PROJECT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

SECOND PHASE OF THE NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL LITERACY PROJECT
(IDA-32460, IDA-3246A)

June 3, 2010

Sector Evaluations (IEGSE)
Independent Evaluation Group (World Bank)
Currency Equivalents (end year)

**Currency Unit = Ghana Cedi (GHC)**

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

- CAS: Country Assistance Strategy
- CWIQ: Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire
- EMIS: Education Management Information System
- ERR: Economic Rate of Return
- FPMU: Funds and Procurement Management Unit
- FTI: Fast Track Initiative
- GDP: Gross domestic product
- GILBT: Ghana Institute of Literacy Languages and Bible Translation
- GLSS: Ghana Living Standard Survey
- GPRS: Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
- ICR: Implementation Completion Report
- IDA: International Development Agency
- IEG: Independent Evaluation Group
- IEGWB: Independent Evaluation Group World Bank
- IGA: Income generating activity
- LFSP: Literacy and Functional Skills Program
- MER: Monitoring evaluation and research
- MDG: Millennium Development Goal
- MoEYS: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
- MTDP: Mid-term Development Plan
- MTR: Mid-term Review
- NFED: Non Formal Education Division
- NFLP: National Functional Literacy Program
- NGO: Non-governmental organization
- PAD: Project Appraisal Document
- PAPF: Pilot Female Literacy Project
- PCU: Project Coordination Unit
- PLCE: Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Project
- PPAR: Project Performance Assessment Report
- SDR: Standard Drawing Right
- SIL: Specific Investment Loan
- UNESCO: United Nations Educational

Fiscal Year

Government: January 1 – December 31

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<td>Ms. Victoria Monchuk</td>
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About this Report

The Independent Evaluation Group assesses the programs and activities of the World Bank for two purposes: first, to ensure the integrity of the Bank’s self-evaluation process and to verify that the Bank’s work is producing the expected results, and second, to help develop improved directions, policies, and procedures through the dissemination of lessons drawn from experience. As part of this work, IEGWB annually assesses about 25 percent of the Bank’s lending operations through field work. In selecting operations for assessment, preference is given to those that are innovative, large, or complex; those that are relevant to upcoming studies or country evaluations; those for which Executive Directors or Bank management have requested assessments; and those that are likely to generate important lessons.

To prepare a Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR), IEGWB staff examine project files and other documents, interview operational staff, visit the borrowing country to discuss the operation with the government, and other in-country stakeholders, and interview Bank staff and other donor agency staff both at headquarters and in local offices as appropriate.

Each PPAR is subject to internal IEGWB peer review, Panel review, and management approval. Once cleared internally, the PPAR is commented on by the responsible Bank department. IEGWB incorporates the comments as relevant. The completed PPAR is then sent to the borrower for review; the borrowers’ comments are attached to the document that is sent to the Bank’s Board of Executive Directors. After an assessment report has been sent to the Board, it is disclosed to the public.

About the IEGWB Rating System

IEGWB’s use of multiple evaluation methods offers both rigor and a necessary level of flexibility to adapt to lending instrument, project design, or sectoral approach. IEGWB evaluators all apply the same basic method to arrive at their project ratings. Following is the definition and rating scale used for each evaluation criterion (additional information is available on the IEGWB website: http://worldbank.org/ieg).

Outcome: The extent to which the operation’s major relevant objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, efficiently. The rating has three dimensions: relevance, efficacy, and efficiency. Relevance includes relevance of objectives and relevance of design. Relevance of objectives is the extent to which the project’s objectives are consistent with the country’s current development priorities and with current Bank country and sectoral assistance strategies and corporate goals (expressed in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Country Assistance Strategies, Sector Strategy Papers, Operational Policies). Relevance of design is the extent to which the project’s design is consistent with the stated objectives. Efficacy is the extent to which the project’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Efficiency is the extent to which the project achieved, or is expected to achieve, a return higher than the opportunity cost of capital and benefits at least cost compared to alternatives. The efficiency dimension generally is not applied to adjustment operations. Possible ratings for Outcome: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Risk to Development Outcome: The risk, at the time of evaluation, that development outcomes (or expected outcomes) will not be maintained (or realized). Possible ratings for Risk to Development Outcome: High, Significant, Moderate, Negligible to Low, Not Evaluable.

Bank Performance: The extent to which services provided by the Bank ensured quality at entry of the operation and supported effective implementation through appropriate supervision (including ensuring adequate transition arrangements for regular operation of supported activities after loan/credit closing, toward the achievement of development outcomes. The rating has two dimensions: quality at entry and quality of supervision. Possible ratings for Bank Performance: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Borrower Performance: The extent to which the borrower (including the government and implementing agency or agencies) ensured quality of preparation and implementation, and complied with covenants and agreements, toward the achievement of development outcomes. The rating has two dimensions: government performance and implementing agency(ies) performance. Possible ratings for Borrower Performance: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.
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## Principal Ratings

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*The Implementation Completion Report (ICR) is a self-evaluation by the responsible Bank department. The ICR Review is an intermediate IEGWB product that seeks to independently verify the findings of the ICR.*

## Key Staff Responsible

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Preface

This is the Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR) for the second phase of Ghana’s National Functional Literacy Project (NFLP II). The total project cost at closing was US$46 million and financed through the IDA Credits No. 32460 and No. 3246A in the amount of US$33.9 million (SDR23.7 million). The NFLP II was approved by the Bank’s Board on June 17, 1999, became effective 14 months later, on August 15, 2000, and closed on August 31, 2006, 20 months after its original closing date of December 31, 2004.

The report was prepared by Victoria Monchuk. The key sources of evidence on which this PPAR relies are World Bank project files; government project reports and evaluations; and independent published and un-published project assessments. The PPAR is also based on interviews conducted during a mission to Ghana in March, 2009, with government officials, development partners, and members of civil society who were knowledgeable of Bank support in the area of adult literacy, and with Bank staff and consultants at headquarters and in the Ghana Country Office. The IEG team conducted field visits in the Greater Accra, Northern and Ashanti regions of Ghana where it met with regional and district program officers, facilitators and beneficiary groups. The report also draws on the qualitative assessment analysis from 15 focus groups with NFLP II participants prepared by Ms. Elizabeth Asante, IEG mission member. The IEG team gratefully acknowledges all those who made time for interviews and provided documentation and information. Mission support by Ms. Rose Abena Ampadu in the Ghana Office was also greatly appreciated. Janice Joshi, Marie-Jeanne Ndiaye, and Viktoriya Yevseyeyeva provided administrative support.

Following standard IEG procedures, copies of the draft PPAR have be sent to the relevant government officials and agencies for review and comments. Their comments are presented in Annex E.
Summary

Background

The government of Ghana’s current long-term development approach became formalized in the mid-1990s. In the area of human development the government took a broad-based approach including improving the access to basic services especially for the poor, women, and in deprived areas. In the education sector, reducing illiteracy was a national priority. In the mid-1990s the government, through the Non-Formal Education Department (NFED), implemented the first functional literacy program supported by the Bank. When it closed in 1997 it had enrolled 1.3 million adults and trained them in basic literacy and functional skills (in areas such as health, nutrition, sanitation, and environmental cleanliness).

But despite reaching its targets, disparities in schooling between men and women remained and deprived regions such as the north lagged behind. In 1997 the national adult literacy rate was 48 percent but only 28 percent for rural women. The experience of the first project showed that literacy programs need to become more relevant to participants’ needs, strengthen quality of delivery and monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and encourage a strong literate environment after completion of the literacy training.

The Ghana National Functional Literacy Project (NFLP ZI) (IDA-32460 and 3246A) disbursed US$33.9 million of the IDA credit (total project cost was US$44.9 million) and was designed as a follow-on to the first phase of the project (1992-97), taking into account the challenges of the previous program and sectoral constraints in mind. The project’s development objective was: “to increase the number of Ghanaian adults (15-45 years), particularly women and the rural poor, who acquire literacy and functional skills. In the credit agreement the objective was stated: “to assist the Borrower in delivering quality, cost-effective basic functional literacy skills in fifteen national languages to about one million adults, particularly women and the rural poor.

Relevance and Design

The objectives of the NFLP II were consistent with the government’s Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (2000-02) which focused on poor people’s capacity to earn incomes. Female literacy rates were recognized as a key indicator on human development performance. A core component of the government’s 2003 education strategy was to offer adult literacy programs. In the following Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006-09) the priority of improving literacy rates remained, although the focused shifted away from adult literacy programs to other formal and non-formal mechanisms. Based on the evolving but continuous relevance of the project objectives to Ghana’s priorities and needs, relevance of objectives is rated substantial.

The core project design rested on teaching basic literacy and functional skills to adults in 15 Ghanaian languages. In addition, the project aimed at strengthening the radio broadcasting component as well as the broader literate environment in order to better sustain project outcomes in the long run. Also the project was designed to improve monitoring and evaluation activities and management and institutional processes. Finally, participant groups would be encouraged to
undertake income generating activities (IGAs), such as animal rearing, palm oil processing or mat-weaving, and the project would deliver a pilot on English literacy based on demand. Relevance of design is rated as substantial. Inadequate attention to demand constraints in the north, and significant political risk were the main shortcomings. Overall the design logic of the project was strong and the results framework, despite weaknesses, was above the norm for non-formal projects.

Implementation

The credit became effective on August 15, 2000 and closed on August 31, 2006. The NFLP II suffered serious implementation delays for three different reasons: disagreement over the legal signature of the credit agreement on behalf of the government; hesitations by the new government about the objectives of the NFED; and a restructuring of the implementing agency. At closing the credit was 98 percent disbursed.

Monitoring and evaluation, although sufficient in design, lagged behind in implementation. The system was greatly improved from the first phase. Two learner assessments were carried out and one tracer study. Utilization of the findings was substantial. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation quality was substantial.

Outcome and Efficiency

The objectives of the NFLP II can be broken down into three sub-objectives. The first sub-objective delivering basic literacy and functional skills in 15 national languages to one million adults, especially women and the rural poor ages 15-45, was substantially achieved. The project reached its objectives on enrollment and drop-out rates. It was well targeted to women in the productive age group and in rural areas. Although 60 percent of participants were from the north, as planned, the project experienced difficulties enrolling northern women.

Second, the project substantially reached its objective of providing basic literacy and functional skills. The project has helped improve literacy skills in Ghana but did not reach its target of making 70 percent of participants functionally literate. This was mainly a result of the poorly grounded targets, especially on writing. Although the achievement targets were only met in reading and strongest for participants who had previously been formally schooled, there were significant positive improvements made in writing and numeracy. Participants also undertook development activities, although most participants were already engaged in these prior to the project. Moreover, the project has lead to behavioral change and better awareness in areas such as health and child care, schooling of children, and decision making and participation.

Thirdly, the objective of delivering quality and cost-effective training was modestly achieved. Although quality of literacy delivery was enhanced through the project as envisioned, much of the capacity development and implementation upgrades occurred late and only those batches of participants that enrolled in the later stages could benefit. Unit cost calculations for the NFLP II lie in the mid-range of similar projects in other countries. But these data significantly underestimate the true cost of literacy delivery as baseline levels of literacy and functional skills are not accounted for.
Given the modest cost-effectiveness and likely overestimation of the project’s rate of return due to decreases in the return to education and lack of labor mobility among the participants, efficiency is rated *modest*.

**Ratings**

Outcome of the NFLP II is rated *moderately satisfactory*. This rating is based on substantial relevance, modest efficiency, and substantial achievement of two objectives and modest achievement of the third. The project likely contributed to reductions in illiteracy and to progress on other development goals albeit to a smaller extent than anticipated. However, evaluations of project performance are not rigorous enough to confidently attribute improvements to the project. The achievements were made mainly thanks to the knowledge of the shortcomings from the first phase, strong and committed NFED leadership, and timely Bank supervision.

Risk to development outcomes is *significant*. Following the end of Bank support in 2006, class and batch sizes have dwindled, fewer facilitators were recruited, and infrastructure deteriorated. Although the government’s commitment to reducing illiteracy is strong, sustainability of literacy gained from adult literacy programs in general is notoriously low. Moreover, the IEG mission found that difficulties in accessing micro-credit limited the sustainability of IGA groups and therefore also reduced the potential for additional family income. The sustainability of functional skills and behavior changes is likely to be higher.

Bank performance was *satisfactory* both at entry and during supervision. Borrower performance was *moderately satisfactory*. Although the implementing agency delivered, their capacity was generally low throughout most of the project and poor initial government support caused major delays and inefficiencies.

**Lessons**

- *The NFLP II demonstrated that non-formal education projects, such as adult literacy and skills projects, can build results frameworks linked to participant achievement and test scores.* Many similar non-formal projects in other countries have not built in tests of participant achievement in project design but rely on participant enrollment and graduation rates for assessing project objectives. Even though the NFLP II targets were not well grounded in reliable pre-tests and could not be fully reached, the project was able to demonstrate that participants’ literacy improved significantly over the course of the project (see paragraphs 4.3 and 6.8).

- *Even in a demand-driven project such as the NFLP II, context specific factors may reduce uptake in deprived regions.* Although literacy and skills training is highly demanded by poor communities on the national level, it was well known that demand was lower in the three deprived northern regions. Here, the project experienced difficulties in meeting its enrollment targets, especially for women. In certain local contexts, providing incentives and reducing barriers to participation are necessary for stimulating demand in parallel to supplying training (see paragraphs 5.4 and 6.9).
Literacy and functional skills projects that involve income generating activities should build continuous support for IGA groups into design in order to enhance sustainability of skills. Over half of the NFLP II learners participated in an IGA group. The possibility of earning an income was an important driver for learners to participate in the literacy and skills program. Engaging in an IGA also exposes participants to activities in which they can make use of literacy and numeracy skills. But IGA groups, generally small and resource poor, are highly dependent on access to finance and markets for sustaining their activities. Providing training and access to credit and markets needs to be better built into project design to increase the chances of the sustainability of income generation as well as of literacy skills (see paragraphs 5.15-16, 5.22 and Box 3).

Vinod Thomas
Director-General
Evaluation
1. Background and Context

Economic Development History

1.1 Ghana is a country of great ethnic and linguistic diversity. It has over 55 languages. The economy relies heavily on agriculture income\(^1\) and a large share of the population lives in rural areas. In the 1980s, transitioning Ghana from the post-independence era military regime, the Rawlings government introduced tough economic reforms. In the 1990s, the economy was characterized by persistent reliance on exports of a few primary products (cocoa, gold, and timber). Plagued by high inflation and interest rates, currency depreciation and a large debt, economic growth fluctuated (Figure 1). Despite economic fluctuations, poverty incidence dropped from 50 to 40 percent during the same period.

![Figure 1. Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth in Ghana (percent)](image)

Source: World Bank 2010

1.2 Ghana’s long term development strategy began in the mid-1990s with the *Ghana Vision 2020*—a 25 year perspective for improving wellbeing. The *Medium Term Development Plan* (MTDP 1997-2000) focused on economic growth, human development, rural and urban development and the development of an enabling environment (Government of Ghana 2003). In the area of human development the government took a broad-based approach including improving the access to basic services especially for the poor, women, and in deprived regions. Efforts also focused on improving rural productivity and promoting income generating activities for the poorest. In 2003, the government produced the first Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy

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\(^1\) In 1990 45 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) came from agriculture; by 2008 the share had dropped to 32 percent (World Bank 2010).
(GPRS 2003-05). The GPRS placed a heavy emphasis on reducing inequities, improving economic growth, and alleviating poverty. In the early 2000s the government started to partner with civil society in service delivery, but it was not until 2004 (also stated in the 2004 Country Assistance Strategy, CAS) that the involvement of private providers and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for more efficient service delivery was really emphasized. The GPRS 2003-05 also prioritized programs which helped the poor, especially poor women, gain access to credit and skills upgrading. At the same time the government began efforts to decentralize both administration and financing of programs to the district level and to move some of the power to district assemblies and local governments.

Education Sector – Priorities, Spending and Outcomes

1.3 The Rawlings government strongly emphasized reducing illiteracy as a national priority. The education sector strategy was two-pronged including increasing access and quality of basic education while improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of adult literacy service delivery. But around the year 2000, government social expenditure was tilted toward non-discretionary spending, particularly salaries, and public spending on health and education was rather regressive (Government of Ghana 2003). Education expenditures as a share of GDP were low compared to other African countries.²

1.4 With the new government³ coming to power in early 2001, education as a means for reducing poverty and strengthening growth remained a priority. Ghana joined the Education for All (EFA) Fast Track Initiative (FTI). Education strategies were viewed as an engine for growth through their goal of increasing productivity. In the first few years of the new millennium, education expenditures increased gradually. Basic education (primary and secondary schooling, grades 1-12) was the main recipient of the increased funds.

1.5 Due to the heightened priority of basic education, Ghana made improvements in school outputs and outcomes. After 1985 more Ghanaians attended and completed school.⁴ Gender disparities and differences in schooling between the poor and the non-poor narrowed slightly, especially in post-primary education. From 1988 to 2003 the gender gap in years of schooling was cut in half.⁵ However, regional disparities persisted and rural boys were four times as likely to attend school compared to rural girls (Government of Ghana 2003). Cost and the need to work were the main reasons for children not attending school in rural areas (World Bank 2004a).

1.6 English is the main language in school nationwide. English literacy increased among children but adult literacy rates were relatively stagnant during the 1990s (Figure 2). Increased school quality was the main contributor (57 percent) to the increase in literacy rates between

² In 1999 government expenditure on education was 2.9 percent of GDP but increased to 5.0 in 2006 (IMF 2009). On average in sub-Saharan African countries, government spending on education was 4.4 percent of GDP in 1999 and 4.6 in 2006 (IMF 2009)
³ In 2000 Ghana’s first democratic elections were held.
⁴ Primary enrollment and completion rates (ages 15 and above) rose from 20.6 and 4.8 percent, respectively, in 1985 to 28.6 and 6.6 percent in 2000 (World Bank 2004a).
⁵ In 1988 the expected years of schooling for men aged 25-34 years old was 60 percent higher than for women (7.8 and 4.9 years). In 2003 the gap was to only 30 percent (World Bank 2004a).
1988 and 2003 (IEG 2004). Rural women, however, remained largely illiterate. In 1997, the national literacy rate was 48 percent, while for women it was 36 percent. Fifty-five percent of rural men were considered literate, but only 28 percent of rural women (World Bank 1997). Box 1 summarizes the theoretical links between literacy and economic growth.

**Figure 2. Trends in Enrollment and Literacy Rates in Ghana (percent)**

[Graph showing trends in enrollment and literacy rates from 1989 to 2007 for Ghana, with data points for primary and secondary school enrollment and adult and youth literacy rates.]

*Sources: GLSS 1998/99; World Bank 1998; World Bank 2010.*
Box 1. Literacy, Incomes and Growth—the Theory

World-wide, as a country develops illiteracy generally declines when more children enroll in school. However, in rural areas and among deprived population groups high illiteracy rates often persist as access to education is limited. Over time, disparities of this sort may continue to grow and negatively affect incomes as large deprived groups are persistently falling behind national averages. The inability to read, write, and count limits participation in the labor market, constrains income generation, and slows farm and non-farm productivity. Research shows that literate adults are more effective workers (see for example Orbach and Delaney, 2004; OECD and Statistics Canada, 2000). This applies both to workers in wage jobs and to the large majority of women and men in developing countries that are self-employed or employed in the informal sector (World Bank, 2002). More informed workers and business owners use better inputs, earn higher incomes, take advantage of credit options and hence benefit from higher welfare and lower poverty. Moreover, low literacy rates have been shown to be negatively associated with human development outcomes such as health status, fertility rates, child development and schooling and women’s empowerment. Literate adults raise better off children, and are able to participate more actively in society. For a country such as Ghana, enjoying relative stability, low literacy rates are adversely impacting growth.

The History of Adult Literacy Programs in Ghana – NFLP I

1.7 In Ghana, efforts to reduce illiteracy, especially in rural areas and among the poor and socially excluded date back to colonial times. Starting in the 1950s, the independent government introduced mass literacy campaigns but with limited success. The reasons for their poor performance are plentiful; supply driven approaches without participant interest; poor links to occupational and civic needs; and ineffective teaching methodologies (Aoki 2006).

1.8 Under the Rawlings regime eradicating illiteracy was declared a national priority and in 1991 the government established the Non Formal Education Division (NFED) in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) in order to implement adult literacy programs. The goal was to eliminate illiteracy among the 5.6 million illiterates by the year 2015 (Owusu-Boampong 2007; Owusu-Mensah 2007). Eradicating illiteracy was considered a strategy for “empowering people to develop themselves” (Aryeetey and Kwakye 2005 p. 5).

1.9 The NFED developed the first phase of the National Functional Literacy Program (NFLP I) with the main objective to “improve economic opportunities and quality of life for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged Ghanaians” (World Bank 1999, p. 3). The Bank supported the $27.8 million program with a US$17 million IDA credit from 1992-97. The NFLP I focused on equipping the poorest Ghanaians adults with basic literacy, numeracy, and new knowledge through: (i) institutional support; (ii) research, monitoring and evaluation; (iii) classroom teaching; (iv) a system of supervisors to monitor the progress of the participants and the performance of the facilitators; (v) classroom materials and participant motivation; (vi) the

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6 Also called the Literacy and Functional Skills Project (LFSP).

7 Norway also contributed financially and the UK, Canada and UNICEF provided technical support.

8 The project was self targeting, around 60 percent of the learners were women, around 70 percent had had no formal schooling. The average drop-out rate was 22 percent (World Bank 1998).
creation of a literate environment; (vii) radio studio and transmission facilities; (viii) post-
literacy classes; and, (ix) assisting NGOs and other literacy providers with training and materials.

1.10 When the NFLP I closed in 1997 it had enrolled 1.3 million adults (mainly between the
ages of 15-45) and trained them in literacy and functional skills in 15 Ghanaian languages.\(^9\) A
large adult literacy program had been developed including a nationwide infrastructure for
implementation. The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) rated the outcome of NFLP I as
Satisfactory. But national literacy rates remained stagnant around 50 percent between 1992 and
that the project had some positive results in reading among adults\(^10\) and suggested that there may
have been some benefits in the areas of family planning, nutrition, and school enrollment of
children as a result of the NFLP I. Health benefits were weaker. On the other hand, Blunch and
Pörtner (2004) and Valerio (2003) who used Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) data, did
not find strong effects of previous literacy programs in Ghana on economic outcomes. Blunch
and Pörtner (2004) found a positive effect on consumption in households but only where no
member had formal schooling. Valerio (2003) also concludes that the impact of literacy
programs on employment cannot be verified. The GLSS data, however, do not measure the
duration and quality of the literacy programs attended by survey respondents. It is hence possible
that many of the individuals have participated in poor quality literacy training many years ago
and that any observed impacts were low and/or have diminished over time. Blunch and Pörtner
(2004) also point out that it is plausible that individuals, perhaps mainly women, attend literacy
training not for its expected economic benefits but for social and human capital building.

**Adult Literacy Sectoral Issues**

1.11 In the early 2000s the progress towards joining of the EFA FTI included intensifying the
strategic dialogue on how to reach the goal of halving illiteracy by 2015. Quality and cost-
effectiveness of the existing NFLP program needed strengthening. Efforts also focused on
improving rural productivity and promoting income generating activities for the poorest. In 2000
the focus on poor peoples’ capacity to earn incomes was strengthened in the government strategy
and female literacy rates were recognized as a core indicator for improving Ghana’s human
development performance.

1.12 The main sectoral issues were:

- **Illiteracy rates remained high among the rural poor, especially women, and there was a stock of young people lacking basic literacy skills.** Illiteracy was highly correlated with
location, income group and gender. It was highest among the poorest income quintiles, in
rural and remote areas, and among women and girls. Even though primary enrollment
rates had increased over the last two decades, inequalities were high. Moreover, low
completion and learning achievement levels contributed to the stock of illiterate adults.

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\(^9\) In 2000 there were around five million illiterate adults (over the age of 15) in Ghana (UNESCO Institute of
Statistics 2010).

\(^10\) Learners could read out of the Bible and out of their textbooks.
Basic literacy programs were of low relevance and quality. The evaluation of the NFLP I showed that it had had some positive effects for improving participants' literacy skills and boosted their awareness in important development areas (Korboe 1997). However, the evaluation recommended that the program be strengthened in the areas of relevance to participants' needs; selection and training of facilitators and supervisors; instructional quality aspects; and program monitoring and evaluation.

Literacy skills needed to be sustained by creating a literate environment. The first phase of the program provided classes in 15 local languages and supplied continued reading materials to graduates. But post-literacy materials were difficult to produce and procure.

NFED's capacity needed strengthening and it needed to collaborate with other literacy providers. NFED was the main provider of adult literacy in Ghana but the community of able NGOs is growing. There was an increasing recognition that better collaboration on literacy activities was needed. Due to the fact that NFED was relatively recently founded, insecurity among staff was high and capacity was limited. The centralized program management system also had poor incentive structures for staff and inefficiencies were high.

2. Objectives and Design

2.1 NFLP II was designed as a follow-on to the NFLP I but with previous program challenges and sectoral constraints in mind. The project was approved on June 17, 1999 and became effective on August 15, 2000. Between the closing of the NFLP I in 1997 and the start up of the first batch (batch 8) of the NFLP II in 2000 there was a period of about two years where NFED continued to supply classes without Bank support and on a smaller scale. After one extension the NFLP II project closed on August 31, 2006. The US$46 million NFLP II was financed by an International Development Association (IDA) credit of SDR23.7 million (US$32 million equivalent) to the Government of Ghana. At closing, 98 percent of the funds were disbursed (World Bank 2007a). No other donors contributed to the NFLP II financially.

Objectives

2.2 The development objective as listed in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) was "to increase the number of Ghanaian adults (15-45 years), particularly women and the rural poor, 

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11 The reason for the 14-month delay was disagreement over the contract signature on behalf of the government. The credit agreement was signed by the World Bank President in October, 1999 during his visit to Ghana. In the absence of the Minister of Education, the Upper West Regional Minister signed on behalf of the government. However, his signature was not recognized by the Ministry of Finance. Consequently, the credit agreement had to be redrafted and resigned.

12 The project delivered literacy and skills classes in five sequenced batches. The aim was to enroll around 200,000 adult learners in each batch. At closing, NFLP II covered six batches (8-13) of the NFED program. See Annex C.

13 Participating communities and NGOs—such as World Vision Ghana, Action Aid, Ghana Institute of Literacy Languages and Bible Translation (GILBT), and Care International—contributed to the project in kind (US$0.5 million).
who acquire literacy and functional skills" (World Bank 1999 p. 1). The credit agreement states that the development objective was “to assist the Borrower in delivering quality, cost-effective basic functional literacy skills in fifteen national languages to about one million adults, particularly women and the rural poor”. The objective in the PAD focuses on final outcomes in terms of reducing adult illiteracy. The objective in the credit agreement focuses on improving the literacy and skills activities undertaken by the government. These outputs would, in turn, lead to reductions in the adult illiteracy outcomes. In assessing the achievement of the development objective this report will consider both the outcome-oriented PAD objective and the output-oriented credit agreement objective.

2.3 The key performance indicators listed in the PAD focused on final literacy outcomes. At the end of the basic literacy cycle it was expected that 70 percent of enrolled adults would:

- be able to read and comprehend a short essay of three paragraphs in one of the 15 selected local languages;
- be able to write a simple one-page letter in one of the 15 selected local languages;
- be able to perform simple calculations in four arithmetical operations with numbers of up to one million;
- participate in development activities (such as community clean-up, bush fire prevention, etc.); and
- demonstrate behavioral change and civic awareness.

2.4 On the outputs side the project expected to enroll 200,000 participants in each cycle for a total of one million participants; at least 40 percent of classes would be held in the north (Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions), 60 percent of classes would be held in rural areas, and 60 percent of enrolled participants would be women. The project aimed at delivering classes in 15 local languages and English and to produce more reading materials through regional mechanisms.

2.5 The quality and cost-effectiveness of the training would also be strengthened at many different levels. This would be achieved via the institutional reforms and strengthening supported by the project: a) developing an NFED policy framework, including decentralization strategies; b) increasing collaboration with NGOs and other providers; c) facilitating obtaining micro-credit for those groups who were engaged in income-generating activities (IGAs)–such as animal rearing, palm oil processing, soap making, and fishing; d) establishing an effective monitoring and evaluation system; and e) improving quality through training, materials development, supervision, and a more efficient radio system.

Project Components

2.6 The project had seven components. Table 1 lists and describes each component and the outcomes and outputs to be achieved. The project components and overall design were not altered.

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14 The program used UNESCO’s definition of a functionally literate person as “one who can engage in activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his/her group and community and also for enabling him/her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his/her own and the community’s development.”
Table 1. NFLP II Components, Output and Outcome Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component description</th>
<th>Outputs indicators and institutional reforms</th>
<th>Outcome indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Basic literacy and development activity program</td>
<td>The core of the program. Teach basic literacy, numeracy and functional skills in 15 languages over a 21 month period.</td>
<td>Enroll 1m. participants (40 percent in the north, 60 percent in rural areas, and 60 percent women) in 15 languages plus English, improve quality by materials development and procurement.</td>
<td>Improve quality by materials development and procurement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. English pilot</td>
<td>Deliver 500 classes in English to participants who have graduated from the basic program.</td>
<td>Improve quality by materials development and procurement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Literate environment</td>
<td>Produce and deliver to classes learning materials (for example, books and newsprint for the sustainability of literacy skills).</td>
<td>Establish an effective monitoring and evaluation system.</td>
<td>70 percent of enrolled adults should be able to read and comprehend a short essay, write a short letter, perform simple calculations, participate in development activities, and demonstrate behavioral change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Radio broadcasting</td>
<td>Support and supervision to program producers so as to increase geographic coverage and more NFED air-time.</td>
<td>Establish a more efficient radio broadcasting system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Monitoring, evaluation and research program</td>
<td>Improve the current supervision and MIS system, improve the learner assessment, support tracer studies, continue research on selected topics to adjust policies and plans accordingly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Management and institutional enhancement</td>
<td>a) revision of human resource policies and planning for strategic decentralization, b) analytical work and development of a policy framework for targeting the backlog of illiterates, c) capacity building of financial and resource management and procurement, d) identify and pilot contracting literacy delivery to other qualified literacy providers NGOs, e) hire an NGO to provide technical assistance to few IGA groups in obtaining micro-credit.</td>
<td>Develop a NFED policy framework including decentralization strategies, increase collaboration with NGOs and other providers, facilitate obtaining micro-credit for literacy IGA groups, improve strategies for quality enhancement through training and supervision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. NFED</td>
<td>Cover NFED administrative expenses and staff salaries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Project documents.

Implementation Arrangements

2.7 Service Delivery: The NFLP II implementation unit was the NFED with supervision and implementation support by the MoEYS. Outsourcing of delivery of literacy courses to NGOs was discussed, but at the time of appraisal their capacity was deemed limited and phase II of the project made use of the already established NFLP phase I infrastructure for course delivery and program maintenance.

2.8 Coverage and targeting: The project was designed to cover all 10 regions of Ghana and was labeled as self-targeting to the neediest groups—women, rural populations, and the populations in the northern three regions—as they were considered the poorest and also the most interested in participating in the program. The main target groups were 15-45 year olds. In this regard, the program had the implicit objective of reducing inequalities in accessing literacy training. Recruitment to the program was demand-based. As NFLP initiatives were well developed and accepted in Ghana at this time, communities who had heard about the program either through neighboring villages or through radio broadcasting, expressed their interest in
participating. NFED also undertook awareness-raising campaigns to advertise the benefits of literacy. Communities would jointly make decisions on whether to adopt the program and start a literacy group. They would also make decisions on class location, scheduling and intensity and whether they wanted to engage in an income-generating activity. Classes would be coeducational or for women only, with around 25-30 students per class.

2.9 Curriculum and instruction: The program length for each batch was 21 months and totaled more than 300 hours. The integrated curriculum included basic literacy skills (reading, writing and numeracy) for the purpose of using these skills in everyday life to improve the welfare of families and communities. The literacy, life-skills, and developmental activities were taught in classes via the use of two primers and follow-up readers. The primers included modules that taught participants to form words and sentences while discussing common community issues and practices. Moreover, the acquisition of life skills and participation in development activities were encouraged. Life skills included learning about health care, family planning, personal hygiene and safety, water and sanitation, children’s schooling, empowerment and gender equity, civic awareness, and improved agricultural and livelihood practices. Participants were encouraged to form groups to undertake development activities, such as community clean-up, bush fire prevention and tree planting, and to form small for-profit groups engaged in an income-generating activity. The type of the activity chosen would depend on the group’s interests and the resources and markets available. The program also delivered an elective English literacy program based on popular demand.

2.10 Staffing: Volunteer facilitators were recruited directly by communities. They were not under NFED contracts nor did they receive pecuniary compensation from the NFED. Instead they received incentives (such as bicycles, roofing sheets, and solar light supplies) at the end of each training cycle. Facilitators were supervised by zonal coordinators who visited learning groups every two weeks and reported to district officers. The district officers reported to 10 regional coordinators. Overall oversight was provided by Accra headquarters staff. Facilitators and NFED staff were to receive training under the program.

2.11 Lessons learned from the earlier program reflected in design: The NFLP II factored in several lessons from the earlier phase. These called for; increased flexibility of training to participants’ lives and needs; improved monitoring and evaluation arrangements; a review of the practice of paying facilitators in-kind (instead of cash); and strengthened mechanisms for creating a literate environment for the neo-literates.

3. Implementation

3.1 The NFLP II suffered serious delays for three reasons. First, the loan did not become effective until August 15, 2000, 14 months after approval (June 17, 1999), due to disagreement over the government’s signature (see footnote 11). During the long delay NFED undertook preparatory work under the Project Preparation Facility (PPF). Participants in batch 8 started to enroll in 1999 but without Bank support.
3.2 Secondly, when the new government was declared in October 2000, the extent to which it would support literacy activities was uncertain, so the implementation of the core basic literacy component was held back.\textsuperscript{15} Adult literacy initiatives in Ghana tend to be popular during times of reform, but providing literacy and skills training to the poor have not been supported by all political parties. Despite the uncertain political environment and the lack of clarity on the appointment of the project director, implementation slowly took off towards the end of 2000.

3.3 Thirdly, the new government wanted to take a closer look at the project implementation plan and, with the agreement of the Bank, a NFED restructuring study was launched.\textsuperscript{16} It was agreed that activities that were not contingent on the restructuring\textsuperscript{17} should be allowed to continue without disruption. Regional offices remained closed,\textsuperscript{18} however, and necessary materials and supplies were not delivered to supervisors and learning groups.

3.4 Eventually, as the program started to show results and after much encouragement by the Bank, government support grew stronger. The Kufor government in 2002 provided strong support for continuing the program. In May 2003, a new Minister of Education with a strong poverty focus and a more open mind towards adult literacy programs was appointed, which ensured new commitment to literacy education and to the NFLP II. Offering adult literacy became a core component of the government's Education Strategic Plan in 2003. By 2003 classes became fully active, supplies that had been in storage were delivered, regional coordinators were appointed and the planned tracer study was launched. In an attempt to make up for lost ground 350,000 participants were enrolled in the 2003 cycle.

3.5 However, at the end of 2003 it became clear that due to the delays in the early part of the project the development objective would not be reached by project closing in December 2004. The implementation progress and project development objective were downgraded temporarily by the Bank in 2003 and again in 2004. Ethnic conflict in the north also limited reaching the target of launching 40 percent of classes in the three northern regions. Annex C lays out the timing of Batches 8-13 of the basic literacy cycles supported by the project.

3.6 Implementation picked up in 2004 and, supported by the positive outcomes reflected in the beneficiary assessment available in May 2004, the project closing date was extended to August 31, 2006. In May 2006, with the planned enrollment of Batch 13, it was assessed that all

\textsuperscript{15} The new government viewed the non-formal education initiative as a political move by the former administration to gain the support of the rural poor. The new government alleged the previous government to have used NFED class supervisors in political campaigns.

\textsuperscript{16} Imas consulting was contracted by the government to assess a potential restructuring of NFED. Imas found that many staff were unqualified for their posts. Although staff training had taken place, it had been unstructured and unrelated to needs. Inefficient practices wasted resources and supervision and financial and procurement processes were weak. The report recommended downsizing staff, ensuring recruitment and retention of qualified staff, improving NFED effectiveness, deepening collaboration with NGOs, strengthening of the MER unit, and creating an updated non-political image for NFED.

\textsuperscript{17} NFED was reorganized including a reduction in staff size, recruiting more qualified staff, and revision of titles and the organizational structure.

\textsuperscript{18} On July 3, 2002 the MoEYS ordered all district and NFED regional offices to hand over their operations to district and regional administrators during the restructuring exercise in order to bring in more qualified staff.
but one output target (percent of participants from northern regions) would be met or exceeded and the development outcomes would be achieved in all areas but writing. Beyond program completion the government allocated 175 billion Cedi (US$12.0 million using July 2009 exchange rates) from the 2006-08 budgets to continue non-formal education.

Costs and Financial Management

3.7 Total project costs were appraised at US$46 million in the PAD (Table 2). Of this the Bank provided US$32 million or 70 percent. Sixty percent of project funds were allocated for the core activities of providing basic literacy training. At closing, 98 percent of available credit and 106 percent of what was originally planned was disbursed. Due to the implementation delays disbursements were slow to take off. Although project implementation picked up in 2003 and 2004, only 45 percent of funds were disbursed by November, 2004. Most of the funds were used in the extension phase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Planned</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Actual as a percent of planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic literacy and development activity program</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English pilot</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>210.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate environment</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio broadcasting</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring, evaluation and research program</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>128.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and institutional enhancement</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>134.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFED</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project preparation facility</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>97.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of the PAD, May 1999.

As of the ICR, June 2007.

3.8 Financial management and procurement experienced problems throughout the project. NFED staff confirmed that the bidding documents and contracts with suppliers were not well specified and that the quality of the goods delivered to the project was many times lower than the samples reviewed. For instance, lighting, necessary for holding classes in the evening, was problematic throughout the project. The solar lights lost battery power quickly and only lasted for short periods of time. Hurricane lights required lots of kerosene to give out a sufficient amount of light. Communities, which had to buy their own fuel, could not afford the expense. NFED also had difficulties securing reliable service from radio stations.

3.9 Until 2003 and during the period when regional offices were closed, supplies and learning materials were held in storage facilities. In some regions, especially in remote areas, the distribution of supplies to classes was further delayed by problems with the NFED motorcycles. Regional staff from the northern regions complained to the IEG mission that they needed more budget allocation for transportation and gasoline as distances in their regions were longer than in other regions. It was also difficult to print and deliver post-literacy materials due to the lack of print shops that could handle the Ghanaian languages. When the boxes with follow-up reading materials finally reached the participants, they were often shared with other groups. In several of the learning groups visited by the IEG mission only a few follow-up readers remained in the community and most were being lent to other learning groups or held in district offices.
4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Research

4.1 Overall, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), although sufficient in design lagged in implementation. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MER) system was greatly improved from the first phase, but training and installation of the MIS was slow. Two learner assessments were carried out and one tracer study. The planned follow-up round to assess sustainability of skills and behaviors was not completed. Utilization of M&E findings was, however, substantial. Therefore, overall M&E quality is rated substantial.

Design

4.2 As discussed in section 2 the development objective was stated differently in the PAD (outcome-oriented) and in the credit agreement (output-oriented). However, the two objectives were not conflicting. Rather, the output-oriented objective would take place earlier in the results chain and lead to the outcome-oriented objective.

4.3 The results framework of the project was developed based on the outcome-oriented objective stated in the PAD. Relevant indicators for outcomes were set and the 70 percent learning achievement targets were established based on tests of NFLP I participants in 1997. However, the NFLP I tests were known to be of sub-standard quality and, as these test instruments would be revised, the NFLP I test scores were not used as baseline. Instead, the planned learner assessments would test participants and selected non-participants at the start of the training cycle and serve as baseline for NFLP II. The learning targets would have been more realistic if the project had linked test data before appraisal with the level of literacy that was expected on the outcome indicators (for example, read and comprehend a 3 page essay, write a 1-page letter) and calibrated standards based on those results. It is not clear how the achievement on the NFLP I test corresponded with the NFLP II outcome indicators. As a result, the 70 percent target on writing was far from being achieved and two of the targets (the percent of participants that demonstrate behavioral change and participate in developmental activities) were already achieved at the start of the training cycle. Few indicators were established for measuring the output-oriented project objective—delivering quality and cost-effective basic literacy and functional skills (for example, develop NFED decentralization strategies, collaborate with NGOs, and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system and radio broadcasting). They were also vaguely defined often without targets and baselines.

4.4 The link between the project components and activities and the outcome and output-oriented development objectives was logical, although there was no discussion of how increased cost-effectiveness would be achieved. At the same time as continuing to deliver literacy and functional skills training, the quality of the training would be strengthened. However, given that lack of capacity and resources had limited the quality of training and the information collected on its outcomes in the past, it would have been better if the institutional strengthening aspects of the project would have been more frontloaded.

19 NFLP I tested learners during the last two years of the project. The tests showed that learners performed well on the writing, numeracy, attitudinal and functional sections but slightly worse on the reading section. The NFLP I ICR does not report test scores but the NFLP II PAD (p. 32 footnote 6) states that, on average, learners who sat for the test scored between 64-74 percent in the various tests.
4.5 The MER system was built into the project as a component and divided into three parts. First, *monitoring* consisted of record keeping (feeding into the Management Information System, MIS) at the class, zone, district, and regional levels of the progress of the literacy classes and the achievement of outputs and attainment of targets. Regular supervision visits by headquarter, regional and district level staff were scheduled. Zonal coordinators would make two visits to each class per month. Facilitators would document attendance and learning progress for each class period. Under NFLP II data entry was to be gradually decentralized to regional and district offices with the procurement of computers and training on data entry. Monitoring records provided periodic information on enrollment, attendance, and instruction.

4.6 Secondly, *evaluation* consisted of learner assessments and tracer studies\(^2\) to measure progress on the outcome indicators such as participants' achievement in reading, writing and numeracy, participation in development activities, and participants' behavioral change. Tracer studies were a new addition to the MER program in NFLP II. They would survey a sample of participants just before they start the class, at mid-point, at termination, and 1-2 years after the completion of the literacy class. Information would be collected from the participants, household members of participants, class facilitators, and community leaders. Also, a set of individuals, similar to the participants and from the same communities, would be selected as a comparison group. The purpose of the tracer studies was to measure the impact of the literacy class on development indicators and to gain an understanding on how well the literacy training was progressing in the communities. NFED would cooperate with other areas in the MoEYS and other government statistical organs to get a representative control group and questionnaire design.

4.7 As part of the tracer studies, learner assessments would be undertaken among participants and control individuals on a set of questions related to the outcome indicators on reading, writing and numeracy. The test, revised from the previous phase, had 30 points for each of the three parts. A score of 21 corresponded to being literate as defined in the project outcome indicators. The learner assessments were to be undertaken every 1-2 years with a minimum of 50 classes sampled randomly based on region and rural/urban location. A simple self-assessment of participants and facilitators was also to be introduced to the majority of classes in order to provide an indication of progress and proficiency.

4.8 Thirdly, *research* involved studying the performance of various aspects of the project. The research findings would contribute to improving delivery and cost effectiveness. Some of the research topics were: effectiveness of the radio component, use of supervision, management of book boxes, effect of awareness creation, and outcome of the English pilot.

4.9 The quality of design of the MER system was *substantial*. The results framework was adequate notwithstanding some shortcomings. The key weaknesses were the lack of indicators on quality and cost-effectiveness improvements as well as the shortage of baselines at the start of the project. Monitoring and evaluation under NFLP I had been weak and even though there were improvements to the MER system for the second phase of the program, were not adequate to address all the shortcomings.

\(^2\) The PAD does not clearly state the number of learner assessments and tracer studies that would be undertaken and when during the project period they would be implemented.
Implementation

4.10 In the earlier phase, reporting and supervision of M&E implementation was poor. It had been cumbersome to fill out field reporting forms and the MIS had been inefficient. Based on these weaknesses the NFLP II simplified the monitoring questionnaires in 2003 and reduced the number of monitoring reports (from 12 to 4). But the monitoring system under the NFLP II still did not operate efficiently. Data collected during supervision visits and by facilitators were, due to complications with the MIS installation at regional offices, not entered, analyzed or reported to higher levels in a timely manner. Supervision visits by higher level NFED staff varied in number between regions but were strengthened in the later stages of the project. Although computers were installed at regional offices, NFED staff complained to the IEG mission that they were old and did not function well. By December 2005, MIS training of supervisors on their responsibilities and on data gathering and entry had only been given in five regions and the installation of the MIS template for synchronizing with the MoEYS Education MIS (EMIS) had been rescheduled for late 2006. Once the MIS templates were installed on regional office computers they facilitated data processing at regional and district offices.

4.11 Thus, at project completion, final training, data entry, and analysis had not been fully undertaken. Operationalization of the MIS for use in the NFLP II was not achieved. Because structured reporting from the districts and regions was hampered, monitoring relied heavily on class visits by headquarters/regional staff to assess progress and resolve issues. Contrary to plans, the non-formal education MIS was not coordinated with the EMIS during the project.

4.12 Through 2003 only “proxy measures” were used to estimate if participants became functionally literate. Two learner assessments in 2004 and 2007 and one tracer study were completed. In May 2004 the first phase of the learner assessment exposed that gains were made in reading and numeracy but that participants were not performing well on writing. The tracer study collected baseline data for batch 10 in 2004 and mid-term data in June 2006. The survey at termination was only undertaken after the IDA funding ended. NFED confirmed to IEG that the planned follow-up of participants 1-2 years after completion in order to assess sustainability of impacts was not possible due to budget constraints. Sixty communities were sampled. Although the tracer study and the learner assessments could not assess impact (rigorously attributing changes in literacy to the project), it provided much information on the progression of learning and skills development and helped inform project management about the strengths and weaknesses in design, outcomes and achievement of the key performance indicators at closing. Box 2 discusses selection issues in the NFED tracer study and learner assessment as well as the independent assessment undertaken by Aoki (2006).

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21 These included a review of primers, drop-out rates, a quick survey of 27 facilitators, supervisors and coordinators at a consultation workshop (Implementation Status Report, December 24, 2003; December 24, 2003 Back to Office Report from the Mid-Term Review (MTR) mission November 25-December 9, 2003).

22 The second learner assessment covered batch 12 learners. However, the assessment was completed after the project had closed.

23 Aoki (2006) also carried out a study of literacy and behavioral aspects of learners and non-learners almost two years after the cycle completion. The findings contributed to understanding the outcomes of the project objectives.
NFED (2007) tested learners in 60 batch 10 classes (847 learners) at the beginning of the training, at mid-point and at completion. They also administered tests to other people in the same community who did not participate in the program (non-participants). The study does not clarify how the non-participants were selected, only that they were from the same community. The study did not use matching techniques to ensure that the comparator group had similar characteristics as the participants. In comparing the descriptive statistics, the two groups were relatively similar on a set of characteristics such as sex, age, occupation, and marital status. However, participants had slightly more formal schooling than non-participants. Because the study does not control for self-selection of participants into the program it is possible that participants were different from non-participants on other characteristics other than those observed. Motivation to learn how to read and write could be one variable, interest in joining an IGA group and the potential of earning an income and accessing credit could be another. In addition, it is possible that non-participants in the comparison group may also have changed their behavior or acquired skills as a result of their close contact with participants. These self-selection and spillover effects make comparison between the two groups difficult.

Aoki (2006) administers written tests comparing 349 batch 8 NFLP II participants who completed the training 1-2 years earlier with around 400 batch 10 NFLP II learners who had just started the training (a few months into the program). Aoki regresses the post-learning score of batch 8 participants against the pre-test scores (batch 10), the individuals’ age, geographic location, household expenditure, and formal schooling. Using this method, selection and spillover effects are likely small although it is possible that the comparison group scores have been affected by what they learned in the few months of the program that they have attended. Also, it is possible that batch 8 participants have gained skills from other sources after the program ended but before the test was administered.

Aoki also administered oral tests to the 349 batch 8 learners and to 105 sampled control individuals in 7 communities which had never participated in NFLP but were located within the same districts as the participating communities. The results of this method are likely affected by the fact that participating communities opted on their own will to participate in the program, but comparison communities, for unknown reasons, did not. Aoki recognizes that it is not possible to separate NFLP effects from possible effects of other interventions such as agricultural and health extension work and mass media effects.

The issue of self selection and spillover in both of these studies increase the unreliability of the findings and reduce the certainty with which the observed differences in literacy and functional skills and attitudes between participants and non-participants can be attributed to the project.

4.13 Also, at least five research studies had been undertaken: a study on supervision and supervised supervision; a follow-up of non-financially supported IGA groups; a study on the expansion of the radio system; an assessment on the use of book boxes; and a study on awareness creation. Implementation of the MER was modest.

Utilization of M&E Data

4.14 Utilization of monitoring information was good when it reached decision makers. For instance, when the female drop-out rate in deprived regions was found to be high, it was discovered that many women dropped out because most facilitators were male. Measures were taken to increase the number of female graduates in the last batches to compensate for the low completion in the early batches. Moreover, based on the learner assessment and tracer study
findings reported in May 2004, progress toward achieving the development impact was judged satisfactory and the project was granted a two-year extension. These research studies contributed to project readjustment. For instance, many of the recommendations made in the radio study were implemented to strengthen radio broadcasting. M&E utilization was substantial.

5. Achievement of Development Objectives

5.1 The assessment of the achievement of the development objectives is split into three parts covering both the outcome- and the output-oriented objectives. The report will evaluate the extent to which: a) delivery of basic functional literacy and skills was provided in 15 national languages, to about one million adults, especially women and the rural poor, ages 15-45, b) participants acquired literacy and functional skills, and c) the quality and cost-effectiveness of functional literacy and skills services have improved.

Delivery of Basic Functional Literacy and Skills. Rating: Substantial

5.2 At project closing over 1,195,000 participants had enrolled (Table 3). Of the 1,165,918 participants who enrolled in batches 8-12, 83 percent continued the whole training cycle. Thus, the average drop-out rate was 17 percent, 16 percent for women and 19 percent for men (NFED, 2008a). Assuming an 83 percent graduation rate for the whole project, around 992,612 participants followed the course to its end. It was mentioned in the ICR that the English pilot also surpassed its enrollment targets due to very high demand (data not available).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Project Outputs on Coverage and Targeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of national languages (plus English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of learners between the age of 15-45 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of classes in the northern regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of classes in rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women as a percent of learners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: World Bank (1999); NFED (2007); NFED (2008a).

5.3 The large majority of the participants fell in the 15-45 age group but a sizeable share of participants was over 45 years of age. Aoki (2004) and NFED (2007) data show that, depending

24 Another 30,000 learners enrolled in Batch 13.

25 Drop-out and attendance rates varied by region. The learners' assessment undertaken of batch 8 learners showed that in the Northern, Eastern and Western regions 85, 66, and 40 percent of sampled learners participated for the full 21 months, respectively. The percentages of sampled learners who attended all classes was 76 percent in the Northern, 50 percent in the Eastern, and 33 percent in the Western region.
on the time this measurement was taken, the share of participants between 15-45 ranged between 70-76 percent. The share of participants above 45 years old varied between 20-29 percent. There was restriction on the age range of participants. Over 70 percent of participants came from rural areas.

5.4 On the other hand, the project experienced difficulties recruiting the targeted 40 percent of participants from the three northern regions (Upper-East, Upper West and Northern regions). Only 29 percent of classes were in the north (World Bank 2007a). The 60 percent participation of women was reached in all regions except the northern three regions where only 49 percent of participants were women (NFED 2008a). Training took place in 15 local languages plus English as planned. In the north populations are more sparse and poverty is generally higher. Tension and conflict made project implementation in the north slightly difficult. Curfews were common during the dark hours making travel to and from class sites difficult, especially for women. Seasonal migration (when agriculture is not productive) of both men and women from the north to the south contributed to the low participation rates.

**Acquisition of Basic Literacy and Functional Skills. Rating: Substantial**

**ACQUISITION OF BASIC LITERACY**

5.5 In sum, the project has likely helped improve literacy skills in Ghana but did not reach its target of making 70 percent of participants functionally literate. This was mainly a result of the poorly grounded targets, especially in writing. Although the achievement targets were only met in reading (Ghanaian languages and English) and strongest for participants who had previously been formally schooled, there were strong positive improvements made in writing and numeracy. Evidence on sustainability of skills is weak and only based on oral tests but literacy skills seem to have been relatively well sustained after the project ended. Participants also undertook development activities although most participants were already engaged in these prior to the project. Moreover, evidence suggests, although attribution is not possible to establish with certainty, that the project has led to some behavioral change and better awareness in areas such as health and child care, schooling of children, and decision making and participation. On balance, the achievement of the objective of providing basic literacy and functional skills was substantial.

5.6 Data on participant achievement from various sources are presented in Table 4. Strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation methodologies are presented in Box 2. Although methodology and outcomes differ, the results point in the same direction. In NFED’s learning assessment of batch 10 participants (enrolled 2004-06) 72 percent of participants scored above the 21 (of 30 maximum points) at the end of the training and were considered able to read and comprehend a three paragraph essay (NFED 2007). This is significantly higher than at the beginning of the cycle and in contrast to non-participants. However, as participants self-selected into the program they might have been more motivated and otherwise different compared to non-participants. The

26 The NFED (2007) test consisted of 30 points. A score of 21 or above corresponds to the objective of being able to read and comprehend 3 paragraphs, write a one-page letter, and perform calculations in four arithmetical operations with numbers of up to one million. They also tested 333 non-learners in the same communities at the mid-point and at completion and used these as control groups.
learner assessment does not control for the self-selection. Aoki (2006) finds that 82 percent of batch 8 participants (enrolled 2000-02) can read and comprehend an essay 1-2 years after attending the training. Although as many as 65 percent could read and comprehend an essay at the beginning of the training, the difference is significantly higher than at the start of the cycle.

Table 4. Participant Achievement in Basic Literacy
(percent of participants who achieved above the pass mark for each test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline, % (source)</th>
<th>Target, %</th>
<th>At the end of the training, % (source)</th>
<th>Change (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read and comprehend a short essay of three paragraphs in one of the 15 selected local languages</td>
<td>18.8 (batch 10, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>72.3 (batch 10, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>53.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>11.8 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>6.6*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64.9 (written batch 10 Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>81.7 (written batch 8 Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>16.8**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.0 (oral control Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>54.0 (oral batch 8, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>26.0a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a simple one-page letter in one of the 15 selected local languages</td>
<td>2.8 (batch 10, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26.5 (batch 10, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>23.7a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>2.2 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>0.0a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.8 (written batch 10 Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>28.1 (written batch 8 Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>19.3**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.0 (oral control Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>38.0 (oral batch 8, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>14.0a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unknown (NFED, 2008b)</td>
<td>47.6 (NFED, 2008b)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform simple calculations in 4 arithmetic operations with numbers up to 1M</td>
<td>8.4 (batch 10, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>59.2 (batch 10, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>50.8a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>6.7 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>3.1a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.6 (written batch 10 Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>59.0 (written batch 8 Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>27.4**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.0 (oral control Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>40.0 (oral batch 8, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>10.0a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and comprehend a short essay of three paragraphs in English</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73.3 (World Bank, 2007a)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a simple one-page letter in English</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>53.0 (World Bank, 2007a)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: NFED 2007; Aoki 2006; NFED 2008b; World Bank 2007a.
** Statistically significant from 0 at the 1 percent confidence level after controlling for educational, geographic, language, age, and household expenditure information.
* Tests of statistical significance were not performed.

5.7 In writing, performance was much weaker. NFED (2007) and Aoki (2006) report that less than 30 percent of participants were proficient in writing (could write a one-page letter), well below the 70 percent target. However, the difference in skills compared to the control groups is significant (the same participants at the beginning of the cycle, beginner participants in later batches and non-participants in the same communities). IEG did not obtain the baseline data for the batch 12 (enrolled 2006-07) learning assessment (NFED 2008b29), but based on the test at the

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27 Aoki tested to which extent participants (in writing) could read and comprehend 3 paragraphs, write a one-page letter, and perform calculations in four arithmetical operations with numbers of up to one million. The test included 30 points, the pass mark was set at 21 out of 30 points, or 70 percent. Tests were also administered to batch 9 learners at the mid-point of their cycle but results are not presented here. Aoki also administered oral tests to batch 8 learners and to 105 sampled control individuals in 7 communities which did not participate in the NFLP II. For several reasons the oral exams are not considered as reliable as the written exams.

28 Aoki also presents other explanations, such as intervention by program staff during the exam, for why beginners score relatively highly.

29 NFED (2008b) tested 187 learners who had attended batch 12 in reading, writing and numeracy. The study targeted 320 learners in two districts each in the Ashanti and Volta regions.
completion of the training 47.6 percent could write a one-page letter. In numeracy, the performance was moderate and below the target. Both NFED (2007) and Aoki (2006) report that 59 percent of participants met the objective of being able to perform calculations using all four signs and numbers up to one million. Again participants scored much higher than comparison individuals. Increases between the baseline/control group and the participants who completed the cycle are significant.

5.8 It should be noted that people who had not attended the training scored very low on the 2007 NFED tests, although Aoki found that a much larger share of the participants had some basic literacy skills already at baseline. In the 2008 NFED study of 187 batch 12 participants, 58 percent had not had any formal education, 28 percent had dropped out of lower primary school, and 11 percent had entered upper primary school (NFED 2008b). In the tracer study conducted between 2004 and 2007, 35 percent of the 1,070 sampled participants had some formal education at the start of the training (NFED 2007). Aoki notes that on average 72 percent of the 1,078 tested batch 8-10 participants had no formal schooling while 20 percent had some primary schooling. In some regions however, the share of participants with formal schooling was over 50 percent. Forty percent of the participants who were just starting their training said that they read and write at home and in the public life (Aoki 2006). Aoki finds that those with formal schooling scored higher than those without. Also, test scores were inversely correlated with age. This suggests that not all of the literacy attained by participants at the end of the project can be attributed to the project.

5.9 Also, the 21 month cycle was to cover two primers, progressively advancing in difficulty level. The NFED (2007) tracer study revealed that, at the end of the 21-month literacy cycle, many learning groups had not progressed to the second of the two primers. Actual instruction was hence slower than expected. Aoki finds that participants did better the longer they stayed in the program. Differences between participants and the various comparison groups are large and it is likely that the project has contributed to an increase in functional literacy levels among participants. However, the tracer study and learner assessments were not carried out with sufficient rigor to conclude with certainty that the project lead to increased literacy levels.

5.10 Although planned, NFED did not complete the two year post-graduation fourth phase of the tracer study. But Aoki’s tests were administered almost two years after batch 8 participants graduated from the program and could therefore serve as a measurement for the level of sustainability of skills. In her survey, 78 and 67 percent of the participants who were sampled 1-2 years after completion of the training confirmed that they use their spare time to read and write, respectively, at home and in public life (Aoki 2006). Compared to non-participants, even though they had more formal schooling, participants used their skills significantly more.30 Participants say that they can, after participation in the project, read and understand student report cards, doctors’ notes, prescription labels, road signs, and know how to count and handle money in the market. IEG was able to confirm these findings in 15 focus groups of about 350 NFLP II participants (mainly from batch 12) around two years after program completion. Most participants could still read and write sentences unrelated to the primer they had been using and could perform simple calculations. Although sustainability of literacy skills in adult literacy

30 In non-participating communities 33 and 43 percent of sampled individuals say that they read and write. Forty-two percent of batch 8 learners and 56 percent of comparison groups individuals had formal schooling.
projects world-wide has generally proven to be low (see chapter 6 on risk), these different findings all point at relatively high sustainability of literacy skills in the NFLP II. Had the post-literacy readers been more readily available to participants the sustainability of skills may have been higher.

**ACQUISITION OF FUNCTIONAL SKILLS**

5.11 According to baseline data the target of 70 percent participation in development activities\(^3\) was already achieved without the project’s assistance. Nevertheless, two studies (NFED 2007\(^2\) and Aoki (2006) confirm that participants acquired awareness and demonstrated behavioral change in many life skills and functional areas (Table 5). Participants gained new knowledge and changed behavior in areas such as health and family planning, children’s education, and joint decision making. Community members and community leaders observed more changes in the community over the period of the NFLP II program compared to before the program (Figure 3).\(^3\) As stated above, because the studies did not adequately control for self-selection into the program, spill over or contamination from other parallel changes to the participants environment the positive outcome cannot be fully attributed to the project. However, it is likely that the project contributed to the observed changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline/control group, % (respondents, source)</th>
<th>Target, %</th>
<th>At the end of the training, % (respondents, source)</th>
<th>Change (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled adults should have participated in developmental activities</td>
<td>75.0 (participants, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>97.4 (participants, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91.5 (househ. memb., NFED, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td>97.6 (househ. memb., NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89.0 (comm. leaders, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td>96.5 (comm. leaders, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72.7 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td>97.0 (control, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled adults should demonstrate civic awareness and behavioral change</td>
<td>76.1 (comm. leaders, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>93.4 (comm. leaders, NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75.0 (send to school, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td></td>
<td>98.0 (send to school, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.0 (decisions jointly, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td></td>
<td>62.0 (decisions jointly, Aoki, 2006)</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.6 (IGA particip., NFED, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.4 (IGA particip., NFED, 2007)</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: NFED 2007; Aoki 2006; NFED 2008b.

5.12 The majority of participants were already involved in developmental activities before the project began. According to NFED (2007) over 97 percent of participants and 98 percent of household members participated in development activities after the project compared to 75 percent among participants and 92 percent among household members at baseline (Table 5).\(^3\) But respondents agree that NFLP II participant groups commonly organized community development activities. The most common activity was clean-up efforts. Participants also say that they understand the importance and make more use of environmental practices such as

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\(^{3}\) Such as community clean-up, push fire prevention and tree planting.

\(^{2}\) The tracer study interviewed batch 10 learners, facilitators, other members in the same community, and community leaders on the development impact of the literacy program.

\(^{3}\) At baseline respondents we asked about changes in the community over the last 5 years. At the mid-point and terminal phase respondents were asked about changes in the community since the beginning of the literacy program.

\(^{4}\) A slightly different answer is obtained from the three groups of respondents.
sustainable land use and bush fire prevention. Although no evidence is presented by Aoki (2006), she found that participants were more involved in communal labor for environmental sustainability than in control communities. The study found that participants organized some tree planting and bush fire prevention.

Figure 3. Reported Observed Changes since the Inception of NFLP II
(asked of participants' household members and community leaders in batch 10 communities)

5.13 Furthermore, participants' empowerment and civic awareness increased. Aoki (2004) found that the program helped bond community groups and give people more courage to make demands on district assemblies. In interviews by Aoki, 40 percent said they make more decisions jointly in the household after attending the course. Sixty-two percent of men and women said that decisions are made jointly and 35 percent said the husband makes household decisions. Among non-participants 48 percent said they make joint decisions while 50 percent report that the man makes the decisions. Moreover, participants also made more joint decisions on family planning (Figure 4). IEG confirmed that women felt that their sense of self-worth had been boosted after acquiring literacy skills. They were more confident speaking in public whereas previously they would leave such public speaking to the men. Aoki (2004) noted much less participation and community empowerment in control groups (no evidence presented). Women also indicated that their ability to contribute financially to the household through the IGAs had earned them the respect of their families and given them greater voice in their homes and community.

5.14 There were a standard set of income-generation activities developed and taught in class through the primers but groups could get engaged in the activity of their choice based on local resources and market availability. Engaging in an income generating activities was often a motivation for groups to enroll in the literacy program. Compared to the baseline, the number of participants that were involved in IGAs quadrupled. The NFED (2007) tracer study showed that 52 percent of participants surveyed had learned income-generation skills in the NFLP II and the
majority (76 percent) of participants said that the NFLP II was the only place where they had acquired IGA skills. The main activities were food and oil processing.\(^{35}\)

**Figure 4. Reported Decision Making on Family Planning**
(asked to participants in batch 10 communities and non-participants in the same community)

Source: NFED 2007. The sample size was 556 for participants and 205 for comparison groups.

5.15 Although not the objective of the project, evidence on increased productivity and income as a result of the IGAs learned in the NFLP II is scant. Both the NFED (2007) study and Aoki (2006) mention the inability of the program of transferring IGA skills as a weakness. The main reason for not learning IGA skills was that they were not taught in the class. An NFED staff provided an explanation for this finding by saying that many learning groups are church groups and not interested in IGAs but seek to learn how to read and interpret the Bible (see objective 3 and Box 3 for more detail).

5.16 Participants state that they send children to school to a larger extent as a result of the program, encourage them to advance, assist them with homework and monitor their performance. Aoki (2006) reports that the percent of participants who send their children to school is twice as high in the participant group (98 percent), compared to in the control group (49 percent). In the NFED (2007) tracer study both community members and community leaders noted a reduction in the number of participants who did not send their children to school. Interestingly, the study does not find any impact on the awareness of child labor laws among participants. Instead, participants' school aged children are more engaged in economic activities, mainly farming and trading, after (85.2 percent) compared to before the program (50.0 percent). It can be speculated whether the increased involvement in income generating activities among the participants also contribute to more work for children.

5.17 The tracer study also shows that participants improved their knowledge and practice of health care and safe motherhood (Figure 5). Participants, community members and community

\(^{35}\) Common IGA activities were farming or fruit growing (cassava/gari, vegetables/maize, coco, pineapples), transformation activities (palm oil, shea butter and gari processing, soap making, bread making), crafts (bead making, batik printing, pottery, kente and mat weaving) and animal rearing/husbandry (beehkeeping, fish farming, grass cutter, snail, sheep and bird rearing). In the 15 literacy classes visited by IEG women were predominantly involved in shea butter processing, soap-making or weaving or in mixed groups engaged in fish-farming, bird-fattening or palm oil processing.
leaders confirmed that more babies were delivered in hospitals and clinics after the program compared to before the program. Fewer babies were delivered using a traditional birth attendant. Moreover, Aoki (2006) find that participants have a better understanding of safe motherhood, and prevention and consequences of teen pregnancy. In the Northern region batch 12 learning groups told IEG that before the project women would hide or remove their children from the village when health care nurses came around for immunizations. They now understand that immunization can help prevent childhood illnesses.

5.18 Although no rigorous impact evaluation has been undertaken of the project, it is fairly unlikely that the outcomes and expected impacts could have been achieved to such a large scale without the project (or without other large scale donor support). Smaller NGOs are active in delivering literacy and skills in Ghana but the NFLP project is by far the largest in scope. Moreover, community leaders indicated that there was no significant increase in community organization, reading materials or mass media available in the area after as compared to before the program. This suggests that few factors other than the NFLP I program may have caused the impacts.

Figure 5. Health Care and Safe Motherhood
(asked to participants and non-participants in the same community)

Source: NFED, 2007. Participants are from batch 8. The sample size for participants was 286 and 68 for control groups.

Delivering Quality and Cost-Effective Training. Rating: Modest

5.19 In NFLP I, the NFED had operated inefficiently with a large staff base especially weak in supervision, financial management, and procurement capacity. The NFLP II intended to increase quality and cost-effectiveness of basic functional literacy training mainly through: a) developing a NFED policy framework including decentralization strategies; b) increasing collaboration with NGOs and other providers; c) facilitating obtaining micro-credit for learning groups engaged in IGA (for more details on the experience with IGA see Box 3); d) establishing an effective

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[36] The rise in clinic deliveries may not be a result of the program but may be attributable to changes in health policies in Ghana.
monitoring and evaluation system; and e) improving strategies for quality enhancement through training, materials development, supervision, and a more efficient radio system.

Box 3. The Experience with Income Generating Activities during NFLP II

To strengthen the IGA component of the literacy program the project intended to contract one or two NGOs to help link borrowers to micro-credit institutions and provide technical assistance to a sample of learning groups to help formulate a business plan. NFED partnered with the GRATIS Foundation which provided training to NFED IGA officers and to leaders of some of the learning groups on marketing, trading, and creating business plans.

At the same time, although the Bank team advised against it, NFED added their own micro-finance service towards the end of the period of Bank support (2005) in order to better sustain IGA groups. The micro-finance would help the various IGA groups with some "seed money" to get their activities up and running and before seeking loans at proper micro-credit institutions. The NFED micro-finance was piloted in five regions in a revolving fund where learner groups had to repay the loan within six months. Micro-credit with local Banks generally ranged 10-12 months.

The IGA component suffered due to delays although improvements were made during the second half of the project. The ICR states that a total of 139 groups obtained and managed NFED micro-finance under the project. The NFED reported that 335 IGA groups in six regions have benefitted from financial and technical support from NFED since 1992. Reports and IEG interviews with regional coordinators from Ashanti, Eastern, Greater Accra, Northern, Upper East and Western regions show that there were well over 220 IGA groups in these regions in 2009 and many of them were supported by technical assistance and/or funding from the NFED. The recovery rate on micro-finance was high, around 90 percent.

However, IEG found that groups experienced difficulties obtaining credit from the NFED and elsewhere. A major constraint to the success of IGAs was limited access to markets and inadequate business plans which were required by banks for obtaining credit. The IEG mission found that difficulties in accessing micro-credit limited the sustainability and extension of IGA groups and therefore also reduced the potential for additional family income. Income generated from IGAs was often used for paying school fees or for undertaking construction of latrines and additional school buildings.

5.20 In assessing achievement of the quality objective it would be appropriate to ask if the program performed better in generating literate graduated as a result of the quality improvements from this project, compared to the previous program (after controlling for the participant’s background characteristics). To answer this it would have required knowing if the success rates of the later batches (that benefitted from the activities aimed at improving quality) were higher than at the start of the project. In addition, it would have required monitoring information of the teaching quality throughout the program. However, such rich information is not available. Instead, in determining if quality has been improved this PPAR lays out what quality related outputs were delivered and the timing of their achievement.

Delivering Quality Training

5.21 Despite it being a part of the development objective of the legally binding credit agreement, the quality of basic literacy training was not formally monitored or assessed during the project. Other than the tracer study which assessed whether inputs (teacher training, manuals,
teaching supplies, supervision etc. had reached the learning groups of batch 10 learners at the start, mid-pint and termination stage, there was no assessment to verify if quality of literacy delivery was higher in the NFLP II batches compared to before the project (or the early phases of the project). The PAD listed some vague output indicators on the institutional strengthening aspects of the project. During the Mid-Term Review (MTR) the Bank team attempted to establish more quantifiable indicators for measuring quality. Using the indicators set in the PAD (and updated in the MTR, see Annex E) this assessment measures quality enhancement based on the types of quality related outputs that the project achieved as well as their timing and relevance for obtaining the project outcomes.

5.22 Overall, most outputs were delivered suggesting that quality of literacy delivery was likely enhanced from the NFLP I project. However, because of the serious delays in 2001-02, quality improvements did not materialize until 2003-04 and were not completed until close to the end of the project. Hence, much of the literacy training delivered by the project did not benefit from the quality updates and the effect on learner performance and the sustainability of skills after the program is weak. Annex E shows the outputs and outcomes achieved for each of the five areas. In sum, quality enhancement was achieved as follows.

- NFED was established as its own legal entity with a strong and visionary director. In 2003, a NFE policy was finalized and integrated into the Education Sector Strategy of the MoEYS.
- Materials decentralization and some financial decentralization were achieved but staffing and information systems remained mostly at headquarters level.
- The NFLP II started partnerships with the GRATIS Foundation and World Vision on IGAs and the English program but no strategic long term discussions on outsourcing of future delivery of literacy training were undertaken.
- IGA training was provided to NFED IGA staff and to 130 leaders of learning groups. At closing 139 IGA groups benefitted from NFED micro-finance (seed money) and the number has steadily increased since project closing. However, major constraints were poor access to markets and insubstantial business plans, limiting the scope for obtaining bank credit.
- As discussed in section 4, the MER system was strengthened from the last phase. But some areas remained weak, especially the MIS and supervision.
- The radio study was undertaken but completion was slow and the planned radio expansion was therefore delayed. The study recommended expanding to 18 stations nationwide. At closing, 16 stations were broadcasting literacy programs. But NFED staff were dissatisfied with performance of the radio component. Radio coverage was lower than expected. Nevertheless, radio programs were popular with participants and helped advertise the benefits of literacy.
- Even though all instructional and IGA supplies and materials were delivered and facilitators and supervisors were trained, these were long delays at the beginning of the project. Quality of literacy delivery, supervision, monitoring, and training on IGA and

37 Also, the MTR recommended undertaking an assessment of the cost-effectiveness of delivery and a beneficiary assessment of batch 8 learners to assess quality of training before the learner assessment and tracer study become available.
developmental activities suffered as a consequence. The tracer study found that many learning groups were dysfunctional due to delays in procuring and delivering facilitators’ incentives and infrequent monitoring. Materials development through local mechanisms and the creation of a literate environment was also slower than planned. Book boxes were few and of poor quality.

**Delivering Cost-Effective Training**

5.23 Although delivering cost-effective basic literacy training was part of the development objective, key indicators on cost-effectiveness were not established and it was not clear how the project attempted to measure and achieve this objective. In sum, actual unit cost per literate participant was twice the estimate in the PAD. There are two important flaws in the unit cost calculations used in the project. First the project uses overly ambitious assumptions on the success rate, second it significantly underestimates the true costs as baseline levels of literacy and functional skills are not accounted for.

5.24 The PAD (p. 36) calculated unit cost per successful basic literacy graduate at appraisal at US$53.1 (see Table 6 row 1). This is based on an estimated cost for the activities supporting basic literacy of US$38 million, one million enrolled participants and a projected graduation success rate of 72 percent including adjustments for drop-outs and number of participants who would not achieve the outcome target on literacy skills.

5.25 But the underlying assumptions on the success rate were too optimistic. Assuming a 56 percent success rate would have been more realistic and along the lines of the target indicators of the project. Also, all project costs except costs for the English pilot should be included in the unit cost calculations, as these costs would be incurred in order to achieve the objective. This would have put the unit cost estimate at US$80.4 per successful graduate (Table 6 row 2).

5.26 Actual project costs reported in the ICR were US$42.8 million (excluding the costs for the English pilot). As stated above, the number of actual participants was just over 1,195,000 and the actual drop-out rate was 17 percent. The average actual pass rate (project wide) for basic literacy was 53 percent. This makes for a much lower than projected graduation success rate of 44 percent. However, true unit costs come to US$81.4 per participant, almost exactly the same as the corrected estimated costs (Table 6 row 3). On the other hand, at best, if all of the 26.5 percent who passed the writing exam also passed the reading and numeracy tests the overall pass rate

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38 The estimated total costs for the project was $46 million but in calculating the total cost per enrolled learner the PAD excluded costs of the English pilot, the literate environment, and the PPF and contingencies (PAD p. 36).

39 For example, a 72 percent ‘success rate’ would be achieved if 100 learners enroll, 20 drop out, and of the remaining, 90 percent (or 72 people) graduate and meet the target on the outcome indicators (World Bank, 1999). In calculating the unit costs the PAD (p. 36, footnote 2) suggests that the aim of NFLP II is that 90 percent of graduates pass the test even through the project indicators are set at 70 percent.

40 Assuming 20 percent drop out and, of the remaining, 70 percent graduate and meet the targets. In the PAD a 56 percent success rate is recognized as the likely scenario for other on-going World Bank supported literacy programs.

41 Average of 72.3 percent who met the reading target, 26.5 percent who met the writing target and 59.2 percent who met the numeracy target (NFED 2007). It is not known what percent of participants met passed all of the three tests but it cannot be higher than 26.5 percent.
would be 26.5 percent. That puts the true unit cost at US$162.7 for those learners who were literate in reading, writing and numeracy (Table 6 row 5).

Table 6. Unit Cost Calculations NFLP II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated unit costs at appraisal</th>
<th>Total costs (US$)</th>
<th>Enrolled participants</th>
<th>Number of participants who completed</th>
<th>Graduation rate (%)&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Pass rate (%)</th>
<th>Success rate (%)</th>
<th>Unit cost (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit costs estimation (PAD, p. 36)</td>
<td>38,232,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected unit cost estimation (including all costs except for the English pilot)</td>
<td>45,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual unit costs (without corrections for the number of participants who were literate at the start)</th>
<th>Total costs (US$)</th>
<th>Enrolled participants</th>
<th>Number of participants who completed</th>
<th>Graduation rate (%)&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Pass rate (%)</th>
<th>Success rate (%)</th>
<th>Unit cost (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average actual unit costs for reading, writing and numeracy</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual unit costs for reading</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual unit costs for writing</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>162.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual unit costs for numeracy</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average actual unit costs for reading, writing and numeracy, behavioral change and development activities</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>True actual unit costs (correcting for number of participants who were literate at the start)</th>
<th>Total costs (US$)</th>
<th>Enrolled participants</th>
<th>Number of participants who completed</th>
<th>Graduation rate (%)&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Pass rate (%)</th>
<th>Success rate (%)</th>
<th>Unit cost (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average actual unit costs for reading, writing and numeracy</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>101.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual unit costs for reading</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual unit costs for writing</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>178.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual unit costs for numeracy</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average actual unit costs for reading, writing and numeracy, behavioral change and development activities</td>
<td>42,800,000</td>
<td>1,195,918</td>
<td>991,850</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>128.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: World Bank, 1999; author’s calculations using costs reported in the ICR (World Bank 2007).

<sup>a</sup> The graduation rate refers to the percent of learners who follow the length of the cycle and sit for the test, the pass rate refers to the percent of test-takers who score above the performance criterion on the tests, and the success rate refers to the percent of participants who enrolled in the class at the start and who score above the performance criterion on the test.

<sup>b</sup> In calculating the unit costs the PAD (p. 36 footnote 2) suggests that the aim of NFLP II is that 90 percent of graduates pass the test even through the project indicators are set at 70 percent (PAD p.16).

5.27 But these success rate calculations include only the achievement on reading, writing and numeracy and exclude any other functional and social benefits. Factoring in the high achievement on the two outcome indicators for functional skills the average achievement rate rises to 70 percent and the graduation success rate comes to 58 percent. Actual unit cost drops

<sup>42</sup> The first three outcome indicators in Table 3.

<sup>43</sup> Including also the 97.4 percent who met the developmental activity target and 93.4 percent who met the behavior change and civic awareness target. For the purpose of these calculations it is assumed that all of the increase in the developmental activity and behavioral change is attributable to the project.
to US$61.9 if both literacy and functional skills are included in the calculation of benefits (Table 6 row 7).

5.28 However, these unit cost calculations do not adjust for the share of participants who were already considered literate before the training. Adjusting the success rate for the fact that, on average, 10 percent\(^{44}\) of participants met the outcome indicators for basic literacy at baseline the success rate drops to 35 percent. Adjusting also for those 76 percent\(^{45}\) who exhibited the desired awareness and behaviors and participated in development activities at the start of the project the success rate drops further to 28 percent. These success rates are in line with success rates calculated by Nordtveit (2008) for the Pilot Female Literacy Project (PAPF) in Senegal where adjustments were made for literacy and functional skill levels before attending the learning. Adjusting for pre-training basic and functional literacy skill levels the unit cost per successful graduate comes to US$101.1 for literacy skills and US$128.7 counting both literacy and functional skills (Table 6 rows 8 and 12). These costs are significantly higher than the corrected predicted unit costs of US$80.4 and twice as high that estimated in the PAD.\(^{46}\)

5.29 No cost-benefit calculations of alternative approaches (other than the previous phase) for delivering literacy in Ghana are included in project documents making it difficult to judge whether the current project is more cost-effective than other options.\(^{47}\) However, as implemented it was far less cost-effective than planned and much higher than in the NFLP I (US$47.3).

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\(^{44}\) Average of the 18.8 percent who met the reading target (being able to read and comprehend a short essay of three paragraphs), the 2.8 percent who met the writing target and the 8.4 percent who met the numeracy target at baseline.

\(^{45}\) Including also the average of the 75.0 percent who met the developmental activity target and the 76.1 percent who met the behavior change and civic awareness target at baseline.

\(^{46}\) The PAD (p. 36) only reports unit costs per enrolled learner (US$35.0) without accounting for the share of learners reaching the outcome indicator skills levels.

\(^{47}\) Although not strictly comparable due to country context and program design differences, it can be noted that the NFLP II unit costs were much higher than in the 2001-07 Bangladesh Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Project (PLCE) (US$30.0) but lower than the Senegal Pilot Female Literacy Project (PAPF) (US$149.0) (World Bank 2004c and 2008). Although these estimates do not account for the number of participants who were already literate at the start of the project, it appears that the cost-efficiency of the NFLP II is around the average compared to projects in other countries. Adjusting for literacy levels before project start Nordtveit (2008) argues that the cost per successful graduate in the Senegal project could be as much as US$300. Finally, Aoki (2006) compares the cost breakdown between the Ghana and the Senegal project in order to explain differences in costs between the government implemented project in Ghana with the NGO outsourcing method used in Senegal. It is observed that the Ghana project spends less on salaries but more on class inputs and materials than the Senegal project possibly due to the fact that the NFLP II relies heavily on unpaid volunteer facilitators compensated by material incentives in terms of equipment. The NFLP II also spends less on operating costs but more on training and research than does the Senegal project. Aoki explains this difference by the high supervision costs involved in outsourcing to NGOs in Senegal and the stronger staff capacity building and MER efforts in the centralized Ghana project.
6. Ratings

Outcome

6.1 This section discusses the rating of overall outcome consisting of relevance, efficacy and efficiency of the NFLP II project. Table 7 summarizes the outcome ratings of the project. Based on the substantial relevance and efficacy, but considering the modest achievement of one sub-objective, and modest efficiency, the overall project outcome rating is moderately satisfactory. The project likely contributed to reductions in illiteracy and to progress on other development goals albeit to a smaller extent than anticipated. However, evaluations of project performance did not rigorously address issues of attribution.

Table 7. NFLP II Summary of Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Objectivesa</th>
<th>Relevance of objectives</th>
<th>Relevance of design</th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>Efficiency</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) delivery of basic functional literacy and skills was provided in 15 national languages, to about one million adults, especially women and the rural poor, ages 15-45,</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Moderately Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) participants acquired literacy and functional skills, and</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Moderately Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) the quality and cost-effectiveness of functional literacy and skills services have improved</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Ratinga</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderately Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see the discussion in the text below for a justification of the weighting used in deriving the overall ratings.

RELEVANCE

6.2 On balance, relevance is rated substantial because of its substantial relevance of objectives despite some shortcomings in design.

6.3 Relevance of objectives. The development objectives were highly relevant to the country conditions and government priorities at the time of appraisal. Providing basic functional literacy would not just afford access to basic education for those who participated but would help boost the demand for and use of services such as basic education, health services and clean water through increased awareness and behavioral change. In the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2000-02 the focus on poor peoples’ capacity to earn incomes was laid out and female literacy rates were recognized as a core indicator for improving Ghana’s relatively poor human development performance. The strategy also placed emphasis on reducing geographic and gender disparities in poverty reduction. The Bank’s strategy (2000 CAS) envisaged support to the education sector to help improve access and utilization of basic services especially or women and in deprived regions.

6.4 The objectives of the project were also relevant for addressing some of the existing sector constraints (such as the poor quality of functional literacy programs, the lack of attention to sustainability of literacy skills, the institutional role and capacity of the NFED, and collaboration with non-governmental literacy and skills training providers). The Bank’s support strategy for
education in Ghana focused on improving quality and effectiveness. The Bank placed strong emphasis on the education sector for helping to reduce poverty.

6.5 In the GPRS 2003-05, attention was placed on strengthening monitoring and evaluation of existing adult literacy programs and developing distance learning initiatives in remote areas. The focus remained on skills building and more attention was paid to enhancing credit opportunities and strengthening entrepreneurial, finance and management skills of poor people. A core component of the government’s Education Strategic Plan in 2003 was to offer non-formal education programs focused on adult literacy.

6.6 In the GPRS 2006-09 the focus had moved more to the productivity related objectives of skills programs and away from basic literacy training as an education sector strategy. Government provision of functional adult literacy programs was no longer an active development strategy. Instead the government strategy for non-formal education has shifted to complementary education for youth drop outs and more formal mechanisms for skills training (not community-driven). The Bank supported the government in trying to improve quality of targeting of basic services such as in education and skills development (World Bank 2004b and 2007b).

6.7 Based on the evolving but continuous consistency of the project’s objectives to Ghana’s priorities in the areas of human development, rural productivity and economic growth—all supported by the Bank—the relevance of the project objectives is rated substantial.

6.8 Relevance of design. The program was built on a model of social change which was expected to lead to the development objectives and to behavioral change outcomes. Important lessons from the earlier phase of the project were carefully reflected in design such as increased flexibility to participants’ lives and needs, and improved monitoring and evaluation arrangements. The results framework was adequate for assessing the achievement of the expected outcomes and linked inputs and outputs to training modules and batches of participants. Although stronger than most other results frameworks in non-formal education projects, its main weaknesses included poor indicators and targets for the output-oriented objective (deliver quality and cost-effective literacy). Also, it used poorly grounded targets on learning achievement. The connection between outcome, outputs, and processes was strong, but the institutional strengthening activities could have been more frontloaded so as to boost project outcomes and impacts on participants.

6.9 Beyond the results framework, there were also some other shortcomings in design. First, because it was well known that demand for literacy activities was low in the north it may have been appropriate if the project took stronger action on stimulating demand (such as by providing incentives, and reducing barriers to participation) in addition to supplying training.

6.10 Second, the centralized design was highly dependent on central government support and sensitive to changes in the political climate. The hesitation of the new government leaders to such a project placed the project at risk and caused major delays. Moreover, the need for decentralization of government operations to the local levels was becoming increasingly important in the FY01-04 and FY05-07 CAS periods. Government capacity in service delivery was stretched and inefficiently operated (World Bank 2004b). As civil society developed, the
government, supported by the Bank, moved towards improving front-line service delivery together with NGOs and the private sector. The project design included developing a strategic plan for strengthened regional and district capacity but only to be implemented towards the end of the project period. But retaining the overall centralized design from NFLP I was somewhat inconsistent with the urgency of moving basic service provision under the control of local government bodies in cooperation with civil society. In 1999, at the time of appraisal, options were proposed to outsource delivery of literacy training to able NGOs and other organizations. But the NGO sector capacity for undertaking such a large program was limited at the time and the government favored a centralized design. Nonetheless, the project undertook preparations for decentralization for M&E and resource management to regions and districts as well as cooperation and engagement with NGOs for literacy training delivery.

6.1 Relevance of design is rated as **substantial**. Overall the design logic of the project was strong and incorporated important lessons from prior experience. Although there were some weaknesses in the results framework, its relevance of design was relatively high. The main shortcomings in design included inadequate attention to demand constraints in the north, and significant political risk of the centralized and large-scale operation.

**Efficacy**

6.12 Efficacy is rated **substantial** due to the modest achievement of one objective and the substantial achievement of two. The project enrolled more participants than planned and reached almost all of its targeting and coverage targets. Learning outcomes were lower than anticipated but participants demonstrated significant improvement in reading, writing, numeracy and behavioral skills. Progress was made on improving the quality of literacy training in Ghana but significant delays halted the impact of the quality enhancements on a large share of the enrolled participants. The unit costs of the literacy services per newly literate adult, as implemented, was more than twice as high as projected in the PAD.

6.13 It is likely that the project contributed to a reduction in the number of illiterate adults in Ghana. As shown in Figure 1, literacy rates increased from 58 to 65 percent between 2000 and 2007 (corresponding roughly to the project period). On the other hand, a larger share of this increase likely came from increases in primary and secondary enrollment and completion rates and quality improvements in basic schooling (demonstrated in World Bank, 2004a).

**Efficiency**

6.14 Efficiency is rated as **modest**. Because it was part of the development objective, cost-effectiveness is assessed in great detail in chapter 5. Cost-effectiveness calculations for the NFLP II lie within the normal range for similar projects in other countries. But the unit cost calculations used in the project significantly underestimate the true costs as baseline levels of literacy and functional skills are not accounted for. Actual unit costs were twice the level projected.

6.15 Based on estimated unit costs and on GLSS data on earnings for individuals with basic literacy (using four years of primary schooling as a proxy) the PAD (p. 11) estimates an economic rate of return of 43 percent for females and 24 percent for males. The analysis was not repeated at closing. However, for a couple of reasons the economic rate of return may have been
overestimated. First, the 2003 round of the GLSS indicated that the return to four years education had fallen. Second, the return to literacy education of rural adults (of which 20 percent were over 45 years of age) may be less than that of four years of primary schooling due to the lack of labor mobility. Third, as seen in chapter 5, actual unit costs per actual literate adult were significantly higher than projected. Therefore, the economic rate of return may have been lower than estimated at appraisal. On the contrary, although difficult to measure, there may be additional social returns given the project’s impact on behavioral change such as health and child care practices and sending children to school.

**Bank and Borrower Performance**

**BANK PERFORMANCE**

6.16 On the whole, Bank performance is rated as *satisfactory*. Both quality at entry and quality of supervision were satisfactory.

6.17 **Quality at entry.** The quality of entry of the project from the Bank’s side was *satisfactory*. The Bank provided a thorough analysis of the sectoral issues and was well informed of the functioning of the NFED and the context of the project from the beginning given the Bank’s involvement in the earlier phase. The project incorporated many lessons from phase I which improved design (paragraph 2.11). The PPF was used for studies in the areas in need of strengthening such as learner assessment and tracer studies, the radio component, decentralization of materials development, and training for facilitators and supervisors. The MER design was also strong including a tracer study and learner assessment.

6.18 Even so, problems with making literacy skills sustainable were known. The Bank could have pushed for a stronger focus on these functional aspects of the project design and given more attention during preparation to the importance of a strong literate environment and the need to stimulate demand in the north. The Bank should also have ensured more realistic and grounded outcome indicators. Although the implementation delays were the main cause for why quality of literacy delivery was not enhanced until the later stages of the project, the Bank could also have better sequenced the project activities to ensure that required quality improvements were frontloaded before the literacy batches rolled out in large scale. Unit cost estimations were also underestimated.

6.19 Nonetheless, the Bank team carefully considered different design approaches such as delivery by NGOs, upfront micro-credits for IGA groups, and remuneration for facilitators. In each instance tradeoffs were discussed with the NFED and decisions were made on the most feasible alternative at the time. The Bank supported the option of outsourcing literacy delivery to NGOs and other local organizations. However, at the time of design NGO resources were still rather limited in Ghana. Decentralized delivery also requires a strong monitoring and evaluation system which was not yet established in the MoEYS. Future adult literacy initiatives may however consider the outsourcing model.

6.20 **Quality of supervision.** Bank supervision was also *satisfactory*. The project team stayed in close contact and on good terms with NFED and mission teams kept a close eye on any issues that arose during implementation. Throughout the project the Bank team monitored progress
towards the development objective and carefully observed implementation progress including visiting literacy classes. Aides-memoire and back-to-office reports accounted the progress and recommendations were provided and agreements were reached with NFED as well as the government.

6.21 Especially in 2000, when the new government had taken office and raised some skepticism towards the NFLP II, the Bank communicated effectively with government counterpart to avoid closing of the project. Including the Country Director, the Bank worked with the government in getting their acceptance of the program and getting it up and running. Although the process took a long time, during the Annual Meetings in September 2002, the Bank helped generate a strong government commitment to non-formal education. Moreover, at the time of NFED reorganization the Bank pushed the NFED and the MoEYS to ensure that project implementation was not jeopardized (although procurement hold ups did cause delays). Also, the Bank flagged financial risks due to separate accounting procedures during the fragile time of the project in 2002 and pushed to help regularize the NFED director for improving project stability. The Bank also communicated with the MoEYS to put pressure on a speedy restructuring and to gain crucial political commitment. Cabinet approval of the project was reached in late 2002 after the Bank sent a letter of concern to the MoEYS.

6.22 The Bank was especially concerned over weaknesses in NFED capacity in the areas of financial management and procurement, supervision, and monitoring, evaluation and research. During the IEG mission, the Bank was praised by the NFED for helping to resolve the procurement complications. The Bank team missions paid special attention to the MER system achievement starting in 2003 and worked with the NFED to develop a working plan for expediting results. In 2004 the Bank strongly urged the MoEYS to take action to develop tracer and beneficiary assessments not to breach the schedule in the Credit Agreement. At the MTR the Bank team tried to rectify some of the weaknesses with the results framework in measuring progress on the quality objectives and helped reformulate indicators against improvement in quality of literacy delivery could be assessed. On the other hand, the Bank knew that NFED capacity was rather weak in many areas and could have worked more closely, for instance using international consultants, to help build the capacity of the country’s program staff early on in the implementation process. It is questionable why the Bank chose to support a transition from a central project coordinating unit (PCU) for the NFLP II to country ownership of a funds and procurement management unit (FPMU) under such weak country capacity.

**Borrower Performance**

6.23 Borrower performance is rated *moderately satisfactory* overall. Central government performance during the first years of the program was poor but picked up towards the end of the phase. The discontinuity in approaches between national administrations has caused inefficiencies. Implementing unit performance was satisfactory under the circumstances and given their weak capacity.

6.24 **Performance of the Government.** At the early stages of the project, support by the new government was very poor. The delay in effectiveness due to disagreements over a signature, the uncertain political support of the project by the new government in 2000-01, and the NFED restructuring exercise in 2002 severely delayed implementation and wasted valuable project
resources. The MoEYS did not regularize the new NFED director until 2002, leaving the project without strong leadership and direction for a long period of time.

6.25 Significant inefficiencies in the implementing unit warranted a reorganization of the NFED but generated further set-backs in the implementation of certain project components such as the IGAs and the radio component. In 2002, prior to the agreement on the recommendations in the consultant NFED restructuring report the government had ordered management of NFED district offices to be closed and handed over to district assemblies. The Bank had not been informed of these developments. As a result of the office closures, goods waiting to be distributed were kept in storage and did not reach learning groups. Facilitators’ incentives were not delivered until very late in the project.

6.26 In 2002/03, when the project started to generate some positive results, and after the appointment of the new Minister of Education, who was more open to adult literacy programs, the support of the government was renewed and strong. In the EFA action plan the government made provisions for non-formal adult literacy as part of the strategy for halving illiteracy rates. A deputy minister for education oversaw the NFLP II and had good knowledge of the project. From the MTR until the end of the project government support remained strong and project operations were running smoothly. The government ensured the Bank of its commitment to continue to support the project financially after closure. On balance, government performance is rated **moderately satisfactory**. The discontinuity in political priorities and development approaches in Ghana has made project implementation uneven with lags and periods of inefficiencies.

6.27 **Performance of the implementing agency.** NFED was the implementing agency. Even during project delays NFED’s work under the PPF moved along and produced studies, instruments for evaluation studies, revisions of the English manual and primer, and technical assistance on a time plan for follow-up reading materials. NFED leadership demonstrated strong commitment to achieving development objectives and was praised for their visionary style by partners in the field. They also strengthened the collaboration with development partners for achieving project goals as set out in the implementation plan.

6.28 From the first phase it was acknowledged that NFED capacity was poor, especially on: a) monitoring, evaluation and research; b) supervision; c) procurement and financial management; d) incentives and staff appraisal; and e) decentralization of data collection and entry. A NFED reorganization to improve capacity and reduce inefficiencies was needed and undertaken. As a result, capacity was strengthened but weak government support and directives made it difficult for NFED to operate efficiently. During preparation the MER system was strengthened, but implementation fell short. In 2004 the severe delays in getting the tracer and beneficiary assessments on the ground raised issues with respect to credit agreement compliance. The Bank urged the MoEYS to take quick action. Supervision and decentralization of monitoring arrangements were also improved towards the end of the project. Procurement and financial management remained challenging throughout the project but was reviewed as satisfactory under new leadership in 2005.

6.29 Under the circumstances, NFED performance was **satisfactory**. NFED supplied the Bank with up-to-date information on progress towards the development objectives throughout the project and kept track of outputs and outcomes enabling quick alterations when issues arose or
indicators were off-track. Since project closure the NFED has continued to deliver literacy training but to a much more limited capacity with around 30,000 enrolled participants per year compared to 200,000 per batch during the project.

Risk to Development Outcome

6.30 The risk to development outcome of the NFLP II is rated as significant. Following the end of Bank support in 2006 class and batch sizes have dwindled, fewer facilitators were recruited, and infrastructure deteriorated. But the NFED is keen to restart a more scaled up adult literacy delivery if financial resources are provided. Although the government’s commitment to reducing illiteracy is strong, the MoEYS strategy of reducing illiteracy and raising human capital has shifted away from mechanisms such as basic literacy and functional skills programs and towards targeting school drop outs via complementary education in parallel with formal skills training. The rating on risk to development outcomes is justified by a number of risk factors that each have some likelihood of occurring and each with some detrimental impact on outcomes.

6.31 The first risk factor is related to the sustainability of the skills acquired. Although skills appear to be relatively well sustained after the project, sustainability of literacy gained from adult literacy programs in general is notoriously low. Studies have found that the relapse to illiteracy is widespread. Abadzi (2003) reports that sustainability in Bank-supported literacy projects is low, although not commonly assessed. For instance, she reports that in the earlier phase of the NFLP 40 percent had relapsed into illiteracy (tested by Bennett 1995). Similarly there is evidence of low sustainability of achievement in a number of other literacy programs in Africa and elsewhere. In a 2005 study of Bangladeshi adult literacy participants 21 months after completion only 25 percent of participants could read simple text, much lower than directly after the program ended. As the post-literacy component of the project was not well achieved, there is a significant risk that participants may fall back into illiteracy if skills are not carefully monitored and maintained. Moreover, a major constraint to the success of IGAs in boosting incomes was the inaccessibility of markets and credit. The IEG mission found that difficulties in accessing micro-credit limited the sustainability of IGA groups and therefore also reduced potentials for additional family income. The sustainability of functional skills and behavior changes is likely to be higher.

6.32 The second risk factor is related to the continuation of the scope and quality of adult literacy delivery by the NFED. At project closing in August, 2006 the government showed its support for the continuation of the NFLP program with a commitment of 178 billion Ghana Cedis (US$12.0 million using July, 2009 exchange rates) for 2006-08. These funds sustained literacy course provision but only to around 30,000 new participants per year. These numbers are significantly lower than during the project and do not have the envisioned substantial effect on reducing illiteracy in Ghana. Unless a larger commitment for more funding comes through it is unlikely that the NFLP can continue to operate efficiently. NFED regional and district coordinators informed IEG that they have no funds for recruitment and training of facilitators. Quality of delivery may hence decline.

6.33 Finally, there are broader institutional challenges in Ghana in reducing illiteracy. In the event that large scale adult literacy activities would be undertaken again, there is a need for the NFED to conform to government decentralization processes and to make more use of private and
non-governmental service delivery. If not, inefficiencies may rise and delivery mechanisms risks diverting from government priorities and strategy. Collaboration with NGOs already started during the NFLP II. Also, currently, School for Life, an NGO in northern Ghana, is very active in providing cost-efficient complementary education for children and youth. They enjoy strong government support and have attracted funds from external donors such as DfID and Danida.

6.34 At the time of this evaluation, president Atta Mills (elected in December, 2008) and his government are considered supportive of non-formal education. As a result of the project, NFED capacity was strengthened and a large infrastructure for delivering non-formal education is in place, although several areas of program delivery need further improvement. For instance, monitoring and evaluation arrangements need to be significantly strengthened to supervise and monitor NGO implementation. A stronger strategy and program for NFED on how it is going to contribute to reductions in illiteracy rates and strengthening of human capital in Ghana is also lacking.

7. Conclusions and Lessons

7.1 Ghana’s NFLP II was designed as a follow-on to a first project also supported by the Bank. The NFLP II has likely contributed to reductions in illiteracy and progress on other development objectives albeit to a smaller extent than anticipated and at a much higher cost. The project enrolled more participants than planned and reached almost all of its coverage targets. Learning outcomes were lower than anticipated but participants demonstrated significant improvement in reading, writing, numeracy and behavioral skills after the program. However, evaluations of project performance do not rigorously address attribution issues. Although quality of literacy delivery was enhanced by the project as envisioned, much of the capacity development and implementation strengthening occurred late and only participants that enrolled in the later stages could benefit.

7.2 Two of the project objectives were substantially achieved, the third was modestly achieved. Relevance was substantial and efficiency was modest, resulting in a moderately satisfactory outcome. Risk to development outcomes is significant. Bank performance was satisfactory. Although the implementing agency delivered, their capacity was generally low throughout most of the project. Poor initial government support caused delays and inefficiencies. Borrower performance was moderately satisfactory overall.

Lessons

- The NFLP II demonstrated that non-formal education projects, such as adult literacy and skills projects, can build results frameworks linked to learner achievement and test scores. Many similar non-formal projects in other countries have not built in tests of learner achievement in project design but rely on participant enrollment and graduation rates for assessing project objectives. Although the NFLP II targets were not well grounded in reliable pre-tests and could not be fully reached, the project was able to demonstrate that participants’ literacy improved significantly over the course of the project (see paragraphs 4.3 and 6.8).
• **Even in a demand-driven project such as the NFLP II, context specific factors may reduce uptake in deprived regions.** Although literacy and skills training is highly demanded by poor communities on the national level, it was well known that demand was lower in the three deprived northern regions. Here, the project experienced difficulties in meeting its enrollment targets, especially for women. In certain local contexts, providing incentives and reducing barriers to participation are necessary for stimulating demand in parallel to supplying training (see paragraphs 5.4 and 6.9).

• **Literacy and functional skills projects that involve income generating activities should build continuous support for IGA groups into design in order to enhance sustainability of skills.** Over half of the NFLP II learners participated in an IGA group. The possibility of earning an income was an important driver for learners to participate in the literacy and skills program. Engaging in an IGA also exposes participants to activities in which they can make use of literacy and numeracy skills. But IGA groups, generally small and resource poor, are highly dependent on access to finance and markets for sustaining their activities. Providing training and access to credit and markets needs to be better built into project design to increase the chances of the sustainability of income generation as well as of literacy skills (see paragraphs 5.15-16, 5.22 and Box 3).
References


## Annex A. Basic Data Sheet

### National Functional Literacy Project II (IDA Credits No. 32460, 3246A)

**Key Project Data (amounts in US$ million)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Appraisal estimate</th>
<th>Actual or current estimate</th>
<th>Actual as % of appraisal estimate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total project costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loan amount</td>
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<td>Cancellation</td>
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**Project Dates**

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<td>Signing</td>
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**Mission Data**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Irene Xenakis</td>
<td>Sr. Implementation Specialist</td>
<td>AFTHD</td>
</tr>
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<td>Supervision/ICR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eunice Yaa Brimfah Dapaah</td>
<td>Education Specialist</td>
<td>AFTH2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aya Aoki</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>SASHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ferdinand Tsri Apronti</td>
<td>Procurement Specialist</td>
<td>AFTPC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samuel Bruce-Smith</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>AFTFM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peter Darvas</td>
<td>Sr. Education Economist</td>
<td>AFTH2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gregory Dawson-Amoah</td>
<td>Program Assistant</td>
<td>AFCW1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony Mensa-Bonsu</td>
<td>E T Consultant</td>
<td>AFTPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benoit Millot</td>
<td>Lead Education Specialist</td>
<td>SASHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lianqin Wang</td>
<td>Sr. Education Specialist</td>
<td>HDNED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frederick Yankey</td>
<td>Sr. Financial Management Specialist</td>
<td>AFTFM</td>
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### Staff Inputs (staff weeks)

#### Staff of Project Cycle

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<th>No. of Staff Weeks</th>
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#### Staff of Project Cycle

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<th>No. of Staff Weeks</th>
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<td>FY07</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
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Annex B. List of Persons Interviewed

**World Bank**
- Eunice Dapaah: Sr. Education Specialist (AFTED), TTL at closing
- Peter Darvas: Sr. Education Economist (AFTED), TTL at ICR
- Janet Leno: Sr. Operations Officer (SASED), TTL NFLP I
- John Elder: Lead Social Protection Specialist (HDNSP)
- Nadeem Mohammad: Sr. Operations Officer (OPCRX)
- Beatrix Allah-Mensah: Ghana gender coordinator (AFTCS), CO staff, involved in project

**NFED Headquarters, Literacy House, Accra**
- Salifu Mogre: Director, NFED
- George Bentil: Deputy Director, Head of Field Operations
- Susan Berdie: Materials
- Ruth Naa Korkoi Hughes: Materials
- Patience Kotey: Materials
- Abui Selormey: Materials
- Michael Akita: IGA and micro-credit
- Emmanuel Doe: Monitoring and evaluation
- Indra Tettegah: Research
- Abakah Yankson: Consultant tracer study
- Harold MacLean: Accounts
- Eric Amanou: Communications
- Agnes Adou Mensah: Special Education

**NFED Regional Coordinators**
- Gilbert Quartey: Greater Accra Region
- Rev. Kutu: Greater Accra Region
- Frank Kofi Menka: Western Region
- George MacBedu: Western Region
- Christopher Agyare: Eastern Region
- Frances Asumedu: Ashanti Region
- Thomas Seshie: Volta Region
- Imoro Issah Mahamadu: Upper East Region
- Ameri Wubei: Northern Region

**Ministry of Education**
- Tony Arthur: Funds and Procurement Management Unit

**Development partners**
- Vibek Mortensen: Denmark – Danida
- Marius W. de Jong: Netherlands
- Adow Auckhinleck: World Vision, responsible for adult literacy
- Ebenezer Saka Addo-Mensah: Adaptive EyeCare
- Sabina Anokye Mensah: Gratis Foundation
Field visits (met with participant groups, facilitators, supervisors and district coordinators in)

Greater Accra Region
Alorkpem, Dangbe East
Dodowa, Dangbe West

Northern Region
Giza, Tolon-Kumbungo
Kukpehi, Tolon-Kumbungo
Malshegu, Tamale rural/metropolitan
Sagnarigu, Tamale rural/metropolitan

Ashanti Region
Afrancho, Offinso
Nsenua (Dwenedabi Zone), Offinso
Asaseaban, Kwamang
Amansie East (Bekwai) District
Moshi Zongo, Kumasi Metropolitan
Aprade, Kumasi Rural
Oforikrom/Angloga Zongo, Kumasi Metropolitan
Akwasiwrobodease, Ahafo Ano South District
Mehame, Ahafo Ano South
Annex C. Implementation Timeline *(adapted from project files)*

<table>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Adapted from project files. The project delivered literacy and skills classes in five sequenced batches. The aim was to enroll around 200,000 adult learners in each batch. At closing, NFLP II covered six batches (8-13) of the NFED program.
## Annex D. Quality-Relevant Outputs and Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Objectives/targets</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing a NFED policy framework including decentralization strategies</td>
<td>Developing a NFED policy framework. Decentralize materials management, MIS forms and data entry to regional offices.</td>
<td>In 2003 a NFE policy was finalized and integrated into the Education Sector Strategy. The NFED was established as its own department under the MoES and the director was regularized in 2002. After the initial hold up district and regional coordinators and directors were regularized and trained, funds started flowing through regional and district offices towards the end of the project. Materials decentralization and some financial decentralization were achieved but staffing and information systems remain mainly central. Regional coordinating councils and district assemblies assisted in delivery of class inputs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating with other providers</td>
<td>Establish closer links with other literacy providers. Collaborate with NGOs to acquire technical assistance on obtaining micro-credit. Identify potential providers and pilot contracting out exercise. Establish NFE coordinating committee/regional literacy advisory groups.</td>
<td>World Vision helped develop primers for the English primer and helped with implementation. GRATIS Foundation provided training on IGA to NFED staff and leaders of learning groups. The NFLP II project already had strong ties with GILBT in materials development and Adaptive EyeCare for supplying adjustable glasses. No strategic long term discussions on outsourcing of future delivery of literacy training were undertaken.</td>
<td>NFED and NGO staff confirmed to IEG that there was strong collaboration with other providers and partners at the local levels. NGO staff described that NGOs looked up to NFED as the leader in the field. Owusu-Mensah (2007) credits the success of the NFED to the support of other many partners such as on materials development and translations, radio broadcasting, book printing and publishing, and IGAs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating microcredit for IGA groups</td>
<td>Contract 1-2 NGOs to help link borrowers to micro-credit institutions and provide technical assistance to a sample of learning groups to help formulate a business plan. A number of groups should obtain micro-credit by the end of project.</td>
<td>IGA training was provided to NFED IGA staff and 130 leaders of participant groups with IGA. 15 NFED staff were trained in micro-credit provided further training to 110 district officers. NFED micro-finance (seed money) and micro-credit was piloted in 5 regions.</td>
<td>The IGA component suffered due to holdups although improvements were made during the second half of the project. See Box 3 for more details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>MIS and supervision: shorten and simplify field reports; better qualified, trained and mobile supervisors; establish a monitoring schedule; revise MIS forms and decentralize to regions for data entry;</td>
<td>MIS and supervision: MIS forms revised in 2001; 12 forms reduced to 4; facilitator training started in 2003 and completed towards the end of project, supervisors were trained in 2004 but the monitoring cycle remained slow and unclear; installation of computers in regional offices facilitated data entry.</td>
<td>Overall, the MER system was strengthened from the last phase. But some areas remained weak especially on the MIS and supervision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANNEX D
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Objectives/targets</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving the quality and efficiency of the existing radio system</td>
<td>Earlier studies had recommended expanding for 2 national stations to 3 national stations and 8 local stations. Undertake 2 more studies on the feasibility of further expansion and impact of radio broadcasting. Provide training, equipment and supervision to radio stations. Develop stand alone radio classes for English program.</td>
<td>NFED had been promised airtime on the national stations in exchange for the resources (mainly material) that they contributed but airtime was not kept up. Also, due to difficulties in securing contracts with national radio stations NFED cooperated with small local FM stations to promote the project and assist in delivery or learning. Radio study undertaken but took a long time to complete so expansion was delayed. It recommended expanding to 18 stations. It was not possible to expand to more national stations so fewer people were served than desired. 18 stations signed MOU with NFED. At closing 16 stations operate and broadcast literacy programs in 15 languages.</td>
<td>The radio programs were popular among participants and helped advertise the benefits of the program and encouraged participants to sustain their skills by broadcasting reading competitions. In areas were radio shows were running the program served to sensitize the population about the literacy program and the benefits it could bring. However, NFED staff expressed much dissatisfaction with the functioning of the radio component. Cooperating with local FM stations instead of stations with national or regional coverage meant that only a few areas could be served by radio programs. In areas were radio shows were running the program served to sensitize the population about the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Actions:** Install MIS template on regional office computers; link NFED monitoring data to EMIS; provide MIS training for supervision in 5 regions in 2006; Generate timely and reliable information about operations and impact. **Evaluation:** Revise learners assessment and self-assessment instruments; carry out learner assessments and tracer studies as planned (sample at least 50 communities, start new cohort every 1-2 years; include follow-up assessment 1-2 years after training is completed). **Research:** Undertake 1-2 studies per year in areas such as supervision, book boxes and local resources, and partnerships. **Outputs:** But personnel that knew how to analyze the data were not adequate so data were not periodically analyzed; MIS templates for synchronizing with the EMIS were installed on all regional computers in 2005-06; MIS data not synched with EMIS during the project; collaboration with Ghana Statistical Service for generating data on delivery in rural/urban areas and age distribution which was not available in the regular monitoring forms. **Outcomes:** PPF financed the evaluation instrument development; two learner assessments and one tracer study (but excluding the follow-up phase) undertaken. **Research Agenda:** Developed for 2003-05 but not fully implemented; research studies prepared on: supervision; non-supported IGA groups; the expansion of the radio system; the use of book boxes, and awareness creation. A computer room with 9 computers at NFED headquarters was established in 2002 and internet was provided.
### Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improving quality through training, materials development, supervision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Objectives/Targets

- Manual development and training for facilitators and supervisors.
- Supervision regularized and enhanced (twice per month per group). Supervisors receive motorcycles to get around easier.
- Delivery of necessary supplies and material on time.
- Create a literate environment.
- Provide more post-literacy materials that are printed locally and in local languages. Make book boxes available to participant groups.
- Launch radio competitions.
- Make delivery more demand and needs based.
- The MTR recommended aiming for 5 new post-literacy titles per year and 50% of participants should have access to the post-literacy materials.

### Outputs

- Training provided to radio stations. Many radios were in the possession of district coordinators, not classes.
- All 21,000 batch 9+10 facilitators trained, some refresher training was also completed on the use of silk screens. Tracer study showed that 90% of batch 10 facilitators had been trained prior to the start of the class. In 2003 supervisors had not yet been confirmed, supervisor training undertaken in 2004, but too few supervisors to cover all learning groups according to set schedule. Tracer study showed that 82% of classes had supervisor visits at least once a month and 50% twice a month.
- Provision of learning materials and supplies was not timely for the first two batches but improved in later batches. Especially, supply of follow-up reader, book boxes and facilitators’ guide and manual was poor. Lighting was problematic in many classes. Tracer study showed that, at termination, 50% of facilitators say lighting is still a problem. Motorcycles for supervisors were only distributed in 2004. Incentives for batch 8 facilitators only delivered in 2004.
- 250 English pilot classes in 2001, 500 English facilitators trained for 500 classes, 1500 English classes started in 2004, English materials revised. 10-15 post literacy titles developed in 5 regions and of good quality, post literacy materials distributed to all regions, only 3 of 9 literacy games made available, materials development committees in communities stand still at first but started operating slowly again, development of community news paper slow, book boxes were few and of poor quality.

### Outcomes

- Literacy program and the benefits it could bring.
- In sum, even though the radio system may have been improved since the start of the project it was not without difficulty.
- Tracer study found that many learning groups were dysfunctional due to delays in facilitators’ incentives and infrequent monitoring.
- Delay in the supply of learning materials and supplies lead to dropouts.
- Learner assessment found that participants achieved the target on reading but that standard of writing and numeracy was too low.
Anexo E. Comentarios del Emisario

En caso de respuesta, el número y fecha de esta carta deben ser citados.

Tel. No. 233-0302-220462

Monica Huppi, Gerente
División de Evaluación del Sector
Grupo de Evaluación de la Independencia

Estimada Madam,

Re: Segunda Fase del Proyecto Nacional de Educación Funcional (C. 3246-GH) Informe de Evaluación de Desempeño de Proyecto (DPPAR)

Nos alegra informarle que algunos de los temas y lecciones aprendidas se han incorporado en el diseño del tercer día del Programa Nacional de Educación Funcional (NFLP III). Nuevos problemas no aún considerados se facturarán en la propuesta para el tercer día.

Nos gustaría hacer comentarios sobre algunos de los temas elevados en el documento adjunto.

Atentamente,

CHARLES D. AFARE
GERENTE DUDANTE, NFED

PAR: M. DR. JOSEPH ANNAN
MINISTRO DE LA EDUCACIÓN
ISSUE: 5.5 Page 17 and 5.7, Page 18

The project did not achieve its 70% target in writing.

The underachievement in the indicator related to writing in NFLP II was noted. This could be the result of the difficult writing posture due to the use of school pupil desks that adult learners had to use. Additionally, it seems the indicator was set too high overlooking international research which affirms writing as one of the difficult skills to be acquired by learners in adult literacy programmes.

This shortfall has been noted and strategies planned in the design of NFLP III.

1. ISSUES: 4.3, last sentence, Page 12 and 4.9, Page 13
   i) ... shortage of baselines at the start of the project.
   ii) No adequate baseline against which to measure achievement. Project achievements are not well grounded in pre-tests.

Baseline studies have been planned to be conducted on learners at the commencement of each cycle.

2. ISSUE: 5.22 Page 25, IGA
   i. Low participation in the northern regions.
   ii. Signs of IGA skills sustainability slim. If they were taught in class at all, they were not put into practice.

Demand for literacy and skills training programmes especially in the three northern regions of Ghana will be increased in NFLP III in general and the IGA component through rigorous sensitization activities. This is expected to stimulate demand and reduce the barriers to participation, especially women.

Partnerships with national micro-credit institutions will be strengthened with the aim of providing credit to more groups. This will reflect in the content of training to the target groups especially in the areas of marketing, business plan development, the establishment and maintenance of effective marketing channels and the scope for obtaining bank credit. NFED will engage the services of experts to support the delivery of the component.

3. ISSUE: Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MER)
i. 4.1 Page 12 Line 1; 5.22, Page 25 Bullet 5: Monitoring and Evaluation implementation lagged.

This was as a result of the late disbursement of funds and delayed development of capacity for the delivery of the component. Arrangements are already underway to remove these challenges in the design of NFLP III.

ii. ISSUE 4.3 Page 12, Line 4:
The word dubious should be replaced with either low or sub-standard or unsatisfactory.

iii. ISSUE 4.10, Page 14
Weak reporting and poor filling of MIS forms for facilitators.

The M&E system in NFLP III will strengthen delivery of project outputs by specifying appropriate performance indicators needed for achieving the objectives of each component. More monitoring activities will be undertaken to critically assess the achievement of these indicators. A performance-based approach to management will be adopted and adhered to.

The content of forms filled by facilitators will be reviewed and content reduced. Capacity of staff at the various levels responsible for management will be built. Templates will be developed and a regular maintenance plan developed to manage data on a more consistent and timely basis.

iv. 5.4 line 4 Page 17,
Delete for in the sentence.

v. 5.5 line 4, Page 19
The words national language should read Ghanaian languages because Ghana does not have a national language except English.

vi. 5.9 Page 19...many learning groups had not progressed to the second level of the two primers...

To ensure facilitators follow the required instructional pace for the completion of the two primers, supervision will be intensified and more working tools and incentives for facilitators and supervisors acquired and used. Care will be taken to ensure that learning is at the pace of participants. Facilitators and supervisors will be more rigorously trained to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills to handle the primers.

vii. 4.6 Page 13 and 5.10 Page 19.
A series of tracer studies will be instituted to capture all the four stages (baseline, mid-point, completion and one year after completion) in the NFLP III.