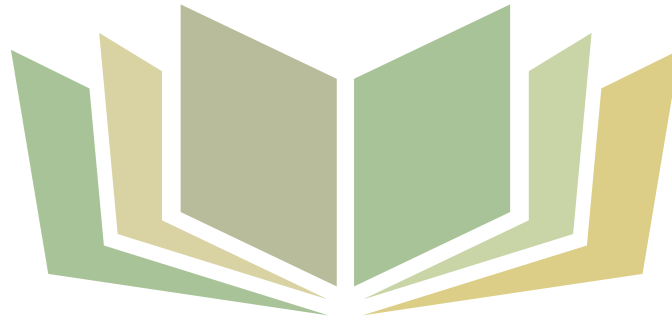


Youth and Adult Learning and Education in Southern Africa

OVERVIEW OF A FIVE
NATION STUDY

Professor John Aitchison

06



O?ENLEARNING





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OSISA

Open Society Initiative
for Southern Africa

FOREWORD

Wongani Grace Nkhoma
OSISA Education Programme Manager

Many countries in southern Africa are facing a critical and growing challenge – how to provide an education that meets the socio-economic needs of their bulging youth populations. Primary school drop-out rates remain high across the region so many children and youth end up outside the education system. Unable to return to school or to access technical and vocational education, they end up without the necessary skills to prosper in a world that is increasingly dependent on knowledge.

And there are very limited ‘second chances’ for these children and youth to learn in adulthood since the adult education sector also faces serious difficulties. Funding remains low, while gaps in policy formulation and implementation mean that the sector cannot adequately meet the current needs of the region’s adults – let alone the needs of the burgeoning population of out-of-school youth.

The right to education for every child, youth and adult is fundamental. Education counts more than ever in the contemporary world that is characterised by rapid change and technological advances. Education does not only benefit the individual but it also benefits their families, communities and the wider nation. And southern Africa can point to some real gains since the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals were adopted in 2000.

Great strides have been made towards universal primary education along with increased participation in secondary and tertiary education, reduced gender disparities, and some steps towards addressing the needs of marginalised groups, children with special needs and indigenous people. But despite these gains, a lot still needs to be done in the youth and adult education sectors if southern African countries are ever to meet

the demands of all the uneducated and unskilled youth and adults in the region.

It is within this context that this research study was commissioned by OSISA in collaboration with the Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbandes (dvv International). The research was intended to create an up-to-date map of the current state of youth and adult education in five southern African countries – Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland – by looking at the policies, legislation and institutional frameworks governing the sector as well as the funding of, and stakeholders involved in, youth and adult education services. The study aimed to highlight critical gaps and provide recommendations to help address them.

The study shows that all five countries need clearer policies, better financing and improved governance to ensure that young people and adults are able to enjoy their right to education. The findings also highlight the fact it is only recently that youth have been regarded as a distinct and important category of adult education learners, largely as a result of the increasing concern about the growing number of young people who are currently ‘not in education, employment, or training’ – hence the new acronym, NEETs.

However, despite this, adult education frameworks have not been adequately reviewed

and restructured to accommodate the needs of the youth. In addition, adult education is usually defined very narrowly as basic literacy or post-literacy – or, even at its broadest, as education that is equivalent to primary and secondary schooling.

The situation is further complicated by the ambiguities regarding which components of youth and adult education (literacy, non-formal education, vocational education, life skills or continuing education) are covered by policy. Another major challenge is the dearth of data or ‘data poverty’ as John Aitchison, the author of this report, calls it – with very little effort being made at the policy level to aggregate the data to get a clearer view of the big picture. Coupled with very limited investment in research, documentation, monitoring and evaluation, this makes it a real challenge to finance youth and adult education.

While focussing on just five countries, the findings of this study highlight key issues that the entire region needs to address – and should provoke much-needed reflection and debate on youth and adult education by policy-makers and financiers at national and regional level. The report also provides recommendations that call upon governments to put in place mechanisms that will ensure the provision of quality youth and adult education services in order to give everyone the chance of a brighter future – and to make southern African societies fairer and more equal for all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wolfgang Leumer *dvv International*

OSISA's Education Programme sees a clear role for adult and youth education in the ten countries where OSISA operates. dvv international in its own philosophy underscores the substantial role that adult and youth education has to play in fighting poverty and contributing to development. These objectives can only be sustainably achieved if politicians, legislators and decision-makers understand the importance of youth and adult education and thus increase efforts and boost investment in the sector. This requires situational analyses and factual descriptions of the state of youth and adult education. This regional study and its five contributing country studies, covering Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland, are a direct outcome of this strategic approach.

We wish to express our most sincere appreciation to the institutions, organisations and individuals who collaboratively contributed to this initiative. OSISA gave unequivocal support, without which the project would not have happened and this study would not have been produced.

Research teams in all five countries have worked tirelessly to provide evidence and to document the existing practices in youth and adult education, to fathom their respective deficiencies

and gaps and develop recommendations for policy design and change.

The research and data gathering process was guided by Professor John Aitchison, the lead researcher, who also authored this regional synopsis. We could not have found anyone more experienced in data processing and collation than Prof. Aitchison, who has worked tirelessly in the field of adult and youth education for decades and continues to do so even after being made emeritus of the University of KwaZulu Natal.

This report would also not have been possible without the commitment of the following:

- Dr David Jele who conducted the study in Swaziland and the Swaziland Network Campaign for Education for All (SWANCEFA), which coordinated the validation workshop;
- Dr Rakel-Kavena Shalyefu who conducted the study in Namibia and the Namibia Literacy Trust, which coordinated the validation workshop;
- Eunice Nanguê Inácio and Santinho Filipe Figueira who conducted the study in Angola and the OSISA-Angola country office, which coordinated the validation workshop;
- Roberto Luis who conducted the study in Mozambique and dvv International Mozambique

country office, which coordinated the validation workshop; and,

- Dr Setoi Michael Setoi who conducted the study in Lesotho and the Campaign for Education (CEF), which coordinated the validation workshop.

The quality of the regional report and the five country studies was enriched by subjecting them to a validation process, which allowed all stakeholders to make their comments, critiques and inputs. We thank all interviewees and respondents, as well as all participants in the validation processes for their frank and open contributions.

While this report marks the end of the current research programme, it is far from being the end of our advocacy efforts in the region. Indeed, it is the start. We will endeavour to bring the critical recommendations in this report to the attention of as wide an audience as possible in southern Africa and beyond.

Finally, this report is dedicated to the millions of adults and NEETs – youth Not Educated, Employed nor Trained – who are waiting to access literacy, basic education and lifelong learning services so that they can critically engage with their world and influence decisions that affect their lives.

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1.

INTRODUCTION

“basic education, which includes life skills for young people and adults, is an essential tool to enhance participation in democracy and contribute to the fight against poverty”

Objectives of the study

There is increasing international consensus that basic education, which includes life skills for young people and adults, is an essential tool to enhance participation in democracy and contribute to the fight against poverty – two outcomes that are of particular relevance to the developing countries of southern Africa and especially to poor and marginalised people within them. There is also consensus that countries in the region need clear policies, adequate financing and good governance to ensure that young people and adults can access education as is their right – but that they all face serious challenges.

So in 2011, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) conducted a research study in five countries – Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland – to create an up-to-date map of the current state of youth and adult education, including the policies, institutional frameworks, governance, funding, provision and stakeholders. The study also sought to understand the extent

of the challenges that hamper the youth and adult education sector, identify their root causes and seek solutions to them.

Furthermore, the study looked at the quality and coherence of the current adult education base as a foundation for future growth and action that is congruent with the vision of open societies – societies in which every citizen has access to free education facilitative of their full participation in a democratic country.

The project’s key objectives included:

- This **synthesis report** identifying both common features and differences in the five countries and outlining recommendations for the five countries as a collective;
- Five up-to-date **country reports** mapping the features of youth and adult education in each country together with a set of recommendations for both the State and civil society, which could lead to planned interventions that result in better governance and coordination of the sector; and,

- Enhanced **research resources** in each country, including copies of current youth and adult education policies and implementation plans; revised templates for data collection that could ease long term data updating; and an easily updated web-output database containing the information from the reports.

This research could become a pilot for further research on youth and adult education in other countries in the region and may help to measure national achievements (or failures) against African commitment benchmarks.

What is meant by youth and adult education?

This study has used a broad definition of adult education as applying to all education and training that is not part of the regular schooling, business, technical and training college, and higher education system, which children enter aged 6 or 7 and exit from their mid-teens to early twenties. Therefore, our definition includes people considered in these countries to be both youth and fully adult. This is in accord with the UNESCO usage, which considers an adult to be aged 15+. So youth and adult education also includes programmes intended for so-called out-of-school youth as well as much non-formal education.

However, this broad meaning of adult education is not commonly used in the five countries studied, where adult education is usually seen

very narrowly as literacy or post-literacy or, at its broadest, as adult basic education that is equivalent to primary and secondary schooling. Equally confusingly, the terms 'non-formal education' and 'informal education' often refer to education for out-of-school youth or adults that is thoroughly formal in every sense and replicates, albeit in a somewhat inferior second class way, formal schooling (See Diagne and Hoppers, 2012, pp. 9-10).

Only recently have 'youth' in this region begun to be looked at more seriously as a distinct and important category of adult education learners. This reflects the new global concern about the growing numbers of young people who are currently 'not in education, employment or training' (hence the new acronym, NEETs) and who are often seen as a potential economic, social and political problem.

In northern countries with their ageing populations, comprehensive social welfare systems, low unemployment and increasingly sophisticated technologies, the NEETs are seen as a social burden and their lack of higher levels of education as a threat to future prosperity. In southern developing countries, although the rapid growth of the number of these marginalised young people is, like in the north, partly a response to the current world crises in global capitalism, it is also a reflection of young countries with fast population growth and education systems and economies that are unable to cope with the

demand. In the South, these NEETs are not – like the illiterate or undereducated youth in the past – people who never had the chance to go or stay in school. In many cases, they have had significant levels of education, albeit of an inadequate and low quality, which makes them virtually unemployable in our increasingly sophisticated 'knowledge economy' workplaces.

It is clear that many of the countries in this study had hardly begun to respond to this growing element in society (or had begun to respond in counter-productive ways as in Lesotho where subsidies were withdrawn from training institutions where male youth had been rebellious). But the NEETs deserve priority attention and ignoring them could have catastrophic consequences. It is for this reason that this study was designed to look into youth and adult education.

The data desert

In trying to understand the situation of youth and adults in need of adult education and the provision that currently attempts to meet this need, we were faced with what can be described as a 'data desert', or to use another metaphor, 'a vicious cycle' caused by data poverty.

Poor capacity in relation to (or insufficient prioritisation of) data collection, analysis, dissemination, maintenance and updating has resulted in no data or out-of-date data.

This weakens the capacity for evidence-based monitoring, evaluation and research since monitoring and evaluation tools and processes are not developed and refined and mistakes in the field are uncorrected and repeated. Research based on accurate data and evidence is not available to be used to influence policies, even though it is recognised that decision makers are increasingly demanding 'hard' (and often statistical) data to justify investment in adult education. Although this overview and the five country reports are modest attempts to 'green the data desert', we see them as a significant contribution to the field.

When the research project was initiated, one obvious data collecting route was to build on the relevant International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) country reports and use a similar template for updating the data. This would mean designing a template into which existing and new information would be dropped as well as identifying the sources, procedures and on-going means of updating it. In other words, this project would develop tools for data collection, monitoring and evaluation in the youth and adult education sector in the respective countries and regionally. In practice, this was an almost impossible task to achieve and the five reports illustrate some of the data problems endemic to the region:

1. Contextual data on the economy, unemployment, general education and

training enrolments and outcomes are often unavailable, not easily found on the relevant ministry websites, and when available, usually well out-of-date.

2. The terminology used to describe youth and adult education differs from country to country and is in itself often confusing (particularly when adult education is narrowly identified with literacy and 'non-formal education' is applied to thoroughly formal activities).
3. The data situation in relation to adult education institutions and organisations is dire. Very few bodies, whether part of government or non-governmental organisations, have easily accessible data that is up-to-date.
4. Obtaining financial data is extraordinarily difficult and understanding the policy, politics and decision making behind the financing of youth and adult education even more so.
5. When studies are done – often by international bodies (such as the World Bank, UNESCO or major funders) or by the countries themselves (as in the country reports prepared for CONFINTEA VI held in 2009) – the efforts made to gather comprehensive data are usually not capitalised on to form the basis for on-going and regular updating.
6. Very few attempts are made to aggregate data to see what the big picture shows. A good example of this is the failure to look at how much relevant vocational education and training is being provided considering the huge

mass of under-educated and untrained youth who need it.

Politicians and economists who dominate decision-making are often fascinated with what they call hard statistics. Therefore, advocating for better youth and adult education with these decision-makers calls for a credible knowledge base. Unfortunately, current efforts are not coordinated, and there is little investment in research and documentation, monitoring and evaluation, which makes it more of a challenge to finance youth and adult education. The broadening and expansion of youth and adult education requires better empirical knowledge and the development of on-going monitoring projects for collecting data and statistics.

Methodology

All the country researchers and the representatives of the host organisations in each country met for a two day workshop in late 2010 and agreed on a basic research report template, research timeframes, and how the draft reports would be verified with a representative group of stakeholders in each country. Most of the researchers developed research instruments (interview guidelines and questionnaires) on the basis of the guiding questions from the main research template but contextualised them to fit the particular country. The research coordinating team reviewed these country instruments before the data was collected.

All the researchers collected both quantitative and qualitative data, although most of it was qualitative (itself something of a reflection on the difficulties involved in getting up to date quantitative data on such things as enrolments and financial expenditure). Draft researcher reports were reviewed and then presented to stakeholder workshops in each county as an initial validation exercise.

The researchers then revised their reports which were then reviewed by the research coordinating committee and finally edited by Professor John Aitchison of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The editing involved both summarising (and in some cases the addition of new statistical data and other material)

and harmonisation in presentation. This regional synthesis report was then compiled by Professor Aitchison.

In each country the final country report and the synthesis report is to be presented to a suitable stakeholder gathering or gatherings as the start of an advocacy and prioritisation process.

Features of the research process in the different countries

Each of the researchers was supported by a host organisation that facilitated interaction with people and organisations in the youth and adult education field and in many cases provided research assistants.

Angola

The Angolan study covered 10 of the 18 provinces, namely Luanda, Bengo, Uige, Malange, Huambo, Cuanza Sul, Huila, Moxico, Lunda Sul and Cunene – all with high population densities and representing the four quadrants of the country. The initial research stage involved the collection and routine analysis of mainly quantitative data from the Ministry of Education sector statistics system to build up a profile on enrolled students, sex, age, location (rural/urban and peri-urban), region, etc. This mapping exercise enabled the identification of focus areas for qualitative analysis in order to detail and analyse factors, reasons, causes and trends revealed by the quantitative analysis.

In the second stage, a sample of ten provinces was selected (as anticipated in the Terms of Reference), which provided a likely representation of the diversity of socio-cultural and economic situations in Angola. This sample included areas of high and low concentrations of the school population, areas with different literacy rates, and areas with different regional and socio-cultural characteristics in the west, north and east of the country.

The third stage consisted of the application of qualitative tools for data gathering including focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and the collection of life history narratives. The main objective in this third stage was to understand

Country	Researcher	Host organisations
Angola	Santinho Figueira and Eunice Inácio	OSISA-Angola
Lesotho	Setoi Michael Setoi	Campaign for Education Forum
Mozambique	Roberto Luis	dvv International
Namibia	Kavena Shalyefu	Namibia Literacy Trust
Swaziland	David Jele	Swaziland National Coalition for Education for All

and interpret the information gathered in the first stage by identifying the causes of the current situation and to look at public policy measures that would be needed to make necessary changes.

Lesotho

The research started using a case study design that looked at individual ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and then gained more contextual data using desk top research to analyse available reports and relevant policy papers. A decision was made to sample at least 10 percent of the institutions and organisations that offer non-formal or formal education specifically for youth or adults from both the lowlands and mountainous areas. Interview and focus group instruments were developed for use with heads of institutions and organisations, and for focus group discussions with youth and adults. Interviews and focus group discussions were tape recorded and transcribed with the help of a research assistant. Informal observations were made in various institutions.

Mozambique

The Mozambique study started with an analysis of documents related to youth and adult education. International and continental policy perspectives were examined via the reports on the priorities and strategies related to the recommendations and commitments resulting from various UNESCO conferences on education held from 2006 to



2010 (at Maputo, Bamako, Nairobi, Belém and Ugugadougou), which form important African and international benchmarks (UNESCO, 2009a; 2009b; UNESCO Institute for Lifelong learning, 2007; 2008; Association for the Development of Education in Africa, 2010).

Interviews and group discussions took place with relevant and representative actors in youth and adult education services, both government and non-governmental providers and with some representatives of international agencies that provide funding or technical assistance. To understand the level of complementarity and coordination among civil society organisations, interviews and discussion were held with a range of NGOs, religious institutions and community associations, which deliver formal and non-formal education programmes. One particular set of discussions was with networks of community based organisations working on youth and adult education and women's empowerment in Zambezia province.

The size of Mozambique and the cost associated with travelling to different parts of the country did act as a limiting factor in the research and important information may well have been missed as a result.

Namibia

An initial survey questionnaire to gather qualitative data and an interview guide were

prepared for interviewing providers of youth and adult education services – including governmental, non-governmental, business and faith-based organisations. The target population was all such provider organisations and those providing financial assistance to youth training and adult education. The initial respondents were identified during three stakeholders' meetings facilitated by the Namibia Literacy Trust. Prior to the meetings, the stakeholders received a letter informing them about the research study. Respondents were also found from the entries in the *Directory of Adult learning and training providers in Namibia*, 2003 (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2003b). With the assistance of the Ministry of Education and these initial respondents, a snowball purposive sampling procedure was followed to identify additional relevant respondents. Twenty seven organisations were interviewed. These respondents were selected from 6 of the 13 administrative regions of the country – Erongo (3), Oshana (6), Omusati (1), Oshikoto (3), Ohangwena (3) and Khomas (11). Interviews were conducted with 1 to 5 people from each organisation.

After the first data analysis and the resulting presentation, it became obvious that the data was mostly qualitative. The first questionnaire did not request any quantitative data in terms of descriptive statistics. Therefore, another instrument was designed to collect the number of learners enrolled, the number who dropped out or were successful each year and the annual

amount of money spent. Document analysis was also performed to critically review the literature – legislative acts, policies and relevant manuscripts – related to youth and adult education in Namibia.

The study was hampered by a few factors, such as some potential respondents being unenthusiastic about participating as they were not sure that they were involved in adult education. The interview guide also proved to be too long and, because of the extended period during which the interviews were done, some respondents were influenced by what other respondents had previously said. In addition, because of limited researchers and financial resources not all regions were reached.

Swaziland

This research study adopted a descriptive research design, employing content analysis and survey procedures. Quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to execute the study, including interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. Data was collected from a sample drawn from affiliate members of the Swaziland National Coalition on Education for All and from a number of other bodies and institutions, including a number of senior government officials in various ministries. The research was conducted in the Manzini and Mbabane areas and 60 people were either interviewed or completed a questionnaire. Two verification meetings were held with a number of stakeholders.

2.

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

“The countries are all relatively poor with high levels of absolute poverty and inequality.”

Four of the five countries function as multi-party democracies, although both Angola and Mozambique are still working to overcome the effects of prolonged civil wars and Lesotho had a period in which democracy did not function effectively. Swaziland is still an absolute monarchy with very limited democratic participation and much current political contestation.

All five countries have a system of cabinet government with a number of ministries controlling different aspects of executive government. All the countries have some sort of

regionalisation by province, region or district with varying degrees of decentralisation but the effectiveness of the devolution of authority is very variable.

The countries are all relatively poor with high levels of absolute poverty and inequality. Three of the countries have very small populations and, while this complicates the economies of scale in educational provision, it also means that – quantitatively speaking – the problem of illiteracy in these countries is relatively small. In all these countries, young people form a large component of the population and the youth population bulge will be present for a long time.

Country	Population	Population growth rate	Population on less than US\$1.25 a day	Gini index
Angola	18 021 000	2.7%	54%	59
Lesotho	2 049 000	0.9%	43%	63
Mozambique	23 900 000	2.3%	75%	46
Namibia	2 130 000	1.9%	49%	58
Swaziland	1 168 000	1.3%	63%	51
Total	47 268 000			

Source:
United Nations Population Division,
2008, United Nations Development
Programme, 2008, 2011, and World
Bank, 2011

Note:
A value of 0 on the Gini index
represents perfect equality, a value of
100 complete inequality.

Although Angola has significant revenues from oil fields and Namibia from minerals, all of these countries are developing. Their general infrastructure and manufacturing capacity are still in the early stages of development, and in the case of Angola and Mozambique still being rebuilt after their devastating civil wars. Most of the people in these countries rely on agriculture for their livelihoods.

In all these countries, there is a large problem with unemployment and a growing population of young people not in employment, education or training. Even in Angola and Mozambique which have enjoyed rapid economic growth in recent years, soaring GDP has not provided jobs for the large number of the unemployed adults and young people. This is partly because the education and training systems in all these countries, although they account for large chunks of the national budgets, are not effectively educating and training people so that they become more employable and productive. Indeed, there are generally weak linkages between school and the workplace. And the socially dysfunctional consequences of this large number of unemployed and illiterate or under-educated people – many of them young – is obvious.

Education and training

Southern Africa has low adult literacy rates and, although adult literacy is one of the six Education for All goals, adult education in the region usually receives less than 1 percent of education budgets. Even so, the three small countries in this study –

Country	Population	Age 15+	Aged 15+ unemployed	% aged 15-34 unemployed
Angola	18 021 000	10 271 970	?	More than 25%
Lesotho	2 049 000	1 362 585	345 000	More than 25%
Mozambique	23 900 000	12 929 900	?	More than 21%
Namibia	2 130 000	1 100 000	428 173	60%
Swaziland	1 168 000	726 496	?	More than 40%
Total	47 268 000			

Sources:
United Nations Population Division, 2008;
Namibia Labour Force Survey 2008;
Lesotho Bureau of Statistics, 2011;
Central Intelligence Agency The World Factbook, 2012

Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland – boast adult literacy levels of 90, 88 and 87 percent respectively and could be within reach of effectively eliminating adult illiteracy.

	Adult illiteracy rate (%)			Adult illiterates		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Angola	30	17	43	2 997 000	839 160	2 157 840
Lesotho	10	17	5	131 000	96 940	34 060
Mozambique	46	30	60	5 759 000	1 785 290	3 973 710
Namibia	12	11	12	158 000	74 260	83 740
Swaziland	13	13	14	95 000	42 750	52 250
Totals				9 140 000	2 838 400	6 301 600

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, 2010

Youth illiteracy is still a significant problem in spite of the efforts to bring formal primary schooling to all.

	Youth illiteracy (15-24 years) rate (%)			Youth illiterates (15-24 years)		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Angola	27	19	35	993 000	347 550	645 450
Lesotho	8	14	2	39 000	33 930	5 070
Mozambique	30	22	38	1 316 000	486 920	829 080
Namibia	7	9	5	32 000	20 160	11 840
Swaziland	7	8	5	19 000	11 590	7 410
Totals				2 399 000	900 150	1 498 850

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, 2010

Unfortunately, the average number years of schooling attained by adults is still very low in all these countries, catastrophically so in Mozambique.

	Mean years of formal schooling among adults
Angola	4.4
Lesotho	5.9
Mozambique	1.2
Namibia	7.4
Swaziland	7.1

Source:
United Nations Development Programme, 2011

Conventional schooling is also failing to attract or retain all children.

	Out-of-school children of primary school age (2008)		
	Total	Male	Female
Angola	455 393	146 207	309 365
Lesotho	101 000	53 530	47 470
Mozambique	863 000	379 720	483 280
Namibia	34 000	21 760	12 240
Swaziland	37 000	19 240	17 760

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, 2010

An intriguing and almost counter-intuitive feature of these statistics is that in those countries where most children of both sexes are at least attending primary school, there are higher percentages of males of school-going age who are out of school. Regarding males as a special target of youth and adult education initiatives will be one of the key shifts that improved adult education provision has to make.

On the provision side, all these countries spend a relatively high proportion of the national budgets on education: Angola 6.4 percent (2010), Lesotho 25 percent (2012), Mozambique 20 percent (2010), Namibia 29 percent (2012) and Swaziland 19 percent (2009). However, the education systems

all have varying degrees of dysfunctionality – with very high repeat and drop-out rates.

In all the countries, it is clear that the vocational education and training facilities are totally inadequate to meet the needs of out-of-school youth and unemployed adults.

Two of the small countries, Namibia and Swaziland have statistics that reveal the extent of this crisis – Namibia has about 47,000 school leavers every year, yet the annual uptake into Vocational Education and Training (VET) is only 1,500; Swaziland has about 7,500 school leavers and 6,500 secondary school dropouts per year but the annual uptake into VET is just 1,000.

Country	School repetition rate (as %)	Drop-out rate (as %)
Angola	12.2% (primary)	?
Lesotho	20% (primary) 14% (secondary)	54% (primary)
Mozambique	35% (junior secondary) 25% (senior secondary)	56% (primary)
Namibia	18% (primary)	23% (primary)
Swaziland	17% (primary)	26% (primary)

Sources:
MICS. (2001). Angola MICS. Luanda: Ministry of Education
EMIS. (2008). Education Statistics. Ministry of Education and Culture. Windhoek. Namibia
Hunt, F. (2008). Dropping Out from School: A Cross Country Review of Literature.
UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, 2010

3.

POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

“The existence of adult education policies indicates that a country recognises the importance of the education of adults as a means towards achieving social, cultural or economic development or other goals.”

The existence of adult education policies indicates that a country recognises the importance of the education of adults as a means towards achieving social, cultural or economic development or other goals. It also indicates explicit political commitment to allocate the necessary resources to implement appropriate strategies for adult education (although not necessarily immediately or completely).

The importance of there being actual official policies lies behind one of the key concerns of the Nairobi 2008 African Statement on the Power of Youth and Adult Learning and Education for Africa's Development (UNESCO, 2009a, p. 3, 5):

Very few countries have comprehensive policies, legislation and strategic plans related specifically to youth and ALE. The lack of these frameworks weakens the linkages between non-formal and formal education and multi-sectoral collaboration and inhibits the incorporation of African perspectives into youth and ALE...Every country should have a comprehensive national youth and adult learning and education policy and action plans (which also provide a comprehensive language policy and support for the creation of literate environments). This policy should be backed by legislation together with strengthened capacity to give effect to the policy. This policy should take into account strategies for poverty alleviation.

This research tried to examine which policies and strategies (at governance level) exist that support adult education for youth and adults by asking a series of questions. Did they exist and were they ratified and well known? Were there inter-, multi-sectoral and coordinated cross-ministry policies? Were all stakeholders and actors (in both government and civil society) involved in policy formation?

Recent documents – including the 2009 CONFINTEA VI report on the state of adult learning and education in sub-Saharan Africa (Aitchison and Alidou, 2009), the country reports that informed this study, and a Southern Africa REFLECT Network study of 2009 – show that many governments in southern Africa have attempted to develop youth and adult education policies or strategies and argued for the provision of it in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

However, the policy situation in all five countries is complicated by the ambiguities regarding which components of youth and adult education (literacy, non-formal education, vocational education, life skills or continuing education, etc.) deserve support. Adding even more complexity to the mix is that youth and adult education tends to be provided for by a wide and heterogeneous range of actors, including public authorities, training institutions, private sector bodies, NGOs, charitable foundations and faith-based associations. All this may partly explain why mentions of adult education in policy documents

and strategic plans tend to be broad and vague as well as absolving the respective ministry of education from direct responsibility for provision (noticeably in the case of Lesotho and Swaziland).

So while there are some references to adult and continuing education in broader education and development policy documents, there are no specific comprehensive and detailed adult education policies in their own right. There is little evidence that even the broad policy documents have been distributed further than the heads of institutions and they are not even available on the Ministry of Education websites. Public policy discussion forums were restricted to invited participants only.

Overall, the study found that although there are youth and adult education policies they are not comprehensive, are usually appendages to other policies and are, in many cases, only in draft and unratified form. Few policies were clearly linked to funding and in several cases key institutional forms (such as adult education councils in Namibia and Swaziland) have not been implemented because there was no funding for them. The place of youth in adult education policies is unclear and indeed there is a weak link between youth and education policies (where they exist). The effect of these deficiencies is unclear priorities, weak or impossible to implement policies that produce unfunded mandates, and signs that data and evidence have exercised little influence in changing policies and plans.

It is clear that one reason for the lack of finalisation of draft policies is fear of the financial consequences (and it can be argued that sometimes unfunded mandates are worse than no mandates at all). However, bureaucratic inertia is also definitely to blame. And even where policies are ratified and legislation passed, financial constraints often hamper implementation, as with the Adult Education councils that have not operated in either Namibia or Swaziland.

Existing adult education policies also tend to be narrowly focussed on literacy and adult basic and secondary education, except in Namibia where there is genuine, stand-alone adult education policy, the *National Policy on Adult Learning* (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. 2003a), and a broader lifelong learning perspective. Speaking of which, it was a tragedy that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) committee tasked with developing a lifelong education framework and strategy for the region was disbanded in 2002 when the SADC Secretariat was restructured (Aitchison, 2004).

Many government policies cover interdisciplinary areas related to youth and adult education. However, implementation guidelines that highlight this interdisciplinary relationship are lacking and their connection to other policies are weak. The main obstacles are in the implementation guidelines, the plans of action

“All the countries concerned take seriously their Education for All Dakar commitments of 2000 to achieve certain literacy and other education goals by 2015”

and their execution. There is a lack of political support, poor coordination and collaboration, and duplication of services.

In the five countries studied during this research, there are a number of notable policy (or draft policy) features. All the countries concerned take seriously their Education for All Dakar commitments of 2000 to achieve certain literacy and other education goals by 2015 (which does suggest that international agreements and benchmarks are important to youth and adult education). In the two Portuguese speaking countries, there is attention to partnerships between state and civil society, which may owe something to conditionalities associated with foreign aid. There was limited evidence of separate attention to youth as adult learners (mainly Mozambique and Angola). There was little evidence of policies providing for linkages between formal and genuine non-formal education (as distinct from quite formal adult basic education).

All the countries have some kind of constitutional basis for the right of all citizens to education. All five have varying bits of legislation that relate to youth and adult education in some way – although Namibia is the only country that has a wide range of fairly specific adult education related legislation. So a total lack of legislation is not, *per se*, a negative factor affecting implementation. The main negative factor, whatever the scale of legislative support for adult education, is the lack of political will to prioritise adult education. In addition, the main civil society adult education institutions and practitioners in most of the countries seemed to have little knowledge of – or access to – policy, legal and regulatory documents.

Overall, without a deeper commitment to youth and adult education on the part of governments and clearer lines of responsibility, the governance, coordination and provision of youth and adult education will most likely remain disjointed and uncoordinated.

4.

GOVERNANCE

“In all these countries, it would appear that the resources to govern and administer vocational education and training facilities are totally inadequate to meet the needs of out-of-school youth and unemployed adults.”

In all five countries, the Ministry of Education is the main governance body for adult education and has a department or sub-department to handle it. Despite most countries having some form of decentralization, this did not seem to have much influence on how adult education is run – mainly it is a case of simply extending the normal line of management system downwards with decision-making remaining centralised.

Civil society organisations (mainly NGOs and faith-based organisations) do play an important, although subsidiary role, sometimes as formal partners of the state (as in Angola). However, their actual influence on policy and governance does not seem very potent. In some countries, such as Lesotho and Mozambique, there are adult education related associations or coalitions.

In all these countries, it would appear that the resources to govern and administer vocational education and training facilities are totally inadequate to meet the needs of out-of-school youth and unemployed adults.

Ministries governing literacy and adult basic and secondary education

Country	Ministry	Department	Directorate	Other bodies
Angola	Ministry of Education	Department of Literacy and School Acceleration Department of Post-Literacy Adult Education Department of Technical and Vocational School Elementary	National Directorate of Technical Education Professional	
	Ministry of Youth and Sports			
	Ministry of Public Administration, Employment and Social Security			
Lesotho	Ministry of Education and Training	Department of Technical and Vocational Training	Inspectorate Office for Non-formal Education	Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre Technical and Vocational Training Advisory Board
	Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sport and Recreation	Department of Youth Department of Gender		
	Ministry of Agriculture	Department of Youth Affairs		
Mozambique	Ministry of Education and Culture		National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education	National Institute for Educational Development Consultative Council Adult Education Working Group
	Ministry of Labour			National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training
Namibia	Ministry of Education	Department of Lifelong learning	Directorate of Adult Education Directorate of Vocational Education Directorate of Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA)	Adult learning Council (inactive) TECH/NA!
	Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture		Directorate of Youth	
Swaziland	Ministry of Education and Training		Inspectorate of Adult and Non-Formal Education	Adult Education Council (defunct) Sebenta National Institute

5.

ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORKS

In spite of the role of government ministries and departments in governing adult education, the sector on the whole is uncoordinated, particularly as much adult education is non-formal in nature and delivered by a very heterogenous group of providers – government ministries, parastatal institutions, the private sector, NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs) and faith-based institutions (FBOs). And during this research, there were many calls for building effective coordination mechanisms.

The lack of coordination is seen in the poor linkages between youth and adult education providers, programmes and qualifications, and the lack of economies of scale as well as both over-centralisation and decentralisation dysfunctionalities. For example, one of the criticisms of the way the Angolan adult education system is run is that there are few incentives for institutions in particular provinces or localities to respond to local needs.

Administratively, in several countries the ministry/ department plays the role of both provider and funder for outsourced provision – as in Angola where most literacy education for adults is done by NGOs and church bodies.

Angola has an *Action Plan for Education for All* (Ministry of Education, 2000) and a central management body, the Education for All National Committee (CNEPT) – a multi-sectoral body that deals with the plan, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation processes. CNEPT has an executive Education for All Permanent Secretariat and is internally structured into six thematic technical groups each corresponding to one of the six objectives of the Dakar Action Framework.

Lesotho has a number of associations or coalitions of NGOs involved in education, training and development and the Lesotho Distance Education Teaching Centre is a parastatal adult education delivery agent.

Meanwhile, the presence of a substantial department dedicated to lifelong learning does show Namibia's commitment to the concept. The Directorate of Adult Education handles mainly literacy and adult basic and adult secondary education, while the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture plays two roles – provider and funder (for example by providing financial assistance to national bodies through grants to the National Youth Council and National Youth Service).

Swaziland also has a parastatal literacy delivery agent, the Sebenta Institute, although its output is very modest.

6.

FINANCING YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION

This section of the research looked at what financing is currently available for youth and adult education from governments, donors, the private sector, NGOs, CBOs and FBOs – and how these resources could contribute to the overall country strategies for youth and adult education provision.

Some of the questions that the study sought to answer included:

- What policies and strategies guide allocations to youth and adult education and do they include benchmarks or targets for finance?
- What needs to be done to increase adult education resourcing whilst at the same time making full, strategic and effective use of currently available resources?
- Is funding being pursued strategically, based on a clear understanding of youth and adult education's potential contributions to socio-economic development?

- What are the challenges and gaps in resourcing youth and adult education and what can be done about them?
- Are ambiguous or misleading definitions and understandings of adult education harming fundraising?

Although all the countries spend considerable sums on education, it is clear that (as it is worldwide) only a very small portion of the education budgets is devoted to adult education (usually less than 2 percent). Furthermore, the funding process tends to be opaque (particularly with respect to the political trends behind decisions) and for most youth and adult education providers it is poorly understood. There are no official benchmarks or targets and there do not appear to be any reviews of existing funding mechanisms and allocations (this is particularly felt in the unchanging rates paid to temporary and part-time educators).

In many cases it is difficult to distinguish between government and non-governmental provision because funding may come

“There are no official benchmarks or targets and there do not appear to be any reviews of existing funding mechanisms and allocations”

from government (and that funding itself usually comes from donor aid) but the actual provision of services may be handled by NGOs and other institutions and organisations. Funding channels appear to be poorly identified and coordinated and there are particularly weak linkages between development partners (foreign aid donors) and the actual beneficiaries. Governments do not seem particularly responsive to donors' adult education concerns. It is also apparent that governments have not been fully appraised of the mounting evidence for the economic and social benefits of youth and adult education, which would justify stronger investment in – and commitment to – this sector.

Donor agencies also are criticised for their short-term funding and lack of sustainable support. Many crucial funding gaps also appear to be unidentified.

At a practical level, both Angola and Mozambique rely on poorly-educated and insufficiently-trained literacy tutors, who are poorly paid and whose stipends have not been adjusted for more than a decade. Costs per literacy learner are less than half of the minimum Global Campaign for Education benchmark. Much of their adult education programme is foreign aid financed.

Lesotho currently spends only about 1.7 percent of its education budget on 'non-formal education' yet the government has proposed to reduce the percentage it spends on 'lifelong learning services' as it would in the future play more of a facilitative coordinating role rather than one of direct provision. In 2011, the Minister of Finance's budget speech made no mention of non-formal education programmes when he identified priority areas for sponsorship and the

budget also excluded non-formal education. In addition, after a number of student (and staff) strikes in 2010 at various university and college technical training institutions – mainly over delays in the payment of allowances from the National Manpower Development Secretariat – indications were given by some officials that the government no longer wished to sponsor 'male-dominated' institutions. This seems like a short-sighted response.

Namibia currently spends around 2 percent of its education budget on youth and adult education but it is trying to increase this. About six other ministries also spend some money on youth and adult education and some government assistance is given to NGOs. Namibia's current decentralization policy has not led to any increases in spending on adult education.

7.

PARTICIPATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

“All the countries have literacy and adult basic education provision that is supported by the state”

It is clear from the five country reports that there are a multitude of forms of youth and adult education provision. However, reporting on this provision (what there is, how vibrant it is, how many people participate in it, and what the outcomes of the provision are) is a statistical nightmare because of the lack of comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date data.

The data on provision collected during this study focussed mainly on basic education and training – some of it relatively formal as in literacy, primary and secondary school equivalency education, and lower levels of skills training (including entrepreneurship) and life skills and health education (the latter mainly HIV/AIDS related).

Literacy and adult basic education

How one categorises the provision is also difficult because of the interplay of state and civil society providers, the type of provision – literacy and adult basic and adult secondary education, life skills training, vocational education and training, continuing education and the multiple varieties of non-formal education – and the targets (whether youth or mature adults, the unemployed or those already in the workplace).

All the countries have literacy and adult basic education provision that is supported by the state (although in some countries, such as Angola, largely outsourced to NGO and church providers). All countries are moving rapidly, if they have not already, to recognise such instruction as being equivalent to primary schooling. Some of it is not targeted at adults but at children who are over age for primary school attendance. Some countries have special literacy

or adult basic education programmes or bodies (such as the National Literacy Programme of Namibia, Swaziland's parastatal the Sebenta Institute, the Lesotho Distance Education Teaching Centre, etc.).

Most of the countries have made efforts in recent years to develop or review the curriculum for literacy and adult basic education, in some cases to revise materials, and to ensure that it articulates with the conventional education and training system. In some countries, such as Namibia, the curriculum has been evaluated and significant revisions are in process. The two Lusophone countries seem to have easier articulation between adult and regular education systems.

In Angola and Mozambique, enrolments have grown but in the other three countries there have been declines in learner numbers in recent years. Most of the countries have relatively high drop-out rates, sometimes ascribed to the length of the full multi-year programmes.

It is likely that both the methods and materials used in this work are in need of much revision or change. The issue of the language of adult literacy and basic education does not seem to be taken seriously enough in Angola and Mozambique where Portuguese is the official language. All international research shows the importance of mother-tongue instruction for initial literacy and post literacy. The evaluation

of the effectiveness of the literacy and schooling programmes based upon the Cuban *Yo, sí puedo* ("Yes, I can") approach would also be desirable.

Countries that have special assessment processes, examinations or bridging programmes to allow for adult primary school equivalent programmes to articulate with secondary or adult secondary education and vocational education include Namibia (where a bridging programme is being designed) and Lesotho. Generally we are seeing a rapid formalisation of adult basic education into primary equivalence (as in Nonformal Upper Primary Education (NUPE) in Swaziland) although articulation difficulties still need to be overcome.

Other than *Yo, sí puedo*, the REFLECT approach was the only other educational approach mentioned in the research.

Other forms of youth and adult education

Angola has afternoon and night classes for adult secondary education in regular schools. Lesotho offers adult junior and secondary education through the Lesotho Distance Education Teaching Centre and Namibia has a large distance secondary education programme offered through the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL).

Youth education usually takes the form of non-formal life skills in small scale centres, although Namibia has a National Youth Service (Namibia) and an entrepreneurship and financial credit scheme.

Very limited information was obtained by the studies on continuing education and professional development. In Namibia, the Community Development Learning Centres provide some post-literacy support, while the Namibian College of Open learning has a number of professional qualifications for community development, youth workers, early childhood development staff and government officials. A number of private centres and NGOs run commercial and skills training courses.

The provision of vocational education and training and various forms of skills training is obviously a crucial component of education and training for all these developing countries. However, what was obvious in all the countries was the mismatch between the scale of provision and the clear need for more training capacity. An important presentation by Needham and Papier (2011) that looked at how technical and vocational education and training (TVET) was responding to the 'NEET crisis' in SADC countries made these observations:

- There is a strong policy commitment to TVET but minimal evidence that TVET was contributing to national development strategies;

- TVET provision in SADC countries constitutes a small percentage of educational provision;
- The paucity of data, information and knowledge about the state of TVET in the region and the poor quality of data makes a finding on the efficiency of the sector impossible. Few countries have throughput rates or data about employment, earnings, occupational linkages, etc.;
- TVET occupies an uncomfortable space between academic schooling and occupational training with responsibilities spread across different government ministries and departments;
- There is poor articulation with academic education and this contributed to the low status of TVET – articulation with universities is underdeveloped or non-existent;
- An agreement by 12 SADC countries to develop and implement a National Qualifications Framework has led to uneven progress often focussed on separate TVET frameworks;
- Coordination and quality assurance of the TVET sector is poor;
- There is some employer involvement in TVET at a national level but much less employer involvement with TVET providers and there is a lack of private-public sector collaboration on curriculum development, financing, and monitoring the labour market outcomes of TVET;
- Government subsidies provide most of the funding for TVET, followed by student fees. Skills levies range from 0.5–5 percent but it is

not clear whether this is sustainable funding for the TVET sector; and,

- Very few countries have dedicated higher education qualifications for the training of TVET lecturers, and most instructors lack a combination of technical qualifications, work experience and pedagogical training identified in the international literature as essential for successful TVET teaching.

Some of the publicly funded technical and vocational education and training provision is run through technical training institutions that are part of the regular education and training provision. Other courses are specifically aimed at people who have not come through the regular school system or have lower qualification than are needed for the regular system.

Namibia has about 6,000 learners in Vocational Training Centres for people at junior secondary level or for people who had not completed primary school but had work experience. The tertiary level Polytechnic has a Centre for Open and Distance Learning. There is also a small scale Adult Skills Development for Self Employment for adults who have graduated from the literacy programme. In addition there are Youth Skills Centres and Community Skills Development Centres that articulate with the more formal Vocational Training Centres. There are also a number of NGO and private skills training and commercial skills centres. Data collected from these during

the study found that they enrolled 1771 learners and graduated 1568 during 2010.

But overall, it is very difficult to get data on the total number of learners involved in vocational education and training. Overall it is small considering the number of potential learners who are young and out-of-school and out-of-work.

Apart from the institutionalised and more formal vocational education and training, there was evidence of a variety of skills training of a low level and non-formal nature. For example, in Lesotho many of the NGOs dealing with AIDS or vulnerable children or youth also have 'add-on' skills training and income-generating activities. It was impossible to quantify the overall impact of this work.

8.

QUALIFICATIONS

“It seems inevitable that in all these countries there will be movement towards full articulation between adult basic education and formal school qualifications”

Several southern African countries have set up a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) following South Africa's example and there is also a Regional Qualification Framework process underway. Angola is exploring the possibility of a NQF and Lesotho has engaged in a very lengthy process of finalising its own, as has Swaziland (with an un-enacted 2003 bill).

Namibia's is the most comprehensive and advanced and the Namibia Qualification Authority (NQA) registers qualifications (at various levels according to defined level descriptors for various occupations), standards and performance benchmarks as well as accrediting education providers (people, institutions and organisations) and courses, and evaluating competencies learned outside formal education (through recognition of a prior learning process). It also evaluates whether any qualification (e.g. foreign qualifications) meet national standards. Most providers of education for youth and adults have not yet registered their

programmes with the NQA, partly because the registration process is very tedious and resource heavy, particularly for small individual providers. Professional Standards for Adult Educators are still in the process of being recognised by the NQA and there is still no body that sets standards for non-formal and literacy programmes.

It seems inevitable that in all these countries there will be movement towards full articulation between adult basic education and formal school qualifications, although most of the countries are still struggling with the mechanics of this. Angola has made the most progress so far.

In Swaziland, despite the obvious attempt at equivalency, there is poor articulation between NUPE and formal schooling. Learners who complete NUPE subjects have to re-enter a formal primary school in order to sit for the Primary School Certificate Examination Grade 7. In practice, this effectively blocks adults from using this examination and is a disincentive to progress on to secondary education.

9.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

*“monitoring and evaluation
on a national scale have
been persistently weak”*

Most countries have some body or directorate that handles national examinations for schools. Lesotho uses the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate for its secondary level examinations for both schoolchildren and adult learners. Mozambique has certificates for official literacy and adult basic education programmes.

Meanwhile, monitoring of adult education programmes and projects is done with a variety of methods: class visits and inspections, classroom observations, field visits, daily progress performance evaluations, vulnerability reduction assessments, SWOT analyses (of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) and various types of monthly and mid-year reports and assessments.

However, there is clearly an overall lack of monitoring capacity for collecting, recording, analysing, disseminating and using data on youth and adult education. Indeed, in

most countries, monitoring and evaluation on a national scale have been persistently weak. This has generally been blamed on a lack of funding and transport (although funds specifically for supervision and monitoring activities may have been decentralised to provincial and district level as in Mozambique). Angola has a systematic monitoring system for the implementation of the Literacy Programme and Recovery of Late Schooling, although it is led by a team of external consultants. Teams carry out quarterly visits to provincial centres and conduct training sessions for programme managers and literacy tutors.

Programmes are evaluated by using methods such as student evaluation of instructors, annual evaluations, post evaluations, peer evaluations, end of year class performance, end of semester assessments/examinations, annual internal and external evaluations, external auditors/ assessors, fact finding missions, programme reviews and end of training evaluation exercises.

In Angola, it is noted that evaluation is hampered by the lack of quantitative data and evaluation expertise. In Namibia, it is clear that evaluations have impacted on policies and strategies and influenced the revision and expansion of programmes. But overall, it is very evident that not enough evaluation is being done and that, even when evaluations are done, there is very poor use of the evaluations. Foreign donors are particularly responsible for not ensuring that the evaluations they commission are openly available to the adult education community.

Poor data collection and distribution remains an enormous stumbling block to research. Allied to this is a weak youth and adult education analysis/research base in most of the countries. Generally, organisations are slow to generate usable data for the current or previous year.

Most publicly available data sets on provision and attendance are therefore somewhat dated. In the various studies it was quite remarkable how little was said about the work and impact of the various adult education departments or units at the universities.

There was little evidence that research was being used to influence policies. Unfortunately, current research efforts are not coordinated, and there is little investment in research and documentation, monitoring and evaluation, which would make youth and adult education more attractive to those who finance education and training. The broadening of youth and adult education requires better empirical knowledge and the developing of on-going monitoring projects for collecting data, statistics and information on the state and development of youth and adult education.

One bright spot was that Namibia produced a model country report for CONFINTEA VI in terms of the clear conceptualisation of what data was needed. However, gathering data for this report showed continuing weaknesses in data collection and dissemination.

In Mozambique the data problem has led the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and dvv International to commission a mapping exercise and database development that will allow all youth and adult education practitioners to capture, process, analyse and disseminate data on this field and make it publicly available. This is seen as a necessary process to mitigate the general fragmentation in the sub-sector. However, it is recognised that data collected will need to be maintained and updated.

“Adult educator qualifications and training are often not, or only partially, recognised.”

In common with adult education worldwide, there are increasing signs both of the professionalisation of adult education personnel and calls for such professionalisation. The reasons for these calls are multiple and complex but in most countries there is a prevailing sense that adult education practitioners do not have the status and earning potential that their more professionalised colleagues in formal schooling do.

Generally, their conditions of service, particularly in literacy, adult basic education and in non-formal adult education are inferior to those of conventional school teachers. Because most state adult education is managed by the formal school education bureaucracies, adult education personnel are often disadvantaged in gaining promotion to higher levels. Adult educator qualifications and training are often not, or only partially, recognised.

With most literacy and adult basic education provision there is a high turnover of educators over a programme cycle, partly because of the low (and often irregular) payment of educators' subsidies. In some countries, there has been no subsidy review for over a decade, despite the increasing cost of living and minimum wage reviews carried out annually by employers, trade unions and the government. This means that adult educators are often very receptive to other employment opportunities – and leads to classes being left with no trained educators.

Some international NGOs have played a role in funding training programmes for educators and paying literacy teachers' subsidies while the government looks after the rest of the budget. However, when the projects end, the educators are left with no subsidies and tend to abandon these adult literacy programmes.

In spite of the good intentions in most countries to have dedicated full-time adult education staff, the majority of lower level adult education posts are temporary, part-time ones. One obvious effect of this situation is that it is hard to retain adult educators if more recognised and lucrative opportunities arise. In addition, the training of practitioners, especially at the lower levels (for example, literacy educators), is often brief or episodic and does not articulate with further, higher level practitioner qualifications.

Though adult educators trained at universities are generally able to have their qualifications recognised as professionally relevant, this route is only open to a minority of practitioners at present. Universities could and should play a much more assertive role in training practitioners, working alongside practitioners, providing conceptual and practical support to them through research, as well as developing programmes, curricula, materials and educational approaches and methods that are more contextually relevant.

There is a general need for a more comprehensive package of adult and youth educator qualifications from secondary level to higher education and for clearer career paths for adult educators within government bureaucracies as well as in-service support. There also does not seem to be much provision of, or commitment to, organised professional staff development programmes nor does

there seem to be much by way of professional interaction or networking between providers of the same sector. New educator policies must take into account the need for career-pathing and educator development – both in terms of initial training and in-service training and educators' conditions of service and workplace conditions. A greater advocacy drive is also needed to bring more men into the sector as educators.

The report in the volume by Hinzen, H. And Schindele, H. (Eds). 2006. *Capacity building and the training of adult educators: present situation and recommendations for the future in Africa, Asia and the Pacific*. International perspectives in adult education, No. 52. Bonn: Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education, Association (IIZ/DVV) is of relevance here.

Angola's generally has low level qualifications for most of its teachers and its literacy teachers are particularly poorly paid. Lesotho's National University offers adult education practitioner qualifications through its Institute of Extra Mural Studies but most people involved in literacy and adult basic education only have low level formal educational qualifications and usually have received limited workshop training in adult education.

In Mozambique, although two universities offer some training and also have staff and students doing research, the country is still far from having an adequate supply of trained people to

reach the target envisaged by the Ministry of Education to offer literacy and adult education to one million people per year. The ministry itself acknowledges that professionalisation is necessary. There have been some efforts to support practitioner training by the Movement for Education for All (MEPT) – a national network of CSOs working on education in Mozambique.

The University of Namibia considers adult education a specialised profession and offers Diploma, Bachelor and Masters programmes. For the Bachelor degree, two specialisation fields have been created after the revision of the curriculum: Community Development (which contains considerable content on literacy and adult basic education) and Human Resource Development (with a stress upon training). The Namibia College of Open Learning provides a Certificate for Development, a Higher Diploma in Adult Basic Education and Training and a Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work. District Education Officer and the Literacy Promoters are granted opportunities to upgrade their qualifications and become adult education professionals through a Certificate in Education for Development Programme designed by NAMCOL and recognised by the NQA.

The University of Swaziland offers adult education qualifications.

11.

CONCLUSION

“Global trends also highlight the importance of the knowledge economy, where having most of your workforce with only a primary education or less is a severe handicap.”

It is a big challenge to conceptualise and plan for youth and adult education as an important component of education when all these countries are struggling to get their conventional schooling systems to function appropriately. At the same time, the reality is dawning on decision makers that a huge mass of undereducated, unemployed (and, in some cases, because of their under-education, unemployable) youth and adults is a disaster in the making and a huge cost burden on society (in terms of lost productivity and poor support for children by their parents). Global trends also highlight the importance of the knowledge economy, where having most of your workforce with only a primary education or less is a severe handicap.

The range of ‘adult’ education is also expanding. At a terminological level, there is confusion about what is adult education and there are also difficulties in programmatically distinguishing out-of-school children of primary school age from out-of school-youth of secondary school age and from genuine adults. In the context of the HIV/AIDS situation, there may be young children who are now effectively heads of households who will never return to conventional schooling.

At the provision level, apart from the obvious fact that all adult education provision is inadequate in quantity, there is a major crisis looming because of the simple quantitative inadequacy of technical and industrial training facilities in all the countries.

But on the bright side, youth and adult education exists and in many cases is vibrant in all these countries and there is a wealth of players in the field. Countries such as Angola have demonstrated the usefulness of partnerships with civil society in the provision of literacy and adult basic education. Namibia has shown through law, policies and practices that it is investing in all its people. The laws and policies are inclusive and have left no citizen behind – from the able to the disabled, from the poor to the affluent, from the advantaged to the disadvantaged.

The downside is that policy makers, actors and providers of youth and adult education services continue to underplay their mandate and fail to recognise and integrate the contributions that youth and adult education offer to broader economic, social, and human development. The field of adult education remains fragmented, advocacy efforts are dissipated across a variety of fronts and political credibility is diluted. There is a need to consolidate fragmented pieces of laws and policies that relate to adult education and form or reform education structures to achieve desired outcomes for this field. This will require time, determination and commitment.

To take stock of the progress made in youth and adult education is a matter of urgency. This may seem an easy task but it is complicated – youth and adult education services happen in so many ways and in so many places that they cannot

be easily described in a simple way. Youth and adult education takes so many different forms including formal afternoon classes in basic education; evening continuing education classes; literacy, numeracy, secondary school qualifications through distance or part-time radio, television or computer teaching sessions; cultural events; church and institutional interventions in life skills and health education; informal, incidental, non-formal education, skills training and on the job training, and so on. The field is so wide and many of the definitions commonly used so limiting (so much so that some providers do not even realise that they are offering adult education!).

The financial underpinning of youth and adult education is difficult to find and map – and so sustainability is a severe problem. Currently youth and adult education is almost completely sponsored by the donor community. There is lack of government commitment to set aside a quota of the national budget for youth and adult education/non-formal education activities. Every ministry, every institution and every organisation has to seek donor funding to undertake most forms of adult education. This scenario is not only unsustainable, but it perpetuates dependency, poverty, powerlessness and submissiveness. Although the partnership between government and NGOs and other partners in provision is, in an obvious sense, good, it has the downside of decreasing governments' responsibility for provision.

Practitioner development seems to require thorough investigation. It is also clear that many adult education bodies and practitioners are not working together in any sort of way even if they know about each other. The lack of any noticeable coordination effort between providers is evident from the lack of a flow of learners between institutions, the lack of participants transitioning into more formalised institutions of learning, and the lack of articulation between providers – for example, private institutions and the vocational training centres. Although there have been various attempts at co-ordination (particularly in the NGO sector), there are no structures that can effectively co-ordinate, monitor, assess and evaluate provision – let alone attempt to bring it to scale. The lack of coherent, accessible data on provision further hampers efforts.

Faced by all these challenges, the key question is – can we in southern Africa move beyond the many mismatches of policy, coordination, implementation, institutions and programmes, actors and providers and deploy youth and adult education as a more potent engine of reconstruction and development?

11.

RECOMMENDATIONS

“These recommendations are in effect a call for a new regional charter for youth and adult education.”

Collectively the consolidated recommendations coming from the five country studies bear a striking resemblance to the list of general recommendations made in the *African statement on the power of youth and adult learning and education for Africa's development* made at the CONFITEA VI Preparatory Conference in Nairobi in December 2008. What this suggests is that the problems that these recommendations strive to overcome are systemic and endemic, not incidental. These recommendations are in effect a call for a new regional charter for youth and adult education.

Terminology

1. Countries need to move to more internationally standardised terminology for adult education to end the narrow identification of ‘adult education’ with literacy and adult basic education and to stop referring to thoroughly formal adult basic education as ‘non-formal education’.
2. Greater use should be made of the definition of lifelong education and training that was coined by the SADC technical committee on lifelong education and training.

Policy, legislation and governance

3. Each country needs a comprehensive consolidated youth and adult education policy for the many people who have not benefited from the formal system of education and training. Although this policy may understandably prioritise literacy and basic education, it should comprehend the whole range of adult education. It should include attention to out-of-school youth and marginalised children and to language issues and support for the creation of literate environments.
4. In the short term, there should be more effective implementation of education policies that are already in place to support youth and adult education and a thorough review and revision of adult education and vocational education and training policies and governance frameworks so that they can be adjusted to the current needs of the population. These framework reviews should examine the partnerships between government and all institutions and stakeholders involved in education and training to enable greater engagement by civil society in youth and adult education.
5. Appropriate mechanisms for the coordination of youth and adult education activities need to be established that involve all stakeholders. Appropriate interim measures should be put in

place to help coordinate the efforts of youth and adult education sector stakeholders, including the resuscitation of dormant adult education councils.

6. While creating and reforming the governance and institutions of adult education, it should be seen as an autonomous sector and not an appendage to another (such as formal schooling).
7. Existing units serving youth and adult education and vocational education and training in Ministries of Education need to be substantially upgraded and better resourced.
8. All actors involved in adult education must have access to legal, legislative and regulatory documents and guidelines to permit them to work more effectively and there should be an improved system for government communication with partners and stakeholders.

Awareness and recognition of youth and adult education

9. Agencies at all levels, including government ministries, that are involved in youth and adult education need to overtly identify themselves as being such providers and so assist in deepening the understanding of key players and the public about the importance of youth and adult education and

reduce ignorance and even prejudice about adult education.

10. There should be a significant policy document for the adult education sector that reflects all stakeholders' views and recognises the role that youth and adult education can play in economic and social development, poverty reduction, etc. This document should be revised on a regular basis in accordance with consultations and the results of monitoring and evaluation programmes.
11. There should be an annually updated communication plan for the promotion of the youth and adult education sector.

Literacy and language

12. Plans to overhaul the conceptualisation, curriculum and materials of national literacy programmes should be supported as it is increasingly recognised that some initial literacy instruction methods are better than others and that initial literacy is not enough on its own.
13. Given that the countries are signatory to several international and regional conventions relating to the elimination of illiteracy, it is imperative that the countries fulfil their obligations under these agreements. In the field of literacy, the

Bamako Call to Action, agreed to by African countries in 2008, is a challenge that most countries have yet to meet. Although provision in all five countries illustrates that governments are committed to this sector, it is necessary to re-galvanise their adult literacy plans and provide the resources to implement them.

14. The language of literacy and adult basic education instruction needs to be re-examined. Although there are compelling reasons for the teaching of English or Portuguese as a key means of communication in the workplace and bureaucracy, there is overwhelming international evidence that the use of the mother-tongue as the main medium of instruction in primary and basic education is more effective.

15. A clear and equitable policy on the provision of learning materials in national languages is also needed, particularly for literacy and adult basic education.

Curriculum

16. Customised curricula must be developed that respond effectively to learners' needs, particularly youth who have had no or very little formal education as well as for youth with some education but few vocational skills.

17. Old curriculum implementation guidelines need to be revised, and the implementers need to adapt the practices accordingly.

18. A unified national curriculum for literacy and adult basic education (including life skills and elements of technical and vocational education and training) must be developed with the participation of all stakeholders.

Data, information and research

19. There is a need for a standardisation of the data required from youth and adult education providers and all providers should be encouraged to develop their own capacity to supply this information. In particular, narrow or misleading definitions of adult or non-formal education should be avoided.

20. Digitised, internet accessible storage of reports, research, evaluations and other documentation is needed. There should be a strong commitment to share documentation and materials, including through a comprehensive, systematic regional web-based database on adult education provision and practice.

21. Governments should work hand-in-hand with universities and other research-based institutions to strengthen or revive research capacity in the field and research findings should inform policy and practice.

Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation

22. Governments should support the development of quality assessment, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in order to formulate and regulate policies, programmes and to evaluate the impact of youth and adult education.

23. A framework for learning validation in youth and adult education should be developed, which is equivalent to the system of formal education, regardless of where, when and how the learning occurred.

24. The operation of existing inspection systems for youth and adult education must be improved since this would help to make the adult education sub-system more effective and efficient.

25. There should be a general improvement in the evaluation methods and programmes linked to adult and youth education and better dissemination of the results.

26. Evaluations should be made of the different programmes and methods used in literacy and adult basic education to verify their advantages and disadvantages, and to propose alternatives.

Funding

27. Notwithstanding the current economic-financial difficulties in most of the countries, there is an urgent need to increase the percentage of the national budgets allocated to education and, in particular, to the adult education and training sector.
28. Funding benchmarks should be developed along with strategies for mobilising the additional resources (including from international donors) for youth and adult education.
29. There should be renewed attempts by all sectors to ensure sustainable funding of youth and adult education and the accountable and transparent utilisation of that funding.
30. Governments should consider the implementation, where it has not been implemented, of a skills development levy on the private sector to help finance training and entrepreneurship.

Infrastructure

31. While it is recognised that the rebuilding and construction of the formal school infrastructure is a priority, attention must also be paid to refurbishing old infrastructure as well as building new infrastructure – both of

which can be used for multiple purposes, including youth and adult education.

Qualifications frameworks

32. Effective instruments and systems of recognition, validation and accreditation of all forms of learning, monitoring and evaluation should be established – as recommended in the *Belém Framework for Action* (UNESCO, 2009b).
33. Appropriately designed national qualifications framework must be established to ensure access to and recognition of prior learning (formal and non-formal) of adults and the rational comparison of certification and qualifications provided by various providers. More accessible progression routes from one level of skill competence or knowledge acquisition to the next should be developed. However, care must be taken to avoid cumbersome and over-bureaucratised models.
34. The registration process for existing National Qualifications Frameworks may need to be simplified and special provision (including less onerous criteria) should be established for small organisations.

Practitioners and practitioner development

35. There must be a coherent capacity building plan with identified agents empowered to implement the plan.
36. The conditions of service, remuneration and general status of adult education personnel, particularly in literacy, adult basic and non-formal education need to be rapidly addressed and harmonised with those of conventional educators and trainers.
37. Action should be taken by both ministries of education and other organisations to develop initial and continuing teacher and educational manager training.
38. The use of Open and Distance learning and ICTs in the training and support of educators and materials developers should be encouraged.
39. Universities and research institutions should – by working alongside practitioners – provide conceptual and practical support to youth and adult education by conducting research and developing programmes, curricula, materials and educational approaches and methods that are more relevant and responsive to learners' needs and are more effective and efficient in practice. Universities and

research institutions should also provide support with monitoring and evaluation, and by encouraging students to do work experience attachments in the youth and adult education sector.

Out-of-school youth

- 40. The advantages of separate programmes for out-of-school youth should be explored.
- 41. NGOs should include youth (both out-of-school and employed) in their programmes.

Mobilisation, cooperation and networking

- 42. Both government and civil society should make a strong commitment to reform and revitalise youth and adult education, to strengthen its capacity and to develop an action agenda for effective follow up.
- 44. More networking and exchanges are required to give substance to cooperation in the field of youth and adult education. Civil society organisations, the donor community, and other actors should make youth and adult education an important part of their social agendas.
- 45. Civil society associations working in the field of youth and adult education

should synchronise their awareness raising activities with those of national, provincial and municipal education departments, and with school management and community or neighbourhood members at the local level, to increase their impact and to ensure local contextualisation and adaptation.

8.

AN ACTION AGENDA

The scale and scope of the recommendations suggests that long term and systemic work will be needed in the field of adult and youth education in the region. But a quick action programme is also vital, both as a follow up to these studies in the five countries and also as an initiator of the longer term activities and programmes.

A suitable quick action agenda could possibly comprise the following activities:

- A public campaign to raise more awareness of youth and adult education;
- A swift start to an advocacy campaign to ensure that these youth and adult education issues are quickly brought to the attention of national budget decision makers and are rapidly able to influence government policy and the legislative agenda;
- A re-galvanisation of adult literacy plans and resources and the renewal of literacy and adult basic education curricula;
- The upgrading of data, information and research capacity which may need to be addressed at the SADC level – as has been done with the current Regional Qualifications Framework process;
- Agreement should be reached (including with the SADC Education Secretariat) about a framework for learning validation in youth and adult education, which should dovetail with the Regional Qualifications Framework process; and,
- Practitioner capacity building is a clear priority, including through better conditions of service.

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APPENDIX 1

Towards a definition of lifelong education

Lifelong education is a comprehensive and visionary concept which includes formal, non-formal and informal learning extended throughout the lifespan of an individual to attain the fullest possible development in personal, social and vocational and professional life. It views education in its totality, and includes learning that occurs in the home, school, community, and workplace, and through mass media and other situations and structures for acquiring and enhancing knowledge, skills and attitudes.

No country has as yet achieved this full goal of a lifelong learning system and it remains as a visionary call for an open learning society, operating through a multiplicity of educational networks. A key purpose of lifelong learning is democratic citizenship, connecting individuals and groups to the structures of social, political and economic activity in both local and global contexts.

Lifelong education builds on and affects all existing educational providers, and extends beyond the formal educational providers to encompass all bodies and individuals involved in learning activities

Lifelong education means enabling people to learn at different times, in different ways, for different purposes at

various stages of their lives and careers. Lifelong education is concerned with providing learning opportunities throughout life (and hence pays special attention to all forms of adult and continuing education), while developing lifelong learners (and hence must address the foundations young people receive in formal education for engaging in lifelong learning).

Lifelong education, in response to the constantly changing conditions of modern life, must lead to the systematic acquisition, renewal, upgrading and completion of knowledge, skills and attitudes, as are required by these changes.

In contexts where large numbers of adults are illiterate or lacking a basic education the focus of lifelong education activities may well be largely upon providing the foundations for lifelong learning to such disadvantaged or marginalised sectors of society.¹

1. Though such a focus is necessary and right it is necessary to avoid the concept of lifelong education being confused with or simply seen as an equivalent term for adult education, for, to be viable, lifelong learning's foundations should be laid in childhood and youth and in what happens in schooling systems. Though many adult learners have not previously been encouraged to develop as independent, critical thinkers through their schooling (where they have completed it), it is essential that schooling system, including educare, and higher education, inculcate the attitudes and competencies vital for lifelong education. If lifelong education is to become effective in SADC countries, its principles need to suffuse the whole education and training system.

The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) is a growing African institution committed to deepening democracy, protecting human rights and enhancing good governance in southern Africa. OSISA's vision is to promote and sustain the ideals, values, institutions and practice of open society, with the aim of establishing a vibrant southern African society, in which in which people, free from material and other deprivation, understand their rights and responsibilities and participate democratically in all spheres of life.

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dvv international is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V., DVV). Its main objective is the promotion of development through cooperation in youth and adult education. The domestic and international work of *dvv international* is guided by a commitment to human rights and the Institute's principles on the promotion of women and gender equality.

dvv international supports non-formal and out-of-school education programmes that provide young people and adults with life-skills training that serve functions that complement formal education and training and compensate for their deficiencies. *dvv international* operates on a worldwide basis, with more than 200 partners in over 40 countries.



