



In partnership with

PAMOJA

and

PAALAE

AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

September 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
FOREWORD	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	4
ACRONYMS	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6-7
1.0 Preamble	8
2.0 Policy Context	8-9
3.0 Gaps in implementation	10
4.0 Civil Society and NGOs Contribution	10
4.1 Programmes Contribution	11 to 12
4.2 Priority Areas	12
4.3 Civil Society Programme Success and Achievements	12
4.4 Civil Society Programme Failure	12
4.5 Challenges : Old and New	12-13
4.6 Partnership and Funding	13-14
5.0 New Direction	14-16
6.0 Summary	16
7.0 Recommendations	17-19
ANNEXES	
- References	20
- Attendance list of the Dakar Regional Workshop (July, 2003)	21-22

FOREWORD

Background and process

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) was held in 1997 in Hamburg. The meeting ended with recommendations to Governments, international partners and civil society organisations and a pledge to implement life-long learning development policies in the field of education. These recommendations are set out in two important policy papers entitled respectively "The Hamburg Statement" and "The Agenda for the Future".

Five years after Hamburg, the international community decides to carry out a mid-term assessment of the progress made by the different actors above-named in this field which has been made more relevant by the Dakar World Forum on Education for All held in 2000 and in particular the Dakar Framework of Action.

This mid-term review was an opportunity for the stakeholders to assess their commitments, the effectiveness of the monitoring mechanism, and to share national, regional and international initiatives of the actors in the field.

The NGOs Collective Consultation (NGOCC) decided at the Coordinating Group meeting on April 2003 in Paris that this thematic mechanism of UNESCO and the Civil society contributes efficiently to this mid-term review.

The regional nature of this contribution led the NGOCC to rely on the NGOCC regional focal point in Africa, ANCEFA to organise and coordinate this activity in conjunction with the two biggest African civil society networks operating in the field of adult and youth education: the Pan African Association for Literacy and Adult Education and (PAALAE) and PAMOJA the REFLECT network in Africa.

PAALAE coordinated the drafting of the shadow report in four African countries (Senegal, Mozambique, Zambia and South Africa) and PAMOJA is coordinating the activities of the national and international NGOs which use the REFLECT method as far as adult education is concerned, in particular with women and marginalized groups.

The regional consultation in Africa has been organised through diverse approaches:

- a questionnaire on this thematic issue sent to all ANCEFA/PAALAE/PAMOJA members and all NGOCC members in the region
- ANCEFA and UNESCO set up an online forum on adult and youth education and learning in collaboration with NGO's and CSO's working in this field in Africa
- a regional workshop led by a regional drafting team organised, supported by UNESCO contact team, UNESCO BREDIA and the UNESCO Institute of Hamburg. This workshop gathered selected African civil society adult and youth education activists and specialists in UNESCO BREDIA on July 2003.

ANCEFA coordinating committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this document is an important landmark in the process of setting up a framework for assessing progress towards the achievement of the targets and commitments made in Hamburg 1997 at the eight International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V).

The assessment derives information from a wide range of sources and processes and the authors would like to acknowledge all the researchers, commentators and writers whose work has contributed to the assessment process.

Acknowledgements need to go to the drafting team – **Gorgui Sow** (ANCEFA Regional Coordinator, Senegal); **Jennifer Chiwela** (People's Action Forum, Coordinator/drafting team moderator, ZANEC, Zambia); **Buuba DIOP** (Vice President of ICAE, President of CONGAD Senegal); **Juliana Adu Gyamfi** (PAMOJA Africa Reflect Coordinator, ActionAid Ghana), **Lamine Kane** (Senior Consultant in non formal education sector Coordinator of PAALAE, Senegal); **Samual Salifu Mogre** (Coordinator of NFE in Ghana); **Serigne Mass Ndaw** (PAALAE focal point in the Gambia); **Tarno Balla** (PAALAE focal point in Niger); **Mohamed Cheik Diarra** (PAMOJA francophone Africa Reflect Coordinator, Mali); **Pr Cheikh Saad Bou Kamara** Education and Human right Senior Consultant, Mauritania); **Macisse LO** (EFA national coalition board member, Senegal).

Civil Society would also like to acknowledge the support and encouragement from UNESCO, especially the Director of BREDa **Mr. Armoogum Parsuramen**, the Director of UNESCO Institute of Education in Hamburg **Mr Adama Ouane**. Within UNESCO, our special thanks go to **Bettina Boshynek, Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo, Susanne Shnuttgen, Claire Mollard, Eva Iversen, Benoit Sossou, Martina Simeti** and all the other staff who facilitated and assisted the drafting committee during their session in Dakar and beyond, all civil society representatives who participated in the ANCEFA/UNESCO on line forum on adult and youth education and learning.

In producing this document, the authors have consulted widely. However, the final views expressed here are those of the authors.

Gorgui SOW

**ANCEFA Regional Coordinator,
on behalf of the drafting committee**

LIST OF ACRONYMS

1. ANCEFA - African Network Campaign on Education for All
2. PAMOJA - Kiswahili word meaning coalition
3. CONGAD - Conseil des ONG d'appui au développement (NGO umbrella organisation in Senegal)
4. CCNGO - Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organisations
5. CONFINTEA - International Conference on Adult Education
6. CSOs - Civil Society Organisations
7. EFA - Education for All
8. GTZ - German Agency for Technical Cooperation
9. HIV/AIDS - Human Immuno Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
10. ICAE - International Council for Adult Education
11. IT - Information Technology
12. IIZ/DVV - Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association
13. MDGs - Millennium Development Goals
14. NEPAD - New Partnership for Africa's Development
15. NFE - Non-Formal Education
16. NGOs - Non-Governmental Organisations
17. PAALAE - Pan-African Association for Literacy and Adult Education
18. PRA - Participatory Rural Appraisal
19. PRSPs - Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
20. REFLECT - REgenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
21. UNDL - United Nations Literacy Decade
22. UNESCO - United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONFINTEA V, which was held in Hamburg in 1997, was a landmark as regards the national commitments to literacy and adult learning, and the definition of an agenda for adult education to provide policy makers, planners and implementers with a direction.

Civil Society welcomes the call for the CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review to not only assess the abidance by the commitments made in Hamburg – to implement the Agenda for the future - but also to create new alliances in literacy and adult learning and to seek a new direction for enhanced enthusiasm and strategies for adult education. Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), also welcome the opportunity to participate in the review process.

Civil Society acknowledges and supports the United Nations Decade of Literacy under the UN Resolution 56/116, with its new vision on literacy, and the fact that it runs through the education of children to that of adults. However, Civil Society is more than concerned that rather than going forward, Africa's social and economic situation seems to be worsening. Equally worrying is the fact that in spite of firm commitments made at the close of the 5th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V), almost no progress has been made as regards the provision of desirable adult education programmes. The status remains low; most African countries lack policy or other legal frameworks; programmes and approaches lack creativity or innovation; and for some, budgets remain negligible.

Although a few countries are doing well in developing new programmes, and involving CSOs, implementation of policies and programmes by many governments still shows glaring gaps which in turn indicate a leadership vacuum, and lack of political will.

Civil Society contribution to youth and adult education has been considerable - be it in an uncoordinated manner, and not on so large a scale. This, notwithstanding, most governments have relied on NGOs and CSOs to implement literacy and adult learning programmes. A major contribution has been in literacy for empowerment. The REFLECT approach, for instance, facilitates people's critical analysis of their own environment for the improvement of their livelihoods. The thrust of the approach is to place empowerment at the heart of sustainable and equitable development.

Civil Society contribution has enjoyed successes, suffered failure and faced a number of challenges. Its ability to reach the grassroots and to tailor programmes according to local needs has added value and relevance to its contribution. However, lack of coordination of programme focus, content and coverage among NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) makes it difficult to measure the impact of their interventions. Challenges also abound which impinge on effective delivery. These include inability to gather and document qualitative data; the slow process of empowerment which delays the integration of the recipients' own input into policy formulation; fragile relationships, even lack of relationships between some Governments and CSOs; inadequate involvement or even lack of involvement of CSOs in government processes for the implementation of various frameworks of action such as Education for All (EFA) and CONFINTEA V, and generally, the lack of appreciation of the role of literacy and adult education in children's learning and national development.

HIV/AIDS and unacceptable levels of poverty place further strain on programme capacity and potential. Effective partnerships and more funding for literacy and adult education are critical if the field is to be addressed meaningfully.

New directions include the need to move from literacy to literacies in order to address real issues of human development, through among other things, creating appropriate linkages between the formal and non-formal education; between the different programmes such as EFA, CONFINTEA, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Poverty Reduction Strategic Papers (PRSPs).

Civil Society hopes that the Mid-term review will provide the necessary impetus and vigour for countries, governments, Civil Society, international partners and all other stakeholders to reiterate their pledge and to move from rhetoric to action.

1.0 PREAMBLE

The challenges of development and the call to respond urgently to social, economic, political and other human needs drew the attention of world leaders throughout the 1990s. Major international conferences were held under the aegis of the United Nations to provide frameworks to tackle global issues that stood in the way of creating a world that was safe to live in and to provide decent livelihoods for all citizens.

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V), held in Hamburg, Germany in July 1997, under the direction of UNESCO and its partners, was one such landmark meeting for those working in literacy and adult education. More than 150 countries were represented and about 2,000 participants dedicated time to discussions that affirmed adult education and learning as the key to the 21st century.

CONFINTEA V was characterised by two major aspects: the acknowledgement of Adult Education's inevitable new direction and the form it needed to take in the future; and secondly, the welcome involvement of Non Governmental Organisations in all aspects of the planning and conduct of the conference.

According to participants, "Hamburg demonstrated the effectiveness of the collaboration between governments and the private sector in matters of mutual interest and thereby set a precedent for future action."⁽¹⁾

Box 1

Objectives of CONFINTEA V

- *To acknowledge the critical importance of adult learning*
- *To forge worldwide commitments to the right to learn of adults*
- *To exchange experience on current provision and needed improvements*
- *To recommend future policy and priorities and to adopt a Declaration on Adult Learning and the Agenda for the Future.*
- *To promote international cooperation*

In acknowledging the important role that the education of adults plays in the achievement of quality education for the young and the attainment of overall development goals, it was agreed that the United Nations Literacy Decade will provide both a platform and an impetus for achieving the six goals of Education for All ⁽²⁾. In effect, literacy was espoused as the common thread running through all the EFA goals. As all stakeholders focus on the assessment of the first six-year period after CONFINTEA, we acknowledge and applaud the efforts made by those few African countries which have struggled, against all odds, to meet the commitments made at CONFINTEA.

(1) Quoted from Foreword, p.5, of Adult Education and Development's Report on CONFINTEA V, By Heribert Hinzen and Michael Samlowski

(2) United Nations Literacy Decade, Education for All, International Plan of Action, p.3

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

No government on the African continent can be said not to believe in the Dakar goals. The obvious reason is the African reality with unacceptable low levels of education among the continent's population. Three years ago, Africa took a stand with the rest of the world to work towards achieving the goals of Dakar, and in that respect, most African countries have so far made an effort to put in place action plans and programmes that seek to address access and participation, learning needs of youth and adults, improvement of literacy levels by fifty per cent, gender equality and improvement of all aspects of quality education.

The CONFINTEA V Mid-Term Review could not have been carried out at a better time in helping to shape the new direction and articulate the new vision of youth and adult learning. It is a shame nonetheless that while most African countries are eager to improve education and to grant it a central role in sustainable development, political instability, widespread conflict and stability, the unacceptable levels of poverty, the abuse of human rights, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the burden of debt servicing – thwart their efforts. Furthermore, Africa suffers from a catastrophic brain drain, massive ignorance, destructive governance, dismally weak infrastructure and environmental degradation. Gender imbalances continue unabated; inadequate and ineffective laws remain – leaving children, particularly girls, open to child labour, sexual abuse and trafficking.

Despite the almost universal and well established democracies that swept through the continent at the beginning of the nineties, and despite the new “crop” of leadership paying lip-service to elevating the continent out of the doldrums and away from dictatorships, the situation in Africa is worsening. Rhetoric reigns, and the dependency syndrome continues with very little, or no will to devise or even begin to develop local capacities for local solutions. This highlights the urgent need for African governments to focus on rebuilding the continent through appropriate youth and adult education policies and programmes, and by promoting African languages for foundational learning and coupling this with appropriate curricula and resources. This would, no doubt, support the assertion that “achievement of modernisation, self-sustaining economy, national integration and political development will be the work of men and women who are willing to accept and initiate change and innovations; who have acquired new technical skills and new attitudes; who participate in the decision-making process, who have been socialised not only by the family and the local community, but their education so that they see themselves as national citizens who have problem solving and material ways of thinking” ⁽³⁾. Even industrialised countries acknowledge the need to empower and to give adults a chance to act autonomously through adult education. African adults are the linchpin as far as development and the fight against poverty are concerned, except that their enthusiasm and efforts are impeded by a low level of knowledge and ability to resolve the problems facing them and their countries.

(3) Excerpt from the Lockwood Report (1965) in which a Commission inquired the desirability of setting up, Specifically, the department of education for adults at the University of Zambia

The policy context in Sub-Saharan Africa (where information is available) is such that only a few countries like Niger, the Gambia, South Africa, Namibia, Ghana, Mali and Senegal have well articulated national policies and programmes for youth and adults. In most cases, too, where policies exist, only a few have developed the said policies and programmes with the involvement of other stakeholders. Consequently, other actors operate in a void oblivious of any existing policies due to their not being well shared or even publicised. They remain securely bound in Government filing cabinets. The impression created is that no one from the outside public service might have access to whatever information is housed in government offices.

3.0 Gaps in implementation

Even in countries such as the Gambia, South Africa, Namibia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Zambia (only for Youth in Zambia) where such policies exist a number of gaps can still be noted between policies and actual implementation. In some countries, policies find their exit with the governments that implemented them necessitating new developments as new governments come into power – creating inconsistencies and a break in continuity and hampering progress.

From local, through national to international levels, no linkages can be exemplified between the formal and non-formal education. The two systems move in a parallel manner, ignoring lessons that could be learned to fill gaps in terms of relevant curriculum, knowledge, skills, values and approaches, and the necessary professional advancement of programme implementers or adult educators who direct learning in either setting.

Generally speaking, it is difficult to measure success or failure even where policies exist, if understanding of adult education is unclear and levels of achievement are not determined. The broad trend seems to be to enable out-of-school learners to read and to write at the most basic level, using a trade or livelihood skill as “bait” for them to stay. Very few countries can boast of post literacy programmes that raise post basic literacy learners to higher levels.

African governments are often so distracted by debt and political issues that they fail to realise that solutions lie, largely, in the drastic reduction of the numbers of the uneducated and unskilled. It may even appear, to some, to be politically expedient to keep the majority poor and uneducated where they are- ignorant, unquestioning and undemanding. It is, however, hardly realised that this is counterproductive in terms of sustainable development because each country depends on the contribution of that local critical mass which seeks first, to understand itself, and then to appreciate and promote its culture, African languages and traditions, for meaningful development. External influence (that is always in abundance), is only positive when it is used to enrich the local knowledge, culture and value systems and should therefore show respect for traditions and culture.

One of the major gaps in the implementation of policies is inadequate linkage by African university researchers to the realities of adult literacy needs. Their research tends to remain purely academic and theoretical and rarely contributes to the enhancement of adult learning. The theoretical publications emanating from universities contribute only to the publication lists of ivory tower academics.

4.0 CIVIL SOCIETY AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS' CONTRIBUTION TO YOUTH AND ADULT LEARNING

Youth and adult education are fields in which non-governmental and civil society organisations (including religious institutions) have, for a long time, played a major role. Various actors may have embarked on adult learning, particularly literacy, for various reasons but they have all struggled to keep programmes going – even in the absence of national policies or lagging behind national policies. For many years, many African governments have relied on NGOs and CSOs for the implementation of youth and adult education programmes.

4.1 Programme Contribution

It needs to be pointed out further that youth and adult education programmes, activities and approaches vary according to the choices made by programme developers. For some, adult education implies mainly literacy and numeracy. For others, it is an opportunity to address various community challenges that are closely associated with poverty such as lack of formal basic education, poor health, ignorance, food insecurity and the poor management of the environment. Many NGOs and Civil Society Organizations, therefore, use functional literacy approaches which address these needs: linking literacy programmes to learners' vocations and rights. That said, the realities of adult education practice, as pointed out by a number of practitioners, have changed faster than even the policies which should give them direction. In spite of the many challenges the Civil Society is facing, realistic efforts have been, and continue to be made to study and understand the local needs, concerns and community dynamics in order to implement relevant and more sustainable programme content and approaches that are more inclusive and focused.

This is very much in line with what was believed to be the ideology of CONFINTEA V by, especially the Non-Governmental Organisation sector, because ultimately, the final outcome of the Conference expressed in the Hamburg Declaration and The Agenda for the Future was a "strong commitment to the social justice perspective. 'The ultimate goal should be the creation of a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being' ". From Africa's perspective, therefore, the expressed commitment reinforced the potential and critical role of adult education in addressing the current pressing problems which include globalisation, structural adjustments, poverty, unemployment, political instability, social exclusion and environmental degradation.

Cases in point are many fairly successful activities carried out in various countries by PAMOJA Africa, a regional network which practises and promotes the Regenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques. In line with several other arguments put forward previously, PAMOJA sees the need to go beyond the quantitative assessment of the rather simplified definition of literacy as "the ability to read and write and do simple calculation" to the qualitative realm where empowerment of the individual and the community as a whole leads to mobilisation and social change. Although with challenges, this approach is renowned for its potential to generate interest among participants in the learning process, as it starts by focusing on the learners' current and local concerns.

In post war countries, where the social fabric has been destroyed by war, participatory adult learning approaches being used successfully to build peace. and to provide learners with civic education raising their awareness of their rights and responsibilities. Participatory programmes which deal with the empowerment of rural communities are valuable in establishing human rights and gender awareness and in enhancing income generating skills needed to fight poverty. Such programmes can mobilise communities to contribute to sustainable development. The main components of the contributions to youth and adult learning programmes through civil society interventions have by and large concerned themselves with:

- Providing structured participatory learning processes, which avoids labelling learners as ignorant people who must be directed in everything.
- Facilitating people's critical analysis of their own environment leading to actions which improve their livelihoods.
- Placing empowerment at the heart of sustainable and equitable development

- Creating democratic spaces; drawing up and interpreting locally generated learning materials which enable learners/people to carry out their own multi-dimensional analysis of local and global realities.
- Helping challenge dominant development paradigms and redefining power relationships – both in public and private spheres
- Facilitating recognition and encouragement of use of existing local knowledge-considering that local people are knowledgeable in their environment.
- Promoting and ensuring use of localised learning materials which concern issues of value and relevance to participants, rather than a top down agenda by “experts”
- Demonstrating that participants can meaningfully participate in the education policy formulation process.
- Promoting a rights based approach to learning.

4.2 Priority Areas

Education has often been cited as the most powerful tool for the eradication of poverty. Action, however, demonstrates anything but giving due regard to education – let alone adult and youth education. Priority areas for civil society's contribution to youth and adult education have been in the realm of programme content and approaches combined with a focus on marginalized and hard to reach who will not readily enlist for learning but who have to be actively recruited. The content and approaches employed recognised that that acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes are not an end in themselves but are rather a means to an end – the impact of their use in changing learners or participants' livelihoods.

4.3 Civil Society Programme Success and Achievements

It is widely acknowledged that civil society is able to not only reach the grassroots but also to effectively identify their needs through baseline studies. This has added value and relevance to their programmes. CSO programmes have also effectively achieve linkages between formal and non-formal education due to targeting the hard-to-reach: children, youth and adults.

4.4 Civil Society Programme Failure

The vacuum created in many African countries by lack of policy in youth and adult education has induced a “free for all” arena for various actors. Hence, there is lack of accountability among several NGOs and civil society in the “what” and “how” of their programmes. As such, civil society organisations lack self-regulatory mechanisms and measurable instruments for coordination. In the process, learners fall prey to unfocused programme targets.

A further failure has been inadequate research in the field of Literacy and Adult Education upon which actors need to base arguments and advocacy for both improved learning and progressive service.

4.5 *Challenges: Old and New*

More often than not, youth and adult education is said to receive the least attention. One of CSOs oldest challenges is the ability to obtain sufficient resources to effectively sustainable their adult education programmes. Consequently learning material supply is poor; facilitator/instructor remuneration and further training are almost non-existent and geographical coverage is small.

Other challenges include:

- Inability to gather and document qualitative data to provide a more accurate adult and youth education status, and indeed to capture any achievements scored.
- Inability to raise stronger and more voices from poor parents and children on their plight to feed into the policy formulation process in order for governments to address socio-economic and political issues more appropriately.
- The slow learning mastery process which inhibits participants from playing their role in decision making.
- The fragile relationship between governments and civil society which militates against complementary efforts for adult education and respect for each other for the achievement of education for all.
- Lack of coordination of the work of CSOs and various government ministries in the field by government machinery.
- Inadequate or even lack of involvement of CSOs in government processes for the implementation of EFA and CONFINTEA.
- Lack of appreciation by major stakeholders of the role adult education plays in effective and quality children's education.
- Lack of NGOs capacities in resource management, utilization of IT, communication strategies, networking, advocacy and lobbying skills, and
- Lack of capacity in policy analysis.

Enhanced challenges continue to be a threat to any efforts to develop and sustain crucial youth and adult education programmes. HIV/AIDS, Human Rights, Gender, rising levels of poverty, apathy and ignorance negate influence from outside the continent and the inability to identify and utilise any positive influence, negates whatever little goodwill may be there. All these are challenges that youth and adult education does not need. Civil society and all development agencies, also need to seriously address the role which the African culture can positively play in changing negative attitudes and practices; in developing a healthier stance in self respect, dignity and self-reliance; and in rediscovering the African identity for relevant and sustainable development.

CSOs' other big challenge has been to lobby and advocate much more collectively and strongly for the place of youth and adult education in each country's process of development. Their voice has so far been weak and fragmented.

4.6 Partnership and Funding

Through its willingness to fill in gaps where governments have lacked the capacity to do so, CSOs have offered effective partnership to implementing youth and adult education where, otherwise, there would have been nothing. As a matter of fact, albeit to a small extent, funding has been secured and used for target groups that were deprived of any other access. Major lessons drawn

are linked to the obviously critical need for collaboration, cooperation and participation for the benefit of marginalized people.

5.0 NEW DIRECTION

A flurry of workshops and seminars in various fields were held towards the end of the 1990s as if all to acknowledge that something needed urgent attention because the world stood at the threshold of the 21st century. The signals coming through implied that new or enhanced skills, knowledge, practices and attitudes were essential for one to be adequately equipped to survive the rapid changes that were gripping our globe.

In his paper, "Global challenges at the beginning of the 21st century", for the Adult Education and Development Half Yearly Journal, Paul Kennedy gives a picturesque description of the human communities living on the globe. He provides a vivid situation analysis of the socio – economic state of the world with the minority (approximately 16%) living lavishly, and about half of the globe's population living in absolute poverty and squalor. The key dimensions of CONFINTEA V draw the world's attention to desirable action for the achievement of social justice and well being of all. This calls for a major shift in the perception of education in general and youth and adult education in particular.

Africa, in particular, cannot afford to wait another 20 –30 years to raise a better educated and skilled generation to move the continent forward. As participants in a UNESCO Seminar in Quebec City said in the Year 2000, there is an urgent need to empower adults today. Adults are in a position to utilise immediately the knowledge, and skills received in a work-related situation or to improve any aspect of their livelihood. The fight against poverty can only have an impact if all marginalized people are empowered enough to act independently.

If Africa and the world are to take a leap forward there is need to create (where they do not exist) linkages between the local, national and international levels in order to achieve the desired impact from shared lessons and experiences. In some countries like Ghana, governments have sponsored literacy and non-formal programmes for adults, implemented in multiple languages to try to reach the millions of adults who are excluded from meaningful engagement with wider society due to their lack of literacy skills.

It is therefore necessary that (where there is political will) policies are developed that are realistic and that respond to people's needs. The Civil society is convinced that where national governments accommodate the concerns, needs and interests of the communities in education planning and management, a strong demand for education and improved rates of enrolment as well as good performance are achieved.

Other important linkages are between formal and non-formal education. Traditionally, the two systems have been seen as totally separate. For meaningful and relevant education, education planners need to determine and appreciate ways in which the two - formal and non-formal education - can benefit from each other, in terms of flexibility, innovation and diversity.

A number of worthy declarations, commitments and frameworks for action have been presented in the last decade for the purpose of addressing ills affecting, particularly, the developing world. These initiatives and proposals can be drawn from our CONFINTEA V, EFA, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), New Partnership For Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Poverty

Reduction Strategic Papers (PRSPs). An impression created, almost at the launch of each of them seems to be that the latest is the new solution to all problems. Civil society believes that the way forward lies in creating the necessary linkages between all the said declarations and commitments rather than the fragmented treatment of the various frameworks.

Gender, and particularly women's education and empowerment – an old and over- debated issue still remains an uncompleted agenda. It has been turned over on all its sides in order to identify which angle might make the better impression and impact. Civil society believes that the time has come to stop dealing with gender issues and above all girls' and women's education in an academic manner. According to by current statistics, it is common knowledge that in 2000, 63 % of the illiterates in Africa were women from the age of 15 ; and the illiteracy rate for men was 29.3 %, while that of women was 48 %.

If Africa is to move forward and to realistically fight poverty in its broadest sense, more resolved efforts need to be made to achieve women's basic education needs. First of all, it is a moral obligation because education is a human right. Secondly, it makes social and economic sense in terms of improved family health, welfare and livelihoods. Thirdly, the restoration of African identity and dignity; the transmission of authentic cultural values which blend more positively with modern thinking, will be better effected with the involvement in the process, of women whose basic learning needs are met.

In most African countries the youth represent up to 45% of the national population, and yet the learning needs of the majority of them are hardly met. Their energies and potential remain untapped, undeveloped and there are not even plans for the future. Whatever kind of leadership the world considers for the future becomes difficult to comprehend, if the adult population just looks on while the out-of-school youth population continues to grow in this alarming manner. Unemployment, drug addiction, alcoholism, street violence, et cetera, are all real.

The new direction strategies need to critically assess education systems that are failing youths so miserably. The renewed vision of literacy, as outlined in the UN Literacy Decade Plan of Action, is clearly critical. Both adults and young people need to learn new literacies and be given opportunities to develop their potential and ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use information in different relevant ways. (4) In this connection, it is absolutely essential for African curricula to be made relevant, and for the content, teaching/learning materials, and generally, approaches to solutions to be localised. The kind of education provided should also address the global economic order to help learners fit into a more and more globalised economy. This could go hand in hand with lobbying developed countries and advocating for fairer trading and marketing systems. The world will not wait for Africa. Social Forums, if encouraged, would be good places or arenas for African countries to give exposure to their nationals and to contribute to both national and global systems.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic – seriously incapacitating humanity in every way, is determined to disrupt every aspect of human endeavour. It needs to be dealt with in a more drastic, decisive and consistent manner.

(4) United Nations Literacy Decade, Education for All. International Plan of Action ED-02/MINEDAF/REF/7

The need for strengthened and consistent partnerships for adult and youth education and literacy cannot be over emphasised. Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments suggests that the world is meeting this commitment together.

It is a well-known fact that youth and adult education have remained at the periphery of national education systems and budgets. Very few countries like The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Senegal can boast of budget increases in the last 2 or 3 years for adult education, although it has not been possible for other key stakeholders to validate the said increases or even percentages by which they rose.

Having acknowledged the important role that adult education and literacy play in the reduction of poverty, it follows that governments and International Development Partners (IDPs) should recommit themselves to funding, sufficiently, literacy programmes, training of teachers/facilitators, and innovative use of available technologies.

The setting up of international alliances for EFA would boost funding for countries lagging behind. Such an example is what was once proposed by participants in the Sofia Conference on Adult Education (November 2002) – called the “Europe – Africa EFA partnership Initiative.” The idea to financially help African countries whose rate of progress, towards halving illiteracy by 2015, was in serious jeopardy was proposed. Beyond the funding, such alliances would benefit immensely from shared lessons and experiences, and would provide a platform for other creative initiatives such as cultural exchanges to help build global peace and understanding among diverse nations.

6 SUMMARY

CONFINTEA V, held in Hamburg, Germany in 1997, gave hope to adult learners and those who plan and organise adult learning. Although the conference acknowledged the importance of adult learning; although the conference managed to forge worldwide commitments to the right to learn of adults; although the conference succeeded in providing a forum for the exchange of experience on provision and required improvement; although, and most important, the Conference recommended future policies and priorities adopted a Declaration on Adult Learning, and an Agenda for the future, and, last but not least, actively promoted international cooperation, not much happened in the ensuing 6 years. While Civil Society has done its best in service delivery, it is greatly saddening that Adult Education still remains at the bottom of the list of African countries’ priorities – many still do not have well articulated policies in place; the majority of governments’ programmes have not been revised, curricula remain irrelevant; teachers/instructors are neither well trained nor well remunerated; learning materials are still patchy; and some methodologies used, unsuitable for adult learning.

It is hoped that the CONFINTEA mid-term review will rekindle commitments made in Hamburg and give direction to the new vision of adult learning – shifting from literacy to literacies. If poverty is to be tackled seriously; if African countries are truly to claim social and economic progress in the 21st Century, then adult learning has to be a critical part of well functioning African systems of education. Partnerships in funding need to be strengthened in order to raise the quality of relevant adult learning. UNESCO and its partners need to demonstrate a stronger conviction in the importance of adult education and it also needs to strengthen its own leadership in raising the profile of adult learning.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

We hereby make the following recommendations necessary to guiding the deliberations and implementations of the African continent. We begin with general recommendations and follow these with recommendations made specifically for government, civil society and then finally for the donor community.

7.1 General recommendations

We recommend that:

- 7.1.1 The region should undertake a systematic all African drive to focus on adult learning within the NEPAD initiative. This should be done in collaboration with ADEA, UNESCO Breda, and with the support of UIE in order to launch a process for the realisation of the objectives of the UN Literacy decade. Resources for this purpose should be channelled to all individual member countries (including their civil society organisations)
- 7.1.2 Adult learning programmes be used as a vehicle for enhancing the African Renaissance processes for the social and economic progress of the African people
- 7.1.3 In order to contribute to political stability in our respective countries, that adult learning programmes should address conflict prevention and the building of national and cross national peace.
- 7.1.4 Quality indicators should be developed and harmonised within countries in order to monitor the implementation of adult learning programmes.
- 7.1.5 Access to adult learning programmes for minority groups be enhanced through the use of learners' own languages, through active attempts to reach the most hard-to-reach and by ensuring that programmes are inclusive to learners with special needs.
- 7.1.6 Adult Learning programme should act as forums for information sharing, dissemination and the constructive critique of national policies.
- 7.1.7 Countries should promote the establishment of databases for credible statistics
- 7.1.8 Best practice "home-grown" approaches should be documented and disseminated so as to share experiences

7.2 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

- 7.2.1 Adult Learning programme activities, as a priority, should focus on HIV/AIDS infected and affected, prisoners, informal sector and learners with special needs. Programmes should address issues of gender (both women and men) poverty, the youth, Human Rights, health and HIV/AIDS and the environment
- 7.2.2 Civil society capacity should be strengthened in order to engage in policy formulation, implementation and the monitoring of adult education programmes.

- 7.2.3 In order to facilitate a better self-image and the development of the African identity, Adult learning programmes should encourage an understanding of, and the positive development of the African culture.
- 7.2.4 Through Adult Education programmes, CSOs should sensitise communities to the importance of education as a human right and as a prerequisite for development. It should strengthen institutions' capacity building to meet challenges, to professionally manage Adult Education programmes, as well as to advocate for participatory development of the official policy, curriculum and its reform.
- 7.2.5 CSOs should focus on training for trainers and peer educators
- 7.2.6 CSOs should enhance south-to-south exchange in order to share valuable best practice, home-grown experiences

7.3 GOVERNMENTS

- 7.3.1 Governments should play a key role in catalysing policy formulation and other legal frameworks in order to validate the importance of literacy and adult education for quality and quantum development in their countries.
- 7.3.2 Governments, as key policy makers, should be more open to forming alliances with NGOs/CSOs in order to enrich each other's inputs through shared experiences, approaches and innovations, in order to effectively address poverty, ignorance and other ills.
- 7.3.3 Governments should institute curriculum development and reform in literacy and adult education programmes and initiate in a participatory manner, the development of qualitative indicators for effective programme identification, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- 7.3.4 Governments should use literacy and adult learning to disseminate information on policies, governance, debt issues and any available support to avoid seclusion which leads to political instability and poor governance.
- 7.3.5 Governments should lead in creating linkages between CONFINTEA, EFA and MDG so that more holistic approaches can be identified to implement their strategies.
- 7.3.6 Governments should develop local approaches for solutions to address ignorance, poverty and all other emerging challenges.
- 7.3.7 Governments should seriously acknowledge the place of education in sustainable development, and subsequently encourage social forums in their countries in order to expose their nationals to various issues, and to provide a platform for them to contribute to solutions on issues that affect them.
- 7.3.8 Governments should help set up partnerships with other stakeholders, including the private sector, (in literacy and adult education), and increase their own budgets, as well as seek funding for their programmes.

7.3.9 Governments should make EFA follow-up a regular feature at both national and regional levels.

7.3.10 Governments should ensure that policies are supported by trained educators and learner support materials

7.4 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

7.4.1 International partners should support more coherent, collaborative and inclusive planning processes among stakeholders in terms of development and strengthening of literacy and adult learning programmes in given countries.

7.4.2 International partners should support, materially and financially, action plans which balance formal and non formal education, and facilitate equitable resource distribution between the six EFA goals

7.4.3 International partners should match their pronounced readiness to fund credible education plans with cancelling debts of debtor countries to pave the way for building national capacities to address issues such as poverty, ignorance and political instability which militate against sustainable development.

7.4.5 International Partners should encourage and support regular follow-ups of EFA and NEPAD to ensure abidance by commitments.

ANNEX 1

REFERENCES

1. IIZ / DVV, Adult Education and Development Journal, Vols. 49(1997), 54(2000), 55(2000), 58(2002), 59(2002)
2. Kelly, M.J., Planning Education in a context of HIV/AIDS, UNESCO/IIEP, Paris(2000)
3. UNESCO/BREDA, Report on the State of Education in Africa,(1999)
4. UNESCO, EFA Planning Guide, Southeast and East Asia: Follow up to the World Education Forum; UNESCO Principal regional office for Asia and the Pacific(2000)
5. UNESCO, The Challenge of Achieving EFA in Africa:, Civil Society Perspective and Positions to MINEDAF VIII, October 2002
6. UNESCO, The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments, World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, April 2000
7. UNESCO, United Nations Literacy Decade, Education for All: International Plan of Action, July 2002
8. World Bank, Basic Education and Livelihood and Opportunities for Literate and Semi-literate Young Adults, (2001)

ANNEX 2

Attendance List of the African Regional Workshop on CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review, 8-10 July 2003

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Mrs. Juliana | ADU - GYAMFI | PAMOJA, Action Aid Ghana
P.O. Box 19083 Accra, Ghana
Tel : 00 233 21 76 49 31/32
Mob : 0208184464
E-Mail : julianaa@actionaid-ghana.org |
| 2. Mrs Jennifer M | CHIWELA | People's Action Forum, P.O. Box 33709,
Lusaka, Zambia. Tel 260-1-236943
E-Mail : paf@zamnet.zm |
| 3. Mr. Tarno Balla | DIALLO | DDE (Démographie Développement
Environnement), B.P. 525, Niger
Tel: office - 73 49 41 / 73 42 48
Home - 73 55 03
Mob : 97 61 29
E-Mail : tarnaballa@yahoo.fr
fadalalpha@intnet.ne |
| 4. Mr Cheik Mouhamadou | DIARRA | PAMOJA, B.P. E1419, Bamako, Mali
Tel : 00 223 674 01 71 / 00 223 229 32 40
E-Mail : mdc@spider.toolnet.org |
| 5. Prof. Boubacar | DIOP | ICAE, CONGAD, B.P. 4109, Dakar
Tel : 00 824 41 16 / 00 824 44 13
E-Mail : congad@sentoo.sn
buubadiop@yahoo.com |
| 6. Prof. Cheikh Saad Bou | KAMARA | FDH, AMDH
Tel : 00 222 634 23 63 / 00 222 525 75 55
E-Mail : ckamara@caramail.com
Csbk10@hotmail.com |
| 7. Dr Lamine | KANE | PALAE, Dakar
Tel : 00 825 48 50
Mob : 00 684 03 84
E-Mail : kane_lamine@hotmail.com |
| 8. Mr Macissé | LO | Coalition EPT, s/c ANCEFA, B.P. 19180
Dakar, Sénégal
Fax : 00 221 824 32 15
E-Mail : gorbalsy@yahoo.fr |
| 9. Mr Samuel Salifu | MOGRE | PAMOJA, P.O. Box 954, Accra, Ghana
Tel : 024 606975 / 021 231664
E-Mail : samuelsalifoumogre@yahoo.com |
| 10. Mr Serign Mass | NDOW | EFA Network, Gambia college, Bukana
Campus, P.M.B. 144 Banjul, the Gambia
Tel : 00 220 48 33 90 / 00 220 37 36 98
00 220 79 34 57 |

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. Mr Gorgui | SOW | ANCEFA, P.O. Box 3007 Dakar Yoff,
Senegal
Tél : 00 221 824 22 44
Fax : 00 221 024 13 63
E-Mail : ancefa@sentoo.sn |
| 12. Mrs Martina | SIMETI | UNESCO Breda, 12 Av. L.S. Senghor, Dakar,
Senegal.
Tel : 00 221 849 23 23
E-Mail : m.simeti@unesco.org |
| 13. Mrs Carolyn Medel | ANOVUEVO | Feldbrunnenstr 58, 20148 Hamburg, Germany
Tel : (4940) 44804125
E-Mail : c.medel-anonuevo@unesco.org |
| 14. Mrs Emilie | ULLMANN | UNESCO Breda, 12 Av. L.S. Senghor, Dakar,
Senegal.
Tel : 00 221 849 23 23
E-Mail : e.ullmann@unesco.prg |
| 15. Mr Amadou Abdoul | SY | Tel : 00 221 825 48 56, Fax : 00 221 824 43 30
E-Mail : anafa@sentoo.sn |