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***A CONSULTANCY REPORT ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE
PROVISION AND IMPACT OF FIVE NON-FORMAL BASIC
EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN BOTSWANA***

FINAL DRAFT

***SUBMITTED TO: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
DNFE, UNICEF, UNESCO***

By

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Botswana***

DATE: JUNE 15TH, 2000

UNICEF/UNESCO/ERNESA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (To be written after receipt of comments from reference group)



1.0 BACKGROUND

The Government has played a major role in the provision of education for all children of school going age. The review in the recently completed National Development Plan VII (1991-1997) indicated that the state has nearly met its objective of universal access to basic education. It has availed enough places for all school going children (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1997). However, calculations based on the 1991 national population census figures and the education statistics of 1991 indicate that 5.4% of the school age children (7-13 years) were not in school. These proportions were arrived at by dividing the actual first level education enrolment for age bracket 7-13 years by the total population for the same age bracket and multiplying by 100 to get the total percentage of those in school, which arrives at 94.6%. This figure may be slightly reduced because some children do drop out of school. Though not indicated by age, the education statistics for 1991 shows a total dropout figure of 3 773 which is 1.3% of the overall enrolment for all ages.

Similar estimations based on population projections for the subsequent years and the actual enrolment statistics at primary level education for the same years indicate that the figure is reducing. This indicates that although there has been a remarkable expansion of educational provision in the past decades, there are still some children of primary school age who are not in school. Therefore, the goal of universal access to basic education has not been achieved (UNDP, 1994). This, according to Kann et al (1989), is because of factors like poverty, drop-outs, cultural reasons and those living among the remote area communities. The figure for out of school children at the same age bracket has been reflected in earlier documents as 10% (Kann et al, 1989); then 17%

in 1991 and later 10% again in 1993 though it is not clear how the figures were arrived at.

The number of primary schools increased from 376 in 1978 to 647 in 1991. In 1994 there were 310 850 children attending 669 primary schools. The system was supported by 11 726 teachers, of whom 40% were expatriate, and 17% untrained locals (Ministry of Education, 1993; UNDP, 1994). It has also been reported that as children progressed through the system, there was a marked decline in the number of girls, starting from 50% at primary school level to 22.6% at vocational training institutions (UNDP, 1994). The reality is that against the 669 primary schools, there were 166 junior secondary schools. This increased the promotion rate from Standard VII to Form 1 from 50% in 1981 to 95% in 1993 (Ministry of Education, 1993).

The disparity in figures suggests that not all pupils who complete Standard VII gain access to Form 1 and go through the ten year cycle of basic education as Government intends. The provision of primary and junior secondary level education which culminates in basic education, has proven to be deficient in meeting the needs for education to be instrumental in meeting the personal and societal needs of the learners.

There is a history and background behind the observed structural inequalities and income disparities in this country. Botswana, like most developing countries, inherited a colonial educational structure that was intended to select a few loyal citizens to be part of the colonial system to help to process raw materials for shipment to the metropole (Youngman, 1995). The system therefore, had a poor record of provision of both formal and out-of-school education. The last three decades after independence in

1966 witnessed a magnificent quantitative growth in the country's economy and educational structure. The economy grew four-fold, from one of the poorest twenty-five nations at independence in 1966 to a middle income state in the 1990s.

The economic growth has however, been accompanied by massive disparities between income groups. It has been observed that the top 20% earned as much as 24 times more than the bottom 20% of the population (Fong, 1995). Structural inequalities have also been demonstrated in a study on Poverty in Botswana by the Botswana Institute of Policy Analysis (BIDPA). The study indicates that in 1993/94, 47% of the population was below the income poverty line, with 30% classified as very poor and unable to meet their basic food needs. Characteristically, female headed households are poorer than the average male headed households (BIDPA, 1997). The study also found that households of the the uneducated and the poorly educated in Botswana experienced severe poverty (Youngman, 1998).

As a result, there is need for provision of non-formal basic education (NFBE) which is presumed to be in a better position to provide opportunities for the enhancement of lives for adults, out-of-school children, drop-outs and other youth. This would closely reflect the government 's commitment to the principles of equity and social justice (Ministry of Education, 1993).

1.1 Provision of Non-Formal Education in Botswana

The concept of basic education is difficult to define. The UNESCO has used basic education to denote a process similar to basic learning as used at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. At that Conference, basic

learning was used to encompass all learning required by human beings in order to survive. Learning needs comprise of both essential learning needs such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, problem solving and the basic skills that are required by human beings to survive and to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate, to facilitate development, to improve quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning (Delors, 1996: 23). This suggests the need to extend learning opportunities to adults, youth and children who are not in school or have dropped out of school, in order for them to have access to learning as a basic human right.

In Botswana, basic education refers to learning opportunities organised to enable adults and children to learn basic skills and to achieve an educational level equivalent to ten years of schooling which is Junior Certificate (Ministry of Education, 1993). Basic education in Botswana has been used as envisaged in the statement from the UNESCO

The programme in Botswana was part of the effort to enhance access and participation in education by both adults and children through formal and non-formal modes. In spite of this effort, there is still a clear demand from individuals and communities to upgrade their capacities, knowledge and skills on the one hand, and to think critically and autonomously on the other. The centrality of formal education as forming the concrete core of basic education for all is not disputed. However, in the developing countries, formal education has reached only a point of near universality. It does not reach all the targeted school age children nor does it provide the needed educational skills to those who gain access. Consequently, the framework for action for the World Declaration on Education for All indicates that the reduction of illiteracy rates of 1990

half by year 2000 signals that it would not be possible or sufficient to concentrate on primary education alone. It can only serve as a first channel (Muller, 1997).

The importance of Non-Formal Basic Education in Botswana has always been recognised. The first report of the National Commission on Education in 1977 indicated that literacy as a form of basic education is a prerequisite for other development efforts.

The Report states that:

A fully literate population is an important long term objective if Botswana's national principles are to be achieved ... it is required in the context of efforts to achieve greater productivity, health, or have greater control over one's environment and it will contribute to the achievement of other objectives (Ministry of Education, 1977).

It is clear that if the majority of the population remains illiterate, national development efforts would be hampered. The persistence of illiteracy would hamper the ability of the people to communicate and receive development information from Government. The state was, therefore, compelled to engage in the provision of literacy as a means to facilitate national development. The initial efforts to provide non-formal basic education were restricted to the provision of basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy under the auspices of the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). The result was the establishment of Botswana National Literacy Programme (NLP). The Programme was developed based on the findings of a task force chaired by the then Coordinator of Rural Development based in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The task force circulated a document entitled *The Eradication of Literacy in Botswana: A National Initiative (A Consultation Document)*. The Document spelt out the objectives of the NLP as follows:

- to eradicate illiteracy and to enable an estimated 250,000 illiterate adults and youth (40% of the population aged 15-45 years) to become literate in Setswana and numeracy within a period of six years, that is, 1980-1985.
- to enable the participants to apply knowledge in developing their cultural, social and economic life.
- to enable participants to perform community duties on the one hand and to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship on the other (Ministry of Education, 1980).

The provision of literacy in Botswana is under the portfolio of the Department of Non-Formal Education. The Department could not complete the task of eradicating illiteracy in six years as envisaged. Consequently, the objectives of the programme were redefined during the National Development Plan VI (1985-1991) as follows:

- to help the learning needs of communities in rural and remote areas by providing education for adults who had a chance to go to school ... and for children

The Department intends to expand its non-formal activities beyond reading, writing and numeracy. The needs of rural communities in terms of skills required for income generating activities will form the basis for expansion (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1985). It should be noted that the scope and mandate of the programme was expanded to include provision of education for children living

remote villages. More importantly, the programme recognised the need for the provision of skills to enable adult learners to engage in income generating projects. However recent studies in both urban and rural areas indicate that practical skills-training has not been effectively carried out. The programme is still too focused on the provision of basic reading, writing and numeracy (Maruatona, 1995: 1997).

The Department of Non-Formal Education and the National Library Services have been making efforts to provide post-literacy materials for the programme graduates from the late 1980s with the establishment of the Village Reading Rooms (VRRs). The Department has recently started working with various industries on a workplace literacy project. The basic objective of the workplace literacy programme is to provide a learning opportunity for some of the workers who do not have basic literacy skills of reading, writing and numeracy. The organisations allow their workers to attend literacy classes during working hours. The Department of Non-Formal Education on the other hand, provides the teachers and the materials such as primers.

The Botswana National Literacy Programme has remained the single largest Government sponsored basic education provider outside the formal school. The NLP was evaluated in 1987 and the result showed that the literacy graduates performed at a level equivalent to Standard IV in the formal school. This has since formed the basis for transfer between the formal school and non-formal strands of basic education. It has been used to allow learners to move between the two systems. The evaluation also indicated the need to review the curriculum of the Programme. The Programme was reported to be plagued by a number of problems that included drop-outs, lack of qualified staff and the low morale of the Literacy Group Leaders who did the teaching

on a voluntary basis (Ministry of Education, 1993). Consequently, the 1993 National Commission on Education recommended an increase of the honoraria for the Literacy Group Leaders, which Government has endorsed (Ministry of Education, 1994).

In 1993 the Department of Non-Formal Education in conjunction with the Central Statistics Office conducted the first ever national literacy survey which found out that the country has an estimated literacy rate of 68.9% with a 66.9% rate among men and 70.3% among women. The study involved a total of 20,000 individuals from rural and urban areas. However, it found that the Botswana National Literacy Programme covered only about 14.2% of the eligible population. This poses a serious challenge to the staff of the Department of Non-Formal Education.

The provision of out-of-school education has not been the sole responsibility of the state. A number of non-governmental organisations have participated in the provision of literacy services to different groups especially, in the rural areas. The Botswana Christian Council (BCC), the Lutheran World Federation provided literacy to villages in Etsha and Mohembo in northern Botswana. The literacy projects used local languages alongside Setswana which is the official language of the Programme (Maruatona, 1997; Reimer, 1997). The problem is that there is lack of a comprehensive policy framework on the role of NGOs vis-a-vis their relationship with the Government in the provision of Non-Formal Basic Education in Botswana. The National Commission on Education does not spell out explicitly what role the NGO should play in the provision of non-formal basic education. It emphasises the need for the state to provide a framework within which a variety of organisations can undertake implementation of literacy services. The cooperation between the state and NGOs in the provision of

education is essential for the maximum benefit of the under-privileged in society (Ministry of Education, 1993; Maruatona, 1996).

1.1.1 *Out-of-School Youth*

One category of the population that needs the services of non-formal basic education are out-of-school youth. The Government of Botswana intends that all school age children should have access to primary education by the mid 1980s. However, it became clear to the authorities that not all children are at school. The outcome was that the Ministry of Education commissioned a study to establish the actual number of children who are not in school. The study concluded that formal education did not reach about 8% of the children while 2% dropped out of school each year (Kann, Mapolelo and Nleya, 1987).

Data from the 1991 population census suggested that about 5.4% of children aged 7-13 years were not enrolled in school. As the urban population expanded over the years there is a growing phenomenon of street children *Bo Bashí* who have become a social concern. Private sector initiatives through the *Bana Ba Rona Trust* have attempted to redress the situation but to no avail.

The problem of out-of-school children is by no means a unique Botswana problem. The United Nations recently adopted a convention on the Right of the Child, pointing to the provision of basic education as a basic human right. The Convention calls for the provision of education through alternative modes if the school cannot reach all the children. This view has been advocated for by such UN agencies as the UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP.

In 1991 the State organised a national conference on Education for All which proposed that Government should ensure that basic education is accessible to disadvantaged children by taking special measures to develop an educational programme for street children, rural and remote area children (Youngman and Seisa, 1991). The Government has made efforts since 1992 to establish the extent of the problem of drop outs, who leave school before completing the full cycle of 10 years of basic schooling. This category of learners has to be provided for to reach Junior Certificate outside school. The category of out-of-school youth have since attracted the attention of the private sector interests who have expanded night schools and study groups/centres to meet the educational needs of out-of-school categories of learners (Ministry of Education, 1993).

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The pioneering efforts of amongst others, UNICEF and UNESCO have been instrumental in the insertion of Non-formal education in the educational nomenclature. The failings of the formal education system and the realization that Non-formal education offers a viable alternative through imparting of critical knowledge and skills, have added impetus to the need for, and provision of this form of education. Adult learning is a gateway to enhanced participation in social, cultural and economic life. It is also viewed as essential for creative citizen participation in the sustainable development of their countries (UNESCO, 1997). The World Declaration on Education for All (1990) states that "every person, child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs" (p. 88). Adult learning has since become imperative at home, work and the community to enable people to be creative. The Hamburg Declaration on adult education states that literacy should be a gateway to a fuller participation in social, cultural, political and economic life.

In Botswana, great strides have been made in the provision of non-formal education since the Non-Formal Education department (DNFE) was established as a separate unit in 1979. Since then, the department has been involved in a variety of programs ranging from functional literacy to income generating projects, and serving a vast array of clientele.

The NDP 8 aimed to:

Increase access to education and training opportunities through both formal institutions and out of school means....to encourage private sector and NGO participation in education (p.356).

Further the Plan 8 stated that:

To ensure equity in provision of, and access to education, special efforts will be made to reach all disadvantaged school age children. This equity will be extended to adults and out of school youth through comprehensive out of school education programs (p. 356).

It was further intimated that "where conventional schools are inappropriate for delivery, non-formal means will be used" (NDP 8, p359, see also pp339-340 for objectives of Non-formal education).

2.1 Literature Review: Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 *Social Development Theory*

There is no consensus on the definition and measures of the concept development. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the measure of development in terms of Gross National Product and Per Capita Income is becoming questionable and is being replaced by a comprehensive measure of the improvement of quality of life. This view puts people at the centre of development and their standard of living is gauged in terms of social, political environment and economic factors (Youngman, 1997). Economic policies should provide opportunity for work, self-employment, reduction of unemployment, poverty and enable people to gain access to income and productive resources. The social development perspective, therefore, brings the human face into development and it is associated with the moral commitment to the welfare of the excluded in society. It has been instrumental in the modification of public opinion regarding activities geared towards poverty alleviation and reduction of structural inequalities in society (Marsden, 1990).

Social development is perceived from the need to provide public services like education, health, housing and welfare for the disadvantaged. Provision of social service would reduce poverty and tackle economic inequalities in society. Social development has enlarged its scope in the mid 1980s when its new approach included commitment to the plight of the poor and enlarged its scope to include inculcation of social and human dignity, tolerance, cultural identity, employment and participation of civil society in the process of development (Youngman, 1997).

Non-Formal Basic Education has a critical role to play in the realisation of social

development. It could be crucial in empowering people and ensuring that they participate in the making of decisions that affect their lives. It can empower people from different walks of life (Freire and Macedo, 1995; Stromquist, 1994). The potential of education to transform its participants has been recognised in international circles especially that it can contribute to human development. Delors (1996, 11) states that it is one of the principal means available to foster deeper or more harmonious forms of human development and thereby reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war. Basic education, should, therefore, be expanded to include the currently excluded adults, youth and children in remote areas where there are no schools and those who because of various reasons dropped from school, especially in the marginalized parts of the urban centers. This has been necessitated by the fact that the economic status of the participants in non-formal education is such that they are poor and economically disadvantaged. They also, on average belong to the ethnic minorities in Botswana more especially the Basarwa who lead a nomadic life in the remote areas of Botswana. There is an underlying assumption that both formal and non-formal basic education could lead to development of the improvement of the quality of life for the participants (Delors, 1996).

2.1.2 Provision of Non-Formal Basic Education

Non-formal Basic Education is composed of diversified set of learning experiences designed and implemented along the formal school for different target groups who intend to achieve basic education. As the world enters the 21st century, there is a growing demand for continuous learning, upgrading of skills, knowledge and capacity for problem solving by individuals and communities. Educational opportunities should not only be restricted to the above task but be made part of the drive for access and

equal opportunity they are able to provide. Provision of NFBE such as literacy should be viewed as a human right and a pre-requisite for the promotion of equality and social justice and democracy (Graham, 1991; Lind and Johnston, 1996). It has been cautioned that the provision of literacy and indeed other forms of adult basic learning only attract men and women if they are convinced that such programmes would contribute to the betterment of their lives.

Some studies have shown that the past three decades have witnessed a phenomenal growth in the provision of education which is informed by a basic assumption that access to education would lead to multiple benefits at individual, community and national levels (Bhola, 1984; Graham, 1992). In the nation a skilled workforce contributes to economic development, national unity and social cohesion. For the individual it promised an escape from poverty, greater social prestige and mobility and the prospects for a good job (Graham, 1992).

Consequently, the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education CONFENTIA V, reiterated the need to ensure universal right to literacy and basic education because they enable individuals to function in the community, and community to effect social and cultural transformation (UNESCO, 1997). Basic education could be understood as both primary and non-formal basic education activities which lay emphasis on activities aimed at alleviating poverty, given its attention to the education of girls and women, disadvantaged and marginalized youth. Therefore, UNESCO basic education entails early childhood and primary education, literacy and skills training for youth and adults in different societies (Muller, 1997). In spite of the good intentions of basic education providers it has been criticised for failure to be transformative especially, among

members of disadvantaged groups like women. It serves to reinforce their caretaker status (Stromquist, 1993; Freire and Macedo, 1995; Maruatona, 1997). Educational problems in Africa has been summarised by Weyers, 1998: 23) who indicated that education in Africa is in crisis. The formal systems, created in imitation of western models after independence, are not able to fill the need on the society. It is apparent that there is no consent about the role of basic education in providing social development, facilitating access, equity and social justice. Basic Education serves to reinforce the hegemonic control by those in power who control the content on NFBE programmes (Maruatona, 1994; Apple, 1993; Youngman, 1995).

In Botswana some studies have shed light on the role of basic education. In a national position paper presented to the 11th Conference of Commonwealth Ministers of Education held at Barbados, the Government of Botswana acknowledged that while it has made impressive records of 85% access to formal schooling there were some missing children. The state made a commitment to give highest priority to primary education up to 9 years of basic education to all children (Ministry of Education, 1990). This commitment has not been met and it does not capture the extent of the need for basic education in Botswana in that it restricts basic education to schooling.

However, the state recognised that need to widen the provision. In 1991 Government organised a national conference on Basic Education for All. In line with the 1990 Declaration on Education for All. In action the participants concluded that there is need for basic education to go beyond the 3Rs and provide a wide range of choices of education in order to respond to the need of the people, especially, among rural communities. Non-formal education has to provide an alternative for children who are

not able to enter formal school for a variety of reasons (Seisa and Youngman, 1993). While the state has achieved quantitative growth in terms of provision it is not established whether the provision has had any impact on the quality of life of the participants. The concern of the present study is to go beyond the quantitative information to establish the extent to which the provision made qualitative changes on the lives of basic education programmes participants in Botswana.

In spite of the mass provision of basic education highlighted above the Government came under increased pressure in the 1990ís to improve the quality of education. In 1992 the state instituted a National Commission on Education to assess the problems in the education system and suggest what could be done. The Commission submitted its report in 1993. The report unlike the 1977 Commission which did not have a single recommendation on literacy had a whole chapter devoted to Out-of-School Education. The chapter outlined the scope and target of non-formal basic and continuing education. However, the report recognised the need for a comprehensive policy on Out-of-School Basic Education that would articulate the roles of non-governmental organisations and the private sector initiative in the provision of adult basic education and how they could work together to provide basic education (Ministry of Education, 1993; Maruatona and Mbaiwa, 1997).

The Department of Non-Formal Education collaborated with the Central Statistics Office to conduct a national literacy survey in 1993. The survey was aimed at providing a reliable database for the Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP) in order to show its strength and areas that require further action in terms of policies and priorities.

2.1.3 *Impact of Non-Formal Basic Education Programmes*

Education serves different purposes in society in different epochs of human history. There is a functional school of thought that presumes that education should provide the individual with basic skills that would enable the person to function in society. It advocates for practical solutions to practical problems. It presses for orderly and gradual change in society. The functional approach is associated with Government and private sector training for upgrading of skills (Boshier, 1994). Education is viewed as essential for the social and personal development of the learner. It could contribute to their personal improvement (Mwamwenda, 1994). It has been noted that basic education could address issues of poverty, inequality and underdevelopment.

The process of education should emphasise sustainable development in order to make an impact on quality of life of the participants. Basic education should redress the need for basic literacy which individuals need for their daily life activities (Delors, 1996). The programmes are to offer practical skills to enable graduates to improve the quality of their lives upon graduation. Consequently, the Hamburg Declaration has noted that adult education is imperative at the workplace, in the home, in the community as men and women struggle to create new realities at every stage of their lives (UNESCO, 1997). However, in spite of these well articulated statements the actual impact of basic education on individuals and communities remain elusive and, therefore, needs to be established more systematically. This is partly because most of these declarations remain at the level of polemic and rhetoric and do not reach the individual to whom they are intended.

Consequently, most of the studies that purported to establish the effects of programmes

have been restricted to the formal school to the exclusion of non-formal basic education. The few studies that have emerged were restricted to literacy in terms of the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. For example, experiences from Tanzania (Kassam, 1998), Thailand (Varavarn, 1989) and Nigeria (Okedara, 1981) indicate that the learners' lives were transformed by the learning experience at individual, family and community levels. In Tanzania literacy enabled the participants to develop a voice and enabled them to produce useful practical and literacy skills which they then utilised to improve their lives. They felt more informed and articulate as a result of the programme. After graduation they felt free to ask questions at public meetings and participated in various development projects in their communities (Varavarn, 1989). From Nigeria the learners reported that after literacy they become socially effective and took part in economic activities (Okedara, 1981).

In Botswana a study was conducted to establish the effects of the literacy programme on the minorities in the North Western part. Its objectives included determining why they enrolled in the programme, what effect it did have on them as individuals and community members and whether they were taught practical skills. The learners and graduates agreed that they wanted to be able to read and write. The programme did not enable them to carry out any community activities nor did it expose them to practical skills other than what they taught each other. This was a micro study and did not enable the researcher to make any firm generalisations about the impact of the literacy programme on the minority learners. It is against this background that a more detailed study was conducted, in order to establish the impact of basic education programs, particularly on disadvantaged groups in Botswana. Overall, the main strength of the study is that it combined the qualitative and quantitative research designs in its data

collection. This enabled the researchers to generate data that gave crucial details about the individual programmes and how they fare across different social and economic settings in Botswana.

2.2 Description of Programs

The consultancy targeted five varieties of NFBE programs. Current and past participants of selected programs were targeted. In selecting these programs, particular attention has been focused on programs that target minority and disadvantaged groups as follows:

2.2.1 *Programs for Remote area dwellers-In and out of School Youth in Community Schools*

These programs are normally community initiatives, which may or may not receive some form of assistance from the District Councils. The programs are a clear indication of the particular community's desire for education, and serve as a good illustration of self-reliance. However, unaided or partially aided community schools usually operate under severe shortage of human, material and physical resources. For a long time, children from many of these remote areas had to travel long distances to schools. Consequently, the government, through the district councils, has built hostels in some remote areas in order to address this problem, and to increase educational access. Hence, many children from remote areas are housed in hostels away from their villages.

2.2.2 *Literacy in the Workplace*

Literacy in the Workplace programs seek to equip workers in particular work situations, with reading, writing and numeracy skills, in recognition of the need for an informed and productive work force. They are part of the Botswana National Literacy Program (NLP), which is operated through partnership between the Department of Non-formal Education and employing agencies.

The workplace literacy program was borne out of the realization that the overall literacy program seemed to be patronized by people in the rural areas, and invariably left out the urban areas, who it was nevertheless felt could greatly benefit from it. It was further noted that "people in rural areas move to urban areas in greater numbers than people moving to rural areas. Hence, the program was started to address the literacy needs of this clientele, by targeting them at the workplace. It was also hoped that the program would serve this immediate purpose, and in doing so would also address one of the key objectives of the Literacy Decade, which stipulated the need to,

increase popular participation and solidarity in efforts to combat illiteracy, particularly through activities of the government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, parastatal organizations, voluntary organizations, and community groups

Theoretically, there seems to be a significant measure of enthusiasm for the program. However, in practice it would seem that some organizations still lack awareness about the immense potential of the literacy program, and so fail to acknowledge the inter-linkages between a literate and numerate workforce, even at a very basic level, and

ability to perform assigned tasks, and hence raise productivity. This is indicated by the fact that some organizations that could greatly benefit from the program have neither started, nor seem to have plans to start it. There is a likelihood that their non-participation could also be due to lack of awareness of the program's existence, as some of those who were interviewed had no knowledge of it. The key to the success of the program lies in creating more awareness than has been done hitherto, and closer partnership between all stakeholders, viz., the organizations and the NFE department. Organizations such Debswana operate their own tailor-made work place literacy, which is specifically tailored to meet the needs of its workforce.

2.2.3 *Distance Learning*

This is the mode of learning in which the teacher/instructor and the learners are usually physically separated for much of the time, and is based on self-instructional materials produced at the Center. Although the materials are based on the regular JC and COSC, they are packaged in a way that is commensurate with the non-formal nature of the program, and are appropriately paced to take this into account. The government is so far the only establishment that operates this mode of learning, through the recently established Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL). BOCODOL prepares students for the terminal junior and senior secondary level examinations. In Botswana, the operation of distance learning programs also integrates the use of radio for instructional purposes.

Prior to BOCODOL the Ministry of Education operated distance learning programs through the Department of Non Formal Education, which offers correspondence courses at Junior Certificate (JC) and General Certificate in Education (GCE) levels. At the University, the Center for Continuing Education started operating in 1987 to expand

the provision of formalized distance learning based-continuing education. It has operated a number of courses and workshops and has provided opportunities for Certificates and Diploma in Accounting and Business Studies which is offered in the evening across the country. As a result of the increased demand for higher and professional education the University plans to increase its output in this area (Akinpelu, 1995).

2.2.4 Non-formal Formal Programs-Night Schools

These programs have been sampled in and included under the umbrella term "non-formal programs" because they operate under non-formal conditions, even though their instructional materials are quasi-formal or even formal in nature. They are very crucial alternative modes of schooling, and have afforded many people opportunities for acquisition of formal qualifications leading to, either the Primary School Leaving Examinations PSLE, the Junior Certificate (JC) or the Cambridge O level certificates. The study will explore the extent to which the participants have gone on to further education, and/ or formal or self employment. The schools usually operate through boards of directors, and generally have severe shortages of teaching equipment. Due to their nighttime operation, they cannot offer practicals in subjects such as Agriculture, which greatly disadvantages the students in terms of practical application of the concepts taught. The shortage of resources in many night schools and time constraints also restricts the range of subjects that can be offered, such as science, design and technology.

2.2.5 Income Generating Projects

Income generating projects are self-employment projects that are organized

operated by learners enrolled in the National Literacy Program. The first attempt to include income-generating skills in the program was stated in the sixth National Development Plan. Program providing basic literacy and skill training for income-generating activities for older graduates was incorporated. The effort was intended to increase educational and employment opportunities for the graduates and also to reduce inequalities in access to education and work (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1985). The objective, which enacted functional literacy in the program, was spelt out in the Sixth National Development Plan (1985-91) as follows;

The Department will expand its non-formal activities beyond reading, writing and numeracy. The needs of rural communities in terms of skills required for income generating activities will form the basis for expansion. (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1985).

However, training in practical skills is not integrated into the program. Literacy Group Leaders teach neo-literates skills, which include poultry, piggery, bakery and sewing projects, which are spread across the length and breath of Botswana. The projects are intended to provide the learners with skills for income generation, which can cascade into improvement of their socioeconomic position and self-worth, etc. The study limitation here may be that coverage has not been done of projects that were set up as a result of community or individual initiatives, which operate outside the ambit of the NLP.

2.3 Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the provision and impact of the five non-formal basic education programs in Botswana, with a focus on the nature of their clientele, the way they function, the curricula, and conditions under which they operate, as well as problems experienced by the participants
2. To analyze the impact of NFBE programs in terms of outcomes such as access to formal and self-employment and income generation
3. To analyze the extent to which NFBE programs equip learners as individuals, and as family and community members with problem solving and general life skills, to enable them to be self-reliant, self-sufficient and to have improved self-worth.
4. To assess the extent to which the NFBE programs enable minority or marginalized groups such as women and girls, out-of-school youth and remote area children gain access to education in order to improve their life conditions.
5. To assess how the status and quality of NFBE programs/provision of NFBE programs could be improved in order to enable participants to utilize the knowledge and skills that they acquired optimally.
6. To establish and examine the nature and level of involvement by, and identify the various local authorities, government, public and non-governmental agencies, which offer NFBE programs in Botswana

2.4 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to analyze core curriculum of the selected non-formal basic education programs, investigate the effectiveness of the implementation process, and to assess the impact on the lives of the participants. The study seeks to answers these specific questions about the selected programs:

1. What is the nature of the clientele of non-formal basic education programs in Botswana, and how accessible are the programs to this clientele?
2. What are the intended outcomes of the programs? Are these congruent with curriculum content?
3. To what extent do members of minority groups, disadvantaged youths, women, and remote area dwellers benefit from these programs?
4. What are the operational conditions of each program? To what extent can the process implementation plan lead to the achievement of intended outcomes?
5. What has the impact of the programs been in as far as preparing and assisting participants to re-enter the formal school system, obtain qualifications that are equivalent to the formal school system, enhancing their self-worth, or preparing participants for self-employment?
6. What is the nature and level of involvement in non-formal education programs by local authorities, the government, non-governmental organizations and the public?

2.5 Cooperation with DNFE

Cooperation with DNFE was forged with regard to the following:

1. Facilitation of access to centers and informants especially in the outlying areas although in a few instances there were minor hiccups, when information had not been relayed on time especially to private organizations, particularly with regard to the workplace literacy program.
2. The BOCODOL has also been consulted at various points in the study, and has assisted with addresses of past participants, as well as arrangement of visits to Centers/ and interviews with individual instructors. Their new Newsletter, which carries an update on some of their latest innovations has also been made available. They have also been generous with their time in providing background information relating to the program.
3. The NFE has also assisted with relevant information and documentation, such as annual reports and in-house consultancy reports, which have been useful for the identification of issues relevant to this study.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate how Non-formal Basic Education Programs in Botswana are implemented, and the relative impact of such programs on the lives of the recipients. To appreciate the depth and complexity of this interactive process, a variety of data sources were accessed to provide meaningful information on the status and impact of non-formal basic education. The data sources included questionnaires, field notes, individual and focus group interviews, discussions, and semi-structured interviews. In keeping with the eclectic nature of the study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Quantitative data was obtained from the forced-choice questionnaires administered to current and past participants of the selected programs. The qualitative data came from the group interviews, field notes as well as informal discussions with the respondents. The qualitative design was chosen in order to establish a holistic understanding of the impact of the program on the participants from their perspectives. This design is viewed as the most appropriate paradigm to determine their understanding of the impact of the program since the data is collected in natural settings (Bogden and Biklen 1998). Merriam (1998) observes that the basic or generic qualitative design is intended to "to seek to rediscover and understand a phenomenon, process or the perspectives and world views of people involved" (p. 11). The design is best meant for helping the participants to demonstrate their meaning and understanding of how their lives have been impacted by the various non-formal education programs. The qualitative approach enabled us to listen to the descriptions and meanings as perceived by those who have lived the experiences by conducting interviews with them (Kvale, 1996).

3.1.1 *The Population*

The population that are eligible for non-formal programs are Batswana of age 12 and above who attended school in the past, but did not complete the basic education cycle. These include those who participated in non-formal education programs in the past and those who never attended school or attended literacy classes. The National Literacy Survey Report estimates the former group to be 193 662, and the later group (which is inclusive in the former) to be 29, 968. The population that is eligible for non-formal programs comprises of adults, youth, and several categories of out-of-school children, namely, semi-literate children, children with disabilities, children of ethnic and religious minorities, street children, and children who reside in remote areas, commonly known as remote-area-dwellers (RADS).

3.1.2 *Target Population*

The *target* population is the population to which generalizations about the findings of the study will be made. This population comprises of children who are past and present participants of different non-formal basic education programs. NFBE programs include Income Generating Projects (IGPs), Literacy in the Workplace programs, non-formal night schools, and community schools which are mainly operated under the aegis of the Non-formal Education Department of the Ministry of Education. They also include distance learning under the auspices of the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL). Those who never attended schools, and/or never participated in the non-formal basic education programs were interviewed to determine factors that hinder enrolment or participation.

3.1.3 Sample

A sample in research is the unit of analysis to be studied, it could be a person, or group and it is determined by the research design (Patton, 1990). The sample of the study was selected by employing a purposive, non-probability sampling technique. This approach proceeds from the assumption that one wants to discover, understand and gain insight. Therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn most (Merriam, 1998). A two-stage sampling procedure was used. First, five categories of non-formal education programs, namely the income generating projects, non-formal night schools, literacy in the workplace, community night schools and the distance learning programs were selected. Programs were purposely selected such that they represent a broad geographical coverage. Secondly, a broad spectrum of the participants of the programs was included, with the exception of night schools, where only the completing classes were targeted. Table 1 reflects that a total of 687 participants of different programs provided responses through questionnaires, while 93 respondents were interviewed (see table below).

Table 1: Sample size per program

<i>Name of Program</i>	<i>Questionnaires Administered and/or Received</i>	<i>Qualitative Interviews Conducted</i>
Non-Formal Night Schools		
• Current students	182	15
• Past Students	98 (out of 500)	10
• Teachers	6	
Distance Education		
• Current students	135	13
• Past Students	57 (out of 100)	9
• 3 tutors	3	
Remote Area Community Schools		
	79	
• Students		10
• Parents		

Income-Generating Projects	53	6 focus groups in all
Literacy in the Workplace	74	30 (3 focus groups)
Total	687	93

3.1.3.1 Non-Formal Formal Night Programs

Non-Formal Night programs were sampled in Maun, Gumare, Francistown, Kang, Hukuntsi, Gaborone. Both current and past students were sampled under this category. One of the criteria for selecting night schools was that the school should have been running for at least five years in order to facilitate meaningful assessment of the progression of past students, whether through further education, in employment, or through other means.

Past students from the selected night schools were also traced. Research Assistants traced those who were accessible and administered the questionnaire, while questionnaires were mailed to those who were inaccessible. 500 questionnaires were sent, and the response rate was 75 (12.5%), which is relatively lower than would be expected with a fairly homogeneous sample (Dillman, 1986). However, it is acceptable to the researchers, given the target sample's lack of familiarity with responding to a mailed questionnaire, and the local hardships associated with mailing, and the migratory habits of people from rural to urban and back to rural areas.

3.1.3.2 Distance Education Programs

Like the Non-Formal Night programs, both current and past students were sampled in the Distance Education category. Students were selected from Maun, Francistown, Kang

and Gaborone. Students in this category were mostly traced by mail. However, questionnaires were administered to the current students and only a few past students who could be reached easily by research assistants. The bulk of questionnaires were mailed out to both current and past distance education students. A total of 75 questionnaires were received from current students, while 57 came from past students.

3.1.3.3 Remote Area Community Schools

Non-formal community schools are few in number. The two schools studied were at Jamataka in the North Central Region and remote settlements in the Hukuntsi/Kang areas. The questionnaire was administered to four groups of students that fell in this category. The first group comprised of current students of community schools, the targeted ones being those in the highest standard/class, while the second group comprised past students of the same schools. The third group comprised of those who dropped out of school, while the children who have never attended school were targeted in the last group. A total of 79 students constituted the sample for this category. In addition to the students, a few parents (10) were interviewed in depth. Focus group discussions were held with members of the community.

3.1.3.4 Income Generating Projects (IGPs)

IGPs at Etsha and Nokaneng in the Northwest, Marapong in the North, Modipane and Dikwididi/Ramatlhaku in the South were studied. In each of the projects, the number of members of the projects who were active was established during the data collection, and at least 80% of the active members were interviewed. A questionnaire was administered to 53 participants. In addition, focus group discussions were held in Marapong and Dikwididi.

3.1.3.5 Literacy in the Workplace

Those that were studied are programs at Orapa Mine and Water Utilities Corporation in Gaborone. Once more, the target of interviewing least 80% of the participants was reached. We also conducted Interviews with participants of the literacy program at the Department of Water Affairs. 74 participants responded to the questionnaire (either self-administered or administered by a research assistant) while 26 of them were interviewed in depth.

A probability sampling procedure was not feasible in that the record of people who have gone through non-formal education and training is incomplete, hence there is no way of ensuring that all those who are eligible stand a non-zero chance of being selected into the sample. As a result, in this case respondents were not chosen by chance, but rather, because they are representative of the accessible population. The spin-offs of purposive sampling are its convenience and economy. The nature of this population is determined mainly by the time available to do the study, the resources – both physical and financial and the interests of the study.

3.2 Data collection

Data Collection is the main activity of the research process since it provides that unique opportunity for the researcher to be among the participants. It gives the researcher a chance to learn from participants in order to be able to describe people, events, settings and situations based on the interactions, discussions, and observations of behavior (Patton, 1990). Data collection is the art of collecting data from the sample for extrapolation into the main population.

3.2.1 *Sources of Data*

The study sought to analyse the process of implementing Non-formal Basic Education Programmes in Botswana and the relative impact of such programmes on the lives of their recipients. To appreciate the depth and complexity of this interactive process, a variety of data sources were accessed to provide meaningful information on the status and impact of Non-formal basic education. The data sources included field notes, individual and focus group interviews, informal interviews and semi-structured questionnaires.

3.2.2 *Types of Data*

In keeping with the eclectic nature of the study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data was obtained from the semi-structured questionnaires. These included the current and past non-formal/night school, current and past distance education, in and out of school youth, income generating projects and work place literacy questionnaires. The qualitative data came from the individual and focus group interviews, field notes as well as informal discussions with the respondents.

3.2.3 *Data Collection Instruments*

A variety of questionnaires were developed by the researchers and pilot tested on income generating projects, night schools and study centers in and around Gaborone. The research team comprising of principal investigators and research assistants took part in the piloting process, as a way of training, and in to have an appreciation for issues that could arise during the data collection process. Feedback from the piloting process was used to revise the questionnaire, and to provide further training on how

the questionnaire is to be administered, and on issues of clarity, relevance and adequacy of the responses. Pilot data was not included in the analysis. Also, participants who responded to the pilot version of the questionnaire were disqualified from the participating in the main study Interview by questionnaire, in depth interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation and existing data bases were the main forms of data collection. The interview is the art of establishing what is on the mind of participant through inquiry. The tendency is for the researcher to elicit and receive information and they give very little either than guiding the process through carefully thought out sets of questions (Patton, 1990). The process was intended to facilitate a constructive conversation with participants about the program.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data from questionnaire were coded and captured using the SPSS data analysis package. Several data analysis procedures were mainly frequencies and descriptive statistics. Where feasible, data were disaggregated by sex and location and other relevant variables, to investigate if differences exist. Since the study was mainly descriptive, and the sample was a non-probability sample, statistical significant testing was not done. Rather, differences were only reported if they were of reasonable magnitude.

Focus group discussions, qualitative interview data, field notes, and open-ended responses from questionnaires were summarized and analyzed using the **thematic coding approach**. Thematic coding entailed organizing the data into themes that were identified by the respondents. This information was used to enrich responses participants provided in the forced-choice questions.

3.4 Limitations of the Questionnaire

The respondents seem to have somehow concluded that they could circle only one response, partly because some of the responses were quite similar. This would have made the respondent to imagine that circling one was just as good as circling the other, yet these subtle differences were important. The forced response nature of the questionnaire added to the problem because it was too restrictive.

3.5 General Observation

There is need for better coordination between NFE and other stakeholders, to avoid duplication of effort and parallel planning, implementation and research and program review. This study has been conducted while the different ministries and stakeholders have been pursuing parallel reviews and research projects on the same issues. This results in duplication of effort, and irrelevant findings on the part of the researchers, since some of the recommendations made here have already been undertaken by events happening in those programs. In This regard it is also worth reiterating the observation made in the RNPE that out of school providers operate parallel to each other and the quality of the programs is uneven (RNPE, 1994, p.10).

4.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Workplace Literacy

There are two types of literacy programs that were investigated in this study. One type is akin to the government literacy program, "thuto ga e golelwe", but is targeted specifically at workers. The department of non-formal education decided to embark on this program in order to improve its outreach, as it became evident that many of those who needed basic literacy were in towns, and a significant number of these were in employment situations. The main thrust of the workplace literacy program is to improve the general literacy of the workers, on the basis of the overall goal of literacy for all by the year 2000. The other goal of this type of program from the perspective of the employing agencies, is to sharpen workers' general job capability, specifically to improve on basic reading and writing skills and hence, improve productivity. This type of literacy program also serves the general literacy needs of the workers in and out of work.

The following employing agencies were sampled: Water Utilities Corporation, University of Botswana, Kgalagadi Soap Industries, Spar, Department of Water Affairs and METSEF trading store. The latter two companies, as well as the University of Botswana do not actually offer literacy classes, but were sampled in to find out the reasons why this is not the case. This would help to determine the extent of the NFE department outreach, the general understanding or lack thereof and awareness about the workplace literacy program, as well as to assess the employers' perceptions about it. To this end the research discovered for example, that organizations such as UB, Spar, Metsef do not have a workplace literacy program, and either through ignorance or lack

of encouragement are not even aware of its existence. The University of Botswana was also found to have no literacy program, nor immediate plans of introducing one.

Although Kgalagadi Soap Industries was sampled in, the data has only been used to enrich the qualitative aspects of the study, but¹ has not been factored into the quantitative analysis. The work place literacy at KSI targets a wide range of workers including soap packers, Olivine oil packagers and welders. One participant was originally recruited as a laborer, but on acquiring an MTTC qualification, got promoted to welder. He particularly feels English would greatly improve things for him and others, including access to other learning situations, such as for example, the MTTC qualification, which he needs to update his skills. On inquiring about the requirements, he was informed that he would have to have some English proficiency, and also some math. The latter however, he has exposure to, and is actually the best one in the subject in the class observed. In WA, participants also expressed need to upgrade or acquire qualification from MTTC, and this brings in the question of and need for some of sort of equivalency to be determined as well as better synergy between formal standards and primas. The table below shows respondents by gender. The respondents of Kgalagadi Soap Industries are not included here, as their data was used qualitatively.

Table 2: Gender of respondents by company

Name of Company	Debswan a	Water Affairs	Water Utilities
Female	12.2 (6)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Male	87.8 (43)	100.0(10)	100.0 (0)
Total	100.0 (49)	100.0 (10)	100.0 (10)

The Debswana work place literacy project was studied in detail as a case study. This formed the basis of the comparison with the government type of work place literacy, with a view to identifying advantages and disadvantages of each.

4.1.1 Debswana Workplace Literacy Case Study: Orapa Diamond Mine

The Debswana literacy program is in two parts, the Adult Basic education and Training (ABET) course and non-formal formal one. In addition, there is a third program for computer awareness.

4.1.1.1 The Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

This program took the place of an earlier program where the company used to follow a formal program similar to the government primary education. It however became necessary to change the strategy to make it job-related so as "to improve productivity and shorten duration." The company specifically sought to ensure that the program was not just limited to literacy. The program is adapted from the South African model of Adult Basic education, which it closely resembles. Literacy itself is taught not as an end in itself, but in order to facilitate skill acquisition. In this regard, the company points out that in the past se-skilled training was not given as workers lacked basic literacy. It is also competency-based, and hence appeals to most Standard 7 leavers. The program is still relatively new, and the current intake is the fourth. As with most of the other workplace literacy programs, the company releases workers during working hours. There is however need to prioritize with the other needs of the company so that productivity is not disrupted. The classes are held Monday to Friday on a full time

basis, from 7.00am to 3.45 pm. There is a general screening that is done in order to determine what level to slot participants into.

Curriculum and Teaching

The program starts with the teaching of the mother tongue, and "does not try to change one's Setswana (*Setswana sa motho*), so that it builds on the individual's capability of proficiency, in whatever dialect of Setswana it is, "so as to make it functional". This is then used to teach the necessary literacy skills. There are two levels of mother tongue lessons of four months duration each, so that altogether there would be eight months for mother tongue teaching. However this duration is considered, "not long enough because the level of proficiency is still found to be low after that period.

The next stage after mother tongue teaching is the English program, which can be studied all the way up to Technikon level, as is the case with the South African Adult Basic Education and Training, although this is not done at Orapa. There are three levels of the English course, and each level takes four months to complete.

4.1.1.2 The Non-formal formal Program

This program is similar to the one run by BOCODOL, and prepares students for the Primary School Leaving Certificate, Junior Certificate and the hitherto, Cambridge Overseas School Certificate. Priority to enter the program is given to workers, but other people are allowed to enter depending on availability of spaces. The general trend is that the larger community (non-employees of Debswana) mainly patronizes the COSC course, as it serves as a viable option in upgrading one's self academically. These are mainly people who have not done well, "eseng ba ba feitseng" (not necessarily those

who have failed). In this program, students work on their own, but they come in daily, from 5-9.00pm for sessions akin to tutorials. The participants find the program exhausting, especially at the primary school level, due to the many subjects covered.

4.1.1.3 Computer Training

This is the third type of program offered at Debswana. They teach MS Word, Spreadsheet, and they also offer the Pitman Certificate. The course is also open to non-employees. Their superiors can either recommend employees, or the employees can initiate the request to enroll in the program. There is a work release arrangement for employees, and educational assistance is given, whereupon after completion, they are paid back the equivalent of the expenses they incurred, but on failure they get nothing. The idea is to motivate the participants to do well, which would be mutually beneficial to the company and the employees.

Background of Teachers

The ABET course uses full time facilitators, with entry scales at Diploma and Degree level. For the BOCODOL type of program, the company uses part-time teachers from the company school for primary classes, and secondary teachers from nearby government schools at Letlhakane and Orapa CJSS.

4.1.1.4 Problems Experienced with the Management of the Program

This is especially with regard to the BOCODOL type of program, which was initially registered as a study center. They have since realized that this is limiting because it restricts them in line with requirements for study centers. Thus they would like their employees to write at their own flexible time, at their own pace. At the moments the

requirements are too prescriptive with regard to all these issues. The current curriculum is also too prescriptive, as for example, there is currently a requirement to increase the subjects, which do not necessarily tie in well with employees' further education interests.

4.1.2 Workplace Literacy (Government type)

4.1.2.1 Operational Conditions

There was no opportunity to observe the Debswana work place literacy participants, but some classes in the regular work place literacy program were observed, and a number of issues were examined. Generally books showed a high level of Setswana language proficiency, and the spelling was good, but the punctuation was almost non-existent, although the arithmetic was quite good too. However, one class in particular was taught by an untrained literacy group leader (LGL), although the research did not determine the extent of this problem.

The NFE policy discourages enrollment of people with formal schooling background. Otherwise, the LGL's determine where to place learners by giving them a reading exercise. However, some classes had people with up to standard 5 education, although the study was again unable to determine the extent of this phenomenon. Nonetheless, two important observations can be made. It would seem that over a period of time participants with some primary level schooling would have regressed to a level where they need to enroll in the work place literacy program. It could also mean that the primary level education that they received has not equipped them adequately with literacy skills, which they need to improve through the work place literacy program.

Workplace literacy classes are held for 1-1/2 hours each day. The company releases employees to attend these classes. However, this is done in such a way that the normal operations continue, to ensure that production does not suffer. Some companies release workers on alternate days, to safeguard the interests of the company. The problem is that some workers whose lines of operation have high production demands are released irregularly. In addition, participants have to fill in at the job when their colleagues are absent from work. In this way, the attendance of some of these workers tends to be erratic. Depending on the company's activities, the employees may find that they travel out of town a lot in order to carry out service and repair of equipment, such as at the Department of Water Affairs. In the final analysis however, it is important to note that in spite of all these problems, the learners have a generally high level of enthusiasm for and commitment to the program. Thus, absenteeism, which is not job-related is very minimal.

The classes are at times characterized by peer teaching and spontaneous group work and mutual respect between teachers and learners and obviously this creates a conducive learning atmosphere. The LGL's in turn are generally very highly motivated in spite of the less than perfect working conditions.

Participants echoed the same sentiments, with regard to the need for English as a subject. It seems as though this suggestion would also help to attract more participants to the program, because some of the dropouts who had actually attended formal school up to standard four, in some cases, had done so, precisely because of want for English. They had registered with high hopes that their studies would include English, which they would not have been exposed to during their formal school days when Setswana

used to be the medium of instruction in primary school:

When they found that no English was being taught, they got disappointed and left.

On the benefits of English, another respondent observed that:

English is needed everywhere, even here in our place of work, we have white people as well as black people who do not know Setswana, and if I also cannot speak English, that means that we cannot communicate

On personal relations and attitude, this is how participation in the work place literacy program has changed one man:

I used to think that a woman could not teach me anything. But now I have relented, because I realize that I will not benefit anything by (adopting) this attitude. I now see that my wife can also help me in my studies, especially because she used to teach somewhere.....

On personal empowerment and self-worth, this is what another respondent noted appreciatively that:

Since enrolling in these classes, I am even able to look at my children's books, and advise them about the correct way of writing and generally help them by showing them where they have gone wrong. (Doing this) has also allowed me to see and I now realize that the things we are being taught here are no different from the ones they are taught at school.

Along similar lines, another stated proudly that:

Before enrolling in the program, I used to get into a bank and felt ashamed to ask people to help me. These days I simply walk in, pick up a form and fill it in as required, without having to say anything to anybody.....

One of the problems that the participants complained about is inadequate time, for teaching as well as for learning, as they feel that 1-1/2 hours is not enough. This is how one instructor put it:

The time is short because they are adults. Hence, they are unable to do much or any of the work at home, due to the many responsibilities they there.....

Even from the perspective of instructors, the hours are too few. Thus, committing more time to literacy classes would be beneficial to both the learners as they would learn more, and to the instructors because it would increase her wages. Many follow a typical schedule of teaching for 1 to 1 1/2 hours three four days a week (figure 1 shows a typical schedule of a LGL).

CASE STUDY OF XY Literacy Group Leader

She teaches work place literacy classes for 1 hour in the afternoons, but she also teaches the government "*thuto ga e golelwe*" participants who come to her house from 9-10.30 am. In the evenings she goes to Therisanyo Primary School where she conducts classes from 6.00-9.30 pm from Monday to Thursday. The company for which she teaches has not started to supplement her pay so far, and she still earns P10-75 per hour. She points out that LGL's are not paid over time although they often have to go over the stipulated time because they need to complete lessons. She feels that the teaching time is too short because learners need to be allowed enough time because they can not carry work and do it at home because they are grown ups and are responsible for household duties...

Her observation regarding the curriculum is that the arithmetic that is being taught at present as it is too easy, and she would like to see more "*maele*" added. She would also like the hours of teaching to be increased. As she stated:

So that it can also be acknowledged that we are people too and ...
and we should be able to go on leave like other people... we should be
paid like normal other (primary school) teachers

This schedule shows that LGL's are engaged for a few hours on the work place literacy program, and because of this their earnings tend to be very minimal. Hence, as is the case with this particular LGL, she has to find other ways of supplementing her income. Moreover, their terms and conditions of service are almost non-existent. Amongst other things, they do not have any provision for leave. In this regard, one of them stated in exasperation that:

We also want to be treated like human beings, to be paid like teachers, so that we also get paid for the break, which occurs between November and February.....

The improvement of the working conditions of LGL's would greatly enhance their status, as presently they consider themselves to be treated "not like people".

4.1.2.2 *Class Attendance*

Attendance is generally poor, as it is determined by, and is secondary to the larger needs of the company/organization. At Water Affairs, Water Utilities Corporation the workers were frequently away on field trips, and the trips often lasted for many weeks at a time. At Kgalagadi Soap Industries attendance is subjugated to the needs of the soap making industry, so that when production is increased, the increased need for the workers' labor supersedes that of literacy attendance. Moreover, attendance at this organization is done on a rotational basis, so as to ensure that "production does not suffer".

This state of affairs is further compounded by the fact that the literacy classes are held during working hours. This is in itself a significant sacrifice on the part of the organizations concerned, but it is also the reason why in some instances, workers are not able to attend either regularly. Yet, this intermittent attendance is also presenting significant pedagogical problems that militate against continuity and reinforcement of lessons, which needs to be done promptly. The fact that the main method of teaching these participants is through drill and reinforcement makes it imperative that the lessons are promptly followed up on.

Another practice that was gleaned was that when learners have missed lessons, at times the teachers say that they attempt to repeat the class for the benefit of those who had

missed it. This was however not observed in practice. What was observed though was that the teacher adopts the same style of multi-grade teaching with those who would have missed lessons, as she/he generally does with the slower learners, that is, by giving them individual work whilst still carrying on with the faster learners. What was observed at times was that the learners themselves maybe through the leadership of one of the faster learners, took the reins by doing collaborative exercises on the board, while the teacher would be helping one or two other people on the other side of the classroom.

Adult learners are generally uninhibited and quite open about their problems, although one still gets one or two who are reserved and want to do their own work by themselves. These are usually the slower learners, and they are usually older people who at times have problems, such as poor eyesight. Some of the reserved ones find some of the work intimidating, as one older man who as the LGL later explained "has problems with additions".

Poor eyesight seems to be a common problem, which seems to prevent some people from enrolling at all, as would be expected since the program is patronized by a significant number of older people. However, its exact magnitude has not been determined, although it came up often enough to warrant being considered a significant problem, both as a deterrent to enrollment and as an impediment to learning.

4.1.2.3 *Background of Participants: Gender Distinction*

The majority of work place literacy learners are men. In fact, only 2 of the four companies had women enrolled in their workplace literacy program, and even then

they were in the minority. There were 6 women to 63 men altogether. One possible reason is that women are generally in the minority in particular work situations, and other times the information (from management) may not be reaching them or getting around to them as much as it does to the men regarding enrolment in the literacy program. According to Debswana, men dominate their program because there are more men than women in employment to start with. There is need to undertake specific measures to attract women into the program.

The other reason, which was advanced by some (male) employees in one of these companies, is that women are "shy" to enroll. One of the four women who had enrolled here had supposedly taken ill and dropped out. The issue of women being "shy" may also have to do with their numerical inferiority, especially if they were likely to be in a class dominated by men, as is usually the case. This was generally so except in the case of KSI, which had some women, possibly due to the fact that the nature of the work there influenced their employment (packers, cleaners, etc.).

4.1.2.4 Educational Level Attained

This refers to the educational level of respondents at the time the research was carried out. It does not distinguish between level attained before or after employment, and the data may well have captured one or the other. Out of the 64 people who responded to this item, 64.1% had attained less than standard 4 at primary school level. Only 6.3% of respondents had attained between standards 4 and 6, 25% had completed primary education, whilst 4.7% had completed secondary education, and all of them were from the non-Debswana sample. However, the data did not distinguish between those who attained junior secondary and those who attained senior secondary education (see table

below).

Table 3: Level of education

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Never been to school	34	53.1
	7	10.9
Primary 3 or less	4	6.3
Primary 4-6	16	25.0
Completed primary	3	4.7
Secondary education		
Total	64	100.0

4.1.2.5 *Reasons for Attending Literacy Classes*

The majority (58%) of the 43 respondents in this category cited the need to be literate as the main reason for class attendance, whilst the least percentage (2.3%), of respondents (only one person) enrolled because they receive "advise from friends". A significant sample (23.3%) of respondents cited "management requirement for worker literacy" as the reason for enrolling in the program. However fewer than 7% (3 people each) cited the "need to feel secure", or "hope for promotion" as reasons for taking up literacy classes. This tallies well with reasons advanced during focus group discussions with work place literacy students that they felt so strongly about the need for literacy that they would be prepared to enroll in these classes even if they were offered after hours (see table below).

Table 4: Reasons for attending literacy classes by program

Reasons for attending literacy classes	Debswana	Non-Debswana
Management requirement	26.3 (10)	0.0 (0)
Needed to be literate	55.3 (21)	80.0 (4)
Exposure	2.6 (1)	0.0 (0)
Job security	7.9 (3)	0.0 (0)
Advancement (promotion)	7.9 (3)	0.0 (0)
Friends advised me to attend	0.0 (0)	20.0 (1)
Total	100.0 (38)	100.0 (5)

As can be seen from the table, the majority of respondents also placed a lot of emphasis on the need to be literate (55.3%). Moreover, 3 respondents (7.9%) indicated that participation in the program was essential for promotion, and the same number cited job security. Thus participants place a lot of emphasis on literacy for both personal and professional development.

4.1.2.6 Background of Learners

There does not seem to be a great age disparity between "younger" and "older" learners who had never been to school before joining the program. This means that there is an equally high likelihood that work place literacy students in the 30-59 age range are people who would have not previously been to school in the age range represented here.

The overall picture that emerges regarding the workplace literacy program is that it is the older, rather than younger learners who are much more likely to have never been to

school. This tallies very well with known trends whereby school enrolment and participation in the general population have greatly improved in more recent times, as more and better educational opportunities have become available. According to the 1993 Literacy Survey Report, the proportion of the population who left formal school before completing standard 5 declined from 12.4% in 1991 to 7.3% in 1993 (Majelantle, 1999, 25). The entire sample of the workplace literacy program has learners with ages ranging from the (late teens) and early 20's to 59 years.

4.1.2.7 *Factors relating to the Running of the Program: Class Attendance*

The workplace literacy students at the Water Affairs Unit indicated that they tend to attend classes very irregularly because of the nature of their work/duties. Many of them, especially those who deal with installing and maintaining bore holes are normally out in the field for days and sometimes weeks at a time, during which time classes are conducted in their absence. Generally, poor class attendance of literacy classes was also noted by Choudhury (1995, 1).

Again as noted in the Choudhury (1995) study, multi-grade teaching is invariably an integral part of the program. One obvious reason is lack of resources, both human (teachers) and physical (classrooms), since one teacher can teach different classes within the same classroom, using the same chalkboard, etc. The system has both advantages and disadvantages. The learners at Water Affairs (WA) favored it because the less able were able to receive peer tutoring in this way. However, in some instances, this seems to be de-motivating to the slow learners. This is because they are often on the spot if they experience difficulties. It could be de-motivating too to the more able to move at a slower pace, because it slows down their learning pace. Of course, these are the same

kinds of issues that the rest of the education system is grappling with. However, in this context the challenge is greater, since several *primas* are taught together. The issue must also present special difficulties and frustration, and must certainly require special skill and talent on the part of the Literacy Group Leaders (LGLs). There is a need here to reexamine and review the training of literacy group assistants so that it appropriately addresses the peculiar problems relating to teaching in a multi-grade teaching context.

There is a serious lack of organized ways of dealing with the high level of absenteeism, and this militates against systematic learning. For example, learners pointed out that because of their absence from stations for lengthy periods of time, they invariably miss tests and other work given by the teacher, in addition to the actual lessons. There does not seem to be a system of assisting them to catch up with missed work, or attempt to administer missed class tests to them upon their return. A few respondents however, noted that their immediate bosses in the field find time to tutor them on some aspects of their work, and so manage to keep pace with the rest of the group (Water Affairs focus group). However, this does not happen in any organized way, and very much depends on the whim of the supervisor, or the interest and time that the superiors may have at their disposal.

4.1.2.8 *Characteristics of Literacy Teachers*

Although it was not possible to interview literacy teachers, the picture that emerges about them is that they are generally committed to their teaching duties, although the issue of late coming kept recurring. However, this should not detract from the general perception of the teachers as caring and supportive, even though they have to work under very de-motivating working conditions. The Revised National Policy on

Education recommended:

the immediate review of the level of payment and conditions of employment of the Literacy Group Leaders (Rec. 81, p.36).

4.1.2.9 *Issues Relating to the Program Itself-Relevance to Life and Work*

Most of the respondents felt that the program addressed work-related concerns. The ability of the program to address work related concerns was a significant factor cutting across all the levels of education, from those who had never been to school right up to those who had secondary education. A total of 55 participants responded to this item. The percentage of those who could read signs and memos, and are able to sign their names was 49.1%, whilst some 41.9% indicated that they use the skills acquired in the program in other ways of a work related nature, including writing reports and filling in logs. However, 9.1% do not use the skills at all.

It is important to note that by work-related concerns the respondents were not so much referring to the technicalities of specific job categories, but rather, at times this also referred to general literacy skills of reading and understanding of written instructions in the workplace. In the case of water affairs for example, employees mentioned specifically that being literate enabled them to be clearer about requests they made for equipment and supplies, which they needed for example, for bore hole repair in various places. They observed that literacy greatly facilitated more effective service, unlike in the past where they would take the wrong equipment or instruments or not be able to take proper measurements when they went on trips, and this would delay their work.

The data was further analyzed according to educational level of participants. This

indicated that 65.4% of those with no prior formal schooling are able to read notices whilst 66.7% of those who have between standard 4 and standard 6 feel the same way. The same response rate (66.7%) was registered for those with less than standard 4 of primary schooling and 26.7% of those who had completed primary schooling. All these indicators make sense because the ability to read and write would be better appreciated by those who had no previous schooling as it reflected their greatest requirement from the program (see table below).

Table 5: Use of literacy skills

Highest Level of Education	No schooling before NLP	Had Primary 3 or less	Had Primary 4-6	Had Completed Primary	Had some Secondary education
Use of Skills					
Can now read signs notices, memos, etc.	65.4 (17)	66.7 (4)	66.7 (2)	26.7 (4)	0.0 (0)
Use literacy skills in other aspects	30.7 (8)	33.3 (2)	33.3 (1)	53.3 (8)	50.0 (1)
Don't use literacy skills at all	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	20.0 (3)	50.0 (1)
Total	100.0 (26)	100.0 (6)	100.0 (3)	100.0 (15)	100.0 (2)

NB: 2 categories combined into one:

- i.e.*
1. *Use literacy skills in other aspects*
 2. *Other*

With regard to those who do not use the skill at all, 3.8% came from the category of participants who never went to school. Some 33% of those with primary schooling and 50% of those with secondary schooling registered this response. This again is reflective

of the different priorities of people with different educational backgrounds.

Also significant amongst those who had completed primary school (49.1%), and those who had secondary education (25.0%). There was also a significant portion of this group, which indicated that they do not use the skills at all (25.0%). Another phenomenon, which the participants pointed out is that they had many years of experience in some of the job categories captured in the research. However, because they did not possess the requisite academic qualifications, they did not progress appropriately and were not accorded an appropriately high level of responsibility, even when they had acquired the right sort of technical expertise. Thus, they feel that they are not properly acknowledged, especially that they often have a better practical and technical knowledge, through having worked for many years in the same organization.

You find that you are working under someone, but you know more about the technical aspects of the job than he does, and often you have to solve practical problems for him. However, because you do not possess a degree, you are not properly acknowledged (Literacy participant, Water Affairs).

This issue seems to apply specifically to the non-Debswana group, whose literacy program is not tailored to the specific work places.

An equally significant number of respondents affirmed that they were able to apply what they learnt, with the highest numbers being in the category of those who had never been to school, and those who had less than prima 4.

There is a very high percentage of respondents who felt that there was too much material to learn in a short period of time. This tallies well with observations made and suggestions advanced that organizations should be asked to allocate more time to the literacy classes. At the moment the time allocated ranges between 1 to 1 1/2 hours of lessons, from Mondays to Fridays. On this point many of those asked if they would attend classes if they were offered outside of work, in order to allow more time for lessons.

4.1.2.10 *Effect on Self-worth and Dealings with Members of the Family*

Top of the list of ways in which participation in the program had affected participants' personal lives, was the issue of gaining more respect from family members at 20.3%. The highest percentage was in the category of those who have attained less than primary level 4 with 28.6%, followed by those who have never been to school at 21.9%, and those who have attained primary schooling at 20%. Increased responsibility in the family was highest among those between standard 4 and 6 (33.3%), followed by those with less than standard 4 (14.3%), and lowest amongst those who had never been to school before enrolling in the literacy classes (3.1%). Notably, there is a really significant percentage of respondents who stated that their enrolling in literacy classes had had no effect on their personal lives, with those who had never been to school registering 12.5%. This was followed by those who had attained standard 4 with 25.6%, some 33.3% for those who had between standard 4 and 6 of primary education, and 13.3% for those who had completed primary schooling.

Table 6: Effect on dealings with family

Highest Level of Education Dealings with Family	No schooling before NLP	Had Prim 3 or less	Had Prim 4-6	Had Completed Prim	Had some Secondary education
Increased responsibility in the family	3.1 (10)	14.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	6.7 (1)	0.0 (0)
Now able to correspond in writing	21.9 (7)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Gained respect from family members	21.9 (7)	28.6 (2)	0.0 (0)	20.0 (3)	50.0 (1)
Literacy status has no effect on dealings with family	12.5 (4)	28.6 (2)	33.3 (1)	13.3 (2)	50.0 (1)
Other effects	40.6 (13)	28.6 (0)	66.6 (2)	60.0 (9)	0.0 (0)
Total	100.0 (32)	100.0 (7)	100.0 (3)	100.0 (10)	100.0 (2)

As the table shows, a significant response amongst those who have never been to school relates to those who feel that participation in literacy classes has enabled them to correspond with the members of their family. They were the only ones who responded at a rate of 21.9%, which indicates once again that it is this category of learners to whom this skill has the greatest relevance and significance to their lives.

4.1.2.11 *Knowledge of Government Responsibility to Provide Programs*

Quite a significant percentage seemed to be ignorant of government responsibility to

either provide materials and opportunity for literacy, or whether the program was a government or company initiative. This may indicate a general lack of awareness of the objectives of this program, which could lead to low enrollment and participation.

4.1.2.12 *Congruence between Objectives and Actual Outcomes of the Workplace Literacy Program*

In many respects the program has succeeded in so far as equipping participants with the basic literacy and numeracy skills. This has happened to the extent that as indicated above, many of the workers interviewed actually report that the skills learnt in the program have enabled them to perform their work better in very specific contexts. On a personal level too, most of the workers state that they feel good about the fact they can correspond with their friends and family, they are able to sign their names at the bank. This has also done away with the stigma of having to put one's thumbprint on paper, by way of identification, which is a common feature of illiteracy.

Although the program clearly has many benefits, participants felt that it could be improved in two main ways:

- i. Introduction of English. Participants feel that English should be integrated into classes even before the post-literacy stage, where it is currently being offered.

In this regard, one respondent succinctly put it this way:

English is required everywhere, because even on the job we have people of various nationalities, both black and white, who do not speak Setswana, and yet if I cannot speak to them in English, it means we cannot communicate.....

Another said:

One finds at times that it becomes necessary to request something from ones bosses, and if one cannot communicate in English one has to rely on others to do the translation, but then if that person is jealous of you for some reason, they may translate in a way that jeopardizes your chances of the request being granted or they may lie to you and tell you that the boss said that it is not possible when this is not so. Thus, it is necessary that one should be able to speak directly to the boss for ones self.

- ii. Teaching of income-generating skills as a part and parcel of the workplace literacy program, not as a distinctly aspect. This would take the form extension of the idea of income generating projects. The idea itself is a good one, but one can foresee problems here, because the employment agencies may view this as detrimental to their interests. For one it would potentially impart useful skills to the workers in such a way that they may actually quit the employment and set up their own enterprises. This would create an enabling environment that would definitely empower individuals in a personal and financial way as well.
- iii. To enable participants to acquire a recognized certificate on completion of prima five. Of course, already the department of NFE is implementing this idea as per the recommendation of the RNPE, which stated that:

The department of Non formal education should introduce an "Adult Basic Education Course" to provide adults with the equivalent of standard seven schooling (Rec. 82, p.36)

4.1.3 Comparison of Debswana Programs and Non-Debswana Programs

Since Debswana operates its own tailor-made literacy program, it is important to compare and contrast with the regular workplace literacy program, which is an aspect of the government literacy program. In terms of the general characteristics of the learners, there are no glaring differences. For example, the youngest and oldest ages of learners are 28 and 58 for Debswana, while the numbers are 29 and 59 for other organizations. In the Debswana sample, 12.5 % are at the median age of 49 years of age, while for the non-Debswana sample, the median is 9.1%. In addition, a significant part of the sample is 57 years of age, which shows that this program is a very viable alternative means of acquiring skills for older learners, to whom other avenues are closed.

4.1.3.1 Highest Educational level Obtained

The most significant difference between the two groups is with regard to the highest educational level attained, which is 44.4% for the Debswana sample and 73.7% for the non-Debswana sample (This data is disaggregated and does not reflect a combined sample). For both samples, the findings clearly indicate that the work place literacy program fulfills a very critical role in provision of the basic literacy and numeracy skills, which are obviously very highly needed and appreciated.

The other striking difference between the two types of work place literacy programs is that the Debswana sample also recorded the greatest percentage of participants who had completed primary education (31.1% and 10.5% for non-Debswana). One conclusion that one can make from the data is that there is greater likelihood for participants to have never been to school in the non-Debswana sample than in the

Debswana sample, possibly implying any number of things. These would include the possibility that Debswana may require higher educational qualifications in more job categories than most of the other work places represented here, as it is such a specialized work place. By comparison, the non-Debswana sample, which is so varied, and which has such varied work categories carries a greater likelihood of having/employing people who have never been to school (see table below).

Table 7: Level of education by program

Highest education level	Debswana	Non-Debswana
Never been to school	44.4 (20)	73.7 (14)
Primary 3 or less	11.1 (5)	10.5 (2)
Primary 4-6	6.7 (3)	5.3 (1)
Completed primary	31.1 (14)	10.5 (2)
Secondary education	6.7 (3)	0.0 (0)
Total	100.0 (45)	100.0 (19)

As the table indicates, there are no participants with a secondary level education within the non-Debswana sample, and only 10.5% with primary level education whilst the Debswana sample has registered 6.7% of participants with a secondary level education. The obvious explanation is that the Debswana work place literacy program, as it is tailored to the specific working environment, caters for learners even with higher qualifications than those that are catered for under the government literacy program taught in the work place.

A worrisome observation that one can make of the 10.5% primary completers who are found in the non-Debswana sample is the possibility that primary level schooling has not adequately imparted literacy skills to its recipients, such that are still deficient in these. Hence they enroll in the work place literacy program. It also implies that contrary to the policy (which obviously needs to be revised in light of the foregoing), some people with considerable primary schooling still find their way into the literacy program. This must be partly influenced by the policy of automatic promotion in the education system, which fails to diagnose and or/remedy learning problems in the various levels of primary education. Hence, it is necessary to review the policy regarding the acceptable educational level for admission into the literacy program, in view of the observation that primary schooling of up to standard seven level may not have adequately imparted basic literacy skills to its recipients.

With regard to people with less than primary level 4, the Debswana sample registered 11.1%, while the non-Debswana sample registered 10.5%, which simply shows that both programs cater for employees with a low level of education in their literacy classes, as it should.

4.1.3.2 Attendance of Classes If Offered Outside Working Hours

There is need to gauge the level of commitment and motivation that participants of this program have. An overwhelming majority of respondents in the two categories, 91.1% for the Debswana sample, and 80% for the non-Debswana sample would definitely be prepared to attend classes (even) if they are offered outside working hours.

4.1.3.3 Need For Literacy Classes

This item sought to compare the two groups in terms of their greatest motivation to attend literacy classes in their work places. In this item too, the vast majority-55.3% of the Debswana sample and 80% for the non-Debswana sample indicated that it was the "need to be literate" that made them enroll. A significant proportion of the remaining respondents in the Debswana sample enrolled because "management required it", which registered to responses in the other sample. This is of course reflective of the fact that since it is a Debswana management initiative, a significant proportion of the trainees would have had this factor uppermost in their minds when they responded to the question. The significance of this is that management initiatives are highly likely to motivate employees to enroll in their programs, as they may be more likely to be tailored to organizational needs with a possibility of enhancing one productivity or competency as is the case with the Debswana program. The organization-grown programs may also be tied to one's advancement, again as in the Debswana-program. In view of the advantages of the internally-oriented program, organization/work places to initiate literacy programs that will be more in line with their internal needs, whilst still imparting the basic literacy and numeracy skills.

4.1.4 Summary

Workplace literacy is highly regarded by its participants. It is empowering on a personal as well as on a professional level. The basic literacy skills improve productivity because employees are able to make the correct requests for equipment where this is required for particular job categories, thus reducing wastage of time and resources. They also able to write meaningful reports to their superiors about their duties where this is required.

The program imparts basic literacy skills, which participants use in a variety of ways in their personal lives, such as filling in forms at the bank or for a personal identity document, such as a passport, or "Omang". Some of the participants are also able to assist their children with homework, which is something that they feel proud of. In this way, the benefits of their literacy trickle down to other members of the family, and certainly help in terms of providing a supportive home environment, which positively impacts on their children's education.

Quite importantly, participants have a high awareness of the value of education, and have identified specific aspects of it that they would like to see an improvement on. They want to be taught English, which is at the moment is confined to the post literacy stage. They correctly view English as an empowering subject for personal and professional reasons, such as being able to communicate with one's bosses, or with colleagues who are non-Setswana speakers.

Both participants and employers recognize and appreciate the fact that possession of basic literacy skills reduces risks of personal injury due to the fact that participants can read signs warning them of dangerous situations such as slippery floors, flammable substances and chemicals.

Arithmetic is also regarded as an important subject, which needs to be upgraded, so as to facilitate better grasp of crucial concepts that are needed for upgrading oneself. This would open avenues such as training and trade testing at a place like Madirelo Trade Testing Center MTTC). Although many of them are highly skilled in their technical areas of expertise, they fail at Madirelo because they have no mathematical background.

There is need to improve level of arithmetic taught by including some meaningful mathematical concepts that can empower participants to undergo training and/or trade tests in their technical areas. In addition, the DNFE should explore the possibility of adopting the South African model of ABET, so that the participants of the work place literacy program are not necessarily subjected to "academic" requirements, such as the present requirement of mathematical aptitude. In this way, they will be assessed and certified on the basis of their competency, and experiential learning.

The Debswana work place literacy has more advantages over the regular work place literacy, with respect to the following:

1. More aligned with the needs of the organization, and hence more directly relevant
2. Competency-based and hence more likely to enhance worker skills, which would ensure improved productivity

The recommendation of the RNPE is reiterated regarding the introduction of an "Adult Basic Education Course to provide adults with the equivalent of standard seven schooling" (Rec. 82, p. 37). In this regard, the DNFE can look into the possibility of adapting the Debswana Adult Basic education course, which is based on the South African model, so that it has in-built flexibility for adaptability to particular work places. In this way, more organizations might find it more attractive, and hence may patronize better than the current one.

4.2 Program for Children in Remote Area Community Schools

The education of out of school and/or street children is one of the top priority areas of the Non-Formal Education department. However, this study is not comprehensive enough on this issue to be able to deal with all the factors militating against the education of these children, nor has it been concerned in any great detail with internal school and classroom issues with regard to factors affecting their learning. It has however attempted to determine the reasons why children of remote area dwellers have either never been to school (left outs) or have dropped out of school (dropouts). It also looked at general issues of factors affecting enrollment, participation, perceptions of utility of education, aspirations of parents and children, etc. The main mode of data collection was structured interviews with the children themselves, and some discussions with members of the community.

The sample size was 74, based on subjects drawn from communities of Jamataka in the Tutume sub-district, as well as remote area settlements around Kang/Hukunsi in the Kgalagadi district. The bulk of the sample comprises respondents from Jamataka, a small settlement about 40 kilometers northwest of Francistown.

While the quantitative analysis is based on the combined sample, the Jamataka sample is used for the qualitative and in-depth analysis, in order to highlight the factors that influence attendance and non-attendance of such schools. It is also used to explore the perceptions of the community on benefits/lack of schooling in this and similar contexts.

4.2.1 *The Socio-Cultural and Economic Context: Socio-Cultural Issues*

This was important to establish in order to determine the potential and actual effects of

education on the lifestyle of the communities involved on enrollment, participation, as well as to appropriately tailor educational intervention programs to make them commensurate with their lifestyle and living patterns.

Jamataka is typical of many remote area settlements. It is for this reason that it has been used as a case study of the remote area context, and particularly with regard to

the initiative the community has taken to provide educational opportunities for their children. Hence, the lessons learned about various socio-economic and socio-political problems with regard to educational provision will be valuable and informative about similar settings, of which there are many. The village constitutes a small settlement with a population of about 400, a significant number of whom are beholden in patron-client relations to cattle barons who operate cattle-posts in the surrounding area. The village does not qualify for a Council school as the population is below the required 500 (now revised to 250-but Jamataka still does not qualify due to its tenuous status as an "unofficial" settlement). However, through community initiative, the village has put up a school, which serves lower primary level. After standard four, Jamataka pupils transfer to the neighboring villages for higher primary education, where they have to stay in a hostel set-up.

The community of Jamataka is made up of several ethno-cultural groups, amongst which can be found Bakalanga and the San. The settlement is connected to villages such as Makobo and Marapong through the national road network. Ease of transportation between Jamataka and these villages has facilitated closer linkages, from which Jamataka has benefited greatly.. In particular, pupils from the village stay in a hostel in Marapong

(Mampori), during the course of their higher primary schooling.

The Jamataka community primary school operates under very serious shortage of human and material resources. It draws its teachers from the community, and they operate on a voluntary basis. The teachers are necessarily unqualified, with many having a little more education than those whom they teach, the most educated of which have a secondary level education, many of whom have only done form two. There are no proper facilities in terms of buildings and/or teaching equipment and materials, with just two blocks of community-constructed buildings. The classes are generally held under *mophane* trees in the old-fashioned way, and of course this has serious implications for the learning context of the children. They haphazardly receive non-committal assistance from the Tutume sub-district Council in the form of a few textbooks here, a few pens and exercise books there, and payment of its unqualified teachers.

There were no adult literacy classes in the village when data was being collected there in August 1999, due to the unavailability of teachers. The last class was held in December 1998, but since then the LGL has had child-minding problems.

4.2.2 *Economic Activity*

The economic activity of many of the village inhabitants mainly comprises cattle herding for men, and household chores for women, in addition to gathering wild berries and fruit. There is also some commercial activity, including vegetables and beer selling in the village, and there is a Chibuku selling point. Beer (mostly chibuku) selling often leads to social ills such as drunkenness and truancy, and these sometimes breed school drop outs.

With regard to youth, their economic activity is generally reflective of wider socio-political relations. For example, many youth are engaged as herd-boys not in their fathers' cattle-posts, but those of the wealthy cattle owners (see table below on socio-economic activities).

Table 8: Social and economic activities

Social activities	Freq	Percent	Economic activities	Freq	Percent
Herding cattle	30	41.1	Hunter-gatherer	20	27.4
Caring for younger siblings	33	45.2	Worked in the household	17	23.3
Other	10	13.7	Herded someone's cattle	8	11.0
			Worked as housekeeper	7	9.6
			No economic activity	21	28.8
Total	73	100.0	Total	73	100.0

There is visible abject poverty, and the villagers get monthly rations through the Remote Area Dweller Office (RADO). The study for example, found that the most significant response with regard to how children who never attended was "to be given incentives like clothes and food" (52.8%), which may simply translate to "need for clothes and food". The same response was popular with regard to how those who dropped out can be helped (42.9%). This type of response is to some extent a result of the forced-response design of the questionnaire. But since other options were available, the fact that this was the most popular could be indicative of the general poverty of the community whose daily worry

and hence priority revolves around the basics of survival-food and clothes. It could also be indicative of the "missing 17%" phenomenon, in the sense that the lack of money for clothes and feeding fees is also related to parents' inability to send their children to school (see Kann et al, 1989).

That the community is generally aware of the value of education is in no doubt. After all, the school is a community initiative, which shows great awareness of the value of education. One parent put it this way:

The school in Jamataka has proved to be of great help because right now the kids help us a lot in things like reading/interpreting letters for us unlike at first when there was no school (member of community, Jamataka).

The significance of the school and the benefits accruing from schooling cannot be overemphasized, especially when one considers that this community is embroiled in a protracted case with the government on the issue of the status of its settlement. Schooling is also seen as valuable in more general ways as well. The high level of awareness of the benefits of schooling is especially significant when understood in the context of 59.5% of respondents who went on to state as the most important reasons for attending school the need to "improve their life". Thus, in spite of the fact at some level that unemployment acts as a disincentive to send children to school, the flip side of this is that the community, being close to Francistown, its affluence and its influences, is nonetheless not unaware of the possibility for socio-economic mobility through education. This assertion is supported by qualitative responses from the individual interviews and focus group discussions with the parents, which indicated a strong awareness about the value of education as being

necessary for a good "future", or to "have a future" (see table depicting reasons for schooling).

Table 9: Reasons for attending school

Reasons for attending school	Frequency	Percentage
Education is a human right	2	2.7
	14	18.9
Learn to read and write	7	9.5
For employment or self-employment	7	9.5
	44	59.5
My community needs educated people		
Improve quality of my life		
Total	74	100.0

Parents, many of whom were illiterate themselves, also had clear ideas about what types of skills they would like their children to be taught. Most of these skills have a clear vocational orientation and comprise sewing, building construction, carpentry, crop production/gardening and pottery, but also include reading and writing.

In spite of the realization of the general benefits of schooling however, there are clearly issues that still militate against enrollment/access and participation in schooling in this community. It was found that 40% of the young men who dropped out of school indicated that they did not see the value of education, while 28.6% of the young women

registered the same reason, which are quite significant responses.

One young woman who never went to school stated:

I do not need to go to formal school, only if I can be provided with non-formal education. All these other people go to school because they are lazy to work at home (Jamataka youth).

Another said:

I am not interested in schooling because my parents never showed me the importance of education, so I just take it that schooling is not important (Jamataka youth).

These observations need to be qualified, because as they are, they seem to negate the fact just noted that the community is generally aware of the value of education. The statement by one principal of a remote area school, albeit in a different part of the country (Salajwe), reflects similar conditions to those of Jamataka. He remarked that:

Some of the parents(who) look at those who come back after completing form five and have not found jobs, and are idling, ask themselves, "why should we send our children to school if they will just come home and idle.....".

Qualitative responses of the various members of the community also give weight to this perception, since some of the statements made by some members of the community seemed to suggest that some parents just "do not see the value of education". There clearly needs to be a distinction between "not seeing the value of education" and "being frustrated by lack of opportunities for employment of further education". There was also

a feeling that some children lacked commitment to school, others cited lack of parental encouragement, while far fewer informants considered discipline in the form of punishment to be a significant problem.

On the lack of parental encouragement one youth stated:

Our parents do not really show us the importance of education. We only realize it when it is already too late. I would like to encourage other children who still have a chance to use the time very well (Jamataka youth).

This shows clearly that while some children may be disadvantaged by the lack of parental encouragement, they nevertheless still appreciate the value of schooling. A number of them even wondered whether it was too late to go to school. This group would obviously benefit from any out-of-school youth program.

4.2.3 *Transfer of Pupils to Hostel in Marapong*

Another problem, which could partly account for parents' and children's disillusionment with, and "failure to see the value of education" can be gleaned from treatment of Jamataka children who transfer to Marapong. When they get there they are made to start at standard 2 or even standard 1 (See also Mothakaja, Ramahobo, et al, 1997). According to the task force that looked into the RADP-administered hostels, this situation has an overall negative effect on the pupils. They become stigmatized as they find themselves in the same class with much younger pupils, or by the fact that they still fail at the end of their repeating year. This has negative social and learning implications, as a result of which the children either perform poorly, become disillusioned with schooling and drop

out (see also Mothakaja et al 1997, 12-13). The hostel situation also presents a negative learning environment for these children because it alienates the pupils from both home and family. This has a deleterious effect on their learning and on their welfare, especially given the dire state of affairs in some of these hostels (Mothakaja et al, 1997). In this regard the report of the task force bemoans the following problem:

.....the catchment areas which are too far from the schools as the school becomes an alienating factor between the pupils and parents since the two separate for too long. This is particularly true given theculture of Basarwa which is based on the principle of intimacy.....(1997, 12).

In this regard one of the community members who were interviewed reiterated this observation in this way:

When kids attend classes in the neighboring villages at times they end up being discouraged and leave school because of long distances (Jamataka community member).

Clearly the problem of long distances that children travel, together with the separation of children from their parents needs to be addressed in any type of program that is targeted to this and similar communities.

4.2.4 *What activities are pupils engaged in before school?*

This item was included in order to gauge the lifestyles and socio-economic activities of the community. As noted above, herding livestock is the main economic activity of boys and accounted for 41.1% of the sample, followed by the activity of "looking after younger siblings. The questionnaire actually influenced the categorization of these two activities as

"social activities", while hunter gathering and "employed" to herd cattle were separately captured as "economic activities". The rationale behind this was that due to the socio-political structure of remote area communities, herding cattle is mainly done as part of ones' social obligation to one's parents, or to the cattle owner. In a few contexts, as reflected in the second category of "being employed as herder", some kind of payment, in money or in kind would have exchanged hands. In terms of the economic activities engaged in before school, 27.4% were hunter-gatherers, domestic work-also reflecting a type of pseudo-employment in money or kind, accounted for 32.9%.

4.2.5 Long-term Aspirations

The most significant intentions were "going for further studies" (37.0%), and "going for further training" (38.4%), which indicates that this group has very high ambitions/aspirations. In reference to the parents' perceptions regarding the types of skills they would like their children to be taught, the aspirations of children seem to echo the same sentiment with regard to the need for vocational skills of various kinds in the community.

4.2.6 Suggestions for Improvement

Although this item intended to capture suggestions for improvement of the formal setting, the need to "learn skills" and the need to be "employable" are top priorities at 39.4% and 31.0% respectively, by way of improving the content to make it responsive to the needs of the community. Once again there is a clear indication here as it tallies well with the need for vocational skills training, as stipulated above. This indicates that people are aware of and see the need for alternative forms of education in place of or by way of supplementing formal education