

Evaluation of the UNICEF Supported Adult Literacy Programme in Guinea Bissau

Report

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List of Acronyms and Symbols

ALP	Adult Literacy Programme
CBO	Community-based organisation
CD	Compact disk
DGAENF	Direção Geral de Alfabetização de Adultos e Educação Não Formal ¹
GoJ	Government of Japan
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estatística ²
MoE	Ministry of Education
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
TV	Television
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US\$	United States dollar (assumed to be 0.0017 US\$ to the West African franc at the time of writing)
Xof	West African franc (assumed to be Xof600 to the US\$ at the time of writing)

¹ Directorate-General for Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education.

² National Statistics Institute.

Acknowledgments

The evaluator would like to thank the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba, the staff of the DGAENF, the staff of UNICEF Guinea Bissau, the staff of the Instituto Nacional de Estatística³ and the following village-based interviewees for their invaluable support and insights:

- the facilitators of the ten adult literacy centres interviewed in Lendem-Bissora, Ntchale-Mansoa, Mansade-Mansaba, Nema-Farim, Contuboel-Bafata, Fajonquito-Bafata, Copa Mangui-Pirada, Canquelefa-Pitche, Mafanco-Sonaco and Tabadjan-Gabu;
- the chiefs of the above villages; and
- the 153 students interviewed at the ten centres.

³ National Statistics Institute.

Executive summary

The UNICEF-supported Adult Literacy Programme (ALP) in Guinea Bissau is a small-scale programme (2,197 students in 2014) with substantial potential for scale-up provided that certain key design features are modified. The ALP has successfully attracted and inspired disadvantaged hard-to-reach students, and has been particularly successful in recruiting female students, who are in the majority. This is especially important in a social context in which girls and women have historically had limited access to education. The programme has impacted positively among adults on their attitudes to education, to the extent that as a result of the programme adults now encourage their children to attend school. It should be noted that the opportunity cost of attending ALP classes is acknowledged by students, who feel that the cost is outweighed by the benefits that accrue from literacy and numeracy.

Various practical examples of how the ALP has changed lives were recorded in the course of the evaluation, such as the ability to negotiate and keep accounts during the cashew harvest. Social and psychological benefits were also recorded, such as enhanced self-confidence and enhanced participation in social interactions. The ALP motto (“Sim, eu posso” or “Yes, I can”) is very appropriate, as it is clear that the programme has had a strong empowering effect on students, whose age ranges (in the sampled villages) from approximately 16 to 85.

It was unanimously reported that there is strong community support for the ALP in the ten villages visited. This support was confirmed in in-depth interviews with the ten village chiefs, who reported a variety of strategies to encourage participation – and especially the participation of women – in the programme. These strategies included visits to each household by all members of the village committee once a month.

The capacity of the Direção Geral de Alfabetização de Adultos e Educação Não Formal⁴ (DGAENF) to manage the programme is very weak, and its state budget is limited. Staff turnover and illness at UNICEF has weakened the partnership between UNICEF and the DGAENF, but there is potential to rebuild and strengthen the relationship.

A key recommendation of the evaluation is that the ALP (which is effective but cost-inefficient) be resuscitated with important design modifications. These include limiting the centralised roles of Bissau-based DGAENF supervisors and methodologists to reduce the proportion of programme costs that their visits to the ALP centres incur, and recruiting local supervisors to monitor programme performance and outstanding ALP facilitators to provide methodological support. General recommendations are presented in section 10, and recommendations related to programme sustainability are presented in section 12. It is noted in section 12 that the scale of the ALP would have to be multiplied by a factor of approximately 100 if the adult illiteracy challenge in Guinea Bissau is to be comprehensively addressed.

⁴ Directorate-General for Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education in the Ministry of Education.

1 Introduction

This report corresponds to the independent evaluation of the UNICEF-supported Adult Literacy Programme (ALP) in Guinea Bissau, undertaken in August 2015. The report contains:

- the approach to the evaluation;
- the methodology applied;
- a review of ALP documents;
- the ALP theory of change;
- the analysis of the fieldwork data;
- an assessment of value for money;
- findings;
- conclusions;
- recommendations;
- lessons learned; and
- sustainability recommendations.

The evaluation work plan is contained in Annex 1 and the evaluation instruments in Annex 2; the fieldwork data are presented in Annex 3 and a summary of the data is contained in Annex 4.

2 The approach to the evaluation

Theory of change

The realist approach to evaluation proposed by Pawson and Tilley (*op. cit.*) frames programmes as ‘theories incarnate’; programmes are essentially testing a theory (or theories) about what might bring about social change. The evaluation therefore developed an ALP theory of change to support an exploration of context, mechanisms, outcomes and impacts (and related assumptions), and to assess if, how and in what circumstances the intervention has achieved its intended outcomes.

The Evaluation Handbook of the Department for International Development of the UK government (2013)⁵ describes a theory of change as follows:

At its heart theory of change involves an exploration of the changes we want to help bring about and how we think the change processes might happen. It involves the articulation of hypotheses about how change will happen and interrogation of the assumptions underpinning those hypotheses. Theory of change thus goes beyond the assertion in a results chain that A leads to B, and explores how and why we think A will lead to B – the intermediate steps, the transmission mechanisms, the different

⁵ Department for International Development (2013). Evaluation Handbook. Department for International Development: London.

possible causal pathways. In particular it explores and opens up what is often just an arrow pointing from outputs to outcomes.

A mixed-methods approach

The evaluation was characterised by the use of qualitative and quantitative research. The former supports an investigation of social phenomena through interactive and empathetic methods, in particular in-depth interviews with individuals and focus groups; the latter aims to establish conditions of objectivity by analysing quantifiable data (such as, in the case of the ALP, pass rates).

The qualitative component predominantly (but not exclusively) deepened our understanding of the effectiveness of the ALP; the quantitative approach generated objective evidence related to the efficiency of the programme. A synthesis of data from both approaches has generated a rich and detailed understanding of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ALP.

Triangulation in the data analysis was undertaken at the level of:

- data (drawing on multiple sources of information); and
- methods (qualitative and quantitative).

As confirmed in the inception phase discussions, the evaluation report is structured in terms of the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Some of these elements may be predominantly qualitative or quantitative in nature. For example, efficiency typically implies quantitative financial analysis regarding use of resources, but the qualitative dataset has provided invaluable explanatory power. This evaluation report recommends ways in which the ALP can be scaled up in an affordable manner.

Value for money

The assessment of value for money called for an examination of ALP outcomes and outputs relative to the following metrics:

- a) **Economy:** to determine if the intervention has bought appropriate inputs at a reasonable price
- b) **Effectiveness:** assessing whether the programme has achieved the intended outcomes of enhanced literacy and numeracy
- c) **Efficiency:** measuring the cost-efficiency of the programme
- d) **Equity:** understanding how the investment has impacted on female learners relative to male learners

3 Methodology

Desktop review

A desktop review of ALP documentation (see section 4 below) was undertaken in the inception phase of the evaluation. This enabled the development of an ALP theory of change (see section 5 below).

Fieldwork

The evaluation fieldwork was conducted over eight working days in ten ALP centres, several of which were located in difficult terrain and hard to reach. A 100% success rate was obtained with respect to the intended research events. The evaluation used both quantitative and qualitative instruments (see Annex 2) to support:

- ten in-depth interviews with ALP facilitators (all male with a minimum of secondary education);
- ten in-depth interviews with village chiefs;
- ten focus groups of female ALP students (totalling 90 students);
- ten focus groups of male ALP students (totalling 63 students);
- ten students who were considered 'outstanding achievers' by the evaluator (in consultation with the INE fieldworkers), based on their level of achievement in literacy and numeracy and their level of confidence in our interaction in the course of the focus group discussions (7 female student and 3 male students, reflecting the proportion of female and male students in the ALP overall);
- ten site observations; and
- recording of student enrolment, drop-outs and pass rates per level (all by gender) in all ten centres.

Two fieldworkers from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística⁶ (INE) facilitated the interviews and focus groups. The INE was also responsible for capturing and securely storing the data.

Lesson observation was not possible as the centres that were operational were on holiday. Some centres had discontinued classes as a result of a MoE instruction issued in August 2014.

Interview and focus group data as well as quantitative data were captured in Microsoft ExcelTM and coded for subsequent analysis. In the analysis stage triangulation was effected across instruments and across respondent types.

⁶ National Statistics Institute.

Evaluation questions and issues

Issues covered in the evaluation instruments (see Annex 2) follow:

- Adequacy and maintenance of infrastructure, equipment and supplies.
- Location and accessibility of each of the ten centres.
- Quality of the learning material and quality of the methodology applied in its use.
- Student enrolment, drop-outs, attendance and pass rates per level.
- Adequacy of the language used in the learning materials.
- Education levels of facilitators and students.
- Frequency and predictability of payment of stipends for facilitators.
- Quality and frequency of monitoring visits and visits to provide methodological support for facilitators.
- Quality of coordination between national and local levels of management.
- Motivations and motivation levels of facilitators and students – why are they in the programme and how motivated are they?
- Community awareness of, ownership of and support for the programme, including encouragement of female students.
- Satisfaction levels among all interviewees with the current programme definitions of ‘literacy’ and ‘numeracy’.
- Quality of learner assessment.
- How transversal issues (such as citizenship and health) are addressed and with what learning materials.
- Shifts, timetables and duration of courses – how flexible are these and what factors are present that influence them (such as harvest time)?
- Challenges and successes of each of the ten centres.

Research ethics

- Respondents were asked to give verbal informed consent to be interviewed.
- No individual is identified in the evaluation report in relation to her or his responses.
- Data were captured electronically and stored at the INE with appropriately restricted access.

Limitations of the research

- It was not possible to interview DGAENF supervisors and methodologists, who were absent from work because of a political crisis.
- It was not possible to observe ALP lessons as all the centres visited were on break.

4 Review of ALP documentation

Introduction

Most of the documents reviewed focus on ALP statistics over the years – such as the number of students enrolled, the number of students who dropped out, the number of students who passed and the number of students who failed (including, importantly, statistics by gender). In the next section the focus will be on such statistics, and after that the qualitative findings and recommendations contained in the ALP documentation will be summarised. An important aspect of the qualitative work, as we shall see, is: What is the ALP definition of literacy and numeracy?

The ALP is implemented under the motto “Yes, I can” (“Sim, eu posso”) by the Direção Geral de Alfabetização de Adultos e Educação Não Formal (DGAENF, Directorate-General of Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education) of the Ministry of Education (MoE), with Cuban technical assistance with respect to methodology and financial support from the Government of Japan, managed by UNICEF. In the academic year 2013-2014 the programme was in its sixth phase with 2,197 students enrolled. The students, the majority of whom are female, attend two-hour shifts once or several times per week (depending on the availability of students and facilitators) for three months before progressing to the second and third levels, which are also three months each in duration. At the third level transversal issues such as health and citizenship are addressed.

The learning material is a Brazilian literacy programme called Alfa TV; UNICEF has provided equipment, including solar panels, to facilitate the use of this audiovisual learning material, which is accompanied by printed workbooks. For approximately 18 months, hands-on technical assistance was provided by the Cuban government for the training of facilitators and the translation of basic learning materials (such as posters) into local indigenous languages. This technical assistance was interrupted by the military coup in Guinea Bissau of April 2012.

The facilitators are paid a stipend of 40,000 Xof per month (approximately US\$67⁷), and it was intended that they should receive one week’s training in the application of the methodology.

Of the 56 ALP centres some have been purpose-built; others are classrooms in schools and others are in private homes.

⁷ Assuming a rate of 0.0017 \$US to the Xof at the time of writing.

Official ALP statistics 2010-2014

In the academic year 2013-2014 the ALP was in its sixth phase with 2,197 students enrolled in five regions. According to the DGAENF⁸, of this initial enrolment:

- 73.74% were female;
- 93.49% completed the programme (the percentages for females and males were similar);
- 87.83% of those who completed the course passed (the percentages for females and males were similar); and
- 82.11% of the initial enrolment passed (the percentages for females and males were similar).

Similar results were reported by the DGAENF in August 2013⁹ for Bafatá (Contuboel sector), Gabú and Oio. Of the 2,173 students enrolled:

- 90.43% completed the programme (no gender-based data are presented); and
- 87.84% of those who completed the course passed.

The above results for 2013 and 2014 show an improvement on the first year of the ALP (2009-2010), when the DGAENF reported (in May 2010¹⁰) that of the 600 students enrolled in the Contuboel sector, Bafatá:

- 78.67% completed the programme (no gender-based data are presented); and
- 81.14% of those who completed the course passed.

A number of important conclusions can be drawn from these statistics:

- the ALP is not a large-scale programme, with just under 40 students enrolled on average per centre across 56 centres in May 2014;
- the completion rate is very high and improving over the years;
- the success rate in terms of students passing is very high and has improved since programme inception; and
- the programme is very successful in targeting women, having a female:male ratio of 73:27 in May 2014.

(It must be noted that the August 2014 DGAENF report contains an instruction to ALP coordinators and facilitators to the effect that no new students should be enrolled until further notice, and another to the effect that new centres should only be opened “when the necessary conditions have been created”.)

⁸ Report dated May 2014, filename “Alfa TV relatorio 2014”, based on monitoring visits to the five regions: Gabú (with 23 centres), Oio (with 19 centres), Bafatá (with 10 centres), Tombali (with 2 centres) and Quinara (with 2 centres).

⁹ Report dated 14 August 2013, filename “Alfa TV 2011 .2013 relatorios”.

¹⁰ Report of May 2010, filename “Alfa TV 2010”.

The 2013 evaluation of the ALP: pass rates

An important document reviewed is an evaluation of the ALP¹¹ in three regions (Gabú, Oio and Bafatá) over the two years prior to 2013. The evaluators administered the following tests to a total sample of 350 ALP students:

- a literacy test which required the students to write their own names and the name of their facilitator, and a further orthography test (second and third levels only) which required the students to write out words dictated by the test administrator;
- a numeracy test which required the students to identify and write numbers, and a further numeracy test (second and third levels only) which required the students to do simple arithmetic.

The results of these tests are less positive than the official statistics reported above:

	Number	Passed	% Passed
Literacy tests			
First level	131	77	58.78%
Second level	201	143	71.14%
Third level	48	41	85.42%
Total	380	261	68.68%
Numeracy: identify and write numbers			
First level	131	84	64.12%
Second level	201	135	67.16%
Third level	48	40	83.33%
Total	380	259	68.16%
Numeracy: simple subtractions			
Total	249	127	51.00%

For example, the 2013 evaluation pass rate for the literacy tests (68.68%) is considerably lower than the literacy pass rate reported by the DGAENF in May 2014 (87.83%). It must be noted that the literacy pass rate reported in the 2013 evaluation is considerably higher in the third level (85.42%) than in the first and second levels, but that the number of students in the third level is much smaller. This does indicate, however, that students' chances of success in literacy increase if they continue with the programme.

¹¹ Filename "Alfa Tv_RELATORIO de AVALIACAO-2013".

The 2013 evaluation of the ALP: qualitative findings and recommendations

Introduction

The 2013 evaluation of the ALP covered three regions (Gabú, Oio and Bafatá) and presented the following useful information about the students and the facilitators:

- ALP students were mostly between 16 and 45 years of age. The majority are engaged in farming, some have informal businesses and the remainder have a variety of occupations, such as carpentry and restaurant work. They expressed a desire to read and write and “rise out of ignorance”; those who had had some basic education wished to “recover [the learning] they had lost”.
- The sample of 38 ALP facilitators were aged between 22 and 45, but were younger in Oio (22 to 30 years of age). The majority (29) had either nine or ten years of formal basic education; however, two facilitators had only three or four years of schooling. The generally younger facilitators in Oio had the highest qualifications, with ten out of 16 having ten or 11 years of schooling.

A case study of a successful ALP student (presented in the 2013 evaluation of the ALP)

There are important qualitative assessments in the 2013 evaluation. At one extreme a case study of one female participant in the ALP (Mariatu) is presented, in which the following extremely positive results are reported:

- Despite having dropped out of school because of early marriage and two pregnancies, Mariatu found in the ALP an opportunity to “realizar um sonho de infância que lhe foi retirado”¹² despite having to carry her younger child to the ALP centre to attend her lessons.
- Mariatu reports that as a result of the ALP she was elected secretary of the community-based organisation (CBO) ‘Jóias de Ouro’ in her ‘tabanca’.
- She reports that when she reached the second level of the ALP she was also able to help her husband in his small business, in which he would give credit to customers verbally without keeping written records. In her ALP exercise book she created a “caderno de registo de dívidas”¹³ so that her husband could keep track of the customers’ debts.
- An important psychosocial outcome reported is that Mariatu “conhece e vive o prazer do encontro com as letras e os números [e] ... sua aplicação no dia- a- dia”, both in her husband’s business and in the CBO ‘Jóias de Ouro’.

The following extract from the 2013 evaluation of the ALP is indicative of what might be achieved for many more students, younger and older, through the programme:

¹² “Live a childhood dream that was taken away from me.”

¹³ A “debt register”.

*Mariatu disse que vai continuar, cito: “lutar” com as letras e os números para mais tarde se qualificar e ser como outras mulheres escolarizadas e mais útil à família à sociedade e à si mesma.*¹⁴

These are important dimensions of the ALP that are embedded (at least implicitly) in its design: being equal to other women who completed school and being more useful to your family and society – and yourself. In a way, the reported achievements of Mariatu could be set as the benchmark for the ALP (it is important to note that they are ‘reported’ achievements that have not been verified). The enhanced dignity that is evident in the above quotation (and the extent to which it has been achieved) must be borne in mind in the course of this evaluation of the ALP.

Other findings of the 2013 evaluation

Other diverse findings of the 2013 evaluation follow:

Women

- Women interviewed in the course of the 2013 evaluation of the ALP reported that despite their role in productive activity and child-bearing, and despite “strong sociocultural taboos”, they are aware of the importance of literacy and are eager to enrol in the ALP centres.

The role of the community

- Community leaders were aware of the importance of the programme but expressed a desire for greater involvement with clear roles to ensure enhanced ownership and programme sustainability.
- The acquisition of physical space for the ALP centres is at times problematic. The majority of community leaders reported viewing the centres as a “communal patrimony” and were engaged in ensuring space. These efforts were not always present, however: two of the centres sampled for the 2013 evaluation were in private houses and in one the facilitator and the students shared their classroom space with livestock. In the majority of the centres sampled the equipment (such as the television) was taken home by the facilitator each day because of lack of security at the centre. The 2013 evaluators noted that this “constant mobility” might affect the functionality of the equipment.
- The 2013 evaluators reported what might be termed a ‘perverse incentive’, in that there had reportedly been various attempts to establish small ALP centres (accommodating no more than 15 students) in order to benefit (for other

¹⁴ ‘Mariatu says she is going to continue, I quote: “fight” with letters and numbers in order to be qualified and be like other women who have attended school and more useful for her family, society and herself.’

presumably illegitimate purposes) from the provision of solar panels. One centre functions in a small space offered by a church, and the solar panels have reportedly been installed in private houses in the vicinity (presumably for private use). The DGAENF in August 2013¹⁵ also reported that some local chiefs had taken centre equipment for private use.

The physical condition of the ALP centres

- According to the 2013 evaluation, most of the ALP centres operate in “precarious conditions”: of the 38 centres sampled, only 10 have their own physical space and are in good condition. Of the remaining 28 centres, 18 are located in schools and are in average condition and 10 are in private houses and are in poor condition.
- As noted above, in one centre the facilitator and the students shared their classroom space with livestock.

Programme coordination

- It was found in the 2013 evaluation of the ALP that there was weak coordination between national and local (government and non-government) role players and poor communication and feedback.
- It was recommended that a decentralised coordination strategy be developed to improve programme monitoring and support for facilitators.

Language

- Although the quality of the Alfa TV video lessons was positively rated, the language of the lessons (Brazilian Portuguese) is reported by the 2013 evaluators of the ALP to be “unknown or almost unknown” among the students interviewed. One of the facilitators interviewed said “Even I don’t understand it” and reported having to translate the lessons into local languages.

Training, monitoring and ongoing support for facilitators

- Of the 38 facilitators interviewed, 16 had received no training in the application of the methodology; three had received “instructions” – presumably not training; others had received one week’s training. However, 78.9% of those interviewed felt that strengthening their capacity to implement the methodology is a priority for improvement in their work. In some centres facilitators have to teach students from two or even three levels in the same class, which suggests that there is a need for additional training to help them cope with multi-level classes.

¹⁵ Report dated 14 August 2013, filename “Alfa TV 2011 .2013 relatorios”.

- Complementary training of facilitators included training in transversal issues such as HIV and AIDS. Some reported having trained themselves in issues such as health, hygiene and family planning using a manual entitled “Saber Para Salvar”¹⁶. The six facilitators who reported that they had not dealt with transversal issues said they had not done so because they did not have this manual for self-training.

Monitoring and support

- Of the 38 facilitators interviewed, 30 felt that the monthly monitoring visits by supervisors helped them to improve their practice given their relative lack of training in literacy methodology. The remaining eight reported that the visits are too short and sometimes only serve the purpose of payment of stipends.
- Of the 38 facilitators interviewed, 22 felt that separate visits by methodologists are “irrelevant”; one of the facilitators had received no such visits.
- It was recommended that monitoring visits and visits to provide methodological support should be separate so that facilitators can better understand the different purposes of the two types of visit.

Shifts and timetables

- Of the 38 facilitators interviewed, 24 reported no problems with the shift system (their shifts varied from 90 minutes to four hours, although the intention seems to have been two hours); 14 felt overworked, especially if they were working as teachers at public schools in addition to their ALP duties; 14 facilitators had to be flexible in their timetables (including offering night shifts) to accommodate their students’ contexts, in particular the need of many students to do agricultural work.
- (The DGAENF in August 2013¹⁷ reported that teaching and learning in most centres in Gabú, Oio and Bafatá had been interrupted by the cajú harvest; the DGAENF recommended that the courses should begin after harvest time.)

Community support

- Of the 38 facilitators interviewed, 32 reported having received diverse forms of community support (including construction of classrooms at two centres); community support was most intensive in Gabú, where such support was reported at 14 of the 16 centres sampled for the evaluation. In one sector a community leader registered for the programme to motivate the local population. Although the 2013 evaluators generally attributed the high levels of student enrolment to community support, in some communities resistance to the programme was reported with respect to support for and ownership of the programme.

¹⁶ This translates as “Know in Order to Save”.

¹⁷ Report dated 14 August 2013, filename “Alfa TV 2011 .2013 relatorios”.

An important conclusion of the 2013 evaluation of the ALP

An important conclusion of the 2013 evaluation of the ALP follows:

“The level of preparation of the literacy students is weak, especially with respect to their knowledge of and basic competence in writing and reading, and the measurement of impact is therefore premature. The results of the three tests that were administered to evaluate the competencies of the literacy students invites us to reflect a little on the need to reformulate the criterion of ‘being literate’ (meaning to consider a more efficient, consistent and sustainable programme) since everything indicates that it is not enough that a person is only just able to write her or his name and be considered literate.”

5 The ALP theory of change

A theory of change involves “an exploration of the changes we want to help bring about and how we think the change processes might happen”. It presents the assumptions underpinning the hypotheses about how change might happen, “going beyond the assertion in a results chain that A leads to B”.¹⁸

The ALP does not have a theory of change; the one presented on the next page is based on deductions by the evaluator. This theory of change is intended to illustrate the interrelationships among the various elements of the ALP and the assumptions underpinning them.

¹⁸ See Department for International Development (2013). Evaluation Handbook. Department for International Development: London.

Challenges	Level 1 (actions and assumptions)	Level 2 (outputs)	Level 3 (outcomes)	Level 4 (impact)
Challenge: The national literacy rate is low ¹⁹ , presenting an obstacle to personal and national growth.	1.1 Implement a literacy and numeracy programme at village level (assuming continued support of development partners)	2.1 DGAENF monitors and evaluates the programme	3.1 DGAENF acts upon the findings of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports	
Challenge: Many languages are spoken, including Creolo and other indigenous languages.	1.2 Import an audiovisual literacy and numeracy programme from Brazil (assuming students understand Brazilian Portuguese)	2.2 Disadvantaged students are enrolled and retained in the programme	3.2 Access to literacy and numeracy is enhanced through efficient deployment of resources	
Challenge: The MoE has no funds to implement a literacy programme.	1.3 Raise funds from development partners (assuming sustained funding will be available)	2.3 Literacy facilitators with high levels of motivation are recruited, retained and incentivised	3.3 Literacy and numeracy levels are enhanced in the target population	Literacy and numeracy levels are enhanced on a scale large enough to accelerate economic growth
Challenge: Low GDP means that the budget for education is much lower than the average in developing countries	1.4 Relationships with development partners are maintained (assuming continued support of development partners)	2.4 Current sources of funding are maintained and increased; partnerships are nurtured	3.4 Programme funding is sustained, either by government or donors	
Challenge: Many villages are remote and difficult to access, especially in the rainy season.	1.5 Vehicles and fuel are funded by development partners	2.5 Resources such as vehicles and fuel are used efficiently	3.5 Efficient management of resources by DGAENF is enhanced through findings of M&E reports	

¹⁹ The literacy rate in the general population aged 18 or above, according to the 2009 census conducted by the INE, is only 30.7% among females and 46.9% among males. See also the MICS5 2014 survey (published in March 2015) – the survey found that among youth aged 15-24 only 50.5% of females and 70.4% of males were able to read a short simple sentence about everyday life (https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/West%20and%20Central%20Africa/Guinea-Bissau/2014/Key%20findings/Guinea-Bissau%202014%20MICS%20KFR_Portuguese.pdf).

6 Analysis of the evaluation data

Interviews at national level

Stark differences of opinion about the ALP were evident in interviews conducted at national level in August 2015. In the MoE great pride in the achievements of the programme and its cost-effectiveness was expressed. There is an equally great disappointment within the MoE with the discontinuation of UNICEF funding in November 2014. Within UNICEF there was some doubt as to whether the programme was effective (in terms of student literacy and numeracy) and a strongly expressed view that the programme is expensive.

An assessment of value for money is contained in section 7 below, showing that the programme is in fact relatively inexpensive when its cost is expressed in per capita terms.

Possible reasons for the stark differences of opinion noted above follow:

- The 2013 evaluation of the ALP²⁰ (commissioned by UNICEF in three regions) was, as noted in section 4 above, highly critical of the low level of literacy expected in the ALP. MoE interviewees confirmed that 'literacy' is defined as the ability of ALP students to write their own names, the name of their facilitator and the name of their village. The field observations showed that this may be a Level 1 outcome, but that programme expectations at Levels 2 and 3 are considerably higher. An example of a text written by a level 3 student in her exercise book follows:

*Então vamos iniciar a nossa aula de hoje mas primeiramente vamos recordar o que vimos no quadro ... Hoje vamos conhecer uma letra nova. Como de costume vamos observar a nossa aula de video.*²¹

As noted above, it was not possible to observe lessons as all the centres visited were on break. However, even if the text above was copied from the chalkboard (rather than dictated to the students) it was copied without errors

- The same 2013 evaluation recommended that support for ALP facilitators be decentralised to reduce programme costs, in particular the cost (in per diems and fuel) of sending supervisors and methodological experts to the ALP centres from Bissau. UNICEF respondents expressed unhappiness with the high proportion of funds assigned to these visits. The MoE, in response to the recommendation of the 2013 evaluation, appointed regional coordinators in 2014. However, soon after their appointment ALP funding was discontinued by UNICEF, and according to MoE interviewees these regional coordinators are now idle.

²⁰ Filename "Alfa Tv_RELATORIO de AVALIACAO-2013".

²¹ 'So we are going to begin today's lesson but first we are going to remember what we saw on the chalkboard ... Today we are going to learn a new letter. As usual we will watch our video lesson.'

Accounts of the suspension of UNICEF funding in November 2014 differed. According to UNICEF respondents, the decision was based on an assessment of the perceived high cost of the programme – particularly, as noted above, the cost of visits to the ALP centres by MoE officials based in the capital, Bissau. The decision to suspend funding was taken when a MoE proposal for a tranche of ALP funding (totalling 22,834,825 million Xof²²) was submitted to UNICEF in November 2014. Of this amount, 20.3% was for facilitators' stipends and 26.2% was for programme materials; the remainder (53.5%) was for per diems for MoE officials and drivers and fuel for monitoring visits. The high proportion allocated to per diems and fuel at the central level (the DGAENF in the MoE) seems to have been an important factor in the UNICEF decision to reject the proposal.

It should be noted that the UNICEF staff member leading the UNICEF contribution to the programme had been absent on sick leave for over a year at the time of writing and that a new head of the UNICEF education section had been appointed in November 2014; familiarity with the details of prior programme implementation was therefore arguably weak. However, as noted above, the funding request received by UNICEF in November 2014 related largely to financing at the central level (the DGAENF in the MoE) and there was no mention of decentralised leadership or ownership; UNICEF's decision to suspend funding is implicitly supported in the sustainability recommendations presented in section 12 below, which suggest a radically different decentralised ALP delivery strategy.

In the course of the fieldwork ALP facilitators reported that the reason given by the DGAENF was that UNICEF had discontinued programme funding. However, this decision was only taken by UNICEF in November 2014. No interviewee was able to resolve this discrepancy in the dates. UNICEF reportedly explained to the MoE in November 2014 that they wished to undertake an evaluation of the ALP before deciding on further funding.

Observation of ALP record keeping at national level

The evaluation at national level revealed poor documentation of the ALP, particularly within the DGAENF, where officials struggled to find basic data such as the number of ALP centres and students per year of the programme.

An unexpected discrepancy was detected in an interview with a senior DGAENF official, who reported that Alfa TV CDs were only available for level 1 of the ALP and that transversal issues (such as health and citizenship) were addressed in levels 2 and 3 using the manual "Saber Para Salvar"²³. In the course of the fieldwork undertaken for this evaluation in August 2015, the evaluator and co-fieldworkers found CDs for level 2 (but not for level 3). Conversely, the manual "Saber Para Salvar" was not available in several centres and facilitators improvised the teaching and learning process using material such as posters (not

²² US\$ 38,819 at the time of writing.

²³ This translates as "Know in Order to Save".

provided through the ALP). In some centres neither the CDs nor the manual was available, despite visits by DGAENF supervisors, to whom the lack of materials was reported. Given this deficiency, and the lack of maintenance of the inverter for the solar panels in some centres, it is surprising that the support provided by the DGAENF was rated so positively by facilitators (see 'Analysis of fieldwork data' below); it is possible that facilitators were reluctant to be critical of their sole source of support (and their employer, prior to the official discontinuation of the ALP in August 2014).

Analysis of fieldwork data

The physical condition of the ALP centres

Observation of the condition of the ALP centres visited showed that:

- Even in seven centres that were funded by the Government of Japan (GoJ) the infrastructure was generally poor. One GoJ-funded centre on the grounds of a public school was in such poor condition that it was unusable; the centre used one of the school's classrooms instead.
- In other villages other facilities were used, such as an annex to the chief's house or the local public school. Conditions in these centres were also generally poor.
- The equipment provided through the ALP was present but in two centres the inverter of the solar panels was not functional and had not been repaired. One centre reported that the television had broken en route and the MoE had replaced it with a much smaller unit. In any event this television had arrived very late in the programme and no CDs had been delivered by the MoE.

Village-level interviews

Noting that certain questions (such as those related to the quality of the ALP methodology and learning materials) were not put to the village chiefs, key points raised in the village-level interviews follow. Observation of the physical facilities and equipment is also reported on below. (The fieldwork data are presented in Annex 3 and a summary in Annex 4.)

Functionality and accessibility of the ALP centres

- Facilitators reported that six of the ten centres were not functioning because of a DGAENF instruction issued in August 2014 (see section 4 above). One facilitator explicitly reported that he had ignored the instruction and continued to teach. No facilitator had been paid their stipend since August 2014.
- At four centres classes had been held in 2015 for level 1 students in contravention of the DGAENF instruction not to enrol new students. At three centres classes had been held in 2015 for level 2 students. At two centres classes had been held in 2015 for level 3 students. All of these courses had been led by the facilitators without pay.

- Timetables and shifts were dependent on discussion with students, especially during harvest time.
- The equipment provided through the ALP were rated good or very good by facilitators. However, in two centres the solar panels were not functioning and in several centres there were no Alfa-TV CDs.

Where 1 is 'Very good' and 4 is 'Very bad', the quantitative rating of the equipment follows:

Facilitators' average rating: 1.4 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

- Accessibility of the centres was rated good or very good by all respondent types, except in one centre on a main road that served several villages.
- Where 1 is 'Very accessible' and 4 is 'Accessible', the quantitative rating of the accessibility of the centres follows:

Village chiefs' average rating: 1 out of 4 ('Very accessible')

Facilitators' average rating: 1.1 out of 4 (between 'Accessible' and 'Very accessible')

Students' average rating: 1 out of 4 ('Very accessible')

Quality of the ALP learning materials and methodology

- The quality of the learning materials was generally rated positively by facilitators and students, as was the quality of the methodology. However, in several centres there were no Alfa-TV CDs or they were in poor condition because of scratches.

Where 1 is 'Very good' and 4 is 'Very bad', the quantitative rating of the learning materials and methodology follows:

Facilitators' average rating of the materials: 2.3 out of 4 (between 'Bad' and 'Good' – the poor condition of the CDs in many centres was the major factor in this relatively low score)

Students' average rating of the materials: 2 out of 4 ('Good')

Facilitators' average rating of the methodology: 1.5 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

Students' average rating of the methodology: 1.65 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

- In some centres the manual 'Saber Para Salvar' had not been delivered by the DGAENF and facilitators used posters and dialogue to discuss transversal issues such as citizenship and health.

ALP pass rates

The following high pass rates were recorded in the ten ALP centres visited in the course of the evaluation²⁴:

²⁴ These pass rates were taken from ALP facilitators' written records in the ten centres visited in August 2015.

ALP level 1	ALP level 1
89.42%	92.05%
Male	Female
Passed	Passed

ALP level 2	ALP level 2
79.45%	96.45%
Male	Female
Passed	Passed

ALP level 3	ALP level 3
92.31%	90.48%
Male	Female
Passed	Passed

It should be noted that the pass rate among female students is higher than that of male students at ALP levels 1 and 2 and only slightly lower in level 3. The ALP, from a gender perspective, thus stands in contrast to the national literacy rates by gender reported above, which show that at national level men have a much higher literacy rate than women.

ALP drop-out rates

The following low drop-out rates were recorded in the ten ALP centres visited in the course of the evaluation:

ALP level 1	ALP level 1
10.58%	8.52%
Male	Female
Dropped out	Dropped out

ALP level 2	ALP level 2
20.55%	4.26%
Male	Female
Dropped out	Dropped out

ALP level 3	ALP level 3
7.69%	9.52%
Male	Female
Dropped out	Dropped out

It should be noted that the drop-out rate among female students is lower than that of male students at ALP levels 1 and 2 and only slightly higher in level 3.

The language of the ALP

- The language used in the Alfa-TV material (Brazilian Portuguese) was rated appropriate or very appropriate by facilitators and students. Several students reported that they welcomed the opportunity to learn to speak Portuguese better. One student said his school-going son came with him to ALP evening classes solely to learn Portuguese.

Where 1 is 'Very appropriate' and 4 is 'Appropriate', the quantitative rating of the language of the learning materials follows:

Facilitators' average rating of the language of the learning materials: 1.3 out of 4 (between 'Appropriate' and 'Very appropriate')

Students' average rating of the language of the learning materials: 1.65 out of 4 (between 'Appropriate' and 'Very appropriate')

The quality of DGAENF support

- The quality of DGAENF supervision and methodological support was rated good or very good by all facilitators; however, supervision and support had ceased a year before in August 2014 (coinciding with the DGAENF instruction referred to above). Where 1 is 'Very good' and 4 is 'Very bad', the quantitative rating of the quality of supervision and support follows:

Facilitators' average rating of the quality of supervision: 2 out of 4 ('Good')

Facilitators' average rating of the quality of methodological support: 1.9 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

Facilitators' motivations

- Facilitators' motivation levels were self-reported as 'high' or 'very high'. Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of facilitators' motivation levels follows:
Facilitators' average rating of their motivation levels: 1.4 out of 4 (between 'High' and 'Very high')
- Facilitators' most common motivations for participating in the programme (despite lack of pay over the previous 12 months) were 'wanting to help the community' (especially those most in need) and 'enjoying teaching'.
- Payment of facilitators had ceased in August 2014. In several centres, however, facilitators had continued to offer classes in 2015 without pay.

Students' motivations

- Students' motivation levels were self-reported as close to 'very high'. Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of students' motivation levels follows:

Students' average rating of their motivation levels: 1.1 out of 4 (close to 'Very high')

- Students' motivations for participating in the programme included 'wanting to read, write and know numbers', 'wanting to be able to sign my name', 'wanting to gain more knowledge', 'wanting to know what is out there in the world', 'making a dream come true' and 'wanting to come out of darkness and have the courage to participate in society'.

Community awareness of and support for the ALP

- Village chiefs, facilitators and students reported very high levels of community awareness of, ownership of and support for the ALP. Awareness-raising activities included village meetings, sometimes led by the village chief and in one case by a student who had been illiterate and innumerate when he started to raise community awareness. In one village a seven-person village committee visited each house in the village once a month to promote the ALP.

Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of community awareness of and support for the ALP follows:

Village chiefs' average rating of community awareness of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Facilitators' average rating of community awareness of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Students' average rating of community awareness of the ALP: 1.2 out of 4 (close to 'Very high')

Village chiefs' average rating of community ownership of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Facilitators' average rating of community ownership of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Students' average rating of community ownership of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Village chiefs' average rating of community support for the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Facilitators' average rating of community support for the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Students' average rating of community support for the ALP: 1.4 out of 4 (between 'High' and 'Very high')

- Support for the programme consisted of a variety of activities, including cleaning the centre on a voluntary basis and ensuring the security of the equipment.
- In every village women were encouraged to attend the programme, by village chiefs and by their husbands. In the latter case it was frequently reported that women were 'allowed' to take time off from agricultural work.

Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of community encouragement of women's participation in the ALP follows:

Village chiefs', facilitators' and students' average rating of community encouragement of women's participation in the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high' across respondent types)

Interviews with 'outstanding achievers'

Students (7 women and 3 men) who were considered 'outstanding achievers' were very articulate and reported that the ALP had boosted their self-confidence:

- Some (mostly female students) had been allocated additional roles in their villages as a result of the ALP. For example, one of the 'outstanding achievers' had been illiterate prior to the ALP programme but had now been elected to represent her village in interaction with other villages.
- Another female ALP student had been asked by her husband to conduct negotiations with buyers after the cashew harvest because she had become sufficiently literate and numerate through the ALP.

Challenges and successes of the ALP

- Challenges reported consistently across respondent types related to poor infrastructure and the lack of basic materials such as exercise books, desks and chairs and a usable chalkboard. At one centre the facilitator and students had used the outside wall as a chalkboard.
- A programme success was reported at all centres (especially by students) as the effect it had had on their attitude to education. All groups of students reported that they now encouraged their children to attend school, and in many cases they insisted. One student said she now beat her children if they tried to skip school; another said that "before the programme I thought school was a joke." One student in his 80s reported that after ALP classes he went "straight home" to his 8-year-old son to work with him on his homework. He called his son to the group to confirm this to the fieldworkers.
- Students at several ALP centres attended the local public school in addition to ALP classes and scored well – at one public school averaging 18/20 in their Grade 4 tests.

Verbatim responses from ALP students assessing the success of the ALP follow:

- "Now I reflect before I act."
- "I feel better about myself, I feel happier even though I'm in the first level."
- "The world is changing – before women and girls weren't allowed to be educated." [Citing a male student.]
- "If the programme recommences, would you like to continue?" [Response: spontaneous applause from a group of male students.]
- "Before the programme I thought school was a joke."
- "Now we know the importance of school, for us and for our children."

7 Assessment of value for money

Introduction

The assessment of value for money in the ALP is presented below relative to the following metrics:

- economy;
- effectiveness;
- efficiency; and
- equity.

Economy

The inputs as planned were appropriate and economical. In total, over five years from 2010 to 2014, only US\$172,077 was spent on the programme. The level of detail in the financial statements provided by UNICEF does not allow a comparative assessment of the prices paid for items such as solar panels and vehicles.

Effectiveness

The ALP has been effective from the perspective of value for money. Although it is difficult to accurately report the number of students over the years, given the incompleteness of programme documentation and the almost complete lack of records at the DGAENF, it is likely that just under 8,000 students have benefited from the ALP at an average per capita cost over five years of US\$21.59. (The numbers of students displayed in the table for 2011 and 2012 are estimates). The high pass rates reported in the 2013 evaluation of the ALP (see section 4 above) and in this evaluation (see section 6 above) suggest that the ALP is an effective, low-cost programme. A major contributing factor is the low stipend paid up to 2014 to the ALP facilitators, who, our fieldwork has shown, are highly committed to the programme, to the extent that most have continued to offer classes in 2015 without pay.

YEAR	NO. OF STUDENTS	PER CAPITA (US\$)	TOTAL (US\$)
Students 2010	600	12.35	7 407
Students 2011	1 000	52.48	52 475
Students 2012	2 000	29.33	58 663
Students 2013	2 173	31.69	68 852
Students 2014	2 197	3.24	7 117
Total (5 years)	7 970	21.59	172 077

The following table shows that the DGAENF request to UNICEF of November 2014 would have resulted in an even lower per capita cost (US\$17.32), assuming that the 2,197 students reported in May 2014 would have continued to attend ALP classes:

DGAENF (MoE) request to UNICEF of 5 November 2014			
Xof 5 422 400			
Xof 17 412 425			
Xof 22 834 825			
TOTAL (US\$)	NO. OF STUDENTS	PER CAPITA (US\$)	TOTAL (US\$)
US\$ 38 058	2 197	17.32	38 058

Efficiency

Although the ALP is inexpensive and effective it is not cost-efficient. This apparent paradox is explained in the breakdown of the budget presented by the DGAENF to UNICEF on 5 November 2014 as part of its request for further funding. As reported above (see section 4), 20.3% of this budget was for facilitators' stipends and 26.2% was for programme materials; the remainder (53.5%) was for per diems for DGAENF officials and drivers and fuel for monitoring visits. The high proportion allocated to per diems and fuel is attributable to the deployment of supervisors and methodologists based at the DGAENF in Bissau. This is inefficient and an alternative and more sustainable strategy is recommended in section 12 below.

Equity

The success of the ALP in terms of gender equity is beyond doubt. The 2013 evaluation of the programme (see section 4 above) reported that 73% of ALP students were women; the current evaluation confirms that women are in the overwhelming majority (63.53% in level 1 in the ten ALP centres visited, 70.10% in level 2 and 60.33% in level 3). In the context of Guinea Bissau this represents redress as many village-based respondents reported that girls and women have historically been excluded from educational opportunities.

8 Findings

Findings related to the ALP theory of change

The ALP theory of change (developed by the evaluator – see section 5 above) contains a number of assumptions, envisaged outputs and outcomes and an impact statement. Achievement of these is assessed below, together with the robustness of the assumptions.

Output 2.1

DGAENF monitors and evaluates the programme

DGAENF capacity to monitor and evaluate the programme is very weak and has not improved over the course of the programme. Technical assistance provided by UNICEF to this end has been weak and the UNICEF staff member responsible for technical assistance has been on sick leave for over a year.

Output 2.2

Disadvantaged students are recruited and retained in the programme

The ALP has very successfully achieved this output on a small scale (2,197 students in 2014 with a drop-out rate of less than 10%).

Output 2.3

Literacy facilitators with high levels of motivation are recruited, retained and incentivised

The ALP has very successfully achieved this output. The facilitators are highly motivated and some have continued to work without pay, motivated by their enjoyment of teaching and their desire to contribute to the development of their communities.

Output 2.4

Current sources of funding are maintained and increased; partnerships are nurtured

UNICEF suspended funding for the ALP in November 2014 pending the outcome of this evaluation. The MoE and the DGAENF have not sought other sources of funding.

Output 2.5

Resources such as vehicles and fuel are used efficiently

ALP resources have not been used efficiently. There is a heavy weighting of expenditure towards the deployment of Bissau-based human resources (supervisors and methodologists) to the ALP centres which is cost-inefficient and unnecessary (see section 7 above).

Outcome 3.1

DGAENF acts upon the findings of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports

The capacity of the DGAENF to manage the programme efficiently is very weak. Basic management practices such as effective record keeping are not in place. Quality assurance is correspondingly absent. Key deficiencies uncovered in visits to the ALP centres (such as non-provision of Alfa TV CDs and maintenance of the solar panels) are not remedied, which renders the weighting of programme expenditure towards these visits especially cost-inefficient. The positive rating by ALP facilitators of the visits by Bissau-based DGAENF personnel is probably attributable to the fact that ALP facilitators were paid (until August 2014) by the DGAENF. **Outcome 3.1 was thus not achieved.**

Outcome 3.2

Access to literacy and numeracy is enhanced through efficient deployment of resources

The success rate in terms of access to literacy and numeracy is impressive on a small scale (2,197 students in 56 centres in 2014), and the drop-out rate is low (less than 10%).

As noted in section 7 above, the deployment of ALP resources is cost-inefficient. **Outcome 3.2 was thus not achieved.**

Outcome 3.3

Literacy and numeracy levels are enhanced in the target population

The success rate in terms of literacy and numeracy levels seems impressive, with pass rates generally above 90%. An examination of students' exercise books (see section 6 above) shows that achievement is much higher than was reported in the 2013 evaluation of the ALP. Attention needs to be paid, however, to the quality of student assessment. The Alfa TV manual makes reference to continuous assessment, but offers no practical guidance to facilitators about how to manage this. There is reference in the Alfa TV manual to a 'final test', but none of the facilitators interviewed had had access to this assessment instrument. It must therefore be noted that the assessment approach by ALP facilitators is subjective and needs to be standardised.

There is thus no hard evidence that outcome 3.3 was achieved, although the achievement is certainly higher than was reported in the 2013 evaluation of the ALP.

Outcome 3.4

Programme funding is sustained, either by government or donors

Government funding for the ALP has been consistently absent. External programme funding provided by UNICEF was suspended in November 2014 for reasons outlined above. Cuban technical assistance was terminated during the military coup of April 2012. Outcome 3.4 was thus not achieved.

Outcome 3.5

Efficient management of resources by DGAENF is enhanced through findings of M&E reports

As noted above, the capacity of the DGAENF to monitor and evaluate the programme efficiently is very weak, as is its capacity to implement the findings of M&E reports. Outcome 3.5 was thus not achieved.

Impact

Literacy and numeracy levels are enhanced on a scale large enough to accelerate economic growth

The ALP is a small-scale programme with (currently) little impact on the national economy. There is some evidence, particularly among female respondents, of impact on village economies, as several numerate ALP students reported their newfound ability to manage negotiations related to agricultural products such as cashew nuts. The positive impact on the enrolment of their children in public schools (not quantitatively measured in this evaluation) points to possible positive long-term impacts on the national economy, given the high rate of return on investment in education.

Assumptions contained in the ALP theory of change

Assumption: Continued support of development partners

This assumption proved to be unfounded as UNICEF discontinued ALP funding in November 2014 pending the outcome of this evaluation.

Assumption: Sustained funding will be available

This assumption proved to be unfounded. UNICEF discontinued ALP funding in November 2014 pending the outcome of this evaluation, and the DGAENF does not seem to have pursued other funding channels.

Assumption: Students understand Brazilian Portuguese

Contrary to the findings of the 2013 evaluation of the ALP, this assumption proved to be largely correct. Students and facilitators reported (see section 6 above) that the language of the Alfa TV learning materials was comprehensible (with some mediation in Creolo by facilitators); students welcomed the opportunity to improve their ability to speak Portuguese.

Relevance of the ALP

The ALP is highly relevant and welcomed by all students interviewed. The programme has contributed to a sea-change in the social order in all the villages visited in the course of the evaluation, as women (who, according to male and female students interviewed, had previously had little access to education) now not only had access to literacy and numeracy but in some cases were putting it to practical use in the economies of their villages. There is evidence (not quantified) of a positive impact on the enrolment of children in public schools.

Effectiveness of the ALP

It was not possible to assess the methodological effectiveness of the ALP in the course of this evaluation as none of the centres were offering classes at the time the fieldwork was undertaken. However, the ALP is cost-effective (see section 7 above).

Efficiency of the ALP

The ALP up to its suspension by the DGAENF in August 2014 was inefficient for a number of reasons:

- the ALP is inexpensive but not cost-efficient (see section 7 above) – however, its cost-inefficiency can be remedied (see section 12 below);
- management of the ALP by the DGAENF is very inefficient; and
- coordination of the DGAENF-UNICEF partnership has been weakened by staff turnover at UNICEF and the absence through illness of the UNICEF staff member responsible for the programme for the past year.

Impact of the ALP

There is ample evidence of a positive socioeconomic impact of the ALP at village level. The programme is currently too small to have national impact, but there is potential for positive impact at national level if the recommendations presented in section 12 below are implemented.

Sustainability of the ALP

Although the ALP is cost-inefficient the programme is cost-effective (see section 7 above) and sustainable, subject to the implementation of the recommendations contained in section 12 below.

9 Conclusions

The ALP has been well received and well supported in the sample villages. Disadvantaged students have been encouraged to participate in the programme through a variety of effective strategies at village level; women have been very successfully encouraged to participate despite the short-term opportunity cost of their reduced participation in agricultural activity and despite historical discrimination against female participation in education – women make up the majority of ALP students. Pass rates are high and the drop-out rate is low.

Literacy levels are higher than those reported in the 2013 evaluation of the ALP. For example, students' level 3 exercise books contain evidence of their ability to write sentences well, not only 'sign their names'.

There is a very high level of enthusiasm among students to become literate and numerate and an evident sense of pride in their achievement. In many cases this leads to practical applications that improve the quality of their lives and their sense of agency. ALP students appreciate the importance of education and an important result of the programme encourage or insist on their children's attendance at school. This changed attitude was reported equally by female and male ALP students. ALP facilitators are very motivated and most have continued to teach without being paid since August 2014.

Despite concerns within UNICEF about the cost of the ALP, the cost is low at under US\$22 per student over five years. Although the programme has been effective it has been cost-inefficient as over 50% of expenditure is attributable to supervision and support by the DGAENF, which deploys supervisors and methodologists to the ALP centres from Bissau. The low cost suggests that the ALP can be sustained, and recommendations are presented in section 12 below regarding enhanced cost-efficiency. Recommendations to address the very weak management capacity within the DGAENF and improved collaboration between the DGAEF and UNICEF are presented in section 10 below.

10 Recommendations

The following general recommendations should be read in conjunction with the recommendations regarding programme sustainability in section 12 below.

- The DGAENF should be provided with shoulder-to-shoulder capacity building TA to support programme management (including but not only strategic planning, monitoring and record-keeping capability).

- UNICEF should ensure close collaboration with the DGAENF and maintain parallel records of programme progress and achievement in electronic and hard copy. When there is turnover of UNICEF and/or DGAENF staff every effort should be made to support incoming staff and ensure a smooth transition.
- Technical assistance for the ALP should include the development of greatly improved monitoring instruments and record keeping, and a monitoring and evaluation plan for use in programme improvement.

11 Lessons learned

Literacy is power, as Paulo Freire would say. Among the 153 students interviewed in the course of the evaluation, perhaps 10-15% were inevitably reluctant to speak in the focus group discussions. The rest, the overwhelming majority, gave impressive accounts of the positive impact of the ALP on the quality of their lives (not only on their ability to read and write) and it was clear that the programme had substantially boosted their self-confidence. As noted in section 6 above, many students gave accounts of very practical ways in which their lives had changed for the better as they took on roles in their communities which they had previously not had access to.

It is important to note the unanimous view of ALP students that their attitude to education had become very positive as a result of the programme when in many cases they had previously been dismissive of its value. Students at two ALP centres (aged approximately 30 to 45) attended the public primary school in addition to their ALP classes. They were proud of their attendance and their children (who in some cases sat in the same school classroom) were reportedly also proud.

For UNICEF, it is of particular importance to note that all the students with children (there were very few without children) now encourage them to attend school and that they attributed this behaviour change to the ALP.

Certain findings of the 2013 evaluation of the ALP (reviewed in section 4 above) differ radically from those of this evaluation. For example, the 2013 assessment of the language of the learning materials (Brazilian Portuguese) was that it was largely incomprehensible for the students and even for one of the facilitators. This is in contrast to the quantitative finding of the current evaluation, which shows that students are not only comfortable with the language of the materials (sometimes mediated in Creolo by the facilitator) but appreciate the opportunity to improve their Portuguese, which (as is typically the case with colonial languages) is perceived to open more socioeconomic doors than Creolo or indigenous African languages. (It should be noted that most of the students interviewed understood most of what the evaluator said in Portuguese and responded in a version of Creolo weighted towards Portuguese. All of the facilitators understood the evaluator perfectly and responded in Portuguese.)

The methodology of the 2013 evaluation is only briefly and weakly described – for example, the number of centres visited and the number and types of respondents are not reported. A clear and detailed methodology is required in future evaluations, not only evaluations of the ALP.

12 Sustainability recommendations

Introduction

This section presents recommendations related to the sustainability of the ALP and statistics that would inform scale-up of the programme.

Sustainability of the ALP

Recommendations related to the sustainability of the ALP follow:

- Non-formal education and literacy interventions need to find an appropriate space within the MoE and in the MoE budget, in order to reduce the dependency on donors' support.
- The ALP should be reinstated at the current low cost of under US\$22 per student over five years and expanded after a pilot based on the recommendations of this evaluation.
- The proportion of programme expenditure (over 50%) that is attributable to supervision and support should be reduced by paying stipends to sector-level supervisors (to monitor factors such as attendance by facilitators and students and student drop-out) and methodologists based in the region (to provide support to ALP facilitators).
- These programme personnel should be provided with motorbikes and the related expenses (fuel and maintenance) should be budgeted for.
- Supervisors (sector-based) do not need to be educationists – the tools they use can be very simple, related, for example, to attendance and centre maintenance. Efficient maintenance of ALP equipment is of particular importance and should be budgeted for.
- Methodologists at the regional level can be former ALP facilitators who have proven their worth in the programme. (In only ten visits to ALP centres we met two facilitators who would be good candidates – one a former teacher and village chief and one a technical expert in agriculture.)
- Travel by MoE supervisors and methodologists to the ALP centres from Bissau should be largely eliminated, subject to a budget being determined for training and support provided by Bissau-based personnel at cost-effective locations.
- Sector-based supervisors and regionally based methodologists should receive support and training from Bissau-based DGAENF specialists at annual or bi-annual intervals (subject to a costing study – see below) at the most cost-effective locations.

- The potential for income-generating activities (such as using the ALP solar panels to charge mobile phones) should be investigated.
- A costed strategy should be developed for the piloting of a new model of ALP delivery; the detailed cost of national roll-out should also be estimated.

Scale-up of the ALP

Citizens of Guinea Bissau aged 15 to 64 (28% of the population²⁵) number approximately 500,360, of whom it is estimated (using the total adult illiteracy rate of 44.7%²⁶) that 223,661 are illiterate. Students enrolled in the ALP in 2014 numbered 2,197 – just under 1% of illiterate people aged 15 to 64. These statistics are presented to illustrate the magnitude of the literacy challenge in Guinea Bissau and the relatively small scale of the ALP to date. The statistics should be borne in mind when considering the possible scale-up of the programme.

Currently the 56 ALP centres have an average enrolment of just under 40 students. In order to comprehensively address illiteracy in the 15-64 age group, approximately 5,600 ALP centres would need to be established.

The average cost per ALP student over five years up to August 2014 was US\$21.59; using this actual reported expenditure, the total cost of addressing illiteracy in the age group 15-64 would be just under US\$5 million (US\$4,828,841) over five years.

A final important statistic is that the evaluation fieldworkers travelled approximately 2,000 kilometres over eight working days to visit ten ALP centres (1.25 centres per day on average). This datum indicates that approximately 25 centres can be visited per month. Assuming that regionally based methodologists are deployed (see recommendation above) for six months per year (120 days excluding, for example, harvest time), one methodologist would be able to visit 75 centres twice per year (120 days * 1.25 centres per day / 2 visits per year). This indicates that in order to cover 5,600 centres 75 methodologists (and 5,600 ALP facilitators) would be needed – a ratio of approximately 1 methodologist per 75 ALP facilitators.

The key cost factors in any substantial expansion of the ALP are presented below:

- the number of facilitators who would need to be recruited and the corresponding number of ALP centres that would need to be established to make an impact on the national economy;
- the number of methodologists who would be needed to effectively support the ALP facilitators (at a ratio of 1:75);
- stipends for ALP methodologist and facilitators;

²⁵ See <http://populationpyramid.net/guinea-bissau/2015/>, accessed 22 September 2015.

²⁶ See http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau_statistics.html, accessed 22 September 2015.

- stipends for ALP supervisors;
- the cost of Alfa TV learning material;
- the cost of construction and maintenance of ALP centres, including periodic replacement of Alfa TV learning material;
- the investment cost and operational costs of motorbikes for ALP supervisors and methodologists;
- the cost of training of ALP facilitators and sector-based supervisors;
- the cost of training of regionally based ALP methodologists by methodologists based in the capital Bissau; and
- technical assistance for the DGAENF to enhance its programme management capacity.

Annex 1 The evaluation work plan

The following work plan includes the travel schedule of the evaluator, who is based in Johannesburg.

Time	Activity	Remarks
06/08/2015		
18.30 – 01.05	Johannesburg - Dakar	SA 207
07/08/2015		
09.00 – 10.00	Dakar – Bissau	DN 063
08/08 to 09/08/2015		
	Continuation of home-based work on inception report and evaluation tools (in Bissau) Meeting with Cristina Brugiolo	2 days (Hotel Ancar)
10/08/2015		
09.00 – 12.00	UNICEF office, meetings and logistics	UNICEF office
14.00 – 16.30	Meeting with data collectors (2) and data entry person	INE/UNICEF
11/08/2015		
09.30-12.00	Meeting with Director of Adult Literacy and Non Formal Education (Dra Francisca M. Dabo)	MoE
15.00-16.00	Meeting with the Ambassador (Ex. Elis A. Gonzalez Polanco) at the Cuban Embassy	Cuban Embassy
12/08 to 13/08/2015		
	Work with data collectors and data entry person on evaluation tools, translation of the tools and data capturing template	UNICEF office
	Further meetings with Director of Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education (MoE) and UNICEF education staff	MoE and UNICEF offices
14/08/2015		
08h30-17.30	Field visit to the literacy centre of Lendem–Bissora with the data collectors - 1 day	overnight – Bissau UNICEF car
17/08 /2015		
08.30- 17.30	Meetings with UNICEF education staff (visit to the literacy centre of Tabadjan–Gabu postponed to 26 August) and refinement of data capturing template	overnight – Bissau
18/08 /2015		
08.30- 17.30	Field visits to the literacy centres of Ntchale–Mansoa & Mansade–Mansaba with the data collectors - 1 day	overnight – Bissau
19/08/2015		
08.30- 17.30	Field visit to the literacy centre of Nema–Farim with the data collectors - 1 day	overnight – Bissau
20-21/08/2015		
08.30- 17.30	Field visits to the literacy centres of Contuboel 1 & Fajonquito 1–Bafata (1 per day) with the data collectors – 2 days	overnight – Bafata (Hotel Triton)
24/08 /2015		

08.30- 17.30	Field visit to the literacy centre of Copa Mangui–Pirada with the data collectors - 1 day	overnight Gabú	–
25/08/2015			
	Field visit to the literacy centres of Canquelefa–Pitche with the data collectors- 1 day	overnight Gabu	–
26/08/2015			
	Field visits to the literacy centres of Mafanco–SONACO and Tabadjan–Gabu with the data collectors – 1 day	overnight Bissau	–
27/08/2015			
08.30-17.30	Debriefing and presentation of first impressions	UNICEF Office	
28/08/2015			
10.45-11-45	Bissau-Dakar	DN064	
29/08/2015			
06.50-17.15	Dakar-Johannesburg	SA208	

Annex 2 The evaluation instruments

See [ALP Instruments 150814 FINAL.docx](#).

Annex 3 The fieldwork data

See [Introducao_DadosICB PM.xlsx](#).

Annex 4 Summary of the fieldwork data

Functionality and accessibility of the ALP centres

Six of the ten centres were not functioning because of a DGAENF instruction issued in August 2014 (see section 4 above). One facilitator explicitly reported that he had ignored the instruction and continued to teach. No facilitator had been paid their stipend since August 2014.

At four centres classes had been held in 2015 for level 1 students in contravention of the DGAENF instruction not to enrol new students. At three centres classes had been held in 2015 for level 2 students. At two centres classes had been held in 2015 for level 3 students. All of these courses had been led by the facilitators without pay.

Where 1 is 'Very good' and 4 is 'Very bad', the quantitative rating of the equipment follows:

Facilitators' average rating: 1.4 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

Where 1 is 'Very accessible' and 4 is 'Accessible', the quantitative rating of the accessibility of the centres follows:

Village chiefs' average rating: 1 out of 4 ('Very accessible')

Facilitators' average rating: 1.1 out of 4 (between 'Accessible' and 'Very accessible')

Students' average rating: 1 out of 4 ('Very accessible')

Quality of the ALP learning materials and methodology

Where 1 is 'Very good' and 4 is 'Very bad', the quantitative rating of the learning materials and methodology follows:

Facilitators' average rating of the materials: 2.3 out of 4 (between 'Bad' and 'Good' – the poor condition of the CDs in many centres was the major factor in this relatively low score)

Students' average rating of the materials: 2 out of 4 ('Good')

Facilitators' average rating of the methodology: 1.5 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

Students' average rating of the methodology: 1.65 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

ALP pass rates

ALP level 1	ALP level 1
89.42%	92.05%
Male	Female
Passed	Passed

ALP level 2	ALP level 2
79.45%	96.45%
Male	Female
Passed	Passed

ALP level 3	ALP level 3
92.31%	90.48%
Male	Female
Passed	Passed

ALP drop-out rates

ALP level 1	ALP level 1
10.58%	8.52%
Male	Female
Dropped out	Dropped out

ALP level 2	ALP level 2
20.55%	4.26%
Male	Female
Dropped out	Dropped out

ALP level 3	ALP level 3
7.69%	9.52%
Male	Female
Dropped out	Dropped out

The language of the ALP

Where 1 is 'Very appropriate' and 4 is 'Appropriate', the quantitative rating of the language of the learning materials follows:

Facilitators' average rating of the language of the learning materials: 1.3 out of 4 (between 'Appropriate' and 'Very appropriate')

Students' average rating of the language of the learning materials: 1.65 out of 4 (between 'Appropriate' and 'Very appropriate')

The quality of DGAENF support

Where 1 is 'Very good' and 4 is 'Very bad', the quantitative rating of the quality of supervision and support follows:

Facilitators' average rating of the quality of supervision: 2 out of 4 ('Good')

Facilitators' average rating of the quality of methodological support: 1.9 out of 4 (between 'Good' and 'Very good')

Facilitators' motivations

Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of facilitators' motivation levels follows:

Facilitators' average rating of their motivation levels: 1.4 out of 4 (between 'High' and 'Very high')

Students' motivations

Students' motivation levels were self-reported as close to 'very high'.

Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of students' motivation levels follows:

Students' average rating of their motivation levels: 1.1 out of 4 (close to 'Very high')

Students' motivations for participating in the programme included 'wanting to read, write and know numbers', 'wanting to be able to sign my name', 'wanting to gain more knowledge', 'wanting to know what is out there in the world', 'making a dream come true' and 'wanting to come out of darkness and have the courage to participate in society'.

Community awareness of and support for the ALP

Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of community awareness of and support for the ALP follows:

Village chiefs' average rating of community awareness of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Facilitators' average rating of community awareness of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Students' average rating of community awareness of the ALP: 1.2 out of 4 (close to 'Very high')

Village chiefs' average rating of community ownership of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Facilitators' average rating of community ownership of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Students' average rating of community ownership of the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Village chiefs' average rating of community support for the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Facilitators' average rating of community support for the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high')

Students' average rating of community support for the ALP: 1.4 out of 4 (between 'High' and 'Very high')

Where 1 is 'Very high' and 4 is 'Very low', the quantitative rating of community encouragement of women's participation in the ALP follows:

Village chiefs', facilitators' and students' average rating of community encouragement of women's participation in the ALP: 1 out of 4 ('Very high' across respondent types)