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AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION

(A A L A E)

A REPORT OF AALAE LITERACY NETWORK MEETING

HELD AT MOMBASA

3 - 7 APRIL 1989

Compiled by :

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MOMBASA. 3 - 9 APRIL 1989

This meeting took place at Mombasa and it was attended by fourteen participants, the duration was one week.

Day one 3rd April :

The participants introduced themselves and gave a bit of their profiles. This meeting was officially opened by the AALAE Secretary General, Mr. Paul Wangoola. He stated that he had trust in the team of literacy practitioners before him and hopes that justice will be done on the topics for discussion so that the objectives of this meeting can be achieved in the end; that is to come out with a practical realistic three-year programme of literacy work.

Participants elected Mr. Adama Berthe from Mali to chair for that day. Participants also elected Ms. Majanja-Zaali to be Rapporteur General - Uganda, Mr. Musa Njiru to be rapporteur - Kenya, Mr. Nteba Bakumba to be rapporteur - Zaire.

Objectives of the literacy network meeting

The AALAE Programme Officer went through the agenda which was adopted and then through the objectives which were:

2.1 To develop a comprehensive and realistic three-year network programme.

2.2 To develop a detailed plan of action for 1989.

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2.3 To clarify the conceptual and organisational framework as well as the mechanism of the literacy network.

2.5 To develop a strategy for the International Literacy Year 1990.

Reports from Participants : ..

Each participant presented a brief report on the literacy activities which have been taking place in their respective organisations.

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There were general and specific issues which came through most of the reports. If these issues are tackled, a lot will have been done to enhance and strengthen the adult education movement on continental level.

Some of these were :

3.1.1 Training :

there is real need for training, planning and in many areas, such as : 1

- '(i) Management of NGOs activities;
- (ii) Programme management;
- (iii) Writing project proposals and fundraising;
- (iv) Curriculum development;
- (v) Material development and production;
- (vi) ' Accounting.

3.1.2 Communication and information :

Communication and information dissemination at different levels is at variance. So there is need to examine information flow and to find

ways and means of disseminating the same. This will create exchange of ideas and also more knowledge on the literacy situation especially in Africa. It will also conscientize and stimulate public awareness which can result into joint efforts for mass literacy programmes.

3.1.3 Technical Assistance

(3 Different organisations have advantages on specific areas of specialisation. This is a . potential that need to be harnessed in good time before opportunity is lost in order to maximize resource utilization. So concrete programmes can be drawn focused on this need.

3.1.4 Materials Production

Generally there is lack of necessary materials to be used at various levels by learners or at times even the trainers. These include materials for basic literacy, post literacy etc.

(;3 In some cases such materials have been developed . but there _is no printing facilities to publicize it and put it into use.

3.1.5 Coordination and Cooperation

A lot of literacy activities take place at the grassroot levels but there is lack of proper co-ordination and even co-operation to be able to share various rich experiences, both at sub-regional and regional levels even inter-continental levels.

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Planning and implementation of literacy programmes and also viable projects

This is a very important area which has not been adequately tackled. If a headway is to be made this area should be critically analysed and be dealt with so that literacy programmes and planned project becomes fruitful for the intended beneficiaries.

Policy on adult education

Different Governments have programmes on literacy.

It is important to draw policy on some of the areas like language, funding, approaches of literacy programmes and also prioritising these programmes because the case of literacy is crucial.

Conscientization and mobilization

It is true that public awareness is not yet at the highest level, therefore there is need to mobilize and conscientize the people through various medias such as radio etc.

(see appendix A for reports)

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It was unanimously agreed that Mr. Adama Berthe chairs the meeting for the whole week.

Participants dealt with Conceptual Framework of the literacy network. Mr. Wangoola presented a paper on this topic. It pointed out that AALAE was a point of encounter for various organisations and individuals involved in literacy and adult education in Africa. Therefore AALAE creates a forum for sharing experiences, exchange ideas, also to strengthen and build capacities. In order to facilitate all that to happen AALAE set up networks to attempt to respond to the many and varying needs of its members at various levels.

Some of the issues from the discussions were :

o i' That network is a process by which individuals, groups and institutions are easily put in practical i contact so as to learn from one another and to supplement each other.

: These networks take joint actions, mobilize and ,make use of talents and resources in order to energise social advancement.

VNetwork is the fundamental process of 'understanding a individual organisations and the essence of

_ identifying prevailing "free space".

iorganisations dealing with literacy and examine the adefficiency gaps that do exist.

,There is need to understand what other groups are adoing and how.

i ?It is important to create a platform for sharing ,ideas and strike horizontal working relationship with different parties carrying on literacy work.

For literacy network, there is need to study individual

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Literacy network should promote the concept of participation and innovation.

-Network to facilitate exchange of ideas and practices.

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Continental joint efforts must take into account various members' needs and approaches to common problems.

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(; o Volunteerism gives a face and human touch to . _ literacy programme but the spirit should not be overfretched.

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Day Three - 5th April 1989

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2.0 Participants tackled the literacy network three-year programme.

2.1 These are the main areas which were considered in formulation of the programme, and also for ILY

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2.1.1 \$reation and strengthening of National Literacy networks.

2.1.2 ixaining of trainers.

2.1.3 \$iteracy programmes for special groups.

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2.1.4 gechnical support programmes.

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2.1.5 9tudy of the literacy situation in Africa.

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2.1.6 . case studies of some successful literacy gfojects in Africa.

2.1.7 international Literacy Yea; 1990.

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After some lengthy discussions it was agreed that members should consider other sources of funding for the network and that the need and initiatives of forming National Literacy networks should come from individual countries concerned. Participants went into workshops to draw up activities of 1989 and 1990.

3.1.1. 1989 Activities

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (a)
- (b)
- (C)

3.1.2 ILY 1990 Programmes

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)

Carry out literacy case studies in five countries that is Zaire, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mali and Mozambique. Study literacy situation in Francophone Africa.

Identify local projects in literacy such as :

Literacy, technology, and trade union education projects.

Improvement of women status in Kajiado area.

Publication of NGO directorZQe carrying out literaey and adult educ' programmes in Guinee Conakry.

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(see attached appendix B for details).

Regional workshops.

Training in management; curriculum and training materials development.

Literacy programmes for marginalised groups.

(iv) Publish newsletter for literacy or use the existing one SPIDER.

(v) Select ten African countries for case studies on successful literacy programmes.

(vi) A team to examine scattered information and compile a paper on situation of literacy in Africa.

(vii) Organise a conference as a climax for ILY 1990.

(see attached appendix C for details).

4.0 Proposed African Centre for Literacy

This proposal was tabled by the AALAE Programme Officer, after which participants went into groups to discuss this noble project. I

This proposed Centre for literacy is intended to act as focal point where different activities of literacy can take place. It will be a Centre where communication and also documentation will take place to facilitate exchange of ideas, sharing of experiences and expertise from all corners which is at the moment very much scattered. The Centre will strengthen and consolidate the efforts which are being initiated at various levels to enhance the literacy movement and to make it more useful and meaningful to the intended beneficiaries.

Day Four - 6th April 1989

During the discussions concerning the proposal of African Centre for literacy participants made some additions and other amendments they felt fit.

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The amendments affected the following pages : 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10.

4.1
4.2

(see appendix d for the amended proposal).

However some other issues were discussed such as :

Specificity of the proposed Centre.

Expanding of NGO movement globalwise.

Systematization of galaxies of literacy activities.

Relationship of the Centre with existing similar institutions and its justification.

Designing of training packages.

_The Centre to operate on pedagogical practices.

Whether the Centre should be decentralized.

Centre to concentrate on trainers who conduct training at grassroot levels.

Consultants with different field of speciality.

A feasibility study is going to be done and also a provisional budget has been drawn and a calendar of activities.

Local Projects :

4.2.1
4.2.2
4.2.3

Mozambique has a project to start a National Adult Education Association.

The Scout movement in Africa region have a housing project and right now they are constructing village libraries in Tanzania.

Uganda has a project to produce some primers and post-literacy materials.

Guidelines depicting criterias to be followed when writing and presenting projects for funding.

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(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

(vi)

Proposal must indicate whether new, on-going or towards completion and duration.

Type of project.

Justification.

Objectives.

Activities and time schedule.

Beneficiaries and the extent of their contribution.

It was agreed that the proposal must :

4.3.1

4.3.2

4.3.3

4.3.4

4.3.5

(i)

(ii)

Emanate from members of AALAE and endorsed by National body.

Where there is no national body, individual organisation can submit the proposal through a neighbouring country to AALAE which has a national body, consideration on merit can be done where the first two criteria do not exist.

Priority to be given to projects with educational benefits to grassroots e.g. basic and post-literacy.

Beneficiaries must be grassroot people such

-as:

a) women,

b) the poor,

c) school drop-outs,

d) youths,

e) special groups like nomads, physically handicapped, disabled.

The proposal must spell out :

Management capacities;

Organisational structure;

- (iii) time schedule of activities;
- (iv) submit progressive reports;
- (v) have a monitoring system;
- (vi) ' submit financial statements-and balance sheets.

4.3.6 The proposal must :

- (1) Be feasible in financial terms and realistic.
- (ii) Indicate local contribution by the organisation.
- (iii) Indicate any other sources of funds.
- (iv) Indicate strategies set to strengthen the national . organisation.

These criteria can be reviewed as and when necessary.

5.0 I T F L

5.1 It was agreed to participate in phase 3 & 4 of the working document of ITFL, since phase 1 & 2 are gone.

,; 5.2 The region will participate in ICAE activities but AALAE . will work out the. necessary modalities.

5.3 Literacy Centres :

A group of participants visited two literacy centres in Kwale district and see how literacy classes are conducted. The majority of learners were women.

Dax Five -' 7th Agril 1989

6.0 Concept of NETWORK

The Programme Officer gave additional background information as to how the networks were conceived.

6.1 Some of the objectives of these networks include :

6.1.1 Exchange and dissemination of information, ideas and experiences.

6.1.2 Linkage of literacy and adult education practitioners.

6.1.3 Stimulation of formal and informal interaction and communication.

(6.1.4 Democratization of participatory approach by . decentralising the organisation.

6.1.5 Have close collaboration with national Associations.

6.2 I Some questions raised :

6.2.1 Who selects members of the networks ?

6.2.2 Who nominates coordinators and convenors ?

6.2.3 What is the relationship of networks with national associations ?

6.2.4 How do these networks operate at national and (a - regional levels ?

6.3 All the above questions were discussed thoroughly by the participants and it so happened that most of the work; is done by the national associations. The only time AALAE comes in is at regional levels but after some useful consultations before any nominations can be done.

6.4 It was agreed that efforts be made to start a literacy newsletter and all members should send in activities.

6.5 ITFL and AALAE

AALAE has already attended the first three meetings of ITFL.

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Participants were briefed about the International press conference which took place in Nairobi .x during March 1989. The purpose was to publicize the ILY year and to disseminate information from different corners of Africa. In fact some cassettes on Nita Barrow about ILY activities are still being used.

Some researchers have already started on the preliminary studies about literacy situation in Africa. For the coming ITFL meeting in Mombasa, it was necessary to identify at least four adult learners who will participate_in a panel discussion to air their views and give impression about literacy activities in their literacy centres.

There was still a big question on how to involve many learners in the whole process of ILY so that they can participate fully.

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A group of musicians called "The Mushrooms" have offered to compose AALAE a song about ILY 1990. To this members endorsed provided there are no heavy costs and that AALAE will have the copy right. One participant said that she had composed AALAE Literacy Anthem, but it can still be improved upon as it was still in the baking stages.

Salim informed members that AALAE will soon be printing calenders for ILY, so they should send in photos showing various activities which can be used on the calendars.

It was envisaged that during ILY many African countries will compose different songs, so it would be a good idea AALAE to make an album of all those songs, afterwhitch it can even generate some small money if it is sold.

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0 Seydou Sall, Majanja-Zaali and Nteba Bakumba were selected to prepare a document for ITFL meeting which was due to start on Monday 10th April. (see appendix f for the document prepared)

CONCLUSION

This literacy network meeting renewed the vigour of the participants and they vowed to go back and implement the plans which have been drawn according to the strategies set. However, it was emphasised that proper communication and cooperation are some of fundamental elements for implementation of literacy programmes. Therefore, hardwork and commitment to eradicate illiteracy by the year 2000 is very essential.