

Achieving Gender Equality in Adult Basic Education A Beyond Access Project Policy Paper¹

1. Background and rationale

This paper identifies strategies and approaches to developing gender equality in adult basic education. It is framed by the aims of the Beyond Access: Gender, Education and Development project which aims to contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 3. This goal was broadly framed to ‘promote gender equality and empower women’ but within the goal, the target relating to education was set in terms of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels by 2015 (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>). The disjuncture between the wide framing of the goal for gender equality, and the narrow focus of the target, has prompted considerable discussion and debate.

Recent e-discussions have called for a move from gender parity for girls and boys to gender equity and quality of education (Action Aid et al 2004) but targets and actions for achieving gender equitable education for women and men are not addressed explicitly in any of the MDGs despite the urgency of more than 800 million illiterate adults, of which 64% are women (UNESCO 2004:225)². Literacy is framed weakly as simply an indicator of change, while the rate, extent and nature of the change needed remains unspecified. This flies in the face of widespread agreement that adult basic education is crucial for achieving many of the goals currently enshrined in the MDGs.

“The response in terms of both policy and practice for literacy and adult education has been recognised as critical for all aspects of human and social development, the opportunities for people to acquire the skills and knowledge to become active citizens, to play productive economic roles and to pursue personal learning goals are inadequate (ICAE 2000, Damascus Declaration, Consensus).

The MDGs recognise the importance of literacy for empowering women but, again, we find that its framing in the MDGs themselves is restricted, in this case to women in the 15-24 age group, thus ignoring women in the 24 plus age band who are a fundamental group for intergenerational, economic and political action. Illiteracy is characteristically found among the rural poor, women and ethnic minorities who have somehow missed the benefits of the existing expansion of the formal primary school system (Patel 2003). The proportion of illiterate women in the world has not changed since 1970 and it is women’s physical, material and ideological disadvantage and inequality that hampers their participation in basic education. But given the ‘feminisation’ of illiteracy and women’s marginalisation it is shocking but perhaps not surprising to find that, despite international and national commitments to adult basic education, programmes are poorly funded and badly designed often considering that literacy can be acquired in very short periods of irregular teaching and attendance. Adult basic education is often, therefore, a second best education and a second class

¹ This paper was compiled by the Beyond Access team from the papers and discussion at Seminar 4: Beyond Access: Developing Gender Equality in Adult Education, organized and hosted by Dr. Nitya Rao and Dr. Anna Robinson-Pant at the University of East Anglia, 29th June 2004. For comments about the paper please contact Sheila Aikman saikman@oxfam.org.uk

² Statistics from the Global Monitoring Report 2005 are for the year 2002.

option for women who have missed out on the chance to acquire basic education through primary schooling. Basic education is a right for all and for basic education to be empowering for women it needs to be equitable and transformatory.

Drawing on presentations and discussion from an international seminar on Developing Gender Equality in Adult Education this paper highlights key areas that need to be addressed to ensure that women and men have equal access and opportunities to pursue their right to learn, that governments and donors commit to providing resources for adult basic education, and that it contributes to gender justice and empowerment. It calls for politicians, donors and practitioners to recognise that access to education is only part of the equation and that we must all be concerned to ensure quality and equity in the content and the lived experience of basic education for women and men. The agreements made at the conferences in Vienna, Cairo and Beijing all acknowledge the existence of discriminatory practices in education and the need to address them. The MDGs are not a brand new agenda but a vehicle for implementation of previous agreements as part of mutually supporting processes (UNIFEM 2004).

The focus of the paper is on adult basic education, which with its diversity of aims, approaches and providers, encompasses 'adult literacy'. The next section briefly examines some of the aims of different programmes for adult basic education, while sections 3 and 4 examine the contexts which influence the development of good quality policies and practices. Subsequent sections consider the low status of basic adult education and women's literacy programmes and the policy challenges at a range of levels from national government level to educator and facilitator. The final sections examine important processes and partnerships for helping achieve gender equality in adult education and actions which governments and civil society needs to take urgently.

2. Aims of programmes

The lack of education for so many women and extent of illiteracy for adults is due to differential distributions of power that results in little or no education for marginalised groups and individuals. With the transition of exclusively oral societies to societies increasingly dependent on the printed word, non-literate people are not among the powerful of the world. The objectives of adult basic education are well expressed in the CONFINTEA V Declaration 5:

“To develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in the communities, in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society in order to face the challenges ahead”.

Programmes addressing aspects of adult basic education are diverse as are programmes and projects for women's literacy. However, not all literacy learning is empowering. There is a diversity of providers – state, NGO, INGO, CBO, faith-based organisation - with funding from a diversity of sources: NGOs, community contribution, state allowance, learner fees, etc. And they utilise a wide range of approaches, from instrumental learning of discrete skills and knowledge for well

defined and measurable aims (e.g. literacy linked to income generation schemes), to approaches embedded in different social and political aims for empowerment and social change.

Programmes vary in terms of their aims and outcomes for gender equality. Gender equality may mean one or more of the following:

- * the elimination of gender discrimination in terms of the type of provision and access
- * curriculum and pedagogies which are gender sensitive so that men and women can achieve quality outcomes and quality educational experience
- * empowerment of women and the provision of a safe space for critical analysis and discussion so that women can challenge gender inequalities in the classroom and outside of it
- * transformation of gendered relations and power hierarchies so that women and men live more equal lives in terms of opportunities, social relations etc.

These gendered aims also differ in the way they are expressed and practiced according to different theories of gender and women in development (such as WID, WAD and GAD, capabilities), ideologies and approaches (e.g. rights-based approach). However, the vast majority of programmes do not have an overtly gendered aim or have an explicit gender policy. They may be gender blind, gender neutral or display different degrees of gender sensitivity.

The following boxes provide illustrations of three different types of programme with explicit gender equity aims:

BOX 1 ABLE – Adult Basic Learning and Education and gender mainstreaming

ABLE is about meeting and expanding the basic learning needs of adults, through formal and non-formal education. Literacy is at the heart of ABLE and must be useful, functional and sustainable.

An evaluation of mainstreaming gender in SIDA-supported ABLE programmes in Bangladesh, South Africa and Nicaragua provided the following learning:

- Only some of the factors promoting or inhibiting gender equality are internal to the programmes themselves.
- Gender analysis by programme owners in the early planning and design phase was often weak
- Explicit and clear objectives for expected gender equality changes linked to systematic monitoring and reporting on gender results made a difference.
- Policy dialogue is important but it depends on degree of interest and capacity of individual programme staff.
- Positive results were facilitated by dealing with issues of male roles and ideas about masculinity as well as explicit objectives on the empowerment of women

Lind 2004

Box 2 Changing the material conditions of women's lives through literacy and mobilisation

From the late 1980s the BGVS* worked in partnership with the Government of India in the Total Literacy Campaign to mobilise women for literacy. The campaign used messages for the mobilisation which linked literacy to basic livelihood problems and

question of exploitation and discrimination against women which provided new hope and optimism amongst millions of women from all classes. The massive environment building gave women the social sanction to be able to come out of their houses and participate in activities organised on their doorsteps.

After ten years the BGVS is in the process of building institutional support at the village level for women who are involved with the work of self-help groups. The objectives of these groups include forming a centre for all activities for women's empowerment, where they can upgrade their literacy skills and through micro-credit enterprises enhance women's status in the family and the community.

Srivastava 2004 *BGVS – Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti,

Box 3 Literacy as a political project – women as transformative citizens

Feminist positions advocate literacy as a prerequisite to the attainment of an expanded citizenship and it is unthinkable to participate fully in society in the absence of literacy. Literacy programmes have the potential to generate encounters for women, where they can express their points of view and come to new understandings and agreements as a result of informed and ongoing dialogue. They can provide an arena where women can learn to defend their rights as citizens, to demand their presence in community meetings, and enhance their self-esteem. To do this literacy programmes must cover:

- Equality of citizenship rights
- Reproductive and sexual rights and health
- Income generation
- Empowerment

The knowledge gained so far from the women's movement indicates that some rights will be gained not by literacy alone but by the assertion of rights preceded by feelings of self-worth and autonomy.

Stromquist 2004

3. The context of adult basic education for women

The aims of women themselves for education and literacy reflect the diversity of their lives and environments – political, social, cultural and economic. Economic poverty and lack of power, as noted above, is a strong overarching characteristic of the lives of the majority of illiterate women.

Diversity and difference

Approaches and programmes therefore need to take into account the local context of women's lives as well as their personal histories and their starting points for learning. There is also a need for women to be able to access through learning and literacy decontextualised knowledge from other contexts with which they can develop and assess their actions.

Recent case studies on literacy, gender and empowerment in Bangladesh and Uganda highlight effects of structural changes to work, gender and family relations through new global economies and changing ideologies which provide new opportunities and new challenges for women (Lind 2004). These may lead to increased numbers of single mothers and female headed households and changes in access to wage-based work. Rapid changes such as these create can unresolved contradictions in gender

ideologies and possible backlashes against female independence. They can also create new and different demands and needs for literacy and organised learning.

HIV/AIDS

Living with HIV/AIDS and the consequences of HIV is an increasing reality for women globally. For some programmes, HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention is the entry point into working with adults. Others are introducing HIV/AIDS into ongoing adult basic education classes.

There is a growing knowledge base and experience of education programmes for children and young people about HIV/AIDS prevention but in the disjointed field of adult education the knowledge and learning is fragmented and dispersed. Level of education has been found to be a strong predictor of levels of knowledge about safe behaviour and reducing infection. A 32 country UN study in 2000 found that literate women are three times more likely than illiterate women to know that a healthy-looking person can have HIV, and four times more likely to know the main ways to avoid AIDS (see Duongsaa).

However, it is clear that knowing what is safe sexual behaviour is not the same as engaging in safe behaviour. There is a need for adult education programmes to help learners personalise and localise the problem of HIV/AIDS and to include life skills and sexuality education which takes a gender sensitivity approach. This means training which not only raises awareness among both women and men of the oppressive gender bias prevalent in societies which are detrimental to women but also training and support for women to challenge gender hierarchies and negotiate safe sex. Such awareness raising is needed for trainers and youth leaders too.

But adult education programmes also need to recognise the trauma of HIV/AIDS on learners and their family and community relations and structures and be sensitive to the way in which cultural practices interact with HIV (e.g. polygamy). Adult basic education therefore need to be embedded in strong cross sectoral linkages so that learning can take place in an integrated fashion and through participatory approaches.

Box 4 HIV/AIDS, gender and adult education in Thailand

The AIDS Education Programme of Chiangmai University has been collaborating with the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) in developing a set of participatory tools to promote HIV/AIDS and gender awareness in the community. The tools are designed to help women and men analyse the linkages between gender (gender inequalities), development (issues of poverty and migration) and HIV/AIDS. They includes techniques for analysing gender values and selecting marriage partners, men's and women's work, risk behaviours and connections among groups in the community, gender roles and values in HIV/AIDS prevention and care, and gender different in the control of and access to resources in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

The research and application of the tools emphasises the need for adult education and awareness-raising about HIV/AIDS to be closely linked to other spheres of education, social action and structural change, for example linking to poverty alleviation measures that will reduce migration, prostitution, drug use and drug peddling thus reducing the risk situation. It also suggests the need for gender sensitivity training for

young men and women as well as service providers, community leaders, faith-based leaders – all gate-keepers to women’s equality.
Duongsaa 2004

Violence and Conflict

We cannot talk about women’s education or women’s right to access adult learning without being aware of the widespread nature of violence against women and girls. In situations of conflict and war women’s lack of power and vulnerability are often exploited as reports and evidence from countries such as Uganda and Liberia graphically demonstrate. And there is a more subtle but pervasive violence against women as UNICEF noted in 1997: “there should be 60 million more women in the world today but they have been killed or have died through violence directed at their gender” (Griffiths, Reuters, July, in Horsman 2004).

Women often start in literacy programs with a hope of improving their education, but those who have suffered violence – particularly life-threatening violence – may find it has drastically affected their self and their ability to learn. This is because it destroys the ability of women on the receiving end and those who observe violence to feel hopeful, capable, smart or able to learn and make desired changes to their lives (Horsman 2004). Research carried out in Canada challenges literacy and the wider educational field to break silences about violence and address the impacts on learning in a myriad of ways. This requires the creation of new curriculum and new ways of working that normalise the challenges that many literacy learners bring to their learning (and educators to their teaching). It means a variety of supports for literacy workers as well as links between literacy organisations and organisations offering counselling and other resources for healing, and grassroots organisations challenging violence.

These examples above call for policies which are sensitive to broad and urgent issues of HIV/AIDS, violence as well as respect for difference and diversity. Policies need to be developed in such a way that they support the development of practices which are cognizant of context and difference and have the autonomy and resources to innovate and find new curriculum and new ways of working to challenge silences, stereotypes and inequalities. National or state programmes as well as NGO programmes need to be facilitative rather than constraining and innovative and empowering rather than instrumental and reinforcing the status quo.

4. The policy challenges

If adult basic education is to serve transformative ends for women, it must have relevant content and methodologies that promote reflection and dialogue together with persistent and pertinent training of teachers. The challenges are substantial and intimately linked to the overall low status of ‘women’s literacy’, and the history of poor resourcing and neglect of the adult education sector in comparison with formal primary education for children. It has been a low priority for most governments and addressed through patchy and uncoordinated NGO/ CBO programmes of different sizes durations and aims. While there *are* good examples of innovative practice – though a limited number have been documented and disseminated - they remain isolated examples and unable to influence government policy or practice.

Governments state that they are committed to ensuring adult basic education but their actions belie their words.

Lack of coordination and the shortcomings of planning

Governments and Ministries do not invest time and resources into adult basic education as part of their ongoing planning processes. Agencies responsible for adult education are marginalised and under-funded and often relegated to under-resourced and forgotten corners of different ministries - despite being faced with ambitious goals and challenges for 'solving' the problem of adult illiteracy. This situation means that policy it is not coordinated across ministries and information and awareness programmes for adult education are disparate and lack cohesion and impact. This situation is not conducive to good quality gender equitable policies and practice.

When governments do commit to large scale adult literacy programmes these are mostly tightly timebound one-off initiatives with no planning or provision for post-literacy and continuing education support or strategies to ensure the sustainability of learning or of the programme in terms of its institutionalisation (see Box 5).

Box 5 Sustaining literacy through long term planning

While the Indian Total Literacy Campaign was launched in 1990 with strong support in implementation from NGOs, and huge uptake and mobilisation of women, the scenario today is less optimistic. There is immense bureaucratisation and routinisation of the programme and no clear strategy for post literacy and the continuing education programme. The policy is hazy and lacks the flexibility to incorporate the multi faceted social dynamics of the campaign situation, as a result the creative participation of the people and the involvement of the community has shown a sharp decline.

It is difficult to keep the women's struggles alive and sustain the women's self help groups. Strategies need to be worked out so that continuing education activities can be actively promoted to build up the capacity of neo-literate women so they can play a valuable role in the community such as para-health workers, para-legal workers and handpump mechanics.

Given the need for ideas in the Continuing Education phase, with most districts not knowing how to sustain or take literacy forward, certain activities could not be actively promoted.

Srivastava 2004

The marginalisation of adult education by most governments reflects a lack of direction and commitment. This manifests itself in a lack of a policy framework for adult basic education. Such a framework is needed to provide clarity of over the role and commitment of the state. It is also needed to support the development of linkages between the diverse providers and in order to establish forums for participation and collaboration, as well as debate and change. In short the government needs to lead a democratic process for defining aims and goals for adult education that are themselves based on democratic rights (Sen). There is a need for literacy programmes to operate at the local levels within decentralised support systems which help facilitate news ways of validating and researching adult education for women's empowerment and social action.

Lack of priority and lack of resources

The marginalisation of adult education within government and ministries means that officials have little power to influence budget allocations from the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Education has to lobby hard to secure funding for its priority plans so that adult basic education, associated with education for women and far down the list of priorities, may receive very little indeed. NGOs play a significant role in the provision of adult basic education but work primarily with short term sources of funding so that long term planning for sustainability of learners' learning and of programmes themselves is often difficult if not impossible. The policies of the large NGOs and INGOs will often be subject to the priorities of their organisations and/or funders may not coincide with those of national governments or 'beneficiaries' where they work. Small CBOs and local organisations may be severely hampered by the availability and sustainability of resources from larger NGOs and have to rely on fees paid by learners attending their educational classes and, where the learners are women with few resources, this income may be very meagre.

Challenges:

The work of the BVGS (Srivastava 2004) in India illustrates how when the women began to organise and demand their rights through an extension of the mobilisation process for the Total Literacy Campaign, the state withdrew its support for the programme and, in the case of the Anti arrack movement of Nellore District, conscious efforts were made to crush the programme. The Government of India drew a line between, on the one hand, promoting literacy through partnerships with NGOs and, on the other hand, supporting social movements for the recognition of women's rights. This illustrates the challenge of partnership between different agencies, institutions and organisations for adult basic education. Women's movements and social movements have an advocacy role to play vis-à-vis governments while governments have a responsibility to set up processes through which a policy framework based on democratic rights can be developed and maintained. This needs to be produced through a creative interaction between committed actors.

5. Dimensions for transformative adult education

The lack of national policy frameworks has repercussions for all dimensions of adult basic education, for example in terms of guiding curriculum development. Where the guidance is not adequate, for example in the case of the Total Literacy Campaign, civil society can challenge curricula which reinforce gender stereotypes. Decisions about the language of literacy and the availability of literacy materials in a range of languages to suit linguistically diverse learners is vital to the achievement of good learning outcomes.

Common to all these programmes, and independent of who is running and implementing a programme, is the lack of training for teachers and facilitators – and with short term poorly paid work in basic education or literacy programmes, the teachers and facilitators are often women. In one-off campaigns volunteers are mostly local women who are badly paid thus perpetuating basic education for women as low status and second class. Literacy programmes are typically implemented by facilitators with a minimum of literacy training and learners are given short-term instruction, often six months, without follow up literacy interventions to promote reading habits (Stromquist 2004). Where there is no policy or legislation to orient the training or contracting of teachers, adult educators rarely have development

opportunities or incentives for quality, sustained teaching. Teachers and facilitators can only become a committed resource if there is investment in them and recognition and for their work. Primary school teachers may be employed for one-off campaigns but it is questionable whether these already overburdened professionals have the kind of training appropriate for working with adults.

Adult educators, facilitators and the trainers of trainers need training in a range of - skills – especially in participatory practices and understanding how people address issues locally, helping them plan their own activities around the kind of social action they are involved in. They need to be able to develop appropriate gender sensitive materials for and with the learners. Few institutions exist which can provide training and develop new practices for an adult education that is empowering for women learners as well as the women facilitators and educators themselves. There is a need for new gender-aware indicators and proxies of empowerment so that social change can be monitored rather than assessment of success based on quantitative measures of time or numbers of primers completed irrespective of learners needs or gendered lives.

6. Processes and partnerships

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), perhaps the strongest set of global policies in effect today, seek to eradicate poverty and promote development, yet as noted at the beginning of this paper, they recognise the importance of only formal education, with an emphasis on girls, not adult basic education and women's literacy. The challenge is to link the focus on girls' education to that of adult basic education and to bring these all together under a call for a gender equity approach to all education, for all learners.

Concepts of non-formal education have been co-opted by primary education to cover primary schooling provided by non-state providers with a diversity of funding sources. Securing government and IFI funding commitments for the achievement of the MDGs are dominating the international advocacy and policy scene for 2005 and beyond. The MDGs however will not be meaningfully achieved without commitment and resources to eradicating women's illiteracy and providing quality basic education for adults. Adult basic education is not only necessary for the achievement of Education For All but for the achievement of every one of the MDGs. MDG reporting at country level continues to be limited to the presentation of recent statistics on the selected indicators when it is intended to be a process which maps out the priorities and approaches a country will adopt for achieving each of the MDG goals. It is important therefore that civil society organisations as well as appropriate UN agencies have greater engagement with this process. Governments have made rhetorical statements in support of adult basic education but they must also be held to account.

There also needs to be dialogue with government for recognition of the importance of participatory approaches for gender equality and social transformation. It is a challenge for civil society to be able to influence this dialogue without compromising and instrumentalising its aims. A transformatory agenda needs to be expressed a language with which government policy makers can be comfortable. This calls for skills in translating a gender transformative agenda into the language of institutions which are stakeholders and resource-providers.

Today there is a huge role for civil society to play in raising the profile of adult basic education and for drawing on high profile women and gender advocates. NGOs have developed new roles and collaborations for advocacy which holds governments to commitments made. The Global Campaign for Education, which brings together NGOs, national education NGO coalitions and regional coalitions of organisations, is developing a strong platform for advocacy and lobby of the international financial institutions (such as the IMF / World Bank), bilateral donors and UN agencies (such as UNGEI).

In all of these processes and networks there needs to be more active engagement of women's groups in all their different forms because women's basic education is not high on the agendas for social and economic change of many women's organisations. Linkages are essential as women's struggles cannot be fought solely on an education platform; there are crucial shared agendas such as health, leadership skills, and wider issues of women's empowerment. There are organisations which should be used to raise the profile of women's basic education such as the Commission on the Status of Women and its processes. UN agencies such as UNIFEM and the UN Commission for the Advancement of Women should have resources to be able to support and monitor the work of national, bilateral and multilateral institutions on the MDGs. They should also ensure that the important work and information already generated in government and NGO reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and national level surveys prepared for Beijing + 10 are fully utilised.

More resources are needed to enable stronger advocacy and to work with a range of networks and allies for change to public policies so that they confront gender exclusion and promote education with gender justice. Networking with different social movements means access to different spaces and to individuals and organisations with different skills and resources which are needed to raise the profile of adult basic education and ensure that change happens (see for example Box 6). For example there are people working with the GATS process and the WTO, and others with experience from, for example, the popular education movement in Latin America.

Box 6 Advocacy for gender justice in education

In 1990 REPEM (Educational Network for Women's Education) launched the Latin American campaign: "Let's work for a Human Non-sexist Education" to promote a big continental mobilisation to change women's image not only in education programmes but also in the media and to highlight the need to recognise women and girls as subject of a right to education with gender justice. The campaign was sustained during 10 years with practically no financial support in a context of no political will to sustain adult education despite an education which recognises the existence of sexism at all education levels.

As we moved forward with our practices and conceptualisations it was necessary to simultaneously influence on several spaces and with different movements:

- In the UN through the social cycle of summits and conferences, particularly CONFINTEA V
- In the social movements, particularly through the women's movement, education movement and later through the World Social Forum. Solidarity and

the capacity for support of global networks such as DAWN and WEDO – which do not work on education directly – was an invaluable support to develop our capacity building in gender and education.

In the UN space each conference implies a preparatory process at the local, regional and global spaces, preparation of documents, review of the contents of what we are working on at the time, the monitoring of the fulfilment of prior agreement on the part of governments, as well as the language consecrated in previous conferences.

We have to work with adult education spaces where, in general, men do not acknowledge or recognise an adult education with gender justice; and advocacy has to be done inside the women's movement where education is not given priority.

Eccher 2004

7. Actions for achieving gender equality in adult basic education

Actions for Civil Society Actors:

To raise the profile and commitment - with resources - to adult basic education:

- Develop new and stronger links with women's organisations and with organised women's groups and NGOs working for gender equality to engage in advocacy for gender equality in basic education vis-à-vis governments, donors and UN agencies.
- Support and strengthen women's organisations that advocate for gender equality in basic education (such as AWID, DAWN, UNIFEM).
- Achieve high profile participation in UN and World Bank policy processes
- Develop strong relationship between civil society groups lobbying for UPE and EFA
- Work closely and through existing networks such as the GCE, ASPBAE and ANCEFA and national coalitions.
- Link with other sectoral networks, such as HIV/AIDS to ensure gender sensitive analysis and ways of working.
- Lobby for investment in adult education to become a clear necessity for achievement of all the MDGs – and therefore a priority - starting with the UNDP as the agency responsible for monitoring national MDG Reports.
- Lobby governments and funding agencies to develop strategies to achieve commitments related to adult education in the Dakar Framework of Action.
- Develop allies with gender sensitive media.

To achieve practices in adult basic education that are gender transformative:

- Broaden the concept of literacy from 'learning to read and write and do arithmetic' to the acquisition of skills for social action and women's empowerment.
- Campaign for training of trainers that is more creative and participatory with action research linked to local gender needs and the diversity of learners.
- Document good practices which will improve understandings of how literacy is developed in different social contexts and actions.

- Support and train women and women's NGOs to be actively involved in monitoring and evaluation of programmes.
- Encourage adult education programmes to engage with gender budget tracking

Actions for Governments and Donors

- Prioritise adult education by developing a policy framework for adult basic education that is part of an integrated education policy.
- Work closely with civil society organisations to design and develop this framework and subsequent policies.
- Ensure that organised women's groups are engaged in monitoring processes and functions.
- Prioritise financial and human resources to support the implementation of good quality adult basic education that transforms gender relations.
- Form relationships and programmes with donors who prioritise adult education (e.g. SIDA)
- Develop human resources and capacity, together with adequate funding, at local levels of government (training, curriculum development, research and documentation)
- Provide resources for civil society to participate in advocacy at major international forums such as the WTO and World Bank.

Key lobby processes and opportunities in 2005

- UNESCO Global Monitoring Report
- Shadow GMR
- CWS process (and Beijing + 10 March 2005)
- GCE Week of Action
- UN decade for Literacy
- UN Millennium Summit
- Fast Track Initiative

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