1999, se estableció la Red Árabe para la Alfabetización y la Educación de Adultos en Egipto, la cual está integrada por 80 organizaciones árabes y Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil (OSC) que trabajan en el campo de la alfabetización, la educación de los adultos y para lograr un desarrollo sostenible, en respuesta a CONFINTEA V. La función

de dicha red era proveer recursos a las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales (ONG) y asociaciones públicas en sus esfuerzos por ser parte activa en el campo. Los dos objetivos principales de la red son: fomentar el establecimiento de nuevas asociaciones de base (incluyendo las personas de los grupos objetivo), y enlazar las actividades de la red a nivel local, nacional y regional con actividades similares a nivel regional e internacional.

Desarrollo de programas de alfabetización

La Meta 3 de EPT tiene como finalidad asegurar que se cumpla con las necesidades de aprendizaje de todos los jóvenes y los adultos mediante el acceso equitativo a programas adecuados de aprendizaje y desarrollo de habilidades para la vida (UNESCO 2000). En tanto que los programas de educación de los adultos se enfocan a erradicar el analfabetismo, también han incorporado el desarrollo de habilidades para la vida y la educación vocacional necesaria para ayudar a los adultos en su desarrollo personal y social. Por ejemplo, administración de pequeñas industrias, salud y nutrición, cuidado de niños, microcréditos, administración bancaria y de dinero, ya forman parte de los programas de alfabetización. Aún más, un gran número de países incorporan temas tales como el medio ambiente, educación cívica y educación democrática en sus programas de alfabetización. Dichas capacitación y educación contribuyen a que los educandos posalfabetización encuentren oportunidades de trabajo con mayor facilidad. La concientización cada vez mayor de la alfabetización, como herramienta para lograr una vida mejor y más productiva, ha desempeñado un papel importante en los cambios del contenido curricular del programa de alfabetización.

Mediante el empleo de diversos y modernos medios se intenta llegar al máximo número de personas analfabetas. La educación abierta y a distancia, enseñanza en casa y educación en la comunidad local, ofrecen opciones que satisfacen diversas necesidades de los educandos, especialmente en áreas remotas y rurales.

Proyectos innovadores en la región

Centros de Enseñanza Comunitarios Multipropósito (Egipto, Jordania, Líbano, Campos Palestinos, Siria y Yemen)

Los Centros de Enseñanza Comunitarios Multipropósito (MCLC, por sus siglas en inglés), tienen como finalidad facilitar el desarrollo de los grupos marginados y comunidades pobres en pueblos y barrios marginados proporcionando alfabetización y oportunidades de aprendizaje diversificados y

permanentes (posalfabetización). Dichas oportunidades ayudan a mejorar la calidad de vida de los educandos e impulsar un desarrollo sostenible. Las comunidades locales (autoridades locales, con la cooperación de las ONG y el sector privado) establecen y administran, asegurando la titularidad social y contribuyendo a la construcción de habilidades en la planeación y el manejo de comunidades locales e individuales. Una de sus actividades es la integración de las Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación (TIC).

Escuelas Amigables para Niños (Egipto)

El proyecto de las Escuelas Amigables se construye sobre los proyectos existentes de Escuelas de Un Aula y Escuela de la Comunidad en áreas pobres de Egipto. Los principales beneficiarios son los niños que se encuentran en condiciones difíciles, los niños que trabajan y los niños de la calle, con edades comprendidas entre 9 y 15 años. La escuela provee a los niños enseñanza básica en el contenido curricular a nivel primaria. Imparte habilidades en el campo técnico, fomenta actitudes positivas hacia sus familias y la sociedad, y enseña habilidades para la vida y orientaciones sociales positivas para que los educandos puedan regresar a la educación formal y alcanzar a otros estudiantes o empezar a trabajar con sus habilidades recién adquiridas. Debido a su nivel de éxito, existen planes para ampliar este proyecto en otras comunidades de la región.

Estudiantes Universitarios en pro de la Alfabetización (Egipto, Líbano, Mauritania, Marruecos, Sudán y Yemen)

Bajo el lema “Deja que uno enseñe a otro”, cada estudiante universitario ayuda al menos a una persona por año para que deje de ser analfabeta. Al crear sociedades universitarias-comunitarias, el programa de Estudiantes Universitarios para la Alfabetización (EUA) permite que los universitarios amplíen su compromiso al educar el capital humano de países en pro del desarrollo, y provee de servicios educativos a diferentes (no tradicionales) niveles de aprendizaje. Los estudiantes, por otro lado, contribuyen a las comunidades reduciendo el analfabetismo y creando sociedades y ambientes alfabetizados.

En Egipto, por ejemplo, EUA fue adaptado por el Ministro de Educación y el Consejo de Enseñanza Superior y será implementado para acelerar la erradicación del analfabetismo especialmente entre mujeres.

Combate contra el Analfabetismo en Áreas Rurales (Sudán y Yemen)

Este proyecto se enfoca a fortalecer la capacidad de los cuerpos gubernamentales y las ONG para el logro de las Metas 4 y 5 de EPT, particularmente en áreas rurales. Incorpora habilidades relevantes (posalfabetización) a mujeres campesinas, tales como la avicultura, el cultivo de abejas, y el procesamiento de vegetales y frutas en el campo.

Problemas principales en la educación de los adultos

Analfabetismo en los Estados Árabes

La Meta 4 de EPT tiene como finalidad reducir la tasa de analfabetismo en un 50% para 2015. En la región Árabe, cerca de 70 millones de adultos aún son personas analfabetas, además de los 7.5 millones de niños entre las edades de 6 a 15 años que ya no van a la escuela y quienes podrían llegar a ser los adultos analfabetas del futuro, a menos de que se ataque el problema del analfabetismo ahora. Estas personas se concentran principalmente en las áreas y países pobres, marginados y altamente poblados. Algeria, Marruecos, Sudán y Yemen, en su conjunto, tienen 30 millones de personas analfabetas, mientras que Egipto tiene alrededor de 20 millones de adultos analfabetas. Estos cinco países juntos tienen 70% de los 70 millones de árabes analfabetas.

Diferencias de género

La situación relacionada con el analfabetismo de mujeres adultas es la más sombría. Egipto, Irak, Mauritania, Marruecos y Yemen tienen tasas de alfabetización femenina superiores al 50%, y Sudán tiene 46.8% (UIS, 2002). La diferencia en géneros es un desafío, especialmente en áreas rurales y remotas. Las causas son las históricas bajas tasas de inscripción de niñas en escuelas primarias (aunque ha mejorado), la falta de escuelas amigables para niñas, la pobreza, y las culturas y tradiciones dominadas por el sexo masculino.

La EPT ha impulsado la educación de los adultos, especialmente respecto a la educación para mujeres. La Meta 5 de EPT señala “eliminar diferencias de género en la educación primaria y secundaria para 2005 y lograr igualdad de géneros en la educación para 2015, con énfasis en asegurar el acceso total y equitativo de las niñas para lograr una educación básica de buena calidad. La mayoría de los Estados Árabes están trabajando actualmente para eliminar la brecha de géneros en las tasas de inscripción y alfabetización. Este impulso también es apoyado por ODM, UNGEI y UNLD.

El Índice de Paridad de Género (IPG) de alfabetización de adultos ahora está en un 0.79 (basado en UIS, 2005), mientras que el IPG de alfabetización de niños está en un 0.93. De acuerdo con el Reporte EPT de Monitoreo Global 2005 de la UNESCO, el IPG de alfabetización de adultos estaba en 0.56 y 0.71 para alfabetización de niños en 1990 (UNESCO, 2005). Esto muestra claramente el éxito en la reducción de la brecha en las tasas de alfabetización entre los dos géneros en la región Árabe.

Recopilación de información y documentación para monitoreo y evaluación

Otro problema principal en la educación de los adultos es la falta de estadísticas y documentación confiable debido a la negligencia de no documentar, aun cuando existen muchos programas que se llevan a cabo en la región. Esto queda claro, particularmente en el campo de ENF, en donde las OSC y las ONG implementan un gran número de programas de alfabetización y de educación de los adultos. Este problema puede atribuirse a la falta de información centralizada y de recopilación de información que conduce a la falta de herramientas de evaluación, como indicadores medibles para revisar los programas de educación de adultos. Esto surge a raíz de la ausencia de marcos relativos a la evaluación y a mejora del currículo o al pobre desempeño de estos marcos.

Aunque los reportes de muchos países afirman que ellos sí evalúan los programas y por consiguiente, modifican el contenido curricular, el contenido del programa, la metodología de enseñanza y la capacitación de maestros, pocos documentos realmente muestran los resultados de dicha evaluación o los cambios realizados.

Los resultados de evaluaciones se pueden usar para avanzar en el sistema educativo, para desarrollar el contenido curricular y para mejorar la calidad de la educación a nivel nacional y regional. La evaluación es una herramienta para fortalecer la gestión con base en resultados, para promover la toma de decisiones y establecer políticas para la planeación estratégica futura.

Existe una fuerte necesidad de construcción de habilidades respecto a la documentación y las estadísticas para monitoreo y evaluación, así como el establecimiento de centros de información y documentación regionales.

Reconocimiento de las OSC y las ONG

Uno de los principales problemas es la falta de suficiente reconocimiento de las OSC y las ONG en el campo de la educación en la mayoría de los Estados Árabes, aunque proporcionan un gran número de programas de alfabetización y educación. La primera resolución de la Quinta Conferencia Mundial sobre Educación de los Adultos (CONFINTEA V) que trata sobre

la “democracia y el aprendizaje de los adultos: Los retos del siglo 21”, subrayó la importancia de la participación y el compromiso por parte de las ONG en la toma de decisiones y la creación de políticas. Sin embargo, esta resolución aún no ha sido promovida. Aunque su reconocimiento ha ido en aumento, los educandos en los programas proporcionados por las ONG no siempre son acreditados en la mayoría de los Estados Árabes. Esta situación inevitablemente afecta la motivación de los educandos, quienes se dan cuenta de que no tienen asegurado un futuro educativo u ocupacional aún después de haber adquirido una alfabetización adecuada y otras habilidades. Por ende, existe una clara necesidad de reconocer la ENF como una manera legítima de proporcionar certificados a educandos y oportunidades de trabajo a educandos posalfabetización. Este asunto también se relaciona con el puente entre la educación formal y no formal. Debe existir una ruta segura para educandos posalfabetizados para regresar a la educación formal, especialmente cuando los educandos son jóvenes.

Conflicto e inestabilidad

También existen otros obstáculos para el logro de una educación de calidad. Los conflictos armados y el estancamiento ocupacional y económico en Irak, Palestina, Sudán y Líbano han impedido el avance en los últimos años. La educación de los niños en estos países constituye uno de los desafíos más importantes para el desarrollo humano.

Planeación y financiamiento de la política

Compromisos de los gobiernos

Los compromisos de los Estados Árabes con las metas de EPT incluyen: reducir la tasa de analfabetismo de adultos en un 50%, reducir la tasa de deserción, la expansión de oportunidades educativas formales y no formales, mejorar la inscripción en escuelas de niñas, y mejorar la calidad educativa. Aunque estos compromisos están relacionados y se busca el logro de los mismos, el enfoque principal en la educación de los adultos radica en la reducción de la tasa de analfabetismo de los adultos en un 50%.

Planes Nacionales EPT: Los planes nacionales de EPT deben formar parte de un marco más amplio que tiene como finalidad el mejoramiento de la calidad de vida del ciudadano, acabando con la pobreza. Las actividades esenciales para el mejoramiento de la educación corresponden al nivel nacional; por lo tanto, es necesario establecer foros EPT nacionales que re-

presenten todos los ministerios correspondientes, las OSC y las ONG. Sin embargo, en el proceso político de toma de decisiones acerca de planes nacionales educativos, la participación de las OSC aún es mínima, con excepción de algunos pocos países.

La UNESCO ha intentado crear puentes entre gobiernos y las ONG para que todos los interesados estén involucrados en la preparación de los planes nacionales. La formación de coordinadores temáticos EPT/ONG en diciembre 2004 y la junta de coordinadores en mayo 2005 de coordinadores nacionales EPT de gobiernos y las ONG, claramente mostraron el mejoramiento en las relaciones entre los gobiernos y las ONG al darle voz a las ONG y aumentar su participación en el proceso de toma de decisiones.

Educación de los adultos en planes nacionales: Dos terceras partes de los Estados Árabes prepararon un plan nacional siguiendo los lineamientos de las oficinas regionales de la UNESCO y en vista de las metas de la EPT. Los planes, estrategias y prioridades principales de la educación de los adultos se resumen a continuación:

Algunos Estados Árabes han preparado borradores de nuevas estrategias de alfabetización basados en el concepto de civilización y la formación de personas árabes integradas (por ejemplo, en Kuwait). En los Estados del Golfo, por ejemplo, se ha puesto más énfasis en la educación de las mujeres, ya que los primeros programas de alfabetización habían puesto más énfasis en la educación de los hombres. El uso de computadoras y de herramientas de aprendizaje a través de medios y a distancia (p.ej. televisión) es promovido para los programas de educación de los adultos y de alfabetización. Adicionalmente, se sugirió el reconocimiento y uso de la ENF (educación paralela, educación continua, educación pública y especializada, instrucción de tecnología moderna). En términos de evaluación, las pruebas y las normas nacionales para la medición de logros (cada cuatro años) fueron establecidas en Egipto.

Los Estados Árabes en general han dado mayor énfasis a las habilidades para la vida en la educación formal y no formal. Esto ha sido particularmente evidente en los intentos de los países de enlazar los programas de educación de los jóvenes, la alfabetización y la educación de los adultos con la capacitación vocacional y la rehabilitación humana.

Sin embargo, los planes generalmente han sido preparados usando métodos de arriba-abajo. Por consiguiente, aparentemente no existe una titularidad clara de los planes o de los compromisos con dichos planes por parte de los actores. Los gobiernos necesitan desarrollar programas de alfabetización usando enfoques de abajo-arriba, impulsados por el educando, basados en necesidades. Para que los gobiernos puedan entregar dichos programas, se

recomienda que las OSC y las ONG participen en los procesos nacionales de toma de decisiones.

Financiamiento

El gasto público en educación en la región árabe ha decrecido desde 1985. Las asignaciones de los presupuestos para la educación también son mínimas en comparación con otros gastos. Sin embargo, la calidad de la educación depende de fondos suficientes, al igual que el mejoramiento de la sociedad y el objetivo de acabar con la pobreza. Debido a que la educación es una inversión para el desarrollo de un país y sus recursos humanos, los gobiernos tienen que reconocer la importancia de esta inversión.

La asociación con otros países y organizaciones donantes es crucial para la obtención de los fondos para los proyectos necesarios. Sin embargo, como los países donantes normalmente prefieren financiar el mejoramiento de la educación formal, es muy importante que los países receptores subrayen las ventajas, beneficios y necesidad de la educación de los adultos en términos de reducción de la pobreza, mejoramiento de la salud, concientización acerca del VIH, y educación para generaciones venideras, que contribuyen no sólo a las metas de EPT sino también a los ODM.

También existe la necesidad de explorar opciones de financiamiento del sector privado. Sin embargo, para obtener fondos, debe existir un plan estratégico y una propuesta de instrumentación. Esto requiere información, estadísticas y análisis de la situación, así como de construcción de capacidades para aquellos que manejan información y establecen responsabilidades.

Conclusiones

La educación de los adultos en los Estados Árabes es un elemento muy importante no sólo para erradicar el analfabetismo, sino también para contribuir a la reducción de la pobreza, el mejoramiento de la salud, el desarrollo social y humano de sus ciudadanos y el desarrollo del estado mismo. Aún más, el incrementar la alfabetización de las mujeres resulta en una fuerza impulsora hacia el logro de los ODM. Por lo tanto, los gobiernos tienen que invertir en la educación de los adultos, recabar fondos del sector privado y de organizaciones donantes, y mejorar sus planes nacionales tomando en cuenta las necesidades de sus ciudadanos y cooperando con las OSC y las ONG. Los gobiernos deben recopilar información y estadísticas y documentar casos en el campo de la educación de los adultos, así como desarrollar la capacidad para el monitoreo y la evaluación precisos. Se debe difundir información a nivel nacional y regional.

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Siglas

AD	Aprendizaje de Adultos
AEA	Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos
AEA/ENF	Programas de Alfabetización, Educación de Adultos y Educación No Formal
AFLP	Accelerated Female Literacy Projects
ANC	Comisión Nacional para la UNESCO de Angola
ANC	Congreso Nacional Africano
ANPED	Asociación Nacional de Investigación y Estudios de Postgrado en Educación
APPEAL	Programa de Educación para Todos en Asia y el Pacífico
ASDSE	Desarrollo de Habilidades de Adultos para el Auto-Empleo
ASEAN	Asociación de Naciones de Asia Sudoriental
ASP	Programa Akshara Sankranti
AUPE	Educación Primaria Superior para Adultos
BACE	Asociación de Bangladesh para la Educación Comunitaria
BBS	Agencia de Estadística de Bangladesh
BEDC	Comité de Desarrollo de Educación Básica
BID	Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo
BNFE	Agencia de Educación No Formal
BRAC	Comité de Avance Rural de Bangladesh
CAALV	Centro de Aprendizaje Abierto y a lo Largo de la Vida
CAMPE	Campaña para la Educación Popular
CCA	Centro Comunitario de Aprendizaje
CCDH	Centro Comunitario para el Desarrollo de Habilidades
CE	Creación de Entornos

CEAAL	Consejo de Educación de Adultos de América Latina
CEALE	Centro de Alfabetización, Lectura y Escritura
CEC	Centro de Educación Continua
CECG	Certificado de Educación y Capacitación General
CED	Certificado de Educación para el Desarrollo
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
CES	Centro de Estudios Externos, Namibia
CES	Esquema de Educación Continua, India
CETV	Estación de Televisión Educativa de China
CLDC	Centros Comunitarios de Desarrollo de Habilidades
CMES	Centro para la Educación Masiva en Ciencias
COBET	Educación Básica Complementaria en Tanzania
COLL	Centro de Enseñanza Abierta y Permanente
CONALFA	Consejo Nacional de Alfabetización
CONAPO	Consejo Nacional de Población
CONEVyT	Consejo Nacional de Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo, México
CONFINTEA V	Quinta Conferencia Internacional en Materia de la Educación de Adultos
CONSED	Consejo Nacional de Secretarías de Educación
CPAA	Centro Público de Aprendizaje de Adultos
CR	Centro de Recursos
CRGES	Certificado Internacional General de Educación Secundaria
DABE	Dirección de Educación y Capacitación Básica de Adultos
DAM	Misión Dhaka Ahsania
DANIDA	Organismo Danés de Desarrollo Internacional
DECJA	Dirección de Educación Continua de Jóvenes y Adultos, Nicaragua
DENF	Departamento de Educación No Formal
DFA	Marco de Acción Dakar
DFID	Departamento Británico para el Desarrollo Internacional
DIGEEX	Dirección General de Educación Extraescolar
DLC	Centro de Alfabetización de Distrito
DLS	Sociedad de Alfabetización de Distrito

DNAEA	Dirección Nacional de Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos, Mozambique
DOE	Departamento de Educación
DRH	Desarrollo de los Recursos Humanos
EAST	Empoderamiento de Niñas para que sean Agentes de Transformación Social
EBA	Educación Básica de Adultos
EBA	Educación Básica Abierta
EBC	Enfoque Basado en el Centro
EC	Educación Continua
ECBA	Educación y Capacitación Básica de Adultos
ECTV	Educación y Capacitación Técnica y Vocacional
EDA	Educación de Adultos
EDUSAT	Educación Satelital, México
EJA	Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos
ENCE	Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Estadísticas
ENF	Educación No Formal
EPAC	Educación Posalfabetización y Continua
EPT	Educación para Todos
EPWP	Programa de Ampliación de Obras Públicas
ERCERP	Estrategias Reforzadas de Reducción de Pobreza
ETSIP	Plan Estratégico para el Programa de Mejora del Sector Educativo y Capacitación
FFLP	Proyecto de Alfabetización Funcional para Agricultores
FIVDB	Amigos en el Desarrollo de Pueblos, Bangladesh
FUNDEB	Fondo para el Desarrollo de la Educación Básica
GOI	Gobierno de la India
GPRB	Gobierno de la República de Bangladesh
GRN	Gobierno de la República de Namibia
IALS	Encuesta Internacional de Alfabetización de Adultos
IBOPE	Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística
ICBAE	Educación Integrada de Adultos Basada en la Comunidad
IEU	Instituto de Educación de UNESCO, Hamburgo
IFEJA	Índice de Fragilidad en la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos
IIFE	Instituto Internacional para Planeamiento Educativo, Buenos Aires

IMG	Informe de Monitoreo Global
INAF	Indicador Nacional de Alfabetización Funcional
INATEC	Instituto Nacional Tecnológico
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estadística
INEA	Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos, México
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, México
INEP	Instituto Nacional de Estudios e Investigación para la Educación
INI	Índice neto de inscripción
IPEA	Instituto de Investigación Económica Aplicada
JSS	Esquema de Jan Shikshan Sansthan
LEARN	Mejora del Aprendizaje para las Necesidades de Recapacitación de los Adultos
MAEA	Materiales de Apoyo de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza
MBESC	Ministerio de Educación Básica, Deportes y Cultura
MCLC	Centro Multiuso Comunitario de Aprendizaje
MDC	Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, Brasil
MEC	Ministerio de Educación
MECD	Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte
MEV	Modelo Educación para la Vida, México
MEVyT	Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo, México
MHRD	Ministerio de Desarrollo de los Recursos Humanos
MIBES	Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo Indígena Bilingüe con Español como Segunda Lengua, México
MIBI	Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo Indígena Bilingüe Integrado, México
MINEDUC	Ministerio de Educación de Guatemala
MJ	Ministerio de Justicia
MNC	Marco Nacional de Calificaciones
MOE	Ministerio de Educación
MOEC	Ministerio de Educación y Cultura
MONALFA	Movimiento Nacional para la Alfabetización
MPFL	Programa Masivo para la Alfabetización Funcional
MPME	Ministerio de Educación Primaria y Masiva
MS	Ministerio de Salud
MTE	Ministerio de Trabajo y Empleo, Brasil

MTs	Instructores principales
MV	Maestros voluntarios
MYNSSC	Ministerio de los Jóvenes, Servicio Nacional, Deportes y Cultura
NAEP	Programa Nacional de Educación de Adultos
NAMCOL	Colegio Namibio de Aprendizaje Abierto
NCUNLD	Coalición Namibia para la Década de Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas
NESDB	Consejo Nacional de Economía y Desarrollo Social, Tailandia
NIEPA	Instituto Nacional de Planeación y Administración Educativa
NIJERA Shiki	Aprender Nosotros Mismos
NIOS	Instituto Nacional de Escolaridad Abierta
NLM	Misión Nacional de Alfabetización
NLPN	Programa Nacional de Alfabetización en Namibia
NPE	Política Nacional de Educación
NU	Naciones Unidas
NUFED	Desarrollo de la Educación
OCDE	Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económicos
ODM	Obejtivos de Desarrollo del Milenio
OEI	Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos
OIT	Organización Internacional de Trabajo
OMC	Organización Mundial de Comercio
OMS	Organización Mundial de la Salud
ONEC	Oficina de la Comisión Nacional de Educación
ONESQA	Oficina para las Normas Educativas y la Evaluación de la Calidad
ONFEC	Oficina de la Comisión de Educación No Formal
ONG	Organización No Gubernamental
OPS	Oficina del Secretario Permanente
OSC	Organización de la Sociedad Civil
PAD	Programa de Aprendizaje de Adultos
PAEBANIC	Programa de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Jóvenes y Adultos
PBS	Padhna Badhna Andolan, Campaña de Mejora de la Alfabetización

PEC	Programa de Educación Continua
PENEM	Programa de Extensión y Mejora de la Educación Básica Secundaria
PKSF	Fundación Palli Karma Shahayak (Fundación de Asistencia Laboral Rural)
PLAR	Evaluación y Reconocimiento de Aprendizaje Previo
PMI	Instituto Paulo Monte Negro
PNAD	Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios
PNDS	Pesquisa Nacional sobre Demografía e Saúde
PNUD	Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo
PPA	Programa de Post Alfabetización
PPAE	Política del Programa de Acción Educativa
PR	Persona de Recursos
PRA	Evaluación Rural de Participación
PROSHIKA	Proshika Shikkha Kaj (Capacitación, Educación y Trabajo)
PRRAC	Programa Regional de Reconstrucción para América Central
RAAAB	Red de Apoyo para la Acción de Alfabetización en Brasil
RAP	Reconocimiento de Aprendizaje Previo
RFLP	Proyecto de Alfabetización Funcional para Agricultores
RSA	República de Sudáfrica
SADSE	Desarrollo de Habilidades de Adultos para el Autoempleo
SANLI	Iniciativa de Alfabetización Nacional de Sudáfrica
SAQA	Agencia de Calificaciones de Sudáfrica
SASA	Sistema Automatizado de Seguimiento y Acreditación, México
SECAD	Secretaría de Educación Continua, Alfabetización y Diversidad
SEP	Secretaría de Educación Pública, México
SETA	Agencia del Sector Educación y Capacitación
SIMAC	Sistema de Mejora de Recursos Humanos y Adaptación Curricular
SLMA	Agencia Estatal de la Misión de Alfabetización
SNE	Sistema Nacional de Educación
SRC	Centro Estatal de Recursos
SSC	Certificado de Escolaridad Secundaria
TIC	Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación

TLC	Campaña de Alfabetización Total
TLCAN	Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte
UE	Unión Europea
UEP	Universalización de la Educación Primaria
UFMG	Universidad Federal de Minas Gerais
UIL	Instituto de la UNESCO para el Aprendizaje a lo Largo de la Vida
UIS	Instituto de Estadística de la UNESCO, Montreal
UNAM	Universidad de Namibia
UNDIME	Unión Nacional de Dirigentes Municipales de Educación
UNESA	Estácio de Sá University Brazil
UNESCO	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura
UNEVOC	Centro Internacional de la UNESCO para la Enseñanza y la Formación Técnica y Profesional
UNGEI	Iniciativa de Educación de Niñas de la ONU
UNICEF	Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia
UNILIT	Estudiantes Universitarios por la Alfabetización
UNISA	Universidad de Sudáfrica
UNLD	Década de la Alfabetización de las Naciones Unidas
URNG	Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Gutemalteca
USAID	Organismo de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional
YPSA	Poder Joven en Acción Social
ZSS	Zilla Sakshratha Samiti (Centro de Alfabetización de Distrito)

Alfabetización, conocimiento y desarrollo.

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