

PQDIMCC: AWAR ?N (3  
 EEIJ;II  
 LITERACY AND THE MEDIA  
 N INTERNATIONAL collo-  
 ,. quium on literacy and the  
 t' media was held in Paris, May  
 16-17, 1989. Representatives from seven-  
 teen press agencies, television and radio  
 networks were in attendance. Delegates  
 from Japan, the USSR, the United States,  
 Great Britain, Australia, Nigeria, Sene-  
 gal, Canada, Pakistan, Brazil, India,  
 France, Mali and Kuwait discussed  
 media action and impact on literacy.  
 Jim Duffy, President of communi-  
 cations for Capital Cities/ABC, made the  
 following comment: "T he media are  
 playing a central role in the literacy  
 situation in our countries and can play a  
 still more central role. The media can be  
 a facilitator, a unifier or can bring aware-  
 ness of the scale and seriousness of the  
 problem. Perhaps most importantly the  
 media can join in a call for action."  
 In his opening address, Federico  
 Mayor, Unesco Executive Director,  
 referrrred to .the American linguist, M.  
 Fishman: "Mr. Fishman has made the  
 point that the introduction of writing  
 systems and the diffusion of literacy are  
 revolutionary, not narrowly technical  
 acts, and that their success or failure  
 Left: Jack Harr, Vice President; Omce of Communications, Fou nder and Project Director fo  
 r Project  
 Literacy U.S.A. (PLUS). Right: Vilionar Yegorou, Member of the Board-USSR State Televisio  
 n and  
 Radio.  
 revolutions of which they are a part:  
 revolutions in the consumption and  
 production of economic goods and in the  
 distribution of power and influence. It is,  
 I believe, in contributing to these revolu-  
 tionary acts that the media make their  
 most valuable and indispensable contri-  
 butions to literacy."  
 A copy of the final report can be  
 obtained from the ITFL Secretariat in  
 Toronto for \$5 (postage and handling).  
 depends upon the outcome of the wider  
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 Learners Speak Out Continued from page 1  
 What are yourfeelings about Inter-  
 national Literacy Year?  
 ' Ihave seen other International Years  
 and many of these are tea parties  
 where social liberals discuss the issue.  
 A lot of money is spent on meetings to  
 discuss the year and in the end nothing  
 is ever done to improve the situation.  
 In the Year of the Homeless, I never  
 met a homeless person who knew that



it was their year. I never met a homeless person who got housing as a result of that year. I am urging you not to do that. I have heard some comments such as give power and authority to the people. We can do better by exchanging our experiences. We can ask the learners about their interests and concerns so they can have input into ILY activities. You can be sure their concerns and agendas will be different from the organizers.

Learners Panel: Mr. Mbotze Bakari  
Mbiru, Mr. Mwanakombo Moyo, Mr.  
Saidi Limo, Ms. Mejumaa Bakari, Ms.  
Sita Bakari, Mr. Suleiman  
Mwaambwe, Ms. Kikoleba, Ms. Robin  
Silverman.

1990 0 INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR



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INTERNATIONAL CENTRE  
FOR LITERACY?

O WE NEED a centre that can  
D provide information on liter-  
acy research and evaluation to  
practitioners in different parts of the  
world? Would this fill a need which  
present organizations are unable to  
fulfill?

When the ITFL met in Berlin in May  
1988, the idea was put forward and  
support given to the suggestion that an  
international resource centre for liter-  
acy might be a useful ILY 1990 project.  
Four Nordic governments, Sweden,  
Norway, Denmark and Finland have  
funded a feasibility study to look into  
setting up such a centre.

The International Council for Adult  
Education has been asked to undertake  
the study and two consultants, Nelly  
Stromquist Of the University of South-  
ern California and Nicholas Kuhanga,  
former Vice-Chancellor of the Univer-  
sity of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania have  
been hired to undertake the study.  
Literacy specialists and potential  
users around the world are being asked  
for input. What should be the functions  
of such a centre? How best could it  
serve the information needs of the liter-  
acy movement? Where should it be  
located? How could new technologies  
best be used?

If you have views about such a centre  
please contact the International Coun-  
cil for Adult Education. The final re-  
port is expected by the end of December  
1989.

:NHMCC; \$TRQD8WMEE

'The Unesco Institute for Education (UIE) has re- :  
cently established an ttInformation EXChange Net'-  
workF cbncerning functional literacy in industriaL  
ized countries with the support and cooperation Of .  
Unesco; Paris

, 'Unescb Institute far Education", '  
Documentation Centre

V 'Feldbrunnenstrasse 58

Contributions ?

All comments, articles, opinions,  
poems, short stories and personal  
experiences, on the topic of literacy  
will in spire our future newsletters.

Send it to ITFL coordinating office  
in Toronto, Canada.

Send all correspondence to:

Darlene Owens

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1990 0 INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR



COMMONWEALTH  
INSTITUTE  
WORKSHOP

iiLiteracy:  
Questions  
of People,  
. Language  
and Powerii  
, Commonwealth  
Institute,  
London UK.

A-pril6-7 1989

For more information contact:

Commonwealth Institute  
Kensington High St.  
W8 6NQ London, UK  
Tel: 01 603 4535

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EMPOWERING DIMENSION

HE MOST profound, far-  
OF LITERACY

reaching and significant im-  
T pact of literacy on peoples  
lives is its empowering potential. To be  
literate is to become liberated from the  
constraints of dependency. To be liter-  
ate is to gain a voice and to participate  
meaningfully and assertively in deci-  
sions that affect peoples lives. To be  
literate is to gain self-confidence and to  
become self-assertive. To be literate is  
to become politically conscious and  
critically aware, and to demystify so-  
cial reality. Literacy enables people to  
read one's own world and to write his-  
tory.

Literacy makes people aware of  
their basic human rights. Literacy  
enables people to have a greater degree  
of control over their own lives. Literacy  
helps people to become self-reliant and  
resist exploitation and oppression.  
Literacy provides access to written  
knowledge and knowledge is power.

45TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
(FOCUSING ON LITERACY ISSUES)

Vancouver, Canada

J uly, 1990

For more information:

International CEA Conference  
Office of Continuing Studies  
Simon Fraser University,  
Burnaby, British Columbia V5A 1S6  
Canada

1990 0 INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR



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NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
FOR AFRICAN WOMEN

( Literacy and Adult Education  
(AALAE) is playing a very  
important role in the training of women  
in literacy. They have embarked on a  
needs assessment which is being car-  
ried out in seven different African  
countries: Nigeria, Mali, Rwanda,  
Mozambique, Tanzania, Botswana and  
Uganda.

The needs assessment will be car-  
ried out at the grassroots level focusing  
on rural women and the specific types  
of problems that they face in trying to  
attend literacy classes. A women can-  
not attend classes when there is no  
water athome. They find themselvesin  
the position of having to choose be-  
tween collecting firewood and going for  
water or attending literacy classes.  
Another problem is that after working  
very hard all day long they are too tired  
and find themselves unable to concen-  
trate in these classes.

Therefore, this needs assessment  
will study these particular problems  
and others and try to structure sched-  
ules for training and classes appropri-  
ately. They are also looking at local  
projects in which the women can learn  
and at the same time earn a small  
income as a motivator. They expect to  
train women in a variety of different  
skills but especially leadership and  
decision making skills which build  
confidence.

In a recent speech to the Interna-  
tional Task Force on Literacy (ITFL)  
meeting in Mombasa, Kenya, Majanja-  
Zaali, the coordinator of the needs as-  
sessment said, "Empowering women  
through literacy is not so they will  
frighten their husbands but to be able  
to be equal partners in development?

T HE AFRICAN Association for  
For more information contact:  
African Association for Literacy  
and Adult Education

Box 50768

Nairobi, Kenya

1990 - INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR



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ITFL is a coalition of international non-governmental organizations  
With representation from all live continents.

ITFL had its 4th meeting in Mombasa, Kenya on  
April 10-15 1989. A full report on this meeting will  
be available in J uly.

While in Mombasa, ITFL members went on Study  
Visits to various Literacy Centres. Representatives  
(Learners) from the Centres then joined the ITFL  
meeting and participated on a llLearners Panelll and  
in open discussions.

Two additional panels were held in Mombasa on the  
situation in Africa and the World Conference on  
Education for All.

Selected media executives, with the help of the ITFL  
and the cooperation of the Literacy Secretariat of  
Unesco, organized a colloquium on llLiteracy and the  
Mediall which was held in Paris, May 16-17 1989.

The ITFL Newsletter will now be published bi-  
monthly.

Majanja-Zaali from Uganda has written an ILY an-  
them and is now composing the music for it. It will  
be published in a future issue of our newsletter.

There is a 30 minute film under production with  
special emphasis on ILY 1990.

The production of a monthly newsletter is well under-  
way with the focus on ILY 1990.

Plans are being developed for a bi-annual literacy  
magazine with articles by experts in different fields  
of literacy from India and the Southern Asian Region.  
Preparations are being made for a 2 minute televi-  
sion spot on the topic of ILY.

Tentative plans have been arranged for a 2Music Star  
Concertli to raise resources for literacy.

A small committee has been formed to work on the  
"Book Voyagell project.

Plans are underway to produce an llILY 1990 Calen-  
darll.

For more information on the activities of the India  
office please contact:

For more information on the activities of the Toronto  
office please contact:

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1990 0 INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL TASK FORCE ON LITERACY

Number 4, July, 1989

LEARNERS SPEAK OUT ON LITERACY AND ILITERACY

GROUP OF seven African

A learners and one Canadian

were brought together in

Mombasa, Kenya in April 1989 to share

their experiences. They talked about

the benefits of becoming literate, the

difficulties of juggling classes with

adult responsibilities, the humiliation

they faced by being illiterate

and their views on

International Literacy

Year.

What have been some

of the benefits of be-

coming literate?

' Since I am a farmer and

have to send my cashew

nuts to market, I was

never sure if I got a fair

price for my product. Now

that I know how, I can

weigh and price the nuts

myself and then give

them to the gentleman

knowing that I won't be

cheated.

' Before I joined literacy classes, there

used to be different women's groups

involved in various development activi-

ties. I could not join those groups be-

cause I couldn't read or write. Now that

I can, I have joined a number of these

women's groups and I am often the one

that was told what impressed the

learners from Kenya the most

was that there was a white

learner. They thought only

black people could be illiterate.

That made my being there

even more important?

-Robin Silverman, Canada

who writes the minutes of the meet-

ings.

' I can now write my own name and

that makes me feel proud and self-

confident.

What were some of the difficulties

you encountered as an adult on

your path to becoming literate?

O We as adults have a lot of problems in

the sense that we have to work very

hard and we have various kinds of

commitments: looking after our chil-

dren, our mates, our jobs and house-

hold duties. It is not easy for us to take

advantage of literacy. It is difficult to

attend the classes on a regular basis.

This slows down our prog-

ress and we cannot

achieve full literacy.

O We have difficulties

travelling around in our

cities because they are

vast and have confusing

public transit systems.

Many people have been

terrified because they got

lost on the streets and



were not able to find their  
way home. When they  
had to ask for directions  
they felt humiliated.  
Some will lie and say, tII  
forgot my glasses, could  
you please tell me what  
that sign says?" Humiliation and  
degradation in Canada is so severe that  
many illiterates dont tell their own  
families that they cant read and write.  
Since education is so accessible you feel  
that you are very stupid or that there is  
something wrong with you or that you  
are brain damaged.  
Continued on page 2