

UNFINISHED PLEDGE

The Ethiopian literacy campaign: A comparative study for the period 1979-1990

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The Ethiopian literacy campaign: A comparative study for the period 1979-1990

ONAFGEWERKT BELOFTE

De alfabetiseringcampagne in Ethiopië: Een vergelijkende studie over de periode 1979-1990.
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands en in het Amhars)

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te Shoa, Ethiopië

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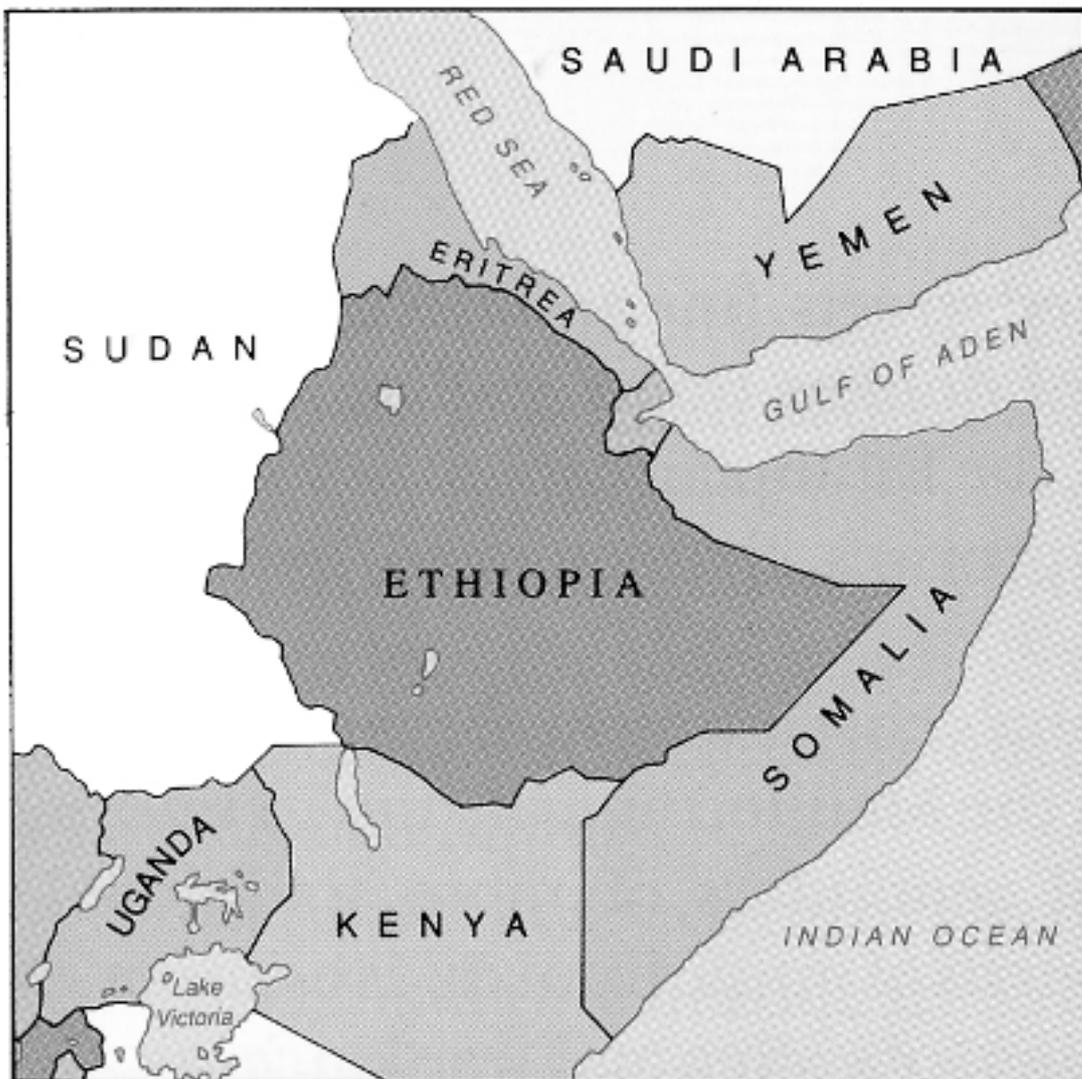
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GLOSSARY

AALAE	African Association for Literacy and Adult Education
APC	Awraja Pedagogical Centre
Awraja	The largest sub-provincial unit of government.
CDC	Constitution Drafting Commission
CELU	Confederation of the Ethiopian Labour Union
COEDF	Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces
CONFINTEA (V)	Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in Hamburg, Germany
COPWE	Commission for Organizing the Workers' Party of Ethiopia
CSTC	Community Skills Training Centre
DSE	<i>Deutsche Stiftung Für Internationale Entwicklung</i> (The German Foundation for International Development)
Derg	Literally, 'committee'; a term almost exclusively associated with the regime that governed Ethiopia from 1974 to 1991.
EETP	Ethiopian Educational Training Policy
EFA	Education For All
EPB	Popular Basic Education
EPDM	Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRP	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party
ESR	Educational Sector Review
EWLP	Experimental World Literacy Programme
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FSLN	Sandinista National Liberation Front
ICAE	International Council of Adult Education
ICDR	Institute of Curriculum Development and Research
ILO	International Labour Office
<i>Kebre Negest</i>	'The glory of the kings'; the pastiche of legends describing the origins of the Solomonic dynasty.
MOE	Ministry of Education
NACE	National Advisory Committee on Education
NCO	National Coordinating Committee
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NHIES	Namibia's Household Income and Expenditure Survey
NLCCC	National Literacy Campaign Coordinating Committee
NLCO	National Literacy Campaign Organization
NLPN	National Literacy Programme of Namibia
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Front
OREALC	Regional Office of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean
PDRE	People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

PMAC	Provisional Military Administration Council
POMOA	Provisional Office for Mass Organization Affairs
PPG	Provisional People's Government
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
REWA	Revolutionary Ethiopian Women Association
REYA	Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association
SEPDF	Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigrean People's Liberation Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNO	National Opposition Union
WCEFA	World Conference on Education For All
Wereda	District, the smallest unit of government
WOALP	Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project
WPE	Workers' Party of Ethiopia
WSLF	Western Somali Liberation Front
YDLC	Yemiserach Dimts Literacy Campaign

Map 1. Political map of Ethiopia.



Source: Ethiopia. A Tourist Paradise (1996)

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Solomon Afework

Dedicated to

Workalemahu BAYU and Yohannes AFEWORK

Chapter I : INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The place of education among development strategies is significant for two reasons. First, there is an assumption that all the political, economic and socio-cultural relations of the world community revolve around communication, basically around written symbols, and second, the formation of an individual as part of a society mostly depends on and develops according to the means of communications employed. Thus, education, using various means of communication, lies at the centre of people's efforts to make a better future for themselves and their society. The increase in the role of education in the last century was to a large extent due to democratisation and the spread of literacy, the ability to read and write. However, while societies enter the information and knowledge society and modern technologies develop and spread at a rapid speed, a significant number of adults are still illiterate and a similar percentage of school-aged children and youth are still excluded from schooling or fall below the expected literacy level. According to UNESCO figures for 2002, this comparatively recent development in human history affects limited areas and population groups in the world. If we take the latest figures, in the year 2000 an estimated 860 million men and women – constituting some 27% of the adult population in developing countries – could not read or write. These 'illiterates' are not only unevenly distributed around the world but also most of them are concentrated in particular continents and countries. Statistics indicate that Eastern and Southern Asia have the highest number of illiterates, with an estimated 71% of the world's total illiterate population. Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab regions have about the same 40% adult illiteracy rate, while Latin America has a figure of about half this rate (see Figure 1.1). The majority of these illiterates are women, who in some countries account for up to two-thirds of adult illiterates (Wagner 2000, see Figure 1.2).

There has been an increasing realization of the size of the problem over the last few decades. Since 1950 different countries have acknowledged the problem and exerted fairly important steps to try to reduce the figure to a reasonable level. According to the United Nations Literacy Decade discussion paper of 2001, specific goals were also set to reduce the approximately 50% adult illiteracy rate of 1950 to 20% by the year 2000. Again at the World Conference on Education For All in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, one of the targets was to reduce the adult literacy rate in each country by 50% by the year 2000. This did not happen anywhere and the UNESCO summit held in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000 bitterly acknowledged that illiteracy is still one of the challenges of the century that had shown no significant improvement in less developed countries, mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the reasons for this slow advance in the reduction of illiteracy rates in the region, as the summit mentioned, are the low quality of education, the restricted school coverage and limited infrastructure exacerbated by a comparatively fast-growing population, poverty and political instability. Subsequent UNESCO evaluations in this regard also revealed that, although the year 2000 was seen as a time of demarcation for different world projects, universal literacy being one of them, at the start of the 21st century literacy for all – children, youth, and adults – was still an unaccomplished goal and an ever-moving target (UNESCO 2000). A combination of factors, mainly ambitious goals, insufficient and parallel efforts, inadequate resources or strategies and underestimation of the magnitude and complexity of the task, would appear to explain the situation.

A recent survey conducted by UNESCO reveals that almost one third of the world's population live in countries where achieving the EFA goals will remain a dream unless a strong and concerted effort is made. According to this survey, if a combination of three

Figure 1.1 Adult illiteracy rates (age 15+), by region

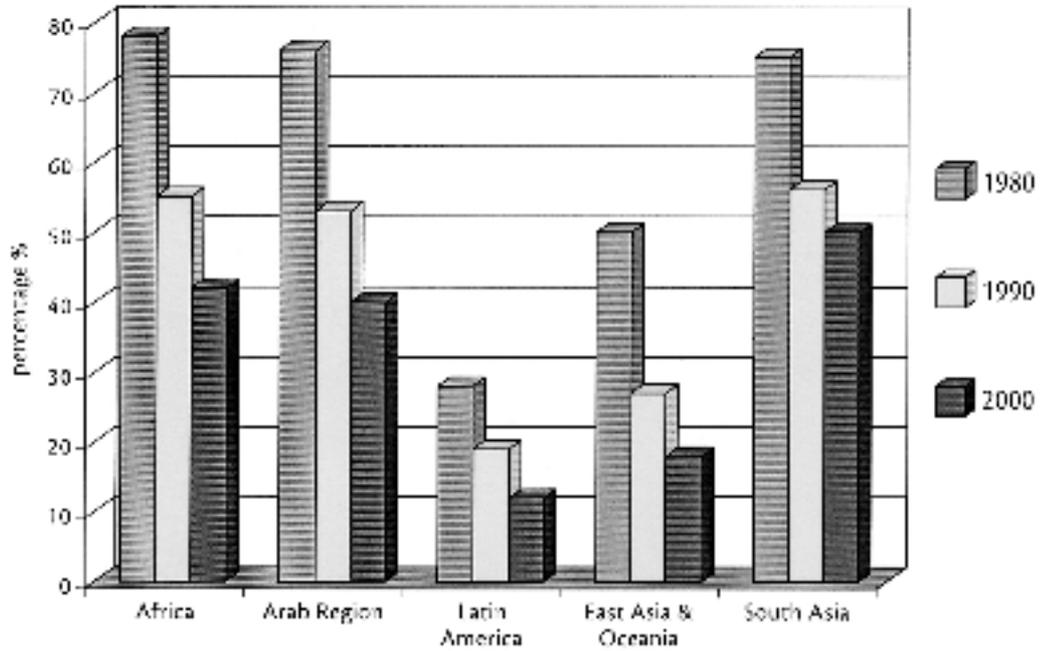
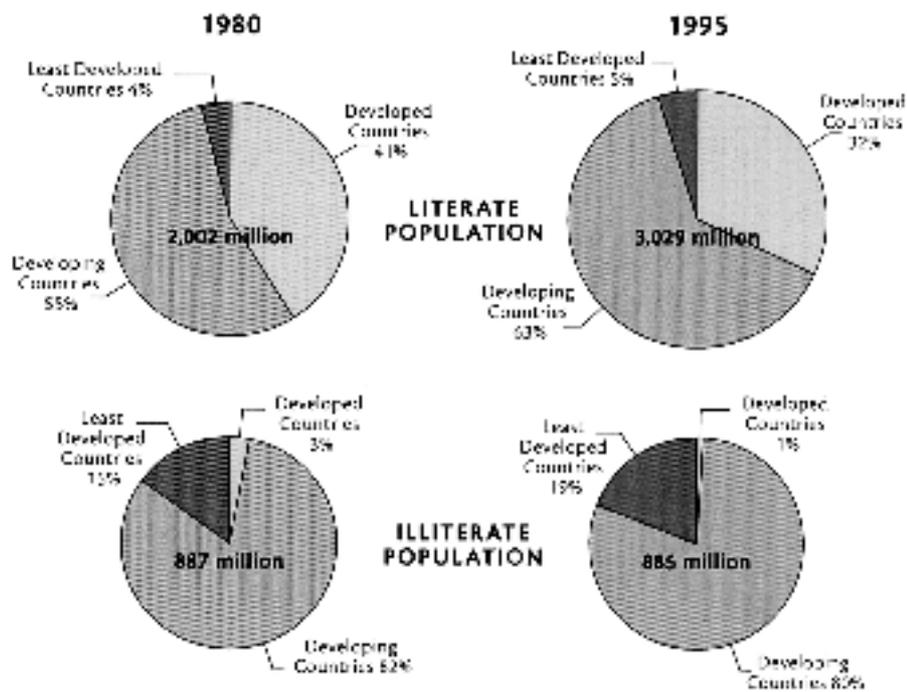


Figure 1.2 Percentage distribution of world literate and illiterate populations, 1980 and 1995



Recaptured from Thematic Studies, Literacy and adult education, UNESCO (1997)

quantitative indices of primary net enrolment, level of adult literacy and gender parity in primary school gross enrolment is analysed in concert with an assessment of trends and levels of progress over the 1990s, the following conclusions can be drawn for 154 countries for which data are available:

- 83 countries have already achieved the three goals or have a good chance of doing so by 2015;
- 43 countries have made progress in the 1990s but at least one goal is likely to be missed by 2015; and
- 28 countries are in serious risk of not achieving any of the three goals.

The first of these categories represents 32.4% of the world's population, including all of the countries in North America, Western Europe and Central Asia, 87% of countries in Central and Eastern Europe, 81% in East Asia and the Pacific and 69% in Latin America and the Caribbean. Four of the nine most populous countries¹ are in the second group – Bangladesh, China, Egypt and Indonesia – which in total represents 35.8% of the world's population. The third, high-risk group consists primarily of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa but also includes India and Pakistan. It covers just over 25% of the world's population. This is where the overall challenge of EFA is greatest (EFA Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO 2002a).

The attainment of literacy is based on different factors. In some contexts illiteracy is approached as an isolated social ill, such as poverty and unemployment. Okech-Owiti (1993), while relating poverty and adult education of which literacy is a component, indicated that poverty is both a cause of need for adult education, an effect of its absence, as well as a cause of its failure at times. In others, literacy is approached as an integral part of a larger social, political and economic reconstruction of a society. According to Adeola (1995), illiteracy is not an isolated phenomenon. It can neither be understood nor responded to as an issue separate from the complex set of social, political and economic issues of which it is but one indicator. Important in each of the situations is the fact that literacy programmes can provide possibilities of enhancement for citizens marginalized by economic, social and political divisions. Thus, one of the factors related to the acquisition of literacy is economic well-being because, as Adeola (1995) indicates, illiterates are the poorest of the poor in every nation. In rural areas they are the landless peasants, virtually enslaved by systems of production that deny them a just economic return for their labour. In urban centres, they are the unemployed and under-employed, marginal and often transient populations who are excluded from the mainstream of societies in which they live. Literacy is a way out of such misery.

Nowadays there is a widely held belief that literacy and economic well-being (at the individual and national level) go hand in hand. One way to evaluate this assertion, according to Wagner (2001), is to plot per capita GNP against adult literacy rates in developing countries (see Figure 1.3). More recently, in industrialized countries, literacy levels have been shown to be one of the strongest predictors of individual income (OECD/Statistics Canada 1995, 1997) and used as an argument for the importance of investment in literacy. The other factor is health. Life expectancy and adult literacy are closely correlated and people in countries with a low literacy rate have a life expectancy of only half that of those living in the most literate countries (see Figure 1.4). Furthermore, the level of female illiteracy coincides with a woman's ability to plan the size of her family, provide childcare and ensure education for her children. As is obvious from the current catastrophic situation, the rapid expansion of

¹ . Nine of the World's most populous countries are: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. Together these countries account for more than 50% of the World's population (EFA Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO 2002a).

Figure 1.3 Adult literacy rates (age 15+) and life expectancy at birth in developing countries, 1995

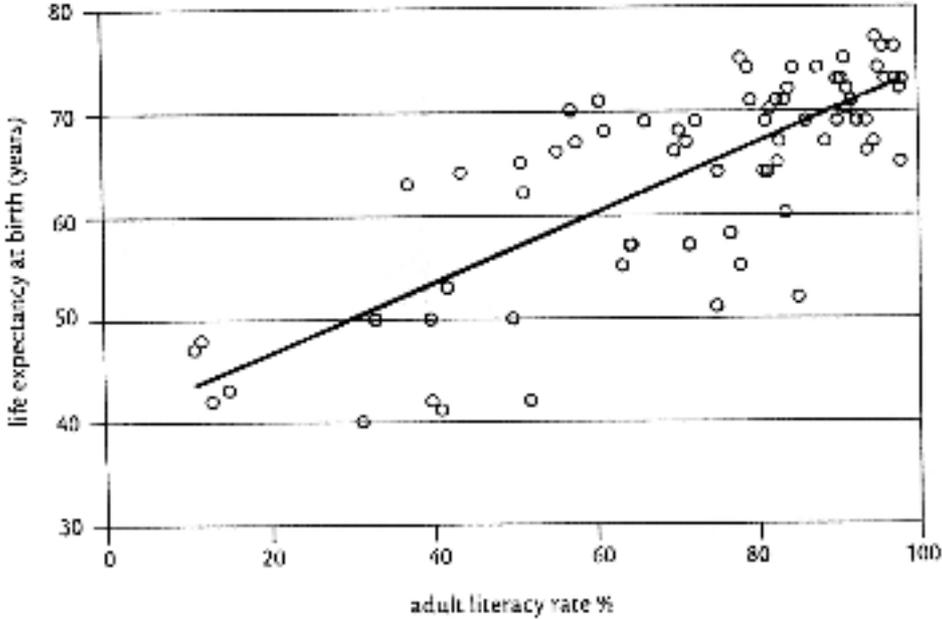
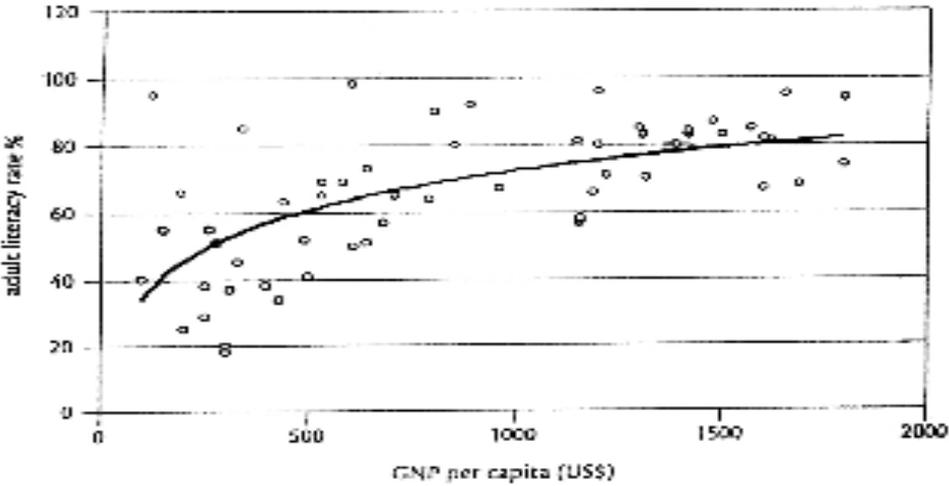


Figure 1.4 Adult literacy rates (age 15+) and GNP per capita in developing countries



Recaptured from Thematic Studies, Literacy and adult education, UNESCO (1997)

life-threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS is also dependent on the level of a society's educational background. One additional factor is political rationale. Although the tradition of utilizing literacy programmes as a means to political ambitions existed long ago (literacy campaigns of the former socialist-oriented countries can be cited as an example), today the search for a national identity and the strengthening and promotion of social integration among different groups are connected to a society's literacy rate. The larger the literate society in a nation, the more the applicability of the rule of law and democracy and the fewer conflicts and confrontations there are among the different groups in society. The emergence of education for the masses can be explained historically as the incorporation of the individual into expanding rational societies and states, which legitimates the individual and contributes to the strengthening of the nation state and its institutions (Boli 1985). Bailly (2000) adds to this by saying '... adult education is a short-cut for a democratic access and genuine participation of our peoples to the general development endeavour'. However, it cannot be taken for granted that the promotion of an adult literacy programme automatically improves a nation's existing societal problems. But what is taken for granted is that the socio-cultural attitude that is generated after the instruction will serve as a starting point to focus on the most important issues of the time.

Learning to read and write can be achieved through formal education (the school) or individual efforts. Since these local and small-scale activities fall short, teaching literacy was tried through mass campaigns, which brought about new and specific problems in the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the campaign. In launching an adult literacy programme it is important to note that such a wide-ranging activity is based on past experience. Because the success or failure registered for each programme carried out in the past contributes new ideas and methods of implementation to the new programme, considerable attention must be given to any pre-campaign procedure. In this regard a thorough evaluation of previous similar activities is vital. Evaluating former programmes here means describing as clearly as possible the input, the process and the outcome of each programme and any peculiarities. Evaluation at an initial stage helps to determine particular aspects of a programme such as (i) its need; (ii) its specific objectives; (iii) its acceptability; and (iv) its administrative and financial feasibility (Cinapah & Miron 1990).

To obtain satisfactory results, organizers of a literacy programme must clearly define their objectives, if possible in quantifiable terms. This may involve a review of official documents, consultation with responsible persons and the consideration of expert advice. Since aims and objectives can often be seen as the connection between the initial situation of participants and their environment and the desired point of completion, their formulation should follow and reflect the assessment of literacy needs. Further, Cinapah and Miron (1990) argue that the objectives of a literacy programme must consider other sectors such as health, agriculture, environment and culture. Three basic elements concerning planning and objectives that became obvious from analysis of the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) and that are still important in designing adult literacy programme are: (i) a functional programme must first of all be organized with economic and/or social and/or cultural objectives in mind, and should be the direct instrument for its achievements; (ii) the socio-cultural milieu of operations prepared in this way must participate in the design and implementation of the programme; (iii) the acquisition of reading, writing and arithmetic skills must be seen as a means of achieving the objectives and ensuring the participation of the milieu (Hamadache and Martin 1988 cited by Cinapah and Miron 1990).

In practice the results of a literacy programme are dependent upon the degree of the participation that adults show and the motivation they demonstrate for the programme. The will that adults ought to show and their interest in the literacy programme can only be secured if the programme is designed and implemented with their active participation and if it is

accountable to them. Thus, the planning of an adult educational programme has to be based on and needs to consider the cultural aspects of any potential learners, the benefits that the programme would offer participants and other additional mechanisms to attract adults to the programme. Such pre-campaign procedures of a literacy programme can, for instance, include the choice of language for instruction, the site and timing and even duration of the campaign and the post-literacy programme activities. In promoting adult literacy programmes and trying to reduce the number of people 'without the ability to write and read', efforts have been made in the past; projects were organized, campaigns have been launched and other multi-purpose actions were also applied (see Chapters 2 and 6). Some of the actions were conducted for a certain period of time, while other campaigns were short and intensive. As the assessment of these efforts indicates, the results gained differed depending upon the objectives outlined, means used and time allocated to the programme. The socio-cultural background and the degree of acceptance by the adult participants on the one hand and the level of determination of the organizers on the other, were among the contributing factors.

How were these and other aspects of adult literacy programmes put into practice in the past and what significant results were registered? An evaluation of these efforts, based on a number of case studies, is one of the main tasks of this research work. In doing so an attempt was made to investigate a national literacy programme conducted in one of the world's less-developed countries and to assess the process on the basis of the outlined objectives of a particular literacy campaign. The Ethiopian literacy campaign conducted between 1979-1990 provided a good example for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was a prime example of a country with a long period of literacy campaigns in recent times. Secondly, it was a country where more than 90% of its population was illiterate and living below the poverty line with very few means of subsistence. The literacy campaign was meant to change this reality. Thirdly, some 12 years after the campaign it seemed that the efforts exerted and the time and material wealth spent had had minimal influence on the above-mentioned reality as shown in a recent UNESCO publication on the country's literacy rate. In addition, with the new government in position and its new educational policy working, the idea of instructing adults appears to have been discarded or else given less priority, arguing that the cycle of illiteracy can best be cut with the expansion and development of formal education. Finally, in spite of the fact that the Ethiopian literacy campaign effort barely met its objectives, its results remain and these should be studied in an attempt to learn from past experiences, something which will hopefully contribute to the success of future efforts.

1.2 Purpose and objectives

Although there are some reports on the effects of the Ethiopian literacy programme², little attention has been paid to the 11-year literacy campaign in Ethiopia regarding the objectives formulated, its qualitative results and the practical lessons that emerged. After some 11 years, the results of the campaign were not encouraging compared to expectations despite the general awareness of education created among Ethiopian society. This alone was given little scholarly attention while its positive and negative aspects extend beyond its initial boundaries. The main objectives of this study were: to gain an insight into the initial aim of the Ethiopian literacy campaign conducted between 1979-1990, the efforts exerted to meet the objectives, the results registered and constraints confronted. At the same time it was in the interests of this study to acquire an understanding of the practical lessons gained from the whole process

². NLCCC (1981, 1984, 1986, 1989), Workneh (1989), Dessie (1989), Mamo (1990), Searle (1991), Bhola (1994), Gobena (1994), Sineshaw (1994, 1996).

of the literacy programme for the benefit of similar efforts in the future. In addition, in order to gain an insight into the Ethiopian literacy campaign from different perspectives and give the reader wide-ranging information on adult literacy campaigns, the Ethiopian literacy experience was compared to literacy campaigns in other countries, namely Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua and Namibia. The choice of these countries coincides with the historical phenomenon of the time, where socialist revolution combined with national efforts to provide adult literacy programmes. However, the appropriateness of the choice of these countries is combined with other factors such as the fact that Ethiopia shares common social, economic, political and even cultural elements with the countries mentioned (which was used as the starting point in a comparison of these countries) and that it was believed that the Ethiopian literacy campaign could be best understood if the literacy programme practices were examined in the light of a literacy programme launched long before it started, the Cuban literacy effort of 1961 and a literacy programme begun after the Ethiopian literacy activity. The Namibian literacy campaign of 1992 was approached with this view in mind. The Tanzanian and Nicaraguan literacy programmes of 1971 and 1980 respectively were viewed in the light of adult literacy campaigns in operation at more or less the same time as the Ethiopian literacy campaign. The main aim of this comparative analysis is, thus, to identify some determining factors of adult literacy programmes, derived from these countries' adult literacy policies and practices, to draw a parallel with the experience of Ethiopia and to provide guidelines for future attempts.

In so doing, the study sets out to bring balance to description and analysis of the launching of the National Literacy Campaign in Ethiopia in the years between 1979 and 1990. The period after 1990 will be mentioned although there is very little information about it. The study's aim is threefold: (i) to analyse the main objectives of the literacy campaign in relation to the policy framework of its organization; (ii) to understand the structural and technical steps taken by the organizers to ensure levels of participation; and (iii) to reassess the implementation of the campaign, its results and the problems encountered. When considering the literacy activities of a certain country, it is important to trace historical accounts of the country's educational background. Relevant information on Ethiopian history and its educational experiences, including adult literacy efforts of an earlier period, was used as a framework for providing background information.

In addition to a desire to understand the whole process of the 11-year Ethiopian literacy campaign, the following questions are central to this study: *Is an adult literacy programme a prerequisite for socio-economic development of a country?* The answer to this question and the degree of its necessity is basically dependent upon the country's socio-economic situation, the level of development it has reached and the extent of the society's technological advancement in the world. Earlier, investment in education in general was perceived as a means to better the socio-economic development of a society and the well-being of individuals within the society. In the face of the present situation and despite rapid changes in modern technologies and the changing face of the world's socio-economic and political systems, the positive assumption of education as a prerequisite for development and modernization is still acknowledged. Education is an essential component of adaptable and flexible societal development. It is a major agent in producing the skilled manpower and modern attitudes and values necessary for the functioning of a modern society. Education is – in terms of access, sustainability and success and its relevance for personal, social, economic and cultural life – a pillar of human development (Arrien *et al.* 1996 cited by Ooijens *et al.* 2000).

This relates mostly to formal education and the question is then whether adult literacy programmes influence the socio-economic situation of a country. And the following question relates to the first question but the emphasis is particularly on the adult literacy programmes.

If education, including adult literacy, is understood as a prerequisite for the socio-economic development of a country, how should it be organized and implemented? What are the practical lessons gained from past efforts? These questions are fundamental and are partly discussed in Chapter 2, in which planning, organization and implementation of a literacy campaign take into account some specific features of a society such as culture – and in it combined issues such as the norms and values of the particular society, language and gender – and the specific interests of society. On the other hand, lessons from practical experiences also demonstrate that the organization of a literacy campaign should begin by consulting adults and considering their actual circumstances, their educational background, interests, time, and any recognized and unrecognised barriers. These points were at the heart of discussions about the Ethiopian literacy campaign's performance and the comparative analysis with campaigns in the other above-mentioned countries.

When dealing with the specific experiences of the Ethiopian literacy campaign and the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian literacy practices in general, specific attention was given to the following questions.

- *What were the main objectives of the national literacy campaign policies? How was the literacy campaign strategy planned and implemented by the government? What was achieved and what problems were encountered?*
- *How was the adult literacy programme designed in order to develop the culture and ideals of the participants?*
- *What lessons are to be learned from these campaigns?*

In outlining the objectives of a literacy campaign, as Cinapah and Miron (1990) stated, considerable attention should be given to the perception of the learners and their particular socio-cultural environment, since the aims and objectives of a programme can be seen as the connection between the initial situation of participants and their environment and the desired point of completion. It is also stated that the framework of such a campaign should be founded on a review of documents outlining past experiences. Furthermore, the objective is supposed to define the intended targets and mechanisms of implementation, if possible in quantifiable terms. Were these mainstream concepts of a literacy programme adequately considered in the preparation stages of the Ethiopian literacy programme and are there lessons to be gained from the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian literacy efforts in this respect? In approaching these and other questions, the present study aims to investigate the whole process of the Ethiopian literacy campaign from its inception to the final outcome.

1.3 Significance

The rationale behind the choice of this subject was due to a combination of factors: First, the importance of the subject in view of development and culture. Literacy plays an important role in improving the lives of individuals by assisting economic security and good health. It also ensures a society's development by building human capital, evolving societal participation in the community's affairs, encouraging the application of the rule of law and promoting mutual understanding and tolerance among the different sectors of society. Increasing literacy and numeracy, for instance, helps rural farmers to acquire and understand information and to calculate appropriate input quantities in a modernizing or rapidly changing environment. Improved attitudes, beliefs and habits through education lead also to a greater willingness to accept risk, adopt innovations, save for investment purposes and generally to embrace productive practices (Appleton and Balihuta 1996). However, the effect of education

is not necessarily the same from one country to the next, and its contribution to rural development, for instance, can be any of the following: (i) a direct increase in productivity or interaction with other factors in production; (ii) an improvement in the marketability of products through the application of effective agricultural techniques; and (iii) the association of education with a farmer's decision to try modern practices (Hallak 1990). It was of importance, therefore, to investigate the literacy programme of a certain country, in this case Ethiopia and the other countries chosen for comparison, and to demonstrate the direct impact education and in particular the adult literacy programme had on the socio-economic and cultural development of a society. The basic argument is whether a developmental programme is intended to involve the people, especially in a country like Ethiopia where the majority of the population has for years lived with its own traditional culture and is still unable to read and write, and whether it should be based on educating the entire population.

A second factor to consider is the absence of a full-scale study of the Ethiopian literacy campaign especially in a comparative form and also my own personal interest due to my involvement for some years in the educational process and in two of the adult literacy programmes organized in Ethiopia. I remember how directives flew in one direction only and more was expected than invested; how adults were running out of time when the programme clashed with their normal everyday lives; how mothers were trying to gain something from the programme while still carrying their children on their backs and so forth. Such practical observations during the campaign encouraged me to do research into the programme so that successive efforts would get extra practical support.

Third, despite the very different views with regard to the initial aim, the degree of input and its outcome, the 1979-1990 Ethiopian literacy campaign also deserves an assessment and documentation. While the revolutionary context around which the campaign was organized places the literacy programme in line with other attempts, the specific features of Ethiopian society give the literacy campaign its own particular character. In contrast to most African countries, Ethiopia is one of the oldest nations in the region with its own indigenous script and language that are relatively developed by modern standards. The country was never colonized and the influence of the cultural set-up of the outside world on existing traditional culture was not significant compared to other countries. However, the country's overall literacy performance has remained one of the lowest in the world. Two reasons can be mentioned:

- i) Although the country has tried to exploit modern educational possibilities during different regimes, the way of life of the majority of the society was dominated by traditional cultures, and the importance of education in transforming this way of life was not understood and/or accepted by the majority of Ethiopians.
- ii) The very specific traditional education exercised in the country was mainly based on religious doctrines and was directed to religious performances. The majority of people were excluded and if education was for public service it was only organized for the elite, excluding the vast majority of the population. Even the modern educational programme, which formally began in the early 20th century, was directed towards the production of a small number of skilled workers and paid little attention to the education of the majority. The very few attempts made by the imperial regime of Haile Selassie were not successful because they were not based on the interests of the target groups, nor were they adequately organized in terms of instructors, teaching aids, location and timing etc.

For these and other reasons, the majority of society still values and shares traditional ways of life. Under such specific circumstances the literacy campaign was set up and run, and for one

reason or another attracted the attention of the international community. It is my belief that the experience of such a national effort with its peculiarities should be examined and recorded. My attempt in this respect is to examine the literacy campaign from a practical point of view and compare it with similar programmes. Evaluating previous efforts and compiling some important details for similar future attempts could offer, in my opinion, a major contribution to the on-going research work in the field.

1.4 Methodology and data

The material sources in this study are basically secondary data. This is for two reasons. The literacy campaign in Ethiopia was interrupted by the political developments in 1991 and, as far as is known, there are no national plans to revive the programme. The effects of this interruption are discussed in Chapters 4 and 6. Just to mention some of the highlights: Because the new government made a shift in its educational policy to favour the expansion of formal education, the once noble idea of instructing adults was virtually ignored. Millions of people who in one way or another were being taught to read and write were left without continuous guidance and support. As Negash (1996) pointed out, previous literacy instruction and reading centres were closed, materials were left to decay, committees were dissolved and even at the central level the adult education department was altered to a panel, named as the Non-Formal Education Panel, and the number of staff was reduced from 150 to 4. In general, what were once considered important structural forces in the literacy programme were ignored and the literacy programme was left with no obvious practical support. Despite this shortcoming, it would have been valuable to approach the adults and to discuss their opinions about the previous literacy attempt and even watch the functionality and utility of the programme from the point of view of the adults' daily lives. Unfortunately this could not be realized because I was unable to enter the country to carry out such field research. The search for materials was thus forced to focus on secondary resources. (i) General background literature on the history of Ethiopia, on its educational performances in general and adult literacy programmes in particular with specific attention to the 1979-1990 national adult literacy campaign. Such background data support the study by offering basic information about the social, economic, political and cultural circumstances on which the Ethiopian literacy campaign was planned and launched. Such a baseline account was also supposed to imply the reality and the necessity of the literacy campaign. (ii) Differing from those periodical reports and small-scale accounts of the Ethiopian literacy campaign, this study is planned to be seen in the light of other literacy campaign experiences. The fact that Ethiopia shares some common socio-cultural, economic and even political elements with the countries considered for comparison makes this study significant, as is discussed in Chapter 5. The aim is, therefore, to assess whether there were past practical lessons from other experiences that could have been exploited and could have altered the outcome of the Ethiopian literacy campaign. (iii) General literature on adult literacy campaigns and projects at regional and international levels is reviewed. The Ethiopian literacy campaign, despite its national peculiarities, was part of the international effort to combat illiteracy. Thus, the cumulative experiences in launching an adult literacy programme assembled by the international agencies were referred to and used as a guideline in this study. Important sources of information were research centres in the Netherlands and other European Union countries; reports and documents by the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia; and my personal observations gained while working as an elementary school teacher and literacy programme organizer/instructor in this particular campaign and in the Development through Cooperation Campaign, known as *zemecha*. Because the 1970s and 1980s were periods of much discussion on the problems of

illiteracy, there are cumulative research works and recorded materials which are still relevant and valid when reopening the illiteracy debate from an academic as well as a developmental aspect, UNESCO-related authors being the main source. Since most of the campaigns that were dealt with – including the Ethiopian literacy campaign itself – were from this period, the literature and quotations used are mainly from this period. When collecting information I was confronted with problems of data in various sources which did not match the actual results of the literacy programme. Because in most cases it was difficult to rely on one source (government sources versus those of UNESCO or individual scholars), I put the different versions when necessary.

1.5 Organization of the study

Following this introductory chapter, the study is organized into five chapters including the conclusion and a list of references.

Chapter 2 provides a conceptual framework focusing on relevant thematic ideas related to the subject matter. As a framework of the study, the chapter reviews mainstream ideas, which guide the rest of the research work. Theoretically, the study is situated amid different fields open to debate and discussion and attempts to combine highlights with respect to the promotion and development of human culture, on the one hand, and insights into political and socio-economic developments on the other. The conscious planned development of human culture is always dependent on the educational practices that members of a society exercise in formal and informal ways. As a process, education helps the members of a society to integrate into the community and acts as the main agent in the transfer of culture. At the same time, by stimulating and developing intellect and creativity, education promotes a development of culture that may lead to change (Dubbeldam 1990). The promotion of an adult literacy programme, particularly in a country where scarce formal-education infrastructure exists and the adult majority is still in the realm of traditional thought and beliefs, helps to bring about that change – a developed human culture. Because literacy is not just a technical skill that is neutral and universal across all societies: it involves fundamental concepts and values at the level of culture (Street 1990). It is this developed human culture that can improve existing economic, political and social circumstances. An adult literacy programme organized in one form or another stimulates and encourages society to contribute to the national development of the country. Thus, in organizing an adult literacy programme especially in a country where a multi-ethnic society exists and a traditional way of communication is still valued, the adults' interest in the programme and their participation in the process of implementation should be considered. Furthermore, considerable attention should be given to the choice of the instruction medium, i.e. the language, and the target groups and most importantly the vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the community, such as women. The choice of language for adult literacy programmes and the use of the mother tongue or official language as the medium of instruction was and still is a subject of discussion among scholars (Lind & Johnston 1986, McDonald 1998) but is one which should be left to the adults themselves. Of course there are more important aspects that should be addressed in this regard, for instance, more needs to be known about such issues as: (i) the use of 'bridge' dialects to facilitate the learning of standard-languages literacy; (ii) how the implementation of the language-of-instruction policies affects later schooling; (iii) the effects of using second-language literacy in school on wastage and grade repetition; (iv) the implications of using second-language literacy for academic subjects such as mathematics, science, health, nutrition and agriculture; (v) skill retention of first- and second-language literacy skills in daily life after leaving school; and (vi) whether (or under what conditions)

first-language literacy should be a precondition for the introduction of second-language literacy in school-based and non-formal settings (Street 1999).

The other aspect refers to the chance that ought to be given to women, who account for half of the total population. Statistical information indicating the literacy gap between men and women is showing a relevant increase and the level of women is lagging behind. For instance, the literacy rate among African men and women, according to UNESCO (1999), by the year 2000 was estimated to have reached 69% and 51% respectively. One of the most obvious distinctions is that, in less-developed countries especially, women are most often found as carers with small children in tow. In addition, their productive and community roles are considered as family responsibilities, to be assumed by women, and because these activities usually take up most of their time, they can rarely attend educational programmes (Ballara 1996). This simple demographic fact is widely known but relatively few literacy and adult education planners take it into account. This and other significant factors related to a literacy programme are central in Chapter 2, to be combined in the other chapters with data and findings from a practical point of view that are relevant to guide the direction of the study.

Chapter 3 focuses on the geographical, political, historical and socio-cultural aspects of Ethiopia with an emphasis on the country's educational practices from traditional and modern perspectives. In reviewing the history of Ethiopia, the following three different periods are set: first, the era of the monarchy, which came to an end with the revolution of 1974. In the second half of the 19th century when Emperor Tewodros II came to the throne, the kingdom began to gain shape and strength. The formation of centralized state power with its army to suppress the slave trade, control law and order and subordinate society under the rule of the king was one of the main tasks during this period. This was well organized and put in practice during the reign of Emperor Yohannes IV, who valued an efficient bureaucracy and political stability. Yohannes, unlike Emperor Tewodros, used the existing traditional authority at provincial, district and village levels to ensure the security of society. Emperor Menelik II and his government are credited with unifying the country in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and giving it its present shape, defending the country against foreign invasion, and realizing modern pragmatic institutions such as a system of taxation, the introduction of a national currency, postage, roads, hospitals and schools, and the formation of the first cabinet. His successor, Lij Iyassu, who ruled for only three years, did not introduce as many reforms but is remembered for instituting a municipal police force and for his attempts to bring together the Muslims and Orthodox Christians, something that was seen as the first major attempt at national integration (Zewde 1991). It was Teferi Mekonen (later Haile Selassie I), first as regent to the throne under Empress Zewditu and later as emperor who ruled the country for almost 50 years, and who introduced significant changes to the country. Some of the serious measures undertaken during his rule include the abolition of slavery and peasant obligation to landlords, the expansion of schools, hospitals and roads, the formation of a strong national defence force, Ethiopia's joining of the League of Nations and most of all his role in the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). He is also remembered for his centralized and absolute rule with a corrupt administrative apparatus in existence during his rule and for leading the country to poverty. This situation created favourable conditions for the revolution of 1974 and he was deposed on 12 September 1974 making way for a new political administration – the *Derg*.

The second part of the study covers the period from the overthrow of the emperor and the formation of the military administration until the year 1991, when the military administration was overturned and replaced by a new political force with a different political agenda for Ethiopia. The revolution, which was initiated and supported by the majority of the population, was later taken over by the military that ran the country for 17 years under the

socialist banner and applied a centralized one-party command in every sector of life including education. The main subject of this study – the Ethiopian literacy campaign – was initiated, planned and implemented during this period and under this administration. The period is remembered for its military-centred policies and strategies that brought untold and unforgettable bloodshed to the society.

The third period of this part provides general information about the post-*Derg* period and the coming to power the TPLF/EPRDF administration and the formation of the federated state along ethnic lines. In doing so, the new administration promised to bring about a heterogeneous unity on diversity, which is far-removed from reality if one considers the existing situation. These and other significant developments, including the country's educational background from the traditional and modern perspectives, are discussed in this chapter in the hope of providing baseline information on the situation in the country before, during and after the adult literacy campaign that is examined in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 deals with the implementation of the 1979-1990 Ethiopian literacy campaign: its objectives, organizational set-up, implementation and results. Successive efforts exerted on the implementation of the literacy campaign are approached step by step. The achievements registered and problems encountered during the campaign, with specific attention being paid to the lessons learned, are also considered, as is a general assessment of the campaign. Earlier nationwide literacy practices in Ethiopia are also examined. What is understood from these accounts is that, despite the existence of traceable efforts at the national and international level, the Ethiopian literacy campaign hardly referred to those experiences gained from previous programmes. National planning seems to have been formulated with no account being taken of either the interests or fundamental needs of the adults nor of the country's ability to organize such a national task at that particular period.

At the implementation stage and regardless of the fact that the government and its different organs at different levels demonstrated active participation in the realization of the literacy campaign's objectives, as time passed the degree of attention and the extent of participation began to decrease. Of course a variety of problems demanded the attention of the government – the drought of 1984, the country's poor economic performance at the time, and the armed conflict with the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front) and the TPLF (Tigrean People's Liberation Front) in the north. Together these absorbed a significant portion of the finance and manpower available, and took up government time and energy (see Chapter 3). One cannot deny also that the negative interest shown by the adults themselves also contributed to the programme's performance in the later stages. In spite of all these organizational and institutional problems, the national literacy campaign was acknowledged as being most successful at both national and international levels, with about 78% of the population being literate. Yet this figure is called into question regarding the trustworthiness of the data, and the mechanisms of evaluation and measurement used to identify literate adults. Chapter 4 takes these and other realities of the Ethiopian national literacy campaign process into consideration.

Chapter 5 compares and analyses the literacy programmes of various countries to lead to a better understanding of the Ethiopian literacy campaign's endeavours. In doing so, the chapter offers an overview of the Cuban literacy campaign of 1961, the Tanzanian literacy campaign organized between 1971 and 1988, the Nicaraguan literacy crusade launched in 1980 and that lasted until 1986, and finally the Namibian literacy campaign organized in 1992. Significant factors suggested by Hallak (1990) were used to identify the success and effectiveness of such a non-formal education programme. They were categorized as follows: (i) organized structural and instructional capacities; (ii) adequate supervisory work; (iii) attention to past experiences; and (iv) the integration of non-formal education and training services with other institutions and development activities at the local level. What was added

to these were the society's educational background as a starting point, the drafting of an applicable objective and the creation of the 'will' among participants to make a success of the programme. What is observed in the process of this comparison is that the educational background of Ethiopian society at the time of the campaign was one of the lowest when compared to the other countries studied. The pre-campaign process of the Ethiopian literacy campaign in relation to the countries listed was not satisfactory when it came to consulting the adults involved, gathering the necessary data, organizing a pilot project and assessing the results, reviewing past experiences and exploiting the lessons of national and international projects, selecting and training the instructors etc. Although after 22 rounds (the time span during which one part of the campaign programme was carried out) of the 11-year adult literacy effort, the organizers claimed that about 78% of the population was literate. A recent UNESCO publication (World Education Report 1998) indicates that the number of literates in the country had dropped to 35.5%, implying that the degree of relapse to illiteracy is relatively high when compared to the other countries discussed (see Table 5.3). These and, most importantly, the significant lessons gained from the campaign's effort are subjects of discussion of this chapter.

Finally, in *Chapter 6* reflections and the conclusions of the study are offered. As we have seen in Chapter 1, a significant number of the world's population is still unable to read and write today and the majority of these people are concentrated in particular continents and countries. Continuous efforts, although they have shown some progress in reducing the number of illiterates, have not been able to reduce the figures to the expected level. In the chapters that follow I discuss factors influencing the efforts of the different literacy programmes from a conceptual point of view and analyse the practical experiences of campaigns in other selected countries. In Chapter 6, as a final thought, I look back and focus on the main points raised in the discussions. I summarize the conceptual highlights raised in Chapter 2 as to the framework of the study and present the positive and negative experiences observed in the Ethiopian literacy campaign and the countries examined in the course of the comparison. Some concluding remarks emphasize the main findings of the study.

Chapter II : LITERACY AND THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION

We are living in an information age. The contemporary world is flooded with information accumulated on video or audiotapes, films, microfiche, TV cables, telephone wires, computer disks, chips etc. As Hobart and Schiffman (1998) observed, we are surrounded by ‘information science’, propped up by ‘information theory’, crisscrossed (some say unified) by an ‘information superhighway’, spending ‘information money’, performing ‘information work’ etc., which demonstrates changes in human communication behaviour to an extraordinary magnitude and which, without literacy, would not have been possible. Two main facts that require our attention in this regard are the successive human demand for better communication means and the technological advancement that mankind has effected.

In overview, the first of these stages was probably the age of signs and signals that started long before our primitive ancestors walked upright. Literally ages passed before it became possible to adopt at least some standardized – that is, learned and shared – gestures, sounds and other kinds of signals that could be used by succeeding generations to engage in the basic exchanges needed for a social life. A radical change occurred, probably rather suddenly, when human beings moved into the ages of speech and language. Although this conclusion is not universally shared, it appears that our most immediate ancestors began to talk somewhere between 90,000 and 40,000 years ago. By about 35,000 years ago language was in use and about 5,000 years ago human communication made the transition to the age of writing (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1989).

Writing is making the step from pictographic representation to a phonetic system, from representing complex ideas with pictures or styled drawings to using simple letters to imply specific sounds. A standardization of meanings of pictures was the first step in the development of writing but it did not begin until well after agriculture had been established. It was its practical application that attracted people to reading, writing and arithmetic. The main motive and an important stimulus to the development of such a system at this stage was people’s desire to record land boundaries and ownership (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1989). Later on, as commercial activity and trading increased contacts between different people, writing became a necessary instrument for keeping records. Writing, capable of capturing the nuances of speech constitutes a technological revolution arguably more momentous than those spawned by printing or the development of the computer. This was a new form of knowing organized information about the world in a hierarchical system that mirrored the observable order of nature (Hobart & Schiffman 1998). The invention of printing at the end of the 14th century gave an impulse to spreading literacy to somewhat larger sectors of the population. The printed word came about through the process of interaction between social and technical change. As time passed, the necessity for written materials increased. People began to share ideas across boundaries and information became the basis of human interaction. However, it took until the Industrial Revolution was well underway and processes of democratization had begun in the 20th century before reading and writing spread to larger sectors of society. Until that time literacy had been limited to the cultural, academic, political and religious elites of various countries.

Interpersonal communication among the members of a society began to develop and show significant changes. Then communications at the community, regional, national and intercontinental levels transformed in new ways, as did information-sharing mechanisms. Newspapers, radio and television began to be used as a medium of information exchange. The emergence of the telephone, fax, telex etc. also made information exchange simple, fast and accessible for individuals. Then came the developed information age of modern technologies

like Internet, e-mail, video-mail, video-phone, chat and so on. What is interesting is that the majority of these new technologies are still based on symbols and written expression of ideas. Thus, the ability to read and write was not only a prerequisite for information exchange in the past but is also a necessity in the modern information era. As a result of this development, the style of human communication moved to more sophisticated and modern ways of information exchange. Within the new socio-cultural terrain, traditional literacy goals have already shifted to multi-faceted literacy activities, including comprehending and utilizing complex sets of communication skills that are now a prerequisite to effective participation in social, economic, cultural and political life in the modern era. Yet alongside the progressing reality of the modern era, the majority of countries in the developing world are still in the process of estimating the need for adult literacy programmes. A very significant percentage of the adult population in developing countries is unable to read and write; significant numbers of school-aged children are not attending school and their governments are not intending or doing very little to alter the situation. As a result, developing countries are suffering from poor economic performance, social instability and political crisis and conflicts on the one hand, and their respective societies are being exposed to poverty, disease and social insecurity on the other. This in its turn hinders or minimizes the country's capacity to join the global movement of socio-economic development. This has to be changed. Although some of the innovations have taken place in the developed world and their direct influence is not felt extensively among the majority of the population in developing countries, from time to time their impact is becoming global because enterprises such as the global network have begun to operate beyond their national boundaries. In such a situation where the global technological advancement in every sphere of life including means of communication are becoming imminent, governments of the developing countries should feel obliged to move alongside the new era and their respective populations should also react to the call of their nations. The promotion of adult literacy, which contributes to the enhancement of this situation, should thus be embodied in the national plan if not given a priority and implemented in a way that suits the demands of their societies.

This is one of the main arguments of the present study and the chapter provides an introductory thematic ideas and offers the forthcoming chapters a framework of discussion. It assesses the place of adult literacy programmes in a wide-ranging national developmental plans, identifies the role of the cultural set-up of a society with an emphasis on adult literacy directed to the 'will' of the target group in general and to specific groups of a society such as women in particular.

2.1 Literacy as part of the educational process

Education is a process by which the shaping of human dispositions, such as belief, behaviour and actions, takes place through meaningful human interventions. It is both an individual and a social process by which, on the one hand, all the traditional values of a society are transmitted to the emerging generation and, on the other hand, the process of scientific and technological advancement and its production are assimilated. As Borrowman (1991) said, 'Education is a process by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values, or attitudes. ...Education should help people become useful members of society. It should also help them develop an appreciation of their cultural heritage and live more satisfying lives.'

The educational process focuses on society in general and the members of a society in particular. It is based and realized in various forms within the society. It can be oral or written; theoretical or practical; well organized and structured or unorganised and unstructured; traditional or modern. Underlying whatever educational form is its ability to mould human nature. The essence of the educational process, as Roy-Singh (1990) pointed

out, in whatever mode it occurs, whether in schooling or community-based groups or in one-to-one communication, is the transformation from *knowing* words or information to *understanding* what the words mean.

As a reflection of this idea, some new educational theories have developed in recent years. This new and quality-oriented educational approach (according to Espinoza *et al.* 1996 cited by Ooijens *et al.* 2000) is no longer based on the principles of the 'traditional school', in which the pupil is the object of education. It instead acknowledges the participants as the prime subjects of the educational process in which its planning and its implementation requires their direct involvement. The basic ideas behind this new educational theory are that the educational process is continuous and permanent without limits in time and place; it is singular and integral with permanent links between theory and practice so that knowledge gained can be developed and utilized; it is personal and social on the one hand and flexible and functional on the other. The adoption of a changing socio-political climate and the cultural set-up of a particular society in keeping with the ultimate goal are the basis of these theories. At the heart of these principles lie the interests and needs of the target groups attempting to gain some sort of knowledge. Only then can an educational programme bring about the anticipated results.

In this respect, it is important to bear in mind the functions of education: education as a social activity should be oriented toward the transmission of cultural, scientific and technological knowledge, as well as the assimilation of traditional values that are oriented to consolidate and maintain a society's status quo; as a means to socio-economic change and cultural transformation. Its purpose is to achieve scientific and technological advances as well as incorporate new values, with a vision of the future placed on the ideal of a more highly developed and just society. It is also stated that education, in its function as an agent of change and transformation of society, can play an important role in the search for national identity and the strengthening and promotion of the level of organization and social integration, especially in the case of excluded groups (Espinoza *et al.* as cited by Ooijens *et al.* 2000). Thus the possibilities of educational worth basically rest upon the fact that it allows people to exercise the powers of conclusion, self-understanding and thoughtful action. UNESCO's four pillars of education in the new century state the basic arguments of being part of the learning society (Delors *et al.* 1996). They are as follows:

Learning to live together This is about developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit which, guided by recognition of our growing interdependence and a common analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, would induce people to implement common projects or to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way.

Learning to know In the light of the rapid changes arising from scientific, economic and social developments, the emphasis is on the basic general training of people with the possibility of studying specific themes at a later date.

Learning to do In addition to learning to engage in a job or work, people must also acquire the competence to deal with a variety of situations and to work in teams. In certain cases, such competence and skills are more readily acquired if pupils and students have the opportunity to try out and develop abilities in work experience teams or social work while they are still in education. This involves learning to manage a variety of practical situations and working in teams, and makes combining study and work important.

Learning to be This theme was first advanced in the report by the Faure Commission to UNESCO in 1972, and it has lost none of its topicality. Everyone in the 21st century will need to exercise greater independence and judgment combined with a stronger sense of personal responsibility for the attainment of common goals. None of the talents, which are

hidden like buried treasure in every person, must be left untapped. Another significant point raised in this document is ‘learning throughout life’, which indicates the continuous nature of the learning-teaching process with no limit on age, sex, religion, social strata, region etc. As a process, education must not be stopped at a certain level but should be continuous and follow the continuous nature of successive generations. Adult literacy as an educational process is seen as an alternative for those adults who, for varying reasons, were unable to be part of the formal education system.

As people do not naturally possess all the necessary instruments to change reality, it is important that they obtain or develop them by learning. Education is expected to fill this gap between human needs and capabilities. It involves both learning and teaching. In the present adult literacy programme, unlike in the traditional programme, the form of communication is dialogue and participation that constitute both a methodological element and a basic objective. In such a way, people learn not only from other people, as is the case in the traditional teaching-learning process but also by sharing their ideas with others since the rich practical know-how they possess is of importance to both.

Literacy as a part of the educational process helps the development of individual capacity. It focuses not only on the training process of specific skills, but also on the transmission of the cultural values of a particular society from one generation to the next. As an educational process, literacy shares the fundamental task of education, enlightening individuals and the shaping of human dispositions – such as belief, behaviour and actions – that takes place through meaningful human interventions. The currently unfolding evolution in our understanding of the literacy process is expressed in different terms by its exponents. However, there are certain focal themes in common, which also distinguish them from other approaches to literacy:

- the adult learner is recognized as having a central role in the literacy process, which is active in defining the learning needs and goals;
- fundamental to literacy is the recognition of learning as a continuous, integral and deepening process of critical awareness of oneself, one’s abilities and limitations and the surrounding world;
- diversity is the true characteristic of a literacy action. The different character in the contextual situations of the illiterates, in the sources of literacy action (which are social, cultural and fundamentally also political) and the means and methods of realizing literacy action in literacy practice are at the basis of this diversity; and
- recognition that the literacy process finds its full expression in engagement and participation in authentic social change and developments (Roy-Singh 1990).

Literacy can be acquired in three different types of education: formal education, non-formal education and informal education (Ooijens 1995, Coombs & Ahmed 1974). Though they offer quite different settings, it is sometimes difficult to draw a line of demarcation between the three. Non-formal education is not a ‘system’ of prescribed interrelated parts like formal education and is not bound by age restrictions, time schedules and sequences, curriculum boundaries, examinations, degrees and so forth. Yet it offers a setting suitable for adult education. One can choose the time and location suitable to the learners, select language acceptable to the adults, adapt the curriculum and teaching materials to the specific needs of the learners, and link literacy lessons to the teaching of other subjects useful to the adults. Informal education, the part of knowledge gained from day-to-day activities, is also not part of structured formal education. However, it plays a significant role in developing people’s knowledge because individuals – to a large extent – are formed by what they learn at home,

from parents, children or neighbours. Such education is not pre-planned but is governed by the existing social norms and practices of the particular community. Children can be stimulated to learn to read and write and adults could similarly learn to read and write by seeing their children doing it. It is advantageous if there is a certain culture of literacy in a family in the form of books, newspapers or the use of religious reading materials. Reading, writing and arithmetic as skills are taught in the early phases of the formal system, the school. In the beginning it is mostly supportive for the learning of other subjects but later it becomes an instrument of communication with others in society. But if the system provides people no follow-up programme through which to exercise their skills after leaving school, there is serious chance of relapse into illiteracy. Literacy programmes must thus always consider utilizing all these types of education because one helps the other in reaching the desired goal.

2.2 Literacy needs: Past and present

The expression of ideas with the help of symbols in general is the meaning and ultimate goal of literacy. It is a human experience developed and transformed over consecutive periods of time. The story of human existence itself, which is explained in terms of distinctive stages such as the Stone Age, the Bronze and Iron Ages, is an era associated with the development of signalling, speaking, writing, printing and communicating with complex and sophisticated means as we know them today.

Being literate is being able to communicate through different means of communication. It is a part of daily human activities. Thus, as individual and societal interaction continues, it is important to have a literate community and an educated society at large. Because paper is patient, literacy helps people to communicate over space and time. Information can be saved for later and repeated use. Literacy is a way of remembering, recording, representing or communicating reality and ideas (Dubbeldam & Epskamp 1995). Basically, non-literate people or people who we conventionally regard as 'illiterate' are not ignorant. On the contrary, they have innumerable skills and extensive knowledge related to their day-to-day lives. They have many means of communicating, through music, drama, songs, drums, cloth patterns, and oral histories, which are based on structure patterns that help people to remember and communicate. They also have the knowledge necessary to survive in what are often harsh conditions. But in modern society that is not enough. People must search, utilize and keep information systematically. Literacy is the basis for this. As Aspeslagh and Van den Berg (1991) pointed out: 'People who can neither read nor write are doomed to function as second-rate citizens. They are poorly equipped to use their rights and have limited access to knowledge that might enable them to improve their situation. ... Thus they hamper the development of the countries in which they live.' Venezky, as cited by Wagner (1991), claiming the importance of literacy both socially and individually says that:

Literacy represents both a *national aspiration* and a *set of human practices* anchored in space and time. From this dual existence, literacy has acquired both a *socio-political dimension* associated with its role within society and the ways in which it is deployed for political, cultural and economic ends; and a *psychological dimension*, associated with cognitive and affective properties that lead to greater or lesser individual motivation for and competence with writing and print. These dimensions have developed over the past 1000 years as literacy changed from being the private possessions of scribes and clerics, practiced primarily within the circumscribed domains of religion and government, to a near-universal tool of the masses, utilizable within every facet of daily life.

Knowledge of formal 'literacy' is not necessarily good or practical for people living in rural communities. Many people have survived quite comfortably without literacy and have evolved effective strategies for dealing with reading and writing when they have to. In such a context, is it worth teaching literacy? If life remained unchanged and there was no prospect of change then there might indeed be little use in teaching literacy. But most patterns of communication have changed and are still changing and there are few places in the world where literacy has not become part of this process of change. Thus, the need to read and write is becoming more important all the time and it is increasingly a need felt by those who are non-literate. A thorough investigation done by Gerhardt (1989) shows three different perspectives with regard to the necessity of educating a society: the illiterate's perspective, the instructor's perspective and the administrator's or policy maker's perspective.

Illiterate's perspective According to Gerhardt, the major personal reason why an illiterate joins an adult education scheme in developed societies is to avoid shame. For example, participants in an adult literacy training programme in Germany, according to an interview carried out 1985, were seeking primarily to learn skills such as filling out forms, signing cheques and taking a driving test. In a similar way adults entering literacy classes in the United States express very specific reasons for returning to school: to be able to read the Bible and to help their children with their homework are two of the most common reasons cited by the instructors in the literacy volunteers' programme in New York (Rother 1986). An illiterate woman in this programme stated her fear that people in the subway would notice her weak reading abilities when she was stuck on the same line for five minutes. 'I used to be afraid that the people sitting along side could tell I was just faking it, that they were laughing to themselves!' (Rohrer 1986).

In countries like France and Canada, researchers have collected similar statements that express the planned usages of literacy and sometimes the acceptance of societal pressure to finally become a literate (Gerhardt 1989). Still today, inhabitants of numerous rural sub-cultures of Third World societies communicate among themselves orally, relying upon those few who are literate to satisfy their writing and reading requirements. Statistical data show that some 98% of the world's illiterates live in developing countries, in what researchers term 'semi-literate culture societies'. In this part of the world, adult motivations to become literate are varied. Among them are the desires: (i) to write one's own name; (ii) to keep accounts; (iii) to deal with market merchants; and (iv) to acquire more vocational knowledge for a better job or general economic advancement. By learning to read and write they hope to gain prestige, to teach their children and to help them with their homework (Bhola 1988b). Such were the motivations observed among the adult participants of the Ethiopian literacy campaign (see Chapter 4, Box 1).

In 1981 Cole and Scribner undertook interesting ethnographic research on the cognitive consequences of literacy and evaluated the self-reported interest of the indigenous Vai people in Liberia to learn the alphabet of their own or another language. They found that the most common usage of the Vai script was for personal correspondence (95%) followed by personal record-keeping (78%), and lastly, business and village matters (63%). Literates in the English language share with their Vai counterparts the desire to read and write letters but interestingly enough they put religious purposes in second place. Among the predominantly Muslim Vai, the Arabic script is learned mainly for religious reasons. These findings are congruent with evidence collected in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province by a team of development experts from Germany. In the province's Islamic culture, nearly the same number of Pakistani villagers and Afghan refugees asked for literacy courses in the native Pashtu language as in Arabic, a clear indication of how important the religious purpose in literacy training can be (Wehrman 1987 as cited by Gerhardt 1989).

Another example is from a semi-literate culture in northeast Brazil, where in the early 1960s Paulo Freire and his team did their innovative work using the conscientization approach. In Quintas, a suburb of Natal, the capital of Rio Grande de Norte Province, a survey of nearly 3,000 households indicated that a quarter of the residents considered themselves semi-literate or illiterate, that is, they could not write their names. Of these, half intended to participate in the literacy course offered by the provincial government to learn to cope better with their private and community lives. Of secondary importance was the desire for political participation through the ability to read and write, even though in Brazil at the time the right to vote was dependent on being able to sign one's name (Gerhardt 1989).

Instructor's perspective Teachers in a literate culture (a developed society) do not need to point out the usefulness of learning to read and write in order to motivate their students: the reasons for becoming literate are generally accepted by society. Most teachers in industrial societies share the prevailing attitudes that illiteracy in a developed society is scandalous. In semi-literate societies teachers belong to the literate culture of their societies. They share with it the belief that only a literate person can reason correctly and that the oral organization of thought is naive and superstitious. As defenders and representatives of literate culture, they aim to spread literacy to enlighten illiterates and to bring to the unconscious masses the consciousness of modernity (Gerhardt 1989).

In most literacy courses conducted in semi-literate countries, teachers at the grassroots level do not participate in curriculum design but in practice they shape the curriculum to a large extent. In times of political and social change within a country, the teaching profession has often identified heavily with curricular objectives proposed by the national or regional authorities (for example, Brazil in the early 1960s, Nicaragua and Ethiopia in the 1970s and 1980s). Most literacy campaigners use the climate of cultural and political renewal to support identification and motivation for the work to be done. These motivational strategies have worked well with most illiterates and their teachers in semi-literate cultures, where the need for widespread literacy is otherwise not yet widely perceived and acknowledged (Bhola 1990).

Administrator's or policy maker's perspective During conferences like the one in Paris from 21-27 September 1988, representatives from ministries of education from countries in UNESCO's Europe region (Western and Eastern Europe, Israel and Canada) issued a recommendation for literacy work. This recommendation was directed towards all those who are involved in coordinating and developing the cultural dissemination of reading and writing techniques. The recommendation implicitly established the main purpose for literacy training in the region (VEB 1988 as cited by Gerhardt 1989):

Considering the rapid technological and social changes of recent years, it would be necessary to use special measures to ensure that a general standard of literacy competence is maintained, and that those who have lost all or part of the reading and writing skills they once learned in school receive help.

Member nations should propagate the goal of 'reading and writing for all' in school and in adult education. Member states should particularly strive towards the prevention of functional literacy, including appropriate measures against dyslexia in primary school, and they should also work on motivating adults to develop further their reading and writing competence, while encouraging them to take the advantage of adult continuing education.

Such acknowledgement of the problem and the tracing of a literacy policy were new for the European and North American educational setting. Politicians and administrators took a long time to recognize the extent of illiteracy present in the adult population. Most national education administrators seemed to hope that better primary schools would solve the problem and guarantee a literate society, but the results were not as anticipated. On the other hand,

Third World administrators and policy makers dealing with their respective educational systems look at the eradication of illiteracy both as a means and a sign of entering the prosperous modern world. Their governments seem to be inspired by modernization as seen in the industrialized East and West, seeking similar social transformations while fostering culturally indigenous patterns of development. National administrations normally delegate the description of literacy campaign goals to officials of international organizations, national desk officers and university personnel. Below is a sample of issues mentioned in a document prepared by the UNESCO Regional Office of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC), which defines the objectives of literacy campaigns in various countries of the region (Beca *et al.* 1987 as cited by Gerhardt 1989). In order of importance they are:

- the eradication of illiteracy as an aim in itself;
- the expansion of the educational services offered (i.e. the teaching of the three Rs) to include the whole population, especially marginalized sectors of society;
- the integration of the education of adults into the social and economic development of a country;
- the promotion of the integral formation, the overall education of the adult population, with an emphasis on social participation by critical and consciousness-raising education; and
- the enhancement of communities and those social organizations that are linked to the development of the country. In such a way, the promotion of adult literacy programmes in most Third World countries was mostly associated with naive expectations by the organizers as if the longstanding problems of an economic, social, cultural and political nature would be solved immediately, while their solution in fact requires a multiple and coherent approach. In connection with this, Ooijens (1989) states that opinions towards mastering the ability to write are sometimes ethnocentric and they do not consider the specific life situations of illiterates or they reduce the situation to the level of caricature. There are also unfounded arguments about the motivations that illiterates show.

In view of the above, if we look at Africa, the characteristic goals of literacy training, as stated in official documents of national governments and regional organizations, have been to support human dignity and to further political unity and national reconstruction. Most commonly, a general literacy campaign is the first step within a series of educational devices for unschooled youth and adults and for school drop-outs. Social and economic development is historically next in importance, and then comes cultural and societal development for individuals, groups and communities (UNESCO 1982 cited by Gerhardt 1989).

The main characteristic of literacy campaigns in Asia is that their ultimate goal is to support community development (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Vietnam and Thailand). Countries with a large literate culture, like Malaysia, the Republic of Korea or Singapore, see the necessity of post-literacy work and continue it by providing technical skills training. The area of concern is much more the quality of the literacy work than its expansion (Gerhardt 1989). Thus it becomes clear that the concern of most Third World countries with a large semi-literate culture goes beyond providing the mere training of literacy skills. *Literacy is seen as the key to better national and individual development.* Literacy is one way, among others, to achieve this goal. Dubbeldam and Epskamp (1995) added the following: 'Literacy can be perceived as an end in itself. The rationale behind this is the idea of education as a human right ... illiteracy was perceived as a societal evil that had to be eradicated. Literacy had to pave the pathway to the modernization of society. According to them, literacy can also be seen as a means to reach other objectives, political, socio-economic or socio-psychological in nature. Within this context literacy is not

seen as an activity on its own, but embedded within a wider context of a series of other activities. Within these types of literacy programmes more than one objective is valid.’

a) Social and historical account of literacy

The word ‘literacy’ used to be associated with positive aspects of human experiences, mainly with individual and societal progress. On the other hand ‘illiteracy’ is usually linked with or characterized as societal and individual limitations of resource or potential, capability and possibility. Poverty and lack of education are always seen as two different faces of the same coin. In fact, the process of instructing individuals and society at large is always based on the transformation of human behaviour – attitudes, beliefs and individual and social relations. Thus literacy itself, as Wagner (2001) indicates, is at the heart of changes that have taken place across literate human history. Whether in the domain of religious tradition, the invention of the printing press or the Internet, literacy has been central to many of our most profound human and historical developments. On the other hand, the terms literacy and adult education for a long time were considered as the chances being given (or that ought to be given) to adults or youth who missed the chance of education when they were young, or who left school before the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. It is a second-chance basic education directed towards the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups of peoples who do not possess basic skills and are in need of education (Wagner 2000). Thus in most cases, the focus is on less-developed countries where the highest illiteracy rates still exist. Within these countries also, the focus is on women and marginalized ethnic, socio-economic and geographical groups that in one way or another were denied the opportunities of education. But this does not in any way mean that adult education, including adult literacy, is meant as a secondary and marginalized programme directed towards a specific group or a particular community. It is instead meant as a programme for lasting human development, poverty alleviation and a wider socio-economic development. In line with this, in his closing statement at CONFINTEA V (July 1997) the Director-General of UNESCO Mr. Federico Mayor stressed that:

CONFINTEA V is no longer to do with the pathology of illiteracy, or about adult education and adaptation, but it calls for the fostering of creative conscious citizenship and knowing adults capable of transforming social, political and economic relations. It is not about formal education on the one side and non-formal education on the other, but it seeks to realize the expanded vision of Education For All, and create a new framework within which the two can begin to work together in a context of life-long learning for all.

Basically, illiteracy is not only a phenomenon in less-developed countries, it is also a problem in industrialized countries where some groups of citizens are unable to read and write and also significant numbers of the population are unable to use the products of modern technology. Thus, illiteracy is currently a worldwide problem, varying from society to society. In reference to this during the past few years significant steps have been taken by international and national agencies and millions of people were served by non-formal education programmes, which were aimed to provide them with basic literacy skills. On the other hand, the accelerated expansion of schooling made basic literacy attainable for the majority of children around the world. For instance, in 1970 the net enrolment ratio in primary schools in developing countries was 62.7% and it was estimated that by 2000 this ratio would increase to 84.8%. In 1970, 68.8% of school-aged boys and 56.2% of school-aged girls were enrolled in school and by the year 2000, it is estimated that these figures represented 87.9% and 81.5% respectively.

Table 2.1

Comparison of educational expectations and achievements in 1950 and 2000

	Year 1950	Year 2000
Adults	at least half all adults were estimated to be illiterate	illiteracy rate was estimated to have been reduced to 20%
Children	206 million children enrolled in primary schools worldwide	by 1998 about 681 million children were enrolled in primary schools worldwide

Source: ‘Literacy for All, a United Nations Literacy Decade Discussion Paper’, (2001).

However, despite all these indications and efforts, universal literacy remains a major quantitative and qualitative challenge of our time. According to UNESCO’s 1999 indication, there are about 876 million illiterate youth and adults worldwide and about 113 million children are still not attending school and will soon be swelling the world's illiteracy statistics. These illiterates are unevenly distributed around the world and most are concentrated in particular continents and countries. Eastern and Southern Asia have the highest number of illiterates, with an estimated 71% of the world’s total illiterate population. Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab regions have about the same (40%) adult illiteracy rate, and Latin America has about half this rate. The majority of these illiterates are women, in some countries accounting for up to two-thirds of adult illiterates (Wagner 2001). Recent UNESCO documents indicate that prospects for universal literacy are not encouraging for various reasons.

- There is an uncounted but presumably large proportion of the world's population – children, youth and adults – that is considered and considers itself to be literate but has an insufficient mastery of literacy to cope even with the most elementary tasks in many parts of the world, including industrialized countries.
- The development and expansion of modern information technology leaves little room for interpersonal communication and expression. Unprecedented flows of information and knowledge, together with unprecedented levels of poverty and unemployment, make leisure studying or learning a luxury for a few; in an era of haste that is dominated by an audio-visual culture and media etc. This increases the risk of social and educational polarization and makes it more pronounced. While a small part of the world’s population gains access to the most sophisticated developments and uses of literacy, including regular use of e-mail and the Internet for everyday communication, the majority of the world’s population continues to have access only to elementary forms of communication and levels of literacy or is denied such access altogether.

The challenge is complex and multifaceted because the map of illiteracy mostly overlaps with the map of inequalities (geographical, social, gender etc.) and traditionally, illiteracy is associated with a lack of schooling although today’s experience shows that the connection between schooling and literacy cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, campaigning for literacy is still a mission that has not yet been accomplished and demands commitment, courage and dedication. A renewed commitment to literacy through fresh initiatives is compulsory. The need for a new understanding of literacy that revitalizes the two-pronged strategy – with children and with adults, in and out of school – and commits itself to modern

approaches, strategies and mechanisms is important. An assessment of past experiences in this regard is significant.

b) Past experiences and recent approaches to literacy activities

Past experiences and approaches

When launching an adult literacy programme, it is important to note that such a wide-ranging activity should be based on past experience. Because the success or failure of each programme carried out in the past contributes new ideas and ways of implementation to the new programme, considerable attention must be given to this pre-campaign procedure. Thus, a thorough evaluation of previous similar activities is vital. Evaluating past programmes here means describing as clearly as possible the input, the process and the outcome of each programme taking into account each one's specific peculiarities. Evaluation at the initial stage will help to determine particular aspects of the programme such as its need, its specific objectives, its acceptability, and its administrative and financial feasibility (Cinapah & Miron 1990). From their experiences with adult literacy programmes in Third World countries, Lind and Johnston (1990) have identified a number of strategies used in the past to educate adults. In practice, however, these methods and approaches can be combined and varied.

The 'Fundamental Education Approach' promoted by UNESCO was largely followed in the 1950s and early 1960s. Literacy was seen as one of the many activities aimed at 'community development' but little thought was put into the question of planning and organization, target groups or follow-up work. It was assumed that instruction would be given in the learner's mother tongue, in which the use of vernacular languages was believed to be useful in achieving the identified literacy goals. As some general assessments of this approach indicate, adult literacy activities within the 'Fundamental Education Approach' were less than satisfactory in terms of expectation. Factors that contributed to the failure of programmes, according to Lind and Johnston (1990), were that target groups were unspecified, the programme was aimed at people with a low level of motivation and follow-up literacy work was neglected. Such a strategy failed to reduce illiteracy to any extent.

The 'Selective-Intensive Functional Approach' of 1965-1974 is well illustrated by the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) supported by UNESCO/UNDP in 11 countries (Algeria, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Iran, Madagascar, Mali, Sudan, Syria and Tanzania). The objectives of these experimental programmes were to test and demonstrate the economic and social returns of literacy and, more generally, to study the mutual relations and influence that exist or may be established or strengthened between literacy and training. Under this approach, target groups of illiterates working within specific economic activities in a specific region were selected and intensely focused upon for a specific duration. The teaching of three R's (reading, writing and arithmetic) was oriented and incorporated with the teaching of vocational skills. Teaching methods focused on 'adult-centred' pedagogy. Active participation by learners was encouraged both in the pedagogical process and in the form of 'self-management'. An evaluation of EWLP indicated that its impact had been limited. A major drawback was that EWLP tended to view literacy as an essentially technical exercise, completely ignoring social, cultural and political factors.

The 'Conscientization Approach' was largely based on Paulo Freire's ideas and put into practice in the early 1960s in Brazil, and later in Chile and Guinea Bissau in the late 1960s and late 1970s respectively. It aimed to make it possible for oppressed illiterates to become aware that they could change their own situation. This was done through a process of critical reflection leading to action and change. Education was seen as an element in the necessary process of human liberation, with dialogue and participation being the key elements in liberating education. Educational programmes following this approach were developed

after participatory investigation was undertaken together with the people in the area chosen for the literacy improvement programme. The culture, the living conditions, existing contradictions, the language and vocabulary used were all understood and incorporated into the literacy programme. Freire's pedagogical approach has widely contributed to the understanding of the literacy instruction process and has inspired many literacy workers to develop their ideas and methods in certain ways. In Latin America, for instance, there was a rapidly growing movement of 'popular education' that was heavily influenced by this approach. The Conscientization Approach, however, lacks sufficient guidelines for a whole literacy strategy and contains non-applicable elements, especially for large-scale government programmes.

Countries like Vietnam, China, Cuba, Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia and Nicaragua have followed the 'Mass Campaign Approach'. They are one-off campaigns organized over a period of one to two years, like the Cuban literacy campaign, or a series of campaigns ('rounds' in the Ethiopian situation) practised over a number of years, such as those in Tanzania and Ethiopia, where literacy campaigns used an 'each one teach one' philosophy. In most cases the Campaign Approach was implemented in revolutionary states. The strategy seeks to involve all sectors of society in order to make all adult men and women in a nation literate within a particular timeframe. It is often part of a policy aimed at overcoming poverty and injustice through mass mobilization (Lind & Johnston 1990). States claiming to have achieved success in these campaigns have had the political commitment, motivation and power to be able to organize and mobilize all the institutional and material resources needed. All available means of communication in favour of literacy are used to motivate the illiterates and the voluntary literacy workers. As a result of such efforts at the initial stage, adult attendance rates show promising figures and later decline, with a significant number of drop-outs and negative long-term results. As Bhola (1983) pointed out, a campaign has a sense of urgency and combativeness and can fail to accommodate local interests and local initiatives for multiple actions and results. In such campaigns, the emphasis remains on massive supply-side programming (irrespective of demand), which puts political capital and political support behind the programmes in questions (Wagner 1989). This is a risky political strategy because, as political winds change, literacy campaigns can disappear as quickly as they were created (Wagner 2001), a fact that is being observed in present-day Ethiopia.

The 'General Literacy Programmes' are mainly programmes with diverse objectives. They are large-scale but 'politically cool' programmes that provide access to those who want literacy. Botswana, Brazil, India and Mexico are among those countries that followed such a programme, and where illiteracy is not seen as a major obstacle to the economy. NGOs often play an important role in such a programme and much effort and extensive resources are put into curriculum design and methodological development. The lack of strong social pressure at all levels often resulted in a high initial enrolment figure followed by a very large drop-out. Regardless of all these efforts, the illiteracy problem was not solved and the countries, mostly developing countries, are still showing high illiteracy rates.

In the last few decades similar endeavours were exerted and the direction of present literacy programmes were identified by international agencies such as UNESCO. The World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in Jomtien (organized by UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank in Thailand in 1990) was one of the major attempts, which in its declaration underlined a global idea for a new approach to literacy activities. The 'expanded vision of basic education', the main idea of the declaration, refers to an education that meets the basic learning needs of all, children, youth and adults throughout life both in and outside school. The declaration further noted literacy as one of the most basic learning needs of children, young people and adults, and emphasized that it should be placed at the very heart of basic education. According to the declaration, literacy is an ageless concept that

is developed both in and out of school, through formal, non-formal and informal learning systems, and is a lifelong process. Literacy is not only an indispensable tool for education and learning but is also an essential requisite for citizenship and human and social development. The right of every individual to education, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, is strongly rooted in the right to literacy. The conference also declared its hope of reducing the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) by one half of its 1990 level by the year 2000, with sufficient emphasis on female literacy to significantly reduce the current disparity between male and female illiteracy rates. Although significant attempts were made in different countries, the Jomtien goals set for the year 2000 were not achieved globally.

Recent experiences

Recently, different kinds of adult literacy programmes, especially those organized by NGOs, have been implemented. One of the approaches developed was the REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques) approach which fuses the theories of Paulo Freire with the practice of the Participatory Rural Appraisal. As the manual of this new approach shows, one of the fundamental premises of the REFLECT approach is the ability to have two interweaving processes: a literacy process and an empowering process. Both are based on people-centred grassroots development. In the REFLECT programme there are no textbooks – no literacy ‘primer’ – or pre-printed materials apart from a manual for the literacy facilitators. By developing its own learning materials through the construction of maps, matrices, calendars and diagrams, each literacy circle systematizes the participants’ existing knowledge and promotes a detailed analysis of local issues.

The REFLECT approach was first started in 1993 by ACTION AID and piloted in three projects in Uganda, El Salvador and Bangladesh. The programme was then evaluated (and compared to other literacy programmes using traditional methods in each country) in the first six months of 1995. The programmes proved to be both more effective in teaching people to read and write and much more effective at linking literacy to wider development issues (Archer & Cottingham 1996).

The other significant step taken by UNESCO with regard to adult literacy is the renewed vision of adult learning stressed during the Fifth International Conference (CONFINTEA V) on adult education that was held in Hamburg in 1997. Under the motto of ‘Adult learning: A key to the 21st century’, the conference underlined that the learning capacity of human beings should be central to the task of shaping the new century and the new millennium. The conference acknowledged the critical importance of adult learning and demanded considerable attention be paid to the following key factors:

- If the key to survival and to sustainable development is the creativity of the citizens, then adult learning becomes one of the critical issues of the coming century;
- Learning is a joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility. A true learning democracy is one in which all women and men participate actively in the building of their communities and are able to pursue their individual and collective projects and visions; and
- The demand for adult learning programmes is increasing rapidly throughout the world, yet provision often lags behind, and there are many inequalities in learning opportunity.

Despite all these efforts and the specific goals set out in the Jomtien Declaration, participants at the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000 acknowledged that still

not enough attention was being given to early childhood and adult education. As stated in the EFA 2000 Assessment, over the 1990s:

- early childhood care and education expanded modestly, and mainly in urban areas; of the more than 800 million children under six years of age, fewer than a third benefit today from any form of early childhood education;
- the overall adult literacy rate rose to 85% for men and to 74% for women, but this is far from the goal of reducing the adult literacy rate to half of its 1990 level; and
- growth in non-formal education and skills training was slow.

The World Education Forum presented a new strategy entitled 'Literacy for All: A Renewed Vision for a Ten-Year Action Plan' and the year 2015 was set as the new deadline for achieving education for all with the following six major goals, known as the 'Dakar Education For All Goals 2000-2015':

- 1) expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
- 2) ensuring that by 2015 all children, with special emphasis on girls and children in difficult circumstances, have access to and completely free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- 3) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning, life skills, and citizenship programmes;
- 4) achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults;
- 5) eliminating gender disparities in primary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on girls' full and equal access to and achievements in basic education of good quality; and
- 6) improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all, so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

As part of this broader international work in education and development and the Education For All (EFA) main objectives, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution in December 2001 naming the years 2003-2012 'The United Nations Literacy Decade'. According to the adopted document, this 'Literacy Decade' will focus on the needs of adults, with the goal that people everywhere should be able, through literacy skills, to communicate within their own community, in the wider society and beyond. Literacy efforts have so far failed to reach the poorest and most marginalized groups of people but the decade will particularly address such populations, under the banner of 'Literacy for all: Voice for all, learning for all'. Three reasons which justify the decade, according to the adopted document, are:

- One in five people over the age of 15 cannot communicate through literacy or take any part in the surrounding literate environment. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002 spelled out the scope of the challenge: over 861 million people without access to literacy. Two-thirds of these people are women, with illiteracy adding to the deprivation and subordination to which women are already subjected. In an interconnected world where literacy is a key to communication, such exclusion is unacceptable.
- Literacy is a human right. Basic education, within which literacy is the key learning tool, was recognized as a human right over 50 years ago, in the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights. It is scandalous that this right continues to be violated for such a large proportion of humanity.

- Literacy efforts, up to now, have proved inadequate at both national and international levels. The decade is an opportunity to make a sustained collective effort that will go beyond one-shot programmes or campaigns.

2.3 Literacy and culture

Human behaviour is guided by a pattern of commonly accepted social codes or norms that we call culture. It enables people to understand each other and live together, and helps them to act and utilize their surroundings. Culture determines the thinking, feelings, characteristics and behaviour of the people. It comprises material, intellectual, emotional and spiritual elements prevailing in that society. Thus culture is a complex entity that distinguishes a particular society or group of people.

Culture, can be defined as the configuration of ideas and learned behaviour and their results whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society, in a continuous process of imitation and intended transfer of knowledge about society, nature and the supernatural, as well as through adaptations to and alterations in society's changing environment and through its members creativity. (Dubbeldam 1994)

Culture is transferred to future generations and in that sense it is conservative. Yet culture is not static, its elements are subject to changes and contribute to the development of a society. Through a changing environment or through people's creativity, new elements may be brought into a culture if these fit into the existing pattern. At the same time particular elements may fade away if they are no longer relevant. Different cultural practices exist in the various societies, depending on the particular situation and developments in a country, for example, in relations between men and women, in ways of communication between parents and children or between boys and girls, forms of respect, relations with authority, expressions of one's feelings. Such aspects are important for the way culture is transferred and changed.

Change may occur involuntarily and people are not aware of them. On the other hand, culture is exposed to change through more formal ways in a deliberate act by society in general or by individual members. Such intended cultural development may occur through a particular period of orientation or education, within the context of the family or in a more formal educational situation such as school. Education helps members of a society to integrate into the community and it acts as the main agent of transfer of culture. At the same time, by stimulating and developing intellect and creativity, education promotes the development of culture that may lead to change (Dubbeldam 1990). Adding to this, Van 't Rood (1993) paraphrases the role that education can play in developing human culture. He feels that education can play a significant role in maintaining cultural identity as well as in preparing society for possible changes. Individuals must be able to survive in changing circumstances, and to anticipate these changes as well as to participate in them. In short, individuals should acquire 'changing personalities'. Such an attitude should be learned on the basis of the participant's specific culture through education.

Literacy, as part of the educational process, acts as an agent in the transfer of the cultural heredities of a society. Above all, a literacy programme directed at the majority of the population with significant life experience prepares society for other and new ways of living. The process of becoming literate includes two complementary facets: induction into membership of a practice that prepares for better and more practical work (Lave & Wenger 1991), and the subjective appropriation of a cultural meaning-system (D'Andrade 1984). Full

membership of a community implies an entitlement to ownership of its cultural resources (Serpell 1993b), which in the case of a literate community includes both the technology of writing and the meaning-system that informs literate practices. Serpell, further elaborating his idea, gives the following example of the case of completing a tax return. The attribution of individual literacy to an actor in this socially defined configuration involves not only the technical competence to fill out a form, but also an understanding of the activity of 'paying one's taxes' as a general obligation incurred as an adult member of a literate society. Thus, according to Serpell, the appropriation of a cultural practice involves not only the adoption of resources that were created by earlier generations, such as the language, the script etc., it also involves reflective applications of these pre-existing resources to the individual's own personal experience and the gradual crafting of a personal perspective on the world, utilizing (and to some extent accepting domination by) the constraints of that culture.

Where does this sense of owning the cultural meaning-system come from? It is from engagement. People share ideas and experiences, predicting or looking back to the well-being of their community, and it can be economic, socio-cultural or political. In traditional society the endorsement and promotion of an adult literacy programme creates conditions to such discussions and significantly changes the content of the discussions with matters much more valuable for the community. By mastering the art of reading and writing, members of a society will be able to know more about the world beyond their own environment, explore new things useful to improving their way of life, understand their right and duties and most significantly come up with better solutions to their problems. Novices to the activities of literacy learn not only from explicit instruction in the techniques of reading (qua extracting meaning from print) and writing but also by sharing in the processes of planning, problem-solving, bargaining, entertainment and so on that are mediated by literacy. As they participate in social activities, they come to understand the relevance of text to these cognitive processes and become able to use reading and writing as resources for achieving goals that are more their own than someone else's (Serpell 2001).

A concept that is closely related to culture is cultural identity, which concerns the totality of values, concepts, ideas, behaviour and goals that members of a society can identify and use to differentiate themselves from non-members. Belonging to a group strengthens the members' feelings of security, and differences in physical appearance or habitat may make people classify 'others' as different (Dubbeldam 1992). Literacy can also help reflect the cultural identity of the specific group in a society. It helps create feelings of 'belongingness'. The formation of literacy groups on the basis of their common behaviour or values, for instance, strengthens the free participation of adults in the programme, which creates the belongingness of the group to a literate community of society. It can also be seen as a means of promoting political objectives, which of course often is one of the objectives of literacy programmes. Levinson (1996) mentions this as 'intimate culture' referring to the real, regionally differentiated manifestations of class culture, and points out that it allows a society to appreciate the diversity and complexity of cultural sensibilities that exist within regions, while not losing sight of common class and race-based identities shared across the same regions.

The concept of an intimate culture, according to Levinson, appears to have at least three important theoretical uses. First, it can help to elaborate the notion of cultural group membership beyond the notion of a social address, an idea which is also shared by Bronfen-Brenner and Crouter (1983). An intimate culture may be defined as the nexus of cultural parameters actually experienced by a specific group of persons. Within this framework it becomes apparent that several levels of grouping can be distinguished and recognizing this is a second useful property of the concept. Not only can we identify regional variants of social class and ethno-cultural group distinctions within different regional social groups, but even

within an ethnically and economically homogeneous social group in a particular region, there remain cultural parameters that differentiate among particular neighbourhoods and even among particular families. A third theoretical use of the concept is as a way of conceptualising a unifying cultural frame of reference for encounters among people originating from a diversity of ethno-cultural formations within a transcendent social organization such as a classroom, a school, a neighbourhood or a profession. To recapitulate, intimate cultures are interpersonally negotiated sub-systems of the macro-culture's system of meanings, constrained by the larger system but often substantially deviant from it (Levinson 1996). In organizing an adult literacy programme it is important to investigate and appreciate the significance of this dimension and for it not only to be based on the practices of the major cultural groups. Consideration must also be given to the degree of participation of each member of the society, to the gender variations and language differences etc. In doing so, adult literacy programmes can be organized and oriented on the basis of the cultural practices of the given community. Any programme must also be based on the specific nature, interests and common values of the whole community and individual members. In line with this the final declaration of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA-V 1997), underlined that approaches to adult learning be based on people's own heritage, culture, values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which these approaches are implemented enable and encourage every citizen to be actively involved and to have a voice.

It is also essential that the adults show interest and commit themselves to the designed programme because the development of human culture through different means demands the participation of individuals in a society's duties. Becoming literate involves acquiring membership in the community and, by implication, acquiring a sense of ownership of the cultural meaning-system that informs the literate activities of that community (Serpell 2001), which includes, in the present situation, the knowledge of communicating by printed means. Such a practice begins from the existing cultural performances and further develops and serves the community on the basis of the reality in that society. The language, the approach of the adult learners and the context of the teaching aids through which the teaching is performed all reflect the nature of the community and the interaction of individual members within the society. In this sense, education, including adult literacy, is an essential part of a cultural activity in which the contribution of the individual adult is expected.

2.4 Literacy and language

In promoting adult literacy programmes the question of language is always a concern. For nations with multi-lingual ethnic groups the concern is doubled and relates to the promotion of education in different local languages, encouraging their development and keeping the existing official language as a medium of inter-ethnic communication. Its application is not always smooth and sometimes demands a cautious approach. For instance, in some situations, as McDonald (1998) suggests, the language of the dominant ethnic group(s) might be more powerful than the languages and dialects of smaller groups or *vice versa*, which obviously influences the educational system in general and the adult literacy programme in particular. Thus, ideas like the use of the official language as the medium of instruction or the introduction of a local language or mother tongue in the process of literacy instruction has been a matter of discussion among scholars. Most countries have formulated an explicit language policy stating which language or languages have official status. The decision about national or official language(s) is usually based on such factors as major linguistic groups, the country's colonial or post-colonial history, and the importance of a given language to the nation's economic development. Official languages are also those commonly used in primary

schools, though there may be differences between languages used in initial schooling and those used later on (UNESCO 2000).

Those who argue for the use of the local language or mother tongue for the literacy programme suggest that the use of the mother tongue encourages and helps people to unite, especially those whose educational levels are low. The use of the local language develops mutual trust and promotes positive social feeling and brotherliness, while foreign languages divide people into classes: those who speak it, especially the teachers, and those who learn it, the students (Amedzro 1990). They also argue that creating a written form of a mother tongue language is not as difficult as one would imagine and they suggest systems such as the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT), where primers are not used, instructors develop their own reading materials through the literacy circles and can make publishing further materials a part of their post-literacy work. This approach ensures that languages are only written down and used for literacy purposes when the people speaking the language request it and understand what the consequences are by sustaining their mother tongue.

The other argument is related to the assumption that it is easier for adults to learn to read and write in their own mother tongue than in a language which is more or less new to them. The use of the mother tongue creates a sense of openness and stimulates active participation in the programme because it encourages pride in one's own culture and also lowers drop-out rates. It is also worth remembering that the decision concerning the medium of instruction is to be considered as a political choice rather than a technical one. This means that in some cases the needs and interests of the learners will be ignored in order to carry out what appears to be the best option politically (Carron & Bordia 1985). Meanwhile, the functionality of the mother tongue is still arguable. As Lind and Johnston (1986) argued, '... it is hardly functional to teach literacy in this [mother tongue] language if there is no written material in it or if there is no organised programme for teaching the transition from the mother tongue to another language widely used for reading and writing'. Bown (1990) takes this point a step further suggesting that there is a constraint on what influence new literates can have on their societies if they cannot communicate beyond their own group.

The arguments of the supporters of the official language are based on the problems that arise with the choice of the local language as the medium of instruction. According to them, in a situation where numerous local languages exist, it is impossible to instruct everybody in his/her own language because of the cost of linguists who would be needed to develop the written form of the language, the training costs of instructors and the cost of supplementary instruction materials to be prepared. Instead, the use of the existing official language as a medium of instruction will not only minimize these problems but would also avert ethnic/language-based misunderstandings. Of course, this has been seen in Tanzania where Swahili has been used as a medium of instruction and helped the Tanzanian people to unite within diverse cultural settings. The language policy they have followed has helped the literacy programme organizers to prepare reading materials on different subject matters with relative availability to the newly literate adults. With regard to functionality, the use of an existing official language as a medium of instruction will not solve the problem. It takes more time to master the language itself, which sometimes leads to high drop-out rates and the application of the language in their day-to-day life will not be as simple as that in the mother tongue. Instead it creates a kind of social division between those who know the official language and those who do not know it. The real solution to this problem is allowing the learners to make their own decisions based on their current and future interests (McDonald 1998).

However, as Street (1999) notes, there are a number of important areas of work that need to be addressed beyond the confines of the debate over 'which language literacy should come first'. For example, more needs to be known about such issues as (i) the use of 'bridge' dialects to facilitate the learning of standard languages literacy; (ii) how the implementation of language-of-instruction policies affects the learners after schooling; (iii) the effects of using second-language literacy in school on wastage and grade repetition; (iv) the implications of using second-language literacy for academic subjects such as mathematics, science, health, nutrition and agriculture; (v) skills retention of first- and second-language literacy skills in daily life after leaving school; and (vi) whether (or under what conditions) first-language literacy should be a precondition for the introduction of second-language literacy in school-based and non-formal settings. These specific areas of inquiry are more tractable and less political than the first- versus second-language debate and they may be more relevant to improving the effectiveness of literacy programmes. Overall these issues fall within the broad context of the cultural appropriateness of literacy programmes, a matter that remains contentious. It is hard to verify which argument is more acceptable in terms of the expectations of the organizers and the adults themselves. It appears to be complex due to at least two factors: the political interests of the organizers related to the choice of the language in some cases and the individual interests of the adults (if not for all) at least to begin with the mother tongue for successful results. The best remedy to the problem is, as McDonald (1998) pointed out, allowing the learners to make their own decisions based on their current and future interests.

2.5 Literacy and gender

In planning a literacy programme at a local or national level one of the questions that comes to mind is the target group and as with many other areas of development programmes the first demarcating factor is often gender. In matters connected to education, especially for adults, gender is extremely important. UNESCO's statistical estimate for 1999 highlights the following: between the years 1990 and 2000 the rate of illiterate women aged 15 years and above throughout the world apparently decreased from 31.4% in 1990 to 29.0% in 1995 and 26.4% in 2000 and the illiteracy rate among men for the same period also decreased from 18.1% in 1990 to 16.4% in 1995 and 14.7% in the year 2000. Although it does not show the urban-rural divide, one can conclude that the results of adult literacy programmes among women are showing significant improvement. Such a result was registered as UNESCO's report on literacy and adult education (2000) indicates, due to specific commitments shown by some governments and agencies especially to women's literacy.

On the other hand the statistical information illustrates that the literacy gap between men and women is showing a significant increase and that of women is lagging behind. This can be easily seen if we trace the African situation: The literacy rate among men has been increasing from 59.8% in 1990 to 64.4% in 1995 and is estimated to reach 68.7% in 2000 compared to 38.5% in 1990, 44.6% in 1995 and the 50.9% expectation for the year 2000 in women's literacy rates (UNESCO 1999). This is due to, as the report on literacy and adult education (2000) notes, in some cases a commitment towards women without fully understanding what would make a women's programme different from one that is male-oriented. One of the most obvious distinctions is that, in Least Developed Countries (LDC) especially, women are most often found as caretakers with small children in tow. In addition to these productive and community roles, which are considered as family responsibilities to be assumed by women and usually take up most of their time on a day-to-day basis, they can seldom attend educational activities (Ballara 1996). This simple demographic fact is widely known but relatively few literacy and adult education planners take this dimension into

account. There is also a cultural and political dimension to the problem. In countries (for example, in most African nations) where male supremacy has existed and is accepted by the majority of the population, including women themselves, it is not easy to promote a kind of educational programme that favours the education of women. Religious practices often prevent women from joining in the very few educational opportunities created. Sometimes the political direction pursued by the government, where it favours specific ethnic groups or only the male part of a society, also plays an important role in hindering women's participation in the educational opportunities organized.

The question here is why it is so important to instruct women and what significant influence they bring to a society. The answer is simple: money, time and material wealth spent on the education of women can bring a double return because educating women contributes not only to their personal development but also to the future of their children. The cycle of illiteracy will be broken and literacy will be part of the society's culture. This in turn will contribute to a better performance by their children in schools, which will produce a literate workforce for the community and the nation at large (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2

Some effects of a mother's education at different phases of child-bearing and schooling

Phases of child-bearing/schooling	Effects of higher levels of mother's education
Before pregnancy	Higher economic productivity; better personal health care; lower fertility rates; smaller families
During pregnancy and at birth	Better prenatal health care; more full-term births; higher birth-weight babies; fewer learning disabilities
Before going to school	Better health care; better language and cognitive development and literacy skills; better preparation for schoolwork
During the school years	Higher participation rates in the schooling process; better management of homework; better advocacy for children's education and negotiation of school/child conflicts; higher academic achievement by children

Adapted from *Teach the Mother and Reach the Child: Literacy across Generations*, UNESCO (1990).

One significant conclusion that can be drawn from Table 2.2 with regard to women's educational levels and their influence on the next generation is the relationship of family size to cognitive development in early childhood. Second, the mother's educational level can also influence the care the mother takes of herself during and after pregnancy. The child's health depends to a certain extent on good ante-natal care, which is the result of a mother's educational achievements. As the World Bank's review, stated by Sticht and McDonald (1990), has concluded, educated parents, especially mothers, are on average more likely to have healthier and better-educated children. This is true even taking into account income differences. It is also true that the higher the parents' and especially mother's educational levels, the lower the mortality rate of infants and the better the child's living situation, nutrition and health practices. Third, the mother's educational background is also significant in developing the child's behaviour and communicative skills before going to school, and lastly, children's performance at school is very much dependent on the level of their parents'

educational background, especially the mother's. Thus, the table's conclusion is that a woman's educational level has the capacity to influence the family size, health and pre-and post-school performances of their children. Such direct effects of women's educational background call upon the inclusion of women in the adult literacy programme much more so than at present. To invest in women is to invest in the present and the future of a society.

In this respect, certain societal and cultural obstacles must be avoided. The need for women's education has to be understood and accepted by family members, the community and by the women themselves. It requires minimizing work-related burdens, maximizing free time for educational practices, and encouraging and assisting women to overcome these barriers. Women should be provided with training that will help them increase their incomes, meet their basic needs, and enable them to participate actively and fully in the cultural life of the community. With the money spent on educating women, we can teach the mother and reach the child (Sticht & McDonald 1990).

2.6 Literacy and nation-building

The major prerequisite for the creation and stability of a nation-state is reaching consensus regarding political values and the conformity of the population to those values. Political integration and the building of a national political consciousness and creating a national culture are important contributions that education can offer a society. This is especially true in a multi-ethnic society where ethnic solidarity on diversity should be the basis of the national identity of a country. Educational objectives are seen as an integrative force that can unite the different ethnic groups of a given society. Through these, it is hoped to realize national integration by promoting feelings of adherence towards the state and society. Thus, the selection of subjects in the curriculum should be relevant to their functioning in a multi-cultural and diverse society. As Boli (1985) observed, the emergence of mass education can be explained historically as the incorporation of the individual into expanding rational societies and states, which both legitimize the individual and contribute to the strengthening of the nation-state and its institutions.

Adult literacy programmes as part of the educational process can be perceived here as a medium in fostering the desirable communication network between various groups and different generations: men and women, old and young, urban dwellers and rural inhabitants, poor and rich. Because it is not and should not be only designed towards the mastering of the world of print but also towards promoting mutual relationships among different cultural settings. Above all, in a country where the majority of the population are still unable to read and write, nation-building efforts can produce the expected result if accompanied by mass education which includes, in most cases, the promotion of an adult literacy programme. Two important factors that can be mentioned concerning the creation of national unity are: the horizontal and vertical social relations highly developed through educational promotion, and the selection and training of political elites. Horizontal social relations means describing the role education can play in promoting common and unifying ideas among the different ethnic, religious, linguistic and other social groups like women, the old and the younger generation, the urban and the most marginalized rural sector of the society. In conformity with this, educational objectives outlined and organizational structures set for their implementation must create a sense of unity and belongingness based on a mutual understanding of each other's values. Vertical or, top bottom or bottom top, social relations are the relationship between rulers and the ruled in a common network of communication, so that ideas and demands can flow 'upwards' and 'downwards' (Nwomonoh 1998). In this respect, Nwomonoh mentions two main ways in which education can promote unity. Firstly, the extension of literacy makes it possible for more citizens to read newspapers, books and

reports, which results in the population becoming better informed about local and national issues. Governments inform the governed about the intentions of their policies, and individuals and groups have a medium through which they can make their feelings known. Secondly, as education becomes more widespread, the basis on which individuals can compete for employment becomes more equal. Where education reaches only a small group, it encourages elitism. But as it is expanded so that more or all groups receive some education, then a greater proportion of the population can be brought into the cash economy and all groups can be placed on a more equal footing.

Because the effectiveness of any political system depends upon the elite and those who hold political power, in many countries education has been regarded as serving as the main agent for the selection and training of political elites. This is evident in most developed countries where a democratic way of administration has been exercised for years and leaders are elected directly by the people. On the other hand, in societies where in most cases a traditional way of administration is dominant, elites are mostly self-assigned (because they were war-lords, for example) or given the position following the longstanding cultural rituals and customs of the society (for example, belonging to a certain line of the ruling dynasty). In a traditional society, the role education plays in the selection and training of elites is naturally very limited. Such was the case in traditional Ethiopia prior to and after the World War II. Under a system of traditional elites, the ruling classes were often illiterate but were attended by scribes who constituted the educated elite. Milkias (1976) observed:

This does not in any way imply that because they were illiterate, the kings, princes and noblemen were ignorant. On the contrary, they were men who excelled in political intrigues and manoeuvres. It does not indicate, however, that education was not a prerequisite for political power, at least not in the direct exercise of it. (Wagaw 1979, Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom 1982.)

But modern society prizes democratic practices as the basis of societal development in the broadest sense, especially when it is connected to electing elites to different positions. This democratic practice on the one hand teaches society how to use its fundamental right of electing its own leaders. On the other hand, what is more important is that it teaches society that leaders must be elected on the basis of their educational and other merits such as their know-how and potential ability to organize and lead a society. As De Ruijter (1995) said, leaders must prepare the members of society to live in a diverse community.

As knowledge builds in a society, so too must the scope for putting it to use. The converse is also true: education, in and outside school, must be related to developments in society. Education is not directed only to equip the learners with the necessary knowledge and skills related with income-generating ways. It must be directed at shaping the new generation. Dearing (1993) mentioned that education must help young people use their leisure time creatively; have respect for other people, other cultures and other beliefs, become good citizens, think things out for themselves, pursue a healthy lifestyle, and value themselves and their achievements. Education can develop an appreciation of the richness of the society's cultural heritage and of the spiritual and moral dimensions to life. The curricula of an educational system must be geared to that end. The opportunities of their practical applications should also be based on the promotion of modern values such as democracy, equality, freedom of expression, the rule of law, participation in community affairs and realizing one's rights and duties. Respect in the modern multi-cultural society for cultures and norms of different social groups and individual human rights is at the forefront of a tolerant coexistence. Such an approach that considers the interest of the society brings its own returns:

society's belief and confidence in the system. This can be achieved only if education is embedded and considered as part of an integrated social development programme. Therefore, in a society where a significant majority of the society is still unable to read and write, priority must be given to the education of this group. Developmental programmes can produce the desired result only if they are supported by the necessary educational know-how.

The idea of nation-building is supposed to be equated or bound with development, i.e. instituting changes which would increase levels of production and welfare at the community, regional and national levels and improving the human condition of each individual. One way of accomplishing this task is assuring an educational opportunity not only for children but also for adults. One principal goal of a national educational plan, including adult literacy, in nation-building is, therefore, the promotion of organized social relations among the different social groups and the creation of national unity based on diversity. An educational system must be oriented towards the recognition of the other, the value of working and learning together and tolerance with regard to different opinions and customs. Education must be 'training in pluralism' (Ooijens in De Ruijter & Van Vucht Tijssen 1995). This means respect for diversity and the attempt to resolve social conflicts through negotiation. The objective should not be to realize unity in society (shared standards and values, common goals, brotherhood) and to have all citizens focus on this unity, but to organize plurality and ways of dealing with differences in convictions and forms of life. People or groups with different values and backgrounds can work together well. People may design and observe rules to associate with one another without it being necessary to base ideas on a like-mindedness with respect to standards and values.

2.7 Literacy and development

Investments in education have traditionally been justified by optimistic assumptions, the first being that an educated population contributes to the socio-economic development of the society as a whole and the second, that education contributes to the well-being of the individual within society (Schultz 1980). Today, despite the rapid changes in modern technologies and the face of the world's socio-economic and political systems, the positive assumption of education as a prerequisite for development and modernization is still acknowledged. Education is an essential component of societal development. It is a major agent in producing skilled manpower and modern attitudes and values necessary for the existence of a modern society. Education is, in terms of access, sustainability and success and its relevance for personal, social, economic and cultural life, a pillar of human development (Arrien *et al.* 1996 cited by Ooijens *et al.* 2000). Education also influences development through its enduring impact on dimensions of cognitive competence: reading, arithmetic, 'modern' behaviour and problem-solving abilities. These skills influence productive behaviour and the ability to reap the rewards of change. Those who can read, write and calculate generally have easier access to employment and find themselves in better-paid jobs.

Education has both cognitive and non-cognitive effects upon labour productivity. Cognitive outputs of schooling include the transmission of specific information as well as the formation of general skills and proficiencies. Education also produces non-cognitive changes in attitudes, beliefs and habits. Increasing literacy and numeracy helps rural farmers, for instance, to acquire and understand information and to calculate appropriate input quantities in a modernizing or rapidly changing environment. Improved attitudes, beliefs and habits may lead to greater willingness to accept risk, adopt innovations, make investments and embrace productive practices (Appleton & Balihuta 1996). But the effects of education are not the same from one country to the next, and its contribution to rural development can lead to any

of the following: (i) a direct increase in productivity or interaction with other factors in production; (ii) an improvement in the marketability of products through the application of effective agricultural techniques; or (iii) the association of education with the decision of a farmer to try modern practices (Hallak 1990).

The role of non-formal education in development is certainly as significant as that played by formal education, if not considerably more so (Bhola 1983). Of course, development may sometimes happen without recourse to literacy. For example, a farmer may be able to increase production with the help of an extension service using oral communication, in person or by radio. But sooner or later, if rural development actually starts to happen and the economy becomes more complex and basic services improve, there will be a need for literacy. It is crucial for a country to profit from its human resources by organizing educational practices outside the established formal system directed at those groups of people who are, for one reason or another, unable to join the formal educational system on the basis of their age, interest or cultural settings. Such a programme should be designed according to the time and location suitable to the learners. It needs to focus on the needs of the potential learners and link the literacy lessons to the teaching of other topics useful to the adults involved. It should be noted that, as Fordham (1983) pointed out, while it is useless to offer literacy instead of food, housing, a water supply or electricity, it may become uneconomic to offer them without it. Literacy may be only a part – but it is still an essential part – of the range of basic services that bring direct economic returns as well as direct social benefits.

Lack of pure water and/or miles of walking to fetch it leave less time for production and increases the likelihood of illness. Lack of vaccination, health education and basic curative services leaves workers and peasants too weak to be fully productive...Illiteracy reduces workers' flexibility and productivity even in 'simple' occupations such as peasant farming, construction or handicraft. (Green as cited by Fordham 1983)

There is a dynamic between literacy and development at all levels of society. Literacy cannot be separated from the development process. If all countries are to move forward from stagnation, recession and despair they will need to generate a new 'climate of urgency' for literacy (Fordham 1983). Transformation to a global modern society is directly related to the development of skilled manpower. Such a transformation can be achieved through changes in attitude and the culture of a society, which come as a result of educational practices. The role that formal education plays in this respect is more important compared to non-formal educational practices. But, in traditional countries, where the overwhelming majority of the population is still illiterate, the role that an adult literacy programme plays is substantial. It is impossible to expect high productivity without changing the mental make-up, attitudes and behaviour of the society; without changing the traditional way of life in the countryside, and most of all without a change in the means of production. As an alternative educational programme, adult literacy activities approach this rural and marginalized sector, sometimes the majority of the population, best. Thus, on the one hand, a development programme at any level must be based on the promotion of educational practices including adult literacy, while on the other hand, educational intervention, in this case an adult literacy programme, must first of all be based, practiced and developed within the framework of the existing culture of that country and its particular society.

The term illiteracy mostly coincides with poverty and economic backwardness. As a country with a high rate of illiteracy is often economically poor, so it is true that those countries often suffer from high rates of illiteracy. Illiteracy is both a cause and result of poverty and economic backwardness. Yet, this correlation is not totally automatic. If a country's economic development is low and its resources are limited, the development of

education and that of adult literacy will be affected. In such a situation, the most vulnerable are the rural farmers, the urban unskilled workers, linguistic or religious minorities, nomads and women who on the basis of different cultural and societal codes are denied the chance to attend educational programmes. In general they are the under-privileged, marginalized and disadvantaged groups in a society. However, experience shows that if there is a strong political will on the part of the government, a positive attitude within society for education and a well-organized objective and structure for the implementation of the programme, the situation can improve. It is then that poverty-reduction actions meet expectations and reduce the numbers falling within the 'poverty norm'.

Such action always begins by figuring out the extent of the situation, the capacity of the state and the role that can be played by the community itself. This can be done through a combination of direct or indirect policy measures or with 'primary' and 'secondary' steps. A direct economic package, which includes the improvement of infrastructure based on the specific situation of the particular society, comes under the 'primary' steps to be taken by the national government. This is a short-term step that should be taken by the government to assist those who are most vulnerable and to initiate community involvement in programmes. In the 'secondary' phase come programmes such as mass education and orientation, pilot project organizations, demonstrations in different fields, and the coordination of health programmes. Such broadly based economic growth generates efficient income opportunities for the poor, improves access to education, health care and other social services and helps the poor to take advantage of these opportunities (World Bank 1993). In line with this, the struggle against illiteracy must be part of a multi-pronged fight against the multi-faceted nature of poverty (Adiseshiah 1990).

Promoting a literacy programme is part of the 'secondary' steps focusing on changing the participants' attitudes to a modern way of thinking, followed by additional skills to improve their lives. In the long-term, it is this human-resource development strategy that results in direct economic, social and political gain. If the productivity of society and poverty reduction are part of a country's national development plan, a significant portion of the development programme must focus on the promotion of education where adult literacy can be a part. As Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania, once said, 'First we must educate our adults. Our children will not have an impact on our economic development for five, ten, or even twenty years. The attitudes of adults ... on the other hand will have an impact now.' In determining the place of literacy as a development priority, the question of timing is important. Unless an individual is motivated to learn, it is futile offering a literacy programme. It is the same with nations. For them, the skill lies in seizing the 'magic moment' to determine when is the time to embark on an effective national programme. If political will is the essential starting point for literacy, good judgment about timing may be the essential ingredient for success (Fordham 1983).

Conclusion

This chapter discussed two important concepts. First, it considered the conceptual frameworks on which the study is based, showing that education as a process serves to shape human interest and its actions so that society can preserve and transmit cultural values and norms to the emerging society, and make use of the technological advances of the new era. The changing nature of human communication demands educational know-how. Political integration and the building of the national political consciousness and the development of a national culture are important contributions which education can promote in a society. But the degree of such multi-faceted educational benefits depends on the educational progress the society shows and its ability to utilize and gain from modern technology. Nations with an

illiterate majority among their population are often dependent on other efforts to utilize their surroundings and improve themselves. The promotion of an adult literacy programme as one form of the educational process is believed to reduce this dependency and bring about important socio-cultural change. As Roy-Singh (1990) observed, the learners in an adult literacy programme have a central role in the process of defining the learning needs and goals of the programme. The literacy process finds its full expression in engaging and participating in social development. Literacy may be only a part – but it is still an essential part – of the range of basic services that bring direct economic returns as well as direct social benefits to people (Fordham 1983).

UNESCO's four pillars of education in the new century revealed that, by learning, human beings can live together better by trying to understand others, be able to be part of the rapidly changing times, be able to be engaged in a variety of possibilities and most importantly be able to be independent and in control of their own lives (Delors *et al.* 1996). One important point mentioned in this report is the idea of 'learning throughout life' with no limit on time, age, sex, religion, social strata, region etc., which coincides with developing contemporary educational theories. According to these theories (Espinoza *et al.* 1996 cited by Ooijens *et al.* 2000), a permanent and continuous educational process without limits in time and place is compulsory. In realizing such a programme, as was discussed in this chapter, considerable attention ought to be given to the cultural aspects of the target groups, to their interests and their choice of instruction time. Although there are scholarly differences as to the choice of the language of instruction, allowing the learners, as McDonald (1998) pointed out, to make their own decisions based on their current and future interest is a solution. The other point is the question of gender. In a situation where the gap between literate adult men and women is showing a steady increase, efforts must be directed at minimizing this difference. Conditions must be created whereby they have free time for lessons and are encouraged to reach a pre-established goal.

The chapter also assessed the international efforts being made to combat illiteracy in the past. This was done to demonstrate the necessity of the programme as such and to point out the importance of the research work. Attention was given to various past campaigns and literacy activities. There have been considerable differences in the thinking and in approaches to tackling illiteracy. According to recent assessments by the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, despite the multiple efforts at the national and international levels, the goal of reducing the adult illiteracy rate to half of its 1990 level is still far from being reached, partly due to the fact that the world's population is still increasing. Identifying the problem of illiteracy, although important, is not enough to defend the existing situation. That is why the conference called upon nations to do more towards meeting the expected goal. This was underlined in the past and is still crucial in the 21st century. As one of the major conclusions, the present study suggests that the concerned bodies exert maximum effort to reduce the number of illiterates in different parts of the world. To use the terms of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V, 1997) in Hamburg: if the key to survival and to sustainable development is the creativity of citizens, then adult learning becomes one of the critical issues of the new century. In the forthcoming chapters, based on the conceptual thematic discussions raised in this chapter, the Ethiopian literacy campaign and campaigns of countries used for comparison will be examined in terms of the organization of their campaigns, the choice of their target groups, and the cultural aspects of their society, language and gender variations.

Chapter III : ETHIOPIA

An investigation into the practical implementation of the Ethiopian literacy campaign that took place between 1979 and 1990, on the basis of the conceptual framework given in the previous chapter, cannot be seen without background information about the country's past and present. This is relevant because, as discussed in Chapter 2, the implementation of a national programme must always be based on the past and present circumstances of the country and on the psychological make-up of the society, especially when the programme is aimed at adults. By discussing the country's past, attention is paid to the groups in Ethiopian society at which the campaign was aimed, their life experiences, their opinions about new ideas and their way of life, the value they attached to the promotion of such a national programme and why it was, according to the organizers, so important to promote such a large-scale literacy campaign at that particular time. In other words, on what socio-economic, political and cultural background was the campaign based, planned and practiced? In this regard, I focus on three main indicators: the country's geopolitical situation and its society, the country's history under three different regimes; and its educational experiences from traditional and modern perspectives.

3.1 People and geography

Ethiopia is an ancient country in the Horn of Africa bordering Eritrea to the north, Sudan to the west, Kenya to the south and Somalia and the Republic of Djibouti to the east. To the outside world, it used to be known as Abyssinia, which apparently came from the Habashat, one of the tribes that inhabited the Ethiopian region in the pre-Christian era. The term Ethiopia is of Greek origin, and in classical times was used as a generic and rather diffuse designation of the African landmass to the south of Egypt. The first known application of the term to the Ethiopian region is to be found in the Greek version of a trilingual inscription from the time of Ezana, the Aksumite king who introduced Christianity into Ethiopia towards the middle of the 4th century AD. This adoption of the term continued with the subsequent translation of the Bible into Geéz, the old literary language. The *Kebra Nagast* ('Glory of Kings'), written in the early 14th century, which gave the 'received' account of the story of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, not only linked the Ethiopian kings to the House of Israel but also sealed the identification of the term Ethiopia with the country. Since the 13th century, when a dynasty that claimed to represent the restoration of the Solomonic line came to rule the country, its rulers styled themselves as the 'King of Kings of Ethiopia' (Zewde 1991).

There has never been a full and comprehensive population census in Ethiopia but a census conducted in May 1984 was estimated to have reached 85% of the population. According to this survey, the average annual population growth rate was about 3.5%. Meanwhile, recent information from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) suggests the average population growth between the years 2000 and 2005 to be 2.4% and the population of Ethiopia is now estimated to be about 65 million (December 2002)³ of which, about 84% live in rural areas. The age distribution of the population shows that the country's population is predominantly young with 48.2% of the population under 15 years of age and 68.5% under 30 years of age (July 1999).⁴

The Ethiopian population comprises over 70 distinct ethnic groups of which the Amharas and the Oromos are the most prevalent, constituting more than 60% of the total

³. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2000) gives a different figure. According to this source, the average population growth since 1994 is 2.9% and the population of Ethiopia is now estimated to be about 63 million.

⁴. <http://countrywatch.a..ta.com/av-country.asp?COUNTRY=58>

population. More than 70 languages are spoken in Ethiopia and linguists have divided these into four groups, three of them trace a common ancestry to a parent language called Proto-afroasiatic. The three language groups of the Proto-afroasiatic family spoken in Ethiopia are Semitic, Cushitic and Omotic. A fourth group of languages belongs to an independent family known as Nilo-Sahara. Semitic languages are mostly spoken in the north and centre of the country. The principal Semitic language is Amharic, which is the country's official language. The Cushitic languages are found mainly in the east, west and south. Of this group, Oromo predominates. The Omotic language groups are spoken mostly in the southwest and are so named because of this linguistic group's proximity to the Omo River. The Nilo-Saharan language groups are found in a large area up towards the Sudanese border.

Ethiopia's principal natural resource is its rich endowment of agricultural land. About 10% of the total arable land area is currently under cultivation. Agriculture is based upon small-holder subsistence production that makes extensive use of the land. Production of food crops is by and large in the hands of individual peasants with state farms and co-operatives paying quite a minor role. Major cash crops are coffee, oilseed, cotton, sisal, tobacco, fruit, pepper and sugarcane. Ethiopia has extensive livestock resources, the largest in Africa and the country has a significant place in the world livestock rankings. The country's fishing potential is estimated to be high, if properly exploited. Forest resources and wildlife were seriously depleted in the past and now cover only 3.5% of the country's total land area. About 100 years ago 40% of the country's land was estimated to have been covered with forest. The manufacturing sector, although not very developed, plays an important role in supplying consumer goods to the domestic market, in absorbing agricultural raw materials and in generating government revenue. The handicrafts and small-scale industry sectors also cater mainly to the domestic market. Hydroelectric potential is estimated at 56 billion kWh of which only 1.2 billion are currently being tapped.

Ethiopians historically have tended to be monotheistic, adhering to either Christianity or Islam. Most of the Christians live in the highlands, while the Muslims and adherents of traditional faiths inhabit the lowland regions. Traditional faiths are practiced by a small section of the population, particularly in the south. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church with its traditional rituals can trace its roots to the 4th century AD and its history often coincides with that of the Ethiopian Empire. However, while the Ethiopian Church was the established religion, Islam and Islamic institutions such as schools and mosques were tolerated by the imperial system. It was after the 1974 revolution that all religions were made equal and the Orthodox Church's dominance was restricted.

3.2 History

3.2.1 Ethiopia under the monarchy

Present-day Ethiopia owes its heritage to the ancient Kingdom of Aksum, which grew out of the northern Ethiopian city-state of the same name. The Aksumite Kingdom emerged around the 6th century BC, flourished between the 1st and 8th centuries AD, and was finally decimated in 970 AD by hostile neighbouring groups (Levin, as cited by Keller 1988). The Agaws were the next to seize state power and made up the Zagwe Dynasty for the next 135 years, leaving an imprint on Ethiopian history through the construction of eleven monolithic churches in Lalibela, named after one of their kings. In 1270, the Zagwe Dynasty was overthrown by Yekuno-Amlak, who claimed to be a descendant of the Solomonic Dynasty and built an empire which equalled – and in some respect surpassed – its Aksumite predecessor in military might and influence (Zwede 1991). However it was stopped by the expansion of the Ottoman

Turks in the 16th century which was directed at crushing the Abyssinian state and restricting its political force. In 1543, the Portuguese, led by Christopher da Gama (Vasco da Gama's son), joined the fight on the side of the Abyssinians and brought the war to a favourable end for Ethiopia. It was at this time that the Jesuit missionaries came to Ethiopia hoping to make religious capital out of the atmosphere of friendship generated by the Portuguese military support of the Christian state, and made continued attempts to convert the kings and the country to Catholicism. They were not successful and all the foreign missionaries were expelled in the 1630s.

Under Emperors Tewodros II (1855-1868), Yohannes IV (1872-1889) and Menelik II (1889-1913), the kingdom began to emerge and strengthen. It was, according to Right (1977), a new period in Ethiopian history – a period of formation of a centralized state, of consolidation of central authority and of the gradual shaping of prerequisites for the country's social and economic development. For Tewodros, the formation of centralized state power meant a reorganization of the tax system, the building of a strong and well-disciplined army, the suppression of the slave trade, the launching of road-building schemes and the combating of banditry. However, many of the schemes never materialized. The struggle for a centralized state was accompanied by military campaigns against insubordinate peasants and as a result, the enemies of the centralized government succeeded in winning the support of a large proportion of the peasantry. The latter half of the 1860s brought intensified feudal rebellions. Tewodros's efforts to suppress a rebellion in one part of the country were not successful and there were new outbreaks of violence in other parts of the country. To a degree, the emperor attempted to use the Orthodox Christian religion as an instrument of national political integration, but his position was never secure enough for this to happen (Keller 1988). Also his efforts to gain support from and establish contact with the outside world, especially with European countries, did not have the expected results. For Tewodros, Ethiopia and Christianity were synonymous but he was not in favour of the Catholic missionaries who tried to dominate his internal and external politics, and in 1854 he ordered all missionaries to leave the country.

This was the main reason why, in 1867, Britain declared war on Ethiopia, using as a pretext the arrest of British Consul Cameroon, and several other Europeans found guilty of plotting against the central government. At that time, Tewodros's once large and effective army was down to several thousand demoralized men and was no match for the disciplined troops they would confront. Understanding this situation Tewodros released the hostage and requested peace talks with Robert Napier, the commander of the British army. He, however, refused to enter negotiations and demanded the emperor's personal surrender. In response, Tewodros, concluding that he had been conquered not only by a foreigner but also by the undisciplined Ethiopian people, shot and killed himself. Tewodros was, according to Rubenson (1966), remarkable in the way he was able to re-establish the concept of Ethiopia as a single state led by a powerful emperor – a vision that his successors sustained, and which was ultimately responsible for Ethiopia's survival as the sole independent indigenous African state.

Unlike Tewodros, Yohannes IV valued an efficient bureaucracy and political stability. For him, ruling provinces, districts and villages through existing traditional authority structures was important and created security among his subjects. His systematic handling of foreign policy allowed him to overcome threats from the outside world, especially a challenge presented by the Egyptians (Gebreseilassie 1975). Apart from his diplomatic and military successes, Emperor Yohannes was able to achieve national integration through his policies towards religion and culture. He sought to establish religious uniformity within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and society as a whole. This was necessary because religious controversies carrying political undertones had emerged among religious leaders, largely as a result of ideas

introduced by Catholic missionaries. Yohannes saw this growing disunity within the church as a potential source of trouble and committed himself to solving the problem by christianising the core of the empire, including the large Oromo province of Wollo where Islam was strong.

Despite his desire to christianise his entire domain, Yohannes took a calculated approach to religious conversion. For him politics came first. As Ernest Work in his book, *Ethiopia: A Pawn in European Diplomacy* (1935, cited by Wagaw 1979), showed, he considered Islam a threat but saw European expansionism as an even greater threat to the political survival of Ethiopia. At one point, Yohannes even attempted to form an alliance with Muslim Sudanese Mahadists against the potential European threat. His efforts in this direction were not successful. The Mahadists were penetrating the country and he had to fight them at Metemma in 1889 where he was wounded and died.

The root of Ethiopia's present territorial shape⁵ and modernization was laid down in the late 19th and early 20th centuries during the reign of Emperor Menelik II. He is credited with uniting the country and giving Ethiopia its present form and for solving the conflict between Ethiopia and Italy by defeating the then well-organized Italian army at the battle of Adewa in 1896. He is also credited with modern attitudes and the pragmatic actions realized during his emperorship: the recognition of the need for a tax system, the introduction of the country's first currency, postage stamps, modern road, railway and telegraph lines, the setting up of banks, the country's first printing press and governmental hospitals, and the formation of the first cabinet where he assigned nine ministers to be in charge of the various aspects of the country's internal and external affairs. Regarding education, Menelik was the first to begin government-sponsored education by sending students abroad and he laid down the foundation of modern education in the country by establishing the first school, which was named after him and still exists today. Menelik was also a man of diplomacy who received diplomatic missions and signed treaties. It was during his reign that the first four foreign legations namely, the British, French, Russian and Italian were established.

When Menelik died in 1913, and his grandson, Lij⁶ Iyasu, succeeded him but soon lost support because of his Muslim ties. In September 1916 Lij Iyasu was accused of being an apostate, and a 13-point proclamation was issued listing his wrongdoings and justifying his removal. Iyasu's reign witnessed a series of measures that, because of the social and economic security that they implied, can be considered as progressive. His reign had also seen the setting up of a municipal police force, the *Terenbule*,⁷ so called because the police were returnees from the Italian campaign of the annexation of Libya in 1911 recruited by the Italians to strengthen their army. On the other hand, Iyasu was a challenge to the long-established hegemony of Orthodox Christianity in Ethiopia. In this respect his marriages to the daughters of Muslim chiefs were given prominence (Zewde 1991). In actual fact, however, as both Ethiopian and foreign sources increasingly make clear, Iyasu had no intention of disestablishing Orthodox Christianity in favour of Islam. His policy can be interpreted as one of trying to redress the injustices of the past and of making Muslims feel at home in their own country, which was the first major attempt to tackle the question of national integration. On 27 September 1916 he was formally deposed and Zewditu, Menelik's daughter by his wife previous to Taitu, was proclaimed empress and Dejzasmach⁸ Tefferi Mekonen (later Haile Selassie I) was made Ras⁹ and heir designate to the throne.

⁵. This refers to the territorial shape before May 1991.

⁶. Literally, 'child'; a title reserved for the children of the high-ranking nobility.

⁷. The Amharic version of Tripoli, the capital city of Libya.

⁸. Literally, 'commander of the gate'; a title of nobility equivalent to count.

⁹. Literally, 'head'; a title of nobility equivalent to duke.

Teferi Mekonen, a grandson of Negus¹⁰ Sahle Selassie of Shoa,¹¹ impressed the nobility with his modern view for the country and his French educational background, which contributed to his efforts at modernizing the country, following on from Menelik. Thus, as regent with responsibility for the advancement of Ethiopia, Tefferi started to strengthen his power base and to dominate both internal administration and foreign affairs. In his formative years, Haile Selassie, as Teferi Mokonen, had undertaken radical measures concerning land reform, slavery and diplomacy. In 1921, he travelled around Europe where he established good relationships with European powers and was successful in making Ethiopia a member of the League of Nations in 1923. In the following year, 1924, he abolished slavery and outlawed peasant obligations such as *Ilf*, whereby peasants had to carry food for governors wherever they went and make payments in money to the latter when they had new babies (Araia 1995). In the same year, some 25 students were sent abroad for education, to Europe and the United States, and a new hospital, known as the 'Bet Sayda', was opened. In the following year the regent established a new school, which bore his name, and in 1929 he imported the country's first aircraft.

On Zewditu's death in 1930, Ras Tefferi assumed the throne as emperor, taking the name Haile Selassie I ('Might of the Trinity'). A number of notable reforms were later undertaken; a ministry of education was established in 1930 and in 1931 new schools and hospitals continued to be constructed, including the first girls' school – the Empress Menen School. A written constitution was introduced, also in 1931, with a two-chamber parliament, and legislation was enacted for the registration and taxation of land, as well as to curtail labour services. A radio station was set up in 1933 and in 1934 a Swedish-run military college at Holleta was founded. His reforms were interrupted in 1936 when Italian forces invaded Ethiopia despite his request to the League of Nations for intervention. Five years later, with the help of British forces, the Italians were defeated and the emperor returned home from exile.

Here one can ask why, in spite of repeated attempts to occupy the country, it was never conquered. The answer could lie in history. As it is discussed earlier, at times of difficulty regardless of their differences, regional rulers and the people of Ethiopia show unity and stand together, especially when it comes against foreign rulers. It is this national feeling that prevented the country from being conquered by outsiders. Such was the reality when Emperor Yohannes IV was supported by the then King of Shoa, Menelik II against the Italians, which later ascended the throne and fought against the Italians in 1896 at the battle of Adewa. In recent history of the country the same patriotic unity was registered during the 1998 invasion by the Eritrean government in a dispute over territory. The rulers – the emperors of the past, the military administration of the 1970s and 1980s and even the present prime minister – call upon the population to back their plans and defend their mother land by pinpointing society's sensitive issues such as religion or territorial integrity. A typical example of such a national call is Menelik II's proclamation of 17 September 1895 before he left for Adewa to defend the country from invasion by Italy:

'Enemies have now come upon us to ruin the country and to change our religion. ... Our enemies have begun the affair by advancing and digging into the country like moles. With the help of God I will not deliver up my country to them. ... Today, you who are strong, give me your strength, and you who are weak, help me by prayer.' (Marcus 1995)

10. King.

11. He reigned from 1813-1847.

To this can be added the assumption of the invaders that Ethiopian society would make concessions or stay neutral rather than fight a major European (Italian) army or any other outsider, which indicates their inadequate observation of the Ethiopians' patriotic attitudes.

Map 2. Pre-1991 Ethiopia: Regions and major towns.



Adopted from Marcus, H.G. (1994)

The period after 1941 is seen as the monarchy's highest point of absolutism. The power of the state reached a limit unprecedented in Ethiopian history. This was clearly manifested in such spheres as provincial administration, military organization and fiscal control. National and regional administrations were led by a carefully selected group of people from the emperor's acquaintances. Politically sensitive decisions were made by the emperor himself and his royal family. Challenges against his authority and reform, such as the Tigray peasant uprising known as the 'Woyane Insurrection', were met with harsh measures (Marcus 1994). In the following years the country was divided into *Weredas* (districts), *Awrajas* (sub-provinces), and *Teklai Gizates* (provinces) to be administered by the Council of Ministers created on the basis of this reform. As Araia (1995) notes, Ethiopia was thus more centralized than ever before: a constitution, a parliament with deliberative chambers, and an executive with council ministers, a hierarchy of administrative apparatus, police and territorial army were established. At the head of all these governmental bodies was Emperor Haile Selassie who not only controlled the organ of the state-government machinery and other institutions, but also directly controlled all ramifications of the state including administrative regions and districts. Neither the governor-general nor the minister of interior could appoint

their own subordinates. All appointments and awards of honour had to be made by the emperor himself (Araia 1995).

In the years after 1950 when the United Nations passed Resolution 390 A (V) that federated Eritrea with Ethiopia, the country underwent a radical political change. In 1951 University College of Addis Ababa opened and in 1955 the country's 1931 constitution was revised, paving the way for the inclusion of Eritrea as part of Ethiopia. In 1963 Emperor Haile Selassie, after participating in the Accra conference of Independent African States (1958) at which he promoted the idea of establishing the Organization of African Unity (OAU), organized the All African Conference and the OAU was established in Addis Ababa. In such trans-national activities and relations, Haile Selassie was admired more by foreigners than by his own subjects. As the realities of the time indicate, instead of combining his efforts and those of his government to deepen and broaden the emerging development plans, he spent considerable time on continental and international matters. He was probably the most travelled head of the state in the world, with no ideological or geographical boundaries. His active participation in the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of African Unity can be taken as examples. Of course, his endeavours in the international arena were certainly not without benefit to the country. Perhaps it was his efforts that brought the country to become the centre of the continent and serving as the headquarters of the OAU and the new African Union.

On the other hand, after the Italians left the country, there was no national policy, which could go far beyond the immediate demand. Instead, as the primary task was seen the formation institutions that serve the different sectors of the government and secure the existence of the monarchy. Little attention was turned to the expansion of light industries such as food, beverages, tobacco, textiles, leather and shoes, the wood industry, paper and paper products, printing and publishing, chemical and metal products, which were mostly dependent on foreign capital investment. The agricultural sector and the question of land were given less priority. The right to land ownership was open to very few people, mainly aristocrats and members of the royal family. The emperor and his immediate aristocrats became richer at the expense of the majority of the population who became poorer and poorer. Such a policy, however, was not without consequences, which led the country to low agricultural production and significantly low rates of economic growth. The political unrest seen in the 1960s following the unsuccessful coup d'état in December 1960 was a result of such unpopular policy followed by the emperor and his aristocrats. The protests won the admiration of the university students of the time, and subsequent student movements were among the many who repeatedly and publicly spoke out against the policy of the monarchy. It was this hatred that developed in quantity and intensity, and gave birth to the new elite and eventually to the new system of administration through the revolution of 1974.

3.2.2 Revolution and Ethiopia

A revolution marks a fundamental and irreversible change in the organization of a society; the destruction – often rapid and violent – of the previous form of social and political organization, together with the myths which supported it and the ruling groups which it sustained, and their replacement by a new institutional order, sustained by new myths and sustaining new rulers (Clapham 1988). Such a change took place in Ethiopia: the longstanding monarchy with its myths of 'Haile Selassie I the Elect of God' and with its ruling aristocrats was suddenly removed by popular uprising, which was later supported by the military. The feudal socio-economic system was abolished and its legitimising law, including the parliament, was abandoned. In the following years, the country's future political course was

formulated, with a socialist system being at the centre of the new order. At this initial stage the changes taking place in the country were in many ways comparable to those experienced during the 'classic' revolutions in France and Russia. The majority of the society was part of the uprising with students, teachers, trade-union members, taxi drivers and later on the armed forces and other sectors of society playing a role in overthrowing the monarchy. The revolution dismantled the socio-economic and political structure of the monarchy bringing a significant change in rural and urban land ownership. However, this was short-lived and as time passed the revolution changed its course and objectives, as will be seen later on. But first, in order to understand the process of the revolution in general and its impact on the Ethiopian society, we will try to answer certain specific questions. What immediate factors contributed to the outbreak of the revolution? How did the revolution further develop in trying to meet its initial aim, namely the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a socialist system in the country?

The 1974 revolution in Ethiopia was brought about by the interplay of long-term and short-term factors leading to what can be summarized as a structural crisis in the administration. The government was incapable of meeting the growing demands of society and the Ethiopian people were no longer prepared to live as they did. For a while, confrontations between the ruling monarchy and society continued to grow, showing a mounting governmental crisis. When the revolution broke out the transition to capitalism in Ethiopia had only just begun. The cash-crop economy, which was mainly targeted to produce coffee and oilseed for export, was linked to the capitalist market in a dependent relationship under which the development of agricultural self-reliance and industry were not priorities. Eviction and the fall of domestic food production exacerbated rural poverty and drove masses of unemployed peasants to the urban centres where there were sporadic protests against the government and reforms were demanded.

The phenomenon was sparked by the ecological disaster in northern Ethiopia in areas such as Wollo and on the lowlands of the country near Hararge, Bale and Sidama, which revealed the emperor's government's inability to meet the needs of the millions of its impoverished subjects. By 1973, the peasants had exhausted their reserves, sold off their goods to purchase food, and even have eaten seed grain (Marcus 1994). Hundreds of thousands left their homesteads and made for towns where they hoped the government would provide relief. The situation was related to two economic problems in 1974: a sharp increase in the cost of petroleum products caused by the closure of the Suez Canal and inflation in the price of finished goods and food, which rose 20% and 80% respectively. The failure to provide more schools, classrooms and teachers, which demoralized the urban elite, combined with the introduction of a World Bank-initiated educational programme known as the 'sector review', a plan to introduce training for large numbers of high school students, the start of tuition fees in public schools and the de-emphasis on higher education all contributed to growing anti-government movements. Students opposed to such educational plans demonstrated against the government with the support of teachers, taxi drivers, trade-union members and other civil servants all calling for an end to the monarchy, land reform and the overthrow of the government. Although Haile Selassie tried to appeal to his officers' sense of patriotism and to save the country's unity from collapsing, his appeals were ignored as military forces throughout the country joined together against the emperor. This was followed by a mutiny among soldiers and military forces in different parts of the country with their own demands. Unrest rose in the country and for the first time in the country's history, freedom of speech and the press were allowed, peaceful demonstrations and gatherings were held and the emperor was forced to make concessions, revising the 1955 constitution which would make the prime minister responsible to parliament and guarantee greater civil rights for the people.

A special commission was announced to investigate charges of corruption among members of the government.

In February 1974, and for the first time in the country's history, Prime Minister Aklilu Habtewold and his cabinet ministers resigned collectively. Emperor Haile Selassie appointed Endalkachew Mekonen as prime minister and other ministers to try to calm the on-going protests. The newly appointed prime minister tried to act immediately to control the situation and gain the support of the Ethiopian people. A major step he took was to form a commission to prepare a new draft constitution for the country based on the demands of the people. He also tried to take some actions to stabilize the increasing prices of manufactured goods, including petroleum products. In spite of such actions, the new cabinet was not accepted. Instead, students continued to protest with the slogan 'A change of furnace doesn't make the sauce delicious'. They were joined in a general strike called by the Confederation of the Ethiopian Labour Union (CELU). This four-day general strike effectively paralysed the socio-economic fabric of the country and brought the prime minister under the might of Ethiopian workers.

Nevertheless, their actions did not have any back-up from organized forces regarding the responsibilities of statehood. The military, in the mean time, was politicising itself and revealing that without the cooperation of the military, no governmental activities would succeed. This realization by some radical officers led them to consider the possibility of political change, with the military being at the head of the reform process. It was at this time, when there was no organized political power, that the military came to power and formed first the National Coordinating Committee (NCO) in February 1974, and later, on 21 June 1974, the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces and Police (in Amharic *Derg* or 'Committee') with 126 delegates from different branches of the armed forces and the police ranging from junior officers to majors and lieutenant-colonels.

Initially the groups in uniform were not organized and did not have a central organ to coordinate their activities and provide leadership. They were from different military organizations with different ideas and hopes for the country. As some observers explained later on, the meetings were full of outbursts with no conclusions in terms of the existing circumstances. However, once they had seized government it was hoped that their common understanding, created from their group life and the involvement of some educated officers, would give shape and control the continuing unrest. Unfortunately this did not happen and the tense situation continued. Just after seizing power, the *derg*, expressing repeated statements of loyalty to the emperor and the throne, continued to destroy the monarchy's foundations and institutions, and to arrest high-ranking government officials and the emperor's advisors. It also abolished the Crown Council and the imperial court, confiscated some of the emperor's private property and isolated him, making him powerless on matters of the country. In the following days the *derg* consolidated its power step by step and became a *de facto* government that forced Endalkachew Mekonen's cabinet to resign. Michael Imiru took over as the new prime minister, the second after Aklilu Habte in less than six months. Prime Minister Michael Imiru was not independent but was put in office to provide cover for the legitimacy of the *derg*'s decisions as the military continued to oppose all civilian initiatives aimed at ending the crisis. When, for example, on 7 August 1974 the Constitutional Commission, as a result of the *derg*'s pressure, reported that it would recommend a liberal-democratic constitutional monarchy, the *derg* showed almost complete disinterest and was against the publication of the document (Marcus 1994). Meanwhile, after careful steps on the part of the *derg*, Haile Selassie was deposed on 12 September 1974, parliament was abolished, the constitution was suspended and a Provisional Military Administration Council (PMAC) was formed, with a descendant of the *Derg* with General Aman Michael Andom at the head of the administration.

3.2.3 Ethiopia under a military administration

The Ethiopian revolution in its initial phase was seen as a genuine revolution like its classic predecessors, the French and the Russian revolutions, but as time passed, the revolution's objectives changed. The democratic right that lived for a short time with the free expression of views was restricted. The role that the different groups of Ethiopian society could play in building the new Ethiopia was reduced. The expected relations among the different groups of society were given less attention or ignored. As Luckham (2002) said, what started as a more or less equal partnership between military radicals, left-wing intellectuals, trade unions and other civilian groups was quickly taken over by the *Derg*, starting with a major break with the trade unions in the autumn of 1974. The accountability of the members of the government to society was minimized. Instead, the country was put under strict military rule with a centrally administered state machinery. Short- and long-term directives and proclamations replaced the existing law and order, paving the way for the military administration's free exercise of power. It was as though the Ethiopian revolution went through two different phases, one after the other. The first phase was mostly played by the majority of the population in which they publicly expressed their desire for a change. The military as part of the society was also actively involved in this movement but in the course of the struggle the character of its participation was dramatically changed. Then came the second phase in which the military, namely the *Derg*, consolidated power and ruled the country. This period was seen as one of strict centralism with a one-man and one-state party as its centre. How did the situation develop?

After deposing Haile Selassie, the *Derg* began to take actions to strengthen its authority. A military court was formed to replace all other former courts, a commission of enquiry was established to investigate the property and official duties of ministers and high-ranking officials and *Ethiopia Tikdem* ('Ethiopia First') was proclaimed as the *Derg*'s guiding principle. Following this came the detention of the royal families, ministers and top military and civil officials. In November 1974 the *Derg* entered a new chapter of its existence: it killed some 60 leading figures in the emperor's administration including Aman Michael Andom, the *Derg*'s first chairman. With this spontaneous political measure, the *Derg*'s promise of *Ethiopia Tikdeam* without bloodshed was broken. This was followed by the declaration of 'Ethiopian Socialism', with a ten-point programme that foresaw a one-party state, public ownership of the main sectors of the economy, and collective agriculture as guidelines of its administration, which was a major step for the survival of the *Derg*. The programme emphasized the government's commitment to national unity and equal opportunity for all ethnic, religious, cultural and religious groups. Nationalization of private financial institutions and industries including foreign-owned companies followed, which, in the eyes of the Western world, cast suspicion on the new government. In order to implement these government programmes and to better reach the majority of the country's rural population, the *Derg* proclaimed the 'Development through Cooperation Campaign', known as the *Zemecha*, which forced high-school students, university students and teachers, military service men and other civil servants to go to the countryside and serve the peasants for two consecutive years.

In principle, students had no objection to the idea, for they were engaged in many social activities before the programme. However, this *Zemecha* was perceived as an intention of the government to disperse the youth from the centre. With regard to the government, the organization and timing of this campaign was important. Through the 1960s and 1970s students had been continuously demonstrating for democratic and national rights for Ethiopians with slogans such as 'Land to the tiller' so now the government was keen to use this force to initiate the rural peasants to support the revolution. This served a dual purpose for the government: the students themselves would join the programme and show their

support for the revolution and, at the same time, coordinate peasant participation in the forthcoming national plan within the framework of the revolution. The campaign was organized and implemented after the government's politically motivated decision to kill 60 former officials, which created serious concern about the government's intentions especially among the students and the intelligentsia. In this regard the campaign was felt as a systematic plan to minimize the challenges in and around the capital by dispatching students and teachers to rural areas. However, neither the *Derg* nor the students saw the unintended consequences of the *Zemecha*. As far as the *Derg* was concerned, the automatic dispatch of students to the country was its prime interest and was unable to see that the students would use the *Zemecha* for their own objectives, as some did, though with limited success. Some students attempted to turn the campaign against the *Derg* while others demanded the formation of a national student organization; and still others agitated among the peasantry for the formation of the Provisional People's Government (PPG) – a major threat to the *Derg*. Meanwhile, the students were sandwiched between the *Derg* and counter-revolutionary landlords, and several hundred of them were victimized. In the end, *Zemecha* proved to be disadvantageous for both the *Derg* and the students (Araia 1995).

One of the *Derg*'s most important step during that period was the proclamation issued in March 1975, which nationalized all rural land and established Peasant Associations as a new mass organization and as an organ of the government. This perhaps was the greatest achievement of the revolution, and it opened up a new era for the majority of rural farmers. On 26 July 1975, the council again issued a proclamation, nationalizing urban houses and land. The proclamation provided for the establishment of an urban dwellers' association. In the course of the year a new phenomenon began to emerge: left-wing political tendencies opposed to the *Derg*'s administration. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) came up with its programme for the formation of a civil administration. In return, the *Derg* found the organizations to be damaging to its image. The period became crucial for the whole country and especially for the *Derg*, which began to take a series of actions.

On the one hand, the *Derg* began to form alliance with factions within a deeply divided intelligentsia. In 1976 an ideological charter for Ethiopian socialism was proclaimed under the National Democratic Revolution Programme of Ethiopia. At the same time the Provisional Office for Mass Organizational Affairs (POMOA) was set up to formalize the *Derg*'s relationship with left-wing organizations, and to form the urban residents' associations (*kebeles*) and peasant associations as the basis of the PMAC's mass mobilization programme. On the other hand, it began to liquidate the various left-wing factions, culminating in the 'Red Terror' of 1977-1978 (mainly targeting EPRP members), when members of the different radical groups were drawn into urban guerrilla war with each other and with the *Derg*, and were hunted down with the help of revolutionary defence squads from the *kebeles*. Thousands were killed, and the remnants of the student movement and the intelligentsia fled into exile or joined the insurgencies in the north (Luckham 2002).

While the Red Terror was at its height in the centre of the country, an unprecedented situation was happening in the north: the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) occupied some parts of Eritrea and was marching on others. The Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), with the support of the Somali government, was operating in the east and invading some parts of the country. Internal relations within the *Derg* among supporters of Mengistu and his deputy, Atnafu Abate, were also strained. Thanks to Soviet and Cuban military assistance, Mengistu emerged victorious. In November 1977 he managed to liquidate Atnafu Abate and his 46 followers and to seize full government power. The following year he managed to win along the Somalian Front and also reoccupied some northern territories. With governmental and political power fully in his hands, Mengistu began to operate in his own way. At the end of

1978 and the beginning of 1979 he began to dispatch and assign members of the PMAC to regions as administrators, firstly, to control the situation at the regional level and secondly, to remove troublemakers from the central office. To manipulate and exert influence on the political life of the country, in 1979 the PMAC formed the Commission to Organize the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE) with Mengistu Hilemariam as its chairman. This led to the birth of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) in 1984.

Both the COPWE and the WPE were dominated by the armed forces and, at the very top, by members of the *Derg*. Of the 123 founding members and alternates of the COPWE central committee, 64% were present or former members of the armed forces and police, and 22% were members of the *Derg*. In 1984 the corresponding proportions for the WPE were only slightly lower, at 48% and 18% respectively. Seven of the WPE political bureaus 11 full members were drawn from the surviving top leadership of the *Derg*, although by now only one, the Minister of Defence, still made use of his military title. In 1987 a new constitution was introduced establishing the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) and transferring power to an elected legislature guided by the WPE, which was confirmed in its political monopoly as a vanguard party guided by Marxism-Leninism – although in reality the constitution made virtually no difference to the way power was exercised (Luckham 2002).

The consequences of such a state/party system of administration for the people of Ethiopia were threefold. First, the popular uprising of the Ethiopian people was seized by the military, which established itself as the only administrative and political organ. Individuals and groups with new ideas or opinions were seen as major enemies of Ethiopia and were removed from the scene. The organizations created to represent different groups of society were not independent and did not reflect society's views. This created fear, frustration and scepticism among the population, and it still remains a problem in Ethiopian society today because the current administration in practical terms is not open to and tolerant of criticism and alternative ideas. Second, Ethiopia's longstanding problem with the Eritrean Liberation Front reached its height and no substantial attempt was made to resolve it peacefully. Instead, the military course followed by the government brought to the people a human, material, social, political and moral consequences. The country's very limited capital was spent on modernizing the military and training of the armed forces to the point that Ethiopia was, in Africa, second only to Egypt regarding the size of its military capacity. Young Ethiopians were either voluntarily or forcefully called up to join the army and were sent to the front with very little military training. Many died, causing grief and suffering for their families. The country's political life was uncertain, which created a sense of disunity and suspicion among the society. The economy was also seriously affected. The rural and urban work forces were continuously sent to barracks to strengthen the army or were asked to fulfil the government's many 'urgent duties'. For instance, peasants found themselves being asked to attend gatherings on working days, which contributed to the farmers' poor agricultural performances and low outputs. The economy started showing a significant decline in all sectors.

From 1988 onwards, the government was unable to control the country's deteriorating situation. The attempted coup d'état in 1989, in which most of the senior army officers were involved, was a signal of the government's inability to rule and its low acceptance rate even among the military itself. Opposition groups outside and inside the country were growing, with the EPLF/TPLF and the OLF at the forefront. It was in such circumstances that in May 1991, the army was no longer capable of mounting any resistance to the military force of the EPRDF- a united front established from a consortium of different political groups- Mengistu left the country for Zimbabwe and Tesfaye G/ Kidan, a member of the WPE's politburo and one of the four vice-presidents of the Ethiopian government, was left in charge of the

government. On May 26 peace talks between a government delegation and representatives of the EPRDF, the EPLF and the OLF started in London, presided over by the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen. The hope of the government delegates for 'fair' mediation failed when the United States publicly suggested that the EPRDF should assume control of the city of Addis Ababa. Some Ethiopians in Addis Ababa at that time dispute this gospel according to Cohen and believe that the United States had options other than handing over Ethiopia on a silver platter to Meles. Cohen's sanctioning of the EPRDF's action while admonishing Meles to implement democratic reforms in return for continuing US support appears to critics to be too simplistic a solution for the problems of 1991. They contend that what concerned the United States then (and now) was containment of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and the sustaining of a regional equilibrium by the nations with large Christian populations that are dominated by the EPRDF and the EPLF. Other issues were considered to be of secondary importance (Vestal 1999). Nevertheless, the EPRDF took control of the city and the country without any resistance from government forces and established an interim government. At the same time the EPLF took control of Eritrea (a province in the former Ethiopia) and established an interim government, pending the holding of a referendum there on independence.

This brought to an end the days of revolution and opened up a new political landscape for the country. Ethiopia, being a country that had preserved its identity during and after the colonial period, now faced an unprecedented political turnover. A once well-organized military institution had been replaced by guerrilla fighters, the unitary state was being converted to an ethnic-based 'federated state' and the socio-cultural bond that survived for years among the population was cut, leaving sharp divisions among the people. As of 1992, the country's geopolitical landscape has changed; major internal and external boundaries and provincial administrative entities have been completely changed and replaced by new divisions. With an estimated population of 65 million people and an area of about 1 million km², the country is divided into 14 (later reduced to 9) regions including Addis Ababa (see Map 3),¹² where the boundaries were fixed on the basis of language and ethnicity (Ezra 1997).

3.2.4 Post-1991 Ethiopia

Post-1991 Ethiopia has been mainly characterized not only by the overthrow of the *Derg* regime but also with the coming to power of the EPDRF, a united front of different political groups. At the head of this united front was the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) established in 1975 with the aim of liberating Tigray from an Amhara-dominated Ethiopia and of creating an independent Republic of Tigray (Araia 1995). Soon after its armed resistance started, however, the TPLF redefined its objectives and aimed at cultural and political autonomy for Tigray within a democratic Ethiopia. By 1989 when they controlled much of the territory of Tigray, the TPLF continued south with the aim of toppling the *Derg* regime but to pursue its struggle against the *Derg* beyond Tigray, the TPLF needed political and military allies from other ethnic groups. Thus, the EPRDF was established in January 1989, composed of the TPLF and the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM). In order to widen the coalition against the *Derg*, the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) was established by the TPLF in 1990 after talks with the OLF failed to include the

¹². To date, no official map showing the regional, zonal and *wereda* boundaries has been released. This map therefore is an unofficial one prepared by the World Food Programme and adapted from Ezra (1997).

Map 3. Approximate regional boundaries of current Ethiopia.



Adopted from Ezra, M. (1994).

latter in a coalition. After the fall of the Derg, yet another EPRDF partner was created to represent the multi-ethnic southern region of Ethiopia, the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (SEPDF). The common denominator of all the EPRDF coalition and affiliates is that they were initiated by the TPLF to consolidate ethnic representation and control over the various regions of Ethiopia. How was the political and socio-cultural landscape of the Ethiopian people shaped and reformed after the coming to power of the EPRDF-led government? To answer this, we trace three main EPRDF events: the formation of the transitional government, 'free and fair elections' and the establishment of the Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia.

After the TPLF/EPRDF fighters controlled the capital city and other parts of the country, the next question was how they should organize the administration of the country and bring it back to normality after the society had been so morally devastated by war. For the TPLF/EPRDF, since the main resistance against the *Derg* regime originated in minority and ethno-national grievances, a natural consequence of the victory was an attempt to settle grievances. The TPLF/EPRDF, promising that minorities would not be further subjugated under 'Ethiopian identity' which only reflects the culture of the ruling elites, outlined its vision of a future Ethiopia and promised to reorganize the Ethiopian state in a way that reflect the heterogeneous complex identities of different ethnic groups and minorities. To facilitate the transition, a charter of transitional period was drafted and a national conference held on 22 July 1991 adopted the charter to serve as the supreme law of the country during the transition period. Under the charter of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) with a president as a head of the state, a prime minister with a Council of Ministers and a Council of Representatives with 87 legislatures was established and given the responsibility of restructuring the political, economic and social life of the country. The Transitional Government was additionally given the task of drafting a democratic constitution for Ethiopia to be ratified by the newly elected national assembly, and of conducting free and fair elections within a two-year period.

Although at this stage the process seemed to be taking positive steps towards democracy, the practical application of the charter was not living up to expectations. The situation began to go wrong initially at the national conference when the TPLF/EPRDF members declared the conference was only open to them and their supporters, denying access to other opposition groups eager to attend the conference. As Tronvoll (2000) pointed out, some 27 organizations participated in the national 'Peace and Democracy' conference, the most important being the TPLF/EPRDF and the OLF. According to him, a number of the smaller ethnic organizations, which had been established by the EPRDF, were invited to display a broad-based Ethiopian platform. On the other hand, organizations 'which failed to make a statement renouncing violence as a form of political struggle', along with the old Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) and the newly formed coalition movement, the Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces (COEDF) that was composed of pan-Ethiopian organizations in which the EPRDF was the leading member, were excluded from the conference. Such deliberate actions on the part of the TGE towards the others led to questions about the government's commitment to democracy. To this can be added the election of members of the Council of Representatives who were appointed by the organizations they represented, a process which did not involve the Ethiopian people. This helped the TPLF/EPRDF transitional government to control key state positions for their own objectives. Although the EPRDF had only 32 seats in the Council, as some analysts pointed out, the seat allocation was manipulated to give the EPRDF and its allies a comfortable majority. Separation of power was not considered important in drafting the charter and during the course of the implementation it was noted that the independence of the judiciary body was threatened by the executive branches.

However, during the transition period, the TGE tried to put into practice some of the major programmes outlined in the charter. In late 1991 the country was reorganized into fourteen (later reduced to nine) new administrative regions based on nationalities and ethnic minorities. The capital city, Addis Ababa, and Harar, a city in the eastern part of the country, were also given a regional status. The new administrative regions were given broad powers over security, budget, language and cultural affairs. Regions were further divided into districts (*weredas*) and neighbourhoods (*kebeles*) (Vestal 1999). To create a unified national army, political organizations were required to register their armed forces and confine them to camps before the election, although this did not happen as smoothly in practice as had been expected. Such an issue caused disputes between the EPRDF and the OLF, which led the latter to withdraw from the national-regional election in 1992, citing a lack of democracy in the country.

As was indicated by the charter, the TGE was given the mandate to draft the constitution of the country to arrange its ratification by the newly elected National Assembly and to conduct national elections. A Constitution Drafting Commission (CDC), dominated by TPLF/EPRDF-nominated members, was established in August 1992 and worked on the constitution until December 1994. At this stage also opposition groups were not able to participate and contribute to the drafting process of the constitution. A TPLF/EPRDF observer described the situation in the following terms:

'Constitution-making under the EPRDF has little in common with the bargaining, trade-offs, and compromises that usually typify such processes; rather it reflects the weakness of the country's democratic institutions, the political objectives of the governing party, its position of dominance within a state where serious opposition had been crushed or marginalized.' (Young 1998)

Irrespective of all this, the new EPRDF constitution reflecting 'respect for and faith in the decisions of the people' was ratified by the Constitutional Assembly on 8 December 1994 and mandated parliamentary elections to be held in the spring to choose a National Assembly and

to establish the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). Since there were few signs of an improvement in the democratic climate in Ethiopia before the 1995 elections, the major opposition parties and coalitions boycotted the elections, and the few local and regional parties that tried to challenge the ruling party were systematically blocked. Thus, the outcome of the election was pre-determined and, according to some independent monitoring groups, the elections were 'neither fair and free nor impartial'.

A critique of the 1995 elections may be summarized into four points. First, the elections were not competitive, hence it is difficult to assess the TPLF/EPRDF's real support among the electorate and its democratic legitimacy. Second, the process leading up to the elections favoured only the ruling parties and affiliated partners, thus preventing many legally registered political actors in the country from participating. Third, although the technical and administrative conceptions of the ballot had improved since previous elections, in all the areas observed, violations of the Electoral Law occurred. And fourth, government structures and bodies were used to subdue the rural population and any expression of opposition (Tronvool & Addland 1995).

Present-day Ethiopia is still not free of the problems mentioned above. Opposition groups are not allowed to operate freely in the country and demonstrate their views and visions of the society; the ethnic-based federal policy, which is favoured by the government is not able to bring about the desired heterogeneous unity on diversity but has instead and damaged past common understandings among the different ethnic groups or, if not, has opened up a gap for misunderstanding. The government's record of human-rights violations has slipped and the country is in the first list of countries that are in similar positions, and the rule of law and freedom of expression are jeopardized. The national security of the country is under threat, and the government-induced war against Eritrea brought not only human and material losses to the country but also unprecedented national security problems. The country's economy has deteriorated and the living conditions of the majority of the population is below average, and corruption – even among high-level governmental officials – has become a daily phenomenon. On the other hand, to date, government officials recently claim that about 14 million Ethiopians are at risk of starvation and one in eight in the workforce is infected with HIV/AIDS. Ethiopian society faces real challenges but the chance for a better future still lies in the hands of Ethiopians themselves.

3.3 Education

3.3.1 *Traditional education*

An assessment of traditional education in Ethiopia must be based on the recognition of the different religions and ways of worship that have coexisted in Ethiopia for a long time. As the most comprehensive studies have shown,¹³ for centuries Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Paganism operated side by side, all offering places of orientation and education for children. In earlier times, Christianity was prominent in the northern, north-western and central regions, and Islam in the east, south, and west. Judaism was largely limited to Lake Tana and the surrounding areas, and Paganism was mainly confined to the southern, eastern and western regions, including parts of the central plateau. The most important of these was the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Ethiopia is the only African country to have preserved Christianity as its national religion for over one and a half millennia. Having its own written language and

¹³ Pankhurst (1962, 1976, 1990), Markakis (1974), Milkias (1976), Wagaw (1979) and Negash (1987, 1990).

literature meant that education developed from the very early days as a tradition of ecclesiastical scholarship, and was offered by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church¹⁴ which introduced young Ethiopians to the Geéz and Ethiopian alphabets and to the reading of the Old and New Testaments (Milkias 1976). The age of admission to a church school was between seven and twelve, and the length of time before graduation depended on the child's health, intelligence and motivation as well as on the type of programme followed.

The curricula for traditional education can be generalized as follows (Pankhurst 1962, Milkias 1976, Wagaw 1979). The primary level had five stages (see Fig.3.3). The first demanded the mastery of *Fidel*, the Ethiopian alphabet with 231 characters (33 letters with 7 different variations, see figure 3.1), while the second stage consisted of reading *Fedele-Hawaria* (the Apostle's Syllabary), and learning by rote the first chapter of the first epistle of St John in Geéz. Writing and numerical studies began at this level but were optional. The third stage was memorizing *Gebata-Hawaria* (sections of the New Testament and the Apostles' Creed), which was read aloud by the pupils with the emphasis being on pronunciation and intonation. Religious songs were also taught at this stage so that pupils could assist in church services as a form of in-service training. The fourth stage known as *Dawit* (the Psalms of David) consisted of reading the psalms, while the instructor paid special attention to pupils' Geéz pronunciation. The lesson was divided into 15 sections, each named after 'Negus' (king). Under no condition would an instructor let a student start a new Negus until he had total mastery of the preceding one. When he finished the 15th Negus, he was considered a primary graduate and gifts were given to him and to the teacher. The last stage of the curriculum of elementary traditional schooling, which was usually accompanied by a church career as a deacon, was a transition period to higher education to become a *debtera*, or to a full-time church career as a priest. It involved committing all the Psalms of David to memory with proper pronunciation and intonation. Prayers such as the *Wudasse-Amlak* (Praises to God) and *Argonan* (Praises to the Virgin Mary) were arranged for each day of the week. Songs of Solomon, Songs of the Prophets, elementary Kidasé (the rudiments of general liturgy) and *Saátat* (night service) would all be committed to memory.

The most ambitious students would continue on to higher education (secondary level, Fig. 3.4), which qualifies them as *debtera* or 'Liq' (master). These students usually leave their homes and go in search of a well-known instructor or teacher. Education at this level had three main branches: *Zema Bet* (School of Music), *Kine Bet* (School of Poetry), and *Metsahaf Bet* (School of Texts or Books). *Zema Bet* had three branches of its own. The first deals with the study of *Dugua*, a musical composition for the Ethiopian church written by an Ethiopian scholar named Yared in the 6th century AD (Milkias 1976) and the second with *Zmaré* (Eucharist songs) and *Mewaset* (songs for commemoration and funerals). The third concentrates on *Kidasse* (general liturgy). Each of these could be learned at the same institutions or at different and specialized places. In addition to these, the *Aquaquam* School (style of singing) combines the three branches of music mentioned above by training the student in the appropriate movements and steps (religious dances) of the songs. Each of these branches of knowledge normally could take at least two years of intensive study. *Kiné Bet*

¹⁴ This study does not cover the traditional Islamic and Judaic education, since in the earliest times, their influence on the development of the educational system was minimal.

Figure 3.1 Ethiopian Alphabet

ሀ ሁ ሂ ሃ ሄ ህ ሆ	ኸ ኹ ኺ ኻ ኼ ኽ ኾ
ሰ ሱ ሲ ሳ ሴ ሶ ሰ	ወ ዉ ደ ደ ደ ወ ደ
ሐ ሑ ሒ ሓ ሔ ሕ ሖ	ቦ ቦ ዲ ዲ ዲ ዕ ደ
መ ሙ ሚ ማ ሚ ሞ ሞ	ዘ ዘ ዘ ዛ ዜ ዝ ዞ
ወ ዉ ደ ደ ደ ሥ ሦ	ዠ ዡ ዢ ዣ ዤ ዥ ዦ
ረ ሩ ሪ ራ ሬ ር ሮ	የ የ የ ያ ዬ ይ ዮ
ሰ ሱ ሲ ሳ ሴ ሰ ሰ	ደ ደ ደ ደ ደ ደ ደ
ሸ ሹ ሺ ሻ ሼ ሽ ሾ	ጀ ጁ ጆ ጇ ገ ገ ገ
ቀ ቁ ቂ ቃ ቄ ቅ ቆ	ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ
ቦ ቦ ቦ ባ ቤ ብ ቦ	ጠ ጡ ጢ ጣ ጤ ጥ ጦ
ተ ቱ ቲ ታ ት ቶ ቷ	ጪ ጫ ጮ ጮ ጮ ጮ ጮ
ቸ ቹ ቺ ቻ ቼ ቾ ቿ	ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ
ኀ ኁ ኂ ኃ ኄ ኅ ኆ	ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ ጸ
ኘ ኙ ኚ ና ኔ ን ኖ	ፀ ፀ ፂ ፃ ፄ ፅ ፆ
ኘ ኙ ኚ ና ኔ ን ኖ	ፈ ፋ ፈ ፋ ፈ ፍ ፈ
አ ኡ ኢ ኣ ኤ ኦ ኧ	ፐ ፑ ፒ ፓ ፔ ፕ ፎ
ከ ኩ ኪ ካ ኬ ክ ኮ	
ከ ኩ ኪ ካ ኬ ክ ኮ	፩ ፪ ፫ ፬ ፭ ፮ ፯ ፰ ፱ ፲
ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
ቁ ቁ ቁ ቁ ቁ ቁ ቁ	፳ ፴ ፵ ፶ ፷ ፸ ፹ ፺ ፻ ፻፲
ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ ገ	20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
	1000
ሷ ሸ ሹ ሺ ሻ ሼ ሽ ሾ	፳፻ ፴፻ ፵፻ ፶፻ ፷፻ ፸፻ ፹፻ ፺፻ ፻፲፻

concentrates on *Sewasew* (Geéz grammar) and the teaching of twelve different types of composition, all committed to memory and taking as long as thirteen years, nine for *Sewasew* and four for *dirset* (composition) (Levine 1965). According to Selassie (1970), the teaching of *Kine* begins first by instructing the simplest *Kine* from *Gubae Qana*, which is an epigram composed of two rhyming verses. Then comes *Zeámlakiye* (3 verses), *Wazema* (5 verses), *Nibezhu* (3 long verses), *Selassie* (6 verses), *Zeyiéze* (5 or 6 verses), *Kibryieti* (4 verses), *Itane Mogar* (7 or 11 verses) and *Mewadis* (8 verses). The third main branch of traditional education – the *Metsahaf Bet* – had a syllabus with three branches. The first is an in-depth look at *Kidusan Metshaft* (the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments); second is the study of *Awaledt* (literature of ‘imagination’ or ‘fiction’); and the third mastery of the *Gedle* (books on monastic life). In addition, *Tarike-Negest* (monarchic history), *Kibre-Negest* (Glory of the Kings), *Fetha-Negest* (Laws of the Kings, which formed the basic code of laws of Ethiopia from the 13th century until less than two decades ago), and world history is taught at the *Metsahaf Bet*.

Figure 3.2

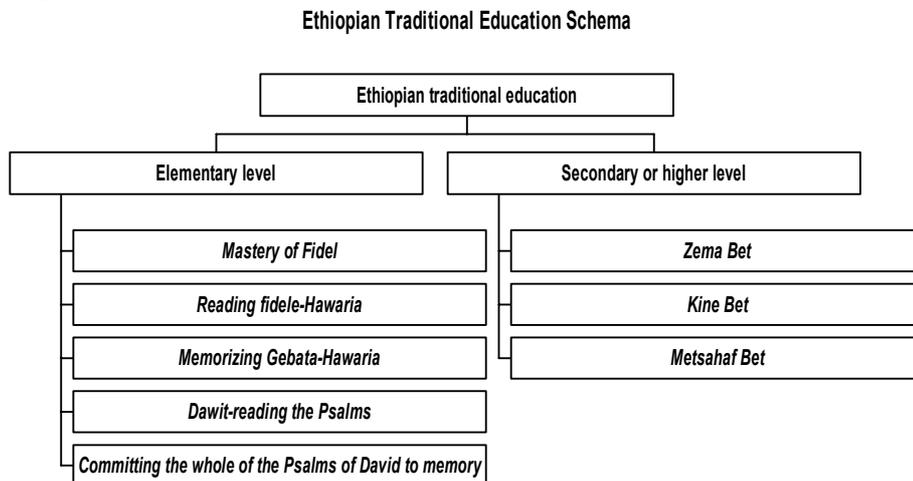
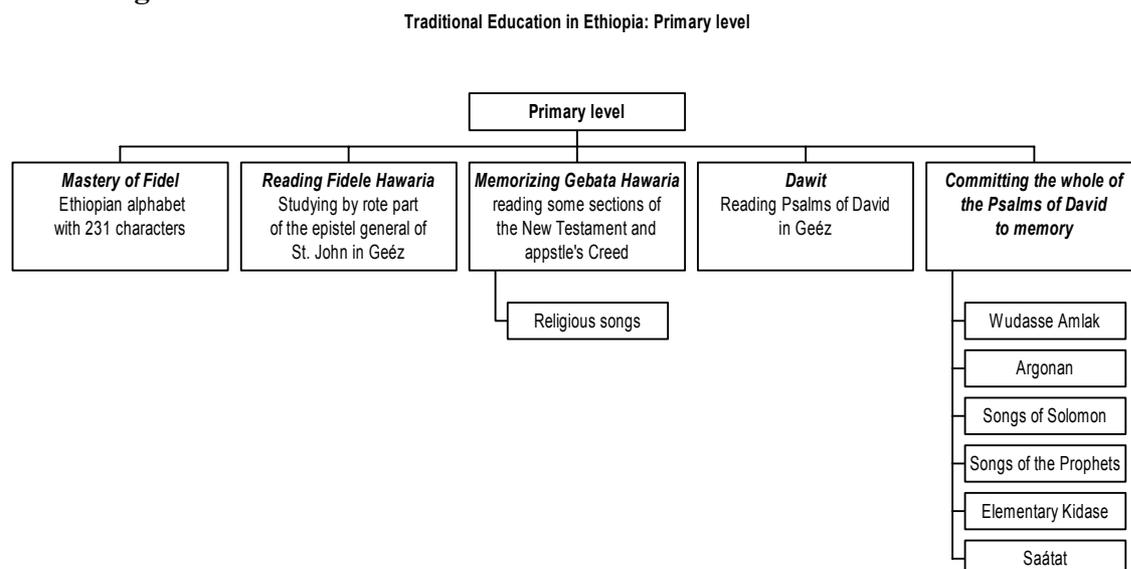


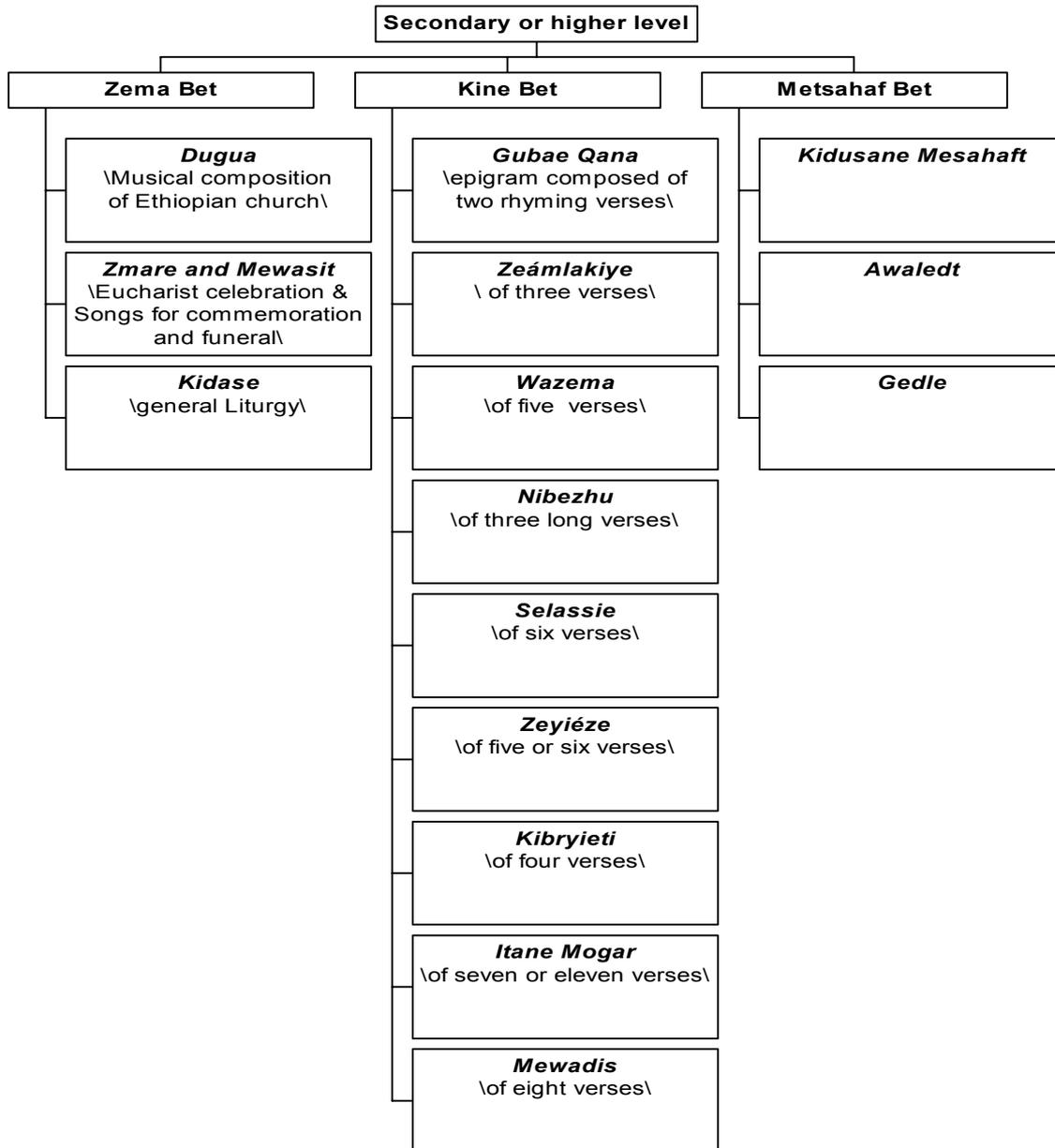
Figure 3.3



Taken from T. Wagaw, *Education in Ethiopia. Prospect and Retrospect* (1979).

Figure 3.4

Traditional education in Ethiopia
 \ Secondary or higher level\



Taken from T. Wagaw, *Education in Ethiopia. Prospect and Retrospect* (1979).

In general, in these specialized branches, the student learns the traditions of the church, theology, church history and laws through the interpretation of the various individual writings. The commentaries of these teachings do not proceed in systematic theological or historical categories but each sentence or phrase of a text is interpreted, depending on the content, theological, moral and historical questions arise, and are discussed and developed. The student has to learn each sentence of the commentary by heart. The following is a typical example of a *Metshaf Bet* lesson from a publication by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church; *The Church of Ethiopia. The Panorama of History and Spiritual Life* (Selassie 1970).

Students come to the teacher in a group of three or four, all studying the same text. One of the groups reads a sentence or a phrase. The teacher first translates the sentence into Amharic and then comments on it. The students listen attentively and try to remember the comment word for word. When this group leaves the teacher, another group or individual comes to read to the teacher and hears his commentary. After leaving the teacher each group moves apart and tries to comment on the text just as the teacher did, as much as possible word for word. If one misses a word or an idea, another member of the group recalls it and supplements. After some time the group goes again to the teacher and reads the same text and again comments on it. This way the group can compare its progress to know how far it has grasped the interpretation of the previous time.

Memorization as is stressed earlier, was at the basis of the traditional education in Ethiopia because written materials were not well developed. The few handwritten manuscripts (most of them written by the priests themselves) on parchment were – and still are – very expensive. Aside from the authoritarian tradition, there is another consideration: the student is not allowed to have a critical opinion about any text, since it is believed that God revealed the content to the Fathers through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, these writings are not to be considered critically but simply learnt by heart. Memorization and the uncritical acceptance of texts and the mode of student thinking in traditional ways of teaching was the method in the past and still is today.

Teaching usually takes place in churches and, in a number of villages, in the compounds of well-to-do families. These are one-teacher schools with instruction given by a priest or a layman with church education. The number of such types of schools is directly proportional to the number of churches in the country. According to the information published by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Selassie 1970): there were about 15,000 churches and, as Aren (1978), showed there were as many as 25 million followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. If each church had one school (*Nebab Bet*), which is probably the case, then there were at least 15,000 one-teacher schools. The number of churches has remained more or less stable since 1974 and these church schools provide traditional education alongside the modern education is provided mainly in schools operated by the government. This role is encouraged by the fact that government schools give preference to children who can already read and write. Of course there are modern theological colleges that combine traditional studies with the broader curriculum demands of the new era.

3.3.2 Modern education

Although for centuries, education in Ethiopia was in the hands of private institutions, primarily the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, there were also individuals or groups of people who supported the rise and development of the ideal of education, art and literature. As Wagaw (1979) pointed out, some of them promoted the production of books and paintings, albeit with religious motives; others supported a teacher or two to conduct classes for children in the village or community. Never, however, until the beginning of the 20th century, had any ruler sought to establish a secular programme of education.

The coming of European missionaries to the country and the process of sending individuals abroad through private sponsorship or that of foreign missionaries can be seen as the first step in promoting modern education in Ethiopia. It was towards the end of the 19th century, that Menelik II permitted the establishment of European missionary schools. Menelik, though he was a man of little schooling, was profoundly conscious of the need for a modern style of instruction (Pankhurst 1962). Asheber G/Heywot, one of the youths educated in the ensuing regime, summed up the Emperor's attitude as follows:

‘We need educated people in order to ensure our peace, to reconstruct our country and to enable it to exist as a great nation in the face of the European powers’ (cited by Pankhurst 1962).

The inability of the traditional educational system to meet the needs of people involved in statecraft, diplomacy, commerce and industry led to the introduction of government-sponsored secular education in the country, and in 1907 the first public school (Menelik School) was set up in Addis Ababa. A year later a primary school opened in Harar. Foreign languages, elementary mathematics and science were taught in French to a limited number of students, along with Amharic and religious subjects. Later on in 1925 the government adopted a plan to expand secular education and the following year imposed a special education tax, which can be seen as the beginning of the national educational system. It was during this period that the then regent Tefferi Mekonen established the second government school. Like the Menelik School, the Tefferi Mekonen School also functioned as a school for teaching foreign languages, with the difference being that Ethiopian religion was supposed to be taught in the latter. In the words of its founder:

‘In this school it is not only foreign languages and learning that I have instituted, but there will also be study of our country's holy books and the Monophysite faith. One who proposes to devote himself to foreign languages when he has not properly mastered the language and literature of his own country is like a boat without a rower’ (cited by Pankhurst 1962).

According to Pankhurst (1968), ten years later, on the eve of the Italian invasion there were about twenty public schools – most of them privately financed – with about 8,000 students. A few students also studied abroad on government scholarships. The Italian occupation of 1936-41 seriously disrupted the educational system that had just emerged and government schools were either closed down or were requisitioned for military purposes. To the extent that they were engaged in education, the Italians had different objectives. During their precarious exercise of power, they did much to disrupt the education system they inherited by their lack of interest and by their systematic elimination of educated Ethiopians (Pankhurst as cited by Negash 1990, Wagaw 1979). After the restoration of Ethiopian independence, schools reopened but the system faced shortages of teachers, textbooks and facilities. It was only with the accession of Haile Selassie to the throne again that the tempo of educational progress quickened, and education began to be coordinated under the guidance of a central Ministry of Education and Fine Arts.

In the years ahead a efforts were done to expand the modern education in the country and shape the curriculum of the entire education. Ernest Work, an American adviser who was guiding the government during this period, suggested for the first time that the educational system should be ‘neither French, Italian, English nor American’, but Ethiopian. He recommended that Amharic be used as the medium of instruction (which had not been practical for so many years) and that the curriculum be relevant. He also advised that as soon as possible the teachers should be Ethiopians, and said that a definite educational plan was essential, providing six years of elementary education and five years of additional learning based on the students’ future plans in the professional world, and suggested that a university be established (cited by Wagaw 1979). These were the far-sighted proposals that can be seen as the genesis for the development of a secular educational system in Ethiopia. However, from 1942 until 1955, the Ethiopian government was frantically engaged in the expansion of the education system without sufficient consideration being given to its relevance. Under the leadership of Haile Selassie, who held the education portfolio until 1966, the education sector functioned without curriculum guidelines and relevant textbooks (M.

Bekele as cited by Negash 1990). By 1952 a total of 60,000 students were enrolled in 400 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, and three institutions offering college-level courses and in the 1960s, 310 mission and privately operated schools with an enrolment of 52,000 supplemented the country's public school system¹⁵. The structure of the educational system during this period was a hybrid derived from the United Kingdom and neighbouring African countries, for example, Sudan and Kenya. A three-term system (4+4+4) was followed whereby the first four years were designated as primary, the next four years as middle or intermediate, and the third four-year period as secondary. From the mid 1940s and throughout the 1950s students were expected to sit for the British General School Leaving Certificate Examination. The practice began to decline with the successive growth of University College in Addis Ababa (established in 1951) and since the mid 1960s the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate had become the only valid diploma (Negash 1990).

Though, with the establishment of a permanent body the (the Ministry of Education), the education system began to gain more permanent structural features and Emperor Haile Selassie continued to believe that he was laying the foundations for the rapid development of the 'New Ethiopia', some young Ethiopians were concerned and reflecting their ideas on the basic problems of the system. Mulugeta Wodajo for instance, writing in 1958, (cited in Negash 1990) pointed out the following weak points of the system: (i) the inadequacy of the system; (ii) the irrelevance of the curriculum; (iii) the administrative and intellectual confusion created by the deliberate recruitment of teachers from many nations; and (iv) over-centralization.

If schools were to preserve their identity, the Ethiopian national system of education, according to him, had to be both a reflection of the past and a guide to the future. The educational system should in the first place aid the transmission of the nation's cultural heritage from one generation to the next and, in addition, train capable persons who might have the ability to interpret, enrich, and adopt that heritage to new needs and to changing conditions as they arose. Any system of education in Ethiopia that failed to satisfy these demands was bound to make the country a lost nation – a nation living in darkness that the world would forget and ignore. Time passed with no attention being paid to Dr. Mulugeta Wodajo's recommendations and in May 1961, Ethiopia hosted the UN-sponsored conference of African states on the development of education. Among other things, the conference highlighted the educational deficiencies in the Ethiopian education system, especially in primary and secondary education, which was ranked the lowest among African nations. There were school and teacher shortages, a high drop-out rate, and low overall attendance rates (about 10% of the country's school-aged children) especially among females, non-Christians and rural children. Embarrassed by this record, the Ministry of Education developed a new education policy, which was in effect until 1974.¹⁶

The coming years witnessed the expansion of the sector, the introduction of a series of restructuring measures and a growing awareness of the need for more comprehensive reform. Enrolment at all levels increased from just over 196,000 in 1960-61 to over 1,100,000 by 1974-75 (Bjerkkan 1987 as cited in Negash 1990). Despite the dramatic expansion of education, Ethiopia was, by 1974-75, still a long way from meeting the target of universal primary education set out by the conference on African education. By 1974 primary education was accessible to only 12% of the primary school aged population, and yet, since the drastic expansion of the educational sector was not accompanied by a comparable expansion in the economic sector, students were beginning to perceive a future of unemployment after

¹⁵ File:///C:/NETSCAPE/ET_02_07.HTM

¹⁶ .ibid.

completing secondary education. According to Desta Asayehegn's assessment, in 1974 up to 25% of secondary-school graduates were unemployed (Asayehegn 1979).

In 1963-64 the grade structure system was changed from a 4+4+4 year combination into six years of primary school, followed by two years of junior secondary and a four-year secondary programme, i.e. a 6+2+4 year combination. With the new structure, Amharic became the only language of instruction at the primary level for the first time – the decade's most significant reform (Negash 1990). Despite these efforts, by the end of 1969 Ethiopia's urban society and the educational sector were in serious crisis. According to Tekeste Negash, the modern economic sector (both public and private) proved too limited to accommodate secondary school graduates. Aware of their prospects of the future, from 1970 onwards secondary students had begun to stage demonstrations and boycott classes, a symbol of dissatisfaction which was also voiced by few members of the conservative elements. The church and the nobility, on the other hand, pointed out that those who passed through the modern schools were being disrespectful of their society and its institutions. They argued that there was very little that was Ethiopian in the curriculum. There was also dissatisfaction from abroad focusing on Ethiopia's extremely poor performance in its efforts to achieve universal literacy by the year 1980, according to the pledge given by Ethiopia at the conference on African education held in Addis Ababa in 1961.

In response to the above criticisms and dissatisfactions, the Imperial government made one of its boldest policy decisions, namely to conduct a thorough review of the educational sector (Wagaw 1979) and the Education Sector Review (ESR) was made up of 81 experts, (51 of whom were Ethiopian) was officially constituted in October 1971. It lasted until August 1972 with the following responsibilities: (i) to analyse Ethiopia's education and training system and its ability to promote economic, social and cultural development; (ii) to suggest, whenever necessary, ways to improve and expand the education and training system in order that it might achieve aims relevant both to society and the overall development of the country; (iii) to suggest ways in which education could best be utilized to promote national integration; and (iv) to identify priority studies and investments in education and training (Negash 1990).

The ESR then proposed the following three alternatives. The first alternative was a three-tier system based on six years of primary, four years of junior secondary and four years of secondary schooling (6+4+4 years). This system was expected to work with the introduction of a double shift system and the lengthening of the school year from 180 to 220 days. Alternative two, with which the ESR closely identified, called for a system based on four years of primary education (known as a minimum formation education) for the majority of the population. About 20% would then proceed to a four-year junior secondary programme. The best of those completing grade eight would be allowed to attend the four-year senior secondary programme. Alternative two with its 4+4+4 year system was slightly different from the first alternative, where the duration of primary education was six years. Alternative two was, no doubt, designed to limit the expansion of secondary education. On the other hand, the second proposal put strong emphasis on non-formal education, which would be institutionalised and programmed under a 'community practicum'. Alternative three was a modification of alternative two (4+2+4 years), where the junior secondary programme would be reduced from four to two years. It was suggested that students begin grade one at the age of nine (Wagaw 1979, Negash 1990).

The ESR regarded the existing educational management as too highly centralized to achieve the reforms with speed and efficiency. It asked that first-level educational matters be primarily the responsibility of the *awraja* and of the local people. At the secondary level, the *awraja* and the provincial educational officers would take over the programme (internet

information 1996). The report was not published until February 1974, which gave time for rumours to generate opposition to the ESR recommendations among students, parents and the teachers' union. Most resented what they considered to be the removal of education from its elite position. Many teachers also feared salary cuts. Strikes and widespread disturbances ensued, and the education crisis became a contributing factor in the imperial regime's fall later that year.

After the overthrow of imperial rule, the provisional military government dismantled the feudal socio-economic structure through a series of reforms that also affected educational development. In 1976 the new regime nationalized all private schools, except church affiliated ones, and made them part of the public school system. Additionally the government reorganized Haile Selassie I University and renamed it Addis Ababa University. It also initiated reforms of the education system based partly on the ESR recommendations and partly on the regime's socialist ideology. However, no meaningful educational reform occurred between 1975 and 1978 because of the social turmoil which pitted the regime against numerous opposition forces, including students.

The new education policy emphasized improving learning opportunities in the rural areas as a means of increasing economic productivity. It also decentralized control and handed over the operation of primary and secondary schools to the sub-regional level where the curriculum supposed to address local requirements. Students also began to use free textbooks in local languages. In late 1978, the government expanded the programme to include nine languages and adopted plans to add five others. The three stated aims for the school curriculum, according to the new educational policy were: (i) 'education for production', which relates practical and technical skills to an understanding of socialist modes of production and to attitudes expressing a respect and love for labour; (ii) 'education for scientific consciousness' emphasizing an environment for enquiry and experimentation, and the application of scientific methods to all aspects of learning; and (iii) 'education for socialist consciousness', which embraces the development of political consciousness, an understanding of the nature of change in the transition towards a socialist society, and the role of the individual and the masses in carrying out these changes (Hough 1987).

The new regime also worked towards a more even distribution of schools by concentrating its efforts on small towns and rural areas that had been neglected during the imperial regime. With technical assistance from the Ministry of Education, individual communities carried out the construction of primary schools. In large part because of such community involvement, the number of primary schools grew from 3,196 in 1974/75 to 7,900 in 1985/86 (the latest year for which figures were available in mid 1991), an average increase of 428 schools annually. The number of primary schools increased significantly in all regions. Primary school enrolment had also increased from about 957,300 in 1974/75 to nearly 2,450,000 in 1985/86. There were variations among regions in the number of students enrolled and still was a disparity in the enrolment of boys and girls. Nevertheless, while the enrolment of boys more than doubled, that of girls more than tripled. Urban areas had a higher percentage of children enrolled in schools, as well as a higher proportion of female students compared with rural areas. The same was true for junior and senior secondary schools. The number of schools and students doubled with a significant increase in female attendance, where the proportion of females in these schools increased from about 32% in 1974/75 to 39% in 1985/86. The number of teachers also increased, especially in senior secondary schools. However, this increase did not keep pace with student enrolment. The student-teacher ratio went from 44:1 in 1975 to 54:1 in 1983 in primary schools, and also increased from 35:1 in 1975 to 44:1 in 1983 in secondary schools.

Although the government achieved impressive improvements in primary and secondary education, prospects for universal education in the near future were not bright. In 1985/86, the latest year for which government statistics were available, enrolment in the country's primary, junior secondary and senior secondary school totalled 3.1 million students, up from the nearly 785,000 enrolled a decade earlier. Only about 2.5 million (42%) of the 6 million primary school-aged children were enrolled in school in 1985/86. Junior secondary school (grades seven and eight) enrolment amounted to 363,000, while at the secondary-school (grades nine through twelve) level, only 292,385 out of 5.5 million, or 5.3%, attended school. In addition, prospects for continued study for most primary-school graduates were slim. In 1985/86 there was only one junior secondary school for every eight primary schools and only one senior secondary school for every four junior secondary schools. There were many primary-school students for whom space would not be available and who would therefore most likely end up on the job market where work was already scarce for people with limited education (Internet Info. www.literacyonline.com).

With regard to the adult education, the government attempted twice to organize a literacy programme for adults. The first was in 1975-1976 during the Development through Cooperation Campaign (the *Zemecha*) when about 60,000 students, teachers, military personnel and civil servants were sent into the countryside to instruct the rural population in the line of the revolution. Adult literacy was seen as one of the campaign's tasks and according to official information a quarter million adults were mobilized and some 160,000 adults throughout the country were able to be literate. The second and relatively well-organized attempt was the National Literacy Campaign launched between 1979 and 1990. Established in 1979, the National Literacy Campaign Coordinating Committee managed to instruct about twenty million people and the rate of illiteracy was reduced from about 93% in 1975 to 22.8% in 1990 (Gobena, 1994). It is this internationally acclaimed national literacy campaign, that the research work examines.

Since 1991 the country has experienced a new political life under a new government and with new socio-economic policies. The federated state formed on an ethnic basis aimed at expanding education by regionalization. The new education and training policy proclaimed in 1994 gave the newly formed regions the right to use their own language for instruction, and the responsibility of providing primary education to its citizens. Some of the major changes brought to the education system of the country since the adoption of this new education policy, according to Shibeshi (2000), are:

Decentralization. Unlike in the past when the Ministry of Education was responsible for all aspects of public education, its responsibilities now have been reduced to general policy matters such as the setting of national educational policies and strategies and monitoring their implementation, determining and supervising the country's educational standards, preparing national examinations, and facilitating the expansion of the country's education. Accordingly, with the exception of higher educational institutions, which are under the central ministry, all schools and primary teacher training institutions are under the jurisdiction of the regions.

Change in structural system and curriculum. Under the new Education and Training Policy, the structure of the educational system is composed of 12 years of schooling with a 8+2+2 structure with higher education of 1-2 years of diploma and 3-5 years for undergraduate study. National examinations are to be conducted at the end of grades 8 and 10 to select those who will go to the general secondary and senior secondary schools respectively. Curriculum reform is one of the areas where the policy brought major changes. According to the new education policy, the curriculum will henceforth

be inspired by the value of indigenous culture, the teaching of democracy and democratic practices, and by the need for environmental protection (Negash 1996). Before decentralization, the development of curriculum and textbook preparation was the sole responsibility of the Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR) under the Ministry of Education. At present this responsibility remains totally with the ICDR only for secondary schools, and the curriculum design responsibility for primary level is divided between the centre and the regions. Thus, the ICDR prepares the flow chart and syllabus while the regions prepare the localized textbooks and teachers' guides.

Language policy. A policy guideline on the use of national languages as the medium of instruction was issued in 1991 by the then Council of Representatives of the Transitional Government. The new Education and Training Policy did not come up with a language policy of its own (when the new policy was declared in 1994, several languages were being used as mediums of instruction) but instead tried to rationalize the already implemented policy by emphasizing its pedagogical advantages.

However, the implementation of this policy was not without difficulty. As the new education policy defines primary education supposed to be a programme of eight years of education in which the mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction. In practice, according to Shibeshi (2000), it varies from region to region; for example five regions use only one language as a medium of instruction and in the rest of the regions the number of languages used varies from 2 to 12. In general 19 languages are now being used at the primary level. In such a way the country's educational policy has found itself under the confines of the politics of ethnic federalism, whether or not this will lead to national cohesion or fragmentation remains to be seen.

Within the current government's new educational policy, the adult literacy programme was not given the attention it required, since it was assumed that the continuous development of primary schools and the expansion of formal education would decrease the number of illiterate adults. On the basis of this principle at the national level, the adult education department was reduced to a panel and its staff was also reduced from 150 to 4. By doing so, the government is confronted with two problems, on the one hand, the country's present industrial-sector development is not in a position to facilitate conditions for those graduating from formal education, and on the other the government is not able to reach all school-aged children. The implementation of this education policy interrupted the adult literacy programme and millions of people who were once taught to read and write found themselves without guidance, instructional materials were damaged, centres were closed and committees were dissolved. These conditions resulted in a relapse into illiteracy for large numbers of people. Thus, although it is believed that the expansion of formal education reduces the number of illiterates in the long term, in a country such as Ethiopia, where there is an unstable educational policy, where human and material resources are limited and the longstanding traditional culture is still dominant, the development of adult literacy would have been given a proportional priority.

Conclusion

As it is discussed in chapter 2, the underlying factor for success in a programme such as a national adult literacy policy lies in the degree of participation that the adults themselves show. Although such a trend can be developed through a series of consultation, it is also dependent upon the culture and way of life a society exercised. Because traditional practices always hamper the development and implementation of modern attitudes, in a society where traditional relations still are valued persuading the subjects of the programme must be the starting point of any practical actions. Did the Ethiopian literacy campaign organizers considered this factor as a point of inception when planning the programme? In this chapter, in order to understand the steps taken by the government, an attempt was made to highlight some of the background information from a historical perspective.

Ethiopian society is a heterogeneous community with more than 70 different ethnic groups exercising different ways of life and speaking a multitude of languages and dialects. It is one of the oldest countries with its specific traditional values, a fact which is reflected in its social interactions, religion, culture, economy, system of administration, and education. The country's economy was, and is, at subsistence level, which is still traditional. Natural resources are not being exploited or utilized, which indicates that the society has not been open to modern attitudes and to the level of openness the modern world demands. The feudal socio-economic relations, which apparently were favoured by their religion (for that matter the Ethiopian Orthodox Church) and existed for centuries, developed a sense of subordination to certain groups, accepting things as they are with no intention to alter them. For the majority of society, until the 1974 revolution, wealth and power were a gift of God. Rulers are born rulers and society has to accept them as they are. For this reason, most rulers, whether they are at regional or national level, were shown no defiance although there were a few pockets of resistance. This held true for Teodros, Yohannes. Menelik and Haile Selassie till his overthrow.

In recent history of the country, although it was very limited, Haile Selassie tried to lay down some essential elements of the modern society by developing the infrastructure and building schools, medical centres, roads, post and telecommunication lines, a modern administrative system, and a modern army. He also laid the foundations for international relations with other countries, especially with Europe and the United States. His visits to Europe, his success in making Ethiopia one of the first members of the League of Nations, his engagement in African matters and his role in the non-alignment movement are also part his efforts in this regard. However, the development of the country was not able to reach the expected level and the majority of the society was living in a desperate situation. As time passed with the emergence of a new group in society – students and other members of the intelligentsia – Ethiopians began to fight for the rights of the majority of the society. Initially the movements were not organized and were exposed to government counter-measures but were able to leave behind a considerable historical legacy. In 1974 the situation changed rapidly and the country was ready for a more or less collective movement against the government and its policies, bringing the expulsion of the emperor and his regime. A new regime with a new system of administration emerged.

The political course pursued by the emperor was also reflected in the development of education and was unable to bring a noticeable change. Even with limited educational possibilities, the curriculum was designed to show subordination to the ruling elites and the system. Adult literacy, a programme introduced during the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie, was also with no encouraging results because it was not organized and put in practice on the interests of the adults. Instead it was intended to impress the international community. The

limited attempts made by NGOs such as the *Yemisrach Dimits* Literacy Campaign organized by the Lutheran Church were also unable to fulfil the expectations.

During the military administration, the government promised to improve the situation and create better educational facilities. The educational policy was changed and attention was given to the promotion of the ideal of scientific socialism and the improvement of production at different levels. The governments' proclamation that brought schools and their administrations under community control laid the foundation for the implementation of this new educational policy. In the meantime, the need for non-formal education was also highlighted and put into practice including the 1979-1990 national literacy campaign, assuming that such national action would develop support for government policy. In its actions, the military administration seems to have been different from its predecessors, but in practice it appeared to be following the same pattern as the previous administrations – imposing actions from above and failing to consult its subjects on matters of national interest.

Here it is not meant that all practical actions undertaken by the government failed to contribute to the country's development, as some have laid significant foundations in different sectors. The question is whether they did enough to promote modern attitudes among the people of this traditionally tight society and whether their actions – including the adult literacy campaign were planned on the demands and full participation of the subjects. In other words, were there grounds for such a nationwide action in terms infrastructure, resources, societal support and even the timing? Did the organizers realized that such a programme requires a through investigation of the past and present situation of the country, which are influential in the implementation process of the campaign? In the course of this analysis I shall try to answer these questions, especially in Chapter 6. The next chapter, however, considers how the adult literacy campaign was planned, organized and implemented and looks at what successes were registered in respect to the outlined aims of the campaign.

Chapter IV : THE NATIONAL LITERACY CAMPAIGN IN ETHIOPIA

In spite of being one of the oldest states and having its own written alphabet, the majority of the Ethiopia population lived for centuries without being able to read and write. In the earliest periods of traditional Ethiopia, reading and writing practices were left to members of the elites and those belonging to religious communities. Even during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie and after the country had apparently opened its doors to modernization, the art of writing and the ability to communicate through printed matter were still exercised only among specific groups in society. It took some time before it was realized that the development of a country depends to a large extent on its skilled manpower and that the government would have to show its political will by expanding education across Ethiopian society. Haile Selassie appeared to recognize the link between schooling and the modernization of the state machinery, and he contributed to the expansion of formal education and the formation of different institutions, including adult literacy. Following his intervention, the number of educational centres and participants showed a significant increase. But with the rapid growth in population and the chances of getting an education decreasing, Ethiopia on the eve of the 21st century had one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. This may have been one of the reasons why the revolutionary administration focused on the promoting the 11-year national literacy campaign. What were the main objectives of the campaign? How was it organized and implemented? What significant role did the population play? What was its success and what problems did the organizers encounter? In answering these and other questions, this chapter discusses the whole picture surrounding the Ethiopian national literacy campaign between 1979 and 1990. As background information, this chapter also traces some of the pre-campaign efforts.

4.1 Pre-campaign efforts

Although formal and secularly organized literacy education only began in Ethiopia half a century ago, historical and religious documents confirm the existence of earlier indigenous literacy programmes in many parts of the country.¹⁷ Pankhurst (1969), describing the existence of one of the oldest system of education in Ethiopia, writes: 'Education in Ethiopia was traditionally in the hands of the church ... It provided elementary and intermediate schools and Monastic Universities with branches devoted to theology, history, poetry, music, medicine and surgery, all of which function to this day, forming one of the oldest continuous systems of education in the world.' Throughout Ethiopia's long history, the responsibility for creating literates in the national language was assumed primarily by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Beginning perhaps as early as the 6th century, reading was taught to boys in churches, monasteries and in the compounds of wealthy feudal landlords (Wagaw 1979). The language of learning was Geéz, the ancient liturgical language and it was limited to the Bible and other religious works. The present Ethiopian writing system of Amharic and Tigrinya is believed to be derived from this ancient language. Its invention and the further development of the writing system, according to Sineshaw (1994), was certainly an immense creative contribution by Ethiopians to human civilization. In spite of this historical wealth of literacy (a remarkable intellectual achievement by any historical standards), Ethiopia's overall literacy rate remained very low. Of course, the expanding but still limited contacts with the outside world after the war with Italy (1941) brought about a relative interest in education. The growing number of civil servants and an expansion of commerce and trade encouraged people

¹⁷ Amare (1967), Pankhurst (1969), Levine (1974), Wagaw (1979), Sineshaw (1994).

to attend schools. An educational system to fulfil these demands came into being. For the first time, writing became a paying profession in which those with talent could profitably engage. During the 1940s and 1950s, some 520 primary and five secondary schools were opened (Amare 1991). There were then only 65,000 students in primary schools throughout the whole country and just under 1,900 students in secondary schools (NLCCC 1989).¹⁸ However, due to the non-availability of tertiary institutions, high school graduates had to be sent abroad for further studies at considerable expense to the government.

This shortcoming was partially overcome by the establishment of five colleges that could award first degrees during the 1950s and the government's priority was now directed at having a national university as soon as possible (Wagaw 1979). In the same period, the Ministry of Education announced that adult education was one of the projects for the future, and reported that already about 745 people (732 men and 13 women) had enrolled at night school. Although this shows that there was a general awareness of the importance of adult literacy programmes as a precondition for development, the government was unable to initiate an ambitious literacy campaign because many of its resources were absorbed by the formal education system. It was felt that the country's needs would be best served if the available resources were spent on the education of youth rather than on adult literacy (Amare 1991).

Nonetheless, some effort was already under way to initiate literacy programmes in the country. To mention some of them, in the late 1940s concerned civil servants – in cooperation with secondary school students and their teachers – reactivated adult literacy programmes (Wagaw 1977). In 1952, the MOE presented a '10 year Plan for the Controlled Expansion of Ethiopian Education', which included a chapter devoted to 'the development and controlled expansion of community schools for basic education'. The intent was well expressed:

At least equally important (to the need for formal education), if not even more important for the future progress of Ethiopia, is *the development of a system of education designed to promote mass literacy*, universalise the official national language, and to help the millions of Ethiopian children, youth and adults who are not selected for academic and technical preparation to do better the things which they are going to do any way- to live better, healthier and more productive life. (NLCCC 1981, italics added)

In fact, the central objective of this plan was to turn all primary schools into community schools, at the rate of 35 schools a year. To strengthen these efforts, in 1955 the Emperor issued a 'Literacy Proclamation' urging people to acquire literacy skills by attending schools in their spare time and by employing private teachers if they could. He said:

'We charge every illiterate Ethiopian between the age of 18 and 50 to learn in the time left over from his daily tasks, such fundamental education as will enable him to know Amharic reading and writing either at school, government and private, existing in his neighbourhood, or by employing a private teacher in his respective village or district.' (Quote from *Every Ethiopian Will Be Literate*, NLCCC 1981)

¹⁸ There are different figures concerning the number of students and schools during this period. For example Kiros (1990), based on the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts information year book 1942-43, showed that the number of schools and the number of students were 415 and 59,862 respectively. On the other hand, Negash (1990) showed that in 1943 there were 19,000 students in the country and six years later total enrolment had increased to just under 53,000. This enrolment, says Negash, continued to rise sharply and passed the 90,000 mark by 1954-55. UNESCO documents and other sources show different figures again. Whatever the exact figures, it is clear that there was a relatively rapid rate of growth in the number of schools and in the enrolment of students.

In 1958 the literacy effort was formalized when the government agreed with UNESCO to establish a centre to train educators of ‘fundamental skills’. The programme envisaged the training of entire families of prospective educators. The husbands were taught courses in teaching methodology, agriculture, community development, health and like; the wives studied home economics; the children were provided with elementary education. Over a period of two years some 200 such fundamental educators were trained, but when they went out to work in the field, the villagers received them coolly, believing they were being relegated to receiving a second-class education and in 1962 the entire programme had to be discontinued (Wagaw 1977). By 1964, the programme had been abandoned and all community schools, which were to include education for adults in their programmes, were reverted to primary schools.

In the meantime, according to MOE (1989), an adult education project known as *Yefidel Serawit* (Alphabet Army) and aimed at adults between the ages of 18 and 50 was formed and the National Literacy Campaign Organization (NLCO, a voluntary body to organize the activities of such programmes was created. This organization, the board of which was comprised of the Emperor and a number of other officials, claimed a total of 60,000 and 80,000 participants respectively at the end of 1969 (MOE 1989, Amare 1991). The results obtained according to these sources were as follows.

Table 4.1
Number of participants in the adult literacy programme, 1962-1969

Year	No. of participants
1962	13,280
1963	19,889
1964	26,977
1969*	7,500
Total	67,646

Source: ‘The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign. Retrospect and Prospect’, (1994) p. 10.

* No information is available for the period 1965-1968.

As the table shows, adult enrolment in the literacy programme dropped in 1969 to about 7,500. The reasons, according to Gobena (1994), were a lack of systematic organization and implementation methods; the proper involvement of all government organizations and the people in the implementation structure, a lack of adequate preparation for launching the programme, a lack of training of instructors and follow-up programmes, and the funds allocated to the programme were insufficient to meet the needs of the vast number of people interested. The adequacy of the data collected during this period is another factor to be considered. Although it does not coincide with the timeframe of the literacy programme mentioned above, the statistical information registered by Wagaw (1979) gives a different view of the attendance figures for 1969 and the total number of participants up to 1970 (see Table 4.2).

With the passing of time, the organization was criticized for failing to train its instructors well, certifying the students without attaining literacy proficiency, lacking adequate preparation for launching the programme and not requesting the proper involvement of the government, lacking general organization and having too few people in the implementation structure (Wagaw 1977, Gobena 1994). Despite these shortcomings, the NLCO seems to have

demonstrated to the nation that people were willing to volunteer their time and that wide-scale literacy proficiency was attainable even though difficult to arrange.

Table 4.2
Enrolment in the Ethiopian literacy programme, 1964-1970

Year	Male	Female	Total
1964	158,778	35,172	193,950
1965	107,660	14,747	122,407
1966	126,057	19,817	145,874
1967	129,527	23,630	153,157
1968	130,753	42,703	173,456
1969	183,535	45,332	228,867
1970	119,292	38,071	157,363
Total	1,193,602	278,551	1,472,153

Source: R.O. Niehoff & B.D. Wilder, 'Non-Formal Education in Ethiopia', p.171, cited in Wagaw (1977) *The Role of Adult Literacy in the Development Africa: A Case of Ethiopia*, p. 7.

In 1967 the government created a central coordinating unit under the Ministry of Education known as the Directorate of Adult Education and Literacy, which showed that the government was beginning to view the matter of adult literacy with some degree of seriousness. The department initiated modern literacy campaigns and produced reading materials for distribution to literacy classes. It also organized courses for literacy teachers and prepared certificates for graduates of literacy classes. At the same time the number of organizations engaged in teaching literacy expanded significantly. According to Wagaw (1977), by 1973 there were at least 20 different government, semi-government, private and religious organizations engaged in the dissemination of literacy skills in which one and a half million people were enrolled. Some of the organizations taught literacy as an end in itself, others tried to relate these skills to wider objectives. For instance, in the case of the armed forces and certain para-governmental and commercial organizations, literacy skills were considered as contributing to the productivity of the individual workers and hence to the organizations for which they worked.

By far the most successful literacy programme initiated during this period was the Literacy Campaign of *Yemiserach Dimits* (Voice of the Gospel), the biggest of the non-governmental literacy operations in rural Ethiopia (Bhola 1994) and launched in 1962 by the Protestant missionary groups who joined forces with a nationwide organization of Lutheran churches known as the Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus. The activities of the *Yemiserach Dimits* Literacy Campaign were mainly directed at the rural population. The campaign was operative in 12 of the then 14 administrative regions, targeting young adults between the ages of 15 and 25. The target groups were chosen for two reasons. In the first place the ages between 15 and 25 is the period when people marry and start families. It is very important for children to have literate parents. The other reason was that young people are supposed to overcome language difficulties with greater ease than the elderly can (teaching was given only in Amharic, author). Since about 95 per cent of the students in YDLC's literacy school were non-Amharic speaking this was an important feature. The main aim of the literacy programme was to make the ability to read and write (and also to do some arithmetic) accessible to as many as possible. Underlying this intention was a firm belief in the importance of literacy as a necessary means of improving living conditions in the broadest sense of the word. Here is the

aim of the campaign as it was contained in the tentative curriculum of YDLC in September 1970:

The aim of *Yemiserach Dimits* Adult Literacy is to teach adults reading, writing and the four steps of Arithmetic. Then the students shall be helped with follow-up literature in the manner of practicing better ways of using their vocation. It is also the aim of this programme to give basic moral teaching and emphasize to the students the value of good citizenship. (Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom 1973)

A fundamental characteristic of YDLC, according to the authors quoted above, was the large amount of autonomy given at the local level. The congregation and other community groups were responsible for employing teachers, building schoolhouses, and administering the funds allocated to them by the programme organizers. Adult teachers were recruited by the local school committees and employed by the literacy centres. They were mostly former students who had left secondary school for financial reasons and they were sent to a training college at Nejo (the former Wellega administrative region) for two years of training. With these organizational procedures in place, the campaign was able to mobilize more than 500,000¹⁹ participants for literacy instruction between 1962 and 1975, of which 30 per cent were adults, and the rest were youths. The organization operated as many as 1,672 literacy schools all over the country and had 2,324 full-time trained teachers. The campaign introduced several innovations such as a manageable organizational structure, new learning methods and materials, mobile libraries and rural memo-newspapers. Almost a million reading books and primers with 32 titles were published at a cost of Eth. birr 400,000.²⁰ In acknowledgement of its contribution to Ethiopian society, the Mohamed Pahlov and Medazhade K. Kluspekay Honorable Mention medal was awarded to the organization in 1970 (Sjöstroms 1973, 1977, 1983, Wagaw 1977, Amare 1991). But the programme was not without its problems, the main one being the low interest shown by adults in the programme. Some of the reasons indicated were: adults' unwillingness to be in the same class as children and women, the difficulty for adults to attend classes during the day because they are often busy with their normal tasks and the low level of motivation shown by the adults for the programme because they did not understand the need for education and the immediate economic value of being literate when they were still working on their plots of land.

The other large-scale literacy programme was the Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project launched with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Office (ILO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the imperial government. Ethiopia was one of 12 countries participating in the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) projected and implemented the Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project (WOALP – the Ethiopian programme was known under this name). It was undertaken in 1968 when the imperial Ethiopian government and UNESCO entered into an agreement to carry out a five-year experiment during which various methods and materials would be tested and a total of 128,000 people would be trained.

¹⁹. Again there are differences in figures from different sources. For instance, the number of people who received literacy instruction during this period according to Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom (1973) was about 475,000. During 1974/75, Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom (1977) said that 151,000 persons received such education. This shows that at the end of the programme, in 1975, about 626,000 people had received literacy instruction under this campaign. On the other hand, in the same report they claimed that a total of 535,391 students had participated in the campaign by December 1975. The number of schools operating during this period, according to the above-mentioned authors, was about 1,672 in 12 of Ethiopia's then 14 provinces. Amare (1991) says that almost half a million people received literacy instruction in 1,773 schools before the programme was terminated.

²⁰. At that time it was about 190, 500 US dollars.

The general purpose of the project was to assist the government of Ethiopia in organizing, implementing and evaluating a work-oriented adult literacy project closely linked with rural development, as well as with industrial/vocational training (UNESCO 1976). The programme became operative in October 1968 and was terminated in 1973 (UNESCO 1976).²¹ According to the MOE (1974), by June 1973, close to 25,000 learners in 885 classes with 783 instructors were engaged in WOALP. But there are doubts concerning the data and even the success of the programme itself. For example, Wagaw (1977), arguing the shortcomings of the programme, suggested that the programme's justification – if any – must be in terms of the development of materials and methods and it should be seen as a pilot project. According to Wagaw, there is no data as to how many people became literate under this programme. The original programme was later reduced to 78,000 and it was found that even this modest figure was high. Eventually only some 1,700 finished the first phase, only half of these enrolled for the second phase and no one was able to enter the third and final stage.²²

A more recent contribution to literacy activities came from the Development through Cooperation Campaign, also known as the *Zemecha* Campaign. By January 1975, nearly 60,000 young people,²³ mainly secondary school and university students, plus large numbers of teachers and members of the armed forces left for the countryside for two years to carry out development tasks. Literacy work, one of the campaign activities, was started in four major languages – Oromo, Wolayta, Tigrigna and Somali – in addition to Amharic, Ethiopia's official language. During this period, among many other tasks undertaken, the campaigners registered over three-quarters of a million people, of whom 160,000 eventually finished the literacy course (Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom 1977, MOE 1986, 1989, Searle 1991, Amare 1991, Bhola 1994). According to the MOE, the campaign had a literacy component in its multi-dimensional aims of awakening, sensitizing, activating and organizing.

The instructional materials and methods used by the literacy organizations, as Wagaw (1977) indicated, were different: The National Literacy Campaign Organization used the traditional alphabet approach where the complete alphabet is memorized before the student begins to assemble the letters into words and phrases. Other organizations used a modified Laubach approach taking advantage of the phonetic nature of the Amharic alphabet, its logical structure, and Laubach-type representations to teach the alphabet and the words simultaneously, whereby the student can move rapidly on to phrases and sentences.

In general, literacy programmes in Ethiopia in the pre-1979 period were carried out by private-based, voluntary organizations and sometimes by governmental agencies. Literacy instruction was mainly conducted to enable adults to read and write in a situation where a multi-ethnic and multilingual cultural tradition was the country's characteristic feature (NLC Office and Adult Education Department 1981). Some of the programmes, for instance YDLC and EWLP, were also intended to provide a basic social and civic education, make literacy work-oriented and promote socio-economic changes. The campaigns were able to introduce several innovations in adult-oriented learning methodology and the demonstration and utilization of different teaching materials, organize mobile libraries in some areas and rural memo-newspapers (done by YDLC) and create some awareness of the advantages of literacy

²¹. Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom argued that the programme was terminated in 1975.

²². WOALP literacy instruction was divided into three sequential stages. The first presented the skills of basic literacy and numeracy. The second was called a 'language programme' based primarily upon the reading of books designed to increase the students' reading skills and vocabulary. The third, or 'follow-up', stage was to consist of the provision of a travelling 'suitcase' library transported from village to village, with students being visited by a teacher about once a month.

²³. The author was one of the participants.

among adults. The use of some five languages as a medium of instruction (mostly in the Development through Cooperation Campaign) and the link of the central objectives of the campaign to the daily needs of the learners were among the positive results registered by these efforts. The programmes were, naturally, not without problems. These included: drop-out rates from the literacy classes with men saying that they were not willing to sit with children and women in the same classes, the inability of adults to see the direct economic value of the programme; day-time programmes clashing with their daily tasks; and language problems and limited organizational and structural means of reaching learners. How much did these positive and negative results influence the 1979-1990 literacy campaign? In the forthcoming paragraphs of this study, attention will be paid to this question.

4.2 Preparation of the first nationwide literacy campaign

In 1979, based on the foundations of the pre-revolutionary literacy campaign attempts and the National Work Campaign for Development through Cooperation, the government announced the launch of its National Literacy Campaign. Internal and external factors can be mentioned as motives for such a campaign. The mid and late 1970s was a time when revolutionary activities tried to shape the character of many states, especially Third World countries. The revolutionary movements that took place in such countries as the former USSR, China, Vietnam, Cuba and even Tanzania on the African continent were generally perceived positively. The literacy achievements in these nations in particular inspired the Ethiopian post-revolutionary leadership to emulate a similar large-scale literacy campaign (Sineshaw 1994). Such a campaign, says Sineshaw, might have also been thought of as a revolutionary educational mechanism by which the new political leadership could simultaneously win national and international recognition. Hoben (1988), who shared this idea, says that the literacy campaign in Ethiopia was initiated by a revolutionary socialist government that had just come to power and was interested in consolidating its support among poor, disadvantaged or non-urban groups within the nation.

Two questions can be asked regarding the intentions and motives of the government in running a national literacy campaign. What were the driving forces behind the programme and why was it so important to organize such a campaign at that particular time? The answers to these questions are bound up in the government's position after having controlled the political unrest within the country and the armed conflicts in the east and in some parts of northern Ethiopia. Within the country, as we have seen earlier, the government was able to liquidate major opposition movements including some members of the government who were reluctant to accept the introduction of new form of administration. Regional administrations were handed to PMAC members to facilitate a central line of command in the regions. The political course of the country was left in the hands of the newly formed political body known as COPWE, which was seen as the heart of the country's future. Development programmes, including education, were forced to get the blessing of this body before they were put into practice. Mass organizations and professional associations were made to accept and apply all national plans and mobilize the entire nation in line with the government's policies. In doing so, the administration was convinced that its acceptance and further mobilization of society could produce even better results if a national campaign for educating adults were planned and implemented. The timing was important because it was felt by the administration that its leading role in society was growing and that by introducing such a socially relevant programme it would win the support of the population.

Although the necessity of the literacy campaign was not in question, there were, however, some concerns within some sectors of society about the timing and steps to be taken

before the campaign started. At that particular time, the Ethiopian society was just starting to recover from the war that had absorbed both material and human resources. The extraordinary nature of the military campaign had also hit the country's economy badly and, even psychologically, the society was not ready for such a national programme. In general, the literacy campaign was announced before Ethiopia had time to recover from its recent past and it was comprehended as an additional government-imposed task in which people were not motivated to take part.

Whatever motives could have been suggested, according to the organizers, it was the following prerequisites that stimulated the launch of the campaign at that 'historic' time: (i) a national determination for change, expressed in the revolution itself, and in the subsequent declaration of national policy;²⁴ (ii) the knowledge that, with the means of production in their hands, the people of Ethiopia could now determine their own future; (iii) a firm organizational base in the thousands of Peasants' and Urban Dwellers' Associations; and (iv) linkages between these associations and the educational system, which emphasized that educational services were for the advancement of the people as a whole and were not confined to a restricted elite (NLCCC 1989). It was on this basis that the National Literacy Campaign Coordinating Committee (NLCCC), a policy-making body, was established by the Council of Ministers in May 1979, and that on 7 July 1979, the National Literacy Campaign was launched.

4.2.1 Objectives and strategies

The general objectives of the literacy campaign were stated as follows: (i) to emancipate the masses from illiteracy without hampering their day-to-day activities and to do so in the languages they understood best; (ii) to strengthen and upgrade the skills acquired through literacy and lay down a strong foundation for further education; (iii) to encourage and promote the development of political consciousness, economic prosperity and social maturity of the masses in the context of functional literacy; (iv) to introduce adult literates to revolutionary literature so that they could utilize the information for their own development; (v) to enable adults to use simple and practical calculations based on four operations that could be applied in their day-to-day activities; and (vi) to give transitional education to adults so that they might not be limited to their original localities and traditional occupations (NLCCC(MOE 1986)).

Based on these objectives a national plan to eradicate illiteracy by 1987 was thus adopted. According to the NLCCC, this proposed plan sought to eradicate illiteracy first from all urban areas in the initial two rounds²⁵ and subsequently to penetrate into rural Ethiopia. This, as the report describes, was in no sense a selective or discriminatory measure. It was rather a strategy intended to gain initial experience under relatively controllable conditions before the great leap was taken into the rural areas. In fact, the campaign was effective from the start in most of the urban and surrounding areas.

Consistent with the points mentioned above, the aim of the Ethiopian literacy campaign was to reduce the prevailing economic, social and cultural backwardness and to improve the living standards of the people. Although the rationale behind such a wide-scale literacy programme was set out as the government's intention to free the vast majority of the society from a

²⁴ This refers to the announcement of the Programme of the National Democratic Revolution of Ethiopia by the PMAC (Provisional Military Administrative Council) that includes the general pledge: 'All necessary measures to eliminate illiteracy will be taken'.

²⁵ 'Round' refers to a period of time during which one part of the campaign programme is carried out (Tsegaye 1991).

centuries-old inability to read and write, certain conclusions can be drawn from the nature of the administration and the historical moment of the period: in the long run the campaign was also projected to serve as an instrument for the social legitimacy of the administration. The war in the east and the north against opposing political movements inside the country had placed the competence of the military administration in serious question. People were asking what the differences in their lives would be under a new system of administration. Thus, the government's plan to promote a new educational policy in general, and a nationwide literacy programme in particular, was directed at regaining the support of the Ethiopian people. The choice of focusing on an adult literacy programme was in this respect systematic and aimed at sensitive issues and different groups in society. The use and development of various languages for instance, despite its pedagogical relevance, was in itself an issue of a political nature.

4.2.2 Planning

In drawing up the seven-year literacy programme the following points were considered by the NLCCC:

- The Ethiopian population was taken to be 30,825,000. Out of this total, 26,611,000 (86% of the total population) were counted as rural inhabitants.
- At the time of planning, the number of people who were literate or who were becoming literate was estimated to be 9,353,999, in both rural and urban areas.
- Out of the total rural population it was assumed that 6,643,000 could be taught to be literate by the end of the first round of the campaign.
- Taking these points into account it was assumed that the number of people between the ages of 8 and 49 who should attend literacy classes would be 16,390,000 minus 6,643,000 = 9,747,000 (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3
Plan of action to eradicate illiteracy from rural Ethiopia in seven years

Year	Population between the ages of 8-49 inclusive (1)	Those who would be literate		Total figure of literate population (4)	Total figure of illiterate population (5)
		Those who can complete grade four (2)	Those who participate in the literacy programme (3)		
1979	16,390,000	–	–	6,643,000	9,747,000
1980	16,783,000	90,000	1,000,000	7,733,000	9,050,000
1981	17,133,000	114,000	1,187,000	9,034,000	8,099,000
1982	17,528,000	246,000	1,375,000	10,655,000	6,873,000
1983	17,927,000	189,000	1,563,000	12,407,000	5,520,000
1984	18,317,000	249,000	1,752,000	14,408,000	3,909,000
1985	18,696,000	310,000	1,940,000	16,658,000	2,038,000
1986	19,200,000	415,000	2,127,000	19,200,000	–

Notes: 1. These figures do not include those below the age of 8 or over 49.

2. It is assumed that those who participated in the literacy programmes would eventually become literate.

Source: 'The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign, Its Achievements and Prospects', NLCCC (1986) p. 6.

There are some points which need clarification. For instance, regardless of the fact that at the beginning of the campaign about 93% of Ethiopia's population was known to be illiterate, point 2 (above) shows that about 30% of the total population were literate or in the process of

becoming literate. Point 4 gives no indication as to whether the assumed figure of those who between the ages of 8 and 49 (16,390,000) was the total number or only the rural population. Lastly, there was an assumption in point 3 that the first campaign of its type would show enormous results in the first round. This turned out to be far from reality.

The information given by Sineshaw (1994) offers a somewhat different picture of the planning. According to him, the seven-year plan was based on an estimated national population figure of 26.6 million in 1974, 18.5 million of whom were believed to be over the age of 10. It was this latter group which was identified as the ENCL's main target group and was split unevenly between rural areas (16.5 million) and urban centres (2 million).²⁶ The estimates also claimed that 5% to 8% of the rural population and 48% of the urban population were literate. The difference in such baseline figures can only be put down to the absence of a definite and complete national population census. There is, of course, no doubt that during the campaign period the majority of the Ethiopian population were not able to read or write and such a campaign was expected to bring about a significant change in this state of affairs. But in order to begin such a campaign it has to be based on basic and traceable data regarding the number of adults who are in need or seem to be the potential target groups. Such baseline figures are crucial at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages. It gives the initial target and the expected result, guides the campaign's progress and indicates the programme's ups-and-downs. The Ethiopian literacy campaign suffered from the lack of such basic information but despite all these problems related to basic data, the National Literacy Campaign Coordinating Committee (NLCCC) accepted as its working base figure the 1974 estimate that put 13% of the population above the age of ten as having already attained some level of literacy (NLCCC 1981).

4.2.3 Organization of the campaign

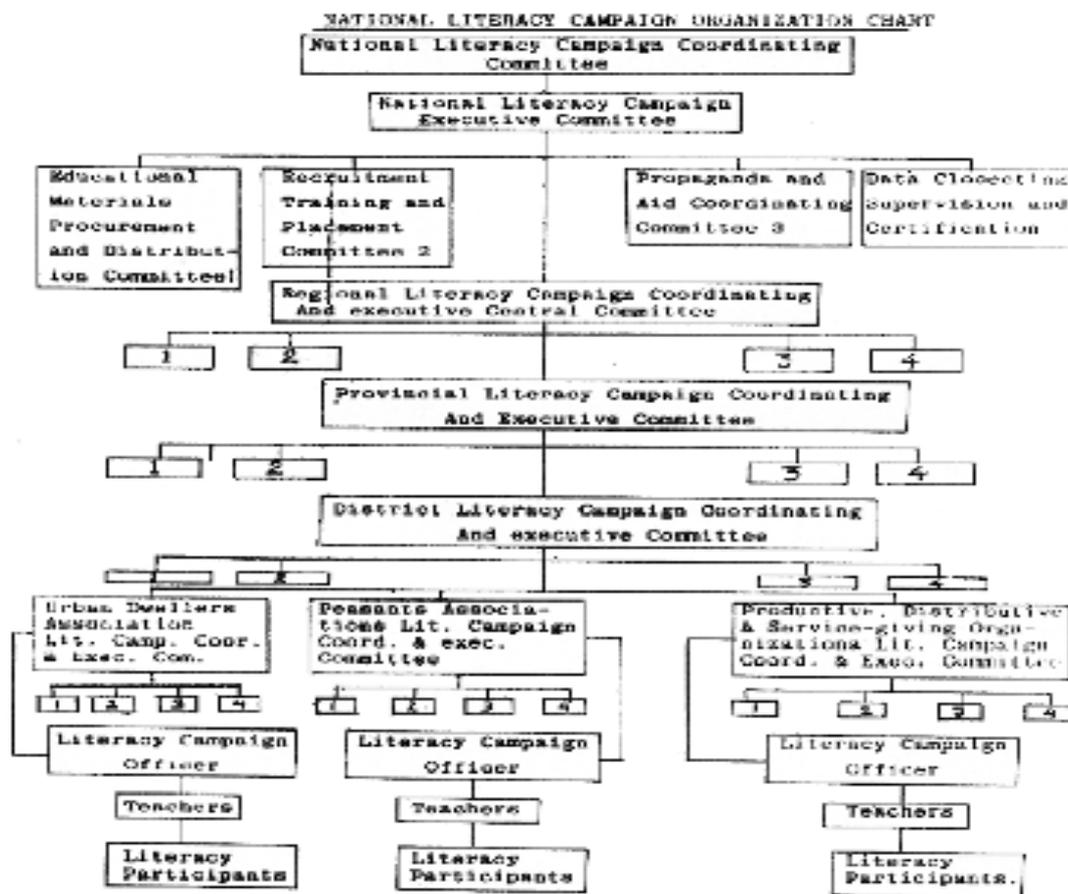
Structural set-up

One important precondition set at the beginning of the campaign was the formation of national literacy campaign's structure with its sub-committee and regional and local branches. Thus, the literacy campaign in Ethiopia was managed by the National Literacy Campaign Coordinating Committee set up in May 1979. Some 28 representatives, according to NLCCC (1986), Amare (1991), Bhola (1994) and Sineshaw (1994),²⁷ from government ministers and agencies, mass organizations, professional associations and religious institutions were brought together to form this senior body of the campaign. This was done for two purposes: to involve the different sectors of society in the national campaign and get assistance for its implementation; and to assure the adult participants that the campaign had the support of all the institutions who were looking for an improvement in the lives of the adults. The involvement of these different institutions contributed to the programme in different ways – with instruction materials and curriculum development, financial contribution, logistics and transportation, medical services and security arrangements etc. However, the campaign was without direct responsibility and authority. The members assigned to form the different level committees were supposed to do this work part-time, in addition to their regular duties. Moreover most committee members also had different additional obligations in which their active participation was expected. To ensure that the campaign benefited from the professional expertise of the Department of Adult Education, the literacy campaign's

²⁶ Urban centres, according to this information, were understood to be those areas with 2,000 inhabitants or more.

²⁷ NLCCC (MOE 1989) gives 36.

Figure 4.1. The Ethiopian national literacy campaign organization chart.



Adopted from NLCCC, 1989.

activities were attached to this department and staff members from this unit were assigned as secretaries at all levels in the literacy committees. Community involvement in and support of the campaign were secured by having individuals from various sectors of society serve on the different committees of the literacy campaign (Amare 1991). Here one has to be cautious in drawing such a conclusion because of the fact that although at the national level the management and administration of the literacy campaign and the daily activities of the programme were run by the executive committee chaired by the Ministry of Education and this was replicated at regional, provincial, district and local levels, the administration of adult education at the provincial and district levels was not as effective as at the central level and the professional manpower support decreased at lower levels. For instance, at the provincial level, the adult education department was not sufficiently staffed, and at district level the administration of adult education was given to the coordinator of the Community Skills Training Centre (CSTC) as an additional duty, which was an unsatisfactory arrangement.

The literacy campaign was run by executive committees structured to cover the various tasks, which had to be planned, coordinated and then implemented if the campaign was to be successful. For the purpose of coordination, each level of the literacy committee was supported by the following sub-committees:

- The Educational Materials Procurement and Distribution Committee was responsible for the preparation, production and distribution of materials to be used at the various campaign centres.
- The Recruitment, Training and Placement Committee was responsible for the selection and training of teachers.
- The Propaganda and Aid Coordinating Committee was responsible for the mobilization of materials and financial resources at a national and international level.
- The Data Collection, Supervision and Certification Committee was responsible for the appraisal of teaching effectiveness and the issuing of certificates to successful adult learners (see figure 4.1). What was troublesome in its practical application was the notion of the structural set-up, which was based on strict centralism where the flow of information was mainly in one direction (top – bottom) and the reverse flow was only for reporting. Such a centrally controlled structural set-up exposed the programme to some problems: it was bureaucratic and left no space for regional or local initiatives; it was obligatory because fear of its failure would initiate inaccuracy in documentation and reporting and it was inflexible with no space for independent action at the regional and local level, which in the end placed the results under suspicion.

The role of organizations

With regard to the contribution by mass organizations and professional associations, it should be noted under what circumstances and for what purpose the organizations were set up and what role was expected from them in supporting the literacy campaign. For a general understanding of the situation, each of these organizations is now considered in the light of these questions. In the Ethiopian situation, organizations and professional associations that contributed to the implementation of the literacy programme were the Peasants' and Urban Dwellers' Association, the teachers', workers', youth, women's and religious organizations and many other community-based action groups.

At the time of the campaign, and especially after the nationalization of rural land, peasants were organized at local, district, sub-provincial, provincial and national levels with the objectives of mobilizing the entire rural society for the implementation of the national objectives of the revolution. In the proclamation, every farming household was allowed usufruct over as many as ten hectares, although this was not put in practice, and peasant associations as an organ of the government were established. There was supposed to be a peasant association allocated to each eight-hundred-hectare area, with wide local powers replacing the old regime's sub-district administrators. Leaders of the local peasant associations were elected at the general assembly of all farmers in the respective areas. Thus, in the rural areas more than 7.2 million peasant households were organized in 25,000 local peasant associations or rural *kebeles*. They were given authority over internal security and economic life and were also made responsible for the equitable redistribution of land within their jurisdictions (Marcus 1994).

The district, provincial and regional leaders of the peasant associations were also elected from the representatives of the local, district and provincial leaders respectively with the aim of interpreting and implementing the national programme of their association and the government within their respective administrative regions. Elected leaders were of two types: the executive committees that represented the local community at all levels and the judicial committees responsible for mediating disputes among members. Both committees were also assisted by security members, known as revolutionary guards, who were also elected by the general assembly. The majority of these leaders were serving their association in combination with their normal duties. Only a certain number of the elected leaders could read and write

and they were sometimes dependent on the help of literate colleagues, which was a major problem regarding the effectiveness of their work. The national peasant association established at the national conference with representatives from local, district, provincial and regional leaders was responsible for the formation of a national framework plan of action on the basis of the government's plan. At this level elected leaders were literate and full-time workers of the association.

The formation of such associations in the initial period was accepted by the farmers with mixed feelings. For some of the members it was a step towards an improvement in their situation. Self-administration together with the ownership of their plots of land, which contributed to the productivity of their efforts, was seen as a positive contribution of the new government and the farmers' participation in some association activities was encouraging. But for others it was not seen as a positive process. Because of the long tradition of central administration, some farmers were sceptical about the practicality of the transition. Such an attitude was also supported by former landowners who assumed that the new administrative organ, with no experience of such responsibility, would not be able to keep its promises. However, regardless of the scepticism, the associations continued to exist, and as time passed they became passive in the performance of their duties.

With the proclamation and nationalization of urban land and extra houses in the urban areas (26 July 1975), an association of urban dwellers – a neighbourhood organization known as *kebeles*, the urban equivalent of the peasants' associations – was set to be organized. This government proclamation also allowed for individuals to own one house and to use as many as 500m² for residential purposes, and extra houses and urban land were confiscated to be used as government property and to be administered by the *kebeles* with their elected representatives. Although with the proclamation *kebeles* or neighbourhood associations were seen as self-administering units in the urban areas, they were a centrally controlled organ of the government. The election of local, higher and municipality-level leaders was monitored by government representatives in order to control the outcome. Similar to the rural peasants' associations, there were also two types of leaders of the urban *kebeles*: the executive committees and the judicial committees with security members elected from the inhabitants with a responsibility for security matters within their jurisdiction. Elected representatives of urban dwellers' associations were also supposed to serve their *kebeles* in combination with their normal duties, i.e. in their free time, at weekends or in the evenings. In addition, by special governmental directive, on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons *kebele* representatives were free from their regular duties and were supposed to be at their respective *kebele* offices to serve the people. Because in most places teachers were elected for such positions and they had to go to the *kebeles* on Tuesdays and Thursdays, schools were obliged to schedule free afternoons on these days or combine classes with other groups. What was different to urban *kebeles* was that they were formed on the basis of the number of inhabitants (the minimum number to form an urban *kebele* was 2,000 residents) residing in the given area and that there was no national association representing urban dwellers. The highest level of urban dwellers' association was the municipality with its mayor at the top. Every municipality has its own domain, duty and responsibility. Thus, on the basis of this proclamation, the 3.8 million people living in the country's 315 urban centres were organized into 1,260 *kebeles* of which 285 were in the capital city (NLCCC 1989).

The Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Union (CELU), an organization which was formed long before the revolution and contributed to the fall of the monarchy, was also reorganized and shaped so that it could be the 'backbone' of the revolution. Basically the structural set-up of this organization was based on the existence of industrial or agricultural plantations and on

the number of labourers working there. Thus, because most industrial working areas and agricultural plantations were found in specific regions and administrations, their organization did not follow the existing governmental line of administration. Instead they were first organized at the local level and these local organizations were brought under 11 different branches such as transport, textile and agricultural sectors to form the national association.

To mobilize the entire nation, the government also established different associations based on age, sex and profession. The Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association (REYA) and the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (REWA) were among the newly created associations to support the revolution by mobilizing their respective members. Membership of the youth associations was within the 14-28 age bracket, with no restrictions on sex, area of residence, occupation or social status. Membership of REWA on the other hand was for all women aged 15 and over with no restriction on area of residence or occupation. Thus, both associations were organized from the local to the national level and followed the governmental line of administration. The main objectives of these associations were to support the government's political course and to mobilize their members to implement the drafted plan of actions.

Professional organizations for teachers, writers, and musicians were among the associations formed during this time with the aim of bringing together as many different professionals as possible under the ideals of the government's social, economic and political plan. The structural set-up of these professional organizations was again dependent on the number of members and they were, thus, on some occasions organized only at the national level as was the case of the writers' association. But when the number of professionals was high enough for the association's basic membership, as was the case with the teachers' associations, the structural set-up followed the pattern of the government's line of administration. There were also some traditional, and rather classical, forms of community gatherings such as religious and small neighbourhood meetings known as *Idir* (community gathering for difficult periods, mostly following deaths). These gatherings did not have a standard form of structural set-up but did have their own regulations, and were mostly locally oriented and formed on the basis of the goodwill of the community members.

During the years of the literacy campaign, the programme was one of the main social activities of these organizations. Structurally, except for the locally oriented traditional community gatherings, the rest were members of the main literacy committees and sub-committees at their different levels starting from the centre out to the local areas. In addition to this, they mobilized their members for the campaign in teaching or learning. At the top of their annual work-plan was the mobilization of their members for the implementation of the literacy campaign. They all made substantial financial and material contributions to the literacy campaign but there were some differences in organizations' obligations and duties. For example, following the proclamation for the Administration and Control of all Schools by the people (1976), local rural peasants' associations and urban *kebeles* were given a general responsibility to promote education, and literacy in particular. Thus, for these two residentially based associations the literacy campaign was one of their primary tasks. They were supposed to orient and prepare their areas for the campaign, look after the instruction sites, exercise their powers and encourage adults to attend literacy classes and follow the day-to-day implementation of the programme. Because the implementation of the literacy campaign took place within most of these *kebeles*, it was their responsibility to provide some 1.9 million instructors with food and shelter (NLCCC 1989). Teachers' associations were asked to be active in selecting and training instructors and to play the leading role in instructing adults, while youth and women's associations were expected to mobilize their illiterate members and make them attend the literacy programme and at the same time be

active in the selecting and training of adult instructors. The question here is whether mobilization helped in putting into practice the idea of teaching adults more adequately. The NLCCC advocates that the participation of the above-mentioned organizations was satisfactory. One report generalizes their participation as follows.

Efficient government organization, even when linked to the national, regional and sub-regional levels of mass organizations, had to be provided with an action framework at community level. This was achieved through the peasant Association and Urban Dwellers Associations (*Kebeles*), supported by local Youth Associations, Teachers' Associations and Women's Associations. This crucial element therefore was a mechanism for mobilizing the communities, ensuring their participation and encouraging the development of a particular enthusiasm which has included massive financial and materials support for the campaign. (NLCCC 1981)

Notwithstanding the contribution that organizers brought to the implementation of the literacy campaign, it is important to remember that there were mixed feelings of regarding the support for these organizations. First, for most of the organizations, the campaign was an assignment they had to accomplish. The organizations and professional associations were also supposed to be involved in different additional duties of the revolution besides their normal work and the literacy campaign was seen as a yet another additional task. In most urban dwellers' associations, for example, teachers had to take on extra responsibilities and were even expected to abandon their teaching duties on Tuesdays and Thursdays in order to fulfil their commitment towards the urban dwellers' associations. On many other occasions and in committee workgroups, they were invited to contribute their time and know-how, which could take up their evenings, weekends and even vacation time. Put simply, the literacy campaign was extra work for them. This was also true for other associations including the rural peasants' associations. In contrast with others, peasants' associations lacked the experience to take on such tasks and maintain them, and in most cases their leaders were themselves illiterate and communication with their areas was done orally. Such a set-up was unlikely to attract the expected level of support required to make the programme a success. The literacy campaign suffered not only the direct support of these organizations but also the necessary creative and motivational input it needed. Second, because the programme had never had any input from its future adult participants, organizations were asked to force adults to show up for the programme, which was not a good sign. In urban areas, for instance, adults who were unwilling to appear for literacy classes, with the exception of those who were exempt from the programme because of their age or for medical reasons, were denied the services of the cooperative shops where goods were sold relatively cheaply. In doing so the leaders of the organizations were exposed to two problems. They were supposed to force local residents to participate in a programme that they neither fully understood nor accepted, thus creating tension in relations with the electorate; and the organizers were confronted with negative attitudes because they had had to use direct or indirect measures to force people to attend classes. Such practical problems placed the support for the programme in question.

One important point to mention here is the contribution and support that were given to the efforts of the Ethiopian literacy campaign organizers by different international agencies, and governmental and non-governmental organizations. International organizations like UNESCO, the World Bank, the FAO, UNICEF and other NGOs contributed considerably to the campaign. In addition to the Eth. Birr 5.85 million²⁸ of financial and instructional material support, the campaign also received the support of specialists and literacy experts (NLCCC

²⁸. It was about 2.8 million US dollars.

1989). UNESCO, for example, helped the campaign by offering literacy-related ideas, information and skills to improve the teaching-learning process, administration and data collection activities.

Preparing the adult students

An apparently well-thought-out programme, an efficiently organized and structured campaign and fully qualified instructors with appropriate teaching methods and materials can achieve nothing unless the programme participant is well prepared and motivated. Adults are not ignorant. They are life-oriented with developed practical experience in carrying out their individual and social obligations formed over years of cultural practices and passed on from one generation to the next. Literacy classes, in this regard, are expected to help these adults in combining this skill with the use of printed matter. Thus, the steps taken to instruct adults to be part of such a programme should consider the participants' specific circumstances and realities. Attention has to be paid to their customs, way of life, inclination and most of all their primary needs. They have to be convinced, encouraged and made to see that taking part in the programme is their part of the bargain. Such an attitude can be created with continuous consultation and discussion with the adults themselves.

In this respect, as some NLCCC documents show, the campaign was viewed as a national cultural process rather than an individual opportunity for educational advancement. It was determined that the campaign would be nationwide, with positive discrimination towards the inhabitants of rural areas and towards women. It was believed that a voluntary approach only would not be adequate and it should be considered the duty of adults to participate as learners. Participation in the programme was not only required by law, but was equally a social obligation imposed on the community. By raising such phrases as 'the campaign was organized by the community, for the community and in conditions familiar to the community', the organizers indirectly pushed adults to commit themselves to the programme. Besides, by using the existing governmental mass media (TV, radio, newspapers, and journals etc.) repeated information was given by the organizers to draw people's attention to the ideals and the main aims of the literacy campaign. Every governmental and mass organizations' day-to-day activities were directly or indirectly affected by the literacy campaigns 'urgent' duties.

As part of the preparation for the campaign, the organizers conducted two- and three-day seminars and workshops at different levels for the local representatives of the mass organizations and members of the literacy campaign committees. The main objective of the seminars was to give the participants a general overview of the campaign in terms of planning and implementation. Directives were given at the seminars by the head of state and the chairman of the NLCCC at the central level and by the regional and district administrators in their respective areas calling upon organizations and their leaders to mobilize their constituencies. A promise was also made by the campaign participants to do their utmost in the implementation of the literacy programme. To 'secure' community involvement and support for the campaign, individuals from various sectors of society were invited to join the campaign's different committees and sub-committees.

The other major step taken in preparation for the literacy campaign was the choice of instructional sites, which was organized in small groups, sometimes looking at the distances between formal school areas and the peasants' settlements in that particular area and also at the number of people already able to read and write. Individuals or groups of people who were familiar with the area were consulted and then the main actors of the campaign, the learners, were informed through their representatives that a campaign was due to be carried out in their area and were asked to prepare shelter and food for the instructors who would arrive in due course.

Reactions differed. While some welcomed the programme as a chance for better opportunities in their lives, others indicated that the programme had no meaning for them as they were too old to sit in classes. The local saying was *timihirit belijinet* ('education must be at a younger age'). Rural peasants in particular were seriously critical of the timing when it clashed with their seasonal work. The organizers presented the programme to the adults indirectly. The question to consider here is whether this was enough in terms of preparing them for such a difficult task as learning when a successful literacy campaign demands: (i) strongly motivated adults convinced of the advantages of literacy; (ii) a careful approach to the adults as they sometimes feared unacceptable treatment regardless of their age; and (iii) the programme had to rely on the subjects' own habits and culture. These and others questions will be discussed in the next chapter when we look at the problems faced during the campaign.

Organization of literacy classes and instructor's preparation

The literacy instruction consisted of two stages: the beginners and the post-literacy programme. The campaign was carried out in cycles of two rounds every year, each round lasting four months. The participants normally received a total of 288-312 hours (18 hours a week) of instruction during the four-month course which included reading, writing and numeracy classes. Tests would be administered at the end of the course and certificates would be awarded to those who passed.

For those who failed the test, an additional 288 hours of remedial instruction were arranged during the second round, which took place in the second half of the year. The course was offered concurrently with that given to fresh recruits comprising mainly of those who had been unable to attend during the beginners' period. Because this round was mainly aimed at those who were unable to respond to the first call, it was known as a 'mop-up' or 'remedial' programme. In most instances, however, the repeaters from the previous round attended the same class as the new recruits. To those who had successfully completed the first phase of the programme and had obtained their literacy certificates a follow-up or post-literacy course was offered during this period. This part of the course, which was given over a period of 120 hours, constituted the second stage of the literacy programme. Upon completion, participants had received a total of 408-432 hours of instruction, which is equivalent to the first two years of education in the formal system.

Most literacy centres operated four times a day, each shift lasting for two hours: 6:00 am to 8:00 am, 9:00 am to 11:00 am, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, and 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Participants chose a suitable time to attend depending on the nature of their occupation. Classes were held in various places: schools, old buildings, under trees, in mosques and church compounds etc. The organization of the programme also consisted of preparing and training instructors and teaching materials. Because one of the basic principles behind the campaign from its initiation was that 'all educated people in the community should assist in teaching those who were less privileged and remained illiterate', the majority of the instructors were volunteers. Of course this goal was easily met in urban areas but it was difficult to work with this principle in rural areas where there were very few people who could serve as instructors. One of the largest available resources at the time, according to the organizers, was the educated manpower emerging each year from grade 12 after the secondary-school final examination and who were looking for employment, further training opportunities or the chance to enter tertiary education in the following academic year. Thus, students constituted the majority of the instructors with schoolteachers, armed forces personnel and policemen, civil servants, retired persons, literate housewives, and members of religious organizations joining them.

Initially, training took place in two different phases: training the trainers and training the instructors. Participants in the first phase were regional adult education officers, representatives of regional coordinating and executive committees, members of national-language promotion committees and high-school directors. Consequently, those who participated in the training at the regional level would organize and conduct a similar training programme at a lower level for more trainers. Thus, the initial training, which was originally given at the national level, was later offered at the regional level to relate and reflect the regional situation. The training of the instructors, which is obviously designed to direct participants in the instruction programme, was given to all adult instructors and was mostly organized at a district (*wereda*) level for three to seven days. Topics covered during the training of these instructors were:

- literacy and development,
- the nature of language,
- teaching in national languages,
- the organization and utilization of reading centres,
- the preparation and utilization of teaching aids,
- methods for adult education,
- an analysis and application of primers and readers, and
- the writing of reports (NLCCC 1986).

In addition to these, according to Bhola (1994), instructors received information about agricultural skills, health, hygiene, family life and political education. The central and regional educational offices and the *Awraja* (Sub-province) Pedagogical Centres (APC) provided instructional materials and teachers' guides, including professional back-up, for the beginners', the remedial rounds and the follow-up and post-literacy classes. This included teaching materials such as exercise books, chalk and blackboards, primers and flash cards.

The effective selection, training and follow-up of instructors before and during the campaign was important. The young students had to be able to carry out such tasks as adult education and instructors needed not only subject expertise but also developed 'life experience' to help in approaching and guiding adults to the hoped-for result. The pedagogical training of instructors had to be adequate for them to be able to instruct adults. The organizers point of view in exploiting students in the period between their completing high school and entering the next phase of their education was not basically a bad idea. However, this new national force, with its intention of serving the country, would only make a difference if properly trained and used. Because not everyone is interested in and has the ability to be a teacher, was it not necessary to screen potential teachers and focus on those who were really interested in teaching and ready to make a difference using their creative abilities? The other issue was that, with very little experience of life behind them, students were exposed to challenges from the more experienced and older adult learners. Were the three to seven days of training enough to prepare the young instructors for the challenges they might face during the programme?

4.3 Implementation and achievements of the campaign

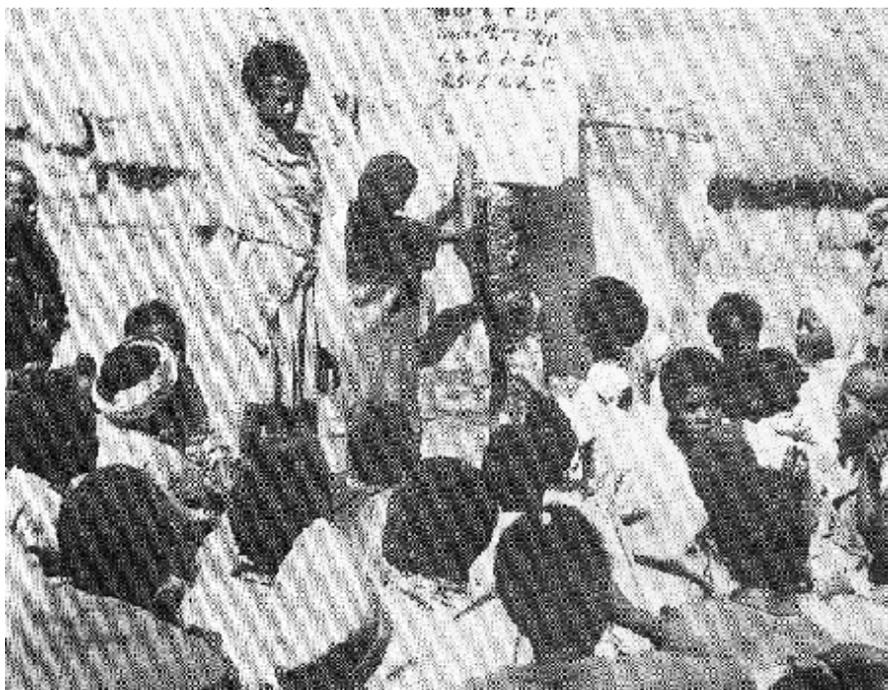
4.3.1 *The first steps in the first campaign*

July 7, 1979 was the day the Ethiopian Literacy Campaign formally began nationwide. Although the campaign took effect in most of the urban and rural areas of the country, a considerable number of remote rural areas were not covered due to infrastructure problems, inaccessibility and security reasons. This included parts of such regions as Tigray, Gonder, Wello, Illubabor, Wellega and Gambella (Asteraye 1984 cited by Abraham 1994). The response from the very beginning, according to the NLCCC (1984), was overwhelming and the programme attracted over 6 million participants, a much larger number than the 1.3 million for whom plans had been made.

With this unexpectedly large number of participants, problems were bound to arise. One was study materials. The materials meant for 1.3 million adults could not meet the needs of 6.2 million participants. The problem was solved with the help of enthusiastic instructors who improvised and made use of local substitutes. Neway Wolde Sadik (1985 as cited in Sineshaw 1996) explained the situation.

It became a very difficult situation for us to manage alone in the Ministry of Education. So other ministries and also some religious bodies and state-run agencies helped us, and with the help of the personnel and infrastructure of all those organizations ... we embraced upon the campaign, even though we had such a serious shortage of materials, alphabet charts and text books. So we had to use our own means and improvise. For example we took dry cell batteries and ground them down to black powder and used it as charcoal, then turned it into paint to make blackboards of our white walls. We used old sacks to make our alphabet charts and old X-ray films were used for cut-out letters for the charts and teaching aids. We operated on a shift system - often with forty adults in a morning class and fifty more in the afternoon, all using the same charts.

Photo 1. An outdoor literacy class.



Adopted from Searle, C. (1991)

The participants' ages in the literacy classes were foreseen by official documents to range from 8 to 60 years. In reality, students were found to vary from aged 3 to the very old (Bhola 1994). Instruction was conducted everywhere: in regular schools, in religious compounds, in workplaces such as factories, settlement areas, barracks, prisons, in private houses, suitable rooms and halls of urban dwellers and peasant associations as well as in other institutions and in the shade of trees (see photo 1&2). In some places there were new buildings for literacy classes. In general, according to Searle (1991), about 34,599 literacy centres and 241,143 instructors were prepared to serve the campaign. Relevant administrative and technical resources were drawn upon to motivate the entire nation and community involvement was created to ensure society's participation in financial and material support. As the country was being mobilized for the campaign, slogans appeared on walls, trees, buildings and fences, such as:

- 'We pledge to eradicate illiteracy by teaching and learning!'
- 'Let the educated teach and the uneducated learn!'
- 'Age is no barrier to education!'
- 'Literacy is part and parcel of the cultural revolution!'
- 'The curtain of ignorance will be torn asunder!'

Under these and other slogans, *kebeles* and peasant association committees all over the country mobilized the population (NLCCC 1984). In homes, at markets, and during the regular meetings of the associations, they explained and underlined the importance of this campaign in changing the educational profile of the nation. They formed action groups for

Figure 4.2. Sample of literacy primer

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Adopted from NLCCC, 1989

various projects within the campaign – the construction of literacy centres where required; the feeding and housing instructors who had come into their communities; the collection of funds to purchase writing materials, the transportation of literacy materials from distribution points

to the community, and the establishment of community reading rooms that were to become permanent focal points for continuing education within the community.

Instruction was given in such a way that participants could easily understand it. The learning process began with the introduction of the Ethiopian alphabet, which consists of 27 letters each with seven different characters. Differing from the old or traditional Ethiopian alphabet instruction method, which was formerly used by the churches, the campaign started teaching the adults the letters that could be easily remembered and were related to their day-to-day life. Alphabet instruction was divided into lessons where each lesson contained a fixed number of letters. For beginners, the letters were printed on a large sheet of paper that could be hung in a tree if the class was held outdoors or on the wall if held indoors (see the sample page from a literacy primer compared to the earlier alphabet instruction method). The instructors used sticks, flash cards, cut-out letters, etc. to show the shape of the different letters. Learning took place by looking at the shapes of the letters and repeating the sounds. Teaching letters with their different characters led to the students mastering the alphabet, which was a step forward in the teaching-learning process. Then came the formation of words by combining two, three or more letters. The lesson would end by forming a simple sentence from the letters already learned. The next lesson would follow the same pattern. Writing exercises were conducted simultaneously. Arabic numerals and four arithmetical operations were taught in a similar manner. At this stage students would be given exercise books for writing (though not in all cases because of the above-mentioned shortages) in which they first tried to copy certain letters, then words and sentences. These improvised teaching methods were always accompanied by teaching guides sent from the centre, and, as Neway explained, were also made locally. Table 4.4 shows the results (NLCCC 1984).

Table 4.4
Figures showing the results of the first-round of the literacy programme

Activities	Number of adults	% of no. registered
Participants registered for the 1 st round	6,224,904	—
Drop-outs (including irregular participants)	2,541,616	40.8
Those examined	3,683,288	59.1
Those who passed	1,543,678	24.7
Those who failed	2,139,610	34.3

Source: NLCCC (MOE 1984).

According to Omole (1991), the first round of the national literacy campaign appeared successful in all areas. One can only agree with such a conclusion if the campaign is seen in terms of the mobilized human and material resources and in terms of the general awareness of the campaign that was created among the population. But the campaign's results must also be examined from another dimension: from the quantitative and qualitative achievements brought to the adults. In this respect, besides the less qualitative changes that the result of the first round had brought among the adults, if one examines the quantitative information, different conclusions would have been drawn. For instance, as Table 4.4 shows, from the total number registered for this round, about 41% of adults dropped out, which significantly influences the outcome. On the other hand, the percentage of those participants who passed the first-round examination as compared to the number registered was about 25%, and when compared to those who sat the examination, the percentage was about 41%. This shows that about 75% of those who registered at the beginning of the first round either dropped out or

failed to pass the examination, which would be a concern in the implementation of the coming rounds. The NLCCC, on the other hand, recommended continuing with the next round just a month after the first round, in October 1979. Were the lessons learned from the first round used when conducting the following rounds? What steps were taken to overcome the problems faced during the first round? In the discussion that follows, these questions will be addressed.

4.3.2 Participation and efficiency in the subsequent rounds

The second round of the campaign, which was known as the ‘mopping-up campaign’, was launched just after the end of the first round. In this round efforts were made to continue to instruct new students and do follow-up work with the remedial groups. Special attention was given to showing the recently literate how to apply their newly acquired skills in literacy and numeracy to their everyday lives, with particular emphasis on economic and cultural activities (Omole 1991). As Asteraye (1984 cited in Abraham 1994) showed, the content of the programme embraced three interconnected phases: (i) the beginners’ classes; (ii) remedial classes; and (iii) the post-literacy or follow-up programme.

The beginners’ programme was for newly admitted participants and reading, writing and numeracy classes were offered for 18 hours a week for four months. On completion, tests were administered and certificates awarded to those who passed. The remedial programme was also offered over a four-month period (about 288 hours) to those participants who had failed the test at the end of the beginners’ programme. New participants were also able to join at this stage. The post-literacy or follow-up programme, which ran for not less than four months, was for those who had successfully completed the beginners’ or remedial programme. It was divided into two stages: the follow-up programme and the post-literacy programme. The follow-up programme offered a foundation course, which might be called an introduction to continuing education (NLCCC 1984). The instruction at this stage was mainly focused on helping participants to develop their reading ability. More than 32 titles of follow-up books prepared in a total of 15 languages and bound together for use in reading rooms (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Post-literacy reading materials

Functional reader I	Functional reader II	Functional reader III	Functional reader IV	Other readers
Clean water & its use	Poultry production	Childhood diseases	Personal hygiene	First aid
Care of pregnant women	Childcare	Value of vaccinations	Vegetable gardening	Health care
Removal of household pests	Balanced diets	Transmission of diseases	Food storage at home	Methods of coffee planting
Soil conservation & pest control	Home improvements	Disposal of rubbish & waste	Prevalent common diseases	Family-living education
		Milking & hygiene	Breast-feeding	Cooperative education

Source: NLCCC (MOE 1984) pp. 59-60.

As the time allocated to this stage was limited, it was hard to expect readers to be able to cover all the materials. One can only assume that such a programme aimed just to introduce

some relevant topics that were related to participants' daily lives. The post-literacy programme had three sections: (i) a reinforcement programme; (ii) formal education and distance education; and (iii) a skills-training programme. The reinforcement programmes used the facilities and services available in the community reading rooms and the educational radio services. The construction of more than 6,000 reading rooms was an indication of the work undertaken, as was the installation of a network of regional radio transmitters for educational programmes. To what degree did the newly literates use these services in view of their heavy day-to-day responsibilities? is an open question left without answer to date.

Regarding formal education and distance education, participants who succeeded in the campaign could attend grade 3 in the formal education system, either in night or day programmes and could also continue the existing distance-education programme. Until 1974 there were only 57,881 night-school students, but between 1979 and 1986 there were 235,803 students. During the same period there were also 5,536 students who attended distance education (MOE 1986 cited in Dessie 1989). The literacy campaign can be seen as one reason for the growing number of participants in the distance-learning programme. The skills-training programme was carried out within the newly developed network of Community Skill Training Centres of which there were 408 throughout the country (MOE 1990). The programme provided skills training in cottage industries such as weaving, tannery, woodwork, basketry, metal work, etc., as well as skills related to health care and animal husbandry. The training also included instruction aimed just at women in, for example, childcare and nutrition.

The third round of the campaign was aimed at the long-term objective of the literacy campaign, namely to completely eradicate illiteracy, not only in urban and sub-urban areas but also in the rural areas of Ethiopia. Round three from this point of view was considered as an extension of the campaign into rural areas.

The fourth round was launched after the end of the third round. Like the second round, it was also described as a 'major attack' and 'mopping-up' programme since the focus was on illiterates who, for one reason or another, had been unable to enrol in the earlier rounds or who were unable to pass the certifying examination in previous rounds. The only difference between this campaign and the second-round exercise was that it was meant to emphasize the importance of the post-literacy programme in rural development. Thus, the accent of the third-round campaign was no more on the urban and sub-urban areas of Ethiopia alone. The focus was on the rural population.

In general, from 1979 to February 1990, according to the NLCCC, it was possible to evolve and consolidate a rational, systematic and coordinated attack on the problem of illiteracy within a national policy framework. A total of 22 rounds of the literacy programme were launched during this period, with two successive rounds being conducted each year. The first three odd-numbered rounds were conducted from May to September (3rd, 5th and 7th rounds) and after 1983 from April to July (9th, 11th etc.). It was during these rounds that the literacy campaign was most intensively conducted.

The even-numbered rounds (2nd, 4th and 6th) also lasted from November to March with the exception of the second round that started in October 1979. After 1983 these rounds were also organized to start in October and be completed in January. This programming of the rounds gave the organizers a two-month break to assess past experiences and rearrange future courses, although no significant measures were taken to improve the teaching process or to solve the problems encountered. On the other hand, the quality of the organization of these even-numbered rounds, or remedial programmes, deteriorated when compared to the odd-numbered rounds. Most instructors were newly literate themselves or some were students who

had left education years before the campaign with no praxis of instruction. Sineshaw (1994), after extensive travels in the southern part of the country, justified this assumption.

... the quality, intensity and coverage of literacy instruction during the even-numbered rounds were by far inferior to literacy work during the odd-numbered rounds. The quality of the recruited teachers and the attention the NLCCC accorded to these rounds largely accounted for this disparity. In fact, one could, with a reasonable degree of confidence, conclude that the Literacy Campaign during the even-numbered rounds was almost non-existent.

Participants at the earliest stage of the campaign were mostly male and children older than eight years of age, but there are no concrete figures showing the age distribution. Very few women joined the programme, partly because of their social position in this predominantly patriarchal society. Classrooms were sometimes very crowded with some 40 or 50 students attending a class given by a single instructor. This did not last long and participants, especially in the rural areas, began to drop out. Some suggest that the timing was not appropriate as most peasants were working hard at the time and some suggest that they saw no concrete advantages to being literate when their sons and daughters, after long years of education, were still without jobs and dependent on them. A typical example of this is given by Sineshaw (1994):

I have seven children, three of whom I have been able to support through high school. They were able to graduate three years ago. It has been a substantial financial burden on the family to support them all those years. We were able to persevere in those long years with the great hope that they will, one day, be able to help us out of poverty. Instead, they have been unemployed for the past three years, which is very frustrating and saddening. Nor, could they contribute to the household by working on our small plot of land, for the school had made them too 'civilized' to engage in such manual jobs. Why, for God's sake, would I, an old man, bother in learning how to read and write when, in fact, the young and strong are unable to benefit from extensive training?

Table 4.6
Progress of the National Literacy Campaign

Rounds	Period	Literacy centres	No. certified (cumulative)
1	July – September 1979	34,559	1,544,000
2	October 1979 - March 1980	18,536	2,202,000
3	May 1980 - September 1980	11,048	3,175,000
4	November 1980 - March 1981	10,440	3,962,000
5	May 1981- September 1981	27,638	5,406,000
6	November 1981- March 1982	30,253	6,221,000
7	May 1982 - September 1982	18,845	7,451,000
8	October 1982 - January 1983	23,726	8,330,000
9	April 1983 - July 1983	23,030	9,568,000
10	October 1983 - January 1983	24,488	10,454,000
11	April 1984 - July 1984	18,053	11,350,000
12	October 1984 - January 1985	19,311	12,037,000
13	April 1985 - July 1985	20,659	12,885,000
14	October 1985 - January 1986	16,028	13,771,000
15	April 1986 - July 1986	21,570	14,725,000
16	October 1986 - January 1987	21,606	15,570,000
17	April 1987 - July 1987	23,955	16,742,000
18	October 1987 - January 1988	23,989	17,688,000
19	April 1988 - July 1988	23,621	18,726,000
20	October 1988 - January 1989	20,167	(19,726,000)
21	April 1989 - July 1989	15,613	(20,500,000)
22	October 1989 - Jan/Feb 1990	4,380	(21,500,000)

Note: Figures in brackets are estimates of possible levels of literacy up to 1990.

Source: ‘The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign Retrospect and Prospects 1979-1989’, MOE (1989) Addis Ababa, p. 33-34; M. Gobena ‘The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign Retrospect and Prospects 1979-1990’, (1994) Addis Ababa, Annex III.

The proficiency of learners at the end of the course depended on the curriculum. The Ethiopian literacy campaign focused on the acquisition of three component skills: (i) basic literacy; reading, writing and arithmetic; (ii) related skills such as modern agricultural methods, health, nutrition and childcare and basic skills of artisan and cottage industries etc.; and (iii) community rights and duties. The aim of all these programmes and instructions was, as Gudeta (1990) argued, the hope for a better future, progress and development. But the practical results registered were lower than expectations. Adults were not strongly motivated, the quality and experience of the instructors was not able to match the extent of the work expected of them, instructional materials, especially during the initial period, did not meet rising demands, the balance between the odd- and even-numbered rounds in terms of attention was uneven, which left a negative print on the ongoing rounds, and as time passed adults began to quit the programme for different reasons and the general outcome did not match the organizers’ expectations. This does not, however, mean that there were no positive results. Although few in number, there were adults who gained from the programme. For these newly literates, literacy meant the points outlined in the box below.

Box 1

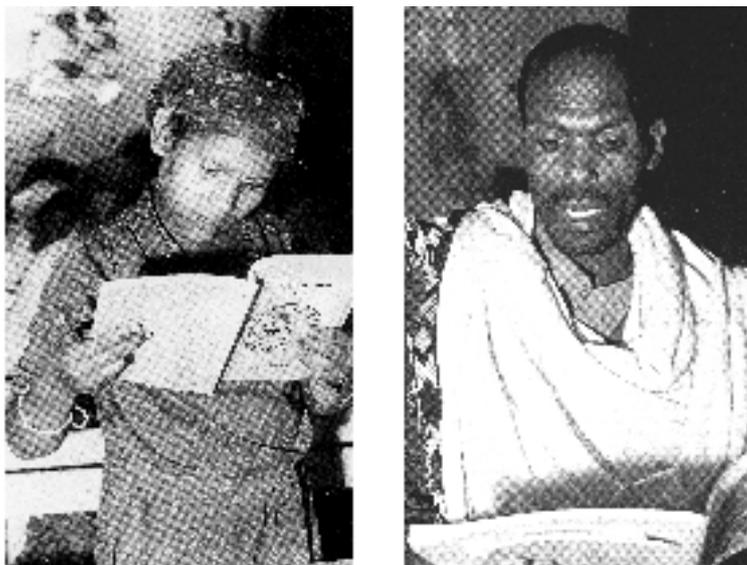
How literacy was understood by adult participants

- Literacy is an eye-opener.
- Literacy learning is receiving light.
- A literate person has social respect.
- Literacy gives me self-confidence when I can read shop labels, shop prices, and newspapers.
- I no longer have to ask people the number of the bus I have to take.
- When I draw my salary I sign my name proudly with others.
- I am greatly satisfied when I write my own letters to friends and when I am able to read the letters they send me.
- My husband has special regard for me since I became literate.
- When I was asked to become literate, I thought that I would learn it for somebody else, but now I realize that it is for myself .

Source: Gudeta, M. Ethiopia: The Role of Literacy Instructors in Changing Attitudes, (1990).

Thus becoming literate has created a sense of pride among adult learners, as is illustrated by the attached letter. Illiterates view the educated as being endowed with supernatural powers before whom they have to prostrate themselves, but as soon as they become literate themselves this feeling of inferiority disappears and they become confident. As one newly literate put it, 'I used to think that reading and writing was something for people of high birth. Now I can sign my name instead of using my thumb print and I can read the numbers of the bus. I feel part of a larger community' (Amare 1991). One category of learners – namely children – was very active and gained a lot from the programme. Their attendance compared to that of their families – in particular in places where there were no formal education centres – was constant. As Sineshaw (1994) indicated, this group of literacy learners appeared to have benefited most from the literacy campaign.

Photo 2. Reading exercise.



Adopted from Searle, C. (1991)

Figure 4.3. Sample letter of the new literate

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Translation

I am Yhdiga Kifle, living in Higher Kebele 1, Kebele 08, house number 922, I am a housemaid. On the first of Hamle, 1971* when the Revolutionary Government began the Literacy Campaign, with great happiness, I started to attend the literacy classes. As the instructors are good, I can now read and write. I am literate. I am very grateful to the Revolutionary Government which brought us out of darkness into the light and I shall continue my education.

* The beginning of July 1979 in the Gregorian Calender

4.3.3 Language and the campaign

Ethiopia is a multicultural society with ethnic and linguistic diversity as its base. The number of languages and dialects spoken in the country certainly exceeds 80, falling into two families – *Afro-Asiatic* and *Nilo-Saharan* – and into four major language groups – *Semitic*, *Cushitic*, *Omitic* and *Nilotic*. Each major group is also divided into a number of sub-families (see the language families in Ethiopia). Within many of the languages, and particularly those which cover large areas, (for example, Oromo that stretches from the Borena peoples of the south to the Raya people in the north), there are dialects in which the differences in structure, vocabulary and pronunciation can be significant. The steps taken by the post-revolutionary-period government, in contrast to the previous one, were an attempt at creating conditions for the preservation and development of the languages and dialects of the different nationalities of Ethiopia. The literacy campaign was also placed in this cultural environment for which

strategies were to be developed to facilitate participation by the maximum number of language groups on the one hand, and on the other, to strengthen and develop a national culture for the whole country.

The first attempt of the post-revolutionary-period government in persuading a different language policy to the previous one was registered during the Development through Cooperation Campaign where, for the first time, four languages – Amharic, Tigrigna, Oromigna, and Welaitigna – were put to a literacy use. Here it should be noted that Amharic and its alphabet were adopted as the common medium for all languages. Literacy kits and all the materials in other languages were prepared in the same manner as the Amharic materials. Based on this, the 1979 literacy campaign selected 15 languages, which cover an estimated 90% of the population, to use as a medium of instruction. They were introduced in three stages (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7
Introduced languages and amount of instruction materials distributed

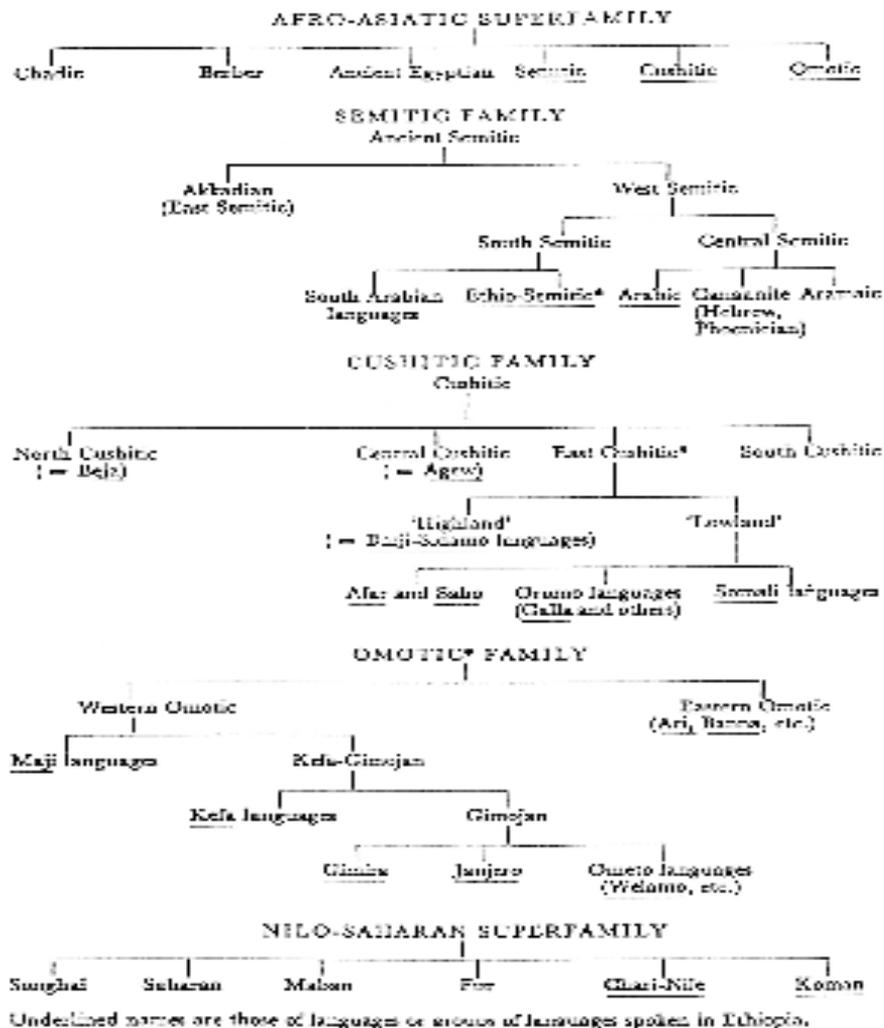
Stage	No. of languages	Year introduced	Languages introduced	Language group	No. of books distributed
I	5	July 1979	Amharic	Semitic	28,950,000
			Oromo	Cushitic	11,697,000
			Tigrigna	Semitic	3,442,000
			Wolaita	Omitic	1,777,000
			Somali	Cushitic	969,000
II	5	May 1981	Hadiya	Cushitic	433,000
			Tigre	Semitic	199,000
			Kunama	Nilotic	50,000
			Gedeo	Omitic	428,000
			Kambatta	Omitic	273,000
III	5	May 1982	Sidama	Omitic	576,000
			Afar	Cushitic	399,000
			Silti	Semitic	339,000
			Saho	Cushitic	204,000
			Kefamocho	Omitic	436,000

Source: NLCCC (1989) pp. 37-38.

The introduce 15 languages were four Semitic, four Cushitic, six Omitic languages and one was Nilotic. In addition, a total of 50.1 million instructional booklets and manuals in the above-mentioned languages were produced and distributed for the beginners' and the post-literacy programme. The government's strategy in this respect was seen as a systematic way of laying the foundations for a multilingual approach in formal and non-formal education. There is no doubt that the promotion of different languages as the medium of instruction in the literacy programme had its own socio-cultural significance. Adults were encouraged to express their views in any language but they develop more confidence in their own cultural heritages and, in the case of literacy instruction, the use of such vernacular language simplifies communication between the instructor and those being instructed. The problem is the development of these different languages is not at a high enough standard to allow them to be used as a medium of instruction. The choice then had to be made between the use of the existing *lingua franca* as the medium of instruction or the introduction of a new way of using the different national languages. The decision demanded a careful analysis of the effect of the

steps to be taken in terms of cost, utility, long- and short-term advantages and the interests of the subjects.

Figure 4.4. Language families in Ethiopia



Adopted from NLCCC, 1989.

4.3.4 Women in the campaign

Although out of the total population of Ethiopia women constitute about 50% and were capable of making a difference to the country's future, in the pre-revolutionary period they had been cut off from political, social and cultural activities with little access to high-status jobs. They were confined to kitchen or nursing work and to the traditional sector of the economy, keeping them politically and economically dependent on others. The suppression of women was cultural, religious and even legal. All cultural and social manifestations reflected only male supremacy, and paid no attention to women's contributions. Because women were

not given equal opportunities to go to school, their rate of illiteracy was higher than that of men. Out of the total female population, 89% were living in rural areas and only 0.3% were literate (Dessie 1989). According to her assessment, out of the total female population at the beginning of the literacy campaign 98% were estimated to be illiterate.

The introduction of modern education contributed little to improve the status of women in Ethiopian society. The number of female students in modern schools was not high and those who got the opportunity to study were directly or indirectly obliged to attend sexually-stereotyped subjects like home economics, nursing, secretarial work etc. On the eve of the revolution, the number of female students in the first level of education was 349,003, which was 31% of the total enrolment (UNESCO 1990). The ratio of women to the total number of students in second- and third-level education was 31% and 10% respectively (Dessie 1989). This changed in the years following the revolution as measures were taken to encourage girls to attend school and the few educated women began to be given equivalent positions as those of men. As a result, the number of female students began to increase in different levels of the country's formal educational streams (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8
Female enrolment in different levels in formal education in 1990

Level	Total no. of students	No. of female students	% female students
1st	2,446,375	980,634	40
2nd	865,886	371,841	43
3rd	34,076	6,092	18

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook (1994).

Literacy programmes launched during this period also contributed to this result. As one of the most important results of the campaigns, women and girls were brought into the process of learning. In the days of the literacy campaign, the sex distribution of the population was claimed to reflect relatively satisfactorily the participation of women, although the initial rounds of the campaign showed some exclusion of women from learning. That situation changed in the course of the campaign and more women took the opportunity to join the programme. Thus, during the campaign, 52% of the newly registered, and the same percentage of those who gained certificates were women (NLCCC 1989). In the following stage, i.e. the post-literacy or follow-up programme, although their participation had fallen to 45%, women continued to show a reasonable performance. Here besides the educational awareness created during the first phase – the content of the programmes directed to the improvement and upgrading of their living conditions, childcare and income-generating activities – contributed to their participation. But compared to male participants, it took much more time for women to become literate given the backward traditional life they led and the heavy social responsibilities they carried (Lind & Johnston 1990). Women were expected to be submissive and obedient, and were not allowed to voice their opinions in public, all of which led to shyness. Such cultural practices contributed to their performance in the literacy programme and they lagged behind compared to men.

The above-mentioned figures are averages for the whole country and cover both urban and rural areas and in some cases they obscure important differences between the urban and rural areas' performances. For example, in the capital city Addis Ababa, women accounted for 74% of the total registration and 78% of the total certificates awarded. In post-literacy registrations their participation amounted to 80% and they formed 81% of those who attended

regularly (NLCCC 1989). This reflects the fact that in spite of there being a slight variation between their participation in the earlier rounds and their regular attendance at post-literacy classes, women and girls presented themselves for the new learning programmes in numbers that convey their eagerness to close the previous gap in the education system. In addition to this, the fact that 21% of the instructors who contributed in 22 rounds of the campaign were women shows that the determination and participation of women in this campaign was significant. In this respect the literacy programme brought important cultural developments and created equal possibilities for women to attend classes.

4.3.5 Achievements and problems of the campaign

Achievements

As reported campaign results indicate, important quantitative and qualitative achievements were registered in this first-ever nationwide adult literacy campaign, the most important being the cultural attitudes formed towards education. During the 11-year campaign, as Gobena (1994) indicated, the following quantitative achievements were registered.

Table 4.9
Quantitative results of the Ethiopian literacy campaign

Beginners' programme	Registered	Certified	% certified of total registered
Women	11,531,997	10,359,880	46.5
Men	10,750,362	10,138,385	45.5
Total	22,282,359	20,498,265	92.0
Post-literacy programme	Registered	Attended	% attended of total registered
Women	8,357,266	6,348,903	34.6
Men	9,962,698	7,619,750	41.5
Total	18,319,964	13,968,653	76.1

Source: 'The Ethiopian Literacy Campaign. Retrospect and Prospect, 1979-1990', Annex III.

According to this source, the literacy rate rose from 7% to 77.2% between 1979 and the end of February 1990. Furthermore, over 160 rural newsletters were produced and distributed and 9,400 reading rooms were created as post-literacy centres (Tsegaye 1991).

Quantitative data are well and good provided they are meticulously recorded. They give basic information on the amount of work done in comparison with the remaining task for reaching the indicated goal. There is, of course, a danger with such statistical data if they are not based on the exact facts and systematically collected. They can overshadow the efforts exerted and mislead organizers by exaggerating or minimizing the work done on the ground. Developed infrastructure, communication lines, information-exchange mechanisms and data-processing systems are essential and compulsory. In countries where it is difficult to use these methods, it is not easy to get a reliable information. Because Ethiopia is one of those countries with poor communications and no developed mechanism of data collection and analysis, the quantitative results made public at the end of the 22nd round of the literacy campaign were and remain a problem and cannot be depended on. On the other hand, changes with regard to the outcome of the literacy campaign can be analysed in terms of the qualitative changes it brought to society. Thus, society's inclination towards any form of education developed, and

its inclination to improve life based on educational gains could also be seen as measuring factors. Considering these factors alone, this first-ever centrally coordinated national literacy campaign can be judged affirmatively. First and foremost, it developed a growing awareness of education. For many, this campaign was their first real introduction to education – to the process of learning or acquiring new skills and using these skills to good effect in daily life. Although they were not many, those who are now literate benefited from this campaign and used their new skills in simple reading and writing, for instance, to write their names and addresses. For others, it was the start of a new phase in their lives. Although the numbers are low, there are adults who started their first steps towards schooling during this campaign and went on to attend college and/or university. As Workneh (1989) and Gobena (1994) reported, despite the lack of precise and well-established figures, millions of people who otherwise would never have had the opportunity gained from the literacy campaign the chance to follow some form of education. From these perspectives, it can be concluded that the literacy campaign was beneficial to adults and disproved the traditional view that learning is for young people only. Thus, in this sense it is of national or societal and also individual importance to promote adult literacy based on the potential participants' interests, the capacity in terms of material and manpower availability, and long- and short-term national relevance. It is by educating society that a country can begin to show progress in national development.

The most important result that the literacy campaign brought to participants, however, in the opinion of the author, is the broad cultural change: a new culture of reading, writing and communicating by means of written material. Adult participants, during their time in the places of instruction, were encouraged to lead their lives based on the know-how they gained from the instruction, personal relations and communications they established. Of course, it is not so easy to apply new ideas at once, given the fact that most participants were part of a traditional culture that had existed for years. What ought to be emphasized here is that an adult literacy programme should always consider and be based on the cultural experiences of the particular society. In doing so, it is hoped that, as the NLCCC in its 1989 report emphasized, the new ideas and ways of life gained through instruction can be implemented side by side with existing conventional ways. The role of the literacy campaign was to add to the participants' capabilities and not to replace the valuable assets of oral skills and memory.

The other major contribution of the literacy campaign in terms of social transformation was that it brought to Ethiopian society the use of 15 ethnic languages as the mediums of instruction. Languages which had never been used in written communication and which have never been put in print were used in this way for the first time during this national campaign. As Workneh (1989) clearly states, over and above the technical accomplishment, there is likely to be the psychological and social satisfaction of learning in one's own language. It is also important to note the opportunity given to women and girls, who represented about 50% of the total population of the country in the 10-40 age group. During the campaign period, 52% of the newly registered and 46% of those who gained certificates were women. Although their participation fell to 45% in the post-literacy programme, their performance, in general, was satisfactory. The fact that 20.5% of the instructors were women also shows that their participation in the programme was substantial, especially given the previous long period of male supremacy.

Also important in this respect is the recognition that the literacy campaign effort received from UNESCO and other international organizations. In September 1980 UNESCO gave the International Reading Association Literacy Award to the NLCCC for its meritorious work in promoting literacy. The citation reads as follows:

‘For (1) developing a broadly-based organizational structure which has permitted the effective mobilization of the resources of society in the case of literacy; (2) systematic planning of literacy work combining the initial teaching of literacy and numeracy with remedial and follow-up courses conceived in a perspective of life-long education; (3) preparation of innovative literacy materials which have been published in five national languages and distributed in more than fifteen million copies; (4) achievement of impressive results in the National Literacy Campaign in the first stage of which more than five million persons were reached, and (5) the positive impact which the Campaign has had upon the national life of Ethiopia and, in particular, on the overall pace and scope of national development.’ (NLCCC 1984)

Following this award, UNESCO’s 21st General Conference passed Resolution 1/0.11 which called for the Director General to launch an international appeal for financial and material assistance to Ethiopia to enable it to intensify its campaign against illiteracy. In 1982, Ethiopia was again selected for an Honourable Mention in the Nadezhda Krupskaya Prize – one of UNESCO’s literacy awards. The citation reads as follows:

ALL ETHIOPIAN PEASANT ASSOCIATIONS for having organized and implemented within the framework of the National Literacy Campaign, a programme responding to the particular needs and special interests of the rural population; for its extensive and effective use of mass media and for the example it sets of the special role which organizations and institutions can play in contributing, within their specialized domains of competence, to the achievement of national literacy objectives.

In 1985 the Ethiopian literacy campaign was also awarded the NOMA literacy prize. A medal and certificate were awarded by the Academy of Simba (Italy), a silver medal was awarded by the Literacy Supreme Council of Iraq and an award from the International Gold Mercury (MOE 1990) can also be mentioned. In addition, Ethiopia hosted the UNESCO-funded Operational Workshop for Post-Literacy Work in the earliest days of the campaign, which was held in Woliso, some 130 km from Addis Ababa. Literacy specialists from 12 English-speaking African countries participated in the workshop, which focused on the on-going literacy activities in four rural centres in the Woliso area.

During the whole period of the campaign, Ethiopia had the chance to welcome specialists from countries such as India, Burundi, Sudan, Botswana, Jordan, Iraq and Liberia for wider discussions on illiteracy and efforts to combat it. At the same time, delegates of the Ethiopian literacy campaign attended international workshops and discussions that were valuable for Ethiopia and for other countries in terms of experience exchange. Further exchanges took place during the UNESCO/IIEP-sponsored sub-regional workshop for local-level personnel engaged in national literacy programmes that was held in Nazareth, Ethiopia during November 1981. This workshop focused on experiences at the local level in implementing literacy programmes and a number of case studies from *kebeles* in Ethiopia were presented for discussion. Representatives from five English-speaking countries in East Africa were also present. All this recognition of the campaign was stimulating and an acknowledgement of the achievements and hard work of the organizers and participants. It was also an encouragement for the steps taken to educate adults, which form part of the country’s present national developmental plan. Regardless of the fact that during the launching of the literacy campaign the organizers undermined or devoted less attention to some fundamental pre-campaign, mid-campaign and post-campaign administrative and pedagogical procedures, the acknowledgment of the attempt to bring about a difference in the country’s overall literacy level was a positive sign. It was this acknowledgment and the relative quantitative and qualitative results that brought about a general awareness and interest in education.

Major problems of the campaign

The results and achievements discussed above were not gained without difficulties being encountered too. The campaign's problems were twofold: structural and technical. As discussed in the previous chapter, the campaign was headed by a centrally controlled organizational structure with its different committees and sub-committees. A result of this structure was that directives flew one way, from the highest level to the lowest and the reverse was only for reporting. This highly centralized structure presented obstacles. It was so channelled and centralized that it was unable to solve problems in a short space of time. For every problem the organizers and campaigners on the ground faced, a recommendation was required from the local, regional and sometimes even national committees. The decision-making process was slow: sub-committees first had to discuss the case and submit a suggestion to the local literacy committee. The local committee in turn referred the case to the district and provincial committees and provincial committees to the regional and so on. Any solution that was proposed had to pass through the same process in reverse. Added to this were the very limited or non-existent methods of modern communication that could not assist in shortening the process. Because the timetable for each round was restricted, this left no room for solving problems by implementing new ideas. Thus, in most cases the campaign was executed without problems being confronted or solved. Bhola (1994) remarked that 'For the first time in the history of NLC, teachers of the third round were given kits including uniforms, boots, blankets, umbrellas and petromax lamps', which in itself indicates how difficult it was to dispatch the important materials for the literacy campaign on time. Such structural problems weakened the efficiency of the literacy committees and contributed to the negative outcome of the efforts.

The literacy campaign lacked a direct and responsible authority. At the centre of the campaign was the NLCCC to which members were assigned from different governmental and other organizations. The committee was supported by four sub-committees and regional and local branches. Members of literacy campaign committees at all levels were expected to work in their free time and in addition to their regular duties. The Adult Education Department office and its branches in regional and sub-provincial (*awraja*) offices, which were said to be responsible for the campaign, were in the most part run with few or limited resources and manpower. Moreover, most committee members also had additional obligations in which their active participation was expected. Under such circumstances it was difficult to expect from them the kind of involvement that the literacy campaign needed. Sometimes committee meetings were not possible because there was no quorum or if there was, discussions were too general but little attention was paid to the practical problems on the ground. It should be also noted that the professional manpower support decreased at provincial, district and local levels where the campaign's intensive work was organized and where the challenges arose. This came as a shock as the very idea of the campaign was that it was planned to accomplish its task in a short period of time, at relatively low cost, and with intensive and continuous follow-up.

To the best of my knowledge, in most parts of the country the Adult Education Department's staff at the sub-provincial (*awraja*) level consisted of only one person, who was known as the 'Head of the Adult Education Department', and was responsible for covering, among other things, the coordination and implementation of the literacy programme, the preparation and adaptation of curricula and instructional materials to local needs, and the recruitment and training of instructors for the campaign and other forms of adult education such as night school, community-training schools etc. Although the number of staff members in regional offices was much higher than at the provincial levels, it was not satisfactory in terms of the work that the department was meant to cover. Even in the main office, the head

of the Adult Education Department was no more than the secretary to the executive committee, who had to give permission for each and every campaign activity. It is naturally understandable that the strategy of the organizers was to mobilize and utilize the existing human resources to the best of their ability for the literacy campaign. What was miscalculated, however, was that the expected manpower at all levels was almost the same as that used for different tasks of revolutionary duties and this resource was unable to combine all the duties and lacked the time to be effective in all its obligations. Education, including the adult literacy programme, is a process that demands not only planning and organizational flexibility but also continuous supplementary support and follow-up, which was one of the problems in the Ethiopian literacy campaign..

The technical problems that the campaign defined were the reflection of the structural problems and the nature of the campaign itself. First of all, the campaign's target was to eradicate illiteracy within a given period of time with maximum effort. Thus, extraordinary effort on the part of the organizers and a similar reaction from the Ethiopian people were required. However, this noble idea was not equally accepted or understood by the real actors in the campaign. The cause of this, despite its emphasis on 'abolishing illiteracy', was that the campaign was politically coloured aiming at certain strategic goals. As stated in the objectives of the campaign, the programme was aimed in the short term to free the vast majority of the illiterate group of society from ignorance, myth and superstition and, in the long run, to raise the level of consciousness of the population in general and create productive citizens for the construction of a socialist economy. Such extolling of education in general and literacy in particular, says Abraham (1994), as a prerequisite for revolution, is to be found in many literacy crusades and educational activities of that period – for example, in the Nicaraguan case in Kraft (1983); Castro's assertion that 'Revolution and education are the same thing'; and Freire (1973). The campaign was over-ambitious because it lacked any relation to existing reality and was not based on the will and interests of the adults concerned. No consultation was made beforehand with the direct beneficiaries of the literacy campaign. The focus was not on the degree of participant acceptance of the programme or even the commitment of the instructors, but on how many people the programme could mobilize. Thus, as a result of such mass mobilization with no effective accent on the specific interests of the participants, the campaign was trying to live up to unrealistic expectations.

The absence of relatively accurate figures before the campaign was launched showing the size of the population and the exact number of illiterate adults to be instructed were also part of the problem. Initially the campaign was planned to eradicate illiteracy from urban and rural areas by 1982 and 1987 respectively. After the 1984 census, the target group was 25% larger than had been envisaged in the previous seven-year plan (NLCCC 1989) and this forced the organizers to change their original plans. This, on the other hand, raised additional organizational problems related to logistics, instructional materials and centres, time and instructors. Such baseline problems meant '... inaccurate documentation, misrepresentation, and misreporting of literacy statistics; evasion of accountability; curtailment of local initiative and independent action due to organizational inflexibility; and concealment of individual and group waste and inefficiency' (Sineshaw 1996) and questioned the accuracy of the overall statistical data.

Lack of systematically studied and conceptualised work on previous literacy attempts can also be added to these problems. This was clear when recruiting and training instructors. During this literacy campaign untrained or less well-qualified instructors with minimal or poor teaching skills were recruited and sent to literacy centres to instruct adults with many years of experience of life. As a result, instruction was not as motivational or attractive as it could

have been, which influenced the outcome of the programme. There was no concreted effort to consider what had been learned from past experiences. For instance, Wagaw (1979) asserted that one of the shortcomings of the then *Yefidel Serawit* (Alphabet Army) literacy campaign was its failure to train instructors properly. In the almost ten years since 1968, there were two attempts at promoting a literacy programme in the country; WOALP and the literacy campaign during the Development through Cooperation Campaign. Had the organizers paid attention to these efforts and examined these positive and negative practical experiences of the previous programmes they would not have repeated the mistakes and problems encountered some years before. In general a thorough investigation of these and other literacy programmes would have reduced problems such as the under-training of instructors, ignoring the necessity of local intervention in planning etc. and could have brought about a more positive outcome.

This can be seen in combination with the sub-standard manner of selecting and training the instructors. As mentioned earlier, teaching is a process of changing existing human behaviour. It is a systematic way of increasing the capacity of human communication from one form or another – in this case oral to written. It works on the mentality and psychology of the participants, and should be undertaken with willing, experienced and motivated instructors, especially when the learners are adults. The Ethiopian literacy campaign paid little attention to this principle. Using 12th grade students as instructors was in itself a problem because they did not have the necessary life experience when approaching adults to motivate them for the literacy programme. In addition to this, two to seven days of orientation was not enough to instruct them for what was required of them. The campaign suffered from a lack of attention or was given secondary attention in terms of selecting and training instructors. A very weak selection procedure and too little instruction or orientation for potential instructors followed by poor teaching methods and inadequate enthusiasm on the ground resulted in low literacy levels.

An additional problem was the length of time allocated for instruction – a total of only 288 hours of instruction was needed for certification. First of all, the indicated teaching hours had to be counted from the first day that the instructors reached their area. Since there was no pre-campaign effort in the form of considering the ‘will’ of the local people, the instructors had to start from scratch: they had to ask the leaders of the local areas to arrange a meeting at which they could start explaining their mission, and get the agreement of the expected learners. This took some of the time allotted for real lessons – at least a week or two. Some of the very little time available for training was, therefore, wasted on procedural actions. In addition to this, the time selected for the campaign, especially the main odd-numbered rounds, in most places was not convenient for many of the adults in the rural population. At this particular time of the year farmers are always engaged in farming, and they could not pay proper attention to a literacy programme and participate fully, or they did not join in the programme at all. This was obvious from the beginning when about half of the registered attendants dropped out. Thus, the outcome of the Ethiopian literacy campaign was influenced not only by the length of the instruction time but also by the specific period chosen for instruction.

The literacy campaign’s other major problem was the standard and the definition given to ‘literacy’ or ‘literate adult’. According to some sources, participants who had passed the programme, including the post-literacy programme, could join the 4th grade of formal education (in some sources it says grade 3) for further education, as the level was regarded to be equivalent to that of a 3rd or 4th grade student in the formal stream. The problem here is that the curriculum in formal education was completely different from that of the literacy programme and it is difficult to compare the two. Students in the formal stream can read and write from the beginning. Although this may be at an elementary level, students are required to follow different subjects such as science, social sciences, computing, problem solving and,

from the 3rd grade onwards, English. The newly literate student was unfamiliar with all these subjects.

The same was true for mastering the ability to read and write. Reading does not simply mean combining letters and naming them. It is, above all, an understanding of the message and being able to interpret it. Writing, on the other hand, is also expressing an idea or view in an organized manner. It is questionable whether the new literates were capable of doing this before they entered the programme. Although the objectives of the campaign indicate that its ultimate goal was to make adults read and write, the definition given to literacy was lowered to be equivalent as being able to identify shop labels and prices, bus numbers, use telephone numbers, read simple letters, and mainly sign their names. This was also accepted by some of the regional organizers, and adults who were only able to write their names and were registered as 'literate' thus reducing the very standard of the definition of being 'literate' and the expectations of the organizers of the campaign. This, in turn, questions the statistics of the literacy rate obtained by the campaign, its outcome and the overall meaning.

4.4 Lessons from the campaign

The rationale for an assessment of the process of planning, organizing and implementing the adult literacy programmes in Ethiopia is not only to narrate the steps taken in implementing the programme, but also to identify the positive and negative outcomes of the campaign so that they can be recognized and used in future attempts. To this end, and based on some theoretical background, this study tries to cover the objectives of the campaign, its structural and organizational scope, and other relevant steps taken by the government in preparing the adults, recruiting instructors and looking after the means and methods of teaching materials for promoting this national campaign.

Besides this, an attempt is also made to identify the results of the campaign and the problems registered during the whole period. In the forthcoming chapter, in order to evaluate the campaign in the light of other similar attempts, a comparison of the Ethiopian campaign is made with the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian adult literacy programmes. Before proceeding further, it is important to discuss the accomplishments of the Ethiopian literacy campaign and to assess the outcome from different perspectives. It is possible to place them in two categories: (i) experiences gained from the achievements recorded during the campaign; and (ii) lessons learned from the constraints of the programme.

4.4.1 Experiences gained from the achievements of the campaign

By its nature as a nationwide adult literacy campaign, the programme can be remembered as one in which the government devoted attention to the development of education, especially adult literacy, and as a programme in which there was mass mobilization for its implementation. Leaving aside for the moment problems related to the data and the definition given to 'literacy' and 'literate person', by the end of the 22nd round in 1990, according to the organizers about 77% of the population of Ethiopia was regarded as 'literate' and the literacy campaign was considered a successful operation. This was a remarkable quantitative achievement for a country known as the 'Land of the Thumb Print'. To this can be added the major qualitative outcomes of the campaign: (i) encouraging evidence that the new literates were starting to write their names, identify numbers, places, read letters and so on in their day-to-day lives; (ii) the use of 15 languages as a medium of instruction, which on the one hand brought those never before used in written communication into the world of print, and on the other hand, enabled most learners to be taught in their mother tongue; (iii) the opportunity given to women to have a chance to participate in this programme outside their

household responsibilities; and (iv) the cultural changes observed within the society, i.e., the interest shown in written materials. From these results, the country gained international recognition for the efforts of the government and the participants and at the same time was able to share the experiences accumulated during the process with other countries. The main experiences gained from these achievements can be summarized as follows:

- it is possible to mobilize the population of a country for such a national programme provided that it has a well-designed objective and clearly outlined methods of implementation;
- the success of such a nationwide programme is dependent on both the political will and full support of the government and also on the full participation of the population; and
- the use of the student's mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the literacy programme not only simplifies the teaching/learning process but also serves as a means of motivation especially when it comes to those languages that had not previously been used in print.

4.4.2 Experiences gained from the problems encountered during the campaign

Besides the above-mentioned achievements of the campaign, shortcomings were also registered. They were incidental, structural and technical. What significant lessons have these shortcomings left?

Adult literacy programmes must be integrated in a country's national development plans, i.e. they have to be part of the short- and long-term national plan with adequate human and financial resources. It is particularly important to ensure that the newly acquired knowledge can be put to use, and in the long run that education is matched by employment opportunities. Organizational set up, as Hallak (1990) pointed out, should be based on a 'principle of duality'. Central levels develop standards of quality and norms, provide training to adult educators, and organize financial support. Local levels initiate, execute and adapt programmes to local conditions. The existence of a flexible structural organization, which leaves space for creative work, is crucial.

Clear, precise and well-defined campaign objectives are a prerequisite of any programme. The Ethiopian literacy campaign objectives, in this regard, embodied a mixture of the political, economic, social and cultural strategies of the government. At the forefront of the objectives of the campaign was the goal of enabling adults to read and to write. At the same time, it was aimed at increasing the adults' political awareness and broadening their collective socio-cultural participation. This was reflected in the teaching/learning guides used and the reading materials prepared for the post-literacy programme that emphasized the secondary objectives. This was in a way a deviation from the main objectives and diverted attention away from the principal targets – teaching people to read and write in as short a time as possible. This shift in the practical applications of the objectives of the literacy campaign programme in the Ethiopian context was at the centre of the problems that were reflected in the results of the campaign..

Planning, organizing and implementing a literacy campaign can best be based on past experiences. The successes achieved or the problems encountered in previous attempts should be observed and analysed. This, of course, includes efforts at national, regional and international levels. Conceptualising past experiences and adapting them to the present situation increases the likelihood of success and the ultimate goal of the campaign. Ignoring

past lessons or paying them minimum attention will negatively influence the outcome. Thus, considerable attention to pre-campaign procedures should be compulsory.

The success of adult literacy programmes is determined mainly by the degree of involvement of the direct subjects in the campaign's entire process, i.e. its planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating. Many past failures have been due to insufficient involvement on the part of the learner. Pre-campaign and mid-campaign consultation with the direct participants and taking into consideration their ideas, feelings and attitudes will bring about a determined commitment to the programme which is vital to the results because it motivates the adults and reduces or minimizes their degree of non-involvement.

The timetable fixed for the literacy programme must not coincide with participants' other (work) commitments. Especially in rural areas where peasants' work schedules are closely tied to the seasons, attention must be paid to this factor. Another important point related to time is the duration of the programme. In the Ethiopian literacy campaign, beginners were supposed to attend at least 288 hours over three to four months. This, according to the organizers, would enable students to read and write if the programme was uninterrupted. In this respect, no consideration was given to the real situation on the ground. There are cultural and societal events that must be considered, such as religious ceremonies and other holidays, cultural gatherings of elders, neighbours and families etc. There are also unexpected events such as illness and funerals. Adults have to attend such events but they interrupt the scheduled learning/teaching programme. In addition to these external distractions, adults' minds are already occupied with many other responsibilities. They have to think about good weather and harvests, problems in their community and their country. In a country like Ethiopia where society still values the existence of the extended family, adults are also occupied with their families', friends' and neighbours' problems. In practice there is very little time and place for additional activities such as learning. When launching literacy programmes and fixing times, consideration must be given to all these and other problems either by extending the duration of the campaign or organizing make-up classes etc. This issue needs to be seriously addressed.

However, well-designed plans and structurally better-organized literacy campaigns can achieve nothing unless they are supported by motivated and well-prepared instructors. Adult literacy instructors must be people who understand the feelings, attitudes, inclinations and problems of their learners. Nothing they do must damage the learners' interest in literacy; on the contrary the content and relevance of the programme must encourage and attract the adults. The selection of instructors needs to be given appropriate attention. As to the instruction materials, it is advisable to look into different forms of instruction materials and guides for urban dwellers and rural peasants based on their life experiences. Using one and the same set of instruction materials for different groups of society with different individual and social practices will, in the writer's opinion, lead to short-term success – very high initial enrolment figures but comparatively low results.

Adult literacy programmes must be continuous and long-lasting. A programme must encourage and prepare conditions for the new literates so that they can utilize their newly acquired knowledge in solving their problems. In the meantime, the programme must attract those who, for one reason or another, have not been able to attend earlier programmes. Literacy campaigns, as so many countries including Ethiopia have shown, has been based on voluntary participation. Practice has also shown that the interruption of such a programme without concrete actions to preserve its gains, intensifies the chances of relapse into illiteracy. This is true in Ethiopia where the rate of literacy, which was 77.2% in 1990, declined to 55% by the end of 1993 (Negash 1996). According to UNESCO's 1998 World Education Report, this figure has declined even further to 35.5%, indicating that the country's literacy rate is in a state of collapse. Adult education today demands a new approach, a shift from a one-off

campaign to an organized and continuous programme promoting literacy alongside formal education.

An evaluation of the accomplishments of a literacy programme should be based on a clear definition of what a literate person is. In this regard, although the definition of a 'literate' person differs from country to country, some common factors still exist: the ability to read and write, and to have some knowledge of arithmetic. It is the cognitive ability of these factors that should be considered as the basis of the evaluation of the work done in instructing adults, and which must be accurately assessed. If writing or copying her/his name is considered as a standard measurement for being literate, it will degrade nationally and internationally the efforts taken to promote the programme and the know-how gained by the learners, which was part of the problem in the Ethiopian literacy campaign.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a general overview of the state of literacy efforts in Ethiopia specifically that of the National Literacy Campaign of 1979-1990. As background information, the pre-nationwide literacy campaign efforts were also discussed so that the programme could be better understood. The indigenous and more culturally or religiously coloured literacy programmes of traditional Ethiopia were directed to serve the elite groups and clergy, preventing the majority of society from learning to read and write. The expansion of the secular educational system was unable to change the situation for two reasons. First, the expansion of modern education was conducted with limited material resources and manpower covering specific regions of the country. Second, the aim of the new educational system was not directed at teaching the majority of the population but at producing limited skilled labour for the different administrative services of the regime. With this small-scale expansion of the modern educational system, the majority of Ethiopians were not given the possibility of education. It took some time for the regime to understand the necessity of education for the vast majority of the population and the first practical attempt in promoting literacy was carried out in 1962 by the *Yefidel Serawit* (Alphabet Army) literacy organization that was run by the government and UNESCO and was aimed at instructing adults between the ages of 18 and 50. Literacy activities were organized and run by a voluntary body that included the emperor and other high-ranking officials. The organization claimed to have instructed between 60,000 and 80,000 adults at the end of 1969 (NLCCC 1989, Amare 1991). However, according to Wagaw (1977) and Gobena (1994), this first effort was criticized for failing to train instructors well, certifying students who had not attained the necessary level of proficiency, a lack of adequate preparation before launching the programme, and inadequate involvement of the government and the people in the implementation of the programme.

The second and by far the most successful literacy effort was the initiative taken by the Protestant missionary groups within the Lutheran church known as the Evangelical Church *Mekane Yesus*, through which between 1962 and 1975 about half a million people received literacy instructions.²⁹ The campaign known as the Literacy Campaign of *Yemiserach Dimits* (Voice of Gospel) was mainly directed at the rural population. The campaign was operative in 12 of the then 14 administrative regions, targeting young adults between the ages of 15 and 25. The target groups were chosen for two reasons. In the first place 15 to 25 is the period when many people get married and start families and it is very important for children to have literate parents. The other reason was that young people are supposed to overcome language difficulties (because the teaching was given only in Amharic) with greater ease than older people. Since about 95% of the students in YDLC's literacy school were non-Amharic

²⁹. Sjöströms (1973, 1977, 1983), Wagaw (1977), Amare (1991).

speaking this was an important factor. The main aim of the literacy programme was to make the ability to read and write accessible to as many as possible including numeracy skills. Underlying this intention was a firm belief in the importance of literacy as a necessary means of improving living conditions in the broadest sense of the word.

The third and other large-scale literacy programme during this period was the Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project (WOALP) launched with the assistance of the UNDP, the ILO, the FAO and the Ethiopian government. The initial aim of the programme was to assist the government of Ethiopia in organizing, implementing and evaluating a work-oriented adult literacy project closely linked with rural development, as well as with industrial and vocational training (UNESCO 1976). The programme became operative in October 1968 and was terminated in 1973.³⁰ By June 1973 close to 25,000 learners in 885 classes with 783 instructors were engaged in WOALP (NLCCC 1984). But there are some doubts concerning the data and even the success of the programme itself. For example, Wagaw (1977), arguing the shortcomings of the programme, suggested that the programme's justification, if any, must be in terms of the development of materials and methods and as a demonstration. According to Wagaw, there are no data as to how many people became literate under this programme. The original programme was reduced to 78,000 and later it was found that even this modest figure was very high. Eventually only some 1,700 finished the first phase, and only half of these had enrolled for the second phase and no one was able to enter the third and final stage.³¹

A more recent literacy activity attempt was the campaign carried out during the first years of the revolution. In this Development through Cooperation Campaign (also known as the *Zemecha* Campaign), adult literacy was seen as one of the campaigners' tasks: three-quarters of a million people were registered and eventually 160,000 finished the course.³² Literacy work in this period was given in four major languages (Oromo, Wolayta, Tigrigna and Somali) in addition to Amharic, the country's official language. The campaign had a literacy component in its multi-dimensional purposes of awakening, sensitising, activating and organizing the society. In general in the pre-1979 literacy instruction efforts, besides the very limited quantitative results registered, the demonstration of different teaching methods and teaching materials and the use of some five languages as a medium of instruction (mainly in the Development through Cooperation Campaign) were some of the positive aspects registered. However, the illiteracy rate among the vast majority of the society was not reduced and on the eve of the national campaign more than 90% of Ethiopians were unable to read and write. The main reasons for this were the lack of attention given by the regime to adult literacy programmes, problems with materials and human resource capabilities to launch such a wide-scale programme and the backward traditional culture that existed for centuries and hampered or reduced the involvement of the society in different small-scale or selective attempts.

In preparing the 1979-1990 national literacy campaign, the Ethiopian government considered its main objective to be to teach adults to read, write and do some practical calculations, which were essential to overcome their individual and social problems. It was also made clear that as part of the objectives of the campaign, the programme would focus on consciousness-

³⁰ Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom argued that this programme was terminated in 1975.

³¹ WOALP literacy instruction was divided into three sequential stages. The first presented the skills of basic literacy and numeracy. The second was called a 'language programme' based primarily upon the reading of books designed to increase the students' reading skills and vocabulary. The third, or 'follow-up' stage was to consist of the provision of a travelling 'suitcase' library transported from village to village, with students being visited by a teacher about once a month.

³² Sjöstrom & Sjöstrom (1977), NLCCC (1986, 1989), Searle (1991), Amare (1991), Bhola (1994).

raising activities to create a socialist-oriented society. In order to implement these objectives a national literacy campaign coordinating committee was formed in which a number of governmental and mass organizations joined the committee. Sub-committees were set up and the staff of the Department of Adult Education under the Ministry of Education were also mobilized. Instruction materials for the campaign were prepared, seminars and workshops were organized, sites were selected and consultations were made with local leaders. At this stage organizations, formed with different objectives and levels, were given the responsibility of mobilizing their respective members to ensure the success of the literacy campaign. Following these were an analysis of the steps taken by the organizers to realize the objectives of the literacy campaign in the implementation of the 1st and the 22 consecutive rounds of the programme.

By implementing the above-mentioned procedures, the government gave the impression of being dedicated to altering the picture of illiteracy in the country and seems to have taken some active measures: groups were defined and adults between the ages of 8 and 49 throughout the country were targeted; mechanisms of operation were established starting with the urban areas and expanding to the rural areas, the country's material and human resources were to be used with additional support from the world community etc., which created a temporary enthusiasm among society. However, society's support did not last long because of problems related to the practical implementation of the campaign that began to emerge. The organizers did not pay enough attention to past experiences in planning and organizing the literacy campaign. Although the achievements of earlier attempts were not satisfactory in terms of the size of the problem, a thorough investigation would have given an indication of the need to create a sense of willingness among the adults. During the campaign, the programme's aims began to be dominated by the objectives of the revolution and less attention was paid to the primary interests and needs of the potential learners – good instruction and reading materials. These were basically being prepared with an emphasis on the revolution and with no or little attention given to the day-to-day life of the students, which indicated a deviation from the initial objectives of the campaign. As time passed, adults began to be less enthusiastic about the programme and stayed away from classes. The campaign also lacked an authorized body capable of solving the practical problems that arose. Structurally formed committees were unable or were less motivated to be active in the programme. The less well-qualified instructors, with their limited life experience, were unable to keep the course relevant and the programme achieved lower results than had been hoped. Despite all these and other major shortcomings, the NLCCC at the end of the 22nd round of the campaign in February 1990 claimed that it was able to evolve and consolidate a rational, systematic and coordinated attack on the problem of illiteracy within a national policy framework and the literacy rate was raised from 7% to 77.2%, although the accuracy of these figures is questionable.

In spite of the dubious quantitative achievements of the programme, the following can be seen as the campaign's successes: the positive implications that the literacy campaign had on education, the cultural changes observed as a reflection of the literacy effort, the educational opportunities given to women and the use of 15 national languages as mediums of instruction and which catered to 90% of the population. Such important gains, according to the organizers, not only solved the problem of communication between instructors and the instructed but also tried to lay down the basis for the preservation of the ideals and cultures of the indigenous population and also created a sense of 'belongingness' among the adult participants which is an important factor when promoting adult literacy.

Chapter V : COMPARISONS WITH SIMILAR LITERACY CAMPAIGNS

The key issue to be addressed in the present chapter concerns the practical lessons that can be gained from other countries with relatively similar socio-cultural, economic and political backgrounds when it comes to organizing and implementing an adult literacy programme. Empirically, the chapter is based on the experiences of four countries: Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua and Namibia. The points considered are: What background differences can be observed between these countries? How were their adult literacy programmes organized and implemented, and what results were registered? What were the problems the countries faced and what similarities or differences were there with the Ethiopian effort? What lessons can be learned from such a comparison? By considering the experiences of other countries, it is hoped that the Ethiopian literacy efforts – the results and the shortcomings registered – will be better understood. Thus, the aim of this comparative analysis is to identify the factors that lead to the success of an adult literacy programme, derived in part from the examples of the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian adult literacy policies and practices, and to compare them with the experiences of the Ethiopian literacy campaign that was discussed in detail in the previous chapter.

5.1 Rationale and organization

These four countries were chosen for a combination of factors. Ethiopia shares some common social, economic, political and even cultural elements with the countries mentioned, which serves as the starting point in the comparison between the countries. To mention, for instance, some common features of Tanzania and Ethiopia: (i) economically both countries depend on agriculture and agricultural products, with more than 90% of their respective populations engaged in this sector; (ii) politically both were socialist-oriented countries during their literacy campaign periods and both used already-existing political mobilization units as the basis for organizing their literacy campaigns at a local level – Tanu cells in urban areas and *Ujamaa* villages in the countryside in Tanzania and Urban Dwellers' Associations and Peasant Associations in Ethiopia; (iii) the majority of their respective populations, about 90% in Ethiopia and 85% in Tanzania, were illiterate before the launch of their literacy campaigns; (iv) both countries conducted a multi-year campaign that began in urban areas and gradually extended into rural areas and benefited from the experience of UNESCO's Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Pilot Project (WOALPP) operating in the country before the campaign; and (v) both countries also had experience in using an official African language for writing – Swahili in Tanzania and Amharic in Ethiopia. Tanzania is regarded as one of the countries with a relatively successful literacy campaign in Africa;

Although having considerable differences with Tanzania and Ethiopia, Nicaragua is also economically dependent on agriculture and agricultural products, with 47% of its population engaged in the sector. Politically, like Tanzania and Ethiopia, Nicaragua was after 1979 and during its literacy crusade considered to be a socialist-oriented country under the leadership of the Sandinista government. About half of the population was illiterate during the time of the literacy programme, with more than three-quarters (76%) of the rural populations unable to read and write. Whilst Nicaragua was not as well organized as Tanzania and Ethiopia, it benefited from past experiences. As Archer and Costello (1990) showed, literacy was an issue in Nicaragua long before the National Literacy Crusade of 1980. In their 1969 manifestation, the then guerrillas of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) promised that after the revolution they would organize a 'massive campaign to eradicate illiteracy immediately' and

in this respect their improvised literacy classes in the village of Anastasio played an important role. In 1977 the Somoza government also launched a literacy programme in the remote area of Wasalala, which laid the ground for the National Literacy Crusade. Nicaragua used and developed the Spanish language as the official medium, and it was also used as the medium of instruction in their literacy crusade.

Cuba's recent agro-industrial developments and relatively modern technology, which have contributed to the country's economic advancement, make it different from Ethiopia's agriculturally dependent, subsistence-level and apparently backward traditional economy. However, the political course followed by the revolutionary government since 1959 and its influence on the socio-cultural and economic spheres bring it close to the situation in Ethiopia. With respect to the adult literacy programme, although Cuba is one of the countries that promoted its adult literacy campaign with no or very little specific experience at a national or international level, its aim in launching the campaign, its organization and the methods it used are fairly close to the Ethiopian literacy campaign's. Like Nicaragua, Cuba used Spanish in writing during its literacy programme.

Second, it was believed that the Ethiopian literacy campaign could be best understood if the literacy programme were examined in the light of a literacy programme launched long before it. The Cuban literacy effort of 1961 can again be mentioned here, and is paralleled by a literacy programme launched sometime after the Ethiopian literacy activity. Although there are very few common elements, the 1992 Namibian literacy campaign was approached from this perspective. With the same notion, the Tanzanian and Nicaraguan literacy programmes of 1971 and 1980 respectively were referred to so as to glean information from adult literacy campaigns undertaken more or less within the same range of time as the Ethiopian literacy campaign.

The aim is not to give an exhaustive assessment of the literacy activities of the same period or different regions, it is rather to provide additional and alternative information in combating illiteracy among adults in less-developed countries. Thus, it is outside the scope of this analysis to provide a detailed description of the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian literacy campaigns. The aim, instead, is to point out some of the main similarities and differences of the literacy campaigns compared to Ethiopia's. Thus the chapter briefly highlights the geographical, demographic, socio-economic and political situation of the countries mentioned. Important factors such as population, language and education are also considered. This is followed by a description of the adult literacy programme experiences of the above-mentioned countries. At the end, a comparative analysis of the case studies is given with specific attention to significant factors such as planning, implementing and evaluating adult literacy programmes.

5.2 Cuba

Cuba, with its main island and a series of small islands covering an area of 110,860 km², is situated in the Caribbean. It is a country with rugged hills and mountains, the highest being Mount Pico de Turquino about 2560 m above sea level. Southern Cuba is low-lying and is the fertile and productive part of the country. With a maximum of 1,260 mm of rainfall annually, Cuba is a country with a humid tropical climate, the temperature ranging between 22°C in February to 28°C in July. For years the mainstay of its economy has been sugar production. At present the country is trying to diversify its economy, an attempt greatly hampered by the on-going boycott by the United States.

Cuba is divided into 14 administrative provinces and 169 municipalities in which its 11 million people live, 86.2% of them in cities such as Santiago de Cuba, Camagüey, Holguin and Guantanamo. About 2 million people live in Havana, the capital city. The population of Cuba is made up of 51% mulattos, 37% whites, 11% blacks and 1% Chinese. The official language is Spanish. About 56% of the population are atheists, 40% are Catholics and the rest are Jews and Protestants.

Education in Cuban society

For years Cuba was known as the country with the best educational system in the region. From the turn of the 20th century until the 1950s, Cuba had the highest rate of literacy, number of children enrolled in schools and the best educational performances of most Latin American countries. In 1899, 43.8% of the Cuban population was unable to read and write but 44 years later the figure had dropped to 28.6% and by 1953 the illiteracy rate in the country was about 23.6% (Lorenzetto & Neys 1965, Valdes 1972). But after the 1950s this downward trend changed and a certain decline was registered in educational performance. For instance, by 1953, the illiteracy rate in the rural sector was twice the national average, amounting to 41.7%, while the urban areas showed only an 11.6% illiteracy rate. In 1923, the number of children and young Cubans enrolled in primary, secondary and higher education, in relation to its total population, was more than that enrolled 30 years later. In the mid 1950s Cuba occupied 17th place in primary enrolment figures in all of Latin America, since the rate of growth of primary education was 50% lower than that of the population growth in the same period.

Furthermore, in 1953, 52% of the island's total population never managed to get beyond third grade and 44% had between a fourth and eleventh grade education, while only 3% of Cubans had schooling ranging from the twelfth grade to three years of college education. Only 1% of Cubans finished four years of higher education and less than that percentage acquired a university degree (Valdes 1972). Successive governments gave insufficient attention to minimizing the growing contrast between the advantageous urban areas and the marginalized rural ones. The authorities in that period were understood to have a backward outlook in terms of the country's human resources development. It was under such circumstances that the Cuban Revolution took place in 1959.

One of the main tasks of the new regime was to carry out a radical overhaul of the whole system, including education, inherited from the previous administration. The fundamental principle of the new regime's national programme was based on the conviction that education was an inalienable right of every human being. The government was also convinced that there was a close relationship between economic development and education and that to invest in schools and human resources was one of the most rapid ways of moving away from underdevelopment. Based on this conviction, a revision of the entire educational system was undertaken in the first years following the revolution: the national system of education was reorganized, encompassing teaching from preschool through to higher education, and a new educational structure was established. The other major step taken in this regard was the nationalization of private schools, and the opportunity of free schooling made available to all Cuban citizens regardless of race, sex, socio-economic background or social position. But the government realized that availability and opportunity were not adequate unless a massive drive was initiated to make as many people as possible literate. Hence, the national literacy campaign for adults was organized.

Literacy activities in Cuban society

The educational reform exercised by the new regime also underlined the fact that if the revolution was to succeed, the gap between the educated and uneducated should be narrowed. According to the government, in order to bring about the economic, social and political benefits of the revolution, successive steps had to be taken to remove the division between the educated child and the illiterate parent, as well as the educated and uneducated citizens of the entire nation. In this sense mass education was seen as the revolution's most pressing task. The following three benefits of the literacy effort were foreseen.

- Economically, the development of Cuba was dependent on a skilled and informed labour force. The dearth of technical skills had to be met through providing an opportunity for education that would enable Cubans to meet the technological needs of their new society.
- Socially, by bringing literacy and political awareness to the disadvantaged, and at the same time introducing literacy workers to the hard realities of poverty and backwardness, both groups could emerge with a clearer understanding of national problems, as well as a desire to work for the transformation of the old society.
- Politically, because gradual reform through education had not achieved the desired outcome for which the revolutionaries had striven, it was felt that the entire nation could best be brought to an understanding of the new ideology through the mobilization of large numbers of Cubans into a massive literacy programme, either as teachers or as pupils.

Thus, in March, 1959, the new government established a national literacy and basic education commission made up of the Minister of Education and five other members, two of whom represented the National Teachers' Association and the National Association of Pedagogues (Lorenzetto & Neys 1965), which began to arrange and organize literacy activities and centres in some urban areas. In the meantime, the National Institute for Agrarian Reform, established at the same time, began to organize literacy activities in less-populated rural areas. The national literacy commission – as its first task – organized 15-day courses for 1,300 volunteer teachers. This was followed by the formation of provincial and municipal literacy commissions that, in turn, organized brief courses in their own areas. In this way, before the national literacy campaign was launched, some relatively organized literacy activities had already taken place among Cubans.

By September 1959, the first official statistics of the preparatory literacy programme were collected, listing the numbers of adults attending and instructors, organized centres and the teaching materials used. According to this document, prior to the national literacy campaign, there had been 844 centres and 19,075 adults attending classes given by 2,832 instructors (Lorenzetto & Neys 1965). The other important step taken by the commission during this period was to search for the active and passive vocabulary of the Cuban farmer with the idea of publishing a teaching primer. According to the then Minister of Education, the need for such a step was based on the fact that such a revolutionary primer would not only provide adequate motivation from the historical and psychological points of view, but would equally express this motivation in a comprehensible form and as closely as possible in the language and expressions of a Cuban farmer.

The Cuban national literacy campaign

The national literacy campaign was announced by Fidel Castro at the United Nations Assembly in September 1960 and was to officially start in Cuba on 1 January 1961. He promised to mobilize his nation and eradicate illiteracy in the shortest possible time. Following his declaration before the UN, the 1st Congress of Municipal Council of Education, meeting in October 1960, declared 1961 as ‘Educational Year’, focusing on the elimination of illiteracy in Cuba. The literacy commission established in 1959 was replaced by the National Committee of Literacy and 18 members of the committee were brought together representing different governmental and mass organizations (Lorenzetto & Neys 1965, Thomas, 1972). At the same period the formation of literacy committee continued at the level of the municipalities and literacy units where local councils and individual educational activists were represented in the committees. Under the National Committee there were the following four departments: technical, publicity, publications, and finance. The following three stages of the campaign were accomplished:

Stage one: preparatory period (September 1960 to 1 January 1961), preparation of manual for instructors and primers for adults.

Stage two: (January to March 1961) the start of the campaign itself and the creation of its organizational and technical structure.

Stage three: (April to September 1961) participation of mass organizations and the establishment of political guidance in the campaign. This third stage consisted of three periods: (i) April-June 1961, the first-round teaching period; (ii) June-August 1961 after the first assessment of the literacy activity an additional step was taken to assure the programme reached its outlined goal by the end of the year. Workers, women and civil servants were invited to join the national effort to combat illiteracy; (iii) October-December was the period during which the final objectives were reached. The campaign ended with a large assembly and a parade on 22 December 1961.

Organization and implementation of the campaign

The first step taken by the government in organizing the literacy campaign was to locate and register illiterate adults and suitable instruction sites. From this first step, it was established that about 929,207 people were illiterate and they were unevenly distributed throughout the country. The other organizational work done during this period was selecting and orienting individual instructors known as *alfabetizadores* (adult volunteers) and *brigadistas* (mobile student volunteer brigades). About 95,777 instructors were selected, the majority of whom were high-school students with some primary-school students joining them too. These young volunteers were organized into brigades and each brigade was sent for an eight-to-ten-day training programme. The training focused on the following three basic themes: (i) teaching writing and reading. They were equipped with two texts – *Alfabeticemos* (‘We teach reading’) and *Venceremos* (‘We shall conquer’) – and instructions on how to use them; (ii) introduction to rural lifestyles. In this part of the programme they were acquainted with the peculiarities of life without the amenities to which most of the volunteers were accustomed; and (iii) brief background material on the psychology of teaching adults. The major aim of this component was to ensure, as far as possible, that the student did not offend the peasants he would be instructing.

The two books mentioned above were based on different approaches to teaching reading and writing. *Alfabeticemos* was structural in its approach with a strong emphasis on the rules governing letter-sound relationships, spelling etc. *Venceremos*, on the other hand, was designed to ensure the learner was able to learn the process of reading. It consisted of

fifteen lessons, each consisting of a thematic photograph emphasizing a particular aspect of Cuban daily life or an issue of profound and widely appreciated importance to Cuba with written materials relating to it. The instructor was meant to link these 'active' words with the picture by asking the learner what the picture 'meant' and then was shown its printed representation. This way the psychological sense and general know-how of the adults was linked to the printed world.

The production of teaching aids and materials went side by side with other preparation duties in which about 500,000 copies of *Alfabeticemos* and 1,500,000 of *Venceremos* were printed. The activities of the campaign were continuously checked by trained supervisors and professional teachers who reflected an intense level of commitment to the programme. Instructors met once a week, mostly on Sundays, to clarify difficulties about the methodology of the teaching/learning process and other problems encountered.

After all these and other preparatory steps, the first brigades left to start with classes. They were sent to the rural parts of the country in April 1961. About 95,000 *brigadistas* in the rural areas and about 126,069 *alfabetizadores* and 33,960 professional teachers in the towns were involved in instructing adult illiterates. In June 1961 when the first assessment of the campaign was carried out, the figure showed that about 500,000 adults had attended the programme out of which only 190,000 had completed the programme. It became apparent that there was no way that the target could be reached and it was also noted that 95,000 volunteers currently was not a sufficient number to reach the proclaimed goal. In response to this the government initiated the following three extreme measures: (i) factory workers were called upon 'out of loyalty to Cuba' to create new 'Literacy Brigades'. Out of some 30,000 workers, about 21,000 workers had responded to the call within three days; (ii) The Cuban Federation of Women and Committees for the Defence of the Revolution were also requested to recruit instructors; and (iii) local school boards were given powers to supervise all literacy activities in their respective areas, which allowed for much closer supervision of the programme.

Increased effort and measures taken to mobilize more participants to the literacy programme brought some results but not as many as were expected. After three months of continuous activity (June-August 1961), an assessment showed that there were still significant numbers of illiterates who were not being taught. Because of the deadline set by the government was only four months away, the organizers were obliged to institute an extraordinary plan of action known as a fourfold plan. This new plan of action involved:

- *Acceleration of camps* Throughout all parts of Cuba troubleshooting teams of expert educators or 'battle-tested brigades' and experienced 'People's Teachers' were chosen to work out and operate a collective remedial programme for those peasants who were unable to attend the literacy programme and those who failed to show the expected level of knowledge. Under this programme adult learners were asked to spend some time away from their work and family to carry out 'academic labour' instead. Neighbours and friends were asked to take over the learners' usual duties.
- *People's Teachers* After teaching their immediate neighbours to read and write, those who were capable of doing so were urged to organize carpools and arrange to teach in other areas.
- *Teams of study coaches* These were organized to work more closely with young individuals and inexperienced brigades who were having problems with instructing and approaching adult students.
- *Compulsion of teachers to serve the literacy programme* Teachers were asked to join the literacy programme for a certain period of time. The school year in Cuba begins in September but because of the literacy programme the academic year was set to begin

in January and teachers were instead sent to rural parts of the country to fit in instruction activity in the last phase of the government's action plan.

Follow-up and post-literacy programme

The literacy campaign in Cuba was followed by post-literacy follow-up and Worker-Farmer Improvement Programmes. The Department of Worker-Farmer Education created under the Ministry of Education just after the literacy campaign was over directed it. Eight municipalities were chosen for a pilot project and the first and the second levels of this experimental programme were run until the end of 1962 in which about 102,710 participants were reported to have done the final exam. In the meantime, in order to encourage the newly literates, 'home-follow-up circles' later known as 'Home Reading Circles' were created. In April 1963, post-literacy adult education was further improved and extended with second- and third-level courses in the worker-farmer improvement programmes. On the basis of these pilot projects and nationwide discussions and debates, a finalized structure of all facets of worker-farmer education was set out in 1964. The course system, structure and contents of this post-literacy are outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1
Post-literacy programme arrangements in Cuba

No.	Course	Objective/aim	Programme content
I	First course of worker-farmer improvement	to raise the level of new readers to that of the 3 rd grade of primary school	interpretative reading, writing and elementary arithmetic
II	Second course of worker-farmer improvement	to raise the student's level from 3 rd grade to that of 6 th grade, i.e. to finish primary school	Spanish and maths
III	Third course of worker-farmer improvement	for those who passed the top elementary level test	Spanish: grammar and composition, literature, maths, science etc.

Source: Report on the Method and Means Utilized in Cuba to Eliminate Literacy, (1965).

Courses I and II were meant for those who had slipped back into a state of illiteracy while Course III was set up partly to incorporate the existing night schools so they could assist as many adults as possible. The programme did not correspond to that of the regular junior high schools but instead was planned to prepare adults for specialized courses. The other programme developed was the 'Home Reading Circles', considered to be a variant of the first course of worker-farmer improvement. These were created in areas where most newly literate adults were left without guidance and assistance after the official campaign ended. It was seen as an alternative when there were difficulties bringing together the minimum (15) students, especially in the rural areas and for elderly people who had been initially taught by the *brigadists* at home and were not willing to attend the worker-farmer improvement programmes. In all these courses including the home reading circles about 538,076 adults were instructed in 21,454 classrooms by 19,310 instructors (Lorenzetto & Neys 1965), which contributed to reinforcing the literacy results gained during the national campaign.

Achievements and shortcomings of the campaign

According to Lorenzetto and Neys (1965), Thomas (1972) and Bonachea and Valdes (1972), the census taken in conjunction with the literacy campaign showed that there were 979,207 illiterates in Cuba at that time. Having exerted maximum effort and as official results announced on 21 December 1961 indicate, all illiterates were tracked down and 894,000 were enrolled in literacy classes. Of the total, 186,000 did not manage to become literate but 707,212 were successful, bringing the country's illiteracy rate down to 3.9% in a single year. The main factors mentioned as the driving force to reach such a significant achievement were the government's determination, its commitment to the programme and the unfailing support of the Cuban people in the teaching/learning process. The size of the illiterate population, the linguistic unity (the language used to instruct the adult illiterates was Spanish), extensive publicity, which all helped create a sense of involvement and motivation among the population, and the maximum and patriotic effort applied by organizers and the instructors to locate and teach the adults, were also among the factors leading to the programme's success. Although the campaign's results was praised, it was not without its shortcomings. Some of the constraints identified were:

Difficulties in locating illiterate adults especially during the first stage of the campaign

The early stage of the literacy campaign was under pressure and confronted with the problem of locating adult learners. Because illiterates feel ashamed of their status they often tried to hide their inability to read and write. Many elderly people also had reservations about learning. Mountain regions were not easily accessible and it was also difficult to reach fishermen and railroad workers because of their mobility.

Lack of trained instructors

The campaign suffered from a lack of professional or trained instructors. Such large number of adults to be taught in a very short period of time demanded the mobilization of volunteers even from elementary schools with no more than two weeks' orientation in teaching methods. In addition to instructors' abilities to carry out such a task, according to Thomas, 1972, the use of non-professional instructors in general created a sense of relaxation among the adult illiterates thereby eliminating the traditional teacher/student relationship, which in fact was essential for success.

Lack of teaching aids

Reading and writing materials, for instance, were based mostly, according to MacDonald (1985), on the study of Che's speeches, the poetry of Jose Marty, and Spanish translations of Gorky and Charles Dickens. Adults who were only on their first step towards reading written materials were forced to understand and recognize the materials and conditions created by the authors, which were in fact too difficult and ultimately demotivating.

Quantitative goals prevailed over the qualitative results expected from the instruction

In attempting to accomplish such a massive programme within a fixed timeframe, the actual contact time with the adults was not sufficient and the quality of education suffered. In January 1961 when the campaign was in its early stages it was assumed that three months would be long enough to teach adults to read and write. Figures released in November 1961 showed that 353, 000 Cubans had been taught to read and write, which was half of the total proclaimed by the end of the campaign. That means the remaining 354,212 began and completed their courses during the following six weeks before the final announcement of 21 December 1961. As Thomas (1972) in his final notes showed, whilst during the first stage of

the campaign a person was considered literate only after completing the 15 lessons of the primer, by October it was reduced to 10 and by November to five. Although successful completion of the primer could have been achieved in less time, it is doubtful whether in such a short period of time adults could have managed to get at least a minimal degree of literacy.

Anti-literacy campaign groups

These groups saw the programme as a means of political indoctrination seeking to propagate a socialist idea and were among the variety of problems the organizers encountered.

Shortage of paper and printing problems

The use of the first paper manufactured by primitive methods using sugar-cane by-products was not successful, since the printing slipped and left marks. Newspaper presses had to be used for printing school textbooks but it was difficult to find suitable typography, colours for the pictures, stereotype plates, and reproductions.

5.3 Tanzania

The United Republic of Tanzania is to be found on the east coast of Africa on the Indian Ocean. To the north it borders Kenya and Uganda, to the west Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and to the south Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. The area consists of the mainland (former Tanganyika) and the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia. The name Tanzania came after the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964. The capital city is Dar es Salaam ('Harbour of Peace'). Geographically, Tanzania is dominated by a huge central plateau, which goes from the mountains in the north to the highlands in the south. There are many different types of vegetation in the country: in the coastal region large areas of forest are found, inland there is savannah and there are rainforests on the mountains in the north. The highest mountain in Africa, Kilimanjaro (5895 m), is situated in the northern part of the country, as well as part of the continent's largest lake, Lake Victoria. The climate is very diverse: along the coast it is very hot and humid, the average temperature being between 25°C and 30°C all year round. On the central plateau the climate is very hot but dry; it seldom rains in these parts which leaves the area sparsely populated. The best areas for agriculture are the highlands, where most of the people live.

About 25 million people live in Tanzania in an area of 945,000 km². More than 90% of the population belong to one of the 120 Bantu tribes, for example the Chagga, Makonde and Haya. There are also minorities consisting of Arabs, Asians (mainly Indians) and Europeans. The language that most Tanzanians speak is Kiswahili, a mix of the original Bantu language, Arabic, English and Hindu. According to Starushenko (1988), about 60% of the mainland people and 97% of the island people are Muslims and the rest are Christians or follow traditional beliefs. The European missionaries and Arabs were successful in their attempts to convert the original population to their religions and nowadays one third of Tanzanians are Christians, one third are Muslims and the rest still profess one of the traditional religious (Löfving & Nordlander 1990).

Education in Tanzania

The presence of foreigners in Tanzania, according to Buddelmeijer (1980), dates back to the 15th century. The Arabs, the Portuguese and later the Germans and the British all left their mark on the country. The British colonized Kenya and Uganda as late as 1895. Tanzania, after a short period of German rule, became a protectorate under the mandate of the League of

Nations at the end of the First World War in 1919. Thus, Tanzania was under British rule as a mandated territory from 1919 to 1945 and as a trust territory from 1946 to 1961. The British presence had a particular influence on education.

Formal Western-type education, according to Buchert (1994), was introduced into what became Tanganyika by missionary organizations of different denominations that established themselves in the territory after the 1840s. It supplemented the traditional forms of education through which knowledge about the prevailing norms and practices of the indigenous societies was passed on by elders to new generations. Education, thus, simultaneously fulfilled a culturally cohesive and a socio-economically differentiating role. Later on, education started to have secular purposes in the form of an academic curriculum and vocational activities. This became important after 1900 when the German administration became involved in the formulation of educational policy and began to support mission schools financially.

The development of educational activities in Tanzania can be examined in two different phases: (i) educational practices before 1961 i.e. during the colonial period; and (ii) post-1961 educational practices. Educational policy during the first period was mainly known as educational policy for adaptation and the Germans first and later on the British applied this policy to minimize the cultural gap between the Western way of life and the indigenous people. For instance, the German administration's interest in education derived from its growing need for middle layers of administrative personnel that could provide a proper level of communication, and for technical personnel who could secure the economic development in the territory (Buchert 1994). The first government school was established in Tanga in 1892, and after 1897 more followed in the areas where the mission schools were mainly concentrated. Education in government schools was non-religious and unlike mission schools, did not directly attempt to convert the local populations to Western values.

In contrast to the German educational policy, the British emphasized both political and economic goals for the educational system, which led to a higher degree of intervention in local circumstances. During this period, the formulation of educational policies were left to the central administration, which was responsible for the supervision and establishment of educational institutions, set up educational advisory bodies and organized financial matters for non-governmental institutions. Education was provided in different categories of schools run by different agencies. Missionary societies generally supported elementary education for Africans in more cultural or religious terms than the British administration. Education beyond the elementary level was provided by missionary societies primarily to create staff to expand mission activities. They used the vernacular languages as the medium of instruction. Government schools were mainly directed at the expected future rulers or clerical workers in the central administration and commercial firms. The teaching was primarily in Kiswahili and English was included as a subject. In the later periods the native authorities and chiefs demanded government or government-supported educational facilities to avoid mission control of education and as a means of increased influence and prestige. Such was the educational development of Tanzania until the Second World War.

After the Second World War, the British administration followed a policy of 'Mass Education in African Society' that, in addition to the earlier emphasis on the need for socio-economic development in the colonies, introduced the issue of political self-government as being of central importance. In accordance with this policy, the British administration outlined two objectives: the ultimate objective and the immediate objectives. Under the ultimate objectives of the administration, education – in its widest sense – was assumed to shape and guide the destiny of the country. The administration's emphasis on the immediate objectives of education was laid on advancing the more backward sectors of society. The underlying view was that literacy would make labour and production more effective and,

therefore, should be considered as a form of capital investment. Despite such emphasis on the immediate objectives of advancing the more backward sections of the population through literacy, the planned activities by the education department largely excluded adult education and were instead concentrated on formal education of the young (Buchert 1994). The focus was directed towards the expansion of the modern urban capitalist sector and the introduction of Western democratic political institutions in order to establish a Western national political unit. This was followed by limited access of African youths to the modern sector, which in its turn influenced their participation in the economic and political life of the country.

Post-1961 Tanzania followed a new course of development with a strategy of socialism and self-reliance focusing on the development of the rural economy. On the basis of this strategy the country's educational policy of that period, known as 'Education for Socialism, Self-Reliance and Social Commitment' was formulated. The basic principle of this new educational policy was to promote mass education to improve production and productivity of the rural sector and to incorporate the wider population in policy-making processes. Education for Self-Reliance was introduced to restore social commitment and cooperative endeavour at every level of the educational system. In 1961, pursuant to the new educational policy, the government initiated reforms of the educational system, which affected its structure, organization, access and contents. The new system was to operate with one national curriculum, and access to education was permitted to all educational institutions with no difference in social position. The government's role in managing and controlling educational institutions including the schools of voluntary agencies continued to grow.

The content of the educational curriculum gradually shifted after independence and began to reflect the political ideology of the government. In the first period after independence the teaching of vocational education was abandoned, turning the curriculum into a purely academic one to consolidate the required middle- and high-level manpower skills. It was after the Arusha Declaration (1967) that the country reintroduced and included vocational education in the form of Education for Self-Reliance. Besides, work-oriented social programmes were also incorporated in the higher-level educational programmes to give future specialists the practical work and skills they would need after their graduation. In general, educational reforms in this period were directed at the creation of work-oriented attitudes and social commitment to the nation. The rapid expansion of educational institutions also helped to minimize the social differences with regard to education and created opportunities even for those who for one reason or another did not get the chance to attend school. While there were positive signs in the new educational policy, it was not without problems. The overall control of private education was one of the concerns that led to disagreements between the supporters and government agencies.

Adult literacy in Tanzania

During the colonial period, despite efforts to integrate a literacy programme with the introduction of formal education in Tanzania, about 75% of the adult population was considered to be illiterate (UNESCO 1990). It was only after the Second World War that literacy instruction centres, first for ex-army men and later for adults in the urban areas, were organized. In 1949 the first pilot adult education programme was set up and in the following years the programme developed to cover different areas (Dave *et.al.*1985, UNESCO 1985, Buchert 1994). Until 1951, adult education concentrated on the teaching of individual men and focused on social welfare areas in urban and semi-urban areas. According to Buchert (1994), there were 33 social welfare centres teaching adults distributed across eight provinces. Classes were organized for two groups of adults: employees with some schooling, and

uneducated men and women. Gradually the programme extended its reach and advanced into rural parts of Tanzania but still did not include the vast majority of the Tanzanian population. It was only after the establishment of the Ministry of Community Development and National Culture, which was in charge of mobilizing the people for social development programmes and literacy instruction, that adult literacy started to gain momentum.

According to a 1965 report on adult literacy and post-literacy education, there were at that time 7,257 literacy classes with a total enrolment of 541,562 adults, of whom 206,214 were men and 335,348 women. In addition to these classes there were 440 follow-up classes (English and arithmetic) with a total enrolment of 14,043 adults, and there were also 1,914 women's groups (cooking, sewing, embroidery, childcare, etc.) with a total enrolment of 112,739 (Dave *et al.* 1985). With the UNESCO-sponsored EWLP being put into practice up to July 1969 when literacy and adult education activities were transferred to the Ministry of National Education, about 600,000 adults had passed through adult education classes. This was an encouraging result for the next step to be taken by the government. However, according to the abovementioned UNESCO document the following points were observable; (i) neither the earlier Ministry of Community Development and National Culture nor its successor, the Ministry of Regional Administration and Rural Development, had an overall policy giving clear objectives to its adult and literacy activities; (ii) lack of an integrated policy at a national level meant that there could be neither an articulated strategy nor an adequate administrative structure; (iii) there was little or no coordination and no substantial financial commitment made by the government; and (iv) no meaningful evaluation of the effectiveness of the literacy efforts was possible from such a diffuse and uncoordinated field of action.

It was in this situation that President Nyerere stated his policies of 'African Socialism', which were further developed in the Arusha Declaration of 1967. One of the most well-known ideas in Nyerere's African Socialism was the formation of collective villages known as '*Ujamaa* villages', which were supposed to function as centres of production in the country. In the following year, a new educational programme including adult education, based on the Arusha Declaration, was adopted. This new policy of 'Education for Self-Reliance and Social Commitment' was aimed at reforming colonial schools by introducing socialist education through curriculum changes at the primary-school level, and using Swahili as the medium of instruction. Thus in the Arusha Declaration, education, especially adult literacy, was preached as the cornerstone of the country's future development and targeted the adult men and women who had never been to school. In his speech in 1964 while introducing the first Five-Year Plan (1964-1969) to the nation, Nyerere emphasized that:

'First, we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our economic development for five, ten or even twenty years. The attitude of the adults ... on the other hand, has an impact now.'

By declaring the year 1970 as National Literacy Year in Tanzania, President Nyerere pledged to eradicate illiteracy by the end of 1975. The literacy campaign began in 1971. It was to be carried out in two phases: the first phase was 1971-1975 and the second phase 1976-1981 (in practice the campaign was extended until 1988). As President Nyerere in his 1970 New Year's Eve address to the nation explained, the general objectives of the Tanzanian adult education³³ was: (i) to shake Tanzanians out of a feeling of resentment towards the kind of life people lived in the past; (ii) to teach themselves how to improve their lives; and (iii) to have everyone understand the country's national policies of socialism and self-reliance (Nyerere 1969). After two and half years, according to Hall (1975), these generally

³³ 'Adult education' in the Tanzanian case mostly refers to the literacy instruction given to the illiterate masses.

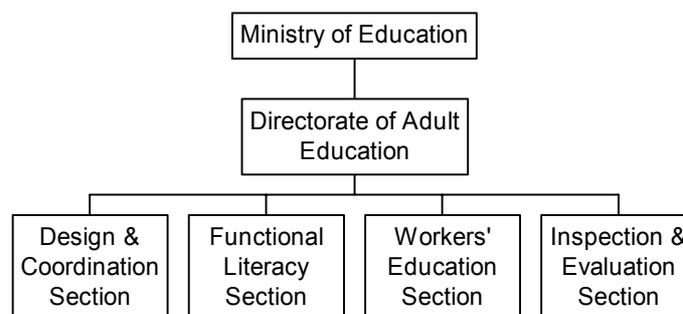
formulated objectives of the campaign were elaborated on by the Directorate of Adult Education within the Ministry of Education. The newly outlined objectives of the campaign were: (i) to mobilize the rural and urban masses into a better understanding of the national policies of socialism and self-reliance; (ii) to provide leadership training in various aspects of life at all levels; (iii) to eradicate illiteracy; (iv) to give knowledge and skills in agriculture and rural construction, health and home economics that would raise the people's productivity and standard of living; (v) to provide follow-up education for primary and secondary school leavers with the view of settling them in *Ujamaa* villages; and (vi) to provide continuing education to professionals at various stages in the form of seminars, evening classes, in-service training programmes, correspondence courses and vocational training. Accordingly, the purpose of the adult literacy programme was more precisely identified to be implemented throughout the country.

Organization and implementation of the campaign

Based on these objectives, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party passed a resolution to instruct a total of 5,200,000 illiterates aged 10 years and older in the first phase. During the first periods of the campaign, the organizational set-up already in place for political education was made available for the literacy campaign. After the Ministry of Education was given the highest responsibility in planning, implementing and evaluating literacy and post-literacy programmes, the organizational set-up of the literacy campaign was changed and the adult education programme became one of the main directorates of the Ministry of Education with the following organizational set-up (Buddelmeijer 1980, Dave *et al.* 1985, Kweka 1987, Löfving & Nordlander 1990).

Figure 5.1

Organizational structure of adult education in Tanzania



Source: *Ontwikkelingen in de Volwassenen - Educatie in Tanzania* (Developments in Adult Education in Tanzania), Buddelmeijer (1980).

It should be noted that there are some differences in the sections under the Directorate of Adult Education shown by Buddelmeijer (1980) and Dave *et al.* (1985). According to the latter, there is no inspection and evaluation section, and the functions of this section were covered by the other two, namely the design and coordination section and the functional section. On the other hand they claim that there were two more sections, namely the Folk Development College and the Adult Education Printing Press under the Directorate of Adult Education.

In the meantime, for the purpose of mobilizing the teaching and learning process, there were also adult education committees at different levels; at the national, regional, district and ward levels. The National Adult Education Committee was a sub-committee of the National Advisory Committee on Education (NACE). Members of this committee were drawn from the political, mass and professional organizations, voluntary agencies and ministries directly or indirectly engaged in adult education such as health, labour and social welfare, agriculture and the Ministry of Information and Culture. Similarly, at the regional and other lower levels of administration adult education committees were formed with representatives from party and governmental agencies, adult education coordinators, teachers and community members. For effective planning and coordination of adult education at the local level, a committee centre was formed where two to ten classes of literacy and post-literacy centres operated. Regional, district, divisional and ward educational functionaries were also assigned to coordinate the daily activities of the programme. The Tanzanian literacy programme developed some important structural arrangements during the campaign period. To mention some of them: (i) the establishment of a network of supervisory and coordinating personnel throughout the country; (ii) the setting up of a separate Adult Education Institute; and (iii) the organization of the Tanganyika library services. The network of supervisory and coordinating personnel, which started with only 62 personnel in 1970 grew to 2,300 fulltime and part-time workers in 1974 with the following tasks:

- assisting and inspecting the opening and maintaining of adult classes;
- taking care of the financial and material resources allocated to adult education;
- organizing training seminars for adult instructors; and
- working in good cooperation with different organizations that carried out adult education in their respective areas and governmental bodies.

The Institute of Adult Education set up independently under the Ministry of Education, besides training adult educators in different levels including high-level adult education administrators served as a centre for research and planning, correspondence education, mass media and publications. During the campaign period Tanzania developed an organized library service. By establishing the Tanganyika Library Service, the organizers helped the newly literate to access reading materials in four ways: (i) through the book box system; (ii) by distributing books to District Adult Education Officers; (iii) via the mobile library system; and (iv) by establishing rural libraries at ward level.

Adult instructors in Tanzania were selected from different ministerial offices and the communities: those who were as close as possible to the adults and their problems and who would be best accepted by the community; those who were best informed on the development objectives; and those who were more of an adviser or development agent than a teacher (*Adult Education and Development in Tanzania*, Vol.1, 1975). The training was organized to widen its basis in a triangular shape from the centre to the local level. The following topics were covered in the training programmes, which were seen as guidelines in approaching and handling the adult learners:

- the use of the literacy primer;
- health education;
- the principles of teaching adults;
- the preparation and use of audio-visual aids;
- the preparation and use of rural newspapers;
- class administration;
- cooperative education; and

- animal husbandry.

At the zone level the training lasted four to six weeks and seminars at district and ward levels lasted a minimum of three days. Different organizations were involved in the teaching process: mainly the Institute of Adult Education, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health and others. The campaign adopted the concept of 'functional literacy' following on from the UNDP/UNESCO Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Pilot Project in the lake regions during 1968-1972. Literacy teaching was to be integrated in the teaching of vocational skills. using 12 different primers written on better cotton, bananas, rice, maize, coconut, tobacco, wheat, cattle, fishing, home economics and political education (UNESCO 1991). The daily programme of instruction was organized with a short lecture about the character of the letters followed by the simple construction of words and sentences from the primers. Additional methods such as study groups of radio listeners and textbook exercises were also developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes in terms of relevant feedback from the participants. In the post-literacy programme Tanzanians developed a favourable environment for their newly literates. There was the creation of the Folk Development College, the opening of rural libraries and preparation of different forms of reading materials, and the organization of correspondence courses for those who were unable to join the regular programme. For the literacy programme, Tanzanians used only Swahili, the official language. The choice of language for literacy work and the decision made concerning the medium of instruction were sometimes dependent not only on the techniques of teaching/learning but also on the political course of the country

Achievements and shortcomings of the campaign

The massive campaign to eradicate illiteracy showed significant results. According to the Tanzanian Development Research Group (1993), 85% of the Tanzanian population is able to read and write. Women have also profited from the Tanzanian adult literacy programme. Since the first campaign in 1971, four national literacy examinations were set up in the years 1975, 1977, 1981 and 1983 and they resulted in the adult literacy rate being 61%, 73%, 79% and 85% respectively (Kweka 1987). The percentage of women in these results was 49% in 1975 and 55% in 1977 (Dave *et al.* 1985).³⁴ The illiteracy rate in the country in 1967 was 67% of which 80% were women. If the above-mentioned literacy rate is taken as background data for comparison, then the rate of literate women in 1975 was said to be 72.8% of the total and 87.1% in 1977. The campaign also generated a growing interest in education among adults, showing that literacy activities did in fact improve people's way of life.

But success was not without problems. As a study carried out by Mushi (1993) revealed, one of the problems related to the campaign was the selection and training of adult education instructors. Tanzania, with the most extensive adult education network in Africa, failed to produce real adult-education facilitators. In literacy activities, primary-school teachers and school leavers continued to be used as literacy teachers, and they did not undergo any substantial training in adult education methods or agriculture, except for occasional seminars. In industrial enterprises too, workers' education faced a similar problem. Management relied extensively on literate workers such as teachers, particularly for literacy and post-literacy programmes. In instances where courses became more complicated and difficult, teachers were employed from other educational institutions such as secondary schools on a part-time basis but then lacked teaching skills, particularly for teaching adult learners. While financial

³⁴ Figures for the rest of the examinations are not available.

constraints were always held responsible for this, at times the problem was aggravated by poor management procedures. Trained adult educators were wrongly allocated and the few available were not retained. This showed the low status accorded to adult education. *Adult education was seen as a non-professional job that could be left to volunteer teachers.*

A more serious complaint, according to UNESCO (1990), was the problem related to the content of the primers and the pedagogical methods employed. The primers in the Tanzanian campaign were centrally written, designed and produced with little local involvement. Incorporating, for instance, some oral history from local communities or designing and writing the content of the primers on the basis of the ideas of the learners would have helped the programme be more effective. The other major problem registered during the campaign period was the lack of effectiveness in creating a literacy environment, especially in most rural areas. As Kedege (1992) noted, adult utilization of post-literacy provisions is low, the presence of such services in villages was minimal and the villagers were unaware of the extent of what was on offer and showed only limited interest in making use of what was available.

5.4 Nicaragua

Nicaragua is one of the Central American countries located between the two great oceans, the Pacific to the west and the Atlantic to the east. Nicaragua borders Honduras in the north and Costa Rica in the south. The capital city is Managua. Running parallel to the Pacific coast over a length of about 240 km is a series of volcanoes, 11 of which are active. In the southern part of the country there are a lot of lakes that stretch to the northern and central mountain region. The highest is 2,100 m above sea level. The Atlantic coastal region is swampy. With the exception of the southwest where winters are relatively dry, Nicaragua is a country with a humid tropical climate with average year-round temperatures of 26°C. About 4 million people live in an area of 121,428 km². The Mestizos ethnic group makes up about 69% of the total population followed by the whites at about 14%, Africans 13%, and Indians constitute about 4% of the population. Spanish is the country's official language and the majority of the population is Catholic, with a minority of Jews.

Educational reform as the basis of social transformation

Arnove and Dewees (1991) and Arnove and Torres (1995) analysed the socio-political transformation of Nicaraguan society in the years 1979-1990, and its educational system in particular, and concluded that although there were still plenty of unsolved problems, the Sandinista government had laid an extremely successful foundation for the country's educational system. In 1979 when the broadly based revolutionary front overthrew the Somoza regime, half of the Nicaraguan nation was illiterate with more than three-quarters (76%) of the rural population unable to read and write. There were under 25,000 students enrolled in adult education programmes supported by the private sector and the church. Primary education reached 65% of the relevant age groups and pre-primary education was available to a mere 5% of children, mostly in private, fee-paying centres. Of the children entering school, 22% completed the sixth grade. Only 355 students were enrolled in special education. Women and the indigenous populations of the Atlantic coastal region were the least schooled of all.

In general Nicaragua under Somoza provided extensive education at public expense to the urban elites but it failed to provide more than minimal primary education or even basic

literacy to the majority of its citizens. It was under these circumstances that the new regime established its philosophy and formulated a set of policies that would set the country on a better-planned path of development. Congruent with this model of development, the following educational policies were set forth: (i) the majority of the formerly dispossessed and socially excluded people would emerge as active protagonists of their own education; (ii) illiteracy was to be eliminated and the introduction of adult education was set as a priority of the revolution; (iii) the educational process was to be linked with creative and productive work as an educational principle, leading to educational innovation and the promotion of scientific and technical fields; and (iv) the transformation and realignment of the education system as a whole would bring it into line with the new economic and social model (UNESCO 1983).

The new system of Sandinista popular education, as the Ministry of Education publications noted, was ‘essentially and necessarily linked to the strategic political project of the FSLN. What is fundamental in it was the fact of being part of that political project for the building of a new society. Popular education is not a new form of teaching. It is not an innovation either, or a modern technique of education or a mere act of political will, but an overall notion of education in keeping with a political project. It is this political project of ours that lends its full significance’ (Ministry of Education 1986 as cited by Arnove & Dewees 1991). In making the education system an integral component of the revolution, the leadership of the Ministry of Education envisaged the expansion, improvement and transformation of education would, respectively, contribute to the process of democratization of basic social services, the independence of the Nicaraguan economy from foreign domination and the development of a new model of capital accumulation based on different social relations of production and forms of public and cooperative ownership. The overriding goal of education was to ‘contribute to the formation of the new man [and woman] and the new society’ (Arnove and Torres 1995).

Although the Ministry of Education referred to the entire system of formal and non-formal education as constituting a system of popular education, the term refers more specifically to those educational activities associated with the 1980 national literacy campaign, the follow-up programme of basic adult education and the educational programmes conducted by various state institutions (e.g. the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Land Reform and the Ministry of Health) and mass organizations (e.g. the Associations of Rural Workers, the Sandinista Workers' Central and the Nicaraguan Women's Association).

National literacy crusade

Within two weeks of coming to power, the new government announced that, among other sweeping reforms, there would be a national literacy campaign. Widely acclaimed as the most important educational event in the country’s history, the crusade was viewed as a second mass uprising, a ‘cultural insurrection’ that was a sequel to the armed struggle against the Somoza regime. Why was literacy chosen as an initial focus by the new regime? The Ministry of Education (1987 cited by Arnove & Dewees 1991) announced that the high illiteracy rate that characterized the country – and particularly the rural areas where illiteracy ranged from 60% to 90% of the population – was a result of the feudal system of the Somoza dynasty, one that kept the vast majority of the population in ignorance. Thus, the new educational system in general and the literacy campaign in particular were expected to contribute to: (i) the formation of a ‘new person’, a more critically conscious and participatory citizen motivated by collective goals, and (ii) the transmission of the skills and knowledge necessary to overcome decades of underdevelopment, that would place the nation on the path of self-

sustaining growth. According to Cardenal and Miller (1982), the following important and compulsory steps were taken to facilitate the actual work of adult instruction.

- *Planning* Following pre-planning research work, which was actually based on data collected by studying the experiences and models of other similar activities on the one hand, and consulting well-known educational experts and analysing factors that might affect the implementation of the programme on the other, a general plan for the literacy crusade was drafted. According to this plan, the crusade was considered to be ongoing, dynamic in process and circular in nature, and intended first to establish the organizational framework and operational plan of the project and later to respond to the programme's changing needs and demands.
- *Identification of the crusade's goals* The following principal goals of the literacy crusade were identified: (i) to eradicate illiteracy; (ii) to encourage an integration and understanding between Nicaraguans of different classes and backgrounds; (iii) to increase political awareness; (iv) to nurture attitudes and skills related to creativity, production, cooperation, discipline and analytical thinking; (v) to support national cohesion and consensus, and (vi) to strengthen the channels for economic and political participation.
- *Investigation of past national and international experiences and construction of different planning and programming tasks* A group of experts began to work simultaneously on different tasks such as a clarification of the programme's goals, its scope, length and starting date, an analysis of available resources and information, the preparation of a budget and fund-raising mechanisms etc. In the meantime the group was active in investigating the national and international experiences of adult literacy efforts such as those in Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Guinea-Bissau, Peru, and Sao Tome and Principe. In this initial period, experts from UNESCO, CREFAL³⁵ and the World Council of Churches assisted the team.
- *National planning seminar* The crusade's organizational structure and its functions and responsibilities needed to be defined and technical matters such as personnel allocation and training models, curricular design, research plans, and the appropriate time for the entire campaign had to be determined. An intensive national seminar was organized.
- *National census* One of the most important planning-related activities undertaken at the time was the realization of a national census of all Nicaraguans over ten years of age and their degree of literacy. It was after this pre-campaign preparation and procedures that the literacy crusade began.

The literacy campaign was administered by a National Coordinating Commission established under the Ministry of Education and was set up to determine broad policy matters and facilitate their implementation, but according to Stansifer (1981 cited by Arnove & Torres 1995), it was at the municipal level that the crusade took real form where organizational and individual involvement was most intense and active. And it was the mass organizations that played the principal role in implementing the literacy campaign. The campaign began in March 1980. In its first five months of activity (March-August 1980) approximately 55,000 literacy workers, mostly high-school students, were mobilized and sent to the countryside to teach the largely illiterate population of the rural areas. In the cities some 26,000 youths and adults participated in the campaign as People's Literacy Teachers and a total of 406,056

³⁵ Centro Regional de Educacion Fundamental para America Latina.

Nicaraguans received literacy instruction, reducing the illiteracy rate by more than half to under 25% of the population over 10 years of age.

The crusade's teaching language was Spanish and the methodology, according to Cardenal and Miller (1982), was in part inspired by the work of Paulo Freire and by the experiences of literacy programmes in Cuba, Guinea-Bissau, and Sao Tome and Principe, but above all it was grounded in reality. It consisted of a several-stage process using a dialogue and phonetics approach. For instance, the dialogue began with a discussion about a photograph in which adults were encouraged to participate. Then came words and phrase formation from the fundamental elements of the theme, which would be followed by the study of keywords and components from each phrase.

The results, according to the organizers, were satisfactory. Beyond the quantitative results registered during the instruction period, the Nicaraguan literacy crusade contributed to a number of fundamental changes: the winning-over of the youth, particularly those students who worked as *brigadists*, to the revolution and the integration of the rural population into national life; an improvement in the status of women who viewed the campaign (in which they constituted the majority of instructors and staff) as vindication of their formerly inferior status in education and public life; the strengthening of mass organizations; and the beginning of efforts to bridge the social and cultural gaps between the Atlantic and Pacific coastal regions. Furthermore, the crusade established a new model of social change based on a substantial devolution of decision-making power to the grass-roots level. It demonstrated that communities, through their own efforts and in conjunction with the government, could provide essential social services. The crusade also contributed to expectations of expanded national services in previously neglected areas such as health and to demands for consumer products that were unfamiliar to most rural populations. It also led to a demand for further education. The demand was met by an expansion of the formal education system on the one hand, and on the other, by the introduction of a system of non-formal popular education that was already being designed and was put in place by the end of the literacy crusade.

The follow-up programme of adult education for Nicaraguans, known as the Popular Basic Education (EPB), began in October 1980. The organizational form that EPB used was that of educational collectives, with the programme principally relying on mass organizations and non-professionals as the agencies of continuing education. Many of the 15,000 instructors of popular education were graduates of the literacy campaign, with approximately a half of the educational collective instructors having less than a complete primary school education. The majority of teachers were under 25 years of age. By 1983, this volunteer and youth teaching force, using inexpensive print materials in a variety of classroom settings, had enabled basic education to reach approximately 187,000 Nicaraguans in some 17,000 educational groups. And by 1986, about 120,851 adults were enrolled in 13,197 centres having the support of 12,792 instructors – either professionals or paraprofessionals. Alongside this governmental effort to promote literacy and follow-up educational programmes among the Nicaraguan population, many state and mass organizations instituted their own educational divisions to instruct and upgrade the level of educational standards of their respective staff and members. Given the absence of an organized adult education system at the time of the revolution, these accomplishments by the Sandinista government were substantial and provided a meaningful contribution to the on-going effort to educate Nicaraguan society.

Major problems encountered

Despite the significant achievements registered in promoting the literacy programme among Nicaraguans, a number of limitations and shortcomings were noted. One, according to La

Bella cited by Arnové and Torres (1995), was the Nicaraguan definition of literacy, which was limited to the ability to read and write. The country's poor economic situation, whereby even the most basic educational supplies and equipment such as lanterns for non-electrified rural areas were lacking, was one of the major problems faced during the campaign period. In an attempt to accomplish the goals of the campaign in a short period of time and with limited resources, the organizers were forced to use thousands of untrained, inadequately or minimally schooled volunteers to serve as instructors, which was a serious shortcoming. The counter-revolutionary movement, which targeted the educational workers and centres, was also one of the problems encountered during the campaign period. According to the organizers, the counter-revolutionaries assassinated over 300 popular educators and more than 500 centres were closed as a result of the displacement of the population and the dangerous conditions in which evening classes were being held.

The other major problem of the literacy campaign was its failure in community organization. As Archer and Costello (1990) reported following their assessment of the Batahola community on Nicaragua's southern shore, contrary to the expectations in some parts of the country adults were reluctant to accept the very idea of the literacy programme. In this sense, the literacy crusade had failed in its aim of making people active subjects of the programme. There was resistance to a participatory role on the part of the learners based on their past experiences. For instance, dialogue – the central plank of the new educational method – did not have a clear function in the eyes of many learners as most teachers went straight to the syllables because the political jargon of the generative words and sentences was unacceptable to most learners. On the other hand, people began to perceive the night classes as simply a 'poor substitute for real education' and 'inferior in quality, a second-class education with amateur teachers'.

As a result of this, by 1988, attendance in adult education programmes had decreased to 83,797 (Arrien & Lazo 1989 as cited by Arnové & Torres 1995). The decline in enrolment figures may be attributed not only to the poorly prepared teachers, poverty and war, but also to the inability of educational policy makers to design a system of popular education (as a follow-up to the literacy programme) that took into account the interests and characteristics of the Nicaraguan population and the country's changing socio-political reality. Instead of developing an educational system related to the communities' interests and learners' needs, the new educational system resembled the traditional and unappreciated schooling system and lacked direct links to local circumstances. Sustaining the interests of learners five nights a week, week after week, over a number of years proved extremely difficult – particularly in a revolutionary society in which extraordinary demands were being placed on ordinary citizens to participate in a variety of community and national tasks.

Although in the final years of the Sandinista regime efforts were made to revitalize the adult education programme and raise the level of literacy through a large-scale campaign related to the International Year of Literacy in 1990, it was difficult to stop the high drop-out and burn-out rates for both students and teachers (less than half of the students were completing the programme and one third of the teachers were leaving annually). Under these circumstances it took seven or eight years for an adult to complete what should have been a three-year programme. Moreover, these shortcomings in adult education programmes, coupled with the failure of the primary education system to reach and retain large numbers of school-aged children, resulted in the illiteracy rate increasing from what Sandinista educational officials claimed to be a low of 12.96% at the end of the 1980 campaign, to over 30% by 1990. In 1990, the ruling Sandinista government lost the national elections to a coalition of 14 opposition parties and alliances ranging from the extreme right to the extreme left. This National Opposition Union (UNO) that came to power in the spring of 1990 changed many of

the Sandinista policies including their educational policies and reforms. They were viewed as part of the ideological apparatus of the previous state, an integral part of the social transformation attempted by the outgoing regime.

5.5 Namibia

Namibia is a country in southwest Africa. To its west is the Atlantic Ocean, Botswana and South Africa are its eastern neighbours and it borders Angola to the north. The capital city is Windhoek, which has some 105,000 residents. There is a high plateau area about 1000-1500 m above sea level which runs from the coastal area towards the southwest of the country. The Kalahari Desert covers most of eastern Namibia. It is a country with a sub-tropical climate: dry winters and hot summers. The average annual temperature is around 20.5°C. Around 1.5 million people live in Namibia,³⁶ a country covering an area of 824,292 km². Namibia is one of the most scarcely populated countries in Africa with 1.7 persons per km² of which 37% live in the cities. Out of the total population, 96% are Namibian and 4% are other nationalities mainly Angolans, South Africans, Zambians and Europeans. English is the official language but various indigenous languages are used alongside it such as Oshiwambo, Nama/damara, Rukavango, Afrikaans and Otjiherero (Lind 1996). About 80-90% of the population are Christians and the rest follow indigenous forms of worship.

Education in Namibian society

Today's Namibia has for years hosted foreigners as colonizers and administrators. First the Germans, then under the mandate of the League of Nations, the British and later the South African apartheid government mandated by the British were all among the administrators until independence. One way of spreading the apartheid ideology among the Namibian society, according to Hopfer (1997), was making the ideology a compulsory part of the organization and curricula in schools. The ultimate aim of such educational principle was to prepare Blacks, Coloureds, Indians and Whites from a very early age for the separate and different roles they would play in Namibian society. It was hoped to organize different educational systems and curricula for the four different population groups and so, based on this ideology, in 1964 the educational system known as the 'Bantu Education System' was introduced.

According to Melber (1979) and Christie (1984) as cited by Hopfer (1997), schools for native Africans under this educational system were badly equipped and understaffed. Most of the teachers were either poorly trained or not trained at all. The curriculum was deliberately made more practical for them and was inferior in the social and natural sciences to the curriculum in the Whites' schools. Schooling was compulsory only for white children, not for Africans. In general the Bantu Education System aimed at preparing the African majority in Namibia to serve the European minority. It was under such circumstances that a resistance movement against the apartheid form of education was organized and an alternative educational programme was implemented in various parts of the country. Churches were the main centres of this alternative programme and they established schools for adults, young people and children. Although an effort was made to challenge the apartheid educational system, the majority of Namibians were denied the possibility of getting a good education until independence when a democratically elected government came to power.

³⁶ The size of the country's population varies: Aleksander (1989), *Countries of the World*, shows it to be around 1.5 million while Lind (1996), *Free to Speak: An Overall Evaluation of the National Literacy Programme in Namibia*, suggests 1,409,920. Internet sources in 1999 showed the country's population then to be 1,594,000.

National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN)

The Republic of Namibia, formed after independence in 1990, was challenged with the problem of coming up with a national plan and creating mechanisms of implementation so that as many adults as possible, who had once been excluded from education or affected by the Bantu Education System when they were children, could be offered comprehensive educational opportunities. What was the legacy of apartheid in terms of the adult literacy rate in Namibia? According to Melaku and Devereux (1993), quantitative estimates of the literacy level of Namibian society at the time of independence vary widely and there was a lack of consensus as to which single figure should be used. Prior to the 1991 census, conventional wisdom was that over 60% of adult Namibians were illiterate. This figure coincides with the publication of the Namibian Ministry of Education and Culture in 1993 that indicated that only about 40% of the adult population were considered to be literate. Of those, most were just barely literate in their mother tongue. On the other hand, an article published in the same year (1993)³⁷ on literacy levels in certain Southern African countries assumed a literacy rate of 38% in Namibia.

Data which have recently become available from the 1991 Population and Housing Census throw serious doubt on the estimates of literacy – or the illiteracy rate – in Namibia which were previously used, such as the 38% figure for adult literacy quoted above. According to this source, only 40% of Namibians aged 15 and over could be classified as illiterates,³⁸ so the national literacy level was 60%, not 38%. Again according to Lind (1996), figures from the 1993/94 Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) conducted by the Central Office of Statistics indicated yet another figure. According to this source, the illiteracy rate had gone down to 32% (41% in rural areas and 14% in urban areas). It also indicates that the illiteracy rates were much higher in older age groups than amongst younger people, and it was only 20% among 15-24 year olds, 49% among people between 45 and 54, and 77% among people of 65 or over.

The conclusion that can be drawn from these figures is that, no matter which quantitative indicator is accepted as valid, Namibia had a major problem – which was largely a legacy of its colonial past – in terms of educating its adult population up to even a rudimentary level of literacy. On the other hand, according to the information from the Ministry of Education and Culture (1992), there had been three attempts at a literacy programme in Namibia before the launching of the NLPN, which paved the way for the nationwide programme.

The first attempt at literacy work was made by non-governmental agencies, principally the churches and the Namibia Literacy Programme, that took the lead in promoting literacy and numeracy classes for out-of-school adults and youth in the students' mother tongues. Quite an extensive range of materials was produced and used during the national campaign.

Later the former Department of National Education entered the field and established literacy classes on commercial farms and in urban adult education centres. One officer was responsible for this programme, which instructed some 2,273 students in 109 farm centres and 16 other venues in 1990. Afrikaans, English and arithmetic were among the subjects taught.

In 1980, the SWAPO Women's Council decided to make literacy activities a priority. With support from the London-based Namibia Refugee Project, materials and handbooks were developed and in 1986 a start was made in camps in Zambia and Angola. Over the next two years the programme reached 3,400 participants. After independence the 'Continuation of Literacy Work among the Returnees' was continued, and was later merged with the Namibia

³⁷ *Africa South and East*, July 1993 as cited by Devereux (1993).

³⁸ There is some difference in figures from the same source. Lind (1996) indicated, for example, that only 35% of Namibians were illiterate.

literacy programme. Thus the NLPN inherited a strong tradition of literacy work in Namibia and gave the organizers material to work with when identifying the primary objectives, the target groups and the steps to be taken in its realization.

It was in this area that the Namibian government launched its national literacy programme in 1992. The main objectives of the National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN), as stated in the 'Guide to the NLPN' produced by the Ministry of Education and Culture, were: (i) to develop a better sense of a reconciled and united nation and to set out a will to deal with the inherited inequalities and backlogs which were an obstacle to the development of the country; (ii) to enable about 80% of the Namibian society to read, write and do arithmetic by the year 2000, allowing them to analyse things more clearly and put into practice the recorded experiences of society when solving their own problems; and (iii) to increase the participation of the society quantitatively and qualitatively in the democratic process of the country. These were used as the starting points of the national campaign and based on these outlined objectives of the National Literacy Programme, the following directives were set:

- Literacy is to be developed in English and in the local languages recognized for use in education by the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- The adult literacy programme must be a national effort, open to all those who wish to develop their ability to read, write and work with numbers.
- Participation must be voluntary.
- Ideally, to encourage participation, adult learners should pay no fees. If fees must be charged to defray costs, they should be very low.
- Participation in the adult literacy programme should normally not exceed three years, so that it can reach as many people as possible.
- If literacy skills remain unused, they quickly decay. Hence, the adult literacy programme must be linked to opportunities for continuing education for its participants.
- To maximize its impact and the sustainability of the skills acquired, literacy classes and other activities should be learner-centred. In general, the learners and their communities must play a major role in planning, monitoring and evaluating the adult literacy programme.
- While the government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, will take major responsibility for initiating and overseeing the adult literacy programme, its success will require the involvement of other organizations and enterprises, both governmental and non-governmental.
- It is essential that all agencies involved in development activities cooperate effectively. The adult literacy programme should facilitate and be supported by other development programmes (for example, health education).
- An effective adult literacy programme requires permanent skilled staff to organize, coordinate and manage the national effort. Other than those recruited for short-term special activities, adult educators should be paid.

The literacy programme was designed to operate within the existing national structure and based on this principle a National Literacy Committee with representatives from different ministries and NGOs was created and regional, district and local offices were formed. In order to facilitate the implementation of the programme, according to Melaku and Devereux (1993) and Hopfer (1997), regional literacy officers for the seven Namibian educational regions, 94 district literacy organizers and several literacy promoters were recruited, trained and deployed. In addition, literacy committees were formed at different levels and were

responsible for the implementation of the literacy activities in their respective areas. It was after such preparation that the National Literacy Programme in Namibia was officially launched on 5 September 1992 and began instructing adults.

The programme consisted of three stages, each stage lasting one year. The plan was to run two-hour literacy classes three times a week. The medium of instruction during the first and the second stages was the mother tongue or a familiar local language. In total, about nine different mother tongues were used for instruction (Linda 1996), while English was used during stage three. In the first two years of the programme, literacy learners were introduced to reading, writing and arithmetic and in the third year they learned basic English. Instructors were recruited from local areas based on their ability to offer their services for at least one year. They were trained in handling and instructing adults and were also advised regularly by district literacy organizers. They were employed part-time on a contract basis at a rate comparable to that of a teacher without professional qualifications. Because the instruction of adults at all levels of the literacy programme aimed at a participatory approach and the idea was to stimulate the adults' participation during and after the instruction period, the contents of the literacy primers were related to the life experiences of participants. Thus the learning method selected was based on the following features: (i) it would be learner-centred, varied and involving; (ii) it would have interesting materials to help stimulate discussions and group activities; and (iii) it would be sufficiently straightforward so that it could be readily applied by the promoters (Ministry of Education and Culture 1992).

In this learner-centred approach, which is far from the classical teacher-learner relationship and way of instruction, learners and promoters were expected to develop teaching materials for their own respective areas which would help the participants to discuss and come up with solutions to their own problems on the one hand, and, on the other, help them experience life and work under democratic principles.

Achievements of the campaign and major problems encountered

According to accounts by Lind (1996) and Hopfer (1997), during the first round of the literacy activities 750 literacy groups were planned nationwide with an average size of 20 students per group. In the first round from July-November 1992, 685 literacy groups with a total of 13,024 registered participants were formed making an average group size of 19. Of those registered, 78% were women. After this first stage, there was an assessment examination for the participants to determine their achievements and expected result. These showed that about 8,500 of the students could be certified.

The introduction of stages 2 and 3 was done in September-November 1993 when about 34,400 learners (77% women) – 17,000 in stage 1, 11,800 in stage 2, and 5,600 in stage 3 – joined the programme. In July-August 1994 literacy tests for all three stages were conducted: about 26,343 participants took the tests and 22,150 (84%) passed. In November 1994 about 36,107 learners joined the programme (77% women): 12,535 in stage 1, 14,819 in stage 2, and 8,177 in stage 3 (Lind 1996). Most of the literacy learners were women and the highest numbers of learners and literacy classes were in the north of Namibia, the most densely populated area of the country. In February 1996, there were 8,358 male learners and 28,506 female learners attending 2,039 literacy classes (12,398 in stage 1, 13,428 in stage 2 and 11,038 in stage 3). From September 1994 until May 1995 an overall evaluation of the National literacy Programme in Namibia was carried out in six different directions, consisting of: (i) a policy analysis and programme evaluation; (ii) a community impact study; (iii) a survey of 1,700 literacy promoters; (iv) a tracer study of literacy learners who enrolled in

1992; (v) a case study of selected literacy groups; and (vi) an evaluation of NLPN implementation at district level.

An umbrella study, integrating and incorporating all the six studies, was also done to evaluate the 'degree of empowerment' derived from the literacy programme. According to the participants in the evaluation who were mainly literacy learners and their instructors, the following process of empowerment was gained from the literacy programme.

- Previously prevailing attitudes of personal inferiority and incapability disappeared. Some students described their situation before taking part in literacy classes as being 'in darkness', being dependent on others, feeling 'stupid', and having a lack of status in the community due to not knowing how to read and write.
- Participating in a non-formal adult education programme had helped them to catch up with what they had missed in the past in the Bantu Education System. They realized that they were still able to learn basic arithmetic and to read and write.
- By taking part in the programme, some participants, teachers and organizers were able to solve problems and realize their personal potential more easily and enjoyed being able to think and act independently and make their own decisions. For adult learners, changes were recognized in three areas of their lives. At an individual level, learners experienced increased awareness, self-confidence and self-reliance. At a family level they offered increased support with their children's education and the education of their partners. At a community level, growing active participation by learners in community structures could be discerned (Lind 1996).

The literacy programme in Namibia was not without its shortcomings. The political will and enthusiasm articulated at the beginning of the campaign at times started to lag behind during the implementation period. The programme was designed to make the majority of Namibian society able to read and write in a certain period of time so the programme required continuous effort and commitment. It also needed a renewal of professional development to overcome decreasing efficiency but, according to Lind (1996), this principal source of strength received less and less priority.

The campaign's evaluation also revealed that there was a serious shortage of teaching/learning materials in some parts of the country. This uneven distribution of literacy materials, offering the students limited access to reading materials, presented a serious problem during and after the instruction period. The lack of a literacy environment was one of the major problems of the campaign and influenced the expected outcome.

Although the majority of the learners and even those who dropped out felt positively about the programme, the number of participants who came to classes declined from time to time. According to the evaluation, economic problems or problems related to living conditions, and cultural issues were the main reasons for adults dropping out and for low attendance figures. Some of the economic problems related to the living conditions of the students were the timing of the literacy period in relation to the farming or harvesting season, poverty, unemployment, migration, shift work, long distances, and health problems. These should have been addressed through inter-sectoral development. Shyness, negative male attitudes, childcare and domestic duties as well as alcoholism were problems of a cultural nature that contributed to the increasing number of drop-outs and affected the literacy programme's success.

Technical problems in the programme were that classes were too short and inflexible timetables left no extra time for revision and compensation for time lost during holidays and other interruptions such as irregular attendance and lateness. Too little attention was paid to group formation in order to avoid problems related to the participants' cultural situations.

Inadequate training for instructors which led to problems of instruction and influenced the final results of the programme, irrespective of the efforts made by the literacy programme organizers, was also part of the problems registered. However, despite all these problems and shortcomings, the Namibian literacy campaign made a serious contribution in overcoming the problem of illiteracy in the country and provided a framework of experience for the on-going adult literacy efforts.

As can be seen from the analyses of various literacy programmes, the adult literacy efforts of Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua and Namibia, although successful in many ways, did not run smoothly as that of the Ethiopian literacy effort discussed in Chapter 4. At the end of this chapter, although it is not simple to show and differentiate the exact qualitative results of the different campaigns as the measurement of such cognitive results depends on the degree of the motivation demonstrated by the adults, the organizational capacity exhibited by the governments and finally by the socio-cultural change the campaign brought, an analysis of the case studies based on these similarities, differences and the results of the efforts is placed. But first, as a conclusion to this part, some significant practices of the above-mentioned countries' literacy programmes compared to the Ethiopian campaign are put together.

Table 5.2
Major similarities and differences of the Ethiopian literacy campaign with the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian campaigns

Factors	Significant elements of	
	Similarities	Differences
<i>Educational background</i>	No similarities in educational background.	Cuba had a better educational background, followed by Nicaragua and Namibia. Even the Tanzanian situation was better than Ethiopia's.
<i>Prior experience</i>	Ethiopia and Tanzania had better organized and internationally supported programmes prior to their adult literacy campaigns.	Cuba, Nicaragua and Namibia were different, only having community-based attempts.
<i>National literacy objectives</i>	Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua and Ethiopia all stated that eradicating illiteracy was their main objective, followed by mobilizing society under the national policy of socialism. For Namibia, increasing society's participation in the democratic process and improving its economic situation were also among its literacy objectives.	For Nicaragua and Namibia the objective also included the formation of national cohesion and consensus on national issues, and the formation of a reconciled and united nation. Namibia indicated a specific target for its illiteracy eradication programme (80% of society would be literate by the year 2000).
<i>Pre-campaign efforts</i>	Steps to be taken by all countries included: planning and working	Cuba looked for active and passive vocabulary of the

	<p>out the programme duties, organizing national and regional seminars, the formation of different-level literacy committees, planning site locations, selecting and training volunteer instructors, and preparing and distributing instruction materials.</p>	<p>farmers for publishing instruction materials to simplify the instruction process. Nicaragua organized a national census to identify its literacy problem and made an extensive investigation of past national and international experiences, aiming to use skilled staff and professional instructors, Namibia was prepared to pay adult educators.</p>
<p><i>Mid-campaign activities, results and problems</i></p>	<p>The use of the existing official language as the medium of instruction was important for all countries.</p> <p>Nicaragua and Ethiopia were selective in their instruction period, but it coincided with busy farming periods and brought negative reactions. The form and content of the instruction materials for all countries, except Namibia, were centrally designed and prepared with no or little local involvement.</p> <p>Mechanisms were created in all countries to support the newly literate by providing reading materials and reading rooms. All countries claim the literacy campaigns brought significant quantitative and qualitative results.</p> <p>Lack of motivation among the adults, High drop-out rates, irregular attendance, poor or unqualified instructors, little attention to students' local situation and interest were all among the problems indicated.</p>	<p>Ethiopia and Namibia used 14 and 9 local languages respectively to instruct adults in their mother tongue while Cuba, Tanzania and Nicaragua offered instruction in only one language.</p> <p>Cuba, because it had a one-year campaign was not subjected to choice concerning time and was flexible in the use and selection of time available and manpower usage in specific areas of the country. Tanzania and Namibia were also not based on specific times or periods. For Namibia, because they were using paid instructors, the question of time was not significant.</p> <p>Namibia's campaign was planned to be learner-centred, with local involvement in activities and in the content and form of the primers. Tanzanian literacy organizers went further and formed a mobile library for adults and an Institute of Adult Education for continued follow-up work.</p>

5.6 Analysis of the case studies

Educational background. As the assessment shows, Cuba is one of the countries with a relatively developed educational potential and culture in the region, leading most Latin American countries in its literacy rate, the percentage of its children enrolled in schools, and other educational performances. Its illiteracy rate before the campaign was 23.6%, which was

far lower than that in neighbouring countries. Nicaragua, on the other hand, although it shares geographical and some socio-cultural features with Cuba, had different educational performance figures. Under the Samoza government more than half of Nicaragua's population was illiterate with more than three-quarters (76%) of the rural population unable to read and write. Compared to these countries are Tanzania and Namibia with their limited educational performances. Their literacy rates were low and the number of children attending the formal educational stream were insignificant with very limited educational facilities organized for the native Africans. However, unlike in some other Sub-Saharan African nations, there were signs in setting educational priorities and trying to minimize the number of illiterate adults. In this regard the practical lessons gained from the colonial governments and the missionary organizations were substantial. The Ethiopian educational culture and performance compared to the above-mentioned countries was one of the lowest with less than a 10% literacy rate (see Table 5.3). Thus, one important difference underlined between these countries is the difference in educational background, with its impact on the feedback process of the literacy campaigns.

Other significant differences related to this are the difference in the size of the population, the level of infrastructure development necessary for such a large-scale social activity and the degree of language homogeneity. As this chapter indicates, Cuba, Nicaragua and Namibia were less populated, Namibia even very scarcely. Tanzania and Ethiopia on the other hand were significantly populated countries, Ethiopia being more than twice as populated as Tanzania, with underdeveloped infrastructure and low-level means of communications to regulate any developmental activities, which had an impact on organizing and launching its literacy campaign.

It is important also to note that any large-scale programme, such as adult education, should be built on the grounds of past experiences for success or failures registered in the past contribute new ideas and new ways of implementation to the new programme. In this regard a thorough evaluation of previous similar activities is vital. Evaluating former programmes here means describing as clearly as possible the inputs, the process and the outcome of each programme and any peculiarities. As Chinapah and Miron (1990) pointed out, such evaluation at the initial stage will help to establish particular aspects of the programme such as its needs, its specific objectives, its potential acceptability, and its administrative and financial feasibility. The fact that the Cuban literacy campaign was carried out in 1961, when national and international experience of the problem of illiteracy was not as developed, makes the attempt and the results registered different to the others. The only motivating force behind the campaign was the government's determination and the general educational culture developed among Cubans. It was in 1959 that the new Cuban government first established a national literacy and basic education commission to accelerate the promotion of adult literacy, having no experience of previous campaigns or programmes to benefit from.

Tanzanians, Nicaraguans, Namibians and Ethiopians in this regard were in a better position, already having experience with their national practices and also being able to rely on regional and international experiences gained in other countries prior to their own respective literacy campaigns. For instance, at independence the illiteracy rate in Tanzania was 75% (Dave *et al.* 1985), which indicates the existence of some sort of effort at reducing the number of illiterate adults in the country. In addition to this, after independence and up to 1969 under the Ministry of Community Development and National Culture the country had organized literacy programmes for adults, which could be used as a model. Being one of the countries with EWLP practices, Tanzania had also experience in terms of planning and implementing a literacy programme for adults. Small-scale pilot projects applied before the national literacy campaign had equally created practical knowledge. To our regret, although UNESCO in one of its documents stressed the necessity of recapitulating a country's past experience and the

experiences of other countries (Carron & Bordia 1985), according to my observation and those of others (Dave *et al.* 1985), this part of the pre-campaign organizational work was not given the attention it required. It was the Nicaragua literacy campaign organizers who went further in this respect. First, they tried to use their own experiences developed during their National Liberation Movement, which launched improvised literacy classes in the village of Anastagia and the experience of the Samoza government's attempts in launching an adult literacy programme. Second, they took the necessary steps to analyse and learn from the experiences of other countries' adult literacy programmes including Cuba's. This gave them a solid practical base to work from.

The Namibian literacy organizers, on the other hand, were advantageous. The campaign itself began in the 1990s when various regional literacy experiences including those of Tanzania and Ethiopia were registered and offered significant theoretical and practical lessons. At the national level too there were at least three previous adult literacy programmes that had left considerable experience for the programme. These were literacy activities carried out by non-governmental agencies such as churches, literacy activities organized by the former Department of National Education for commercial farm workers and urban adults and literacy activities organized by the SWAPO Women's Council for refugee women in camps in Zambia and Angola.

Ethiopia had also organized a number of adult literacy activities prior to its national campaign – the National Literacy Campaign organized during the Emperor's period, the *Yemisirach Dimtis* church-organized literacy campaign, WOALP (Work-Oriented Adult Literacy) carried out by UNDP/UNESCO for commercial farm workers and literacy activities during the Development through Cooperation Campaign. Had all these efforts left lessons for the launching of the national literacy campaign and did the organizers utilize them when organizing their respective national literacy activities? I will approach these and other questions in the forthcoming paragraphs.

Pre-campaign efforts. These include the steps taken by governments in the planning, implementing, following and evaluating adult literacy activities. The pre-campaign stage consists mainly of the formulation of the campaign's objectives and aims, defining the target groups, locating the instruction site, allocating instruction time, outlining teaching and learning methodologies and identifying the instruction means to be utilized. It also takes into account the selection and orientation of instructors, the preparation and distribution of teaching materials and teaching aids, adapting manageable structures and most of all building up good relations with the expected actors in the campaign. Lastly, it focuses on the implementation and evaluation of the literacy campaign in the light of the outlined objectives, assessing the outcome and the problems confronted.

Drafting applicable objectives and aims for the programme. The objectives of the literacy campaigns of the countries discussed were basically formulated on the basis of the general political line of the respective countries. In Cuba, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Nicaragua, for instance, there were revolutionary governments whose objectives were to change the existing socio-economic situation and the political life of their respective countries. Education was seen, in this respect, as a tool and means of transition and was given the highest priority. As part of the educational reform programme, adult literacy was also seen as an immediate task for these governments based on the assumption that literacy paves the way for the direct involvement of the majority of the population in revolutionary and nation-building activities. The Cuban literacy programme objectives can be regarded as the best example. Economically, the development of Cuba was dependent on a skilled and informed labour force.

Table 5.3
Literacy performances of the countries analysed

Country	Year of literacy campaign	Size of population in millions	Estimated Illiteracy rate			No, of languages used during campaign
			When the campaign started	At the end of the campaign	1995*	
Cuba	1961	11	23.6%	3.9%	4.3%	1
Tanzania	1971-1988	25	75%	15%	32.2%	1
Ethiopia	1979-1990	59.6	91.2%	22%	64.5%	15
Nicaragua	1980-1986	4	50%	25%**	34.5%	1
Namibia	1992	1.5	60%	-.***	-	10****

* Source for the 1995 figures is UNESCO's 'World Education Report 1998'.

** This figure on the illiteracy rate in Nicaragua since the beginning of the campaign was different at different times. For instance it was 12.9% in 1981, returning to 25% at the end of the campaign and 30% in 1990.

*** The target was to reach an 80% literacy rate by the year 2000.

**** Namibia used nine mother-tongue languages in the first two stages of the campaign and at the third stage English was added, which brought the number of languages used to ten.

The dearth of technical skills had to be met through providing an opportunity for education that would enable Cubans to meet the technological needs of their new society. Socially, by bringing literacy and political awareness to the disadvantaged, and at the same time introducing literacy workers to the hard realities of poverty and backwardness, both groups could emerge with a clearer understanding of national problems, as well as a desire to work for the transformation of the old society. Politically, because gradual reforms through education had been unable to achieve the desired outcome for which the revolutionaries had striven, it was felt that the entire nation could best be given an understanding of the new ideology through the mobilization of a large number of Cubans into a massive literacy programme, either as teachers or as pupils.

Similar to these formulations were the Tanzanian literacy campaign's objectives briefly outlined two and half years after the campaign actually started. According to the organizers, the main objectives of the campaign were the mobilization of the rural and urban masses for the better understanding of the national policy of socialism and self-reliance, providing leadership training in various aspects of life at all levels, the eradication of illiteracy, providing knowledge and skills in agriculture and rural construction, health and home economics that would raise people's productivity and the standard of living, and offering follow-up education for primary and secondary school leavers with the view of settling them in *Ujamma* villages. By such a formulation of adult literacy objectives it could be understood that the ultimate goal of the campaign was not only to change the participants' way of life but also to mobilize the populations of the respective countries to achieve certain political goals of the revolution.

The Nicaraguan literacy campaign objectives were along similar lines. The objective included the government's political line so as to encourage an integration and understanding between Nicaraguans of different classes and backgrounds, to increase political awareness, to nurture attitudes and skills related to creativity, production cooperation, discipline and analytical thinking, to support national cohesion and consensus and to strengthen the channels for economic and political participation. What was different in their formulation was their well-defined commitment to eradicating illiteracy. The indication of this important task of the campaign, the author believes, was due to the fact that Nicaragua campaigned against illiteracy some 20 years later than Cuba did and was able to benefit from the experiences of others.

The Namibian literacy campaign was also carried out under a new government with a new vision of socio-economic developments and its political course. Differing from those of Cuba and Nicaragua but similar to Tanzania, the government of Namibia was newly formed after independence from the South African apartheid administration. Despite the fact that the campaign was organized in the early stages of the country's independence and with minimum or no experience of a large-scale national programme, it profited from the compiled regional and international experiences in adult literacy. Thus, although it also had elements of the national political line, the formulation of the literacy campaign's objectives showed the precise strategy and its ultimate goal. The main objective of the campaign was that Namibia would bring down its number of illiterates to 20% of the population by the year 2000. It also showed that the instruction would be directed at helping adults solve their own problems based on the assumption that literacy improves communication, which is often at the core of progress and development. The campaign was aimed to be learner-centred whereby adults were expected to play a major role in planning, monitoring and evaluating the programme itself.

The Ethiopian literacy objective formulation, as mentioned earlier, was a mixture of political ambition supplemented by the desire to eradicate illiteracy. However, the organizers tried to indicate the intentions of the government by linking instruction with adults' daily lives so that the know-how gained could help them change the reality in which they lived for the better. In this respect the objectives of the Namibian and Ethiopian literacy campaigns were relatively better formulated, indicating the expected results at the end of the programme.

In outlining objectives of a literacy campaign, as Cinapah and Miron (1990) noted, considerable attention should be given to the perception of the learners and their particular socio-cultural environment. The framework of such a campaign should be based on a review of documents of past experiences. Furthermore, the objective is supposed to define the intended targets and mechanisms of implementation if possible in quantifiable terms. Aims and objectives, according to the authors, can also be seen as the connection between the initial situation of participants and their environment and the desired point of completion. Thus, their formulation at the beginning should follow and reflect the assessment of literacy needs. Looking back to the formulated objectives of the above-mentioned countries in the light of these suppositions, one comes to the following conclusions. First, it is difficult to conclude that the organizers fully assessed the vision and interests of the adults. Such a perception demands serious consultation with the adults and observation of the socio-cultural environment on the ground prior to its formulation. Thus a step was not apparently undergone and in most cases the formulations were politically motivated and were full of rhetoric in terms of the interests of the organizers. Even the Cuban literacy campaign, which was widely acclaimed for the measures it took in searching for the most farmer-relevant vocabulary, and the Nicaraguans, who as a pre-campaign procedure held a national census to determine the precise number of illiterates, were not directly focused on such pre-campaign steps. The expression of the objectives of the literacy campaigns discussed did not coincide with the real interests of the potential learners, which influenced the literacy programme and its outcome. Second, except for the Nicaraguan literacy programme organizers, none of the others indicated in their documents that they had traced or even reviewed past national and international experiences when formulating their literacy objectives. However, from the historical development of their adult literacy activities and their involvement in EWLP, it could be said that the Ethiopian and Tanzanian literacy programme organizers were subjected to such past experiences and exploited some relevant information. The problem is that Ethiopia in particular, as indicated in Chapter 4, repeated practical errors that were recommended for specific future attention, namely the under-training of the instructors, ignoring the role of local interventions etc. Third, the formulation of the objectives of an adult

literacy campaign ought to be based on specific quantitative targets to be reached at each step of the programme. In this regard except for the Namibian literacy programme organizers, which indicated a 80% literacy rate in the year 2000, the rest showed a similarly broad intention to eradicate illiteracy that was too general and too difficult to accomplish. In such a way the formulation of the objectives of the adult literacy campaigns in the analysed countries paid too little attention to the interests of the adult participants, the socio-cultural environment, past experiences and generalities.

Creating the 'will' of the people. This factor was seen in a very different way in the literacy campaigns examined. From the information that we had access to, it was possible to conclude that except for the Namibians, the rest undervalued this point. The new socialist revolution and its doctrine was seen as an alternative to previous backwardness, in which it was believed that 'the government of the people' would automatically change this reality. Under this new ideology it was the leadership that determined the fate of the country and its people. Thus a developmental programme including education and adult literacy was planned and practiced with only the blessing of the leadership, while recent practices have shown that the actual actors in any development circles, also literacy campaigns, should be consulted. In this respect as experiences clearly show, if adults are not well informed about the objectives and the significance of such a programme they always give it less priority than other activities, or join with suspicion. They often drop out of the programme or show little or no interest in mastering the teachings, or come up with problems rather than solutions. Only taking time and trying to convince adult learners would resolve such practical barriers. Individual conviction and societal commitment must come out of continuous consultation. Thus, the technical application of the campaign must always take into account the feelings of the target groups, their basic needs, local and regional differences, past and present cultural experiences etc. In short, a participatory approach is a key factor for success.

What was the result of insufficient attention to the 'will' of the people? Written documents that we have gone through indicate that there were some shortcomings registered during the literacy campaigns in Cuba and Nicaragua, such as the difficulty of registering or locating illiterate adults and failing to make adults active subjects in the programme. In both countries the literacy campaigns were organized based on revolutionary feelings and were carried out just after the governments had taken power, allowing no time for consultation. The Ethiopian experience is no different in this regard (see Chapter 4). A high turnover of students in the initial stage followed by lower motivation or less conviction and a high drop-out rate resulted in disappointing results, which signifies the importance of this factor.

The Namibian literacy organizers, unlike the others, were a step further in this regard. In their outlined campaign directives, they apparently indicated that the programme should be adult-centred and it would be applied with the full participation of the adult learners from planning to implementation and evaluation. The organizers believed that such an approach would maximize its impact and the sustainability of the skills acquired. Of course this alone was no guarantee of success as the literacy programme of Namibia had also suffered such shortcomings as drop-outs and inconsistency in the learning process, but in terms of organization it is best to start by consulting the participants.

What can be concluded here is that as part of the pre-campaign procedure even before the formulation of the objectives of the intended literacy programme, one should seriously consider the actual circumstances on the ground and the real interests of the potential students. Time, material and manpower spent on such a programme will only offer positive returns if it is based on the support of the adult participants. Otherwise, the efforts of the government in the eyes of society will be undermined. If the situation coincides with an undeveloped socio-cultural background, as the one in Ethiopia compared to the colonial and

missionary heritages of Tanzania and Namibia or the relatively developed inclination towards education of Cuba and Nicaragua, it will meet unimagined negative attitudes even in future attempts.

Make use of the experiences of other non-formal educational activities. Based on the experiences of the countries discussed, literacy campaigns can be organized in different ways: running a pilot project before the promotion of the national campaign to acquire practical experience or assessing and utilizing experiences of other countries. The Cuban literacy organizers exercised the first approach and the National Commission was formed for that purpose, which accomplished two main things: organized pilot literacy classes for adults and identified the active and passive vocabulary of Cuban farmers with the idea of publishing basic teaching aids. It was this commission, which further developed into the National Committee of Literacy, and it was its experiences that were exploited when launching the national literacy programme in Cuba. Given that at the time of the Cuban literacy campaign there was little available knowledge about literacy activities in other countries, the organizers' limitation was understandable.

The second approach was applied by the Nicaraguan literacy organizers who at the beginning of their campaign investigated literacy experiences of Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Guinea-Bissau, Peru, and Sao Tome and Principe. Nicaraguans, thus, benefited from experiences of other literacy programmes and the expertise of international agencies. Namibia, on the other hand, although its campaign was organized more recently and with the support of regional and international adult literacy experiences, the documents I referred show no indication that organizers attempted to exploit the positive and negative practices of other programmes. But, looking at the draft objectives of the campaign, the identified steps to be taken and the role given to the adults in joining the literacy campaign, one can assume that the organizers in one or another way had access to the experiences of other programmes.

The Ethiopian literacy organizers, as discussed in Chapter 4, paid very little attention to experiences registered at the national or international level. Approaching the adult literacy activity from past experiences, as was the case in Nicaragua, or running a short pilot project before the 'great leap', as was the case in Cuba, provides the organizers with an enormous amount of practical information: not only does it help to avoid repeating the same faults made earlier, but also guides the organizers on how to approach and handle adults and indicates specific points that might need attention or care. This is what the Ethiopian literacy campaign lacked. The pilot project in Cuba enabled them to identify the most frequently used words in Cuban farmers' vocabularies, which is part of their society's culture, and opened the door to approach the adult farmers. Such a step at the initial stage can be seen as a confidence-building procedure, which is important for the promotion of any adult literacy programme. Although each individual country and society has its own specifications and peculiarities, there are common elements of a general nature that can be borrowed and utilized. Information regarding time allocation and site choice, the selection and training of instructors, group formation and methods of instruction etc. can be gained from the experiences of others. Because little attention was given to these pre-campaign procedures, in practice, the Ethiopian literacy campaign was not adequately prepared for its task and this has negatively influenced the efforts and its outcome.

Adapting a flexible structural set-up. What was common to all was the use of the existing governmental structures as a basis for the implementation of the literacy campaign. Literacy committees were formed at national, regional and local levels with sub-committees working with them. In most literacy campaigns and this includes the Cuban, Nicaraguan and Ethiopian campaigns, the structural set-up of the campaigns were centrally run following the

bureaucratic line of administration with no sufficient space for creative work or local initiatives. Such a rigid structural set-up had hampered the development of individual and group initiatives and blocked resourceful approaches in solving practical problems.

The case of Namibia is different in this regard. Although the literacy committee activities followed the existing line of administration, in the directives adopted at the beginning of the literacy campaign, the organizers had clearly indicated their intention to allow more room for local and regional incentives. The possibilities given to the instructors and the participants to develop their own regional and even local instructional materials based on the national curriculum were an indication of the relative flexibility of the structure of the literacy campaign. In their learner-oriented approach, the Namibian literacy programme organizers were convinced that the participation of the adults would be much higher and they would be more motivated to join in the literacy programme's administration and implementation.

The observation here is that such an unorthodox way of educational programme designed for the vast majority of society demands openness from the part of the organizers so that the participation of the society helps to minimize the problems and set up a working structure that gives answers to the questions emerging from the fieldwork. The Ethiopian literacy programme organizers, in this respect, were not in a position either to exploit ideas coming from others or did not set up a flexible and working structure. Instead, the many committees formed and members assigned were part of the problems because their meetings were dependent upon the free time of each individual member and their contribution to the committee was dependent upon their ability to solve such practical problems of a pedagogical nature.

Integration of the literacy programme with other development activities. An investigation to the Cuban literacy campaign gives very little information about how much the campaign was integrated with other developmental activities. What can be conceptualised from the overall activity of the literacy campaign is that the leadership was convinced that the national development agenda could be realized and bring about a significant change only if it was based on an investment in education. Thus, educating the majority of the rural people was given the highest priority and was seen as a task of everyone – the government and the people. The Tanzanian and Nicaraguan literacy organizers shared this principle too. For them, as for the Cubans, education in general and adult education in particular were seen as a means of transforming the backward socio-economic life of their respective country into a new one. Thus developmental incentives and agendas were planned on this line and all concerned institutions were given the responsibility of corresponding their efforts in line with the campaign objectives.

By encouraging agencies involved in development programmes to support the on-going literacy campaign, the Namibian literacy programme dealt with this factor similarly. In the directives adopted at the beginning of their campaign, the organizers clearly indicated the importance of the cooperation of all developmental agencies in the activities of the literacy programme. According to the documents referred, although the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture took responsibility for initiating and facilitating the adult literacy programme, it was the involvement of other organizations and enterprises that brought about the expected results. The adult literacy programme, say the directives, should be facilitated and be supported by other development programmes (for example, health education). The Ethiopian literacy programme was not different in this respect. First, as the composition of the National Literacy Committee shows, it was a broad-based organ trying to make responsible each and every organization involved. Second, governmental and non-governmental agencies were expected to do their utmost in facilitating and creating

mechanisms for the implementation of the literacy campaign. For instance, as some instructional materials demonstrate, the Ministry of Agriculture and Health was involved in preparing teaching materials, which was a sign of involvement by other developmental agencies.

Others. Some other factors in this area are related to the technical matters of the teaching process – mainly language, ways of recruiting instructors and the instruction methodology applied. The focus was also on the duration of the campaign and on the major shortcomings that each campaign experienced.

a. Language. The Cuban and Nicaraguan literacy organizers, because the majority of their population speak Spanish, used Spanish as the medium of instruction. Teaching primers and instruction models were prepared in Spanish. What was different in Cuba in this regard was the attempt made to assemble the active and passive vocabulary of Cuban farmers with the idea of publishing teaching materials. This was deliberately done, according to the organizers, in order to use the language and expressions of Cuban farmers as far as possible. It could be assumed that it was this language unity that helped to bring about positive results in the literacy campaigns of both countries. The same practical experience in terms of the medium of instruction was registered in the Tanzanian literacy campaign. The organizers used Swahili, the country's official language, for the literacy programme, assuming that such a choice would help unite societies with diverse cultural settings.

The Namibian and Ethiopian literacy organizers, on the other hand, used a number of languages (nine and fifteen respectively) during their literacy campaigns. The use of nine languages in the Namibian literacy activity was based on the stage the adults were at during the campaign. Among the three-stage literacy activities the first two were set to be held in the mother tongue or a familiar language, while English was introduced as a medium of instruction in stage three. It was believed that this form of organization in terms of instruction medium creates a sense of motivation among adults. The Ethiopian literacy campaign organizers introduced fifteen different languages (which were estimated to cover at least 90% of the population) in three different periods (see Chapter 4). The rationale behind the introduction of this number of languages in the campaign, according to the organizers, was an attempt to preserve and develop the languages of different nationalities and to exploit the advantage of the mother tongue in the teaching/learning process. What ought to be noted here is that, although the rationale for the choice of instruction medium in adult literacy programmes appears to be different (see Chapter 2), the final word should be left to the adults themselves because they are the ones who decide which language they will use in the future.

b. Methods of recruiting instructors. There were three different stages that the Cuban literacy organizers underwent in recruiting instructors. The best source, as with Nicaragua and Ethiopia, was high-school students. At the beginning of the campaign, the Cuban literacy organizers recruited about 1,500 students, known as *brigadistas* and trained them for three months before they were dispatched throughout the country. This was followed with a second round of recruited *brigadistas*. This time the training took only 8-10 days before they were sent to the countryside to instruct adult learners. After analysing the outcome of these attempts, the organizers began to recruit volunteer instructors from professional teachers, factory workers and members of the women's federation. The third stage of recruiting instructors was conducted directly from the population, with 'people's teachers' being used as instructors and teams of study coaches to help less-experienced *brigadistas*. At this stage of the campaign even professional teachers who had not volunteered to join the campaign earlier were obliged to join as instructors. Thus, the Cuban literacy organizers used professionals, paraprofessionals and non-professionals as instructors and as time passed plans for training instructors were abandoned.

The Tanzanian experience in recruiting and preparing instructors was partially

different from the Cuban one. Basically the adult instructors were selected from different ministerial offices on the basis of their enthusiasm for the programme and their social position, and they were trained from three days to 4-6 weeks depending on the level of their educational background. In the training process different organizations were involved including the Institute of Adult Education, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Health.

The Nicaraguan literacy organizers also used professionals and paraprofessionals as instructors, with high-school students being the main source. They recruited people's literacy teachers from among ordinary citizens and newly literates were also engaged in the instruction process. What is different was the absence of a relatively organized training programme for instructors. In this respect, as the documents we relied on indicate, in an attempt to accomplish the campaign in a short time and with limited resources, the organizers were forced to use thousands of untrained, inadequately or minimally schooled volunteers to serve as teachers.

The main source of instructors for the Ethiopian literacy campaign were also high school students i.e. grade 12 students who were waiting their secondary-school leaving examination results. These potential instructors were trained for 3-10 days before leaving for the countryside for the following 4-5 months. At the local level, in addition to the high-school students who were in charge of the literacy campaign, volunteer instructors were also invited to join the campaign. Local instructors with skills in reading and writing provided instruction in the post-literacy programme.

In this respect the Namibian literacy organizers followed a rather different approach. The organizers understood that an effective adult literacy programme required permanent skilled staff to organize, coordinate and manage the national effort. Based on this principle, they recruited instructors from local people who were judged able to take this responsibility on for at least one year. The training of instructors was compulsory and during the campaign period instructors received professional assistance from the district literacy organizers. What was different from the above-mentioned campaign in Namibia was the fact that the literacy instructors were employed part-time on a contract basis on a salary comparable to that of a teacher without professional qualifications. Thus, instructors in the Namibian literacy campaign differed from the volunteer instructors in other literacy campaigns because they were paid and they were morally and professionally responsible for the campaign activities and results.

What is observed here is that adult instruction, except in Namibia, was understood as a teaching process that could be run with minimal or no professional know-how. Every citizen able to read and write in the language chosen for instruction could be used as an instructor with very little prior training or even none at all. The slogan 'All educated people in the community should assist in teaching those who were less privileged and remained illiterate', used in Ethiopian literacy campaign, can be seen as an example of this. The campaign, from its beginning, was seen as a secondary stage requiring little or no formal pedagogical assistance. Perhaps the use of young students as instructors can be seen as a means of exploiting the work force for the good of the country, but what is not seriously considered is their inadequate life experience when approaching adults and during instruction. In addition to this, the very short training programme designed in these countries worsened the situation and left the whole effort with no equivalent return from the programme.

c. Teaching methodology applied. The main aim of the Cuban literacy campaign was to enable adults to read and write. For this purpose two textbooks were prepared: *Alfabetemos* and *Venceremos*. *Alfabetemos* was structural in its approach with a strong emphasis on rules governing letter-sound relationships, spelling etc. *Venceremos* on the other hand was designed to enable the learner to read. The lessons in *Venceremos* were supported

with additional thematic photographs so that adults could associate and recognize written letters with pictures.

Paulo Freire's thoughts and work heavily influenced the instructional methodology of the Nicaraguan literacy campaign. It was also based on experiences of some of the other countries and grounded in reality. The dialogue and phonetics approach, which the Nicaraguan literacy organizers followed, consisted of discussions on certain topics that were supported with additional information such as photographs and pictures to encourage adults to participate in discussions. Later, lessons moved on to phrase derivation and the recognition of key words and their components in each phrase.

The information we relied on for the Namibian literacy campaign did not show the instruction methodology that the organizers used but indicated that it was learner-centred with the explicit aim of creating conditions in which adults could be active in the learning process. Adults were introduced to reading, writing and arithmetic and instructors were supposed to develop teaching materials for their own respective areas which would help stimulate discussions and group activities on the one hand, and on the other, the instruction was supposed to be sufficiently straightforward to be readily applied in class. Thus, one can deduce that a combination of structural and dialogue methodology was applied in the Namibian literacy campaign.

The Tanzanian and Ethiopian literacy campaigns mainly applied a structural methodology in which adults were first introduced to different letters of the alphabets and then promoted to words and simple sentence constructions. Differing from the early days of instruction, the Ethiopian literacy campaign introduced new methods of instruction for the first time in the history of Ethiopian alphabet instruction. In this new way of alphabet instruction, first the whole 33 letters of the Ethiopian alphabet with their seven different characters were grouped into nine primers based on their likeness or similarity. Second, the sequence of the primers was determined by the relationship of the alphabet with adults' daily experiences so that it could be easily understood and remembered. For instance, the letter 'ኧ' (which is 'b' in Amharic with different phonetic) and its seven different characters was placed in the first primer with four other letters. This was done first, it is simple to name it and repeat it after the instructor, and second its written form is similar to a house gate, known as 'ber' in Amharic, and where the name begins with this letter. The instructor then tries to associate the known word – a house gate – with the letter and goes on instructing the rest of the letters. In this manner the organizers tried to bring together, in different lessons, letters that are more or less similar or can go together in writing and can be easily remembered. Instruction in the alphabets were organized in a way that progressed from simple, easily remembered patterns that were connected to the day-to-day lives of the adults to more difficult and complex ones. The teaching of letters was then followed by word formations, first from the same letters they had covered and later in combination with other ones.

The countries examined used different teaching methodologies to instruct adults from being structural in their approach with a strong emphasis on rules governing letter-sound relationships, spelling etc., which Cuban and Tanzanian literacy organizers used, to the dialogue and phonetics approach of the Nicaraguan literacy organizers or a combination of structural and dialogue methodologies as applied in the Namibian literacy programme. The semi-structured approach implemented by the Ethiopian literacy programme organizers, which tried to associate the learning of the alphabets and word formation with the daily life of the adults was one positive development that the literacy campaign put in use and the organizers ought to be praised for this effort. It was impressive to hear adults in their first contacts with the instructors saying 'I know, it is simple', which helps to develop confidence in their abilities. The dialogue approach, followed by the Nicaraguans and partially adopted by the Namibian literacy organizers, which initiated and encouraged participation by students

in the teaching/learning process, was also another positive development observed. As one of the recent teaching approaches, the REFLECT approach, which interlaces the literacy instruction process with the empowering process, encourages the use of such methods for at least two reasons. First, the discussion always begins from what adults know and in such a way breaks the inferiority problem of some adults and second it initiates everyone to join in the discussion, which is important for the programme's success. In general the instructional methodology exploited in the literacy programmes examined were encouraging, although this alone did not bring the expected results.

d. Duration of the campaigns. The campaigns were organized for different lengths of time. For instance the Cuban literacy campaign had a one-year programme, while the Nicaraguan literacy campaign was intended to last for three years (1980-1983) but because of different problems encountered it ended up being extended to 1990, when the organizers did their utmost to revitalize the programme and include it in the 1990 'International Year of Literacy' efforts.

The Tanzanian literacy campaign was initially planned to run for 10 years in two phases: 1971-1975 and 1976-1981, but in practice it was extended until 1988. In the same way the Ethiopian literacy campaign was initially designed to be a seven-year programme based on existing statistical figures, but because the 1984 national census came up with a new figure for the total population of the country, the literacy campaign was extended but with no concrete timeframe. Thus the campaign ran in effect for 11 years from 1979-1990.

The Namibian literacy campaign was designed to be conducted from 1992-2000, having set the concrete objective of making 80% of the population literate by the year 2000. The organizers had also decided that for an adult to be successful in the campaign he/she must attend the programme for at least three years. In general, except for the Cuban literacy campaign which was conducted for only one year, campaigns lasted considerably longer, showing that adult instruction is not a one-off short-term activity but rather a time-consuming affair.

Results gained and major shortcomings confronted. The achievements of the literacy campaigns of these countries, according to the information that this research work is based on, were twofold: (i) quantitative results that indicated the reduction in the number of illiterates in each country; and (ii) the behavioural change that the campaigns brought among in the population of the countries. With respect to the first, it is clear that results are considerable as is shown in Table 5.3. The campaigns reduced the number of illiterates to a considerable degree. For instance the Cuban literacy campaign brought the illiteracy rate down to 3.9%, the Nicaraguan rate dropped to 12.9% and in Ethiopia the rate was reduced to 35%. The Namibian literacy campaign also, during the first four-year period that the research work examined, reduced the illiteracy rate to 30%. In spite of the fact that there were definitional problems and that statistics are sometimes incapable of showing the exact ability acquired by adults in such campaigns, these figures indicate that the programmes played a significant contribution in minimizing the number of people unable to read and write.

The other important point that the campaigns had in common in terms of achievements is that although there are still differences in the degree of acceptance based on such factors as the educational culture that the country had developed and the extent of effort exerted, the literacy campaigns left a positive attitude among adults towards education. For instance, before the campaign most adults had thought that education was an activity for young people but after the campaign they realized that age makes no difference if you are motivated and ready to face the challenge. This is one of the most important achievements that the campaign brought about.

However, the campaigns were not without shortcomings, which can be categorized in

two groups: shortcomings encountered due to minimal attention and involvement from the organizers, and unexpected problems faced during the implementation process. To the first group can be linked such problems as the difficulty of locating and registering adults, a lack and shortage of trained instructors, shortages of teaching materials and teaching aids, a lack of long-term vision and a decline in political will and commitment. Besides, the campaigns' inability to make adults active subjects of the programme was also one of the difficulties faced. Such problems were common to all the five countries discussed. As a result of these shortcomings, adults were reluctant to join the programme or the instruction was not supported with enough educational resources, causing high drop-out rates and motivational problems. On the other hand, the literacy campaigns were practised under revolutionary situations (Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua and Ethiopia in particular, and Namibia to a lesser extent), where an extraordinary dedication was demanded in addition to the many local and national tasks community members were required to accomplish. This naturally created a sense of frustration and an inability to carry out such an intensive, diverse, time-consuming and compulsory task. Also, in some countries such as Nicaragua, a counter-campaign and anti-government elements targeted the instruction centres and instructors, making the situation very difficult for further rounds.

Conclusion

The central question in this chapter was related to the practical lessons gained from other countries with a relatively similar socio-cultural, economic or political background in organizing and implementing an adult literacy programme. Meanwhile, an examination of the literacy activities of Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua and Namibia in comparison with the Ethiopian literacy effort on the basis of certain points such as educational background and experience in adult literacy programme, shows that an adult literacy programme is basically dependent on national circumstances.

Educational background developed and the socio-cultural environment that existed during the adult literacy campaign were among the factors implicitly referred from different perspectives: first, South or Central American countries (Cuba and Nicaragua) compared to African countries (Tanzania, Namibia and Ethiopia) and second, countries with some sort of educational experience from past colonial or missionary activities (Tanzania and Namibia) compared with the traditional educational experiences of Ethiopia. From both perspectives, it was clear that countries with some sort of practical educational background were in a more advantageous position and the organization of an adult literacy programme for them was less problematic than in a country with backward educational standards and the strong influence of a traditional culture. In this respect, the literacy programme in Ethiopia, which operated under the latter situation, was disadvantageous for the latter has left its mark on the overall efforts of the campaign and this was reflected by the less enthusiasm and an unwillingness shown by the adults to the programme.

The other point revealed is the relevance of the degree of infrastructure development in a country, its population's size and the language homogeneity, which all directly influence the process of adult education. Compared to the other countries described, Ethiopia was seen to be a country with the most backward infrastructure and means of communication, with large population size and a very diverse language interest for literacy instruction.

Again one important point raised was the rationale and the experiences of the countries in planning, organizing and implementing an adult literacy programmes in their respective countries. A common element observed, with some variations between the countries and with the exception of the Namibian Literacy programme, was the existence of

the direct or indirect 'revolutionary' motives behind the adult literacy campaigns. This have forced the countries to skip some important steps like analysing the perception and interest of the adults towards the programme, their government's financial and manpower capacity and the appropriateness of the intended time. For Ethiopian adults, for instance, the programme was seen as something that came from the outside with little or no attention to the existing realities and their participation was less encouraging. As time passed, the political will and commitment of the government also began to fall off, negatively influencing the programme. With regard to the selection and training of the instructors, once more with the exception of the Namibian literacy programme organizers, the countries discussed used instructors with little or no professional background for their literacy campaigns, perceiving that an adult literacy campaign can be run with minimum pedagogical know-how. Once again such an approach in the selection of the potential instructors has contributed to the negative results of the efforts.

With respect to the results registered and the problems encountered, it was understood from the documents examined that encouraging results in minimizing the number of illiterate adults have been claimed. Obviously such a national effort would undoubtedly enjoy some positive results as a reward for individual and societal efforts. The problem is how exact the figures are, given the fact that the campaigns were launched in a situation where there were underdeveloped means of communication for effective information exchange and the organizers used untrained or under-trained staffs (often instructors) to collect the figures and analyse the statistical data accumulated. The other question considered was the qualitative achievements that the campaigns, which was difficult to estimate on the basis of the written documents or secondary data and was common to all the campaigns with some differences, based on their background and the level of development they had at the time of their literacy campaigns.

Some common problems registered, according to the documents I was based on, were the lack of motivation from the adults, higher than expected drop-out rates from the programme, a shortage of instruction materials, and the appropriateness of the time, which in some occasions clashed with the farmers' seasonal work patterns and was the main concern of the Ethiopian literacy campaign in particular. Despite all these problems, the efforts examined have convincingly demonstrated that an adult literacy campaign can be effective and bring about the desired results provided that the organizers are willing to consider all the necessary steps to be taken before, during and after a campaign.

Chapter VI: REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Though different forms of adult literacy campaigns have been conducted in many parts of the world, current information suggests that expectations are far from being fulfilled especially in less-developed countries. At the core of this problem lies, as described in the previous chapters, the launching of literacy campaigns with minimum attention to the actual needs on the ground and the high expectations of organizers from a programme with low investment. Nowadays, with changes in educational policies, the attention given to literacy programmes began to diminish and even the achievements registered were left without a subsequent follow-up programme. Combined with this are the increasing size of population mainly in less-developed countries, persistent poverty and continuous political instability, which have contributed to the rise of illiterate adults. Such were the highlights of UNESCO's evaluation of the state of the current illiteracy problems discussed in Chapter 1.

The problem of illiteracy will be unavoidable in the near future unless considerable attention is paid to the matter. Although the problem of illiteracy is linked to the material wealth of a country and its degree of development, because most illiterate adults are found in less-developed countries, efforts to minimize the number of people unable to read and write cannot be left to the countries concerned: it has to be the task of the international community. In practice the realization of such a programme must be oriented towards the development of the interests of the adults so that they can be active participants in any programme and be able to change their lives for the better. Wishes must consider the existing capacity, the present reality and its sustainability. These were some of the main issues raised in the previous chapters. In this concluding chapter important observations made in the previous chapters are summarized and assessed within the wider framework of the current situation.

In providing a summary of the results of this study, this chapter is organized around two main themes: the application of an adult literacy programme in the light of conceivable conceptual assumptions which are basic to the problem of literacy, and the practical lessons learned from the Ethiopian literacy campaign and the experiences of a few other selected countries used for purposes of comparison. There is also a summary of the international experiences and approaches in literacy programmes (see Figure 6.1). The chapter ends with some concluding remarks to emphasize the main results of the study.

Adult literacy programme in the light of some conceivable conceptual assumptions

The focus of this part is, on the basis of the conceptual thematic ideas on the subject matter elaborated in Chapter 2 and the practical lessons learned from the literacy programmes discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, to round up some significant factors which need practical consideration when launching an adult literacy programme. In Chapter 2 of this study the relevant conceptual aspects were discussed that should be considered when promoting an adult literacy programme. To summarize them: a consideration of the cultural aspects of the given society, the choice of the medium of instruction, a consideration of past experiences, adequate attention to the vulnerable groups in society (usually women), and the integration of the adult literacy programme into the national development plan.

A consideration of the cultural aspects of a particular society. The fact that adults are life-trained members of a society makes this factor very significant. Adult resentment towards joining a literacy programme highlights this reality, as does a limited motivation on their part to attend classes. Specific cultural aspects and the motivation of the prospective adult learners must be regarded as the starting point when planning to launch a literacy programme. Thus the promotion of an adult literacy programme must, first of all, be based on and developed

within the framework of the existing culture of that country and particular society. The participants' ages, the individual and social responsibilities they carry, their environment and the socio-cultural character of the society they belong to, the language they speak, their feelings and primary interests are among the factors that need to be considered and will determine the success of any adult literacy programme. A literacy campaign ought to be based on the cultural set-up of a particular society. It should be learner-centred and accountable to them. The cultural identity of individual groups within the society, their perceptions of their surroundings and, beyond that, their feelings and interest need considerable attention. As noted in the final declaration of CONFINTEA-V (1997), it is essential that approaches to adult learning be based on people's own heritage, culture, values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which these approaches are implemented enable and encourage every citizen to be actively involved and to have a voice.

The choice of the instruction medium. One important element in promoting an adult literacy programme is the choice of the medium of instruction, particularly in societies where multilingual ethnic groups live alongside each other. Language is the key element for communication between the instructor and the adults in the initial stage and in the process of instruction. It determines the whole effort and the subsequent outcome. As seen in Chapter 2, there are different arguments regarding the choice of language: the adult's mother tongue or the country's official language. On the one hand those who advocate the use of the local language (mother tongue) as the medium of instruction suggest that it enables and encourages people to unite, especially those whose educational level is low and it develops mutual trust among societies, while the official language divides people into those who speak it and those who have learned it. On the other hand, those who advocate the use of the existing official language as the medium of instruction argue that its use for this purpose minimizes ethnic/language divisions. The cost of linguists to develop the instruction materials in different languages and to train the instructors slows down the introduction of a programme. Thus, in organizing a literacy programme for adults – particularly in multilingual societies – a thorough investigation of the effects of the choices must be undertaken and it is appropriate to give the adults involved the opportunity to have the final say. This method would always demand the practical involvement of the prospective adult learners in helping to design and implement their own literacy programme.

Adequate attention to vulnerable groups. In designing and launching adult literacy programmes, organizers are confronted with the question of who the target groups are and, as with other development programmes, the first demarcating factor is gender. Women constitute about half of the world's population but many are still illiterate and the gap between men and women, concerning literacy rates, is showing an increased rate of illiteracy among women. The gap is widening and women are lagging behind. The problem of gender-based educational inequality among adults must be one of the concerns of any literacy programme. Adult women should be assisted and encouraged to join literacy programmes and organizers should pay extra attention to them because money, time and material wealth spent on educating women can bring a double return: the cycle of illiteracy will be broken and literacy will be part of the society's culture. This, in turn, will contribute to the better performance of children in schools, ultimately producing a better-educated and literate workforce for the community and the country at large.

Integration of the adult literacy programme in the national development plan. Educating adults not only enables them to address their temporary individual problems but also encourages them to take part in long-term national development actions, allowing them to be

part of the socio-cultural, economic and political affairs of the country, participate in the planning and decision-making process of their country's future, and promote the principles of democracy in its full meaning. It is impossible to expect high productivity without changing the mental make-up, attitude and behaviour of a society, without changing traditional ways of life in the countryside, and most of all without a change in the means of production. Thus, educating the majority of the population will serve to develop human potential and to build a more tolerant nation in which people try to understand the cultural attitudes of others, respect and facilitate smooth relationships and develop better communication between individuals. The promotion of an adult literacy programme must always, therefore, be viewed as part of the national development programme for two reasons: the programme will be guaranteed continuity and the necessary human and financial support; and as a result of this the programme is likely to show concrete results in terms of adults' expectations, which in turn will encourage them to be part of the programme to start with.

Consideration of past experiences. In launching an adult literacy programme it is important to bear in mind that such an activity should be based on past experience. Lessons can be learned from the success or failure of a programme carried out in the past and these positive or negative experiences contribute new ideas to the ongoing or newly designed programme and other pre-campaign procedures. This helps not only in figuring out the methods and methodologies to be used but also to overcome organizational and methodological problems registered earlier. Thus, evaluation of previous similar activities and the hammering out of hitches, difficulties and complications are vital. In the next paragraph, on the basis of the points raised in Chapters 4 and 5, the practical experiences learned from the Ethiopian literacy campaign compared to the other countries assessed will be summarized.

The practical lessons learned from the Ethiopian literacy campaign and the countries used for comparison purposes

The experiences of the Ethiopian literacy campaign carried out between the years 1979-1990 and the countries used for a comparative assessment were approached from two perspectives: the pre-campaign and mid-campaign activities carried out during the years of their programmes and the results of their efforts in the light of the objectives outlined at the beginning of the programmes.

The Ethiopian pre-campaign and mid-campaign literacy activities in the light of the countries used for comparison

As discussed in Chapter 4, the main objectives of the Ethiopian literacy campaign were to eradicate illiteracy; enable adults to read and write and use simple and practical calculations; and encourage adults to be active participants of the socio-economic and political life of the country. The objectives also included a purely political aim – the introduction of revolutionary literature among adult readers primarily so that they could be used as part of the national government's agenda. In outlining objectives of a literacy campaign, as Cinapah and Miron (1990) stated, considerable attention should be given to the perception of the learners and their particular socio-cultural environment. They also noted that the framework of such a campaign should be founded on a review of documents of past experiences. Furthermore, the objective is supposed to define the intended targets and methods of implementation, if possible in quantifiable terms. Aims and objectives, according to these authors, can also be seen as the connection between the initial situation of participants and their environment and

the desired point of completion. Thus, the careful formulation of goals at the beginning should follow and reflect an assessment of the society's specific literacy needs.

Looking back to the Ethiopian literacy campaign objectives in the light of these principles (see Chapter 4), a mixture of images is revealed as the programme had a combination of political and economic aims. Among its political goals, the campaign was supposed to create a new political, social and cultural life under the umbrella of a socialist ideology. The economic objectives of the campaign were placed upon a conviction that developing a literate society would contribute to an improvement in the existing poor economic situation by producing more skilled manpower and would increase productivity. The cognitive learning goals of the 3Rs were seen as instruments in attaining these aims. Given the revolutionary context in which the campaign was conceived and launched, these were noble aims indeed. The difficulty lay in the combination of these two aims, where the former demanded a mass-coverage approach and the latter a more selective one. Very few national resources and limited manpower were allocated to the programme and huge numbers of adults were mobilized for the campaign to achieve results in a short space of time. The fact that the campaign aimed to improve the economic and social life of the adults resulted in significant numbers of adults participating in the programme, and it was a major problem for the organizers and instructors to accommodate them all in groups and provide them with learning materials. However, this massive reaction to the campaign was seen as temporary and adults began to miss classes, especially in rural areas when the programme clashed with specific seasonal tasks in their agricultural year. As a result, the high turnout and enrolment figures during the initial period were followed by a high drop-out rate and poor results at the end. It is not intended here to suggest that a mixture of these approaches cannot work. The point is, as the above-mentioned authors stated, that at the basis of such a mass campaign the concept of the adults' understanding the programme's goals must be central in order to create a communal sense of interest and belongingness. This, however, comes only if the campaign objectives are clearly defined and based on the primary needs and interests of the adult learners themselves.

Lessons from the Cuban, Tanzanian, Nicaraguan and Namibian literacy campaigns were no different in this regard. The objectives were basically formulated on the basis of the general political line of the respective countries at the time. In Cuba, Tanzania and Nicaragua, for instance, revolutionary governments were in power and had as their objective the changing of the existing socio-economic relations and political course of their respective countries to a new and better system. Education here was seen as a tool and means of transition and was given the highest priority. As part of educational reform, adult literacy was also seen as an immediate task for these governments, based on the assumption that literacy would pave the way for the direct involvement of the majority of the population in revolutionary and nation-building activities. The formulation of the Namibian literacy campaign objectives was similar to the others, also having some elements of the national political line. What was different in it was the campaign's aim to be learner-centred so that adults could participate in the major activities of the campaign such as its planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Basically the implementation of a literacy campaign and the realization of its objectives require not only adequate planning but also a proper structural set-up and good working relations among the policy makers, practitioners and the programme's subjects. The choice of instructional sites, the target groups and the recruitment of instructors all demand considerable attention before and during the campaign period. The same proportional work in terms of preparing and distributing teaching materials, rearranging the instruction season and the timetable is necessary over the course of the campaign. In order to overcome such practical pre- and mid-campaign problems, a thorough investigation of the countries' past

experiences in this or similar areas is essential, something that was lacking in the Ethiopian literacy campaign.

The Ethiopian literacy campaign organizers used the existing governmental structure as a basis for the implementation of the programme. Literacy committees were formed at national, regional and local levels with sub-committees working with them. The organizational set-up was strictly vertical and allowed insufficient space for creative work or local initiatives. The same was true for Cuba, Tanzania and Nicaragua. The situation was different in Namibia, however, where the organizers clearly indicated that it was their intention to provide more room for local and regional incentives. The possibilities given to the instructors and participants to develop their own regional and even local instruction materials based on the national curriculum were an indication of the relative flexibility of the structure of the literacy campaign. In this learner-oriented approach of the Namibian literacy programme, the organizers were convinced that the participation of the adult students would be much higher and could be better stimulated if adults joined in the literacy programme's administration.

The other important pre-campaign procedure in organizing an adult literacy programme is the adequate choice of instruction site, again based on the interests of the adults concerned. Adult instruction, in my view, must start from those areas where interest in the programme is adequate and then expand to other areas. The choice of instructional sites ought to correspond to this reality and must take into account the diverse cultural set-up of the particular society. The experience of the Ethiopian literacy campaign, in this regard, was not striking. Although the objectives of the campaign indicate the government's intention to eradicate illiteracy within a certain period of time (first it was planned to do so within seven years and later an indefinite timeframe was announced with an emphasis on eradicating illiteracy in the shortest possible time), this was not based on the real interests of the potential learners. No fundamental consultation with the students took place and no proper investigation of the positive and negative sides of the possible instruction sites were carried out. Instead, to maintain the political image of the revolutionary government, a great deal of attention was given to formalities such as targets to be accomplished and the mass mobilization of students. The choice of instructional sites, which was based neither on cultural backgrounds nor on the wishes of the target groups, can here be seen as an example. In determining these sites, in most cases the organizers followed the patterns of settlement based on the number of inhabitants in a certain area and the expected participants from outside (see Chapter 4 for details). Instead, had they at the initial stage focused on and exploited the existing common places such as religious centres and worship areas as meeting points and conferred with their leaders as responsible organizers, they would have decreased the extent of the problems they faced especially during the first round (an influx of adults for the programme and the inability to accommodate them with instructors and teaching materials).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, for instance, owns more than 15,000 sites of churches (see Chapter 3) with at least the same number of men serving in the church (in most churches there is a minimum of two priests and a deacon, so the number of people is three times the number of churches) scattered throughout the country. The use of these religious leaders as instructors and their places of worship as centres of instruction, at least in the initial period, would have brought enormous advantages to the programme. First, learners would have been approached and assisted by respected members of society who would have paid full attention to the customary and cultural values of the community members to a much greater extent than 12th grade students with no life experiences; second, facilitators (priests, deacons) would also have provided additional services which could have been seen as a means of promoting their religious mission; and third, the government, as an organizer, would have also

benefited from this because learners would have felt some degree of moral obligation and tried to attend classes regularly. The same would have been true for Muslims. Of course this ought to have been done with the full respect of their religious leaders' ideas and an understanding of the cultural settings of the particular society.

As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, the winning over of the 'will' of the participants is half the battle. Practice has shown that success in literacy programmes first and foremost depends on the active involvement of adult learners, who will be the direct beneficiaries of the programme itself. To secure the participation of the expected learners and the results of the programme, organizers must first of all know who the adult illiterates are and understand and appreciate their circumstances prior to creating conditions for their involvement. Of course this should be based upon encouragement, stimulation and motivation, and not coercion.

Looking at the Ethiopian literacy campaign, adult illiterates formed the vast majority of the socially and culturally disadvantaged communities. They were rural peasants and urban workers or unemployed men and women, usually poor or with low incomes. In such circumstances, where life itself is difficult and the attention of the adults is always first on overcoming their daily problems, a prudent approach, with no element of coercion, is necessary in order to make them interested in joining a literacy campaign now or in the future. In the case of Ethiopia, if participation in a literacy campaign becomes a duty but does not produce any tangible advantages, it will develop an unwillingness or lack of motivation for the programme. Obviously, some positive influence and social accountability are fundamental. But, using compulsory means of getting adults to join literacy programmes should not be done in such a way that damages the expectations and credibility of the programme itself. In the first place, adults who come to the literacy programme in fear are not going to benefit from it and their participation will be conditional. In the second place the use of such means, which deprives them of their rights has a negative psychological effect and creates a sense of punishment. High drop-out rates and limited success rates of the literacy programmes were, in most cases, the result. Thus, if a programme is to create at least a sense of concern and individual and societal responsibility, it must be based and function on the interests of adult learners. They must understand the benefits and the challenges of the programme and agree to the details of its implementation before it is put in practice. The moral obligation they are taking upon themselves is the most important foundation that the campaign can be based on.

This can be viewed from the point of view of the learners' motivations. Although it has not been adequately investigated from the Ethiopian literacy campaign's perspective, at least two reasons for participating in a literacy programme can be deduced: the *pride motivation* and the *advantage motivation*. Under the pride motivation comes the adults' interest in being seen to be capable of reading and writing among the members of their community. Some of the statements made by the newly literates (see Chapter 4) such as 'a literate person has social respect', 'I no longer have to ask people the number of the bus I have to take', 'when I draw my salary I sign my name proudly with others', 'my husband has special regard for me since I became literate', indicate that there are adults who join the programme for this purpose. Their first intention is not to use their literacy skills but rather to gain self-confidence or self-esteem by being able to read and write. Under the advantage motivation comes the adults' interest in using their newly gained skills to improve their daily lives such as by increasing their income by taking on activities that require reading and writing, keeping accounts, identifying shop labels and prices, etc. For this group of adults being literate can open doors to other activities. It should be noted here that adults might join the programme for mixed motivations too. Thus every attempt to bring adults to the literacy programme must be based on their will, motivations and expectations. Lessons from the Namibian literacy campaign in this regard indicate that a learner-centred approach in a

literacy campaign motivates adult learners to join the programme by helping them discuss matters they are interested in and come up with their own solutions. It also helps the instructors to develop additional teaching materials.

The instruction of adults and the results expected are directly related to the teaching potential and creativity exerted by the instructors. Instructors must bring together the adults, convince, instruct and assist them in utilizing their new-found knowledge. Thus, they should be aware of their task, the circumstances in which they are working, the clients they ought to assist and the target they intend to reach. That is why it is suggested that the selection, training, assigning and follow-up of the instructors should be given significant attention. The experiences from the Ethiopian literacy campaign, in this respect, were not substantial. It is not only because recruited instructors were mostly 12th grade students with no or little life experiences, but also because the pedagogical arrangements and training programme organized for the instructors before leaving for their missions were insufficient. Instructors in the Namibian literacy programme, for instance, were recruited from local areas based on their ability to take on such a responsibility for at least one year. They were trained and prepared in handling and instructing adults and were also advised regularly by district literacy organizers. They were employed part-time on a contract basis at a rate comparable to that of a teacher without professional qualifications, which can be seen as setting an example in this direction.

On the other hand the expected results of a literacy programme and its quality rests not only on the work carried out by the instructors but also on the availability and quality of the instructional materials. In places where scarce or poor infrastructure for educational services exists, the influence of deep-rooted cultural experiences are enormous and there is a limited know-how about the outside world, it is difficult to expect the smooth promotion of a literacy programme without appropriate instructional materials. Such circumstances will make the instruction process more abstract for adults and hinder the progress of the literacy programme, creating an additional burden for the instructors. Thus, the preparation and distribution of instructional materials should again be given considerable attention. These instructors are expected to be creative and to exploit local and traditional means of communication to motivate the adult learners participating in the campaign. This requires experienced and devoted instructors. Some of the shortcomings registered in the Ethiopian literacy campaign in this regard were that there was no attempt to diversify the instructional materials and their contents and instructional techniques in accordance with the needs of the various target groups and their culture. The same materials and teaching methods were used throughout the country, rather than taking the different languages into account. The very limited printing facilities were not able to produce the required amount of materials and in vast quantities and within a short period of time, which affected the distribution of materials. Their distribution was also hampered by the country's undeveloped methods of communication especially in the rural parts of the country.

Choosing the best time for a literacy campaign is another main factor to be realized. While organizers try to answer questions about how adults could participate in literacy programmes or why they do not want to participate or stop participating in the middle of the programmes, they should also try to find out when it is appropriate for adults to attend literacy classes and point out implications for literacy planning, particularly with regard to the interests of the different target groups. Experiences of the Ethiopian literacy campaign, in this regard, show that there were misconceptions or miscalculations of this vital factor. On the one hand it was a very centralized timetable constructed mainly to exploit the period of time the 12th grade students had free after their national examinations. This was not necessarily a bad approach but this time coincided with a busy time in the peasants' agricultural season when they were involved in long days working in the fields (mainly for the odd-numbered rounds,

see Chapter 4). Secondly, the inflexible duration of each round (a period of 3-4 months) failed to take into account the reality and hardship that most adults confronted whilst attending literacy classes. As a result, many irregularities were registered, namely, irregular attendance, being late or not being active in class, a high drop-out rate, and finally poor results.

Results of the efforts and lessons learned from the Ethiopian literacy campaign in the light of the objectives outlined

As the results of the Ethiopian literacy campaign show, important quantitative and qualitative achievements were registered in this first-ever nationwide adult literacy campaign, the most important being the cultural attitudes formed towards education. During the 11-year mass literacy campaign, a total of 22,282,359 adults were registered in the beginners' programme and some 20,498,265 adults certified. In the post-literacy programme a total of 18,319,964 people registered and 13,968,653 attended the programme (see Table 4.9). Millions of people who otherwise would never have had the opportunity to learn to read and write had the possibility of following some form of education after participating in the literacy campaign. From these perspectives, it can be said that the literacy campaign was able to disprove the traditional view that learning is for young people only. The literacy rate was raised from 7% to 77% between 1979 and the end of February 1990. In addition, over 160 rural newsletters were produced and distributed and 9,400 reading rooms were created as post-literacy centres (Workneh 1989, Tsegaye 1991, Gobena 1994).

The most important result that the literacy campaign brought to the participants was, in my opinion, the broad cultural change it introduced: a new culture of reading, writing and communicating by means of written material. Adult participants during their stay in the places of instruction were advised to lead their lives based on the know-how they had gained from the instruction and personal relationships and communications they had established. Of course, it is not so easy to apply new ideas at once, especially given the fact that most participants were part of the traditional culture that had existed for years. The hope here is that, as the NLCCC emphasized in its 1989 report, the new ideas and ways of life gained through instruction could be implemented side by side with existing conventional ways, provided there was a favourable environment, as the role of the literacy campaign was to add to people's capabilities and not to replace the valuable assets of oral skills and memory.

The literacy campaign's other major contribution in terms of social transformation was the use of fifteen ethnic languages as mediums of instruction. Languages which had never before been used in written communication and which had never been put in print were used for the first time in this national campaign. As Workneh (1989) clearly states, over and above the technical accomplishment, there is likely to have been a psychological and social satisfaction from learning in one's own language. It is also important to note the opportunity given to women and girls who represent about 50% of the total population of the country in the 10-40 age group. During the campaign period, 52% of the newly registered and the same amount of those who gained certificates were women. Although their participation fell to 45% in the post-literacy programme, their performance, in general, was satisfactory. The fact that 20.5% of the literacy instructors were women also shows that their participation in the programme was substantial given the country's culture of male supremacy (Gobena 1994).

The results and achievements discussed here were not gained without problems and difficulties. The problems of the campaign can be categorized as structural and technical. To begin with structural problems, the campaign had a centrally controlled organizational structure with its different committees and sub-committees. As a result of this structure directives flowed only one way – downwards – and the reverse was only for reporting. This highly centralized organizational structure created obstacles. It was so channelled and

centralized that it was not equipped to solve problems in a short period of time. For every problem the organizers and campaigners on the ground faced, information from the local, regional and sometimes even the national committees was demanded. The decision-making process was too time-consuming: sub-committees first had to discuss the case and present a possible solution to the local literacy committee. The local committee in turn referred the case to the district and provincial committees and provincial committees to the regional and so on. The expected solution to the problem had to pass through the same channel in reverse, taking up valuable time. Added to this was the limited or poor means of communication that hindered the decision-making process. The timetable for each round was very restricted, leaving no room to accommodate any possible solutions to the problems. Because of these and other reasons, the literacy campaign was carried out without sufficient answers to the problems encountered in the process of its implementation. Bhola (1994) remarked, 'for the first time in the history of NLC, teachers of the third round were given kits including uniforms, boots, blankets, umbrellas and petromax lamps', which indicates how difficult it was under such arrangements to dispatch on time even the important materials required for the literacy campaign.

On the other hand, the Ethiopian literacy campaign appears to me to have been without direct responsible authority. At the centre of the national campaign was the NLCCC whose members were assigned from different governmental and mass organizations. The committee was supported by four sub-committees and regional and local branches. Members of literacy campaign committees at all levels were expected to work part-time in addition to their regular duties. The Adult Education Department office and its branches in regional and provincial (*awraja*) offices, which were said to be responsible for the campaign, were in most part run with few resources and limited manpower. Moreover, most committee members had different additional obligations where their active participation was expected. Under such arrangements it was difficult to expect from the committee members the kind of work that the literacy campaign demanded. Experience has shown that committee meetings sometimes had to be postponed as there was no quorum or things were discussed very generally with no attention to the problems on the ground. One should also note the fact that manpower support decreased at provincial, district and local levels – exactly where the campaign's intensive work demanded a more professional approach.

To the best of my knowledge, the adult education department at the provincial (*awraja*) level in most parts of the country was run by only one person, known as the Head of the Adult Education Department (before the literacy campaign the department was responsible for the promotion of limited night-school classes in some cities and later on for the CSTC that emerged during the revolutionary years) covering, among other things, literacy programme coordination and implementation. He/she was also responsible for the preparation of the curriculum and instructional materials and for adapting them to local needs (this mostly refers to CSTCs), recruiting and training instructors for the campaign and other forms of adult education such as night school, community training schools etc. In regional offices although the number of staff members was much better than at the provincial level, it was not satisfactory in terms of the work that the department had to cover. Even in the main office, the head of the Adult Education Department was no more than the secretary to the executive committee.

The technical problems that the campaign faced are the reflection of the structural problems and the campaign's nature. First of all, as a campaign, the target was to eradicate illiteracy within a given period of time with maximum effort. Thus, extraordinary efforts on the part of the organizers and from Ethiopian society were required. However, this noble idea was not equally accepted or understood by the campaign's real actors. This was because, despite its emphasis of 'abolishing illiteracy', the campaign was politically coloured and

aimed at certain strategic goals: mobilizing society for the benefit of the revolutionary government. 'The objectives of the literacy campaign state that the aim was in the short possible term to free the vast majority of the illiterate group of the society from ignorance, myth and superstition and in the long run, to raise the consciousness level of the broad mass of the population and create productive citizens for the construction of a socialist economy.' Such extolling of the virtues of education in general, and of literacy in particular, is a prerequisite for revolution (Abraham 1994) and is traceable in many literacy crusades and educational activities of that period – for example, the Nicaraguan case (Kraft 1983); Castro's assertion that, 'revolution and education are the same thing'; and Freire (1973). But it was not combined with the necessary pre- and mid-campaign efforts for the expected results. It was over-ambitious because it lacked any relation to the existing reality and was not based on the will and interests of the adults. No adults were consulted while the campaign was being set up and no one focused on the degree of the campaign's acceptance by the participants, but instead concentrated on the number of adults the programme could mobilize.

The absence of figures showing the size of the population was one of the main problems. Initially the campaign was planned to eradicate illiteracy from urban and rural areas by 1982 and 1987 respectively. After the 1984 census, because the target group appeared to be 25% larger than had been anticipated, the organizing committee was obliged to adapt its earlier plan, which raised additional organizational problems of logistics, instruction materials, and even instructors. The outcome of all these problems was, as Sineshaw 1996 pointed out, 'inaccurate documentation, misrepresentation, and misreporting of literacy statistics; evasion of accountability; curtailment of local initiative and independent action due to organizational inflexibility; and concealment of individual and group waste and inefficiency'.

A lack of systematic investigation and study of previous literacy attempts contributed to the problems of the literacy campaign. This was observed when recruiting the instructors for the literacy campaign: less-qualified instructors and poor teaching methods were among the problems that the campaign faced. There was practical experience and recommendation in this regard from previous efforts and lessons could have been learned. For instance, Wagaw (1979) in his assessment of the *Yefidel Serawit* (Alphabet Army) literacy campaign stated that one of the problems in that literacy campaign was its failure to select and train its instructors adequately. In the almost ten years after 1968, there were two literacy programme attempts in the country; the WOALP and the literacy campaign during the Development through Cooperation Campaign, which, in my opinion, left positive and negative lessons that could have provided valuable feedback and suggestions. Experiences at the international level accumulated before and during the campaign itself were also of importance (see Figure 6.1). Had these and other previous national, regional and international experiences been systematically studied and had the experiences gained been utilized, the organizers would have avoided repeating the problems mentioned earlier such as under-training their instructors, ignoring the role of local intervention, etc.

Figure 6.1
Past experiences and approaches in literacy programmes: A summary

No.	Approaches	Period	Objectives	Target groups	Results	Failures
I	Fundamental Approach	1950s & 1960s	Community development	Unspecified, aimed at people with low motivation	Mother-tongue teaching practiced but unsatisfactory outcome	No proper planning for instruction and follow-up; failed to reduce the number of illiterates to expected level
II	Selective-Intensive Functional Approach	1965-1974	Test economic and social returns of literacy	Specific group working with specific economic activity	Teaching methods focused on the 'adult-centred' pedagogy but its impact was limited	Literacy viewed as only a technical exercise ignoring the social, cultural and political factors
III	Conscientization Approach	Early 1960s	Encouraging illiterates to be aware of their situation	No specific target group	Dialogue and participation were key elements with specific attention to the culture, living conditions, language and existing social contradictions. Inspired many literacy workers to develop their ideas and methods	Lacked adequate guidelines and contains non-applicable elements for large-scale programmes
IV	Mass campaigns	1960-1980s	Make all adults in a nation literate within a given period, overcome poverty and injustice through mass mobilization	No specific target groups	Promising figure at the initial stage but later changed	Shows sense of urgency and combativeness; accent on political capital and political support without attention to the demands of the learners
V	General literacy programmes	At different periods	Programmes with diverse objectives often run by NGOs	No specific target groups	More efforts on curriculum design and methodological development	Lacks strong social pressure

When talking about the training of instructors one must not forget that the instruction of adults demands willingness, experience and motivation. The Ethiopian literacy campaign organizers paid too little attention to this factor. Using 12th grade students as instructors by itself was a problem because they do not have the necessary accumulated experiences of life to approach adults and to accomplish their task. In addition to this, an orientation course of 2-7 days was not enough to qualify them as instructors of adults. The campaign suffered from a lack of attention in terms of selecting and training instructors and the instruction of adults in general was given a secondary status. Weak instructors, poor selecting methods and insufficient instruction times combined with inadequate teaching methods and less enthusiastic adults to produce few positive results and low standards of literacy. An additional problem was the length of time required for the adults to finish their planned programme. According to the NLCCC, a total of 288 hours of instruction was needed for certification. First of all, the indicated instruction hours had to be counted from the first day that the instructors reached the area. Because there was no prior preparation to facilitate the implementation of the literacy campaign, the instructors were supposed to begin their duties by explaining their actual task – asking the leaders of the local areas to arrange a public gathering where they could explain their mission, and waiting for the possible agreement of the expected learners. This consumed some of the instruction time allocated to real lessons – at least a week or two. Thus the specific time for instruction was decreased by the procedural activities which were supposed to have been done before the arrival of the instructors. In addition to this, the time chosen for the campaign, especially the main rounds (odd-numbered rounds), in most places was not convenient for rural adults. At this particular time of year farmers are always busy with agricultural duties and they could not give the programme the attention and level of participation it required, or they did not join the programme at all. This was seen from the beginning when about half of the registered participants dropped out in the middle of the first round.

The other major problem of the literacy campaign is the definition given to what ‘literacy’ or ‘literate adult’ meant. Participants who have passed through the training stages, including the post-literacy programmes, could join the 4th grade of formal education (in some sources it was grade 3) for further education as their result in the literacy programme is considered to be at a level equivalent to 3rd or 4th grade in the formal education stream. The problem here is that the curriculum in formal education is completely different from that of a literacy programme and it is difficult to compare the two. Students in formal educational could read and write from the beginning. Although this would have been at an elementary standard, students at these levels are required to follow different subjects such as science, social sciences, computing, problem-solving and, from the 3rd grade, English. The newly literate was unfamiliar with all these subjects, which makes the comparison difficult.

The same was true for mastering reading and writing. Reading does not simply mean combining letters and naming them. It is, above all, understanding the message and being able to interpret it. Writing, on the other hand, is expressing an idea in an organized manner and reflecting one’s view and thoughts so that others can understand the message. It is more than simple letter combinations. It is questionable if the newly literates could have mastered the art of writing in its full sense before they were able to exercise it. Although the objectives of the campaign indicate that the ultimate goal of the campaign was to make adults able to read and write, the definition given to literacy by some participants states briefly that being ‘literate’ means being able to identify labels and prices, bus numbers, telephone numbers and simple letters. The most important achievement for many of the participants was just being able to sign their names. This was also accepted by some of the regional organizers, and adults who were only able to write their names were registered as ‘literate’, thus lowering the very

standard of the definition of being 'literate' and the expectations of the campaign organizers. This, in turn, resulted in a questioning of the statistics concerning literacy levels obtained from the campaign and their overall meaning. From this perspective, it is hard for the quantitative results given by the Ethiopian literacy campaign organizers to account for the success of the programme.

Teaching and learning is not a short-term process. Adult literacy instruction is the same: it is a process that should be free of interruptions. Any intermission created during this process can divert the direction of the whole programme. If continuous assistance is not offered and the newly literate is left with no possibility of developing his/her knowledge, he/she might forget the basics of what was just learned and relapse into illiteracy. If this happens, the manpower, material and time spent on the programme will have been lost without having created a firm foundation upon which the learning process can be rebuilt. As the major findings of this study showed, a lack of continuity in an adult literacy programme will not only damage the achievements of the whole effort but will also leave unavoidable lessons for future efforts. Even under such conditions where the results are not satisfactory in terms of prior expectations, the promotion of an adult literacy programme must continue to help the newly literates from relapsing into illiteracy and to support their growing interests. The Ethiopian experience in this respect was not appreciable. To be more specific, the organizers of the Ethiopian literacy campaign, according to the documents this research is based on, proclaimed that about 20 million eligible adults were approached for literacy instruction and as a result of this effort at the end of the programme about 77% of the population was declared to be literate, although UNESCO's recent figures (World Education Report of 1998) indicate that the number of literates in the country had gone down to 35.5%, which is not a positive indication by any stretch of the imagination.

Since 1990 Ethiopia has undergone a course of socio-political change, education included, and because of the new government's educational policy, the noble idea of instructing adults was given minimum attention. Millions of people who in one way or another were taught to read and write in the past were left without continuous support. Instructional and reading centres were closed, materials were left to decay, committees were dissolved and at the central level the Adult Education Department was even replaced by a panel and its staff was reduced from 150 to 4 (Negash 1996). In general, what once were considered important structural forces for the literacy programme have been ignored and were then abolished. A new educational policy was proclaimed that favoured the expansion of formal education. With this new educational policy in place, it is unlikely that the economically active institutions are able to absorb all those graduating from formal education centres. The formal educational programme is yet not capable of reaching a significant portion of school-aged children and the majority of the rural adult population is unlikely to benefit from it.

Even if the EETP acknowledged the need for the expansion of primary schools. There would still be a large number of adult illiterates to be dealt with and adult literacy would have to be promoted to ensure the success of child education. There is a danger that much of what is gained by children will be lost unless a successive literacy programme is promoted among illiterate adults. Thus, the promotion of adult literacy alongside the development of formal education must receive equal consideration. Events cannot wait until an adequate school system produces a new generation of literate people: the current adult population's role in the country's development is very significant. It is of importance to remember once again what the late Nyerere (1964) emphasized:

First, we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our economic development for five, ten or even twenty years. The attitude of the adults ... on the other hand, has an impact now.

As mentioned earlier, the goal of eradicating illiteracy on a large scale, as in Ethiopia, requires not only investments in time, human resources and materials but also a transparent and flexible working structure. This means the literacy programme administration and its structural set-up must be organized on a principle of duality, i.e. the central level develops standards of quality and norms, provides training for instructors and takes care of any financial resources. Regional and local levels, on the other hand, try to adapt the main principles to their specific situations and come up with new ideas gained from practical work. If, however, only top-down hierarchical working relations are exercised and strict centralism is followed, the campaign's administration will lose its collective character and pave the way for a single bureaucracy, which, in turn, will negatively influence the expected results. Thus, the role of regional and local organizers must not be restricted, it should instead be widened, paving the way for creative work and the flexible application of norms.

Meanwhile, a nationwide programme must be monitored and evaluated in a way that the evaluation process considers the implementation process of the drafted objectives on the one hand and on the other, the cognitive know-how the learners gained. It should be participatory and must focus on such basic principles as: (i) examining whether the identified objective of the campaign is being put in practice; (ii) ensuring the degree of acceptance and participation in the programme by the adults; (iii) regulating the instruction materials, instruction methods and most importantly the instructors efforts regardless of whether they are combined with and directed to the interest of the programme; and (iv) identifying the problems encountered and the solutions given. Obviously, evaluating the literacy campaign only on the basis of the results without considering the process followed is of little use. The lack of such a basic assessment of the Ethiopian literacy campaign, as the documents used here have shown, overshadowed not only the scale of the effort taken by the organizers from the central to the local level but also the real qualitative results registered among the learners.

I have tried to show in this study that, despite shortcomings and the lack of reliable quantitative information about the campaign, the Ethiopian literacy campaign has left a recognizable achievement. It created an enormous, nationwide interest and awareness in education, especially among women and rural children. Furthermore, it institutionalised the use of fifteen languages for literacy instruction. It also left organizational and pedagogical experiences that could be used in any future attempt. However, when looking back to the objectives of the campaign, the initial pledge of the government, the relative support of society and the international community and most of all the invested time, human and material resources in comparison with the results registered, one has to conclude that the high-profile promise was not fully kept. There are a number of reasons, in my opinion, that contributed to this situation: the ambitious goals set and the lack of experience by the authorities; minimum international support; little interest shown by the adults; and internal and external socio-political problems. One must not forget here that the Ethiopian literacy programme was implemented under very difficult situations. The war in the northern part of the country, severe economic problems followed by continuous drought and famine in the country's northern and eastern parts and the government's inability to handle these and other national tasks, led to inconsistency, deterioration, and a failure of commitment to the literacy programme.

Concluding remarks

Although several attempts have been made to minimize the number of illiterates, there are still some 876 million illiterates in the world, the majority of whom live in less-developed countries. The question here is what prime factors have contributed to this problem and what concrete measures should be taken in order to put it on the right track.

First, as the recent situation in Ethiopia indicates, the government gave priority to the expansion of formal education sectors, assuming that the more the younger generation had access to education, the lower the illiteracy rate would become. Such a policy perspective, followed by many developing countries, shifted the focus of international institutions away from literacy projects, although huge investments in the expansion of the formal educational sector were unlikely to bring the expected achievements. Here it must be understood that in most countries of the less-developed world, local and regional conflicts still prevent the smooth promotion of educational activities. On the one hand, the country's economic situation is collapsing catastrophically, and on the other, the size of its population is showing an enormous increase, creating an imbalance between capability and necessity, an unavoidable societal problem in the near future. In such a situation the expansion and development of formal education is not expected to show significant results. Thus, in such countries the illiteracy rate is still on the increase and this requires particular attention.

Second, as the experiences of the countries analysed in this research project indicate, literacy campaigns were often seen as a means to a certain target of political will rather than being of educational merit in themselves. They were associated with certain goals and were run with little or no proper vision of the situation. In most cases they were implemented without any real consultation with the expected learners and instructors. Past experiences were not adequately examined and lessons from success and bad practices were not seriously considered. Emphasis was not given to teaching strategies so that they could be flexible and provide alternative approaches. As Bhola (1983) argued, campaigns had a sense of urgency and combativeness; and they failed to accommodate local interests and initiatives to maximize results. Thus, the implementation of a literacy campaign in such a manner offered minimum contributions to bringing down the number of illiterates to the expected level.

Third, literacy campaigns were not as successful as expected and hoped because of the little attention given to the selection, training and follow-up of the instructors. The use of young students with no or minimum life experience combined with short orientation courses was one of the problems of the adult literacy activities. Added to this was the fact that minimal attention was put into developing a locally oriented curriculum, and there was a lack or shortage of instruction materials and guides because of the ambitious goals set, which contributed to the declining interest of the adult learners and their instructors and their lack of motivation.

Fourth, the definition given to 'literacy' and 'literate person' and the statistical information given on the basis of this definition is confusing or at best misguided. It was sometimes measured on the ability of the adult to write his/her name or identify some letters and figures. In this respect, the emphasis on the learning process and achievements made at most regional and international conferences was not widely adopted as a starting point for literacy work.

And last but not least, a worldwide trend in the past meant that the problem of illiteracy was not seen as a primary task, while all other globally acknowledged problems such as poverty, economic backwardness and even health problems such as HIV/AIDS are directly related to the educational level of a given society. As literacy is essential for the effectiveness of education and the spread of information and knowledge in all fields, it is a must that at the national and international level literacy be given the very highest priority.

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Samenvatting

Onderwijs verbreedt de interesses van mensen en stimuleert maatschappelijke participatie. Culturele waarden en normen worden op die manier ook makkelijker aan de volgende generatie doorgegeven. Door onderwijs kunnen mensen beter gebruik maken van de technologische vooruitgang. Het zijn overigens niet alleen de veranderingen op het vlak van communicatie die om bepaalde kennis vragen, ook de pogingen om een nationaal bewustzijn te creëren en een nationale culturele eenheid te vormen kunnen profiteren van scholing. Kortom onderwijs ligt aan de basis van menselijke pogingen de toekomst te verbeteren. Ondanks het feit dat maatschappijen zich in een informatie -en kennistijdperk begeven en moderne technologieën zich in een rap tempo ontwikkelen is nog steeds een groot aantal mensen op de wereld analfabeet. Het laatste cijfer dat voorhanden was op het moment van het schrijven van dit boek was het cijfer van het jaar 2000 waarin het aantal analfabeten wereldwijd op 860 miljoen mannen en vrouwen geschat werd. Deze mensen leven geconcentreerd in een aantal delen van de wereld. Statistieken laten zien dat Zuid Oost Azië de hoogste cijfers kent, hier woont 71% van de totale analfabete wereldbevolking. Sub Sahara Afrika en de Arabische wereld huisvesten ongeveer 40% van het aantal analfabeten en in Latijns Amerika is het de helft van dit cijfer. De meerderheid van deze analfabeten is vrouw. In sommige landen maken vrouwen zelfs twee derde uit van degenen die niet kunnen lezen of schrijven (Wagner, 2001)

Er is de laatste decennia een toenemende erkenning van het analfabetiseringsprobleem. Sinds 1950 hebben verschillende landen het probleem onderkend en belangrijke stappen ondernomen om het cijfer omlaag te krijgen, tot een redelijk niveau. Volgens het 'Literacy Decade' ('Alfabetisering Decennium') van de Verenigde Naties (2001) zijn er specifieke doelen gesteld om het wereldwijde cijfer van analfabeten van 50% in 1950 te verlagen tot 20% in 2000. Op de Wereldconferentie over Onderwijs (Education for All) in 1990 in Jomtien (Thailand) was één van de targets analfabetisme onder volwassenen in alle afzonderlijke landen met 50% te verlagen tot het jaar 2000. Dit gebeurde echter in geen enkel land ter wereld en op de UNESCO top in Dakar (Senegal) in april 2000 werd helaas vastgesteld dat analfabetisering nog steeds één van de uitdagingen van de 21^e eeuw is. Er is recent geen significante mindering van het aantal analfabeten geweest in de onderontwikkelde landen en met name niet in Sub Sahara Afrika. Een evaluatie van UNESCO onthulde dat, ondanks het feit dat het jaar 2000 als ferme streefdatum gold voor wereldwijde projecten, waaronder de strijd tegen analfabetisme, alfabetisme op het moment van de eeuwwisseling voor zowel kinderen, jeugd als volwassenen nog steeds een onbereikt en een zich steeds verder opschuivend doel was (UNESCO, 2000) Een combinatie van factoren; té ambitieuze doelen, ontoereikende en ineffectieve inspanningen, verkeerde middelen of strategieën en een onderschatting van de omvang en complexiteit van de taak kan deze situatie verklaren.

Alfabetisering kan vanuit verschillende gezichtspunten bekeken worden. In sommige contexten wordt analfabetisme benaderd als een geïsoleerd, sociaal gebrek. Terwijl in andere gevallen analfabetisme meer wordt begrepen als een integraal onderdeel van een wijder, sociaal, politiek en economisch systeem. Analfabetisme kan niet gezien, noch bestreden worden buiten dit complexe geheel van sociale, politieke en economische zaken waar het zelf onderdeel van uitmaakt. Wat belangrijk is in elke situatie is dat alfabetiseringsprogramma's degenen die door economische, sociale en politieke scheidingen in de maatschappij gemarginaliseerd zijn, toch weten te bereiken. Leren lezen en schrijven is over het algemeen alleen mogelijk binnen een formeel onderwijs kader (scholen) of door individuele inspanningen. Lokale en kleinschalige activiteiten zijn echter niet overal voorhanden.

Alfabetisering is op verschillende manieren geprobeerd, massa campagnes behoren tot één van de mogelijkheden. Deze campagnes brachten echter nieuwe en specifieke problemen met zich mee: implementatie en vervolgprogramma's. Ervaringen uit de praktijk laten zien dat positieve resultaten van het alfabetiseringsprogramma afhankelijk zijn van inspanningen van de organisatoren, maar ook van de participatie van de deelnemers en hun motivatie. Om zeker te zijn van een bepaalde toewijding van de volwassen leerlingen zal het alfabetiseringsprogramma ontworpen en geïmplementeerd moeten worden met de medewerking van leerlingen zelf en zal men rekening moeten houden met hun sociaal economische achtergrond. Programma's voorafgaand aan alfabetiseringscampagnes zouden een doelgroepanalyse moeten uitvoeren en duidelijke keuzes maken omtrent taal, plek, timing, de lengte van de campagne en mogelijke vervolgprogramma's.

Hoe werden deze aspecten van alfabetiseringsprogramma's in het verleden uitgevoerd en welke resultaten werden er geboekt? Een evaluatie van deze inspanningen, gebaseerd op een aantal case studies was één van de belangrijkste doelen van dit promotieonderzoek. Er is een poging gedaan om een nationale alfabetiseringscampagne in een ontwikkelingsland te onderzoeken en om deze campagne af te zetten tegen de algemene doelstellingen van alfabetiseringscampagnes. In dit opzicht is de Ethiopische alfabetiseringscampagne die van 1979 tot 1990 plaats vond voor een aantal redenen een goede case. Ten eerste is Ethiopië een land met een recente, omvangrijke en langdurige alfabetiseringscampagne. Ten tweede is het een land waarin bij aanvang van de campagne meer dan 90% van de bevolking analfabeet was en onder de armoedegrens leefde met zeer weinig bestaansmiddelen tot zijn beschikking. De alfabetiseringscampagne was bedoeld om deze situatie te veranderen. Ten derde bleek na 12 jaar, volgens een recent gepubliceerd rapport van UNESCO dat de inspanningen, de tijd en het geld dat geïnvesteerd was minimale invloed gehad hadden. Met een nieuwe regering aan de macht en een verbeterd onderwijsbeleid kreeg het idee om volwassenen te instrueren minder aandacht. Het argument dat stevast daarvoor gebruikt werd was dat de analfabetiseringscyclus het best doorbroken kon worden door het formele onderwijsbeleid uit te breiden en te ontwikkelen. Ten slotte, ondanks het feit dat de Ethiopische alfabetiseringscampagne nauwelijks zijn doelen had bereikt liet die interessante ervaringen na voor nadere studie, waar uit men lessen kan trekken voor de toekomst.

De belangrijkste doelstellingen van deze studie zijn als volgt uiteengezet: inzicht verschaffen in het initiële doel van de Ethiopische alfabetiseringscampagne (1979-1990), de inspanningen die verricht zijn om de doelen te verwezenlijken, de resultaten die geboekt zijn en de beperkingen die men tegen is gekomen. De studie probeerde ook lering te trekken uit de praktische lessen van de alfabetiseringscampagne om soortgelijke projecten toekomst van dienst te kunnen zijn. De campagne werd tevens bestudeerd in het licht van andere alfabetiseringscampagnes, namelijk die van Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua en Namibië. Dit werd gedaan om inzicht te krijgen in de Ethiopische campagne vanuit verschillende perspectieven, maar het geeft de lezer ook een bredere kijk op volwassen alfabetiseringscampagnes in het algemeen. Voor de keuze van deze landen bestonden twee argumenten. Ten eerste speelde het feit dat Ethiopië een aantal overeenkomstige sociale, economische, politieke en zelfs culturele elementen deelt met de genoemde landen zodat ze goed vergeleken kunnen worden. Ten tweede de verwachting dat de Ethiopische alfabetiseringscampagne het best begrepen kon worden als het programma bestudeerd werd in het licht van een alfabetiseringscampagne die eerder gelanceerd was. De Cubaanse alfabetiseringscampagne is een goed voorbeeld, zij dateert namelijk uit 1961. Ook werd er gezocht naar een campagne die later gelanceerd werd. De Namibische campagne dateert van 1992. De Tanzaniaanse en Nicaraguaanse alfabetiseringscampagne dateren respectievelijk van 1971 en 1980. Deze campagnes werden

bestudeerd om juist informatie te verkrijgen over campagnes die ongeveer op hetzelfde tijdstip als de Ethiopische campagne plaatsvonden.

De hele studie bestaat uit zes hoofdstukken. Hoofdstuk één benadrukt, als introductie, de huidige situatie in de wereld wat betreft analfabetisme. De specifieke aandacht gaat hier naar een aantal praktische zaken zoals het doel, de relevantie, de methodiek en de belangrijkste data bronnen.

Hoofdstuk twee bevat het conceptuele kader waarin de belangrijkste uitgangspunten worden geschetst. Zoals de rol van onderwijs in de promotie en ontwikkeling van cultuur aan de ene kant en de politieke en sociaal economische ontwikkeling aan de andere kant. Eén van de doelstellingen van een alfabetiseringsprogramma voor volwassenen in een land waar weinig formele educatieve infrastructuur bestaat en waar de meerderheid van de volwassenen nog onder invloed is van traditionele gedachten, is om veranderingen teweeg te brengen die tot een ontwikkeling van de cultuur kunnen leiden. Een ontwikkelde cultuur kan de bestaande economische, politieke en sociale omstandigheden namelijk verbeteren. Bij het organiseren van een alfabetiseringsprogramma voor volwassenen is het dan ook van groot belang om houdingen van volwassenen ten aanzien van het programma en hun participatie in het proces ter overweging te nemen. Daarnaast zal er aanzienlijke aandacht besteed moeten worden aan de keuze van het instructieprogramma, de taal en de doelgroepen en het meest belangrijke, aan kwetsbare en marginale groepen in de samenleving, zoals vrouwen.

In hoofdstuk drie komen de geografische, politieke, historische en sociaal culturele aspecten van de Ethiopische samenleving aan de orde, met de nadruk op onderwijsmaatregelen vanuit een traditioneel en een modern perspectief. Bij het terugblikken op de geschiedenis van Ethiopië staan drie verschillende perioden centraal. Ten eerste was er een periode van monarchie, die in 1974 met de Revolutie tot een einde kwam. De tweede periode van de studie begint bij de afzetting van de keizer en de vorming van een militaire administratie en eindigt in 1991 toen de militaire administratie omver werd geworpen en vervangen werd door een nieuwe politieke macht met een duidelijk verschillende politieke agenda voor Ethiopië. De revolutie, die door de meerderheid van het volk was geïnitieerd en gesteund, kwam snel tot een einde en de militairen bestuurden het land voor 17 jaren onder een socialistische noemer. Ze stelden een gecentraliseerd en één-partijen stelsel in op alle terreinen, inclusief het terrein van onderwijs. Het belangrijkste doel van deze studie, de Ethiopische Alfabetiseringscampagne, werd geïnitieerd, gepland en geïmplementeerd tijdens deze laatste periode en onder deze administratie. Deze periode van Ethiopië is erg bekend en wordt herdacht in het licht van zijn harde militair gerichte beleid en het verschrikkelijke bloedbad dat het achterliet. De derde periode biedt algemene informatie over de post-*Derg* periode en het aan de macht komen van de TPLF/EPRDF administratie en de formatie van de federale staat langs etnische lijnen. De nieuwe administratie probeerde systematisch een heterogene eenheid te smeden en diversiteit te bevorderen, maar dit ideaal stond ver van de werkelijkheid af. Om enige achtergrondinformatie te verschaffen worden deze en andere belangrijke ontwikkelingen van de situatie in het land van voor, tijdens en na de volwassen alfabetiseringscampagne (inclusief de verschuivingen van traditionele naar moderne perspectieven op het gebied van onderwijs), in dit hoofdstuk beschreven.

Hoofdstuk vier beschrijft de hele alfabetiseringsperiode (1979-1990) in Ethiopië, de doelen, de organisatorische opzet, de implementatie en de resultaten. Ook wordt er aandacht geschonken aan de geregistreerde prestaties en de problemen die men tegen is gekomen tijdens de campagne, met een speciale nadruk op de lessen die men hier uit kan leren. Om de

beoordeling van deze nationale alfabetiseringscampagne te ondersteunen zijn ook eerdere en internationale campagnes bestudeerd. De nationale Ethiopische alfabetiseringscampagne refereert in geen enkel opzicht aan ervaringen van eerdere en internationale campagnes. De nationale planning lijkt geformuleerd zonder aandacht voor de belangen van en prioriteiten van de volwassen deelnemers noch voor de mogelijkheid een grootschalig nationaal programma te bereiken. Paradoxaal genoeg bleek ondanks actieve deelname van de verschillende departementen van de regering het niveau van aandacht en participatie van de deelnemers op het moment van implementatie juist af te nemen. En dit leidde uiteindelijk tot matige resultaten. Er waren op dat moment uiteraard verschillende problemen die de aandacht van de regering vroegen zoals de droogte van 1984, de slechte economische prestaties en de conflicten met de EPLF, het Eritreese Liberaliserings Front en de TPLF, het Tigreaanse Liberaliserings Front in het noorden van het land. Deze maatschappelijke toestanden slokten veel van het budget, mankracht en tijd op (zie ook hoofdstuk drie). De negatieve interesse van de volwassenen zelf kan hierdoor echter niet verklaard worden. Deze houding van de deelnemers droeg ook bij aan de latere (wan)prestaties van het programma. Opvallend is het ook dat ondanks al de organisatorische en institutionele problemen nationale alfabetiseringscampagnes toch als zeer succesvol werden gezien zowel op het nationale als op het internationale niveau. Er werd gepronkt met het resultaat van 78% van de bevolking dat na de campagnes alfabeet is. Er zijn echter twijfels over de betrouwbaarheid van deze cijfers. De evaluatiemethode van het programma en het meetinstrument om geletterde volwassenen te identificeren kunnen in twijfel worden getrokken. Hoofdstuk vier bediscussieert deze en andere realiteiten van de nationale Ethiopische alfabetiseringscampagne.

In hoofdstuk vijf volgt een vergelijking met alfabetiseringscampagnes in andere landen om de Ethiopische case beter te begrijpen. Er wordt een vergelijking gemaakt met de Cubaanse campagne van 1961, de Tanzaniaanse campagne (1971-1988), de Nicaraguaanse (1980-1986) en de Namibische campagne. Deze laatste is pas vanaf 1992 van kracht. Een aantal belangrijke factoren voor een vergelijking zijn de educatieve achtergrond van een land, de (al dan niet) geformuleerde doelstellingen voor het programma, de pogingen om participanten te motiveren en de ontwikkeling van een organisatie structuur. Verder spelen ook het instructiekader, het gebruik van supervisie, de voorafgaande ervaringen en de integratie van non-formele educatie (zoals volwassen alfabetiseringscampagnes) en opleidingsmogelijkheden bij andere instituties en ontwikkelingen op lokaal niveau. Wat met name opviel in de vergelijking is dat na één deel van het programma (22 rondes/elf jaren) de organisatoren claimden dat 78% van de bevolking gealfabetiseerd was terwijl een recent UNESCO rapport (World Education Report, 1998) het aantal analfabeten in Ethiopië op 35,5% schatte. Dit impliceert dat het aantal dat terug is gevallen in een situatie van analfabetisme relatief hoog is in vergelijking tot andere landen. Deze en andere lessen die geleerd kunnen worden uit deze campagnes zijn het onderwerp van discussie in dit hoofdstuk.

Hoofdstuk zes biedt een reflectie op de hele studie en daaruit volgende conclusies. Zoals we eerder in hoofdstuk één zagen is de huidige situatie nog steeds dat een significant hoog aantal mensen van de wereldbevolking niet in staat is te lezen noch te schrijven. De meerderheid van deze mensen is ook nog eens geconcentreerd op bepaalde continenten en in bepaalde landen. Voortgaande inspanningen zijn niet in staat geweest om het cijfer omlaag te krijgen tot het verwachte niveau, alhoewel wel vermeld moet worden dat ze wel enige vooruitgang hebben geboekt. In de rest van het hoofdstuk worden andere invloedsfactoren van de verschillende alfabetiseringscampagnes vanuit het conceptuele kader en de praktijk bediscussieerd. Ten slotte is hoofdstuk zes een samenvatting van de conceptuele hoogtepunten en worden de positieve en negatieve ervaringen van zowel de Ethiopische als de andere bestudeerde

alfabetiseringscampagnes geobserveerd. Een aantal concluderende opmerkingen benadrukken de belangrijkste resultaten van de studie.

አጭር ግብታወሻ

ትምህርት በአንድ በኩል የሰውን ልጆች ፍላጎትና ከዚህም ፍላጎት ጋር ተገዳኝ የሆነውን ገለበጫና ማህበራዊ እድገት ቅርጽ በመስጠት፣ በሌላ በኩል ደግሞ ተወራሪብ የሆነው የሰው ልጆች ባህላዊ ወግና ሥርዓት ለተከታታይ ትውልድ በአግባቡ መተላለፍ እንዲችል ዘመኑ ካፈራቸው የሳይንስና ቴክኒዎሎጂ ግኝቶች ጋር በማቀራረብ ረገድ ጎሳ ያለውን ሥፍራ የያዘ ሂደት ነው።

በውል እንደሚታወቀው ዛሬ የምንገኘው የሰው ልጅ በመረጃ ልውውጥና ግንኙነት ረገድ ትልቅ ዕመርታ ያሳየበት ወቅት ላይ ሲሆን ከዚህ አንጻር ከጊዜ ወደጊዜ ጥራቱና መጠኑ እየተሻሻለ የመጣው የትምህርት አሰጣጥ ሥርዓት ለዚህ ዕድገት በመሠረትነት ማገልገሉን እንገነዘባለን። ይህ ሲባል ግን የዘመናዊ መገናኛ ሰልት ማደግና መሻሻል በተናጠል ለትምህርት መስፋፋት መስጠቱ ሆኖ ሊያገለግል ይችላል ማለት አይደለም። ምክንያቱም ትምህርት ከዚህ በፋ ባለ መልኩ ብሔራዊ የፖለቲካ ግንዛቤና ሀላፊነትን በማገልገል፣ የጋራና የተናጠል ነገር ግን ሁሉንም ወገን አቀራረቢ የሆነ ባህሉን በማዳበርና ተመጣጣኝ ለሆነ ኢኮኖሚያዊ ዕድገት አስፈላጊ የሆነውን የሰው ሀይል በማዘጋጀት በኩል ጎሳ ያለ ሥፍራ አለውና። ስለዚህም ነው ትምህርት የሰው ልጅ ለማደግ በሚያደርገው ጥረት ሁሉ በመሠረትነት የሚያገለግል መሣሪያ ነው የሚባለው።

አጠቃላይ እውነታ ይህ ሆኖ አያለና የዓለምም ህብረተሰብ ወደ ዳበረና የተሻሻለ የመረጃ ልውውጥ ሥርዓት እየተሸጋገረ ባለበት በአሁኑ ጊዜ የትምህርት ዕድገትና ሥርዓት ጎልቶ የሚታይባቸው ክልሎች ውሱንና ተጠቃሚዎቻቸውም ጥቂቶች ሆነው ይታያሉ። በአንጻሩ ደግሞ በበርካታ ሀገሮች ቁጥራቸው በቀላሉ የማይገመት ጎልማሶች ገና ፊደል ያልቆጠሩ ወይም የመማር እድል ያላገኙ ሲሆን፤ ከዚህ ጎን በርካታ ለትምህርት የደረሱ ህጻናትና ወጣቶች ከትምህርት መስጫ ክልል ርቀው ይገኛሉ ወይም ዝቅተኛ የትምህርት ደረጃ ላይ ናቸው። እዚህ ላይ የተባበሩት መንግስታት ድርጅት የትምህርት የሳይንስና የባህሉ ኮሚሽን (ዩኔስኮ) በዚህ ረገድ እ.ኤ.አ. በ 2002 ያወጣውን መረጃ ብናጣቅስ፣ እ.ኤ.አ. በ 2000 ቁጥራቸው ወደ 860 ሚሊየን የሚጠጉ ወንዶችና ሴቶች (እነዚህም በታዳጊው አለም ከሚገኘው ህዝብ 27% ያህሉን ይሸፍናሉ) ማንበብና መፃፍ የማይችሉ መሆናቸውን ሲያመለክት ሰብጥራቸውም ተመጣጣኝነት በሌለውና በተወሰነ የዓለም ክፍል ብቻ እንደሆነ ያስረዳል። ስምሳሌም ያህል ከጠቅላላው አህዝብ 71% ያህሉ በደቡብ አስያ እንደሚገኙ፣ ከሰሜን በታች ያለው የአፍሪካ ክልልና የአረብ ሀገሮች ደግሞ 40% ያህሉን እንደሚሸፍንና 20% ያህሉ ደግሞ በላቲን አሜሪካ እንደሚገኙ መረጃው ያመለክታል።

በአርግጥ ይህንን ሁኔታ በማሻሻል ረገድ ባለፉት ዓሥርት ዓመታት በርካታ ጥረቶች እንደተደረጉና መንግስታት በተናጠል፣ በአከባቢና በአለምአቀፍ ደረጃ ከሚንቀሳቀሱ ድርጅቶች ጋር በመሆን አበረታች ተግባራትን እንዳከናወኑ የሰራ ዘገባዎቻቸው ያመለክታሉ ጥቂቶቹን ለማውሳትም ያህል ከያዝነው ዓመት ጀምሮ እየተቆጠረ ያለውን የመሠረተ ትምህርት ዓሥርት ዓመታት ምክንያት በማድረግ ዩኔስኮ እ.ኤ.አ. በ 2001 ባወጣውና ያለፉትን ዓመታት ጥረቶች ሁሉ በገመገመው ሪፖርት እንደተመለከተው፣ በዕቅድ ደረጃ የጎልማሶች መሀይማኝን ቁጥር ወደ 20% ለመቀነስ ታስቦ እንደነበርና ቀደምም ሲል በጆሞቴይን (ታይላንድ) ላይ ተደርጎ በነበረው እ.ኤ.አ. የ 1990 ትምህርት ለሁሉም ዓለም አቀፍ ስብሰባ ላይም በየሀገሩ ከሚገኙ መሀይማኝ ጎልማሶች ውስጥ 50% ያህሉን እ.ኤ.አ. በ 2000 ማንበብና መፃፍ እንዲችሉ የማድረግ ዕቅድ ተይዞ እንደነበር ያስረዳል። ነገርግን ከአፈጻጸም አንጻር ሲታይ ዕቅዱ በየትኛውም ሀገር ውጤታማ እንዳልነበረና ለተግባራዊነቱም የተደረገው ጥረት በአመዛኙ አበረታች እንዳልነበረ መገንዘብ ተችሏል። ከዚህ አንጻር የዩኔስኮ ተከታታይ ምዘና እንዳመለከተው ምንም እንኳን እ.ኤ.አ. 2000

ለብዙ አለም አቀፍ የልማትና እድገት ውጥኖች መዳረሻ እንደነበረ ቢገመትም (ሁሉን አቀፍ የትምህርት መስፋፋት አንዱ ሆኖ) በክፍለ ዘመኑ መግቢያ ላይ የተደረገው የመረጃ ሰብሰባ እንዳሳየው ብዙዎቹ እውን አለመሆናቸውንና ትምህርትን ለሁሉም ማለትም ለሀገርና ለጎልማሶችና አዋቂዎች ለማዳረስ የነበረው ውጥን ያልተፈጸመ (ከዳር ያልደረሰ) ግብ ሆኖ መቅረቱን አመልክቷል፤፤ ለዚህም በምክንያትነት ከተጠቀሱት ችግሮች መካከል የዕቅድ ዝግጅት በአመዛኙ ከአካባቢ እውነታ ጋር መቀራረብ የአለመቻሉና ለአፈፃፀሙም የተደረገው ጥረት ተመጣጣኝነት ማጣት፤ አነስተኛ የመዋዕለንዋይ ምደባ፤ በመንግሥታት በኩል ለተግባራዊነቱ የተደረገው ጥረት ዝቅተኛ ሆኖ መገኘትና የችግሩ ውስብስብነት የፈጠረው ተጨማሪ ጫና ጥቂቶቹ እንደሆኑ፤ በአጠቃላይም ቅድመ ዝግጅት፤ በተግባር አተረጓጎምና ክትትልን በተመለከተ በፕሮግራሞቹ አፈጻጸም ላይ የታዩ ዋናዎች ችግሮች እንደነበሩ ተመልክቷል፤፤

ከዚህ ብዙም ሳንርቅ በጎልማሶች የመሠረተ ትምህርት ፕሮግራም አስፈላጊነትና አሰጣጥ ላይ የተለያዩ አመለካከቶች ሰፍነው መቆየታቸውም ሌላኛው ምክንያት እንደነበረ የሚያስረዱ ቁምነገሮችን እናገኛለን፤፤ ለምሳሌም ያህል የተወሰኑ ወገኖች ትምህርቱ በጎልማሳው የመጀመሪያ ቋንቋ መሆን እንዳለበት ጠቁመው ይህም ጎልማሳው ፈጥኖ ትምህርቱን እንዲረዳ ያግዘዋል፤ ለቋንቋ እድገትም በር ይከፍታል የሚል የመከራከሪያ ሃሳብ ሲያቀርቡ ሌሎች ደግሞ በተለያዩ ቋንቋዎች የመማሪያ መጻሕፍትን ለማዘጋጀት ከሚፈጀው ግዜና አስፈላጊ ከሆነው የሰው ሀይልና የገንዘብ መጠን አንጻር ትምህርቱ በአንድ አማካይ ቋንቋ ቢሰጥ ውጤታማ ይሆናል በማለት ሲከራከሩ ቆይተዋል፤፤ በትምህርቱ አስፈላጊነት በኩልም የተወሰኑት የጎልማሶች መሠረተ ትምህርት ስርጭትን እንደአይነተኛ የግህበራዊ ህይወት በሽታ ማስወገጃ አድርገው ሲመለከቱት ሌሎች ደግሞ ሰፊ ብሎ ከሚታየው ፖለቲካዊና ኢኮኖሚያዊ ጠቀሜታ ጋር በማያያዝ በሀገር ግንባታ ላይ ጎሳ ያለ ሥፍራ እንዳለው ያመለክታሉ፤፤

እዚህ ላይ የጋራ የሆነውን ሀሳብ ሰናጤን የምንገነዘበው ቁምነገር ቢኖር የመሠረተ ትምህርት ፕሮግራም መስፋፋት የዜጎችን ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣ ግህበራዊና ፖለቲካዊ ተሳትፎ በማጎልበት ረገድ ትልቅ ሰፍራ እንዳለው ነው፤፤ ከዚህ አንጻር ያለፉት ዓመታት ተግባራት ትተውት ያለፉት ልምድ ቢኖር የጎልማሶች መሠረተ ትምህርት ውጤታማነት በአስፈጻሚ ወገኖች ጥረት ላይ ብቻ የተወሰነ ሳይሆን ጎልማሶቹም ለፕሮግራሙ በሚያሳዩት ፍቅርና የተሳትፎ ደረጃ ላይ የተመሰረተ እንደሆነ መገንህብ ይቻላል፤፤ ስለዚህም ነው የፕሮግራሙ ዕቅድ ዝግጅት፣ አፈጻጸም፣ ክትትልና ምዘና የጎልማሶቹን ባህላዊ ልምድና ፍላጎት ያጤናና አጠቃላይ ፕሮግራሙም ለጎልማሶቹ ተጠሪ መሆን እንዳለበት፤ በዝርዝር ሲታይም የትምህርት ፕሮግራም ዝግጅቱ የተሳታፊዎችን የቋንቋ ምርጫ፣ የትምህርት መከታተያ አማካይ ሥፍራ፣ አመቺ የመማሪያ ግዜ ቆይታና የድህረ- መሠረተ ትምህርት ፕሮግራም አፈፃፀምን በውል ያመለክተ ሊሆን ይገባል የሚባለው፤፤

ከላይ ጠቅለል ባለ መልኩ ያነሳናቸውን ዋናዎች ሀሳቦች በተግባር በመተርጎም ረገድ የቱን ያህል ጥረት ተደርጓል? ምንሰ ውጤት ታይቷል? ወይም በአፈጻጸም ሂደት ላይ የታዩ ዋናዎች ችግሮች ምንድናቸው? እነዚህንና ሌሎችን መሰል ጥያቄዎች በማንሳት በተወሰኑ ሀገሮች ልምድ ላይ የተመረኮዘ መልስ መስጠት የዚህ ጥናትና ምርምር ዋነኛ አላማ ነው፤፤ በመሆኑም የአንድን ሀገር የጎልማሶች መሠረተ ትምህርት ሂደት ተነድፎ ከነበረው ዕቅድ፣ ከተደረገው ተግባራዊ ጥረትና ከተመዘገበው ውጤት አኳያ በመገምገም ከሌሎች መሰል ፕሮግራሞች ጋር ማወዳደርና ካንድ መደምደሚያ ላይ መድረስ በአማራጭነት የተወሰደ የአሠራር ዘዴ ነበር፤፤ በዚህ ረገድ እ.ኤ.አ. ከ 1979-1990 ተካሂዶ የነበረው የኢትዮጵያ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ በሚከተሉት መሰረታዊ ምክንያቶች ለዚህ ጥናት መነሻ ሆኖ ላገኘው ቻልኩ፤፤

፩ኛ ኢትዮጵያ ባለፉት ዓመታት በርከት ያሉ የጎልማሶች መሠረተ ትምህርት ፕሮግራምን በመሞከር ረገድ በዓይነተኛ ምሳሌነት የምትጠቀሱ ሀገር በመሆኗ ጠቃሚ ልምድ ማግኘት እንደሚችል በማመኔ፤

፪ኛ በብሔራዊው የመሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ዋዜማ ከዜጎቿ 90% ያህሉ የማንበብና የመጻፍ ችሎታ እንዳልነበራቸውና የኑሮአቸውም ደረጃ ዝቅተኛ ሆኖ ሀገሪቱም ድሀ ተብለው ከሚታወቁ ሀገሮች ተርታ የምትገኝ ስትሆን (በእርግጥ የመሠረተ ትምህርቱ ዘመቻ ዋነኛ ዓላማ ይህንን ዕውነታ መቀየር ነበር) በዘመቻው የተገኘውን ውጤት መመዘን አስፈላጊ ሆኖ በማግኘቱ፤

፫ኛ በሌላም በኩል ዘመቻው ከተቋረጠም በኋላ ወደ ኋላ መለስ ብለን ያለፉትን ዓመታት ጥረት፤ ለፕሮግራሙ የሞሰው የሰው ኃይልና ቁሳዊ ሀብት ያስገኘውን ማህበራዊ ለውጥ ፕሮግራሙ ትቶት ካለፈው ዘላቂ ቅርስ አንጻር ስንመለከተው ውጤቱ ጎላ ብሎ የማይታይ ሆኖ እናገኘዋለን፤፤ ይልቁንም በቅርቡ የወጡ የዩኔስኮ መረጃዎችን ስንመለከት በዘመቻው ዓመታት የተገኙ ውጤቶች አሸቆልቆለውና ዝንባሌውም አሳሳቢ መሆኑን ሲያመለክት ከ1991 አጋማሽ ጀምሮ በሀገሪቱ የተከሰተው የመንግሥት ለውጥና ይህም ያስከተለው የትምህርት ፖሊሲ ለውጥ ለጎልማሶች የመሠረተ ትምህርት ፕሮግራም የሰጠው ትኩረት እናሳ ሆኖ መገኘት ለዘርፉ ትኩረት እንድሰጠው ስለገፋፋች፤

፬ኛ በመጨረሻም ምንም እንኳን የኢትዮጵያ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ፕሮግራም ከታለመለት ዕቅድ አኳያ ውጤታማነቱ የጎላ ባይሆንም ከጠንካራም ሆነ ከደካማ ጎኑ የተገኘው ልምድ በውል ተዘግቦ ለወደፊት መሰል ጥረት በመረጃነት መቀመጡን አስፈላጊ ሆኖ ማግኘቱ ሌላኛው የዚህ ጥናት መነሻ ምክንያቱ ሆኖአል፤፤ በመሆኑም የዚህን ጥናት ዋነኛ ግብ እንደሚከተለው ነደፍኩ፤

ሀ/ የኢትዮጵያን እ.ኤ.አ. 1979-1990 የመሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ዓላማ፤ ለተግባራዊነቱ የተደረገውን ጥረት፤ የተመዘገበውን ውጤትና ያጋጠሙ ችግሮችን መረዳትና ለአንባቢያን በተጨማሪና ሰፊ ባለ መረጃ ግንዛቤ መስጠት፤

ለ/ ከአጠቃላይ የዘመቻው ሂደት የተቀሰሙ ልምዶችንና ለወደፊት ጥረትም የሚበጁ ቁምነገሮችን ለይቶ ማወቅና ይህንንም ከሌሎች መሰል ጥረቶች ጋር አወዳድሮ በግጤን ከአንድ መደምደሚያ ላይ መድረስ እንደ አይነተኛ መዳረሻ በመያዝ፤ ከዚህም ጋር በተጓዳኝና ጠቅለል ባለ መልኩ የኩባን፤ የታንዛኒያን፤ የኒካራጓንና የናሚቢያን መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ዕቅድ ዝግጅት አፈፃፀምና ውጤት የገመገመና ከኢትዮጵያ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ጋር ያነጻጸረ ማጠቃለያ ሀሳብ ማቅረብ ነው፤፤ የሀገሮቹ ምርጫም በሚከተሉት ሁለት ዋነኛ ምክንያቶች ሊመሠረት ችሏል፤

፩ኛ ኢትዮጵያ ከተጠቀሱት ሀገሮች ጋር የተወሰኑ ማህበራዊ፤ ኢኮኖሚያዊ፤ ፖለቲካዊና ባህላዊ ባህርያትን የምትጋራ መሆኗ፤

፪ኛ የኢትዮጵያን መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ዕቅድ፤ አፈፃፀምና ውጤት በውል መገንዘብ የሚቻለው ከመሰል ጥረቶች ጋር በማመዛዘን መሆኑ የተወሳ ቢሆንም የሀገሮች ምርጫ በመነሻ ከኢትዮጵያ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ቀደም ብሎ ከተካሄደ መሰል ዘመቻ አንዱን መውሰድ (እ.ኤ.አ. በ 1961 የተካሄደውን የኩባ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ይመለከታል)፤ ቀጥሎም ከኢትዮጵያ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ወዲህ የተካሄደን ፕሮግራም መመልከትና (ይህ ደግሞ እ.ኤ.አ. በ 1992 የተካሄደውን የናሚቢያን መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ይመለከታል) በተጨማሪም ከሞላ ጎደል ከኢትዮጵያ የመሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ ጋር በተመሳሳይ ወቅት የተካሄዱ ሁለት ዘመቻዎችን (እ.ኤ.አ. በ 1971

የተካሄደውን የታንዛኒያን ዘመቻና እ.ኤ.አ. በ 1980 የተካሄደውን የኒካራጓን ዘመቻ ይመለከታል) መመልከት በአማራጭነት የተወሰደ የአሠራር ዘዴ ነበር፤፤ በዚህ የአሠራር መርህና በሁለተኛ ደረጃ በተገኙ መረጃዎች ላይ ተመርኩዞ ከዳር ያልደረሰ ዕቅድ በሚል ርዕስ የተጠናቀረው ይህ የጥናት ውጤት በሚከተሉት ስድስት ምዕራፎች ተካቷል፤

ምዕራፍ አንድ፤ የወቅቱን የጎልማሶች መሠረተ ትምህርት ይዘት የዳሰሰ መግቢያ ሲሆን የጥናቱን ዓላማና ዋነኛ ግብ፤ የጥናት ስልትና የመረጃ ምንጭ፤ የጥናቱን አስተዋፅዖና የጥንቅር ቅደም ተከተል አመልክቷል፤

ምዕራፍ ሁለት፤ ጥናቱ የተመሰረተበትን ንድፈህሳባዊ መረጃዎች ያመለክተ ሲሆን ትኩረቱም ትምህርት ለብሔራዊ ኢኮኖሚ ዕድገት፤ ለባህላዊ ልምድ መዳበርና ለግላዊና ማህበራዊ ፖለቲካዊ ተሳትፎ መጎልበት መሣሪያ መሆኑን ማመልከት ነው፤፤ በተለይም እንደ ኢትዮጵያ ባሉና የመደበኛ ትምህርት ዕድገት በተፈለገው መጠን ባልተስፋፋቸው ሀገሮች የጎልማሶች መሠረተ ትምህርት ፕሮግራም ዝግጅት የሚኖረውን ድርሻ ከመረጃ አኳያ የዘገበው ይህ ክፍል የመሰል ፕሮግራም ዝግጅት ከሁሉም በላይ የተሳታፊዎችን ሙሉ ስሜት ያጠና፤ በፍላጎታቸው ላይ የተመሠረተና አከባቢያዊና ክልላዊ ዕውነታዎችንም ከግምት ውስጥ ያስገባ መሆን እንዳለበት የተብራራበት ነው፤፤

ምዕራፍ ሦስት፤ የኢትዮጵያን መልካምድራዊ፤ ፖለቲካዊ፤ ታሪካዊ፤ ማህበራዊና ባህላዊ ገፅታዎችን ጠቅለል ባለ መልኩ ያካተተ ሲሆን የኢትዮጵያን ባህላዊ ትምህርት ዓይነትና ሥርጭት በመቃኘት በዘመናዊ ትምህርት መስፋፋትም ላይ ተመጣጣኝነት ያለው ዘገባ የያዘ ክፍል ነው፤፤ በዚህም መሠረት የኢትዮጵያን የመንግሥት አመሠራረት ታሪክና በተለያዩ ጊዜያት የታዩ የአስተዳደር ዓይነቶችን ከተከተሏቸው የትምህርት ፖሊሲ ጋር በተጠቃለለ መልኩ በማቅረብ ለአንባቢያን የመነሻ መረጃ መስጠት ተችሏል፤፤

ምዕራፍ አራት፤ ይህ ክፍል የጥናቱን ዋነኛ መረጃ ያካተተ ሲሆን ጥናቱ ትኩረት ካደረገበት እ.ኤ.አ. የ 1979-1990 ብሔራዊ የመሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ በተጨማሪ ቀደም ብለው ተደርገው የነበሩ ሙከራዎችን በመነሻነት አውስቶ የዚህን ዘመቻ ዓላማ፤ ዕቅድ ዝግጅት፤ በተግባር አተረጓጎም ሂደት፤ ውጤትና የታዩ ችግሮችን ያመለክተ ምዕራፍ ነው፤፤ በምዕራፉ ማገባደጃም በተመክሮነት ሊያገለግሉ የሚችሉና ከዘመቻው ጠንካራና ደካማ ጎኖች የተገኙ ልምዶች ተጠቃሎ ቀርቧል፤፤

ምዕራፍ አምስት፤ ይህ ደግሞ የኢትዮጵያ መሠረተ ትምህርት ዘመቻ በተወዳዳሪነት የተመዘነባቸውን ሀገሮች ልምድ አጠር አጠር ባለ መልኩ የያዘ ሲሆን ከኢትዮጵያ ዘመቻ ጋር ተመዛዝኖ የተገኘው ልምድ በተጠቃለለ መልኩ የቀረበበት ክፍል ነው፤፤

በመጨረሻም ምዕራፍ ስድስት፤ የጥናቱ ዋናዋና ውጤቶች በተለያዩ ክፍሎች ቀርበው ከነበሩ መነሻ ቁምነገሮችና መረጃዎች ጋር በተዛመደ መልኩ የተንፀባረቀበትና በማጠቃለያም ትኩረት ቢደረግባቸው የሚበጁ ህሳቦች በማስታወሻነት የተመዘገቡበት ክፍል ነው፤፤ ይህ ጠቅለል ባለ መልኩ የቀረበ ማስታወሻ የጥናቱን መነሻና መድረሻ ቁምነገር ለአንባቢያን በአጭሩ ለማስተዋወቅ እንደሚችል ዕምነቴ ነው፤፤

ሰሎሞን አፈወርቅ

Curriculum Vitae

Solomon Afework Tekleyesus was born on 22 March 1958 in Shoa, Ethiopia. He studied Journalism at Tashkent State University in Uzbekistan, one of the former Soviet Union Republics, where he received MA in 1991/92 academic year for the thesis: '*Addis Zemen (New Era), the first daily newspaper in Ethiopia: features and history of its activities*'. From 1996-2004 he did his PhD research at the University of Utrecht. During the same period between 2000-2002 he worked as a researcher at Erasmus University and between 2003 – 2004 he worked as assistant researcher at the Institute of Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES), Amsterdam University. He is co-author of *Ambitious ... and then? Problems and perspectives of qualified refugees in searching and joining the Netherlands labour market (2002)*. He is married and a father of two children.