

UPPINGHAM SEMINARS IN DEVELOPMENT: DISCOURSE AND DIVERSITY

LITERACY AND LIVELIHOODS REVISITED: FINAL REPORT ON THE UPPINGHAM SEMINAR 2002

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The background

The Uppingham meetings bring together international practitioners and academics from a variety of disciplines. They meet for three days in order to discuss current and burning issues related to literacy, adult education and development. The format of the seminars, intentionally, differs from conventional academic conferences. The main purpose is to provide a thinking space for busy practitioners and academics who rarely have the opportunity to reflect critically on their own work, to discuss the many reports and studies that arrive on their desks every day, or to exchange views with colleagues from related fields. The shared basis of these discussions is not only practical experience in developing countries but also an understanding of development which extends beyond a narrow focus on social and economic transformation. Instead, development and, more specifically, adult education for development are seen in terms of contested discourses. The Uppingham seminars seek to promote a vision of adult education that supports a diversity of approaches and strategies rather than single universally applicable models.

Given this focus on diversity, the seminars themselves do not aim to produce a shared set of recommendations, but intend to create a constructive critique of existing practice, including those initiatives participants themselves are involved in. With a diversity of views and experiences present at the 2002 seminar, we engaged in many intense and controversial, but highly fruitful debates. As one participant of this year's seminar eloquently put it, the ethos of the seminar was for its members 'to be willing to stand challenged in what they are doing' (for a list of participants see Annex I). This was achieved through a process of informal learning and exchange of ideas that, although open-ended and including both conceptual and practical issues, aimed to provide insights for renewed practice in adult education and development.

Uppingham Seminar 2002: Literacy and Livelihoods

The topic of the 2002 seminar was Literacy and Livelihoods. As a basis for the discussion at the meeting, a series of recent reports and studies had been distributed to all participants prior to the seminar (see Annex III for a list of

these background documents). The intention of the seminar was critically to examine current approaches to literacy and livelihoods, using as examples the initiatives presented in the background documents as well as projects and programmes the participants themselves were involved in or acquainted with.

In accordance with the unique structure of the Uppingham seminars, the group determined the timetable, of which a tentative draft had been circulated among participants prior to their arrival, as the seminar progressed (for the final timetable see Annex II). Participants were not asked to prepare formal presentations, as this would not be conducive to the kind of intense debate and exchange the Uppingham seminars aim to achieve. However, as in previous Uppingham seminars, participants gave informal, short presentations responding to the issues that arose from our discussion.

The seminar was broadly structured around three overarching themes. The first sessions were devoted to conceptual issues. We examined existing concepts of literacy and livelihood (I). Our aim was to unpack the assumptions about literacy, learning, knowledge, development and livelihoods these discourses rest on.

In the second part, we dealt with examples of policy and practice (II). In this part, participants gave informal presentations on projects and initiatives from countries all over the world. For this purpose, we split up into small groups.

In the third part of the seminar, as a way of summarising the outcomes of our discussions, we attempted to formulate a broadened vision of literacy and livelihoods and discussed its implications for research and practice (III). The general ethos of this vision, as is detailed below, is grounded in a social and humanistic view of both literacies and livelihoods.

In the final session of the seminar, we learned about current initiatives in Britain and discussed plans for future Uppingham seminars.

This report summarises the main points debated during the seminar. The aim of the report is to present to the reader the main conclusions regarding literacy and livelihoods that were drawn by the seminar participants. During the seminar, there was much debate, in particular over definitions of literacy and livelihoods. While the report attempts to cover the range of arguments brought forward by participants, in its conclusions it reflects what its author considers to be the views shared by the majority of the group.

Part I (Session 1): Conceptual issues:

The initial focus for our discussions was provided by a background paper, which had been prepared by Joan Dixon and Lisa Deyo. In their paper (see Annex IV), Lisa and Joan identify six main questions regarding current practice of literacy and livelihoods education that emerged from the five background reports. In the first part of the seminar, we looked at their first question: What vision of literacy and livelihoods underlies different policies and programmes? Our discussions immediately revealed the controversial nature of these terms.

1. Livelihoods

We began by looking at the concept of livelihoods. How do different projects and policies define livelihood? Judging from the five backgrounds reports, a

continuum of meanings appears to exist, beginning from a very narrow economic definition and stretching to the much broader view of livelihoods as including individual and social well being, health and environment. However, with the exception of the Torres' study, the reports seem to adhere to a rather more restricted economic view of livelihoods.

The above shows that (as with other terms such as literacy or development) the meaning of livelihood is a matter of contestation. And this is not only the case when we look at different projects and policies: conflicting definitions of the term often exist within a single project.

Rather than searching for a universally acceptable definition, we therefore need to ask, in the context of each intervention or policy, who defines what livelihood means? This raises the question of power. Can the participants of a literacy and livelihoods programme define for themselves what they would recognise as improved livelihoods? Can they decide which income-generating activities they want to embark on? Or is it the responsibility of the providers to decide for them what would be viable and sustainable initiatives?

Behind these questions regarding the definition of livelihoods lurks the broader question of who defines what counts as development. Whose development do we talk about in the context of a livelihoods programme for poor peasants in Bangladesh (for example)? Is development achieved once their productivity is increased? Does livelihood refer to income in the narrow economic sense, or does it include for example social and cultural capital? And how are farmers in Bangladesh supposed to improve their livelihoods? Is greater integration into the global market the only way forward for them or are there alternative roads to development?

2. Literacy

With regards to literacy, a similar range of definitions exists. On one side, there is the nowadays increasingly shared view that literacy consists of more than decontextualised coding and decoding skills; rather, it is seen as a social practice which is always situated in particular social, cultural and economic contexts. On the other side, however, the autonomous view, which sees literacy as a universal set of transferable reading and writing skills, still dominates much of current policy and practice in adult literacy education.

And this appears to be the case in particular in those literacy programmes that include a livelihoods component or combine teaching in reading and writing with practical skills training. When improving people's livelihoods is an explicit aim of a literacy programme, the chances are that it defines literacy in a narrow functional way. Those who think of livelihoods in terms of economic benefits seem to privilege a view of literacy that sees it primarily as a pre-requisite for the acquisition of knowledge and practical and vocational skills. Therefore, within many literacy and livelihoods programmes, a narrow economist view of livelihoods is coupled with a functional-utilitarian and technicist view of literacy.

One of the characteristics of the technicist view of literacy is that it denies the existence of different literacies, for example literacy in order to read the Bible or literacy for record keeping. Furthermore, it overlooks the power dimensions that are involved in each literacy education programme. The participants of the

Uppingham seminar advocated an approach to literacy education that explicitly addresses the power differentials between different literacies. This view is based on the insight that literacy practices are related to institutional and social forces which give some literacies more authority and power than others. Each literacy programme (and the same is true for livelihood programmes that include literacy) makes choices as to what forms of reading and writing it will include in its curriculum. The question that needs to be raised therefore is the following: On the basis of what criteria are some literacies chosen in order to be taught and supported while others are left out?

The question of the language of instruction, which was discussed repeatedly at the seminar, is a good example to illustrate the centrality of power when talking about literacy. As several participants emphasised, the choice of a language (and a literacy) is always a political decision. An important question, however, is whether the participants of a programme are given the right to decide in what language they want to learn. And what happens if their choice opposes the preferred language of the organisers? There is some evidence from countries which share a legacy of colonial language policies that local people prefer to be taught in the official language, not in their mother tongue. However, adult literacy programmes that use the official language have not necessarily been successful. On the other hand, those that rely on mother tongues or local languages have also encountered difficulties. In the functional literacy programme in Ghana, for example, difficulties arose with the retention of literacy skills acquired in local languages.

There is certainly no single solution to the above issues. Decisions need to be taken on the ground or in the light of local conditions and local language practices. With regards to literacy and livelihoods programmes, it is particularly important to find out which languages people are most likely to use in the context of their own livelihood activities. This could turn out to be the official language or a language of wider communication, which may be required when interacting with institutions and individuals outside the community, for example with state offices, trading bodies, middlemen or wholesalers.

Definitions of literacy were strongly debated in Uppingham. While many participants favoured a concept of literacy that explicitly addresses social, cultural and ideological aspects, others warned that such a broad definition weakens the conceptual basis of literacy education policies and programmes and called for a tighter focus on the development of literacy skills. A further matter of debate regarded the transferability of literacy skills: can skills acquired in one context easily be transferred to other situations? Again we did not reach a consensus on this issue.

To conclude, the principal differences between existing conceptions of literacy and livelihood lie between two poles:

Livelihoods (and literacy): narrow definition	Livelihoods (and literacy): broader definition
Instrumental	Social, cultural

Technicist Economistic	Political Humanist
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In addition to the questions listed in the Dixon/Deyo paper, the seminar participants identified a number of issues which were to guide our discussions of policies and practice (see below Part II):

1. The issue of existing livelihood strategies:

- How can we identify existing livelihood strategies?
- How can we make sure that any intervention builds on the strengths of existing practices?

2. The question of what literacies to include in a programme:

- *What exactly do we know about the kinds of literacy practices specific livelihoods require? What literacy practices for example can we find in a fair trade programme?*

3. The question of learning:

- In what theories of learning are current literacy and livelihood programmes grounded? (Many of us shared the suspicion that they follow a delivery approach.)
- Presuming that the banking model is to be rejected, do we have pedagogical models that reflect the situated and social nature of learning?

Part II (Sessions 2-4): Examples of current practice

A broad spectrum of initiatives and projects addressing issues of literacy and livelihood was discussed, ranging from the tradition of the Nordic Folk High Schools to an environmental education programme in Pakistan.

The following is not a list of all case studies presented, but a summary of common issues that emerged from the examination of these cases.

1. Where to start? With literacy or with livelihoods?

In several of the projects presented at the seminar, literacy was the first area of intervention. This is for example the case in the Women Economic Empowerment and Literacy Programme (WEEL), implemented by World Education in Nepal. This programme, which is addressed to existing and newly formed credit and savings groups, covers four distinct phases: literacy, post-literacy, continuing education, and livelihoods, the latter being introduced in the third year of people's participation only.

Programmes such as WEEL appear to regard literacy as a pre-requisite for further learning. Livelihood activities are believed to require at least a minimum of basic reading and writing skills. Contrary to this view, we felt that there is no evidence to suggest that people cannot improve their livelihoods without a prior improvement of their literacy skills. In fact, there are examples which reveal the above assumption to be wrong. One such example is Indonesia's Functional Literacy Programme. This programme combines practical skills training and income-generating activities with the teaching of

reading, writing and numeracy. It does not start with reading and writing as an isolated activity. Contrary to what might have been expected, it was found that learners in this programme were highly motivated and learned faster than participants of conventional literacy programmes. The programme was based on two important findings, both of which could be relevant to other contexts. First, it was found that almost every person who joined a learning group in Indonesia did so in order to increase their family income. Second, in the Indonesian programme, facilitators realised that many of those who joined literacy classes had basic reading and writing abilities; yet they felt unable to deal with the concrete literacy tasks required in everyday life. This indicates a need for the teaching of specific literacy practices, in combination with livelihood activities, rather than the provision of 'school-based' or academic literacies.

2. How can people's livelihood strategies be improved? The importance of social capital.

Assuming that a shared agreement on what livelihoods are exists, how can people's livelihood strategies be improved? This was one of the fundamental questions the seminar addressed.

Several of the cases we discussed during the seminar revealed that people's social capital is central to their ability to improve their livelihoods. Decisions regarding the introduction of a specific income-generating activity in a community are often based on narrow economic factors, such as cost/benefit analysis, market structures and product demand. However, the experience of REFLECT circles in Uganda has shown that there may be important local factors which determine a person's ability to become an entrepreneur or to engage in a particular income-generating activity. These have to do with people's social capital. In many cases, an individual who wants to enter a particular area of economic activity can do so only, if s/he has the right connections with other people in the trade. In other situations, a woman might decide to take up sewing because she receives an old sewing machine from a friend, or because a relative who works in the same business provides some material and puts her in contact with potential clients. In such a case, the woman's social capital is essential for her ability to engage in a new economic activity.

The above examples show that an individual's capacity to take up a new occupation depends on her position within the society. The same counts for groups. In many countries, one's gender, race, ethnic or caste background will to a large extent determine whether enhanced literacy and/or improved skills and entrepreneurial knowledge can have a positive impact on the person's livelihood. Women in particular are often constrained by the roles assigned to them by their culture. This was highlighted by the experience of several Nepali women who had joined adult education classes. Some of these women became literacy facilitators and others were trained as health assistants. The traditional understanding of women's place in society, however, placed strict boundaries on what these women could do with their new skills and how far they could earn money. The new health assistants for example were allowed to work in health centres, but they were not paid for their work. In this case, new skills, and possibly improved social capital, did not result in enhanced economic capital.

Gaining social capital can nevertheless be an important positive outcome of a literacy and livelihoods programme. For the women who participated in the WEEL programme in Nepal (see above), their learning groups had become a positive new structure in their lives.

3. The centrality of the local context

The centrality of the local context and of people's existing livelihood strategies for any planned intervention was highlighted throughout the seminar. The group discussions brought about some important specifications and qualifications to this generally accepted requirement.

First of all, all the examples we shared revealed that the local context, contrary to what might be expected, is diverse, complex and dynamic. It is made up of a variety of people and groups, their livelihood activities and their literacy practices, and their changing interests and world views. Any literacy and livelihood programme will have to address this diversity. Second, the local context is not an isolated space, but will typically be a community whose social and economic life is determined by regional, national and even international factors. In today's globalised economy, transnational conditions, such as trade agreements between countries, increasingly affect the situation even of those who live in remote rural areas. Furthermore, factors such as the state of the infrastructure, the ability to access markets for specific goods and the demand for particular services, determine whether a specific economic activity is likely to generate a regular income. This was exemplified by the situation of local tourism workers in Lesotho and Namibia.

Case studies from Lesotho and Ghana highlighted the efforts specific programmes have made in order to understand the local context in all its diversity and complexity. Both cases worked with REFLECT. The example of a small project in Lesotho is particularly interesting, as it illustrates how the REFLECT methodology can be used as a participatory research tool. In this programme, which examined the potential of a local community to gain an income from tourism, REFLECT was used as a strategy to identify the most important constraints the community faced. Based on the results of this exercise, areas for intervention were decided and learning groups were set up to address these.

4. Literacy skills and literacy practices

Understanding the local context should not be limited to identifying local livelihood strategies. Crucially, initial research into the local context needs to include research into local literacy practices. Programme planners need to know about people's daily literacy activities and understand the strategies people use in order to deal with whatever reading and writing their income-generating activities require.

The term 'literacy practices' relates to the situated and context-specific nature of reading and writing activities and of texts. A literacy and livelihoods programme needs to provide support with the forms of reading, writing and calculating that people use as part of their income-generating strategies. Tour guides in Lesotho and Namibia, for example, need to write leaflets and signposts which can attract tourists to their business. Other economic activities require different literacy practices. While some of these, such as record

keeping, are relevant for a broad range of economic activities, others are highly specific to the particular activity.

Savings groups can be a good context in which to introduce specific literacy practices that directly relate to the activities of their members. The Indonesian Functional Literacy Programme included an initiative to set up savings groups for women. As part of the regular meetings of the new savings groups, their members were taught the particular literacy practices of saving and borrowing money. Each participant had her own savings book in which she had to write the amounts and the dates of the savings she had made. In addition, the women learned practices such as record keeping, which required the skills of addition and subtraction, or writing requests for loans, for which the women had to learn to use particular words and to write a specific genre.

The above examples show some of the many literacy practices that people use as part of their income-generating activities. Other important literacy practices that often occur in connection with economic activities have to do with bureaucratic documents, for example trade regulations, or with forms which have to be filled out when requesting services or applying for support. Such practices can usefully be introduced as part of a literacy and livelihoods programme.

5. Improving people's basic education and literacy does not necessarily have positive effects on their livelihoods

Time and again, the conclusion that emerged from the initiatives we discussed is that improved literacy as such cannot be expected to bring about significant improvements in people's economic situation. An example from South Africa amplifies this point. In a workplace basic education programme which was implemented in a Toyota car factory, initially the workers were highly motivated and many joined the courses. They had been told that their participation in the programme would lead to pay raises. Yet it soon emerged that the improvements in their salaries remained minimal. Workers began to drop out of the programme as it did not seem to lead to any significant changes in their work situation. In fact, while they struggled to improve their minimal wages, the gap between their own salaries and those of the factory's high earning managers continued to increase. The growing disparity between those who are part of the 'core' and those who belong to the 'periphery' of industrial production is a feature of the present economic order. In today's fast capitalism, companies employ a core of highly educated 'knowledge workers' who are paid substantial salaries. At the same time, many of these companies rely on the manual work of low skilled and badly paid men and women who, like the factory workers in the above example, belong to the periphery of the global economy.

This example raised several important questions: What is the value of basic education in today's economic order? Does adult basic education provide access to second-class education for entry into second-class livelihoods?

Yet despite these changes in the global economy that appear to have diminished the value of basic education, the 'literacy myth' is still alive. It remains central to the rhetoric of policy-makers and planners. The hope that

enhanced literacy will lead to a better life is still shared by many of those who join basic education programmes. It is thus almost inevitable that learners engage with programmes with high expectations. However, as the experience of the factory workers in South Africa has shown, these can not always be fulfilled. The REFLECT programme in Ghana faced similar problems. Because nothing much seemed to happen for those who had joined the circles and had begun to read and write, learners became frustrated and lost their motivation. They quickly realised that, in itself, the ability to read and write did not lead to any major changes in their lives. As a consequence, some of the REFLECT circles drifted towards a strong focus on livelihoods and other development-oriented initiatives, while leaving aside the teaching of reading and writing.

6. The quality of programmes that have been implemented: how much do we know about what works and what doesn't?

At the seminar, we felt that although a lot of research had been done, planners and practitioners still do not know enough about the impact of existing literacy and livelihoods programmes. What works in these programmes? Once the question was raised, we asked what exactly the word 'impact' means and how we can measure the 'outcomes' of a programme. What counts as evidence for whom? Furthermore, what happens when a programme broadens its view of livelihoods and literacies in order to include social and personal change? Empowerment, a central aim of the WEEL programme in Nepal, is notably difficult to define and to measure. The women who participated in this programme felt that their involvement in the groups had a positive impact on their lives. But does this count as a positive result in the eyes of those who finance the programme? Donors tend to ask for tangible evidence. When it comes to livelihoods, the need to produce numerical evidence that shows a reduction in poverty is particularly pressing.

If a variety of concepts and views are present within a single programme, stakeholders are likely to disagree over its aims and purpose. It then becomes even more difficult to determine what the initiative's outcomes are and how these can be demonstrated. This was highlighted by the experience of a multi-agency project on environmental education in Pakistan. While for some of the involved agencies the term 'environment' referred to conservation, for others it was much broader and encompassed the physical, the social and the political context. Given this diversity of views, what counted as a positive outcome of this initiative was a matter of intense debate.

7. Can livelihood strategies and skills training be integrated in a general literacy programme?

If, as we suggested at the seminar, livelihoods and literacy programmes need to develop local strategies that address local issues, does that mean that these programmes necessarily have to be small-scale? Given the scope of poverty and lack of literacy worldwide, governments and NGOs alike feel compelled to search for large-scale solutions. Such efforts are particularly common in literacy and basic education. An example is Ghana's recent National Literacy Programme which was implemented for five years and used primers in 15 national languages. Although the programme did not include a specific livelihoods component, some income-generating activities were discussed in

the primers. The primers introduced learners to a range of economic uses of reading and writing. However, in the primers livelihoods (and literacy practices related to them) were discussed in a general manner. Since no direct links with the issues local communities faced were created, many learners found the primers to be irrelevant to their particular needs. Once again, this indicates the need to develop flexible and decentralised strategies that are grounded in the local context and work with the strengths and the weaknesses of each particular community.

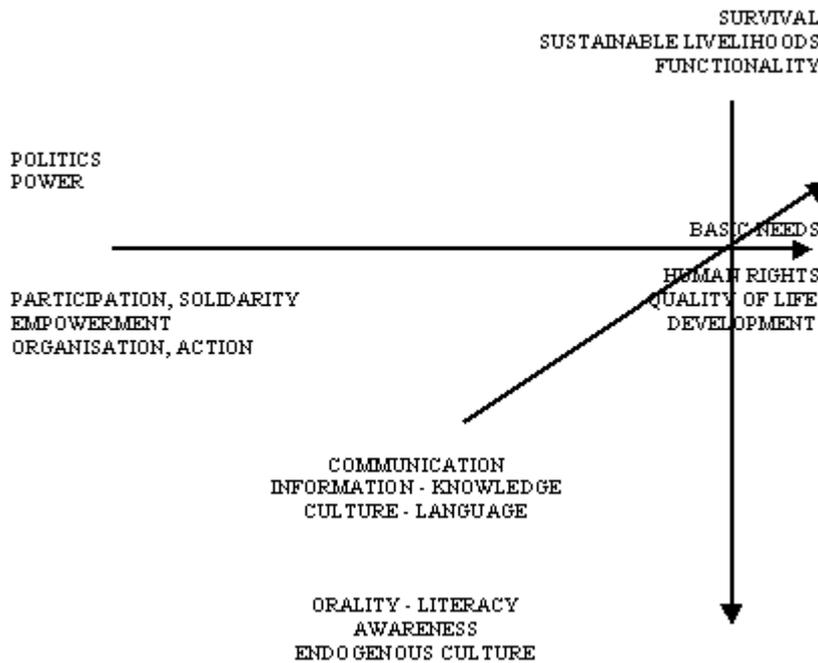
Part III (Session 5-7): Widening the concept of literacy and livelihoods: implications for research and practice

In the third part of the seminar, we attempted to summarise the insights we had gained from our analysis of existing programmes. This brought us back to the conceptual discussion of the first day. What emerged strongly from many of the projects we discussed is that a narrow conception of livelihoods and literacy, one which focuses on economic parameters alone, is unsatisfactory. A purely economist view does not match the complexity of the social, cultural, political, economic and environmental issues people all over the world face when trying to improve their livelihoods.

While there was no clear agreement on how literacy and livelihoods should be defined, the tendency among participants was to favour a broad vision of both concepts. This would be grounded in a humanistic and social view of both literacy and livelihoods and extends beyond purely economic considerations. Besides technical and vocational skills, it would include economic and cultural literacies, life skills, political empowerment and democratic rights as well as support for local culture and social life. Such an expanded view explicitly addresses questions of language and local knowledge. Furthermore, it defines development in broad terms, acknowledges the politics of development, and encourages empowerment from below, aiming to support democratic processes at local, national and international level.

A model developed by Denzil Saldanha conceptualises such an expanded view: (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF LITERACY AND LIVELIHOODS IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Explanation: Questions related to literacy/adult education in relation to livelihood need to be located within a conceptual analysis of sustainable development. The central objective of sustainable development is to address issues of basic human needs in a manner that is equitable and sustainable within a long term perspective. Thus issues concerning human rights and enhancement in the quality of life are central to the concept of sustainable development and are placed at the centre of the diagram.

In addition, sustainable development may be seen as having three constitutive dimensions/aspects:

1. The socio-economic structure of a given context both of which have implications for the survival strategies, sustainable livelihoods and functional skills of participants in adult educational processes.
2. The aspect of power/politics or issues of control which have implications for the participation, group formation and solidarity building - empowerment as operationalised in terms of the organisation of beneficiaries towards action for addressing basic needs.
3. The symbolical communicative dimension, which in some senses is distinctive of human beings, and within which one might locate processes such as information and knowledge distribution, culture and language. One locates literacy as one component of communicative practice within this aspect.

The foregoing conceptualisation has strategic and practical considerations. For example, adult education programmes would need to consider the rationality of the learner within a given socio-economic context, as a guide to their prioritisation of basic needs and hence as an indication of the sequencing of interventions. This conceptually rooted perspective needs to be distinguished from related academic and historical concerns relating to cause and effect, before and after, long term and short term, macro and micro. For example, from a historical perspective it might be generally concluded that socio-

economic development set the conditions for the possibility of mass literacy and basic education. However, from the urgency of an interventionist standpoint, especially in conditions that threaten the very quality of human survival, adult educational interventions might need to address economic issues of livelihood, concerns of empowerment such as community organisation building and the need for basic education, at the same time, i.e. together; rather than in a manner that is before and after. In the same manner, individualised literacy provision, even with 'functional' skills, especially in regions of low social developmental indicators, may not lead to sustainable development unless it also addresses the issue of confronting through people's organisational forms (e.g. self-help groups, women and youth groups, cultural organisations, village education committees) the inequitable structures of opportunity.

One of the conclusions of the foregoing conceptualisation is that interventions within any one of the three dimensions mentioned above, taken in isolation and without attention to the other two, does not generally make for a sustainable process of the enhancement in the quality of life.

This raised two questions: how such a vision can be translated into viable intervention strategies; and what kind of research do we need in order to help develop such programmes.

Implications for practice

Given the diversity of social, political and economic factors that will have to be addressed when planning a literacy and livelihoods strategy, the seminar suggested that generic models are highly unlikely to yield any positive results. What we need are strategies that are grounded in the local context and developed with direct input from local people. What emerged strongly from all the experiences discussed in Part II is that programmes need to be flexible and to offer a variety of individual and community-focused solutions. The main issue for programmes then is how to manage such diversity.

Before we turned to the question of diversity, we discussed two important general implications of a broadened concept of livelihoods and literacy (or, literacies, as we might want to say). First of all, despite our above suggestion to move towards a more inclusive concept of livelihoods, we believe that poverty, in its material reality, must remain a focus of many interventions. This is to reiterate our earlier claim that any programme has to be firmly grounded in the local context and its specific contingencies and address the priorities of the people it tries to reach. In many cases, addressing material poverty will be among participants' most pressing demands.

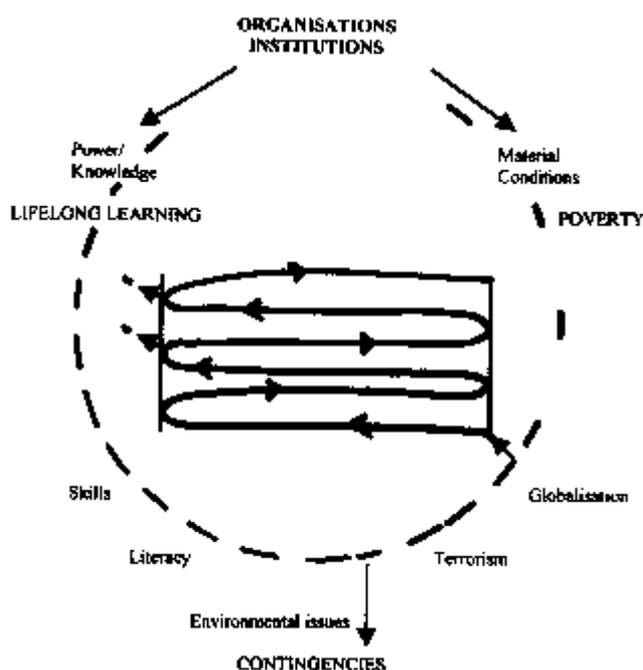
Secondly, the moment we begin to think about literacy in terms of a broad range of practices rather than a single set of skills, the conventional preoccupation with the boundaries between literacy and illiteracy becomes problematic. If there are many literacies which people at all levels of education manage with greater or lesser difficulties, then there are not clear-cut boundaries between literacy and illiteracy. It follows from the above that the learning of different literacies does not stop once a person has reached the threshold of 'becoming literate'. In terms of literacy policies, this is reflected in

the current move in many countries from restricted literacy and post-literacy campaigns towards much broader and more inclusive systems of lifelong learning.

Within such elaborated systems of lifelong learning, interventions which aim to support people in their attempts to improve their livelihoods take on a central role. Learning within such programmes is for now and addresses the key material constraints in people's life. However, lifelong learning should extend beyond the functional utility of education and include learning for individual and cultural purposes. It is in that sense that lifelong learning also addresses learning for the future.

A further implication of the expanded vision of literacy and livelihoods education as part of a system of lifelong learning is that literacy education will no longer necessarily be the first step. In some contexts, the need for literacy may be felt right from the beginning of an intervention. Yet it is equally possible that reading and writing will only become important in the course of a developmental programme. This is likely to happen once participants have engaged in new livelihood activities which require them to deal with new forms of reading and writing.

The following diagram by Brian Street shows the role of lifelong learning as a continuous process in people's struggle to overcome poverty. The diagram presumes that lifelong learning includes both structured education activities as well as the informal processes of everyday life learning. It regards organisations and institutions (defined in a broad way in order to include local forms of organisation) as the focal points for learning and education. (see Figure 2)



EXPLANATION: Organisations/institutions can address both learning programmes (education and training) AND the development of material conditions for the relief of poverty. Starting with the poverty dimension, the programme can alternate between lifelong learning (skill development, literacy skills development, knowledge acquisition etc) and poverty-reduction

strategies (credit, marketing, environmental issues etc). During the lifelong learning programmes, the participants may take off into other dimensions of development than poverty reduction (e.g. health, civic participation etc)

With regards to the question of diversity, the seminar felt that it is important to see diversity not as a problem or a deficit, but as a resource. First of all, within a system of lifelong learning there is much more space for various forms of provision which address the diversity of people's needs and aspirations, than in narrowly framed literacy and continuing education programmes.

Secondly, as mentioned earlier, strategies that help planners and participants to research this diversity exist. One of the strengths of the REFLECT methodology appears to be its potential to develop the kind of situated analysis of the local context on which any later intervention can be based. In fact, it seems that there is space here for a REFLECT-inspired component in literacy and livelihoods programmes. This emerged among others from the example of Lesotho.

In conventional development discourse, this initial period of research has been called 'needs assessment'. Our discussions at the seminar have shown that, in reality, when we talk about the needs of those who are to benefit from an intervention, these cannot be simply 'assessed'. Needs are always negotiated. The real question then is not how do we find out about people's needs, but who in a project decides whose needs will be acknowledged and addressed?

With regards to the point about learning, several of the projects examined in Part II highlighted the positive aspects of diversity. In the savings groups in Indonesia, women whose reading and writing were better than those of their colleagues helped the others to deal with their saving books or their loan applications. Diversity here was a resource rather than a constraint. Mutual help and apprenticeship learning are common in everyday life. However, we do not seem to know much about such 'real life' learning strategies and as a consequence, structured education programmes rarely build on these informal ways of learning.

A further question the seminar addressed regarded the role of facilitators in literacy and livelihoods programmes. If, as the experience of existing programmes reveals, a range of training needs exist, it is unrealistic to expect a single facilitator to take charge of all these demands. One strategy which was suggested to help towards resolving this issue was that two facilitators, one focusing on the livelihood activities, the other on the involved literacy practices, may be used.

However, depending on the programme in question, other solutions may be possible. A literacy class, for example, can be substantially enriched if special events are organised as regular or occasional additional activities for some or all of the participants. These could for example be one-day training events on particular livelihood activities, or shorter sessions on more specific topics such as crop cultivation, fertilisers, or market opportunities. A trainer who is an expert in the respective area would be invited to run such special events. The

above-mentioned tourism project in Lesotho, at several stages in its implementation, invited experts who helped participants with particular literacy- or livelihoods-related skills. One such activity was the production of traditional Basuthu hats which could be sold to tourists.

A closely related issue regards the question of existing groups and organisations. Livelihood programmes tend to focus on groups such as savings groups or co-operatives. There are three questions to be raised here. First, what about individuals who are not part of such groups? Is it always best to work with groups? Secondly, do programmes address such groups only in terms of their economic capacity (i.e. do they possess a good structure from within to build viable income-generating activities) or are they also seen as spaces for the development of political power from below? And, thirdly, how much do we know about these groups in terms of their potential as learning communities?

A final question in our debates concerned the ultimate purpose of literacy and livelihoods programmes. Is their aim to foster integration into mainstream society rather than to promote transformation and the development of alternative projects? In terms of livelihoods programmes, some of us went further and asked whether the main objective of such initiatives is to urge the poor to produce more. Which led us to ask who is most likely to profit from literacy and livelihoods programmes. Do such programmes really support the poor (whoever they are)? Do they promote greater equality or do we unwittingly support local elites? These are uncomfortable questions which in the day-to-day running of programmes are rarely addressed.

Implications for research:

The challenges for research are manifold. The need for more ethnographic research into existing livelihood and literacy practices was repeatedly stressed. Such research, which should be conducted prior to any intervention, needs to be participatory, involving local stakeholders in key decisions. It should identify those specific uses of reading and writing which are part of people's livelihood activities and the literacy-related tasks people want and need help with. A further area of research, which was indicated earlier in this section, concerns people's informal learning strategies.

Following from the above, the seminar saw the need for practitioners and researchers to advocate programme plans that provide the resources and the time needed for this initial phase of research and consultation. At the same time, we felt the need to advocate more research into the outcomes of literacy and livelihoods programmes. However, as indicated earlier, it is important for researchers and evaluators to develop a variety of indicators that capture both economic as well as personal and social changes in people's lives.

Finally, we noted that the existing anthropological research into the social uses of reading and writing is rarely acknowledged and given credibility for what it has to offer to policy-makers and practitioners. However, the seminar also acknowledged that a mere focus on idiosyncratic cases and anecdotal evidence will not help adult education to raise its profile and to attract the political and financial support it needs.

Final Session (Session 7): Where is basic education going internationally?

In the final session of the Uppingham seminar, we discussed current developments in adult basic education in Britain. The 'Skills for Life' Programme, a major new initiative by the Blair government, aims to provide basic education for as many as 750.000 citizens who are believed to have severe difficulties with reading, writing and calculating. As part of the initiative, new national curricula for literacy, numeracy and ESOL have been developed. There are undoubtedly parallels between the 'Skills for Life' programme and the policies which we discussed earlier in this seminar, most of which are located in developing countries. The 'Skills for Life' programme places strong emphasis on work-related literacy and numeracy skills. Like many other programmes, it believes in the contribution basic education can make to improving the country's economic productivity and to combating social exclusion.

The Blair government has made a strong commitment to research on adult basic education. At the beginning of this year, a new National Research and Development Centre in Literacy and Numeracy was opened. As part of its work, the Centre will conduct ethnographic research into learners' lives and their experiences with participation in adult education. These studies will examine the possible impact of participation in classes on people's socio-economic situation, while at the same time trying to develop broader indicators that can reveal personal and social changes in people's lives.

It would thus seem that many of the same issues which those engaged in so-called 'development' programmes in so-called 'developing countries' are being faced in Western countries; there is much that can be learned from cross-cultural approaches.

The Uppingham seminar ended with a brief discussion of possible future initiatives. Inspired by the example of the UK, we highlighted the need for us, as practitioners and researchers, to continue to press governments for greater commitment to literacy and adult basic education.

Finally, with respect to future Uppingham seminars, two possible themes were suggested: literacy and organisation, and, literacy and environmental issues.

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ANNEXI: List of participants

1. Adu-Gyamfi Juliana, Action Aid
2. Barnett Naomi, International Extension College, Cambridge
3. Barton Professor David, University of Lancaster
4. Castle Dr Jane, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
5. Deyo Lisa, University of Massachusetts
6. Dixon Professor Joan, Brigham Young University, Utah
7. Donnelly Dr Ray, Herriott-Watt University, Edinburgh
8. Farah Professor Iffat, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan
9. Fiedrich Marc, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
10. Flores-Moreno Claudio, OXFAM and Institute of Education, University of

London

11. Kiirya Patrick, Director, LABE, Uganda
12. Lauglo Dr Jon, World Bank
13. Mfenyana Ms Nzuko, Rural Development Services Programme, Northern Cape, South Africa
14. Mueller Dr Josef IIZ/DVV, Germany
15. Mwangi Anna, Kenya consultant
16. Narnor Marina Africa Educational trust
17. Osman Dr Amina Commonwealth Secretariat
18. Papen Uta, University of Durham
19. Rob Abdur, Intermediate Technology Group, Bangladesh
20. Robinson-Pant Dr Anna, University of East Anglia
21. Rogers Professor Alan convenor
22. Saldanha Professor Denzil, Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai, India
23. Street Professor Brian, Kings College, London
24. Teamey Ms Kelly, Kings College, London
25. Varghese Sathybalam, PLAN International Education
26. Veloso Dr Maria Teresa, National Institute of Educational Research, Maputo, Mozambique
27. Wallis Dr John, University of Nottingham

ANNEX II: Timetable of the seminar

Uppingham Seminar 2002: Literacy and Livelihoods

Thursday 7 March

3.00-4.00pm Arrival and registration at Falcon Hotel

4.00-6.00pm Session 1: Literacy and Livelihoods - Conceptual Issues

6.00-7.00pm drinks in the bar

7pm dinner

Friday 8 March

9.00-10.45am Session 2: Group work on experiences with literacy and livelihoods programmes

Group 1: Indonesia, Lesotho, Namibia, and Norway

Group 2: Nepal, Pakistan, and South Africa

Group 3: Ghana, Bangladesh, Uganda, and Mexico

10.45am Tea/coffee break

11.15-12.45am Session 3: Group work cont.

1.00pm Lunch

2.30-3.45am Session 4 (Plenary): Reports from the group

3.45-4.00pm Tea/coffee break

4.00-6.00pm Session 5: 'Taking stock': What can we learn from current experiences?

7.30pm Reception; Dinner (with local guests)

Saturday 9 March

9.00-10.45am Session 6: Group work on specific issues identified in previous sessions.

Group 1: Lifelong learning: the place of literacy and livelihood strategies to reduce poverty within broader system of lifelong learning

Group 2: Managing diversity in livelihood and literacy programmes

Group 3 focused on the Oxenham report (see annex)

10.45am Tea/coffee break

11.15-12.45am Session 7:

'Pulling the strands together': Implications for research and practice;

New developments in Britain: The 'Skills for Life' programme and the new National Centre for Research and Development in Adult Literacy and Numeracy;

Future Activities: Uppingham 2003

1.00pm Lunch

ANNEX III: List of background documents.

The following reports were taken as the basis for the discussions in the Seminar:

Lauglo, J. (2000). Engaging with Adults: the Case for Increased Support to Adult Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. World Bank. Africa Region. Human Development Department.

Oxenham, J, Diallo, A. H., Katahoire, A. R., Petkova-Mwanga, A., & Sall, O. (2001). Strengthening Livelihoods with Literacy. Draft paper. Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association.

Literacy for Livelihoods: Report on DFID Conference (Dec. 4-6, 2000), Nepal.

Torres, R. M. (October 2001). Lifelong Learning: Where and How Does Adult Basic Education Fit? Draft paper prepared for SIDA.

World Bank. (2001). BELOISYA "Basic Education and Livelihood Opportunities for Illiterate and Semiliterate Young Adults" World Bank Discussion Paper. IRBD: Washington, D.C.#

Additional papers available to participants:

DFID 2001: Literacies and Livelihoods. Report of Second DFID Seminar Convened in Response to the White Paper on Globalisation, 28 June 2001.

'The Implications for Literacy: A response to 'Eliminating World Poverty - making globalisation work for the poor': White paper on international development, December 2000.' Juliet Millican, April 2001 (unpublished).

'Literacy and the White Paper 'Eliminating World Poverty: making globalisation work for the poor', Clinton Robinson May 2001 (unpublished).

Impact Evaluation of PACT's Women's Empowerment Programme in Nepal - a

savings and literacy-led alternative to financial and institution building, Jeffrey Ashe and Lisa Parrott, October 2001.

DFID 2001 Notes from Literacies and Livelihoods meeting on April 3rd 2001.

Lillis K: Literacy-Across- the-Sectors DFID-Nepal Concept Paper February 2002.

ANNEX IV: Discussion Paper submitted by Joan Dixon and Lisa Deyo

Introduction

In this paper, we identify key issues and respond with critical questions to the six documents that will be discussed at the 2002 seminar on Literacy and Livelihoods: Strengthening Literacy with Livelihoods, BELOIYSA, Lifelong Learning: Where and How Does Adult Basic Education Fit?, Report on Literacy for Livelihoods, Literacies and Livelihoods, and Engaging with Adults. Two questions guide our discussion:

- A) What do the authors mean by livelihoods?
- B) What key issues raised in the papers should be discussed at the seminar?

Many and diverse themes, ranging from broad policy issues to program implementation, were raised in the papers. The first section of this paper offers a brief introduction to the authors' perspectives on livelihoods. This section discusses what the authors mean by livelihoods in a broader sense, including the policy directions being advocated and the definitions or descriptions of livelihoods used by the authors. Section two is laid out in table form to provide a comparative view of what makes up these different perspectives, particularly in terms of vision, policy and coordination, relationships with other organizations, training, target participants and research. The third section offers several sets of questions for discussion at the seminar.

Section I: What do the authors mean by livelihoods?

At first glance, it appears that the authors can be divided into roughly two categories in their discussions of livelihoods: those such as DFID who adopt a broad definition of livelihoods to cover most aspects of development and well-being, and those who adopt a narrower approach which equates livelihoods more specifically with economic well-being and 'making a living'. Yet, the areas of difference are not so clear cut.

Despite the divergent perspectives on livelihoods, there seems to be several basic areas of consensus at the policy and program levels. At the policy level, literacy, livelihoods, learning, and education are linked - albeit differently - to the broader issues of development in all the papers. Livelihoods as a strategy serves a larger purpose. The DFID and World Bank reports emphasize poverty reduction and the links between poverty, literacy or ABE, and broader issues of development, like the development of social capital, civil society, as well as sectoral areas (e.g., health and formal schooling). Torres sees livelihoods set

within a broader "horizon" of human and social development.

The authors of the papers also identify several common best practices for the design of literacy and livelihoods education programs. Despite the differences in approaches to education and learning proposed, the authors agree that literacy needs to "serve some purpose and practice that is important to the users" (Oxenham) and, therefore, literacy education programs "need to take in account these many and varied uses and needs of literacy" (DFID). They also agree that programs should be participatory, flexible, group-oriented, and use the mother tongue or market place language as the language of instruction. Programs need to be context-specific and responsive to the wants and interests of participants; given these characteristics, the authors stress that no single strategy or program can be best for all contexts. At the same time, the authors emphasize the need to strengthen policy, planning, and implementation. Continued research on literacy, livelihoods and learning and an increased level of program documentation and evaluation are also emphasized.

Differences emerge in the definitions and key concepts of livelihoods used by the authors. Oxenham, in a World Bank review of vocational and technical education, takes a view of livelihoods that is "more in its traditional, restricted sense of simply making a living". Livelihoods has to do with

the knowledge, skills, and methods used to produce or obtain the food, water, clothing and shelter necessary for survival and well being, whether the economy is subsistence, monetized or a mixture of both.

Training in livelihoods, then, will result in "higher productivity, incomes and well being". The wider environment - the enabling factors and barriers at the macro and micro levels - need to be taken into consideration in planning strategies. In the World Bank report by Lauglo, livelihoods is discussed in terms of its potential as a content area in adult basic education programs. Livelihoods, as described in the report, is associated with a rise in income, productivity and employment. Livelihoods is strongly linked to the skills needed in the market place and to be an entrepreneur or self-employed, and, to a lesser extent, an employee.

While Torres differs in her overall appraisal of the goals of literacy and learning and the strategies that should be taken, her perspective on livelihoods is based on the definition offered by Oxenham. "Survival" and "life skills" are viewed as key concepts of livelihoods, and poverty is "understood as an eminently economic reality and variable".

DFID expands the concept of livelihoods to sustainable livelihoods. Livelihoods, in this sense, is not defined in strictly economic terms. Livelihoods comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.

Assets include social, human, natural, financial, and physical capital. This strategy is much more related to the broader notion of development and

stresses the need for linkages between micro and macro issues, participatory planning and development, and, importantly, a multisectoral approach.

Section II: Comparative view of key issues and ideas raised by the papers

What, then, make up these different perspectives on literacy, livelihoods, education and learning? Although there are many similarities among the papers, they are not always immediately evident because not only do the authors use different terminologies, but they also promote different agendas and analyze problems and solutions from different perspectives. We chose to lay out this section in table form in order to juxtapose ideas from the various papers and facilitate discussion of relationships, commonalities and differences.

Clearly this abbreviated table does not cover the full range of issues that could be discussed. We have chosen to focus on how the authors articulated their vision of literacy and livelihoods, issues of policy and coordination, references to relationships with other organizations, training and support for teachers, targeting program participants, and research and evaluation. Issues of strategy are addressed in the questions in third section of the paper. It is hoped that the seminar participants will react to the ideas summarized on the table and add their own insights and observations gleaned from the papers.

Section III: Questions for the seminar discussions

The more we reviewed and discussed the papers in terms of our own experiences, the more we realized that underlying all the talk of linking literacy to livelihoods, multisectoral approaches, participatory methods and decentralized responses to local conditions was a growing inclination to restructure the social institutions and environments that circumscribe learning and livelihoods opportunities. Even the papers that basically stayed within the education paradigm proposed working partnerships and other linkages between diverse sectors of knowledge and practice, between the bureaucracies of various ministries, between government agencies and NGOs, between organizations and communities, as well as between educational and noneducational institutions. The papers with broader-based approaches were even more far reaching, with proposals to break education out of the schooling mind-set, to create new concepts of learning communities and to restructure the social environment to support livelihood and lifelong learning opportunities. The ideas are exciting because they reflect a growing trend to form partnerships and networks for linking literacy to social change as well as to livelihoods development. Therefore, we have chosen to include many discussion questions on issues related to the implementation of broader structural and social changes to support the linkage of literacy and livelihoods in addition to the detailed questions of how to train capable literacy and livelihood educators. The questions are divided into categories addressing vision, organizational relationships, strategy, training, targeting and evaluation.

- 1. What vision do we have for lifelong learning, literacy and livelihoods? What do people and communities need in order to achieve optimal living situations? How do you overcome the narrow ABE and school centered mindsets so that policies and implementation plans can ensure that learning includes a broader range of process, analytical and decision-making skills? What do we mean by literacy and literacies and how does that translate into our practice? What are some of the specific learning needs, livelihood skills and content areas that should be covered in learning programs?*
- 2. What kinds of relationships do we need with other organizations, sectors and institutions in order to provide effective lifelong learning, literacy and livelihood development? How do we as educators initiate and facilitate effective linkages with individuals and organizations in the economic and other sectors? How do we learn about informal learning that happens in non-educational organizations? How do we share NFE strategies with them? How do we incorporate or create learning opportunities into all aspects of a community? What kind of a structure can facilitate the full range of learning? Can individual organizations manage this? Who should be involved? How could organizations work in partnerships or in networks to link their expertise and resources?*
- 3. Where is the most strategic place to initiate the linkage of literacy to livelihoods? Is it a problem that we are all educators talking to other educators? What is our role as members of the education sector? What is our role in facilitating a multi-sectoral approach? Should the education sector take the lead or should some other sector? Should a new organizational structure or network be created to draw attention to all types of livelihood development and lifelong learning in all kinds of organizational settings? Would integration of literacy and livelihoods be more effective if literacy practitioners worked out of other sectors besides education?*
- 4. How do we build the capacity at the local level to create a program based on local resources, needs and opportunities? How do we prepare capable literacy and livelihood educators? There seems to be general agreement that approaches to literacy education need to be participatory, flexible, responsive, context specific, group oriented, and based on use of mother tongue and marketplace languages. Given this assumption, how should teachers, facilitators, supervisors, leaders of noneducational organizations etc be trained to implement such programs? What types of training strategies and approaches should be used? What can we do to support the development of effective and successful strategies for promoting lifelong learning, literacy and livelihood development? What resources do we already have? And where are the gaps?*
- 5. In planning programs, who do we target - specific individuals, target groups or complete communities in all their diversity? What are the advantages of designing strategies that are intergenerational and multi-level as well as multisectoral? How do we need to restructure our assumptions and strategies to design a truly flexible, capable and dynamic learning community to address the full range of learning needs? How can community-based organizations and members of the community be involved in assessing their strengths, needs and resources?*

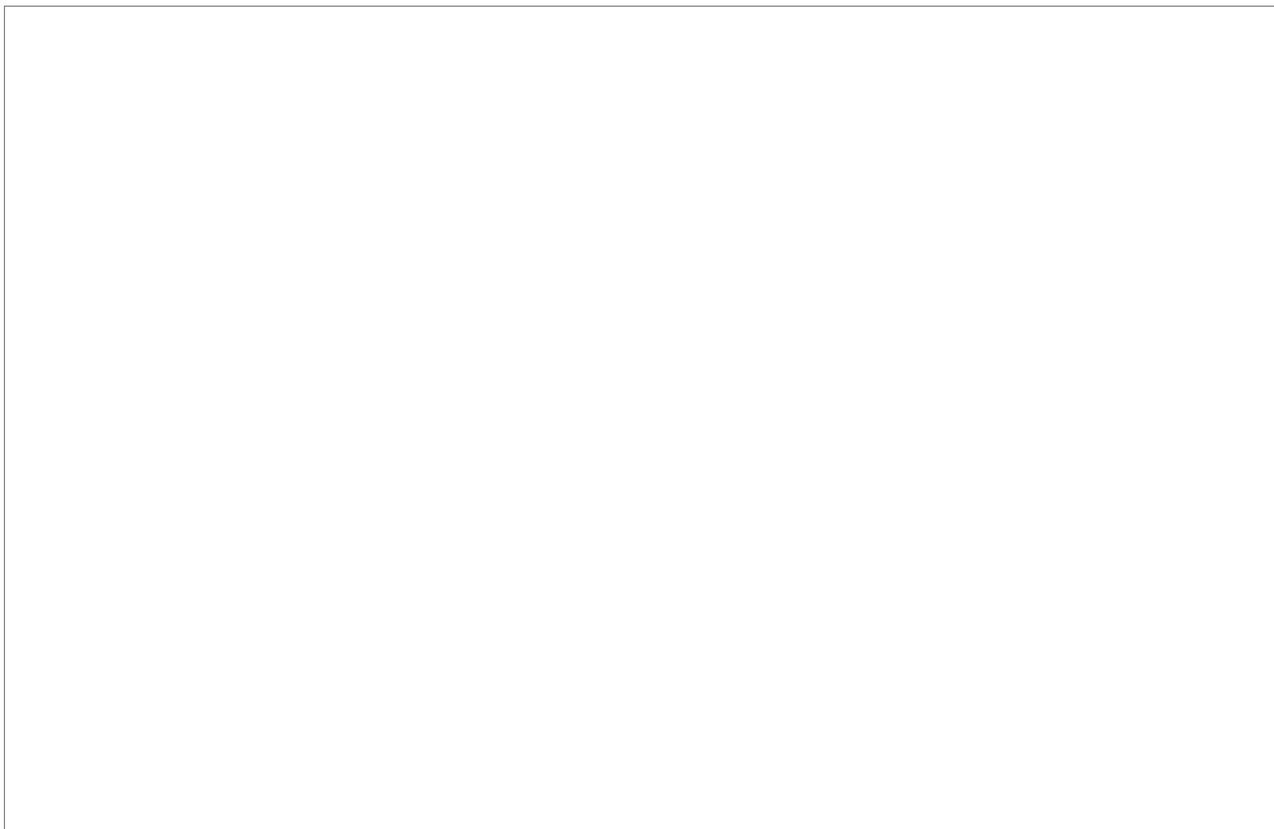
6. *How can projects be better designed to allow for the time and resources to do proper research and evaluation?* Nearly every paper lamented the lack of good research, but no one identified the reasons why projects tend not to provide adequate resources for documentation, reflection and evaluation. What are the most important areas of research and study? What are some strategies that we can take so that research, evaluation, and practice as well as theory and practice are more closely connected?

Comparative view of key issues and ideas raised by the papers

	DFID: Literacy for Livelihoods and Literacies for Livelihoods	Torres: Lifelong Learning	Lauglo: Engaging with Adults	Oxenham: Strengthening Livelihoods with Literacy	BELOISYA: Basic Education and Livelihoods Opportunities
Vision of literacy and livelihoods	“The capabilities, assets (both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base”	Learning Communities that support Lifelong Learning for 7 areas of basic learning needs: 1. Surviving; 2. Developing one’s full capacities; 3. Living and working with dignity; 4. Participating fully in development; 5. Improving the quality of life; 6. Making informed decisions; 7. Continuing to learn	Empowerment More productive livelihoods More effective communication Supporting children’s education Improved family health	Programs that start from livelihood skills seem to stand a stronger chance of success . . . Organizations which are more concerned with livelihoods and other aspects of development seem to be better at designing and delivering effective combinations of livelihoods and literacy than organizations, which are more focused on education.	Necessity of connecting adult literacy and nonformal basic education to functional and post literacy activities such as income-generation, health or citizenship.

Issues of policy and coordination	DFID calls for policy and an institutional environment that supports multiple livelihood strategies and promotes equitable access to competitive markets for all	Torres expands the vision of learning into the context of human and social development. However, she points out the need to work within the education system for functional management while encouraging multisectoral policies and building bridges between sectors.	Lauglo asks which case is stronger: the case for integrating ABE into a unitary service, or the case for each agency integrating ABE into its particular sector (agriculture, health, etc)?	“Managing the diverse environments in which the poor live calls for flexibility, imagination and resourcefulness, and for institutions that respond appropriately. It points ideally to a strategy that will a) allow for considerable decentralization and delegation; b) follow existing demand; c) foster flexibility and mobility; d) rely on and nurture freelance specialists in business and livelihood development; e) operate through institutions of complete transparency.	Communities, as well as administrative and political authorities, should always be involved in basic education programs and their participation encouraged. Their sensitization and mobilization should be an ongoing and continuous process (p 20) Systematically link adult literacy and NFBE to local development initiatives and socioeconomic needs.
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Relationships with other organizations	<p><i>Sustainable livelihoods objectives:</i></p> <p>Improved access to high-quality education, information, technologies and training and better nutrition and health</p> <p>More supportive and cohesive social environment</p> <p>More secure access to, and better management of natural resources</p> <p>Better access to basic and facilitating infrastructure</p> <p>More secure access to financial resources</p> <p>Maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.</p>	The Learning Community is “an organized human community which builds and becomes engaged in its own educational and cultural project to educate itself, its children, young people and adults within the framework of endogenous, cooperative effort and solidarity, based on an analysis of its deficits, but above all its strengths.” (p. 30)	<p>Government collaboration with NGOs</p> <p>Roles for business and industry</p> <p>Governments can outsource literacy programs to NGOs</p>	“The first requisite for livelihood training to be successful . . . is an enabling environment: local norms, broader institutional factors, natural resources, infrastructure and finance all need to be supportive.” (p. 8)	In actualizing basic education for livelihood a pragmatic and incremental approach is needed. Waiting for the total system to come into being would be counter-productive: building and improving on the way is the strategy to adopt. As innovations are invented and adopted, they need to be contextualized to the realities of the local system. (Bhola)
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<p>Targeting program participants</p>	<p>“Literacy is first and foremost a group mechanism and entry point for other activities. . . . There are clearly other effects resulting from people coming together for literacy classes. People get together for literacy and it is about how that time and space is used, looking for dynamics, communication and social status”.</p>	<p>Torres recommends that a focus on the creation of learning communities replace isolated projects and targeting individual categories of learners. Learning communities would integrate learning across all age groups and would be more flexible in addressing the specific learning needs, constraints and resources of a given community context.</p>	<p>Targeting Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age – (not school age) Women, mothers of school-aged children Regions where illiteracy rate is high Locations demanding ABE most strongly Established groups that wish to sponsor ABE Occupational groups Younger adults Especially vulnerable groups 		<p>To succeed, a project must be demand driven. The content should strongly reflect the problems, needs, interests and aspirations articulated by the direct beneficiaries themselves. (p. 20)</p>
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Research and Evaluation	<p>There is a need to link policy and research. There is a need for research in the following areas:</p> <p>The links between literacy and other fields</p> <p>Possible generic principles across contexts, for content and pedagogy.</p> <p>Development of southern research agenda</p> <p>Networks of practitioners, communities of practice, etc</p> <p>Motivations and constraints for learning literacy</p> <p>Developing training</p> <p>What are the most useful institutional models?</p>		<p>There is much variation in quality of program implementation. This variation makes evaluation and monitoring important so that one can learn from mistakes and take corrective measures when implementation is weak.</p> <p>There needs to be a better research base for ABE in order to identify specific conditions for success.</p>	<p>Policy-makers should support further research on costs.</p>	<p>“Allow experiments in adult basic education to reach completion, before generalizing them and assure good coordination when there are several workers in the field.” (p.20)</p> <p>Measure three types of impact: by design, by interaction, and by emergence</p> <p>Use economic and social analysis to capture significant consequences of literacy.</p>
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Texts:

Lauglo, J. (2000). *Engaging with Adults: the Case for Increased Support to Adult Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*. World Bank. Africa Region. Human Development Department.

Literacies and Livelihoods. (June 2001). The 2nd DFID Seminar Convened in Response to the White Paper on Globalisation.

Oxenham, J, Diallo, A. H., Katahoire, A. R., Petkova-Mwanga, A., & Sall, O. (2001). *Strengthening Livelihoods with Literacy*. Draft paper. Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association

Report on Literacy for Livelihoods [DFID](#) Conference (Dec. 4-6, 2000). Nepal.

[Torres](#), R. M. (October 2001). *Lifelong Learning: Where and How Does Adult Basic Education Fit?* Draft paper.

World Bank. (2001). [BELOISYA](#) "Basic Education and Livelihood Opportunities for Illiterate and Semiliterate Young Adults" World Bank Discussion Paper. IRBD: Washington, D.C.

RESPONSE BY ALAN ROGERS TO DIXON-DEYO PAPER LITERACY AND LIVELIHOODS: some further questions

I think the background paper by Joan Dixon and Lisa Deyo has summarised the reports very well and the areas where they overlap and yet differ. I would like to take this a bit further by raising some pedagogical issues which arise.

1. *How* do we decide what is meant by livelihoods? The paper outlines the differences. The various views seem to me to lie along a continuum (see

diagram). a) At one end is the narrow technician approach of the early UNESCO functional literacy approach as applied in many country adult literacy programmes - skill training for production-based income generation alongside learning a school-based literacy from a textbook. The problems with this are now well known - it does not lead to effective command of literacy skills nor to viable livelihood practices and certainly not to empowerment, for most of these activities are determined by others and the profits are taken by others. b) This has been widened out at times to include pre-production and post-production training: we ran such a scheme in India through Education for Development. c) Further along the continuum lie more independent and rounded livelihood training programmes (small business, entrepreneurial training; co-operatives etc); d) further along lie even wider definitions, for livelihoods can depend on health and environmental issues. e) At the opposite extreme, then, livelihoods means general 'well-being', i.e. full-scale development (which then brings us back to the start again, for we have to ask, where do we start?).

The issue I want to raise is not simply which of these (or the many intermediate positions on the continuum) do we take: but who makes the decision? and how is it made? Does a donor make a unilateral (and uniform) decision about what they mean by livelihoods; is it made in a 'participatory' way and if so, how? I hope the Seminar can look at this issue. Whose concept of livelihoods counts and how is it implemented?

2. *Existing livelihoods:* The great danger is that some of the discussion seems to imply that 'the poor' do not have livelihoods. They do: and they will interpret this in different ways (see the extract from Cleaver 1999 in the folders). They already have their definition of livelihoods; but some of them may waive this definition in the hopes that they will obtain benefits by accepting the definition of the aid agencies.

The task then of any programme devoted to literacy and livelihoods is with helping the participants to enhance their existing livelihoods, make them more secure and sustainable. And this will be very local in nature, not general. A learning programme devoted to enhancing and securing livelihoods will involve very local forms of assistance like (agricultural and health) extension.

3. *A wide range of activities:* Unlike the traditional uniform literacy learning programmes, livelihoods covers a very wide range of different activities. Indeed, one person may, and certainly many families will, comprehend a range of activities within their own definition of livelihoods. Not simply seasonal activities but in every day, making ends meet may involve various different tasks. A learning programme devoted to enhancing livelihoods will involve a wide range of assistance.

4. *Group or individual/family?* A smaller issue but yet one associated with this, is whether livelihoods are seen as primarily an individual/family matter or a group matter. If the latter, group formation and maintenance (capacity building) becomes an issue in livelihood learning programmes. How far do such matters get in the way of learning literacy skills? Here experience of co-operatives may help. How has the training for the establishment and maintenance of co-operatives been combined with specific occupational training? If we have too wide a range of activities, are we pedagogically trying

to do too much?

5. *What issues other than literacy learning are involved in the development of sustainable livelihoods?* I am fully committed to the view that literacy is not an end in itself but a means to an end; and that 'the end' should inform the learning programme rather than the intermediate goal and should form part of the evaluation of the success of the programme? But other things are needed to ensure livelihoods (e.g. access to markets for trading activities; access to capital through credit and savings etc). All livelihoods stand on many 'legs' (see diagram). Are we concerned that these other facilities should be in place? For if they are not, sustainable livelihoods will be unattainable. And if so, how is that concern to be implemented?

6. *Other uses of literacy?* My final pedagogical query is this. Any traditional adult literacy learning group will contain participants who will have other intentions than using literacy skills for livelihoods. For example, reading the Bible or other religious texts. How do we incorporate such other participant intentions into our learning plans? If we ignore them, we demean them - and demotivate the literacy learner.

I don't know the answer to that one or indeed to the others above.

Alan R

RESPONSE BY ANNA ROBINSON-PANT TO THE DIXON-DEYO PAPER: Literacy and livelihoods: some last minute reflections!

I have only managed to read through the various papers (many thanks to Joan and Lisa for usefully summarising them so succinctly), so apologies for the late response.

1. What is not said in the papers?

I was struck by what is not said in these papers, and is perhaps hinted at by Joan, Lisa and Alan's responses in terms of "how do we decide what is meant by livelihoods"(AR paper) and "is it a problem that we are all educators talking to other educators?" (JD/LD paper). A major question for me is should we be using the concept of "livelihoods" at all - and how did the concept begin to enter discussions around literacy? (This is a similar issue to our discussions around "social exclusion" last year). Linked to this idea is a question - which is not just about how poor people or "target groups" might define or view the literacy and livelihoods debates - but about whether there are alternative concepts/views from people participating in development programmes which could shape literacy strategies? Alan's last point about "other uses of literacy" points to this. There seems to be a danger that we could assume that the only argument for promoting adult literacy should be economic (to enhance livelihoods), whereas there is an equally strong argument that literacy is a human right, whether or not there are any economic benefits (see, for example, Martha Nussbaum's work on universal values in *Women and Human Development*, CUP, 2000). I would add to the question "whose concept of 'livelihoods' counts?", "whose concept of literacy (or education) counts?"

2. Power dimensions

As Alan points out, there is a tendency to emphasise a "technicist" approach to both literacy and livelihoods in several of the papers. I feel the issue of whose language, whose literacies etc, needs to be explored in relation to the questions they have outlined for this seminar. For example, in (4) around the "agreement... that approaches to literacy should be based on the use of mother tongue and marketplace languages". We might need to look here at the possibility that the participatory approaches promoted could lead to a demand for courses in English or languages that appear to be "empowering", particularly for women, though not necessarily useful in a functional sense. Similarly, when considering what kind of literacy is developed through programmes, we need to recognise that people's desires (eg to read Sanskritised Nepali in order to be able to participate in religious reading events) may not actually be easy to meet - nor contribute to enhancing their livelihoods in a tangible sense.

3. Research

I know there has been much lament about the lack of "good research" (point 6, JD/LD paper), but I think the issue is perhaps wider than simply that of quality, time and resources. I see the question as lying in what kind of research is considered to be "good" and how we can use it. Recently, more in-depth ethnographic and qualitative research has been conducted (see Street, 2001), but has rarely been able to influence policy and practice. The assumption is still that good quantitative research is needed - particularly figures on impact and cost effectiveness of programmes - and this is certainly difficult to come by. What struck me, particularly with Oxenham's paper, is the attempt to use data from small scale qualitative studies in a quantitative way - i.e. to try to generalise from small samples as to the effect of literacy. I think this points to a dilemma for researchers in this field - whether to try to conduct more large scale surveys that provide accurate statistical information or to focus efforts on exploring how to use ethnographic data for policy and programming purposes.

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