

Background\* paper prepared for the  
Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006  
*Literacy for Life*

## Literacy in Botswana

Dr. Ulrike Hanemann  
UNESCO Institute for Education  
Hamburg, Germany  
March, 2005

This paper was commissioned by the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* as background information to assist in drafting the 2006 report. It has not been edited by the team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* or to UNESCO. The papers can be cited with the following reference: "Paper commissioned for the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006, Literacy for Life*". For further information, please contact [efareport@unesco.org](mailto:efareport@unesco.org)

\* Commissioned through the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE)

# Literacy in Botswana

<b>Context</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>History of adult literacy in Botswana</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A) Definition and measurement of literacy</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>National Literacy Surveys: an innovative and courageous policy to systematically monitor the evolvement of literacy in Botswana</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Learner performance assessment and evaluation strategies</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>B) Evolvement of literacy provision and acquisition, patterns and trends of literacy and illiteracy in Botswana</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Which groups remain excluded ?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>C) Long-term objectives and commitments established by the Botswana Government</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>D) Management and financing of literacy in Botswana</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>E) Innovative programmes or policies in the field of literacy in Botswana</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>24</b>

## Literacy in Botswana

This paper provides an overview of the literacy policies and practices in Botswana through an analysis of how literacy is defined and assessed in Botswana, which are the trends and patterns of literacy, how literacy policies are reflected in different development strategies and policy commitments of the government, how literacy is managed and financed, who are the different actors in the field of literacy and non-formal education and how are they interacting with each other. In addition, it tries to outline innovative programmes or policies in the field of literacy. The analysis is mainly based on official documents provided by the Government of Botswana, a recent evaluation of the Botswana National Literacy Programme that was carried out by the UNESCO Institute for Education and additional academic research.

### Context

Botswana is about 582,000 square kilometres in size. With a total population estimated in 2003 of 1,850,360<sup>1</sup> (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:14) it has one of the lowest population densities in the world (3.2 inhabitants per square kilometre). The Second National Literacy Survey 2003 showed a lower male proportion of 47%<sup>2</sup> compared to 53% of females. Today almost half of the population live in urban areas, compared with two per cent in 1960 (Presidential Task Force, 1997:22). The population is growing at a rapid rate of 3.4% per annum and according to the 2001 Census it is a young population, with 48% below 15 years of age and about 36% between the ages of 12-29 years. Life expectancy in 1996 already stood at 67 years (ibid.:15). However due to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS - 35.4% among the 15-49 year-old population (Sentinel Survey 2003), - in 2001 life expectancy at birth had dropped again to 56 years<sup>3</sup> (Republic of Botswana/ United Nations, 2004:1).

At independence in 1966, Botswana was among the 25 poorest and least developed countries in the world (Presidential Task Force, 1997:13). In 1995/96 the per capita gross domestic product was the equivalent of about US\$ 2,850 (ibid:14) and Botswana graduated to rank 125 on the UNDP Human Development Index list (UNDP: 2003). Botswana's economy developed at an unprecedented rate during the past thirty years. It has had one of the highest rates of per capita income growth world-wide at over 6% per annum in real terms for the post Independence period up to 2001. This has been attributed to the discovery and exploitation of mineral wealth, especially diamonds, to democratic governance, and a stable macroeconomic environment and development (Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, 2003:2).

Botswana has now moved into the group of middle income countries in the World Bank classification. On the other hand, high rates of income inequalities have led to an estimated percentage of 37.4% (2001) of the population below the national poverty line (Republic of Botswana/ United Nations, 2004:1)<sup>4</sup>. The persistent poverty is more prevalent in rural areas and among female-headed households. In 2001, the rate of unemployment was estimated at 19.3%. Available data shows that unemployment is concentrated amongst the lowly skilled people and youth, especially females, and that it is a bigger problem in rural areas (ibid.:22).

Education has been a key development priority for Botswana since independence. From 1995-2000, the estimated net enrolment rate (NER) for children aged 7-13 was consistently above 95%. Over the same period, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) was at least 11 percentage points higher than the NER, in part because some children start school late but also because some dropouts do return to school. The 2004 Status Report of the Millennium Goals concludes that

Botswana has achieved universal access to primary education which currently consists of a ten year basic education system<sup>5</sup> (Republic of Botswana/ United Nations, 2004:31).

However, there has been a high rate of failure and school dropout especially in the remote and small settlements resulting from a poor supply of education facilities, a hostile attitude by teachers to students from these areas, and long travelling distances (Presidential Task Group, 1997:18). Results of Standard 4 attainment tests also showed that learning is not very effective at the early primary school level: In 2001, only 39.6% were literate in Setswana, 21.9% had reached the desired competency level in English, whilst only 21.2% had done so in basic numeracy (Republic of Botswana/ United Nations, 2004:32). According to the Ministry of Education, the major constraint that Botswana is facing relates more to issues of quality than of access (Ministry of Education, 2004:3).

The available statistics reinforce this diagnosis: only 40% of those enrolled in primary school in 1990 managed to reach Form Five in secondary school in 2001. “The educational system opens doors to the majority of Batswana to enrol but then fails to retain them”. Approximately half of the students who enrol in the first grade are dropped along the way, “creating a pool of potential learners for adult basic education” (Lekoko, R./ Maruatona, T., 2005:7 and 21).

Although more girls enrol in primary education than boys, the number of females decreases sharply at the senior secondary, tertiary and technical education levels. This puts women at a disadvantage in their employment opportunities and causes them to be under-represented in key decision-making positions (Presidential Task Force, 1997:17). Among the main reasons girls drop out of school are pregnancy and the need to care for AIDS infected family members. Gender equity in terms of access to basic education is currently not seen as a major constraint in Botswana (e.g. Republic of Botswana/ United Nations, 2004). However, more recent enrolment rates indicate that there are more males enrolled in primary education than females<sup>6</sup>. But this trend in turn is “compensated” through higher drop out rates among boys:

**Enrolment and dropouts from standard 1-7 by sex, 2001-2002**

Year	Sex	Enrolment		Dropouts	
2001	Boys	165,330	50.5%	3,686	59.6%
	Girls	162,252	49.5%	2,501	40.4%
	Total	327,582	100%	6,187	100%
2002	Boys	168,575	50.7%	3,546	61.4%
	Girls	164,202	49.3%	2,232	38.6%
	Total	332,777	100%	5,778	100%

Source: Central Statistics Office, 2002:1/2

HIV/AIDS is having a severe impact on education and is likely to reverse most of the gains that have been attained in terms of education for all, unless the pandemic is effectively addressed. It is spreading rapidly among teachers and young women while many children, particularly girls cannot attend school because they have to care for sick family members or take on economic and household responsibilities<sup>7</sup>.

About 70 per cent of the population is ethno-linguistically homogenous and speaks Setswana. About 30 per cent of the population speaks about 28 other languages<sup>8</sup> (Maruatona, T./ Cervero, R.M., 2004:236). At present, Setswana is the national language and English is the official language. The Presidential Task Force stated that “Botswana contains a diversity of tribes with different languages that are not equally recognised, and there are signs of disunity and separateness (ibid., 1997:26). In their Long Term Vision for Botswana it is promised that “Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions will be recognised,

supported and strengthened within the education system. No Motswana<sup>9</sup> will be disadvantaged in the education system as a result of a mother tongue that differs from the country's two official languages" (ibid.:5). However, since the current language policy is based on the argument that a common language would bring about national unity, the consideration of minority concerns constitutes still one of the major challenges to the mainstream dominant Setswana culture.

### **History of adult literacy in Botswana**

Prior to Botswana's independence, adult literacy classes were conducted by Community Development Assistants who worked under the direction of the Welfare Officer in the Department of Education. In addition other organizations, mainly church based, took initiatives to teach literacy skills to people. At that time literacy was not a priority, "because of the country's great size and small and widely scattered population, inauguration of any extensive literacy campaign will be a most difficult and very costly undertaking" (Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1961:14)<sup>10</sup>.

After independence (1966) not much was done in relation to adult literacy during the first ten years. The first National Commission on Education, which was appointed in 1976 to review problems and prospects in the design and delivery of education in Botswana, recognized in the resulting report that "a fully literate population is an important long term objective if Botswana's other national objectives are to be met". It also indicated that "literacy should not be pursued in isolation from other development programs" (Republic of Botswana, 1977:67).

Despite the fact that the report did not have a single recommendation on literacy, since then literacy has been fully adopted in the political discourse of the government as part of the national development effort. However, R. Lekoko and T. Maruatona criticize that the report "completely omitted the place and importance of non-formal education systems in Botswana". Furthermore they share the opinion that as a consequence of this omission, this sector "has always been neglected in the development activities", in particular when it came to allocating the required resources (ibid., 2005:6). The initial narrow interpretation of literacy and adult learning was conducive to the need to afterwards make continuous improvements to the National Literacy Programme by creating diverse post-literacy components<sup>11</sup>.

Yet the National Policy on Education, Government Paper No.1 of 1977, was the basis for the National Literacy Programme whose primary goal was to promote access to education for out-of-school groups and thereby complement the formal school setting. In 1976/77 the former Botswana Extension College (BEC), which was responsible for (secondary) distance education by correspondence, conducted two literacy pilot projects. At that time, the BEC, - a parastatal and semi-autonomous body<sup>12</sup>, - was the only institution involved in literacy and adult education. This is the reason why the government charged the Department of Community Development at the BEC with the task of developing literacy materials. A preliminary set of materials, based on generative themes as intended in the Paulo Freire approach<sup>13</sup>, was tested and evaluated (Evaluation Report May 1978). The results indicated that there was popular demand for literacy in Botswana. In October 1978 the College was transformed into the (governmental) Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE).

In 1979 the government accepted the National Consultation Document<sup>14</sup>, which laid the foundation for the current Botswana National Literacy Programme (BNLP). Its main objective was "to enable 250,000 presently illiterate men, women and youth to become literate in Setswana and numerate over six years, 1980-85" (Ministry of Education, 1979,

cited in Youngman, F., 2000:259). After a pilot phase in 1980, the BNLP was officially launched in June 1981 as the major adult literacy initiative in the country.

The Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) of the Ministry of Education could not eradicate illiteracy in the envisaged six years. S. Meissenhelder indicated several reasons, such as dropouts and an over dependence on resources from foreign donors (in: Maruatona, T./ Cervero, R.M., 2004:2). Among the redefined objectives of the programme was stated in the National Development Plan VI (1985-1991) the following: “The Department will expand its non-formal activities beyond reading, writing and numeracy. The needs of rural communities in terms of skills required for income generating activities will form the basis for expansion” (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 1985, in: *ibid.*: 238).

In 1987, the programme was evaluated (Gaborone, S./ Mutanyatta, J./ Youngman, F., 1987). All in all, they concluded that there was a need for reinvigoration and renewal in the programme, and for stronger policy direction. According to F. Youngman, the evaluation report helped to secure the future of the programme, but few of its detailed recommendations for change were followed-up and implemented (Youngman, F., 2002, pp. 19/20). P.B. Gough considers the BNLP “an expert-driven conventional programme designed to meet state-defined goals intended to contribute to better health, personal mobility, and cognitive development” (Gough, P.B.,1995 in: Maruatona, T./ Cervero, R.M., 2004:236). T. Maruatona and R.M. Cervero similarly argue that the planners of the literacy programme “maintained a conventional view of literacy” by excluding key stakeholders in the development of the curriculum and ignoring gender, language, and minority issues (*ibid.*).

Over time, the BNLP has experienced a number of achievements and constraints which will be addressed in the course of this study.

### **A) Definition and measurement of literacy**

The first official definition of literacy was stipulated in the 1979 National Initiative Consultation document of the Ministry of Education on the planned literacy programme: “*The term ‘literate’ shall be interpreted to imply that a person can comprehend those written communications and simple computations which are part of their daily life*” (Ministry of Education, 1979, cited in Youngman, F., 2000:259). This definition, on which the governmental BNLP is based, is very much in line with the basic definition adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 1978 which states that a “literate person is one who can, with understanding, both read and write a short simple statement on his/her everyday life”.

The recent evaluation carried out by UIE (UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004), however, concluded that the above mentioned definition of literacy – and implicit of the underlying curriculum – has remained unchanged and continues to apply in the BNLP, despite the recommendations of several studies since then<sup>15</sup>. However, this concept of literacy is quite narrow, because:

- it is excluding the possibility to become literate also in other languages spoken in Botswana (including English),
- it is reducing the instrumental or generic skills to “comprehension”<sup>16</sup> and to those issues that are part of “daily life”, and
- it is not linking the development of reading, writing and numeracy skills to the development of skills in other areas reflecting the socio-economic and cultural needs of the learners.

But nevertheless, the evolution of the literacy concept has unquestionably benefited from the implementation of two major exercises to measure literacy in Botswana: the first and second National Survey on Literacy in 1993 and 2003.

### **National Literacy Surveys: an innovative and courageous policy to systematically monitor the evolution of literacy in Botswana**

All the efforts towards the achievement of national development goals, which should include literacy and numeracy as important indicators for improvements of quality of life, cannot make headway without a proper record of progress achieved in literacy and numeracy. Until the early nineties, Botswana depended on estimations based on the figures of people who never attended school and those who dropped out of school before successfully completing the level of Standard Five. There was no direct and objective way to establish the actual rate of adult literacy in the country.

Several attempts by the DNFE to have literacy related questions included in the national censuses of 1981 and 1991 were rejected on the grounds that the census questionnaire would be too long. However in retrospect, the non inclusion of literacy in the national censuses “turned out to be a blessing in disguise” because the limited reliability of literacy data from population censuses became common knowledge (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 1993:6). First experiences in the context of the evaluation of the BNLP in 1986 were collected with a small scale literacy and numeracy test. It was a standardized test using the primary education Standard Four attainment test as the norm. However, with a total of only 845 learners who participated in the assessment, the test was inadequate to assess the country’s literacy rate.

The first ever national survey to establish the literacy rate in Botswana was carried out in 1993 covering a total population of 1,403,858, being 46% male and 54% female. The survey was designed to measure the country’s literacy rate not only by the number of years spent at formal school but also testing of “objective literacy skills”. In the survey “objective literacy” was defined as “the ability to read and write in either Setswana, English or both; and the ability to carry out simple mathematical computations”. “Ability” was ascertained through the results of literacy tests (ibid.:10). Respondents were categorised as literate if they scored 50% or more in the test (Youngman, F., 2002:10).

The target population eligible for the literacy tests was “citizens aged 12-65 years old, who never attended or left school before completing Standard Five”. In this survey, it was agreed that the required literacy is achieved after at least five years of formal schooling (excluding repeated years), “hence the cut-off point for school attainment” of the target population of the survey (ibid.:10/11). In this context, the survey team made an attempt to redefine the literacy concept. For them, this was not an easy task “since it does not involve simple cut-offs between the literate and illiterate”. It has rather to be conceived as “a set of language and communication skills, attitudes and knowledge involving an integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and critical thinking which people acquire and can effectively use at varying degrees”. Furthermore, they state that people’s ability to effectively use these skills, attitudes and knowledge may vary according to changing contexts. Literacy practices are, therefore, context-specific (ibid.:3).

The first literacy survey, however, kept to the narrow definition of literacy held by the BNLP. This limited the development of the tests for the survey: “advanced functional literacy skills

were not tested” (ibid.:9 and Youngman, F., 2002:11). Therefore, M. Commeyras and B. Chilisa, who made a comprehensive critique of the survey, reached a negative conclusion about the usefulness of the statistical profile produced by the survey: “What exactly do the literacy survey results tell us about literacy in Botswana? [...] The result that 69% of the population is literate sounds impressive until one sees the low level of literacy that was assessed. Considerable time and money were expended in conducting this survey and it is tragic that the information gathered reveals so little about the literacies of the Batswana people.” They recommended assessing literacy in the next survey “as a continuum of skills and abilities in the context of a multilingual nation” (Commeyras, M./ Chilisa, B., 2001:444/445).

The second National Literacy Survey carried out ten years later tried to tackle this limitation through broadening the understanding of a more complex and encompassing literacy concept that builds on prior lessons learnt. For the purpose of the second survey, literacy was defined as “a responsive and context specific multi-dimensional lifelong learning process designed to equip beneficiaries with specialised knowledge, skills, attitudes and techniques to independently engage in practices and genres involving listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy, technical functioning and critical thinking required in real life” (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:1).

The second survey made a renewed attempt to test literacy and numeracy skills and competencies (decoding competence, comprehension competence, application competence, and discourse analytic competence). The test design was guided by the above mentioned expanded definition of literacy . In addition, the survey tried to consider the fact that literacy must be assessed in continuum rather than just a two point scale of pass or fail. The survey team took up the issue of the previous problems with the narrow literacy definition which had influenced the literacy test. Also in this second survey, the test did not cover certain aspects of literacy and numeracy domains. They pointed out the need “that these issues of literacy conceptualization and definition be revisited to pave the way for future studies and provide clear conceptual and theoretical frameworks to guide literacy provision” (ibid.:10) and assessment. The survey expanded the target group to cover all Botswana citizens from the ages of 10-70. The total population estimated from this second survey was 1,850,360 (47% male; 53% female). A total of 7,280 households (46% were rural and 55% urban) were selected for the survey, of which a response rate of 94.2% was achieved. The data is disaggregated by location (district), gender and age in order to guide efficient policy making and implementation.

The two national literacy surveys constitute a milestone in the effort to provide a reliable data base for both politicians and decision makers as well as managers of the BNLP. They mirror an innovative policy to systematically monitor the evolvement of literacy in the country. The results provide important insights into the current state of literacy levels and practices, learning needs and motives for why people wish to become literate. They further help to highlight areas that may require future action in terms of policies, strategies and prioritisation. The policy now is that literacy surveys are to be conducted every ten years, when new National Population Census data is available<sup>17</sup> (ibid.:14).

### **Learner performance assessment and evaluation strategies**

In the framework of the recent evaluation carried out by the UIE it was concluded that the BNLP is missing adequate assessment and evaluation strategies. Learner performance assessment and evaluation strategies are not explicit in the current curriculum (primers) of the

BNLP. One of the reasons why no evaluation standards have been provided for the BNLP is the intention to decentralise pedagogical and technical aspects of the programme. However, this led the process of evaluation of performance to become an arbitrary mechanism, where it is impossible to compare national results, or even in some cases, results within a region or between districts. Only two regions were able to provide results to the evaluation team, although the examinations of Primer Five graduates were based on different and non-coordinated standards (Barkered, A./ Hanemann, U./ Maruatona, T., 2003:75).

“For the evaluation of the outcomes of a course the participation of the learners is being observed. It may not be the best system, but it is in place currently. No format exists for measuring the results.”<sup>18</sup> This statement of an interviewed BNLP staff gets to the heart of the current practice of learner assessment and evaluation within the literacy courses. Learners are supposed to be tested after completing each primer, but there are no defined standards to say what a learner should be able to do at the end of each primer. In several cases the evaluation team observed the practice that if a learner did not “pass” the test after completing a primer; he or she had to restart the primer from the very first lesson. The evaluation team was surprised to discover learners who were studying the first lessons of Primer One although they had been attending BNLP courses for several years. This can partly be explained by the “on and off” enrolment feature that was discovered related to irregular attendance schemes, but it is also attributable to the poor equipment of Literacy Group Leaders (LGL) with inadequate methodological and assessment tools to facilitate and monitor learning progress (ibid.).

Most of the interviewed and observed LGLs do not assess their learners systematically. The reported assessment and evaluation activities mainly consist of testing learners at the end of each primer or once or twice a month. None of the interviewed LGLs records the results of those tests. LGLs were unable to diagnose learning problems through assessment and to adjust their teaching strategies in order to help learners to achieve progress in learning (ibid.:77).

According to the Ministry of Education, most of the non-formal education programmes do test their participants. There are also accreditation and certification systems, especially in the private sector (ibid., 2004:37). But the BNLP testing is normally limited to determine whether a learner is ready to pass to the next primer level, and this is done without using standardized tests. As a result there are no recorded and nation-wide comparable statistics available to monitor how literacy achievement is evolving on the ground.

There is no Non-Formal Education Management Information System in place that would link the DNFE to the governmental Central Statistics Office. The programme is not issuing officially accredited certificates, a fact that also may have influenced the decreased enrolment rates. A national process to discuss and establish a National Qualification Framework was recently set up. It remains to be seen if a basic literacy level will be considered as its foundation.

## **B) Evolvement of literacy provision and acquisition, patterns and trends of literacy and illiteracy in Botswana**

The trend in the adult literacy rate according to indirect estimates from school attainment in the national censuses (1981, 1991 and 2001) and the results of the two national literacy surveys in 1993 and 2003 are as follows<sup>19</sup>:

### Adult literacy rates disaggregated by sex, 1970-2003

Year	10-70 years			12-70 years			15-65+ years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1970	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41% (1)
1971	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40% (2)
1981	32%	36%	34%	-	-	-	-	-	-
1991	-	-	-	-	-	-	66.8%	67.7%	67.3%
1993	-	-	-	-	-	-	66.9%	70.3%	68.9%
2001	64.98%	69.82%	67.5%	-	-	-	69.9%	73.6%	71.8%
2003	75.3%	77.9%	76.6%	79.6%	81.8%	80.9%	80.4%	81.8%	81.2%

Source: Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:15

(1) Presidential Task Group, 1997:14

(2) Youngman, F., 2001:5

The data shows a clear upward trend. The literacy rates for adults (15 to 65+) increased from 68.9% in 1993 to 81% in 2003. The national adult literacy rate therefore increased by about 12%. The largest proportion of literate people was found in the 2003 survey in the 15-19 age group (16%). However, it should be noted that this is more a result of the expansion of formal education than of adult literacy programmes. Only a fifth - in the case of the 1993 survey and a little bit more than a quarter - of the target population had been reached by adult literacy programmes according to the 2003 survey. The data of the second national literacy survey carried out in 2003 shows that about 71.5% compared to 81% in 1993 of the eligible population<sup>20</sup> never attended adult literacy classes. Major reasons advanced for non-attendance were that people were either not interested, there were no facilities in the area, they did not know about the existence of the literacy programme or they did not have time to attend. These were also the main reasons claimed in the 1993 survey.

The above figures indicate that of the total number that was eligible, in 2003 only 28.5% (in 1993 only 19%) enrolled in adult literacy programmes. 5.7% were currently attending literacy classes and 22.8% had attended in their lifetime but had left the courses already (in 1993: 5% and 14%). The 2003 survey shows an increase in the number of people enrolled in literacy programmes of almost 10%. More males (80.6%) than females (64%) never attended literacy classes. Moreover, more females (8.7%) than males (2%) were still attending classes (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:24).

Evidence on how people acquire literacy skills may also be drawn from a survey question on reading and its sources. The eligible population aged between 10-70 years who have never been to school or left school before Standard Five, were asked to state where they acquired their reading skills. The table below suggests that most people (52.2%) acquired their reading skills from the formal school system, followed by those (32.2%) who reported to have acquired their reading skills from the literacy programme. Interestingly a few (11.8%) learnt reading on their own. This data, together with the previous information, shows the real impact of the literacy programmes on literacy rates in a different light.

### Where eligible population learned reading by place and sex, 2003

Place	Male	Female	Total	Percent
At Formal School	11,565	21,315	32,880	52.2
At Night School	1,037	1,351	2,388	3.8
On my Own	4,320	3,088	7,408	11.8
Literacy Programmes	7,749	12,550	20,299	32.2
Total	24,671	38,304	62,975	100.0
Percent Total	39.2	60.8	100.0	

Source: Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:28

From the above mentioned reasons given for non-attendance it became clear that some portion of the eligible population could not access literacy programmes because there were no facilities in the area, distance problems, disabilities and lack of information on the programmes. Major literacy programmes include the national literacy programme, the mines and the prisons/ reformatory institutes, and the workplace literacy programmes<sup>21</sup>, almost all run by the government. Some NGOs and church-based institutions are minor literacy providers which are limited in scale and which target specific groups, such as linguistic minorities and out-of-school children and youth. The following table indicates the types of literacy provision by number of learners and sex in 1993 and 2003.

**Types of literacy programmes by number of learners and sex, 1993 and 2003**

Year	1993				2003			
	M %	F %	Total	%	M %	F %	Total	%
National Literacy	<b>30.5</b>	<b>69.5</b>	<b>26,713</b>	<b>89.1</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>98.9</b>	<b>38,962</b>	<b>92.4</b>
Mine literacy	78.7	21.3	2,863	9.6	11.9	-	1,725	4.1
Prison/ reformatory	62.5	37.5	128	0.4	2.8	0.3	489	1.2
Workplace literacy	-	-	-	-	4.2	0.2	655	1.6
Other	50.8	49.2	264	0.9	0.6	0.7	275	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>29,968</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>42,106</b>	<b>100</b>

Sources: Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 1997:41 and *ibid.*, 2004:25

There is no specified data on the literacy activities organized by NGOs in Botswana. Altogether, it is extremely difficult to find statistics for adult literacy programmes outside the government-operated programme. The only significant literacy and adult basic education provision outside the government is the one run by the Debswana Mining Company<sup>22</sup>, which has been operating since the 1970s. The literacy and adult basic education programmes that Debswana started in Orapa are based on materials imported from the South Africa Bureau of Literacy (instituted in 1971) and Literature and the South African Adult Basic Education and Training programme (started in 1998), which have been adapted to the Botswana context (Lekoko, R./ Maruatona, T., 2005:13; Maruatona, T., 2003:9; Youngman, F., 2002).

The above data indicates that the Botswana National Literacy Programme is the most popular programme. It is the largest government sponsored programme of non-formal education. The enrolment figures (see table below) have shown over the years first an increase, which peaked in 1985 with 38,660 participants, and then a steady decline until the present, with its low point in 1996 with 11,072 participants (Department of Non-Formal Education, 2002, in: Republic of Botswana, 2003:299). In December 2004 the DNFE had 814 Literacy Group Leaders working in the National Literacy Programme, of whom 87.2% (710) were female and 12.8% (104) male.

This data, however, does not distinguish between newly enrolled learners and those who enrolled in previous years, which makes it difficult to determine the accurate figures of access to, duration in and completion of the courses. The apparent increase in enrolment numbers during the past years<sup>23</sup> reflects the DNFE's focus on workplace literacy courses. In an effort to improve access to literacy classes, the DNFE had extended its services to reach eligible people who would not be able to participate because of their work schedules<sup>24</sup> (Department of Non-Formal Education, 2003:2).

## Enrolment figures for the National Literacy Programme, 1980-2002

Year	Enrolment
1980	7676
1981	23630
1982	18779
1983	27935
1984	36068
1985	38660
1986	35354
1987	29999
1988	26200
1989	33226
1990	25905
1991	19856
1992	26119
1993	29667
1994	16497
1995	20956
1996	11072
1997	17588
1998	15917
1999	14474
2000	12004
2001	11771
2002	13458



Source: Department of Non-formal Education, 2002 (Republic of Botswana, 2003:299)

The general trend of declining learner participation over the years has been interpreted as a sign that the BNLP is no more responsive to learners' interests. There is a need for going beyond the current basic literacy level which is equivalent to Primary Education Standard Four. There is also a need for responding to wider and specific learner needs beyond just reading, writing and numeracy.

The impact of the literacy programmes was not only measured by participation on the programme but also by performance on literacy tests, which were taken in Setswana and English reading, writing and oral skills and numeracy. The literacy test results increased the previously stated literacy rate by only 1.6%. The data revealed that those who attended literacy programmes did better than those who never attended; this was the case in all tests except English writing. While the 1993 survey did not show major differences in what respondents reported and their performance in the test, the 2003 survey data shows that between 20% and 27% of those who claimed some level of skill in reading and writing in Setswana and English were incompetent in the skills assessed (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:29/30). The majority proved that they could read and write and numerate but they mostly demonstrated some competence with only a few showing a high rate of competence (ibid.:ix).

The majority (82.7%) of the people who could not read in Setswana, and the majority (70.5%) of people who could not read in English plan to enrol in the National Literacy classes. This shows that people were aware of the National Literacy programme and were willing to enrol in it. The main reasons that respondents claimed for not willing to participate in Setswana or English lessons were that they were 'too old', had 'poor eye sight', 'lack of interest' and 'lack of time'. The challenge for the literacy providers will be to help candidates overcome these obstacles so that they can access learning opportunities (ibid.:40/41).

Literacy in other languages was assessed in the 2003 survey through self reports. The responses revealed that people aged 10 years and over were literate in 10 of the 13 languages surveyed<sup>25</sup>. Out of a total of 5,984 persons literate in languages other than Setswana and

English, the majority (34.8%) could read Sekalaka or Ikalanga, which was used as a medium of instruction before independence in 1966. The second highest portion (17.4%) of the population could read Zezuru/ Shona. Sekgalagadi, Seyei, Sekgothu, and Sesarwa could each be read by less than 100 people. There were no people literate in Setswapong, Sebirwa, and Sesubiya. The largest number of people (18.5%) literate in languages other than Setswana and English were in the 55-59 year age group followed by those in the 50-54 year age group. In general, literacy in those other languages increases with the age of the population (ibid.:42, 53 and 149).

Analysing the age specific patterns of the adult literacy rates, the 2003 survey suggests that with an increase in age, literacy rates decreased to the lowest point of 18% for those at the age of 70 years. Women of the ages 15 to 44 had higher literacy rates than men in the same age group. Literacy for these age groups ranged between 72.8% and 94.9% for women and 68.9% and 92.5% for men. For the age group between 45 and 70 years men had higher literacy rates than women in the same age group (ibid.:17).

The literacy rates disaggregated by urban-rural and by districts show high literacy rates in towns for all age groups (between 92.5% and 98% for the 15 to 70 year age group). At the top is the mining town of Orapa, with a literacy rate of 98% for the 15 to 70 year age group. Compared to the rates obtained from the 1993 survey, the 2003 survey rates indicate that literacy in the towns increased by more than 10%. The district Kweneng West had the lowest literacy rate of 57.7%, followed by the Ghanzi district with literacy rates of 59.9%. Additional districts with literacy rates below the 1993 national literacy rate of 68.9% were Ngamiland West (65.7%) and Kgalagadi South (64.9%). There are also wide disparities of literacy attainment between urban and rural areas: urban areas had a literacy rate of 85.4% against 65.7% in the rural areas (ibid.).

In terms of gender differences, the 2003 survey indicate that literacy rates across all age groups are higher for females than males in all districts except North East, Ngamiland East, Ghanzi, Kweneng West and Chobe<sup>26</sup>. In the rest of the districts, gender differences in literacy range between 0% (no difference) and 10%, compared to a range of between 1% and 13% in the 1993 survey. Moreover, the differences have narrowed to within 3 or less percentage points in all the towns. The largest gap between males and females was found in Kgatleng, where female literacy rates were higher than males by almost 10%. This is followed by Ghanzi where literacy rates were higher for males by 8% (ibid.:18).

A comparison of Botswana's literacy rate with those of other selected SADC<sup>27</sup> countries shows Botswana (81%) behind Zimbabwe with an adult literacy rate of 90%, South Africa with 86%, Namibia with 83.3% and Lesotho with 81.4%. However, Botswana compares favourably with Swaziland (80.9%), Zambia (79.9%), Tanzania (77.1%), Malawi (61.8%) and Mozambique (46.5%) (ibid.:15/16).

### **Which groups remain excluded ?**

The above analysed patterns and trends of literacy and illiteracy illustrate features which are prone to lead to exclusion from literacy. Therefore, considering the population groups with illiteracy rates above the national average (81.2% of the 2003 survey), the groups who are likely to remain excluded are:

- The older generation (40 years and over)
- Women in the age group 45 years and older

- Men in the age group between 15 and 44
- Dwellers in rural, remote and underdeveloped areas (men in the age group 25 years and older; women in the age group 30 and older)
- Citizens in 14 (out of 26) districts
- In particular, citizens of the districts Kweneng West, Ghanzi, Ngamiland West, Kgalagadi North, Kgalagadi South, and Central Boteti, where literacy rates were below the national literacy level (68.9%) achieved in 1993
- Linguistic and ethnic minority populations which are mainly concentrated in the Kgalagadi (Khalahari) area and are not left any alternative by the national language policy<sup>28</sup> than to become literate in Setswana.

Data revealed that districts with low literacy rates also had high proportions of people who never attended both formal school and non formal courses or left school before completing Standard Five. Language and conflicting cultural values are barriers to universal access to basic education in Botswana<sup>29</sup>. “Minorities are forced to adapt to the norms and values of the elite groups” (Maruatona, T./ Cervero, R.M., 2004:248). The BNLP still does not offer courses in different languages, yet most members of the senior management do admit that language is a real problem, some field staff have openly challenged the language policy in their district, and most of the Literacy Group Leaders pragmatically teach in the language their learners understand (ibid.:244; Barkered, A./ Hanemann, U./ Maruatona, T., 2003). T. Maruatona and R. Cervero call this practice at the grassroots level “resistance to the official literacy education policy” and “quiet dissent” (2004:244/245), however most of the BLNP staff would acknowledge the linguistic realities in the classes and would not sanction attempts to facilitate learners efforts to become literate in Setswana through a previous step of mother tongue literacy. But the right to become literate in somebody’s mother tongue is still not a mainstream issue in Botswana.

Socio-economic situation and life circumstances also play an important role in determining people’s access to formal school and literacy classes. The 2003 survey shows that the most frequent reason given for never attending school<sup>30</sup> was that “parents were unwilling”<sup>31</sup> (38.1%) followed by “looking after cattle” (35.8%). The major reason for never attending both formal and non-formal school was “lack of time” (21.77%) (ibid.: 19, 78 and 80). Furthermore the 2003 survey shows that the population 10 years and above that never attended school or left school before attaining Standard Five ranks at a low economical status: about half of them were “jobseekers” (52.1% male; 47.9% female) and the majority of the employed were engaged in “elementary occupations” (64.2%). The major economic activity was “home making” carried out mostly by females (76.1%). Illiterate women have lesser chances of getting a job compared to illiterate men (ibid.:43/44), and therefore they are more vulnerable in economical terms. Frank Youngman concludes that the inequalities and divisions that exist in Botswana’s society constitute a major excluding factor which hinders people from benefiting from literacy provisions (ibid., 2001:12).

Although there is no empirical data on this, HIV/AIDS does have an impact on access to and the willingness to participate in the National Literacy Programme. Literacy classes are attended by adults who are either affected or infected. Those who are affected have to take care of sick family members and will not have time for classes. Others have to look after their grandchildren and other orphans left behind by deceased family members. This also reduces the possibility of people attending classes, and of course, those who are infected will be unable to continue their studies due to their ill health.

Another excluded group is the out-of-school children for which the DNFE is responsible in creating specific provisions. But, so far, this assignment has not been fulfilled. According to the 2003 survey, a total of 5,371 children aged 10-14 had not attended both formal school and a non-formal literacy programme, or had left school before they completed Standard Five. There were more females who never attended school because of parents' unwillingness (68.4%) compared to males (31.6%). A larger proportion of males (66.8%) were more likely not to attend school because they were looking after cattle or worked on their lands compared to 33.2% females. More females than males were more likely not to attend school because they had to perform domestic chores such as helping at home and taking care of sick family members. The survey data showed that out of those 294 children (10-14) who participated in a literacy programme only 35 were still attending while 259 dropped out of the programme (ibid.:20 and 25).

### **C) Long-term objectives and commitments established by the Botswana government**

Botswana's policies, planning strategies and action plans are quite advanced compared to many countries in Africa and elsewhere. The government has deployed a wide range of cross-sectoral policy frameworks that have the potential to address the important issues of the country. Botswana also shows a relatively good record of effective planning of the national development policy, which is reflected in the formulation of successive development plans since Independence in 1966. The National Development Plans of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning are designed for five year periods. The current *National Development Plan 9 (2003/04-2008/09) (NDP 9)* is continuing the consolidation process of the gains that have been made in promoting access to basic education within the context of the Dakar Framework of Action.

The education strategy presented in the NDP 9 emphasises lifelong learning as its "central element", and the need to make education more flexible "so that people can enter and leave the education system at different times in their lives". The strategies promoting lifelong learning include shared use of resources, access to part-time courses through the use of varying modes of learning, modularised learning packages, and a National Qualifications Framework (Republic of Botswana, 2003:277/278). Among the seven main objectives for non-formal education, the first four are related to the provision of literacy training:

1. Plan, design, develop, and implement the Adult Basic Education Programme, the Post-Literacy and Life Skills Programme and the Out of School Children's Education Programme that are accredited;
2. Restructure and develop human resources required for the implementation of the three programmes;
3. Strengthen the support system for learners and facilitators;
4. Create and sustain a literate environment by planning, designing and developing materials<sup>32</sup> (ibid.:299).

While stating that the BNLP was realised to be "inadequate" because of the decline in enrolment from a peak of 38,660 in 1985 to a low of 11,771 in 2001, the NDP 9 announces the transformation of the BNLP into the three programmes which are mentioned in objective 1. The development of these "new examinable programmes" include, among others, the development of monitoring and information management, examinations and assessment systems, the review of the BNLP information management, examination and testing systems, the construction of six out-of-school education resource centres, the use of all available technologies to ensure the best possible means of reaching learners in all parts of the country,

a review of the organisational structure, the launching of a vigorous programme of staff development, redeployment and upgrading, the launching of a programme marketing and social mobilisation initiatives, and the establishment of a Unit for Guidance and Counselling to strengthen the management of the HIV/AIDS/STD programme (ibid.:299/300). All these tasks are entrusted to the DNFE without specifying the resources which would be required to implement the envisaged programme activities. About 8% of the entire NDP 9 document is dealing with education and training. Non-formal education is occupying about 5.5% of this portion, and together with distance and open learning it accounts for 11% of the NDP 9 document.

The *1994 Revised National Policy on Education* is still the officially prevailing policy guideline for the education sector. About 90% of the recommendations of the National Commission on Education refer to the different components of the formal education system, whereas the rest is dedicated to “out of school education” which includes literacy for youth and adults. With respect to the National Literacy Programme, the Second National Commission on Education recommends:

- a) the continuation of the National Literacy Programme under the direction of the Department of Non Formal Education.
- b) an immediate review of the level of payment and conditions of employment of Literacy Group Leaders.
- c) an evaluation of the National Literacy Programme to take place immediately after the publication of the results of the National Household Literacy Survey (ibid.:36)

The first recommendation was met, whereas the second could only be partially accomplished because the literacy teachers are still volunteers. The third recommendation could only be carried out ten years later in 2003, at the same time as already the second National Household Literacy Survey. The UNESCO Institute for Education, which was granted a contract by the DNFE to evaluate the BNLP, concluded that there is a need to have a systematic focus and follow up on previous recommendations: while Botswana’s policies and strategy documents were found to be advanced compared to many countries in Africa and elsewhere, the identified problem lies in implementing these policies (UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004:9).

Furthermore, the second National Commission on Education recommends with respect to the post-literacy stage for adult learners that:

- a) the Department of Non Formal Education should give greater priority to post-literacy activities, particularly in relation to the development of a literate environment and support productive activities in traditional agriculture and the informal sector.
- b) the Department of Non Formal Education should introduce an “Adult Basic Education Course” to provide adults with the equivalent of Standard Seven schooling (Republic of Botswana, 1994:37).

Over the years the DNFE introduced a number of additional components into the BNLP to improve the delivery system and sustain the programme, which contributed to the achievement of the first recommendation. These components or sub-programmes were:

- Home Economics Programme and life skills provision
- Income-generating projects and productive/business skills training
- Village Reading Rooms in collaboration with the Botswana National Library Services

- A series of complementary reading materials for new literates
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Workplace Literacy Programme (Barkered, A./ Hanemann, U./ Maruatona, T., 2003: 11-23)

With regard to the second recommendation, in 2001 the Adult Basic Education Course (ABEC) was introduced as a pilot project and only implemented during one year. T. Maruatona and R.M. Cervero argue that although the task force responsible for ABEC had carried out a needs assessment to determine learners' needs and interests, they afterwards ignored the findings of their assessment and opted to import materials from the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme from South Africa, such materials did not reflect the multiple Botswana contexts (Maruatona, T./ Cervero, R.M., 2004:242). The ABEC initiative temporarily ended in 2001 and was not followed up until 2005, when the UNESCO Institute for Education was awarded with a second consultancy to help develop a curriculum for the planned Adult Basic Education programme equivalent to Standard Seven.

The *Strategic Plan 2001-2006* of the Ministry of Education sets priorities for the development of the education sector in form of nine "key result areas", which are each spelled out into goals, strategic objectives and corresponding strategies. None of the key result areas are focusing particularly on non-formal education or literacy<sup>33</sup>. The strategic objectives of the entire document are concentrating on formal education. The only reference to "literacy rates" is in relation to goal 4.2 (To ensure equity and equal opportunity in the provision of education and training). In this case one of the key performance indicators is the "literacy rates". Strategic objective 4.3.1. (To facilitate access to learning through the establishment of at least 10 learning resource centres around the country by 2006 which are open to the out-of-school youth and the general public) is the only indication of non-formal education in the Strategic Plan.

The *Annual Plan 2003* of the Department of Non-Formal Education, in the context of its *Strategic Plan 2003-2006* and following the key result areas of the Ministry's *Strategic Plan*, reflects its own goals and strategic activities which are, of course, about literacy and non-formal education (Ministry of Education/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2003).

Both the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education and the current National Development Plan 9, commit the government to provide an appropriate basis for ongoing personal development through forms of training other than further formal education. A total of 16 programmes in five areas<sup>34</sup> with an estimated budget of 165 million Pula<sup>35</sup> are included in the National Development Plan 9 as part of the national poverty strategy. A non-formal basic education programme would lay an optimal foundation for lifelong learning and would also make a major contribution to boosting employment and reducing poverty as envisaged in the *National Strategy for Poverty Reduction of 2003* (Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, 2003).

However, although it is stated in this document that illiteracy rates are at their highest in the poorest and most remote areas in Botswana (ibid.:4), literacy is not among the proposed programme activities. Actually, there is only one educational programme foreseen in the national poverty strategy. It aims at creating technical, communication and business skills development programmes for educated unskilled youth (ibid.:21). But it is not starting from literacy as the required foundational level of basic education. Rather it is meant for those young people who finished formal school but have no vocational skills. The *2002 Revised National Policy for Rural Development* (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning,

2002), among whose objectives is also to reduce poverty, does not include any objective, strategy or programme related to education or literacy.

However, the *National Gender Programme Framework (NGPF)* (Ministry of Labour & Home Affairs/ Women's Affairs Department, 1999), which was prepared by the government following the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, does focus on education and training as one of six critical areas of concern. While acknowledging that the participation of women and girls at some levels in the education system is favourable, the NGPF points out that particularly at higher education levels gender disparities persist and have a negative impact on women's employment opportunities. Among the efforts made to date, the NGPF lists those of the Department of Non-Formal Education which promotes income generating projects through the literacy groups, most of which are made up of women (ibid.:12). The four proposed strategies<sup>36</sup> for the educational empowerment of women including the relevant key action areas do not explicitly mention literacy since they are formulated in a rather general way (ibid.:12/13).

Based on the Hamburg Declaration (UNESCO, 1997), the Botswana National Commission for UNESCO had developed a national plan for action for adult learning aiming at the expansion of the provision of literacy and adult basic education within the framework of lifelong learning (Botswana National Commission for UNESCO, 1998). The 2004 *Education for All National Action Plan (EFA-NAP)*, which was prepared by a working group comprising also of Non-Formal Education, is informed by the National Development Plan 9 and the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan for the period 2001-2006. It also attempts to meet the main goals of Vision 2016. The current EFA-NAP will be implemented along the same timeline with the National Development Plan 9, and when Botswana develops the National Development Plan 10 a second EFA-NAP will be developed to cover the remaining EFA Dakar Action Framework period until 2015.

Botswana has adopted a strategy to integrate the EFA-NAP into the existing plans and programmes, instead of developing a separate structure for EFA. This means that when the important strategic planning documents are achieving their goals, they automatically achieve also the EFA goals. In other words, the direction of plans and targets for all education sectors are shaped by EFA. In Botswana, EFA means access to lifelong learning opportunities (Ministry of Education, 2004:6). The plan is being structured according to the six Dakar goals. In terms of goal 4, the plan proposes to achieve "a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially men in Botswana". The four interrelated objectives and their corresponding target groups are as follows:

1. To raise levels of adult functional literacy in Botswana (all illiterate adults, particularly men).
2. To raise general levels of literacy across society for sustainable development (adults with low levels of literacy).
3. To improve retention levels of literacy beyond school (young adults).
4. To enhance functional literacy levels in rural and remote communities (adults).

The main implementation strategies proposed by the EFA-NAP are the revision of the national literacy programme and integration with other non-formal education programmes; the development of a literacy extension programme; the linkage of adult literacy programmes with commerce and industry and integration into learners' life styles; and the development of appropriate materials and methodologies. The time frame for the first two objectives is 2003-2006, and for objective three and four 2006-2009. At the end of the National Development

Plan 9 period (2009) illiteracy is expected to have decreased by 20%. The leading Department for the implementation of the planned strategies is to be the DNFE, apart from objective three, which is in the charge of the Ministry of Education's Headquarters (ibid.:15).

The EFA-NAP also provides a cost analysis for the period 2004/05-2009/10. Only 1.2% (7,754,000.00 Pula) of the total cost of 660,408,718.00 Pula<sup>37</sup> is allocated to achieve the planned objectives under goal 4<sup>38</sup>. While almost half of this amount (3,764,000.00 Pula = 48.5%) is scheduled to be spent during the first year (2004/05), the rest is to be distributed by allocating around 10% of the budget for each year over the following five years. The greatest share (52.4%) of the small amount allocated to goal 4 is devoted to objective 2 (development of a literacy extension programme for adults with low levels of literacy), whereas 23% is allocated to objective 3 (linkage of adult literacy programmes with commerce and industry), 20% to objective 1 (revision of national literacy programme), and 4.5% to objective 4 (development of materials and methodologies to enhance functional literacy in rural and remote communities). About 77% of the estimated costs for implementing goal 4 of the EFA-NAP would be spent by the DNFE (ibid.:21 and 23). Altogether this budgetary projection provides a revealing picture about what weak emphasis is placed on literacy and non-formal education.

*Vision 2016: Towards Prosperity for All*, which was formulated by a presidential task group in 1996 and launched in 1997, constitutes one of the milestones in creating a long-term strategic framework to development in Botswana. One of the seven long term visions for Botswana is to be "an educated, informed nation" by the year 2016. Improvements in the relevance, the quality, and the access to education lie at the core of this vision. While the opportunity "for continued and universal education" is claimed for all Botswana<sup>39</sup> (Presidential Task Force, 1997:5), no special reference is made to literacy or non-formal education as alternative options within the education system. More over, when it comes to outlining the strategy for the next twenty years in building an educated, informed nation, the main focus is clearly and exclusively on formal education (ibid.:28-33). Only one section of the document includes literacy training, which is the policy on women in development. One of its six strategies ensuring the empowerment of Botswana women is: "Gender equity would be ensured in education and training through programmes aimed at the eradication of illiteracy, and improving women's access to vocational training, science and technology" (ibid.:51).

In an attempt to match the *Vision 2016* goals with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in the *Status Report 2004*, the goal of building an educated, informed nation is matched with the MDG#2 of achieving universal primary education (Republic of Botswana/ United Nations, 2004:15). The report mentions, however, the National Literacy Programme as one of two support policies and programmes for achieving universal access to education. The policy's objectives of the BNLP are summarised as follows: "To eradicate illiteracy; enable national literacy participants to apply knowledge in developing their cultural, social and economic life; enable participants to effectively perform community duties on the one hand and to exercise their rights and obligations of citizenship on the other" (ibid.:34).

There are well defined long-term objectives and commitments of the Botswana government at the central level which are quite advanced and in line with current international trends. The problem lies, however, in implementing these policies (UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004:114). Within the NDP 9 plan period funds have been approved for major activities such as the comprehensive evaluation study of the National Literacy Programme, the National Household Literacy Survey, the construction and equipment of a national NFE training centre

and the construction of ten cluster level offices, but the implementation capacity of the DNFE continues to be low and hampered by a lack of human resources with the required qualification level. T. Maruatona and R. Cervero (2004:235) assume that there is a lack of political will to decentralise decision-making through involving all stakeholders and to empower learners through the national literacy programme. In another article, T. Maruatona similarly argues that the “state hegemony” in literacy provision stifles learner participation and district initiatives (2004b:53). This may have contributed to the decline of participation rates in the BNLP, but still does not satisfactorily explain why the above analysed policy and planning documents do not lead into a stronger political and hence financial commitment from the competent authorities towards literacy and adult learning.

The analysed policy documents seem to be driven by the acknowledgement that education is an essential ingredient of development. Literacy education however is mentioned less in these documents, in some of them not at all. Particularly striking is that literacy is not considered in the *National Strategy for Poverty Reduction of 2003* and the *2002 Revised National Policy for Rural Development*, even though there is a close interrelationship between illiteracy and poverty and the highest rates of both persist in rural and remote areas. Altogether, literacy and non-formal education seem to be the “Cinderella” (marginalised) within the developmental strategies related to the education sector.

#### **D) Management and financing of literacy in Botswana**

The EFA National Plan of Action indicates clear targets assigned to different institutions and organizations to assist the nation in achieving its defined goals for Education for All. In the case of EFA goal 4 which is related to literacy, the leading Department is the DNFE. Only the implementation of objective 3 which is aiming at the improvement of retention levels of literacy beyond school is in the charge of the Ministry of Education’s Headquarters (Ministry of Education, 2004:15). There are no other central government ministries directly engaged in literacy education. At the local government level, a number of departments provide adult education and training, but no literacy classes.

There is a mechanism to provide overall co-ordination and strategic planning. In 1999, the National Council on Education established a specialised Sub-committee for Out-of-School Education which includes literacy. It is representative of key stakeholders and has a mandate to advise on public policy, set priorities, and to monitor implementation. Organisationally, the Sub-committee also relates to other relevant co-ordinating mechanisms, such as the Rural Extension Co-ordinating Committee, which oversees the government’s extension services, and the Adult Basic Education Committee, which co-ordinates literacy and post-literacy activities. The Committee represents an important attempt of horizontal integration. It faces the challenge of how to develop a comprehensive system of lifelong learning opportunities and how to mobilise the public, private and community resources to finance such a system (Youngman, F., 2001:11).

Although public provision of literacy by the state has a key role, it is complemented by a number of non-governmental organizations and institutions who are engaged in this task. But they are not operating country-wide and at a considerably lower level than the DNFE with its BNLP. NGOs/ CSOs are seen as important stakeholders by the DNFE, but there are no official public-private partnerships or contract schemes in place.

The DNFE is organised in a decentralised manner. It operates the BNLP with the support of all constituent units: Course Development; Educational Media Support; Research and

Evaluation; Database Management and Monitoring; Regional, District and Village Outreach; Editorial, Printing and Production; and Administration and Management. Despite the policy drive for decentralisation, the existence of decentralised structures at regional, district, cluster and village levels and the creation of a National Commission on shared resources, UIE's evaluation team saw many literacy classes taking place under trees even though school classrooms were available. The evaluation came to the conclusion that there is an urgent need to place more emphasis on and devote more resources to work in the field.

Cluster officers and Literacy Group Leaders (LGLs) are the main crossroad in which administrative management actually meets with the management of pedagogy in the field; therefore, attention could be focused at these levels. There is a need for a sharing of resources and an improved co-ordination of policy and development initiatives across different sectors. There is also a need to promote policy dialogue between the Ministry of Education, DNFE and other NFE providers on strategies for improving literacy provisions and strengthening its links with formal education (UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004:114 and 161).

Furthermore, the evaluation of the BNLP concluded that inter-communal, inter-agency development work, consultation and co-ordination is taking place in a more systematic and coherent way at the central level. In contrast, at field level, the whole programme is represented by one individual, and his/ her activities are disconnected from other development structures, activities and players. The LGLs are isolated and cut off from others; there is no institutional identity because no visible infrastructure exists that personalizes the BNLP. The entitlement of LGLs to access shared resources and services is extremely limited, as the DNFE has not devised a properly coherent and dynamic field operation and presence. Co-ordination with other institutions to improve the quality of NLP services to people enrolling in literacy groups is not working properly. For example, HIV/AIDS themes as class content are practically left up to the Literacy Group Leaders in charge of a group, whereas this issue in particular is a national problem. (ibid.).

With respect to administration, management and service delivery, the general evaluative judgement of the evaluation team is that there is no visible trace of improvement in the programme. This assessment already formulated by the Second National Commission on Education in 1993 is corroborated by recent findings and echoed by most stakeholders. The same literacy 'primers' are still in use, providing access to Standard 4 only. Neither a new curriculum nor new learning materials were produced to allow learners to reach Standard 7, as projected. The improved Post Literacy and Productive Skills Programmes are limited in scope (ibid.:134). There is too much concentration on the resources and on decision making structures at the central level, and too much emphasis on administrative procedures. This has slowed down implementation and ossified the system, leading to learners dropping out, lack of motivation, lack of flexibility, and feelings of irrelevance by the staff (ibid.:160).

The BNLP was originally conceived as a programme of six years' duration and the government obtained significant donor funding. This was before the post-1982 economic boom when Botswana was still classified as low-income country and was a major recipient of external aid. In the period 1980/81 to 1985/86, 72% of the costs of the programme were provided by donor aid. The major donors were the Swedish SIDA and the German GTZ, but contributions were also made by the Dutch Government, the German KfW and UNICEF.

Following the policy decision to institutionalise the programme in 1985, the Botswana Government gradually took over an increasing portion of the costs. Donor aid was subsequently targeted at specific activities, such as SIDA's support to post-literacy materials,

but later came to an end. For example, UNICEF terminated its assistance in 1994 and SIDA in 1997. This reflected a general trend of donor withdrawal because of Botswana's economic success. The government has taken full responsibility for the programme's costs, though donor aid is still sought for particular activities, especially support for income-generating groups. No effort is made to generate financial inputs from learners, communities or NGOs, and only minor contributions are made by the private sector, even by companies participating in the Workplace Literacy Programme (Youngman, F., 2002:18).

The government's financing of the BNLP covers the costs of the basic organisational infrastructure of the DNFE's central, regional and district offices and permanent staff. However, the operational costs of running the programme are "chronically under-funded". As a result there is insufficient transport for supervision, inadequate funds for honoraria for Literacy Group Leaders and class meeting environments are "unacceptable" (Reimer, F.J., 1998:5). The total budget for the DNFE represents slightly more than 1% of the total budget estimate for the Ministry of Education<sup>40</sup>. Furthermore, out of this negligible amount 43% goes to the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) and the African Association for Correspondence Education (AACE).

**Budget estimate for the DNFE 2001-2004 incl. % change in last three years**

<b>SUBHEADS</b>	<b>Year 2001/2002</b>	<b>Year 2002/2003</b>	<b>Year 2003/2004</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Personal Emoluments	9,716,769 (35.2%)	11,600,060 (33.1%)	12,056,430 (31%)	24.07
Travelling and Transport (Internal)	2,953,685 (10.7%)	3,148,550 (9%)	3,251,460 (8.4%)	10.08
Travelling and Transport (External)	34,349 (0.1%)	89,800 (0.3%)	96,980 (0.3%)	182.33
General Expenses and Supplies	582,704 (2.1%)	1,189,000 (3.4%)	1,200,450 (3.1%)	106.01
Departmental Services	74,833 (0.3%)	320,000 (0.1%)	319,250 (0.8%)	326.61
Maintenance and Running Expenses (Equipment)	30,686 (0.1%)	144,600 (0.4%)	141,300 (0.4%)	360.47
Maintenance and Running Expenses (Others)	15,513 (0.06%)	12,100 (0.03%)	12,100 (0.03%)	- 22.0
Institutional Running Expenses	10,571 (0.04%)	227,500 (0.7%)	230,500 (0.6%)	2080.49
Training	2,815,312 (10.2%)	3,662,510 (10.5%)	3,979,510 (10.2%)	41.32
Councils, Conferences and Exhibitions	127,921 (0.5%)	224,500 (0.6%)	244,000 (0.6%)	90.74
Grants, Subventions and other Payments	10,999,836 (39.9%)	13,722,090 (39.1%)	16,642,900 (42.8%)	51.30
Special Expenditure	210,560 (0.8%)	720,000 (2.1%)	751,200 (1.9%)	256.76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,572,739</b>	<b>35,060,710</b>	<b>38,926,080</b>	<b>41.17</b>

Source: UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004: 174

The uneven allocation of resources by the Ministry of Education to the non-formal education providers has been criticized in the National EFA Plan. As a result the provision of non-formal education and literacy is also uneven: In urban areas, towns and major centres there are available learning opportunities for career advancement, while the rural and remote areas are prone to absence of such opportunities. There is also a problem with the low qualification of the teaching staff as is the case of the BNLP which is entirely comprised of volunteers. The Literacy Group Leaders, who are paid 12,60 Pula per class session, do not enjoy the social welfare services and other privileges of governmental employees such as the cluster supervisors and other field staff of the BLNP. The DNFE does not have adequate resources to get personnel with the requisite qualifications, and this is even more pronounced with the private and parastatal providers because of lack of effective coordination structures (Ministry of Education, 2004:37). This is why the Ministry of Education recommends in its 2004 EFA

National Action Plan that “the government should increase its financial and resource allocation to this sub-sector” [out-of-school education]. It is believed that the providers of non-formal education are “highly marginalized”. Some of them “depend on handouts from government and donor agencies” (ibid., 2004:37).

### **E) Innovative programmes or policies in the field of literacy in Botswana**

The practice of the recurrent national literacy surveys was already described as an innovative policy to create a data base and to systematically monitor the evolvement of literacy patterns and trends in the country. Also its successes and limitations were already discussed. Another innovative practice is the development of strategic plans of the DNFE for three year periods (the first was for 2003-2006). This planning instrument constitutes a systematic way of projecting goals, objectives, critical activities, outputs, accountable persons, stakeholders, period for activity to be done, resources needed and status of implementation to be assessed (Maruatona, T., 2003:30). Both of these policies seem to be well institutionalised and therefore sustainable.

During their field visit the UIE evaluation team identified and visited a number of institutions and civil society organisations engaged in research, promotion and education activities of minority languages, such as:

- a) The University of Botswana/ Department of Adult Education with its Project for the Development of Literacy in Minority Languages (Shiyeyi and Ikalanga);
- b) The Language Centre Francistown with its Ikalanga Bible Translation Project and Mukani Action Campaign (Ikalanga);
- c) The TOCaDI Centre in Shakawe with its Development of Khwedam Language Project;
- d) The D’Kar Trust with its Naro Language Project;
- e) And the Botswana Christian Council with its Language Learning Centre at Etsha for Thimbukushu.

Although most of their language activities pursue different objectives (bible translation, Christian mission, preservation of minority language and culture, etc.), they are potential partners for the DNFE in providing good quality literacy in minority languages within bilingual or multilingual settings. Most of them have developed their own literacy material in different minority languages. A good practice case was, for example, the Naro Language Project where the learners first became literate in Naro, then they were taught by a Naro native speaker to acquire literacy in Setswana and English. Learners are generally interested to learn the languages which are needed in their environment, and they are also interested to learn to read and to write in their own language (Barkered, A./ Hanemann, U./ Maruatona, T., 2003:66-74).

Most of these activities are highly dependent on external funding and therefore some of them have had to close down their activities due to the lack of funds. Such is the case of the Project for the Development of Literacy in Minority Languages from the University of Botswana, which was started in 1998 with the financial support of UNESCO. The TOCaDI Centre and D’Kar Trust activities are affected by the same dependence on external aid, but they are more likely to be sustainable since they are organized in the NGO network of the “Kuru Family” (Kuru Development Trust) and also receive support from the regional network of the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA).

A small scale research project using the Regenerated Freirean Literacy Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) approach was carried out in 2003/04 in the Ngamiland District which explored ways of the potential for alternative pedagogies, curricula, and organisational forms to be identified outside the state-run BNLP. It was aiming at empowering learners through a participatory methodology. The process involved the training of teachers on the participatory methodology, development of materials and assessment of its impact. The findings indicated that the REFLECT approach had a positive impact on virtually all activities of teachers and their learners in terms of how they conceptualized and implemented literacy education. REFLECT also empowered learners by discussing issues that were immediately relevant to their contexts. Some learners even decided to take action on the problems they discussed in class (Maruatona, T., 2004a:1). There are no indications that this project, which was also externally financed, is to be continued on a larger scale.

## References:

- Barkered, A./ Hanemann, U./ Maruatona, T.** (2003) Botswana National Literacy Programme Evaluation Report on Curriculum, learning material, methods, language of instruction, assessment and evaluation strategies, and school age children, UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg, October-November 2003 (unpublished)
- Batibo, H. M./ Mathangwane, J.T./ Tsonope, J.** (2003) A study of the Third Language Teaching in Botswana, Consultancy Report (Draft), Ministry of Education, (unpublished)
- Botswana National Commission for UNESCO** (1998) National Plan of Action for Adult Learning. Gaborone: National Commission for UNESCO
- Central Statistics Office** (2004) Botswana Literacy Survey: 2003. Press release on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004, Gaborone, Botswana
- Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education** (2004) Report on the Second National Survey on Literacy in Botswana, 2003. Government Printer, Gaborone
- Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education** (1997) Report of the First National Survey on Literacy in Botswana. Literacy Survey Report 1993. The Department of Printing and Publishing Services, Gaborone June 1997
- Chebanne, Andy/ Nyati-Ramahobo, Lydia/ Youngman, Frank** (2000) Adult literacy and cultural diversity in Botswana. Fifth Botswana Annual National Literacy Forum (BANALF) June 2000 (unpublished paper)
- Commeyras, M./ Chilisa, B.** (2001) Assessing Botswana's first national survey on literacy with Wagner's proposed schema for surveying literacy in the 'Third World'. In: International Journal of Educational Development No. 21, pp.433-446
- Department of Non-Formal Education** (2003) Briefing Notes for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 22 October 2003 (internal report)
- Education Statistics 2002** Stats Brief, released by Central Statistics Office, Gaborone, Botswana, October 2002
- Gaborone, S./ Mutanyatta, J./ Youngman, F.** (1987) An Evaluation of the Botswana National Literacy Programme. Gaborone: Ministry of Education
- Hasselbring, Sue** (2000) A Sociolinguistic Survey of the Languages of Botswana. Sociolinguistic Studies of Botswana Language Series, Volume 1, Basarwa Languages Project, Tasalls Publishing and Books, Mogoditshane, Botswana
- Lekoko, Rebecca/ Maruatona, Tonic** (2005) Opportunity and Challenges of Widening Access to Education: Adult Education in Botswana. In: Brainart, Marcus (ed.) (2005) Social Justice, Chapter 18, UIE, Hamburg (upcoming)
- Maruatona, Tonic** (2004a) The impact of the REFLECT approach to literacy education: The case of Ngamiland in Botswana, University of Botswana (unpublished paper)

**Maruatona, Tonic** (2004b) State hegemony and the planning and implementation of literacy education in Botswana. In: International Journal of Educational Development 24 (2004) 53-65

**Maruatona, Tonic** (2003) Country Report on Botswana for CONFINTEA Midterm Review 2003 Six Years after CONFINTEA V: Status and Future. Unpublished research report. Gaborone: University of Botswana, Department of Adult Education

**Maruatona, Tonic/ Cervero, Ronald M.** (2004) Adult literacy education in Botswana: Planning between reproduction and resistance. In: Studies in the Education of Adults Vol. 36, No.2, Autumn 2004, 235-251

**Ministry of Education** (2004) Education for All (EFA) – National Action Plan (NPA), September 2004, Final Draft (unpublished)

**Ministry of Education** (2001) Strategic Plan 2001-2006

**Ministry of Education** (1994) Report of the Revised National Policy on Education. Gaborone: Government Printer

**Ministry of Education** (1979) The Eradication of Illiteracy in Botswana: A National Initiative. Consultation Document. Gaborone: Department of Non-Formal Education

**Ministry of Education/ Department of Non-Formal Education** (2003) Annual Plan January-December 2003, Strategic Plan 2003-2006 (unpublished)

**Ministry of Finance and Development Planning** (2003 a) National Strategy for Poverty Reduction of 2003 (As approved through Presidential Directive Cab 14/2003), April 2003, Printed by the Government Printer, Gaborone

**Ministry of Finance and Development Planning** (2003 b) National Development Plan 9: 2003/04-2008/09, March, 2003, Gaborone

**Ministry of Finance and Development Planning** (2002) Revised National Policy for Rural Development. Government Paper No: 3 of 2002, Gaborone, Botswana

**Ministry of Labour & Home Affairs/ Women’s Affairs Department (1999)** National Gender Programme. Popular version. June 1999, Printed by the Government Printer, Gaborone

**Mpofu, Stanley T./ Youngman, Frank** (2001) The dominant tradition in adult literacy – A comparative study of national literacy programmes in Botswana and Zimbabwe. In: International Review of Education, 47 (2001) 573-595, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands

**Presidential Task Force** (1997) Vision 2016: Towards Prosperity For All, Long Term Vision for Botswana, September 1997, Associated Printers

**Republic of Botswana** (2003) 2004/2005 Estimates of Expenditure from the Consolidated and Development Funds, Draft, printed by the Government Printer, Gaborone

**Republic of Botswana** (1994) The Revised National Policy on Education, April 1994, Government Paper No.2 of 1994, As Approved by the National Assembly on the 7<sup>th</sup> April, 1994, Printed by the Government Printer, Gaborone

**Republic of Botswana** (1977) Report of the National Commission on Education, Gaborone, Government Printer

**Republic of Botswana/ United Nations** (2004) Botswana: Millennium Development Goals, Status Report 2004, Achievements, Future Challenges and Choices, Production by Tiger Design and Graphics

**Reimer, Frances Julia** (1998) Seeing the light: Literacy education and citizenship in Botswana. Presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, April 1998, San Diego, California

**Reimer, Frances Julia** (1996) Moving from the Darkness: Literacy Practice and Development in Botswana. Paper presented at ATBE’s “Adult Education and Social Transformation” Conference, Maseru, Lesotho, April 1996

**UNDP** (2003) Human Development Report

**UNESCO** (2004) EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005. Education for All: The Quality Imperative. UNESCO, Paris

**UNESCO** (1997) Final Report: The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education. Hamburg, Germany: UNESCO

**UNESCO Institute for Education** (2004) Sharpening the Focus. Evaluation of the Botswana National Literacy Programme. December 2004 (unpublished)

**Youngman, Frank** (2002) An Overview of Adult Basic and Literacy Education in Botswana. International Conference on Adult Basic and Literacy Education in the SADC Region, The Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 3-6 December 2002 (unpublished paper)

**Youngman, Frank** (2001) The prospects for lifelong education for all in Africa – The case of Botswana. In: Inchiesta, XXX, No.129, 42-50 (Le prospettive dell'educazione permanente per tutti in Africa: il caso del Botswana)

**Youngman, Frank** (2000) The state, adult literacy policy, and inequality in Botswana. In: Welch, A.R. (Ed.), Third World Education, pp. 251-277

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> According to the 2001 Census, Botswana's population is about 1.7 million people (Ministry of Education, 2004:25)

<sup>2</sup> In the 2001 census the male proportion was still 48%.

<sup>3</sup> Life expectancy was for males 53 years and for females 59 years.

<sup>4</sup> The Presidential Task Force indicates that in 1993/94 some 47 per cent of people in Botswana had incomes below the poverty datum line (ibid., 1997:23).

<sup>5</sup> The current ten years basic education system is made up of seven years of primary and three years of junior secondary school. The Long Term Vision 2016 for Botswana envisage to expand the basic education system to twelve years of schooling (Presidential Task Force, 1997:5)

<sup>6</sup> Enrolment for boys is higher in lower standards (1-5) but declines in higher standards (6-7) (Central Statistics Office, 2002:1).

<sup>7</sup> NEPAD Human Resources Development Initiative, 2002, quoted in: Ministry of Education, 2004:3

<sup>8</sup> A Consultancy Report on Third Language Teaching in Botswana (2003) assumes that there are as many as 30 languages and dialects, which are divided in three groups: 1. Languages of the Bantu family, spoken by over 96.8% of the population, 2. Languages of the Khoesan family, spoken by about 2.9% of the population; and 3. Languages of the Indo-European family (Afrikaans), spoken by 0.2% of the population. As a result of their field survey, the consultants identified 26 languages (Batibo, H. M./ Mathangwane, J.T./ Tsonope, J., 2003:7 and 13). A previously conducted sociolinguistic survey arrives at the conclusion that there are 41 different languages in Botswana (Hasselbring, S., 2000:141).

<sup>9</sup> A "Motswana" is a citizen (singular) of Botswana.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in: Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 1997:2

<sup>11</sup> For example, Home Economics Programme, income-generating projects, Village Reading Rooms, complementary reading materials for new literates, English as a Second Language programme and an Adult Basic Education pilot course (UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004:56-66).

<sup>12</sup> At that time the BEC was independent from the Ministry of Education and under alternate authority.

<sup>13</sup> The Freirean concept had gained prominence in the Declaration of the International Symposium for Literacy in 1975 and substantially influenced the subsequent pilot project (cf. Youngman, F., 2002, p.5).

<sup>14</sup> The Eradication of Illiteracy in Botswana – A National Initiative (Ministry of Education, 1979)

<sup>15</sup> The two most important of these, namely the evaluation of the programme in 1986/87, and the First National Survey on Literacy of 1993, provided important empirical information.

<sup>16</sup> "...little more than provide skills to decode text" (Riemer, F.J., 1996, p.5).

<sup>17</sup> The national population census is also carried out every ten years (1981, 1991, 2001); the next in 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Mothuseng Mathwane, 31.10.2003, Senior Adult Education Officer, Molepolole, Kweneng District

<sup>19</sup> The combination of two different sets of data - resulting from the 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses where adult literacy rates were only estimated, and from the 1993 and 2003 National Household Literacy Surveys, which assessed more accurately the literacy rates, - may distort the figures and lead to inconsistencies such as the fact that in eight years (1993-2001) the literacy rate seem to have improved only by 3 percentage points, meanwhile from 2001 to 2003 it increased by almost 10 percentage points. Another factor that makes the comparability of

---

figures and hence the analysis of trends more difficult, is the fact that the censuses and surveys defined an adult in diverse forms (10 years and above, 12 years and above and 15 years and above).

<sup>20</sup> Population aged 12-65 years old, who never attended school or left school before completing Standard Five (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 1993:1).

<sup>21</sup> The term workplace literacy in the context of Botswana refers to those literacy classes that take place at the learners' workplace and during working hours. The courses are generally run by the governmental DNFE, but the employers contribute to the provision of their employees' literacy education by either providing the meeting place, work time, and in some cases they even pay the fee of the Literacy Group Leader. Contrary to the rest of the BNLP classes, in the literacy classes at workplace male learners outnumber females. Most of the workplace literacy courses take place in urban areas. More governmental or parastatal employers are ready to support literacy classes for their employees than private companies (UNESCO Institute for Education, 2004:64-66).

<sup>22</sup> The main shareholder of the Debswana diamond mine is also the Botswana government.

<sup>23</sup> In 2002: 13,329; in 2003: 13,045 (Maruatona, T., 2003:8; Department of Non-Formal Education, December 2003 Statistics, unpublished)

<sup>24</sup> In 2002 a total of 1,203 learners (80.5% males; 19.5% females) were enrolled in the Workplace Literacy Project. 12.6% of these learners worked in private or parastatal workplaces, and 87.4% in the public sector (Department of Non-Formal Education, 2003:3).

<sup>25</sup> Sekalaka, Sekgalagadi/ Sengologa, Seyei, Herero, Setswapong, Sebirwa, Sembukushu, Sesubiya, Sekgothu, Sesaewa, Afrikaans, Ndebele, Sezezuru/ Shona (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:153). According to the recent study of the Third Language Teaching in Botswana, there are only ten (out of 26) languages with established orthographies. Two of the tested languages in the 2003 survey are in the process of developing an orthography, and another two (Sebirwa and Setswapong) are classified as languages without any established orthography (Batibo, H.M./ Mathangwane, J.T./ Tsonope, J., 2003:19).

<sup>26</sup> The 1993 survey showed the districts of Ghanzi and North East with lower female literacy rates compared to males (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 1997:22).

<sup>27</sup> Southern African Development Community

<sup>28</sup> According to T. Maruatona and R.M. Cervero, the choice of Setswana as the sole medium of instruction was a critical move for facilitating state hegemony, as it was argued that a common language would bring about national unity (*ibid.*, 2004:244).

<sup>29</sup> Sue Hasselbring published a paper with data showing lower levels of literacy among minority language groups compared to Setswana speakers (*ibid.*, 2000).

<sup>30</sup> The 2001 census indicated that 15% of those 10 years and above never attended school. The 2003 literacy survey estimated the number to be 10.5%. 10.7% of the eligible population never attended both formal and non-formal education. The number of people who never attended school seems to be declining (Central Statistics Office/ Department of Non-Formal Education, 2004:18 and 20).

<sup>31</sup> Education is not compulsory by law in Botswana (*ibid.*:19 and Lekoko, R./ Maruatona, T., 2005:5).

<sup>32</sup> The rest of the seven objectives are related to HIV/AIDS education, the operational capacity of the DNFE, and the use of radio and television for educational and mobilizing purposes (Republic of Botswana, 2003:299).

<sup>33</sup> The nine key result areas are as follows: 1. A high level of HIV/AIDS awareness; 2. A competent national human resource; 3. Quality and relevant education and training; 4. Open access to and equity in life-long education and training; 5. Use of up-to-date technology in education and training; 6. Responsive and relevant policies; 7. Efficient and effective educational management; 8. An enabling learning environment; 9. Effective partnerships and stakeholder satisfaction (Ministry of Education, 2001:6).

<sup>34</sup> These five programme areas are Sustaining Livelihoods, Enhancing Capability, Enhancing Participation, Strengthening of Local Government Institutions and Strengthening National Development Management Capacity (Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, 2003:14/15).

<sup>35</sup> One Botswana Pula is equivalent to about 0,23 US\$ (March 2005).

<sup>36</sup> The four strategies are: Ensuring equal access to education and training for females and males; Development of gender equitable life-long education and training; Ensuring the democratic organisation and management of education through the transformation of gender relations; Ensuring that education and training contribute to the empowerment of girls and women (Ministry of Labour & Home Affairs/ Women's Affairs Department, 1999:12/13).

<sup>37</sup> One Botswana Pula is equivalent to about 0,23 US\$ (March 2005).

<sup>38</sup> About 2% are allocated to achieve goal 1 (early childhood education), 61% to goal 2 (primary education), 36% to goal 3 (life skills programmes for youth and adults), 0.4% to goal 5 (gender equality), and nothing to goal 6 (quality) of the six EFA goals (Ministry of Education, 2004:23).

<sup>39</sup> "Batswana" are the citizens (plural) of Botswana.

<sup>40</sup> Financial data based upon UIE's compilation of information provided by DNFE in March 2004. According to Frank Youngman the governmental allocation to literacy education is 1.1% of the recurrent budget of the Ministry of Education (*ibid.*, 2002:19).