

BUILDING TOMORROW™



THE *Literacy*

MAGAZINE

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“ Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Cohesion and Socio-Economic Transformation ”





Appreciation!

The People of Uganda appreciate H.E Yoweri Tibuhaburwa Kaguta Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda for the exemplary leadership in promoting multilingual education and literacy for social cohesion and socio-economic transformation



ZERO ILLITERACY ILLITERACY, OUR AIM

By Kyaterekera Janat - Sumayya Girls HS Nsangi

Some years back
 Its Africa the world had
 As a continent with the of
 highest level of illiteracy
 It's those years when black
 people were literally illiterate
 Still those years when black
 people had no say
 And of course, no
 illiterate illiterate can ever
 have a say

And today
 History be remembered
 And still, today's status quo
 will make history
 Yes, we still have
 illiterate illiterate in Africa
 But the ancient can
 tell, how it was in there years

If today we have a change
 We see our countries grow
 Due to a slight decrease on
 illiterate illiterate
 It means tomorrow is much
 more better
 Only if we persistent and fight
 the barrier "illiterate illiterate"

So if illiterate illiterate is kind
 of kind of a disease
 And it can be cured
 Let's join our hands
 together and look for the
 cure
 Fight illiterate illiterate,
 develop develop Uganda
 Develop Develop the world
 And save the next
 generation.



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Foreword from the Minister of Gender

As we mark this year's International Literacy Day, we celebrate the transformative power of literacy in driving sustainable development, fostering social cohesion, and providing individuals with the necessary skills to participate fully in society. Under the theme of "Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Cohesion and Socio-Economic Transformation," we emphasize the importance of multilingual education in promoting societal cohesion and facilitating socio-economic growth.

Although significant progress has been made in promoting literacy globally, there is still much work to be done to ensure that everyone has access to basic literacy skills. It is estimated that approximately 774 million adults worldwide lack basic literacy skills, with women disproportionately affected. In Uganda, there are still significant gender and regional disparities in literacy rates.

The Ugandan government has implemented various programs such as Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE), Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) Program, and the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) program to promote literacy and provide essential skills for socio-economic empowerment. However, dropout rates remain high, and negative attitudes towards education, especially for girls and children with disabilities, contribute to these challenges.

On International Literacy

Day 2024, we call on all citizens to support and embrace the government's education initiatives, ensuring all children complete their secondary education and promoting access to literacy opportunities for adults. We must work together to address the root cause of illiteracy and build a more cohesive, educated, and prosperous society.

I extend my sincerest gratitude to our

partners, including UNESCO, DVV International, Read to Learn, Finnish Refugee Council, Unbound Kampala, Literacy and Basic Education, Building Tomorrow, Education and Development Initiatives Uganda, Asante Africa Foundations, Makerere University - School of Distance and Lifelong Learning, Kyambogo University, and many others who have supported Uganda's literacy programs. Together, we can combat illiteracy and promote multilingual education and literacy to drive socio-economic growth and promote societal cohesion.

This year's International Literacy Day should serve as a reminder of our commitment and dedication to promoting



Hon. Betty Amongi Ongom
Minister of Gender, Labour & Social Development

“This year's International Literacy Day should serve as a reminder of our commitment and dedication to promoting literacy and access to education for all.

literacy and access to education for all. Let us continue to work together to ensure that every Ugandan has the opportunity to read, write, and thrive.

Hon. Betty Amongi Ongom
Minister of GLSD

Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Cohesion and Socio-Economic Transformation



Hon. Dr. Peace Regis Mutuuzo
Minister of State, Gender and Cultural Affairs

Dear citizens of Uganda, esteemed educators, development partners, and literacy advocates,

As we come together to celebrate International Literacy Day 2024, it is my privilege to address you under the theme "Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Cohesion and Socio-Economic Transformation." This theme speaks to our ongoing efforts to ensure that literacy becomes an inclusive tool for fostering national unity and driving social and economic progress.

Today, I would also like to take a moment to reflect on the progress we made over the past year, under the theme of "Promoting Literacy for a World of Transition: Building the Foundation for Peaceful and Sustainable Societies." In 2023, we focused on literacy's

transformative power in addressing global challenges, such as social inequality, conflict, and environmental sustainability. Our efforts during the past year laid the groundwork for building more peaceful and resilient communities, where every individual had the opportunity to access quality education.

We witnessed the profound impact of literacy in transitioning communities towards sustainable practices. Through collaboration with all partners: Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Local Governments, Development partners, Civil Society Organizations, Community Based Organizations, educators, and learners, literacy initiatives empowered individuals to engage in peace-building efforts, resolve conflicts peacefully, and make informed decisions that benefit their communities and the environment. It is evident that, literacy serves as the cornerstone for sustainable development and long-lasting peace.

Over the last year, Uganda expanded literacy programs targeting marginalized groups, including women and rural populations, ensuring that literacy becomes a tool for inclusive growth and social cohesion. As a result, many communities embraced literacy as a key to unlocking opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and improving their overall well-being. The spirit of these efforts is now embedded in our long-term national development goals, and we continue to draw inspiration

from the achievements of 2023 as we move forward.

This year, as we shift our focus to multilingual education, we are expanding upon last year's successes by embracing the cultural and linguistic diversity of Uganda. Multilingual literacy fosters stronger connections between individuals from different backgrounds, helping to create more cohesive and inclusive societies. In doing so, we are not only promoting economic empowerment but also ensuring that education reflects the diverse identities of our people, promoting mutual understanding and respect.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting education that empowers every Ugandan. By leveraging the power of multilingual literacy, we will continue to build a future of peace, social cohesion, and economic opportunity for all.

Let us use this day as a reminder of the transformative power of literacy, and work together to ensure that every individual, regardless of their linguistic or social background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute to a peaceful and prosperous Uganda.

Thank you, and may we all continue to champion the cause of literacy for the betterment of our nation.

For God and my country!

Hon. Dr. Peace Regis Mutuuzo
Minister of State, Gender and Cultural Affairs

Transforming Uganda Through Education

Today 8th September, we join the rest of the world to celebrate International Literacy Day. This day has been marked since it was recognized by UNESCO in 1967 to serve as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of literacy; as both a fundamental human right and a corner stone of development. Literacy refers to the ability to read and write. As a result, it is a fundamental ability that everyone should possess because it enables individuals to make educated decisions, obtain information, and actively participate in communities. And so, people's capacity to read and write is an important engine of social and economic progress, as well as an essential component of a more equal and sustainable world.

In Uganda, the international Literacy day has been observed with unwavering commitment since 2002. This commitment reflects the Government's deep-seated belief that literacy plays a vital role in empowering our citizens and fostering national progress. As a result, this day is more than just a day on the global calendar; it is a celebration of our country's successes in increasing literacy rates. Our progress toward being a literate country is reflected by the literacy rate, which stands at 76%, indicating that 76% of Uganda's 45.9 million people, excluding those under the age of 18, can read and write.

This has been possible through the government's actions and collaboration with different sectors to further literacy through inclusive, equitable and quality learning opportunities for all. In place are the policies on Early Childhood Development, Integrated Early Childhood development, Primary Education policies, Skilling Strategy, Adult Literacy, and Community Development. Then there is the government programs for example Universal Primary Education (UPE), Post - Primary Education and Training Programs (USE), Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) program which ran from 1992 to 2015, Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) Program, NGO contributions to mention but a few. However, despite the significant strides in eliminating illiteracy through these literacy programmes and policies, 24% of the population still remains illiterate. In absolute numbers, there are approximately 10 million adult Ugandans (6.3 million Females and 3.7 million Males) who can't read and write. This shows that there is need for more targeted interventions especially in adult learning and community education targeting the youths and adults. This is paramount because with the Government's introduction of poverty alleviation programs like Parish Development Model (PDM), Emyooga, National Special Grant for PWDs, UWEP,

YLP to mention but a few, there is need for the beneficiaries who are mostly 18 and above to possess literacy skills that will help them accessing the funds dispersed through these programs and also utilizing the funds wisely.

In commemoration of the International Literacy day, different stakeholders engaged in a week of dynamic events, including a literacy boot camp, symposium, reading and writing competitions and graduation of adult learners. These activities were essentially designed to highlight the successes of the different literacy programs and projects by showcasing impactful stories and fostering community involvement in literacy development.

In conclusion, Uganda's recognition and celebration of the International literacy Day is not only an opportunity to reaffirm the country's commitment to literacy and education but also an opportunity to ponder about the issues that hinder the implementation of government education and literacy programmes, how we can overcome them and build a future where every Ugandan is literate and therefore possesses the ability to contribute to the country's prosperity and socio-economic transformation as envisioned in the vision statement of 2040.

... despite the significant strides in eliminating illiteracy through these literacy programmes and policies, 24% of the population still remains illiterate.

Special message to Inter-Religious Council of Uganda

By Mr. Everest Tumwesige & Ms. Imelda Kyaringabira Engabi

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development together with the literacy promotion partners in Uganda implore the Inter-Religious Council Council Members and Faith Movement to formally acknowledge and mark the 2024 International Literacy Day under the theme "Promoting multilingual education and literacy for socio-economic transformation and social cohesion. The historical contribution of Uganda's religious institutions in promoting education in all its forms will always be recognised and acknowledged.

1. Acknowledging that Literacy is a foundation for people to acquire broader knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviours to foster a culture of lasting peace based on respect for equality and non-discrimination, the rule of law, solidarity, justice, diversity, and tolerance and to build harmonious relations with oneself, other people and the planet.

2. Recognising the historical contribution of the Members of the Inter-Religious Council in promoting reading, writing and numeracy in our Country (e.g. Mengo Secondary school (1895), Namilyango College (1902), Gayaza High School (1905), Kings College Buddo (1906), St. Mary's College Kisubi (1906), Nabisunsa Girls School or Kibuli SS

3. Aware that the council members continue to establish education institutions to promote access to literacy

and education in our collective vision of ensuring that everyone in Uganda is literate.

4. Further aware that despite the collective efforts of all state and non-state actors, almost 000 Million adult Ugandans are not able to read and write; and millions of those who have the literacy skills do not practise literacy thus a terrible reading culture that needs to be reversed.

5. Recognising the extraordinary effort by some council members who conduct literacy education programmes for non-literate adults, refugees and internally displaced persons

6. Aware that these literacy programmes for adults are driven by the Inter-Religious Council Council Members and Faith Movement deep recognition of literacy not only as a tool for cementing religious faith and values but also as an instrumental for promoting social justice, peace, harmony and cohesion.

7. Cognizant of the mobilisation power of the Inter-Religious Council Council Members and Faith Movement owing to their regular big audiences on every Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

8. Religious institutions and organisations ought to make literacy in all its forms (Basic, financial, ICT, etc) key in their agendas:

- Make deliberate effort to establish classes or programmes to help their flock

acquire literacy skills for all matter of purpose

- Make budget provision for literacy and all forms of learning
- Put in place a department(s) in their churches/mosques responsible for literacy/Adult Learning and Education
- Make effort to coordinate and collaborate with government through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) on their effort on literacy for any necessary advice/support
- In future, join hands with the government in the celebration of International Literacy Day (ILD) where achievements and challenges are shared

9. Religious institutions and organisations ought to formally acknowledge and mark the 2024 International Literacy Day under the theme "Promoting multilingual education and literacy for socio-economic transformation and social cohesion". Council members are hereby requested to exercise their discretion by way of spreading the message:

- Gazetting an appropriate reading (eg Hosea 4:6)
- Embedding 'literacy and its power' in the main surmon / Kutuba??
- Conducting a mass 'read aloud' as part of the service or prayer
- Creatively rallying the congregation to make a symbolic endorsement of the multilingual education approach in recognition of Uganda's cultural and linguistic diversity

Language of instruction and literacy outcomes: A note on data collection

By Maya Alkateb-Chami, PhD candidate, Harvard University



With 9% of the world's children of primary school age being out of school, of those who reach the end of primary school only 58% achieve minimum proficiency in reading. An important factor to consider in this striking discrepancy is linguistic discordance: the mismatch between the language children speak at home and the language of instruction (LOI) at school. More strategic data collection and reporting is needed to understand this problem and devise effective solutions.

Language matters for learning

In a study published earlier this year, where I analysed data from 56 countries, I showed a compelling link between higher linguistic discordance and lower literacy outcomes

at the national level. Countries with higher rates of students being taught in a LOI that is not their home language also have higher rates of children unable to read with understanding.

The analysis was based on data made available by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) on SDG indicators 4.1.1 (percentage of students who achieve minimum proficiency in reading) and 4.5.2 (percentage of students who have their first or home language as LOI). The latter measure is constructed using the language of school tests as a proxy for the LOI, compared with the responses of students who indicated that they speak the language of the test at home.

The findings provide a wide comparative view, validating existing research on the impact of language barriers

on educational outcomes. For example, in South Africa, one study demonstrated that early education in a child's home language improves literacy rates in English later on. Similarly, in the United States, a study found that students who receive instruction in their home language alongside the dominant language will exhibit better reading performance in subsequent grades. In Cameroon, a study revealed that switching the LOI to students' home language in early primary education reduced school dropout rates.

The devil is in the details

However, collecting and reporting language-related data is not simple. For example, in Singapore, the linguistic discordance statistic is based on whether students in grade 4 reported that they spoke

the language of the TIMSS assessment (English) at home 'always', 'almost always', 'sometimes', or 'never'. Students considered as having the same mother tongue as the LOI were those who responded with "always" or "almost always" which was the case for 48% of respondents. But another 48% reported speaking English at home "sometimes", indicating that the language of instruction was not entirely foreign to them. While this case is unique, it demonstrates the limits of a binary measure of students' home language matching the LOI at school.

One may conclude that we need more information about the situation at hand to better analyse the results. Indeed, reporting on the four options for levels of language familiarity could be helpful. However, it has been argued that more knowledge does not necessarily lead to more understanding. For example, with regard to language use in the classroom, we could consider which language(s) are employed for what purposes and for how long each is used by teachers as well as students, differentiated by speaking in the class plenary, in small groups, and one-on-one. We could also look at language(s) used to teach various subjects, the language(s) of textbooks and assessments, as well as whether one or more of these languages change from one grade to another. If we add the closer-to-reality view that languages are dynamic and fluid rather than static codes, things get even more complex.

A need for strategic data collection and reporting

More data can sometimes obscure our understanding. The right balance needs to be

struck between reporting too little and too much information for comparative research purposes.

The UIS choice of using the language of textbooks as a proxy for LOI is not only practical given data availability but also wise, because language learning goals are embedded within it to a certain extent. Supplementing this indicator with one focused on the language of assessments for different subjects at key educational stages, such as the end of primary school and the end of secondary school, would deepen our understanding of language learning aims in different countries. This is especially helpful because having cross-subject exit examinations in a language different from the LOI used in primary education has been observed to have a washback effect on linguistic practices and perceptions in the classroom, influencing teachers' classroom usage of language toward that of the exit examinations and resulting in lower learning gains in the language with low-stake assessments.

With respect to sampling, national data can obscure details about minority students. It is helpful to measure linguistic discordance experienced by speakers of non-dominant languages in addition to data based on country-

level sampling of students. Furthermore, capturing information about out-of-school children would provide a more comprehensive view than solely examining responses from children currently enrolled in school. This is particularly important because LOI itself could play a role in pushing students out of school.

While we need to improve data collection and reporting substantively, the internationally comparative data recently curated by UIS on students having their home language as the LOI is an important resource that should be expanded in geographic scope. The most significant impact of such data is their potential for spotlighting the issue of linguistic discordance, as is also done in the second Spotlight continental report on Africa, which dedicates a section on language.

This window of opportunity is particularly crucial because misconceptions about language learning, ideological biases regarding the value of different languages and dialects, and political influences often converge, leading to ineffective language-in-education policies. And while language is not everything in education, there is enough evidence to show us that attention to it is key to achieving quality education for all.

Students considered as having the same mother tongue as the LOI were those who responded with "always" or "almost always" which was the case for 48% of respondents.

Using Adult Education to Foster Positive Social Change among Refugee Communities

By Joan Racheal Apio, Communication Officer, Finish Refugee Council

Literacy is key in ensuring that the world is more sustainable, peaceful, and financially secure. A report by UN indicates that there have been strides made with literacy worldwide. However, despite this growth, an estimated 763 million adults worldwide still lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. Of these, 27 percent of the world's illiterate are from sub-Saharan Africa.

In sub-Saharan Africa, South Sudan has the lowest literacy rates at 27 percent. According to UNESCO, more than 20 percent of the population above the age of 15 is illiterate.

South Sudan has been marred with decades of conflict, some of which has been ethnic in nature. The continued conflicts have forced a number of its

citizens to seek refuge in neighboring countries like Uganda. While in Uganda, they are put in settlements where different ethnic groups stay together. As a result, there have been reports of some of these ethnic groups conflicting within the settlements. These conflicts are made worse by the high illiteracy rates among the refugees.

Joseph's Story

One leader in Palabek Refugee settlement was not happy with the status quo within his community and he sought to change the narrative using literacy as a tool. Joseph Yanga Hakim a refugee from South Sudan, was not happy that most of his people were unable to speak and read English, which made them vulnerable to conflicts. Due

to their inability to effectively communicate and find common ground to help resolve any misunderstandings. He believed that, if his community was able to learn English, it would make life easier and most peaceful for them. And improve the quality of their lives.

He shares that.

"Although my community was very interested in learning, there was no one to help us. So, I talked to some guys who had been to school and were willing to voluntarily sacrifice and help their fellow community members learn how to speak and write English."

In 2019, Joseph became a refugee in Uganda. When he was taken to Palabek, he was restless and wanted to start



a literacy program to help his people. He started his volunteer program with two volunteer instructors and 20 learners. They would gather and study under a tree in his compound. Within the same period, he heard about the work of Finnish Refugee Council (FRC) in other neighboring communities. He then started going to the offices of FRC requesting them to bring their literacy program to his community. TAnd three months laterafter, he started his volunteer program FRC started working in his community.

Social Impact of Literacy in Joseph's Community

Through his efforts, there have been visible changes in his community. For instance, he notes that.

“During the time, we were working with the community, I was working in the education sector, so when I would do my rounds and greet the women, I was happy that the women would respond to my greetings in English. Yet previously they were not able to speak a word in English.”

He further adds that.

“The first learners, we started with in a joking way, they are doing well. They are now atin another level., If you go to Ogili Primary school this year, FRC learners supported by FRC are now going to primary seven>,”

They started from here with us, and they went to level one and are now progressing.”

There has also been a mindset change in his community because of the literacy program. The community which has different ethnic groups is peaceful, and when conflicts arise, they are open to dialogue and sometimes they even involve Joseph to help them resolve the conflict.

Ouko Peter who was among the two volunteer literacy trainers had this to say about the program.

“When Hakim approached me in 2019 and told me that there were a group of people who wanted to learn English but there was no teacher. I offered myself since I was not doing anything at the time. From the time I becamebecome a trainer, I have seen changes in the community., Ssome of my learners enrolled in school and this year, they will be sitting their PLE-Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE)s. And 2 of the ladies who went through the program later became

leaders within this community. Also, the community respects my opinion, and when there is conflict, they call on me to me a mediateor. I am, therefore, happy to be part of this positive change.”

Joeshph concludes by sharing that.

“There is a certain mama, I was worried about who would translate to her when we were taken to hospital. When she came out, I entered in to see the doctor, and when I tried to inquire from the doctor, the doctor said he could not believe that this mama wasis speaking little English. That is the English they got here from FRC, not atin the primary level.”

In conclusion, the role of literacy in preventing conflict, rebuilding post-conflictpost conflict societies, and improving the lives of refugees to make them more resilient and self-reliant cannot be ignored. To read more about our work in Uganda visit our website <https://pakolaisapu.fi/en/uganda/>



Breaking Barriers; Ssebbowa Farasiko's inspiring journey of Triumph through Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW)

By Teddy Naluwu, Country Coordinator, UNBOUND, Kampala Project

Farasiko is an adult learner from Kijumba, Butiti, Lwanda, Rakai district. At 3 years, he became physically disabled due to Polio. At school, he was bullied by fellow children. "The children used to tease me by imitating how I walk., Tthis discouraged me and I quit school before I learned how to read, write or count."

Farasiko didn't return to school ever after ever-after. He narrates his illiteracy woes, where a friend rescued him from appending his thumbprint on a fake land agreement, which for a piece of land he had purchased. d, after he had been manipulated by the seller who knew that he was illiterate. "Banange! Obutasoma buluma bukulu" meaning, "illiteracy is painful and costly in the old age.

Confronted with illiteracy challenges, Farasiko, enrolled for a 2-years2-years' ICOLEW program which was introduced to his home area by Unbound Kampala, a community development organization. Farasiko is now able to write his name and canis able to read and write with comprehension simple words in Luganda. He is focused on attaining numeracy skills to improve his farm records.

Farasiko's story depicts vulnerabilities the illiterate, more so persons with disabilities face. It further draws duty bearers' attention to strengthening Adult Learning and Education (ALE) by increasing funding for ALE programs as a catalyst for poverty eradication. Farasiko finds difficulty walking to the learning centre and requests a good Samaritan

to get him a Tri-cycle to help him move easily to community engagements.



Breaking barriers: Digital literacy for mutual understanding and peace

By Deborah Namugenyi, Interim Country Manager, Asante Africa Foundation Uganda



Asante Africa Foundation Uganda proudly joins the international community to celebrate International Literacy Day 2024. We promote multilingual education and literacy for mutual understanding and peace. Our Digital Literacy Program empowers young minds to bridge the language gaps and foster harmony through e-books and language learning apps in various languages including English, Kiswahili, Luganda, and Rutooro.

We offer Digital literacy training for girls and boys in schools. We reach out to those out of the formal education settings. Our conviction is that access to online resources and educational content is paramount to harnessing sustainable literacy skills and practices.

In the rural village of Kassanda, Kyenjojo district, 12-year-old Junior, a Rutooro speaker, struggled to communicate and

express himself during club sessions and classes. Provision of digital devices to the club and the entire school helped him learn English through our interactive e-books and language apps. His improved language skills enhanced his relationships and leadership abilities earning him the vice-presidency of our Wezesha Vijana Program school club. He has facilitated sessions within the club in English and Rutooro. This is one of the practical approaches to promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Our Digital Literacy program has reached 2412 lives through our Youth Livelihood, Wezesha Vijana and Accelerated Learning program providing access to digital resources and training in literacy skills. The programs aim to create a culture of understanding and respect where language is no longer a barrier to communication. Read more about our work: <https://asanteafrica.org/>

“ We offer Digital literacy training for girls and boys in schools. We reach out to those out of the formal education settings. Our conviction is that access to online resources and educational content is paramount to harnessing sustainable literacy skills and practices.



The Creative Learning Centres' Success at CRANE

By CRANE

The Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE) have been a beacon of hope for children in Uganda, championing their right to education and safety. Through partnerships with organisations like Viva, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), CRANE has made significant strides in enhancing literacy and numeracy among marginalised girls. Between 2017 and 2023, CRANE supported over 10,923 girls and their families through Creative Learning Centres (CLCs) and various clubs that fostered life skills, career development, and vocational training. These efforts were designed to bridge the gap in education for girls who had dropped out of school and provide them with opportunities to learn in engaging and creative ways. Our Creative Learning Centres helped these out-of-school girls to learn four times faster in numeracy and five times faster in literacy.

One remarkable success story is Sharon's. After losing her parents, Sharon joined a CLC and learned vital skills in literacy, numeracy, and income generation. Using these skills, she helped her grandmother save money to fund her education, leading her to complete a course in

Early Childhood Development. Sharon's dedication and talent were recognized, and she became a teacher at one of CRANE's partner schools. Her passion for education and empowerment didn't stop there; she ran for Youth Councillor and won, demonstrating

her commitment to uplifting other girls. Sharon's journey is a testament to CRANE's impact on transforming lives through education, building self-confidence, and creating brighter futures for Uganda's children.



“Through partnerships with organisations like Viva, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), CRANE has made significant strides in enhancing literacy and numeracy among marginalised girls.”



The Burden of Asking Someone Else to Communicate on Your Behalf

By Martin Turibamwe, ALE Program Manager, Development Companions International (DCI) Uganda

Talk about the world evolving, talk about education, talk about missed /denied opportunities! Remember the story of the cave by Socrates? That story is relevant today more than ever, to have information all around you, and yet you cannot read or understand it. It is heart-breaking having to ask someone else to communicate on your behalf simply because you cannot speak, read, or write in a given language. It all feels like being caged in the dark, only seeing the shadows moving outside that cave!

Development Companions International (DCI) is a non-profit organization, existing to enlighten the lives of those adults who missed out on the opportunity to study, granting them a free chance to learn how to read and write in English and

other local languages, and as well empowering them with numeracy, entrepreneurial skills, and other general knowledge. We primarily target adults, both men and women, the parents of many children, who have keen interest in learning and want to create a different future for their families.

Over the years, more than 1500 adults have passed through our program and taken charge of their own futures, building the economy in their local areas, and impacting the lives of their children. Classes have been held all around the Mt Elgon region, from Bukwo to Bududa, and in Amudat, Jinja, Buikwe, Mukono, Masaka, and Sembabule. We graduate these students every two-and-a-half years. In January this year, we graduated 158 students in Mbale. At graduation, they

demonstrated their knowledge by reading randomly chosen texts while others translated them, and others gave powerful speeches in English. Last year in September 2023, we graduated from a special Luganda class near Katosi in Mukono. Those students were confirmed to be fluent in reading and writing Luganda language, to meet their particular needs.

We believe that each one of us has special skills and talents regardless of the age, and regardless of the opportunities that one might have missed in childhood. But communication can be a limiting factor. Therefore we expose these adults to literacy and we create an environment for them to shine with their God-given potential.



The Situation of Literacy in Uganda as we commemorate the International Literacy day 2024

By Everest Tumwesigye, Commissioner, Community Development and Literacy



Uganda has made significant strides in literacy over recent decades, but challenges persist, particularly in rural and marginalised areas. This year 2024, we are proud to join the rest of the world to reflect on achievements and these challenges as part of the International Literacy Day (ILD).

Uganda has made significant strides in literacy over recent decades, but challenges persist, particularly in rural and marginalised areas. This year 2024, we are proud to join the rest of the world to reflect on achievements and these challenges as part of the International Literacy Day (ILD).

Established by UNESCO in 1967, ILD is observed every September 8th to emphasise literacy's crucial role in individual empowerment and national development. Since 2002, Uganda has used this occasion to advocate for enhanced literacy, especially among adults, and to underscore its importance for national progress. ILD serves as a global reminder of literacy's vital role in fostering equitable,

peaceful, and sustainable societies. It offers a platform to review progress, celebrate achievements, and devise strategies to address remaining challenges.

This year's theme, "Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Social Cohesion and socio-economic Transformation," highlights the role of multilingual education in enhancing understanding, economic opportunities, and social harmony. Our country is progressing. Efforts are underway to promote mother-tongue education as a foundation for learning in formal education as well as addressing Uganda's linguistic diversity to improve literacy engagement. But we need to do more in terms of ensuring access to quality literacy

education services for all. As of 2023, Uganda's adult literacy rate is approximately 76%, with youth literacy at around 88%. Despite improvements, about a quarter of the adult population remains illiterate, indicating the need for continued efforts.

Primary school enrolment has increased due to the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy, achieving over 90% net enrolment. However, secondary education enrollment remains lower due to financial and geographic barriers. Universal Primary and Secondary Education: Initiatives like UPE and Universal Secondary Education (USE) have broadened access to education but still face challenges in quality and retention.

Initiatives such as the Integrated

Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) program have made notable progress. Implemented since 2015 with support from the German Adult Education Association (DVV International), ICOLEW focuses on literacy and numeracy, financial inclusion through Village Saving and Loans Association (VSLA), Livelihood/business skills training through Community Learning Centers (CLCs). Positive outcomes from pilot districts show enhanced literacy, improved self-esteem/confidence, increased savings, improved livelihoods and participation in local leadership.

In solidarity with all our stakeholders Government and Non-Government Organisations such as DVV International, Literacy and Basic Education (LBE), Unbound Kampala, Education Development Initiatives-Uganda, Building Tomorrow, Development Companion International, Academic Institutions, National Adult Education Association of Uganda, Finnish Refugee Council, Refugee Law Project, Read to Learn among others continue to support literacy through all forms of education at Community Learning Centers (CLCs), family literacy programs, book donations, literacy and numeracy, among others.

Several barriers impact literacy efforts:

- **Geographic Disparities:** Rural areas continue to face lower literacy rates due to a number of factors including long distances to schools, isolation and limited resources.
- **Socio-cultural barriers:** Being born in families with illiterate parents/guardians causes low motivation of children to learn thus causing intergenerational

illiteracy

- **Economic Barriers:** High costs for school-related expenses and inadequate resources in impoverished areas affect educational access and quality. The main reasons related to income poverty constitute 65% of reasons for leaving school. In spite of free education (UPE and USE) lack of money to meet school needs e.g school uniforms, scholastic materials and feeding results into school drop out.
- **Language Diversity:** Uganda's multilingual context, with over 40 indigenous languages, complicates educational material development and instruction.
- **Quality of Education:** Inadequate teacher training, outdated curricula, and insufficient resources hinder educational quality.

Future Directions

To advance literacy in Uganda, focus areas include:

- **Improving Educational Quality:** Invest in teacher training, curriculum development, and teaching materials.
- **Enhancing Accessibility:** Address economic and geographic barriers to education.
- **Promoting Multilingual Education:** Develop programs that incorporate local languages into curricula and instructional materials.
- Mobilise, sensitise and empower parents to participate in school management committees so that they support their children to remain in school
- Roll out Adult Learning

and Community education programmes to cover the whole country

International Literacy Day 2024 Activities

The ILD 2024 celebrations will be held on September 12th in Kampala, under a national symposium. The literacy week will run from 1st -7th September, 2024 and will feature a range of activities:

- **Literacy Week (1st-7th September) activities:** Includes literacy boot camp, book donations, reading and writing competitions, graduation of learners and community reading tents.
- **D-Day Activities:** A literacy walk, public gatherings, exhibitions, speeches, panel discussion and media coverage.

The Chief Guest, the Hon. Minister of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, will lead the events, highlighting the importance of literacy in national development

Conclusion

As we approach International Literacy Day 2024, it is crucial to embrace the theme of "Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Socio-Economic Transformation and Social Cohesion." This theme calls for a concerted effort to leverage multilingual education to foster mutual understanding, enhance socio-economic opportunities, and strengthen social cohesion. Together, let us commit to advancing literacy and multilingual education as fundamental pillars for a more inclusive, equitable, and peaceful society.



EDUCATION AND
DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVES UGANDA

BLISSFUL INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY 2024

By Kyeswa John | Promoter (Intern), Literacy and Community
Library | EDI Uganda

At EDI Uganda, we are delighted to participate in the 2024 International Literacy Day Activities in Uganda. Education and literacy at all levels is an inevitable value-addition aspect of life. It helps in building and nurturing empowered communities and individual citizens.

A society that supports adult literacy among its citizens promotes social well-being. Social well-being is the ability of oneself to have healthy relationships. It is about free and authentic interaction amongst individuals and communities. This yields a

sense of belonging to an individual. Social wellbeing is also about a thoughtful mind.

Up to late, Literacy has manifested itself in producing all-around people who can survive in all dimensions of life ranging from political, economic, health, and cultural. This is vividly evident as people's intellectual capacity is boosted logically and professionally in finding sustainable solutions to the challenges in the communities where they stay. EDI Uganda has created such a space where both young and adults

are coherently guided to optimize the available resources (internet, books, games, and sports) so that they can cope with the trend. For more about EDI Uganda's work click here (<https://www.adultslearnuganda.org>)

Governments, ministries, and International agencies should collectively invest and promote sustainable adult education opportunities. Community Libraries should be increased in number but also be well facilitated to promote the positive energy of reading and writing amongst young and adults.

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From Out-of-School to Spelling Bee Champion: How Roots to Rise Changed John's Story

By Lauren Babirye, Building Tomorrow



John (center) and his classmate are crowned the winners of the Mityana District spelling bee and reading contest.

As International Literacy Day 2024 approaches this Sunday, we take a moment to celebrate the work of Building Tomorrow's Community Education Teams who work tirelessly to ensure every child has access to a quality, inclusive education. Building Tomorrow's vision is "literacy and numeracy for all children," and we are excited to share how a moment of triumph for a learner named John moved us one step closer to that goal.

In 2021, John Ssemwogere, who was 12 years old at the time, dropped out of his school in Mityana District due to the long distance between his home and school. For almost a year and a half, John thought he would never return to school to enable him to pursue his

dream of becoming a doctor. During one of his household visits, Patrick Ssebagala, a Cohort 8 Building Tomorrow Fellow, visited John's home and listened to his story.



Roots to Rise (R2R) is Building Tomorrow's signature learning program. It is delivered in school by R2R-trained teachers and in the community by Community Education Volunteers. The program involves interactive and personalized learning to help learners gain critical foundational skills.

Patrick noticed John lacked critical literacy and numeracy skills necessary to continue his education, so he enrolled John in a Roots to Rise camp at Namakomago Primary School, a school closer to home, where John caught up on foundational skills. In August of this year, John used his literacy skills gained during Roots to Rise to win the Mityana District spelling bee and reading competition – an impressive accomplishment!

Congratulations, John! We are so proud that Building Tomorrow's work ensures learners like you can learn to read, write, and spell - and work toward a brighter future!

How the ALESBA is Enhancing Adult Literacy Service Delivery

By Imelda Kyaringabira Engabi, Principal Literacy Officer/ National Coordinator, Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) Programme

Creating an Adult Learning Education System for Uganda:

How the Adult Learning and Education System Building Approach (ALESBA) is Enhancing Adult Literacy Service Delivery enhancing adult literacy service delivery

In Uganda, a new wave of change is sweeping through the field of adult learning and education (ALE), driven by the Adult Learning and Education System Building Approach (ALESBA). This innovative framework is not just a technical shift; it's a profound movement towards multilingual education, which is essential for fostering social cohesion and enabling socio-economic transformation. This article explores how ALESBA is operationalized in Uganda, highlighting its milestones, stakeholder contributions, and the future prospects of this transformative approach.

Advancing Adult Learning and Education in Uganda:

The Impact of the Adult Learning and Education System Building Approach (ALESBA) Approach

In Uganda, a new wave of change is sweeping through the field of Adult Learning and Education, driven by the Adult Learning and Education System Building Approach (ALESBA). The ALESBA framework was adopted in 2020 to create with the aim of creating a comprehensive adult

education system that would effectively facilitate planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the ALE services to meet the needs and aspirations of the target beneficiaries—the, that is, the non-literates and neo-literates. This innovative framework represents a shift from traditional methods, offering a more holistic and structured approach to improving adult education. This article delves into the operationalization of ALESBA in Uganda, exploring its milestones, experiences, stakeholder contributions, and the future prospects of this transformative strategy.

The ALESBA Approach: A New Paradigm

The ALESBA approach was introduced as a response to the limited success of the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) approach, which had been used globally and in Uganda for over 20 decades with a myriad of challenges and gaps that which limited its effectiveness to address the ever-emerging needs of learners. FAL implementation challenges and gaps highlighted the necessity for a comprehensive adult learning and education system capable of developing, funding, monitoring, and supporting adult education at all levels—national, local government, and community.

The ALESBA approach was introduced as a response to

the limited success of the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) approach, which had been used globally and in Uganda for over 20 decades with a myriad of challenges and gaps that which limited its effectiveness to address the ever-emerging needs of learners.

ALESBA's adoption aimed to address these gaps through a methodical, bottom-up approach. The framework unfolds in four distinct phases:

- **Consensus Building:** Establishing a shared vision and commitment among stakeholders.
- **Assessment and Diagnosis:** Identifying existing challenges and opportunities.
- **Alternative Analysis and Design:** Crafting strategies and solutions tailored to local needs.
- **Implementation and Testing:** Applying the strategies in real-world settings and refining them based on feedback.
- **Review, Adjust, and Upscale:** Evaluating outcomes, making necessary adjustments, and scaling successful interventions.

Core Elements and Building Blocks

ALESBA is structured around four key elements, each comprising several building blocks essential for effective implementation:

Enabling Environment:	Institutional Arrangements:	Management Processes:	Technical Processes:
ALE Policy: Guidelines to steer adult learning initiatives.	ALE Implementation Structures: Organizational frameworks for delivering programs.	Participatory Planning Processes: Inclusive approaches to planning.	Localised Curricular: Contextually relevant educational content.
ALE Strategy: A comprehensive plan to achieve long-term goals	Human Resources: Skilled personnel to manage and facilitate ALE programmes	Appropriate Budget and Resource Allocation: Financial and material support.	Clear ALE Programme Design and Methodology: Structured and effective program frameworks.
ALE Programme Implementation Guidelines: Standards for executing programs.	Accountability Mechanisms: Systems to ensure transparency and responsibility.	Monitoring and Evaluation System: Tools to assess program effectiveness.	Capacity Development: Training and support at all levels.
Qualifications Framework: Standards for certifying competencies.	Partnership Structures: Collaborations between state and non-state actors.	Management Information System: Data management and utilization.	Material Development: Creation of educational resources.
Legal Framework: Laws and regulations supporting adult education.		Coordination and Cooperation Processes: Enhancing synergy among stakeholders.	Learner Assessments: Evaluating learner progress and learning outcomes.

Milestones and Impact

The implementation of ALESBA has led to notable achievements in Uganda’s adult learning landscape. One of the most significant milestones is the development of the Non-Formal Adult Learning and Community Education Strategy (NALCES). This strategy provides a strategic direction and outlines interventions, opportunities, and challenges for adult education.

Another milestone is the adoption of the Global Adult Learning and Education Curriculum code named “Curriculum GlobALE” which provides a cross-cultural, output-oriented core curriculum for trainings in the area of adult learning and education. The curriculum has been contextualized to meet various training needs of the adult educators i.e. initial training for facilitators and up-skillingup skilling for supervisors and managers in the quest for professionalization of adult educators.

Despite the complexities and financial challenges associated with ALESBA, the

approach has facilitated several improvements in the adult education system of Uganda:

- Broader Focus: Shifting from a narrow emphasis on functional literacy to a more inclusive view of adult learning and community education.
- Systematic Identification of Issues: Improved identification and addressing of community educational needs and challenges.
- Enhanced Coordination and Collaboration: Better cooperation among stakeholders.
- Capacity Building: Strengthened skills and abilities of individuals and institutions involved in adult learning and community education.
- Improved Planning and Monitoring: More effective and efficient management of adult learning and community education programs.

Future Prospects

While the ALESBA approach has proven effective, ongoing challenges remain, including financial constraints and the need for continuous adaptation. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social

Development as the main driver for the framework is focusing on testing implementation with the aim of refining the strategy, addressing emerging issues, and ensuring sustainable support for adult learning and community education initiatives. The lessons will be used in the planned rollout of ICOLEW programme through Community Learning Centers establishment across the country to in order to effectively contribute to the transformational goal of Uganda by 2040.

In conclusion, the adoption of ALESBA in Uganda represents a significant advancement in the field of adult education. By addressing past challenges and embracing a comprehensive, systematic approach, Uganda has laid a solid foundation for the continued growth and success of its adult learning and community education system. All stakeholders are urged to continue collaborating and building upon these achievements, so that the prospects for further improvement and impact remain promising.



Fostering Global Citizenship through Multilingual Education at Eco-Bloom Montessori

By Luwam Araya, Director Eco-Bloom Montessori International School

“Promoting multilingual education: literacy for mutual understanding and peace” is more than just a slogan at Eco-Bloom Montessori International School—it’s a core philosophy. Here, we believe that education transcends the classroom, aiming to create a truly inclusive environment where students from all backgrounds can thrive. Our multilingual programs are carefully crafted

to enhance communication and understanding, helping students feel a sense of belonging as they adapt to new communities.

But our commitment to education doesn’t stop there. We are equally proud of our outreach initiatives, particularly our strong partnership with our sister school, CEVIC-Uganda. By involving our students, and the broader Eritrean and Ugandan communities

in projects that promote cross-cultural collaboration, we extend learning beyond textbooks. A key highlight of these efforts is our initiative to craft and sell handmade pots, seedlings, and artifacts. Proceeds support educational resources for CEVIC Uganda, while also teaching our students about responsibility, empathy, and the power they have to make a difference.



At Eco-Bloom, we strive to nurture not only academic excellence but also social consciousness and environmental sustainability. Our unique programs and outreach initiatives empower students to become

compassionate global citizens, fully aware of the importance of community support and cultural exchange. Together, we are cultivating a brighter, more interconnected future.

Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW): A New Era in ALCE

By Imelda Kyaringabira Engabi | Principal Literacy Officer / National Coordinator, ICOLEW Programme Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development



Post-independence Uganda has witnessed a significant evolution in its approach to adult learning and education. Initially driven by the quest to address basic literacy and numeracy, the country's educational programs have progressively adapted to focus on functional literacy and now embrace a more integrated approach. A standout example of this transformation is the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) programme. Launched with the support of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) and DVV International, ICOLEW represents a pivotal shift towards leveraging adult education for socio-economic transformation.

Initiated in 2016, ICOLEW represents a comprehensive effort to transform adult education into a tool for wealth creation and community

development. The programme was conceptualized and implemented with the support of DVV International, leveraging their extensive experience with the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) model, along with insights gained from Uganda's Functional Literacy Programme (FALP) and other related projects.

Philosophy and Impact of ICOLEW

ICOLEW is built on a philosophy that combines adult learning with practical, community-focused interventions. The programme's core tenets include:

- **Empowerment Through Education:** Providing adult learners with knowledge and skills that directly contribute to their economic and social well-being.

“Initially driven by the quest to address basic literacy and numeracy, the country's educational programs have progressively adapted to focus on functional literacy and now embrace a more integrated approach.”

- **Community Engagement:** Ensuring that learning programs are designed and implemented with active participation from local communities based on their most pressing issues
- **Integrated Approach:** Combining literacy and numeracy with Village Saving and Loans Association (VSLAs), Livelihoods/Business skills training and development, vocational training and other resources to create comprehensive support systems for learners.

Community Learning Centers (CLCs) establishment as hubs for knowledge and skills acquisition and application as well as promoting integrated service delivery across the sectors

Pilot Phase and Expansion

ICOLEW began as a pilot project in 2016, following a year of joint preparatory work. It was initially rolled out in the districts of Namayingo, Mpigi, and Iganga. The program aimed to integrate adult learning with practical skills development, enabling participants to enhance their livelihoods and contribute to their communities’ economic growth. The success of the pilot led to the program’s expansion to Nwoya in 2018, Mityana and Rukungiri in 2023 further solidifying its impact.

Achievements

In the participating districts, ICOLEW has already started to show positive results.

- **Literacy and Empowerment:** A total of 5,603 learners, including 1,303 men and 4,300 women, are now proficient in reading, writing, and basic numeracy in their

local languages. This newfound competence has boosted their self-esteem and confidence, leading to some being elected to Local Council and Women Councils.

- **Savings and Financial Inclusion:** Through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), a culture of saving has been inculcated among the participants. The literacy groups have opened group bank accounts, embracing formal banking and investing in productive activities.
- **Community Learning Centers (CLCs):** Established in fourteen sub-counties across six ICOLEW implementing districts, CLCs have become key hubs for continuous education and integrated service delivery. They offer a range of services including basic education, library and information services, community development, health and hygiene promotion, demonstration of technologies, food security, conflict resolution, and early childhood development.
- **Capacity Building:** Continuous training has enhanced the technical skills of staff in the Community Development

and Literacy Department, improving their ability to design and manage community programs. Facilitators have also received training to better deliver the ICOLEW programme, and 80 Village and Group Action Plans (VAPs and GAPs) have improved com

- **Improved agricultural practices:** Through demonstration of new technologies and modern methods of farming participants are getting better agricultural yields leading to improved incomes.

Participants in the peri-urban who have no land have also initiated small-scale enterprises.

The ICOLEW programme represents a significant advancement in Uganda’s adult education landscape. By integrating education with practical skills development and community engagement, ICOLEW is not only addressing literacy gaps but also contributing to broader socioeconomic transformation. As Uganda moves forward, the lessons learned from ICOLEW pilot districts can serve as a model for other districts, reinforcing the power of adult education as a driver for positive change.





College of Education and External Studies



**Prof. Anthony Muwagga Mugagga, Principal,
College of Education and External Studies**

The College of Education and External Studies, along with the entire Makerere University community, joins Uganda and the global community in celebrating International Literacy Day (ILD) 2024. This year's theme, 'Promoting Multilingual Education: Literacy for Mutual Understanding and Peace,' resonates deeply with our vision and mission at Makerere University. Our strategic plan (2020/2021-2024/2025) envisions Makerere as a thought leader in knowledge generation for societal transformation and development. Multilingual education is a powerful tool for achieving socioeconomic transformation, particularly in a diverse society like Uganda, with over 70 dialects spoken across the country. Literacy and numeracy skills in these dialects

are vital to ensure that no one is left behind.

Makerere University is committed to supporting the government and other partners in developing primers and learning tools for all Ugandans in their specific languages, as well as cross-border languages such as Kiswahili, English, Arabic, French, German, and Spanish. Promoting multilingual education is crucial for fostering mutual understanding, cultural appreciation, and peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society. It enables individuals to access information, participate fully in civic life, and contribute to the nation's development.

The College of Education and External Studies (CEES) is dedicated to promoting education in all forms. Our mission is "To excel in the

preparation of teachers, other education practitioners, adult education providers, community workers, and providers of open, distance, and e-learning." Currently, we train educational professionals across various levels, from Early Childhood Development (ECD) to Higher Education, as well as Adult and Community Education (ACE). Beyond our campus programs, we extend our services to communities through extra-mural and distance learning programs.

We are committed to creating a knowledge society that addresses local and international development needs, influences policy formulation, and maintains the quality of our programs and graduates. We are also committed to creating a knowledge-based society and fostering communities of practice that address challenges arising from the implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE). By increasing educational opportunities for adult learners, influencing policy formulation, and responding to both local and international development needs, we aim to play an active role in the community. Amidst growing competition, we remain dedicated to maintaining the quality of our programs, services, and graduates. Together, we will achieve a fully literate society for Uganda. Together, we shall attain a 100% literate society for Uganda.

Makerere University to document ALE efforts in an edited book

By Twine Bananuka, PhD (Senior Lecturer, Makerere University)



Makerere University (Mak) has commenced efforts to document efforts in adult learning and education (ALE) in Uganda. One of the noted challenges to literacy and generally ALE in the country has been limited research and reporting of efforts by various stakeholders. Many efforts pass unreported, but also uncoordinated.

The proposed book title is 'Contemporary issues in Adult Learning and Education in Uganda'. Book chapters are being organised under five themes, that is; 1) Historical ALE efforts in Uganda, 2) Policy, partnerships and funding 3) Global debates on ALE/Professionalisation/disciplinary/digital revolution 4) Lifelong Learning and Socio-economic transformation e.g. Recognition of prior learning, qualifications framework, parenting, workplace learning 5) Community engagement and participation, advocacy, equity, and inclusion.

The call for abstracts attracted a total of 29, and these have been carefully evaluated and successful ones identified. The book is expected to be published by May 31, 2025. The University is grateful to DVV International, our long time partners who graciously accepted to co-fund the book. The book will be edited by two acclaimed academics,

that is, Prof. George Laadah Openjuru and Dr. Samuel Siminyu. Professor George Openjuru is a professor of adult education and the current Vice Chancellor, Gulu University. Dr. Samuel Siminyu is a lecturer and English editor based at Makerere University.





Empowering youth through multilingual literacy for global leadership and sustainable development

By Musa Kasozi, Country Director- Youth After School Initiative (YASI) in the capacity of the Managing Editor



In Uganda, a nation marked by linguistic diversity, multilingual education and literacy are essential for socio-economic transformation. The ability to read, write, and communicate in multiple languages unlocks opportunities and fosters global engagement. The Youth After School Initiative (YASI) champions this cause by integrating multilingualism into its core programmes, aiming to transform young people into active global participants.

YASI's approach extends beyond basic literacy to include comprehensive capacity building, advocacy, and empowerment. The organisation targets various groups, including In-School Students, Graduates and Young Professionals, and Out-of-School Youth, with special attention to marginalized

groups such as adolescent girls and refugees.

YASI's programmes align with Uganda's national theme of "Promoting Multilingual Education and Literacy for Socio-Economic Transformation. Through its Human Capital and Sustainable Livelihoods programme, YASI emphasizes Multilingualism as crucial element for job readiness and employability. The Youth, Women, and Community Empowerment programme, leverages literacy to help young people access information and advocate for their rights in leadership, entrepreneurship and business, accessing quality health and wellness services among others.

The Governance, Policy,

and Advocacy programme enhances youth participation in policy-making, while the Environmental Sustainability programme fosters environmental literacy and climate resilience across linguistic groups. Collaborations with partners like the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and UNDP, Volunteer Service Overseas International (VSO), AIESEC, Heifer International Uganda, etc support global citizenship through initiatives like YASI Worldwide Wanderlust, which offers cross-cultural exchanges and global tours.

YASI calls for continued support in promoting multilingual literacy to empower Uganda's youth, driving socio-economic transformation and global impact.

The Youth, Women, and Community Empowerment programme, leverages literacy to help young people access information and advocate for their rights in leadership, entrepreneurship ..



Eulogising Uganda's Inclusive ALE Champion

By Robert Jjuuko, PhD | Facilitator, Eulogy Editorial Team



I am delighted to invite you to read the tremendous tributes to the late Fred Kisirikko Lukabwe. This remarkable champion of inclusive development left a mark on Uganda's adult learning and education (ALE) landscape. The country's ALE fraternity will always remember and pursue his equity and disability inclusion ideals.

Driven by profound social justice principles and values in his more than 50-year career, Fred transcended typical community development work. He rose to become a profound social activist and a passionate campaigner of culture and local languages as instruments for meaningful learning. I trust that reading this eulogy of 21 tributes by

colleagues and relatives including his daughters and widow is a perfect choice especially now as we gear up to mark the 2024 International Literacy Day. Why? Partly because of the befitting theme "Promoting multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace". Fred was a real champion of multilingual education.

**Robert Jjuuko, PhD | Facilitator,
Eulogy Editorial Team | Aug 2024**



The Role of Mother Tongue in Child Education and Upbringing

By Joyce Nairuba, Communications Manager | LBE

Holistic child development requires parents as partners. The over 65 indigenous languages of Uganda should be used as a resource. Language shapes a child's identity, learning capacity and social development. In the early years, the mother tongue environment provided by parents forms the foundation for future learning.

Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LBE) promotes mother tongue in children's upbringing and education in marginalised communities of West Nile and Northern Uganda. LBE focuses on Early Childhood Development (ECD) for children under 3, School readiness, and Transition from home to school. The Ministry of Gender's 2024 ECD National Situation Analysis highlights a gap in Uganda's learning framework for children aged six months to two years. LBE's work emphasises that oracy in mother tongue, developed through activities like lullabies, rhymes, riddling is critical to children's later

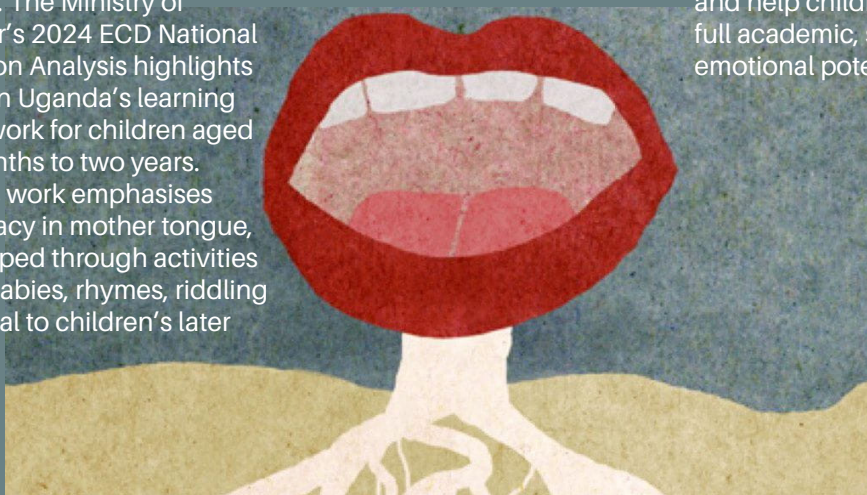
mastery of literacy and numeracy.

Uganda's early primary grades Thematic Curriculum uses mother tongue instruction to provide a strong foundation for learning new concepts and languages. However, many ECD centres use English as the medium of instruction, causing a language discrepancy during transition and diminishing the parents' role since most homes don't use English.

LBE's mother-tongue based Family Basic Education approach engages parents, primary and pre-school children through Home Learning Centres (HLCs) interventions. These include

HLCs - Village Savings and Loaning Activities Plus parenting and financial literacy, Child - to - Child play-based learning, storytelling and shared book reading. HLCs equipped with local language books and materials, are run in 87 locations across Koboko, Terego, Yumbe, Obongi, Nwoya and Gulu districts. Over 2,000 children and more than 2,000 parents have been reached.

Children who communicate in their mother tongue express themselves better, strengthening emotional bonds and fostering cognitive development. Despite progress, more work is needed to promote mother tongue-based education and help children reach their full academic, social, and emotional potential.



Germany Parliamentary Session hears Uganda's ALE success story

By Tumwesigye Everest, Community | Commissioner for Community Development and Literacy, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development



In June 2024, I was privileged to address the Germany Parliamentary Session in Berlin. DVV International published an overview of my presentation. I invite you to read this unedited account of this important encounter with the Germany policy makers who endorse their country's funding commitment to ICOLEW.

During a recent parliamentary session in Berlin, Germany, the Commissioner for Community Development and Literacy at the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development in Uganda shared significant insights into Uganda's Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in the presence of the Minister of the German Ministry of Economic Development and

Cooperation. The event, titled "Hardly Known. Often Used. Social Structures for Social Challenges Worldwide," featured esteemed guests including the Director of DVV International, Uwe Gartenschlaeger, Ms. Gwendolyn T. Pang, Secretary General of the Philippine Red Cross, and Ms. Camila Japp from DGRV Brazil, alongside Minister Svenja Schulze.

A key focus of the evening was a presentation by Mr. Everest Tumwesigye, he provided a comprehensive overview of Uganda's efforts in ALE, highlighting the pivotal role of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) and the collaborative efforts with DVV International. The discussion emphasised the transformative impact of these

initiatives on communities and the necessity for continued support to sustain and expand these programs. Key areas discussed included successful approaches towards the establishment of a holistic national ALE system, the integration of multisectoral adult education services and the measurable milestones achieved through the about 10 years' journey of cooperation with DVV International

A Collaborative Journey Towards Educational Empowerment

Nine years ago, Uganda started a partnership with DVV International, aiming to build a comprehensive national system of adult education. This collaboration has brought together government ministries,



departments, and agencies in a unified effort to address the educational needs of out-of-school youths and adults. The Adult Learning and Education (ALES) System encompasses various elements that collectively create synergies for sustainable, effective, and efficient adult learning and community education programs.

Building a Sustainable Framework. Mr. Tumwesigye emphasised the importance of achieving sustainability through technical and financial support embedded within governmental structures. As a result of this support, the Integrated Community Learning and Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) Project was piloted as a national flagship program. Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are a vital aspect of the program, ensuring the provision of needs-oriented integrated adult education services at the community level, including basic education and literacy, health, agricultural skills, vocational training, and more. The Commissioner facilitated the proposal for the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development to allocate a budget code for the ICOLEW program, thereby ensuring nationwide implementation and the expansion of CLCs.

Milestones and Achievements

Apart from the development, piloting and upscaling of ICOLEW programme, the progress in building the ALE system is marked by additional milestones:

Consensus Building and Peer Review:

A peer review process conducted in 2021 laid

the groundwork for consensus on the current state and future direction of adult education in Uganda.

National Strategy: The launch of the National Non-Formal Adult Learning and Community Education Strategy in 2023 signifies a significant achievement, supported by system assessments and collaborative efforts.

Community Learning Centres:

Establishing 11 functional CLCs across the country has brought education and essential services closer to underserved communities, embodying the concept of lifelong learning.

Impact on Communities

The ALE initiatives have had a profound impact on communities:

Increased Literacy Rates:

The adult literacy rate has improved from 72.2% in FY 2014/15 to 74% in FY 2019/20, empowering more individuals with the skills needed for socio-economic development.

Financial Literacy and Economic Empowerment:

Adult learners have cultivated a culture of savings, borrowing, and investing, with cumulative savings amounting to Uganda shillings 740,332,700 (approximately \$197,422) between 2016/17 and 2018/19.

Gender Equality and Empowerment:

Educational programs have increased awareness of women's rights, improved self-esteem, and fostered gender equality, leading to greater female participation in governance and decision-making.

Community Engagement:

Communities are more actively participating in government programs, contributing to sustainable development and improved governance at local levels.

The Need for Continued Support

Mr. Tumwesigye emphasised the critical need for ongoing support to sustain and expand these initiatives. "DVV International, with the support of BMZ and the Social Structure Promotion Instrument, has been able to build a long-term partnership with the Ministry and all relevant stakeholders in the process," he noted. The collaborative efforts with DVV International have been instrumental in building a solid foundation for adult education in Uganda. Continued support will ensure the further development of the ALE system, reaching more individuals and communities, and fostering socio-economic transformation.

As we reflect on these achievements, it is clear that the work done so far has laid a robust groundwork for the future.

"Community Learning Centres bring education closer to the people and they bring to life the concept of lifelong learning,"

Mr. Tumwesigye explained.

The ALE initiatives are more than just educational programs; they are catalysts for change, empowering individuals and communities, and driving national development. It is crucial that these efforts receive the necessary support to continue making a significant impact.

Iganga District commends Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development & DVV International

By Mpiya Stephen/ DIC Iganga)

Iganga district local government commends the Ministry of gender, labour and social development and DVV International through integrated community learning for wealth creation (ICOLEW)

programme for transforming the socio- economic status of our communities. The ICOLEW programme through its components; numeracy and literacy enhancement, VSLA, LST/BST, community learning

centres and community development, has empowered many learners with literacy skills and mindset change in areas of political, cultural and socio-economic development.

1. Nabitende community learning centre Nabitende clc structure before renovation



2. Nabitende structure after renovation and ICOLEW learners graduating in 2019



3. Early childhood development (ECD) programme in progress currently with enrolment of 162 of which 99 are girls and 63 are boys:



4. Agricultural officer Nakigo Sub county demonstrating on planting soya bean during livelihood skills training(LST) as a way to improve crop production



5. Nakigo CLC before being commissioning on 19th september 2023



6. Commissioning of Nakigo CLC by RDC Iganga district and awarding of certificates to ICOLEW facilitators



Empowering Communities through Literacy: The Read to Learn Foundation's Transformative Impact



In a world where education serves as a gateway to opportunity, the Read to Learn Foundation stands at the forefront of the literacy movement in Uganda. As a women-led, indigenous non-profit organization, the foundation is committed to advancing early literacy development and empowering communities, ensuring that every child, regardless of socio-economic background, has access to quality education.

Founded with a vision to create a world where no child is left behind in the journey to literacy, the Read to Learn Foundation has, over the years, built a comprehensive network

of literacy programs. These programs are designed to inspire a love for reading, foster critical thinking, and nurture a lifelong passion for learning. Through its dynamic team and partnerships with organizations such as the US Embassy, UNESCO, and Global Fund for Children, the foundation is making strides in addressing Uganda's literacy challenges.

Innovative Programs Driving Change

At the heart of the Read to Learn Foundation's work are its diverse literacy programs, which reach children from early childhood through secondary school, with a strong focus on underserved communities.

As a women-led, indigenous non-profit organization, the foundation is committed to advancing early literacy development and empowering communities, ensuring that every child, regardless of socio-economic background, has access to quality education.

Some of the flagship programs include:

- 1. In-School Book Clubs and Clinics:** These clubs are designed to cultivate a reading culture among students. Through activities such as storytelling, book discussions, creative writing, and illustration, students develop a deeper understanding of literature while honing their communication and critical thinking skills. The program is active in both public and private schools across Uganda, creating inclusive spaces where young learners can thrive.
- 2. Community Book Clinics:** Operating in refugee camps and rural settlements, these clinics offer reading sessions and distribute educational materials to children with limited access to books. The program empowers community members to act as literacy champions, facilitating learning in environments where resources are scarce.
- 3. Library Construction and Renovation:** Recognizing that access to reading materials is a key barrier to literacy, the foundation has built and renovated libraries in rural areas. These libraries serve as safe spaces for children to explore books and expand their knowledge.

- 4. Book Drive Store:** This sustainability initiative ensures that 20% of the store's profits support the foundation's operations. It also promotes a culture of reading by making books affordable and accessible to Ugandan families.

Technology and Literacy for the Future

In a digital era, Read to Learn Foundation is harnessing technology to bridge the literacy gap. The foundation is developing the SOMA app, an AI-powered multilingual reading app that offers e-books, audiobooks, and animated stories in both international and local African languages. This initiative aims to make literacy more accessible and engaging for children and parents, while supporting educators with innovative tools to enhance the learning experience.

Impact and Success

Since its inception, Read to Learn Foundation has reached thousands of children, teachers, and community members across Uganda. The impact of its literacy programs is evident in the improved reading skills, heightened engagement, and increased school attendance among children who participate. By focusing on marginalized and disadvantaged communities, the foundation is contributing to the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4: Quality Education, Goal 5: Gender Equality, and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Through collaborations with schools, libraries, and international partners, Read to Learn Foundation is not only fostering literacy but also empowering communities to take charge of their educational journeys. The organization's emphasis on multilingual education ensures that children can learn in their mother tongues, reinforcing cultural identity while building a strong foundation for academic success.

The Importance of Literacy

Literacy is more than just the ability to read and write—it is the foundation upon which individuals can build their futures, unlocking doors to economic empowerment, social cohesion, and personal growth. At the Read to Learn Foundation, literacy is seen as a tool for transformation, creating opportunities for all children, particularly those in underprivileged communities, to rise out of poverty and achieve their full potential.

As we celebrate International Literacy Day, the Read to Learn Foundation continues its mission to make literacy a reality for every child. With an unwavering commitment to innovation.

Through collaborations with schools, libraries, and international partners, Read to Learn Foundation is not only fostering literacy but also empowering communities to take charge of their educational journeys.

Addressing Illiteracy and Enhancing Skills in Uganda: The Nyakagyeme Regional Model Community Learning Center

By Kyokutamba Pamela, Senior Assistant Secretary, Nyakagyeme Subcounty, Rukungiri District

Illiteracy in Uganda extends beyond the inability to read and write; it encompasses a broader range of challenges, including the lack of essential skills required for managing daily life tasks. This gap in skills contributes to the slow adoption of technology and hinders economic transformation, particularly in modern agricultural practices. The pressing question is whether increased productivity and sustainable growth can be achieved through formal education or through targeted non-formal learning, skill enhancement and development.

In response to this challenge, the Government of Uganda (GOU), in partnership with DVV International, has prioritized increasing access to adult education and skill development. Through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, efforts are being made to leverage collective resources and strengthen institutional capacities to foster effective participation in social and economic transformation. This approach has bolstered acceptance of government programs like the Parish Development Model (PDM), thereby reaching more learners and addressing their life challenges.

The Integrated Community learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) program has been

transformative for residents of Nyakagyeme Sub County in Rukungiri District and the broader western region of Uganda. Since its inception, the Nyakagyeme Community Learning Centre (CLC) has made significant strides in offering a variety of programs, including Tailoring, Community Empowerment Groups (CEGs), Computer Skills Training, and Mindset Change Programs. These initiatives aim to transition beneficiaries from subsistence activities to commercial production, thereby increasing household incomes.

Notably, the ICOLEW Program has pioneered Livelihood and Business Skills Training and Support through food production projects. For example, two CEG learners trained in tomato and vegetable cultivation are now harvesting substantial quantities for both home consumption and sale, demonstrating the benefits of technology adoption and

experiential learning with support from technical experts like Agriculture Extension Staff.

Looking ahead, the CLC plans to expand its impact through several key initiatives:

- **Poultry Enterprise:** Establishing a poultry enterprise for CEGs with support from PDM funding.
- **Matoke Growing:** Demonstrating best practices in matoke cultivation, utilizing diverse varieties to enhance yields.
- **Vegetable Production:** Leveraging a micro-scale irrigation scheme to grow vegetables out of season, thus boosting production and availability.

These efforts underscore the CLC's commitment to empowering communities, improving livelihoods, and driving economic growth through accessible education and skill development.

...two CEG learners trained in tomato and vegetable cultivation are now harvesting substantial quantities for both home consumption and sale, demonstrating the benefits of technology adoption and experiential learning with support from technical experts like Agriculture Extension Staff.

Enhancing Community Development: The Impact of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in Nwoya District

By Akena Geoffrey, District Community Development Officer- Nwoya District Local Government



Pabali Regional Model Community Learning Center, Anaka Subcounty, Nwoya District Local Government

Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are pivotal community-based institutions established at the parish level to provide lifelong learning opportunities and integrated services aimed at socio-economic transformation and improving the quality of life for local communities. These centers are managed by local communities with technical support from Local Governments, the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development and Partners.

CLCs in Nwoya offer a wide range of services, including:-

- **Educational Services:**

Functional Numeracy and Literacy.

- **Livelihood and Business Skills Development and Support:** Demonstration gardens, business development services, and livelihood skills training.
- **Vocational Training:** Apprenticeship programs.
- **Financial Services:** Village Saving and Loan Associations.
- **Community Engagement:** Community radio, library, digital television, meeting rooms, sports and recreation activities, and grievance redress services.

“Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are pivotal community-based institutions established at the parish level to provide lifelong learning opportunities and integrated services aimed at socio-economic transformation ...”

Community-Based Facilitators at CLCs provide daily guidance, linking community members with government staff and development partners. This setup helps residents acquire knowledge, develop skills, network with service providers, participate in community planning, receive updates on development programs, and address grievances.

“How Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are bridging the gap in effective and efficient Implementation of the Parish Development Model Strategy in Nwoya District Local Government”

The Parish Development Model (PDM) is a key government strategy that aims to decentralize services to the parish level, the lowest administrative unit. While the PDM requires parishes to have headquarters for service

delivery, not all parishes currently have these facilities, creating challenges in coordinating PDM activities.

CLCs address these challenges by serving as entry points for community activities, simplifying access to PDM services. In Nwoya District, for example, four CLCs have been established across various parishes. These centers facilitate PDM activities, including community sensitization, enterprise selection, training, beneficiary profiling, registration, and disbursement of funds. They also serve as offices for SACCO leaders who manage enterprise group activities from these centers.

Overall, CLCs have become multi-purpose venues for community development, promoting constructive dialogue, enhancing trust in government services,

improving quality of life, and fostering coordination among community members and service providers. They have contributed to increased community participation in government programs, better management of integrated services, enhanced resource mobilization, improved livelihoods, and better literacy skills.

With positive outcomes evident in Nwoya and other districts, the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development is working to expand the CLC model nationwide. Supported by DVV International, a German adult education organization, the Ministry has established 14 CLCs across six local governments, including Nwoya, Iganga, Rukungiri, Mityana, Namayingo, and Mpigi, aiming to extend these benefits across the country.



CLCs have become multi-purpose venues for community development, promoting constructive dialogue, enhancing trust in government services, improving quality of life, and fostering coordination among community members and service providers. They have contributed to increased community participation in government programs, better management of integrated services, enhanced resource mobilization, improved livelihoods, and better literacy skills.

Uganda's Journey to Empowering Communities

By Vanessa Mutesi Kyalimpa

While education is often associated with children and young adults, adult education plays a critical role in national development. In Uganda, it has become a cornerstone for social and economic transformation. At a recent international event in Berlin, Uganda's Commissioner for Community Development and Literacy, Mr. Everest Tumwesigye, highlighted the nation's progress in Adult Learning and Education (ALE).

In 2014, Uganda partnered with DVV International, an organization focused on advancing adult education globally. This collaboration, led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (MGLSD), has been instrumental in creating a national adult education system. The system aims to meet the educational needs of adults and out-of-school youth, especially in underserved communities.

A key initiative under this system is the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) project. ICOLEW takes a holistic approach, integrating literacy, vocational skills, health education, and livelihood training. Community Learning Centers (CLCs), established through this project, serve as hubs for tailored learning services based on each community's specific needs.

Uganda's ALE system is built on the principle of lifelong learning—education that extends beyond formal schooling. CLCs, now active in 11 districts, bring this vision to life by providing continuous learning opportunities, from basic literacy to vocational training. By decentralizing education, Uganda is not only improving literacy rates but also equipping adults with practical skills for economic participation.

The impact of these efforts is evident. Since the launch of the ICOLEW project, Uganda's adult literacy rate has risen from 72.2% in 2015 to 74% in 2020. While the increase might seem modest, the benefits for individuals and communities are significant. Adults who once struggled with basic literacy now manage small businesses and engage more effectively with government services.

Financial literacy programs within the ALE framework have further empowered learners. Between 2016 and 2019, adult learners saved over 740 million Ugandan shillings (around \$197,000), showcasing the financial empowerment that education can bring. Moreover, ALE has made strides in gender equality. Women who participate in these programs report increased self-esteem and greater involvement in community governance.

Despite these successes, Mr. Tumwesigye stressed that Uganda's ALE system is still in its early stages and needs continued support to grow. "Community Learning Centers bring education closer to the people," he noted. "But we must ensure these centers have the resources to thrive."

The partnership between Uganda and DVV International, supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), has laid a solid foundation for adult education. However, ongoing investment is crucial to scale the program and reach more Ugandans.

Uganda's experience shows that adult education is more than just teaching literacy—it's about unlocking the potential of entire communities. Through integrated learning, individuals gain skills that enhance their livelihoods, foster societal participation, and contribute to national development. Educated citizens are also more likely to engage in dialogue and problem-solving, promoting peace and social cohesion.

As Uganda continues on this path, its progress in ALE could offer valuable lessons for other nations. Adult education, once an afterthought, is emerging as a powerful tool for national transformation—a key to unlocking the potential of nations.

Why Adult Education is Uganda's Key to Unlocking Marginalized Potential

By Vanessa Mutesi Kyalimpa

In the rural district of Bugiri, 54-year-old Ziyaada Kagoya stands in her garden, her hands weathered from years of hard work. Her eyes reflect pride for raising four children, but regret for never learning how to read or write. "I've missed many blessings," she says in Lusoga. "I couldn't read to receive government benefits. My children help me, but I wish I could do it on my own."

Ziyaada's experience is not unique. Across Uganda, nearly 4 million people, predominantly women in rural areas, face the challenges of illiteracy. This educational gap severely limits access to essential services, economic opportunities, and social justice.

In response, the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (MGLSD) has introduced several adult literacy programs aimed at uplifting marginalized communities. The Adult Functional Literacy (AFL) program, in collaboration with civil society organizations, offers adults like Ziyaada a second chance at education and life.

While Uganda's national literacy rate stands at 76.5%, rural areas tell a different story. In some regions, illiteracy rates soar to 30% or higher, with women and older generations most affected. Illiteracy keeps many trapped in cycles of poverty and prevents access to basic rights.

For women like Ziyaada, the inability to read means relying on others for healthcare instructions, legal documents, and business decisions.

Uganda's Constitution guarantees the right to education for all, regardless of age. Adult education is not just a privilege—it's a right. The Ministry of Gender is working to ensure older adults like Ziyaada get the education they missed, offering opportunities for learning later in life.

Adult education provides a lifeline for those forced into adult responsibilities too early. Christine and Christopher, a couple from Nwoya District, are a testament to this. Graduates of the ICOLEW Programme, they not only learned to read and write but also gained skills to manage their small farm.

"We can now sign our documents and manage our farm better," Christine said.

"It has brought us closer and more involved in community activities." Their journey, alongside 2,000 others, showcases the impact of the program in empowering rural communities.

Historically, adult education in Uganda has been sidelined in favor of formal schooling. However, the growing focus on adult literacy highlights its crucial role in national development. Particularly in

rural areas, adult education is transforming lives by bridging the literacy gap.

The benefits of adult education extend beyond individual learners. Studies show that literacy programs contribute to economic growth. In districts where adult education programs have been implemented, household incomes rose by 25%, according to a 2022 UBOS report.

For women, literacy offers a voice in decision-making at home and in the community.

Challenges remain. Many adults, especially in rural areas, face difficulty attending classes due to distance, chores, and social stigma. To combat this, the Ministry has introduced flexible learning models like evening and weekend classes, radio lessons, and mobile libraries.

As Uganda works toward becoming a middle-income country by 2040, adult education plays a critical role in that vision. Literacy is more than reading and writing—it is about empowerment and inclusion.

For these and many others, adult education is a second chance. The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development's initiatives are not only changing individual lives—they are reshaping Uganda's future, one learner at a time.

DVV International - A trusted global actor in promoting multilingual adult education and Literacy

By Caesar Kyebakola, Country Director, DVV International

The concept of Globalisation is to some, still an imaginary expression of the interconnectedness between different 'worlds' but the reality remains that vast as it is, innovation and invention continues to shrink this planet earth into an even smaller village. As humanity continues struggling for space in this multidimensional and seemingly narrow global village, our intrinsic and extrinsic identity still hangs primarily on the language we go home to, yet this may not be enough to facilitate navigation into the diverse social cultural and economic contexts of daily living. The situation becomes even more complex in educational settings, especially formal education with predetermined languages of instruction.

Numerous studies have shown a compelling connection between the language spoken at home - be it mother tongue, local language, home language as experts often categorise it, and the literacy learning outcomes. As a global actor in the promotion of adult education and literacy, DVV International appreciates, advocates for and demonstrates multilingualism in adult education and literacy programming together with our partners the world over. Uganda, as one of our over 30 partner countries, is home to over 70 languages including one formal but foreign language - English.



It's also important to note that majority of Ugandans prefer interacting through their indigenous languages over the formal language. The situation can even be more sophisticated where in a single language, you find different dialects, making it an even more complicated situation for literacy programming.

At DVV International, priority is given to local context, which context includes local languages, and in our literacy programming, together with our partners in Uganda, we consider the language of instruction to be that which is commonly used in socio-economic interactions within a particular community. We also appreciate inadequacy of a single language in promoting constructive dialogue between and among cultures. So, we consider exploring additional languages to facilitate this interaction and promote global competitiveness.

As we celebrate international literacy day, 2024, we join all stakeholders in Uganda and across the globe to reflect on

this year's theme of "promoting multilingual education and literacy for cohesion and social economic transformation", take stock of DVV International's contributions like facilitating literacy skills acquisition for over 5,000 Ugandans and expanding literacy learning spaces through establishment of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) together with our lead partner - the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development across all regions of Uganda among other.

We further invite development actors to reflect on the subsisting challenges; that over 10 million Ugandans are still illiterate, to prioritise literacy in their development programming to enable literacy to take its place of a foundational skills on which all other skills are anchored. For literacy promotes social cohesion, fosters mutual understanding, reduces marginalization, promotes access to economic opportunities, promotes civic participation and access to services, among other benefits.

Empowering Lives through Literacy and Vocational Training: The Inspiring Journey of Ms. Salama Nandi, an ICOLEW programme Graduate

By Mathew Bwire, District ICOLEW Coordinator, Namayingo District Local Government

When Ms. Salama Nandi first joined the Community Empowerment Group (CEG) in Madowa 'B,' she had very little to her name. With limited education and even fewer opportunities, her future appeared bleak. However, Nandi's story took a transformative turn thanks to the literacy and numeracy enhancement skills provided by the ICOLEW program.

In the initial phase of her involvement with the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), Nandi managed to save Uganda Shillings 650,000. For her, this amount was not just a sum of money but a seed for her dreams. With her new found savings, Nandi invested in cassava cultivation and the sale of second-hand clothes. Her entrepreneurial spirit blossomed, and with the profits earned, she constructed a modest two-room house.

The introduction of vocational skills training at the Madowa Regional Model Community Learning Center (CLC) presented Nandi with yet another great opportunity. She enrolled in a tailoring course and invested in buying her own sewing machine.

"Today, my sewing machine is more than just a tool. It's the foundation of my daily livelihood. It has enabled me to support my children's education and sustain my household," Nandi shares.

Nandi's story is a testament to the success of the ICOLEW programme, which has been operational in Namayingo, one of the pilot districts, since 2016 with support from Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in partnership with DVV International. This programme has positively impacted over 1,246 participants across the four sub-counties of Buyinja, Banda, Buswale, and Buhemba, equipping them with essential literacy, numeracy, and vocational skills.

The beneficiaries of the ICOLEW programme are now active contributors to the local economy, with approximately 80% engaging in small-scale businesses. This surge in entrepreneurial activity has sparked a wave of socio-economic transformation throughout the district.

In Butajja, 16 out of 29

Community Empowerment Group participants have upgraded from grass-thatched houses to iron-sheet-roofed homes, significantly enhancing their living conditions.

The Madowa Regional CLC has evolved into a central hub for integrated service delivery, knowledge, skill acquisition and application. This CLC now houses a total of 70 trainees in vocational training programs, including tailoring and hairdressing.

Salama Nandi's journey, along with many others, underscores the profound impact that literacy and vocational training can have on individuals and communities. Through these programmes, lives are being transformed, opportunities are being created, and a brighter future is being forged for countless individuals across the district.

Madoowa Regional Community Learning Centre, Buswale Sub county, Namayingo District Local Government.

A. Tailoring class



B. Community members attending a meeting



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Innovative Programs Driving Change

At the heart of the Read to Learn Foundation's work are its diverse literacy programs, which reach children from early childhood through secondary school, with a strong focus on underserved communities. Some of the flagship programs include:

1. **In-School Book Clubs and Clinics:** These clubs are designed to cultivate a reading culture among students. Through activities such as storytelling, book

discussions, creative writing, and illustration, students develop a deeper understanding of literature while honing their communication and critical thinking skills. The program is active in both public and private schools across Uganda, creating inclusive spaces where young learners can thrive.

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As we celebrate International Literacy Day, the Read to Learn Foundation continues its mission to make literacy a reality for every child. With an unwavering commitment to innovation



Embooji Empandike

ATANAYIGAAYIGE

EWANBIIKISWA

ATANAYIGAAYIGE ICOLEW CEG

Katusooke n'obabuzaaako, buli omu mu kiti kye, Abaami n'abakyala, mugyebale gyemutuusaako engalo. Anti balugera ddu nti, "Ogutateganya teguzza nruma."

Liisoddene yatugonnomolako omukisa. Mu mwaka 2023 netwanjulirwa okusoma kuabantu abakulu, anti "ezinunula amunaku Katonda azitunga kiro." Wamma gwe netusagambiza nga akimezezza okwenjala, anti bwesiirye waakiri nawuuta. Twejaga nga tutandika okusoma kuba twali abasomi nkaaga (60) be ddu; Naye nga wayise akaseera, banaffe abaali balawooza nti okusoma kuba kuseereza ligenda mugga, bakizuula nti, kuba kulonda bwaya mu kkukuuzi batandika okwesaba okutuusa twetwasigal abasomi asatu mu bataano (35).

Okusoma nga kutojjera, twakizuula nti obutasoma bulume akuze kuba obutamanya bwali butwezinzeeko, akabaani ku ndongo. Obwavu, obuligo, okwetya, enyombo mu maka nga be baana baliwo.

Twatandika okusoma wadde nga tebyaali bya mannye wenu engabo tugikwasizza mannya okutuuka wetuli kati, kuba tuyambiddya okulaba nti ku basomi ffenna asate mu abataano tusebala okusoma n'okuwandika era ebinkun twabigoba. Naye nga kyali kyewunyisa okulaba nti ffe abaganda era abogezi boluganda netutamanya walifu zoluganda!

2. Mubintu ebingi byetuyize akapukunya ng'obugulu bwe ggongola, mwemuli bina wammanga. Okukola ebitabo, ebizigo, ekipooli, okulunda enjuka, enkoka, embizzi,

okukola ssabuuni nebirala bangi, anti "agaali awamu" ebintu ebyo tubifunyemu ekigulira Magala reddiba.

• Mu kukola ebitabo fusobodde okukikwasaganya kuba twatandika n'emitalo abiri (200,000), kyokka kati tufulumya ebivaamu shs. akakadde kalamba (1,000,000),

• Nga burebagamba nti, endabika y'omuntu kyekitiibwa kye twayiga okukola ebizigo ebituyoooyose ensusu, bye twatandika ne mitwalo ebiri (20,000) kyokka kati tufulumya bya mitwalo ana (400,000), byebayayaanira ennyo kuba ebintu byaffe byamutindo kuba twayigirizibwa nti "ensiba mbi edibya mutere".

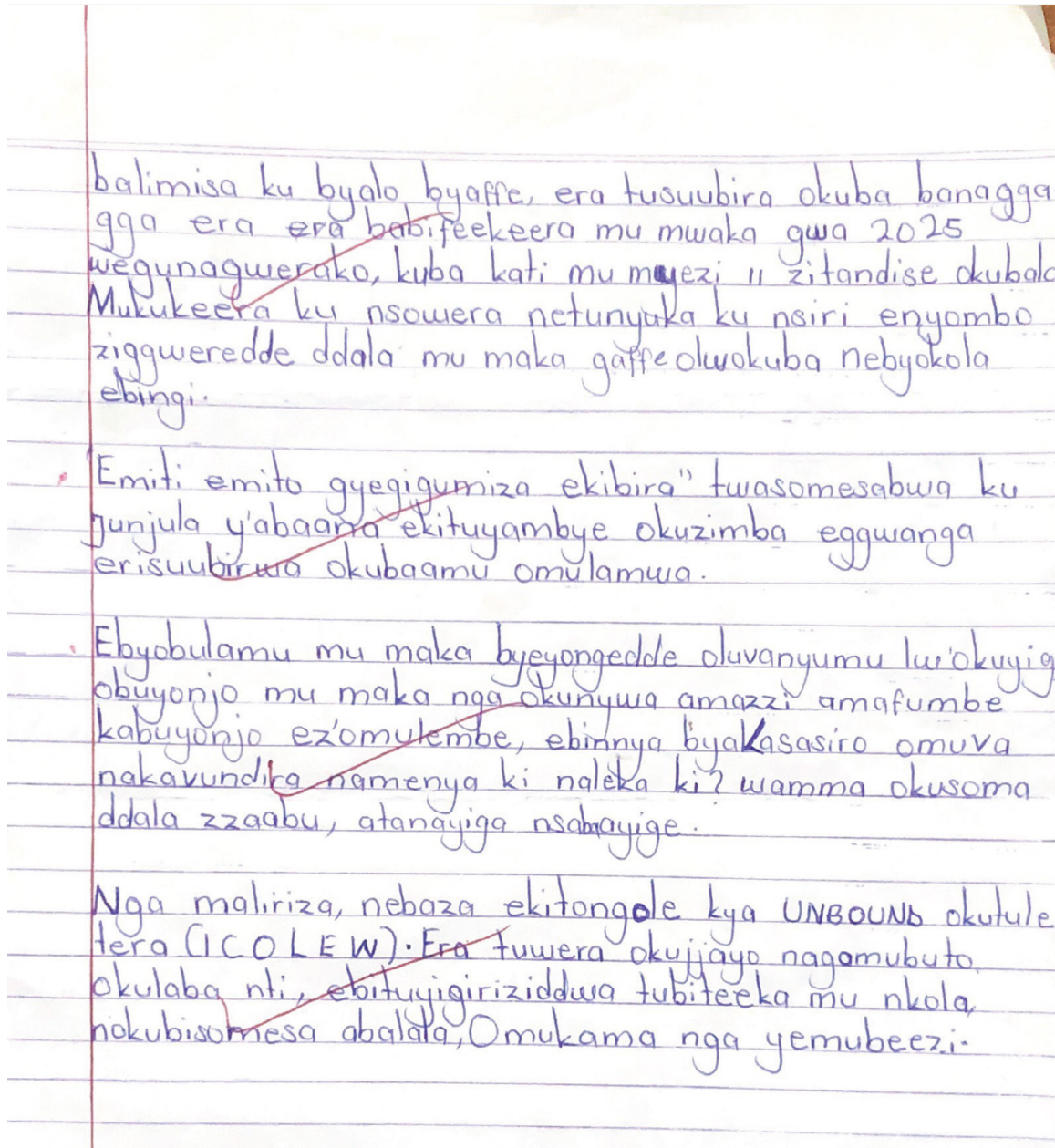
• Munnange nno ategga egumu nga bwataliira, bwetutyo naffe eby'obuluzi nga embizzi, ne njuki tetubitumidde mwana era enjuki tuzirundidde ddala, oluvanyuma lw'okumanya emigaso egikirimu ng'omubisi ne ddaggala byetutunda ne bivaamu ssente nyingi.

• Kantuuke ku kukola sabuni ate ekya twafuna magero bugero kuba kyekimu ku bintu ebyaali bitwala ssente mu maka gaffe, kyokka kati nga tumwekolera netufisya n'owokutunda.

• Bwetwasomesebwa ennima ey'omulembe, ensuku zaffe zazibwa bugya era emmere tulya netusindisa nebigere.

• Amaluma mu maka gaffe twagagoba, oluvanyuma lwokuyiga okulima enva endiibwa n'okukola ekipooli awo ettooke wamma gwe nerigenda bitege.

3. Ddala ddala wamma amagezi 'muliro bwegukuggwako ogunona ewammunno' oluvanyuma lwokufuna endokwa zemwanyani, era nebitusomeseddwa ku zo, kati tuli



Voices in Many Tongues

In words we rise, in voices strong,
 Where languages blend, we all belong.
 From many tongues, one dream we share,
 To build a world that's just and fair.
 With knowledge as our guiding light,
 We shape the future, we are all bold and bright,
 WE ALL GO FORWARD.

Programme For The International Literacy Day Symposium - Uganda 2024

Session	Activity
08:00am	Literacy Walk as per the journey plan
Session One (9:00am – 10:30am)	Arrival and registration
	Climate Setting (Anthems, Prayer, self-introductions, programme overview)
	Welcome remarks by the Commissioner Community Development and Literacy: Mr. Tumwesigye Everest
	Remarks by UNESCO/UNATCOM
	Statement from the ILD pre-events – The Boot Camp
	Official Opening of the symposium by MOGLSD – Hon. Betty Among (MP) Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development
10:30 - 11:00am	Break
Session 2 (11:00am to 01:00pm)	Keynote Address on “Promoting multilingual education and literacy for cohesion and socio-economic transformation”. By Associate Professor Willy Ngaka, Kyambogo University
	Panel Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development » Ministry of Education and Sports » Civil Society – Literacy in formal settings » Civil Society – Adult literacy » Learner’s Representative » Academia – Makerere University » Local Governments – Nwoya DLG
1:00 -2:00pm	Lunch Break
Session 3 (02:00pm to 04:30pm)	Learners’ Testimonies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Namayingo District Local Government » Ubound Kampala » Asante Africa Foundation
	Learner statement: (Uganda Literacy and Adult Learners Association - ULALA)
	Eulogy for the late Lukabwe Fred
	Award of Certificates – Boot Camp Competitions
	ILD 2024 Event Supporters’ Pitch – One minute each
	Presentation of the Call to Action – The Voice of Literacy Stakeholders in Uganda
	Official closure
	Evening Tea and Evaluation
	Departure at Leisure

Thank you partners for your support towards this year's International Literacy Day



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



