



**Accessing Quality Basic Education Through Non-Formal  
Education**

**THE POSITION  
OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN KAKAMEGA  
DISTRICT IN THE FACE OF DECLARED FREE  
PRIMARY EDUCATION.**



## **Foreword**

Ever since independence, the policy of the Kenyan government on alleviation of illiteracy has been that of basic education provision. Much effort has been expended on this, given that education is both a fundamental right for everyone in a democratic society and a means of achieving economic and social development.

Since then, emphasis has always been on formal education which was a major step the government took after Ominde Commission in 1964. Various commissions have been instituted to look in to Kenyan education system. This has resulted to over 1,000 recommendations. Much effort has been made over the years to establish educational facilities with a view to expanding opportunities for the realization of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education For All (EFA) goals. To signal the importance of this, the government in 1974 introduced free primary education from standard one to four in order to provide access to all. The impact was overwhelming with 1.8 million additional children enrolling. But these efforts were short lived especially with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP's) coupled with increased poverty, declining economy and frequent droughts. In 2003, the NARC government went a step further and declared free primary education. This "Free" Primary Education policy is a boon for parents who can not afford fees at that level.

Unfortunately, the escalating poverty rate at household, HIV/AIDS scourge coupled with government inability to address other social-economic issues combined with others continue to frustrate the government's efforts to reach all age going children and youth with special needs. In response to the education need of these children, and youth, alternative Basic education programmes have been initiated with majority being run by Non-Governmental Organizations, Faith Based organizations and community groups in some parts of the country both

in rural and urban. These programmes continue to play an effective role in meeting the basic learning needs of children who would otherwise miss out in the achievement of basic education. Therefore, these alternative Education programmes are crucial for increasing access as well as bridging gaps in the learning process.

These programmes are geared towards preparing learners for entry and re-entry into the formal education system. Ideally they supplement and complement formal education. This calls for collaboration and coordination between various forms of alternative basic education. Accessing education through Non-formal education in Kakamega district has in the four years demonstrated innovative learner friendly programmes that have increased access to Basic education and thus contributed significantly to reaching the un-reached.

It is in the light of the above that the research illuminates the Non-Formal Education programmes in Kakamega district and assesses the importance of the Non-Formal Education centres to the attainment of Education For All goals. The research highlights key issues, stakeholders of these centres, how they are managed and with a view of giving a strategic direction of Non-formal Education not only in kakamega district but Kenya at large.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research has been a joint effort of many partners and persons. LIFA would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved in making this study a successful reality.

Special thanks go to the lead researcher, Mr. Elijah Otiende, of Euro Consult East Africa, and his team of research assistants, editors, and others who helped put together the report.

Sincere thanks go to all the interviewees who responded to the questionnaires, participated in the Focused Group Discussions, debated on the issues of Non-Formal Education, and shared strongly held opinions.

We also recognise and appreciate the work of the enumerators who collected the data. The data collected was the beginning of this successful study.

We also would like to appreciate the helpful critiques, comments and suggestions of all the participants from partner organisations of LIFA. The Commonwealth Education Fund [CEF] sponsored the research activities, The African Canadian Continuing Education Society [ACCES] volunteered technical information and support, and as did the CARE Kenya Basic Education Fellowship Project.

Common Wealth Coordinator Emily Kioko-Echessa and Elimu Yetu Coalition, National Co-ordinator- Andiwo Obondo, critiqued the first draft, the second and this last report, to make it what it is now, an empirical and objective report.

Great appreciation is due to the LIFA Team; Former Programme coordinator Francis Butichi, Alfred Mmayi and Jeff Mangala for their tireless efforts in co-ordinating and guiding the researchers, partners, enumerators and interviewees.

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## **ABBREVIATION**

ABEK:	Alternative Basic Education for the Karamajong
ACCES:	Africa Canadian Continuing Education Society.
ACCESS:	Appropriate Cost Centres for Effective School System
CATS:	Continuous Assessment Test
CHESS:	Canadian Harambee Education Society.
COPE:	Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education
CIDA:	Canadian International Development Agency
CBO:	Community Based Organisation
CESA:	Comprehensive Education Sectors Analysis
CEF:	Commonwealth Education Fund
CMC:	Centre Management Committee
FBE:	Free Basic Education
FPE:	Free Primary Education
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
GER:	Gross Enrolment Rate
GOK:	Government of Kenya
HIV:	Human Immuno - deficiency Virus
AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
KANNET:	Kakamega Non Formal Education Network
KCPE:	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
LATF:	Local Authority Transfer Fund
LA:	Location Assistant
LIFA:	Literacy For All
MOEST:	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOCSS:	Ministry of Culture and Social Services
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals.
MURDEF:	Muma Rural Urban Development Foundation
NARC:	National Rainbow Coalition
NGO:	Non Governmental Organisation
NFE:	Non-Formal Education
PLA:	Participatory Learning and Action
PT:	Proficiency Test
PTR:	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
REFLECT:	Regenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Technique
ROK:	Republic of Kenya
SAP:	Structural Adjustment Programme
TSC:	Teachers Service Commission
UNICEF:	United Nation International Children's Education Fund
UDHR:	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The government of Kenya is committed to a broad based approach in planning, co-ordination and implementation of basic education activities [ROK, 2001, and ROK, 2003]. Besides the role of the government in the provision of basic education services, non-governmental organisations and religious organisations, as well as the private sector, continue to play a significant role in delivery of basic education services including non-formal education.

The capacity and capability of the majority of these institutions in the delivery of NFE services remain largely undocumented, and therefore policy makers, development partners and other stakeholders know little. In addition, the introduction of free primary education changes the dynamics within which NFE is provided. Therefore, establishing the position of NFE in Kenya.

This study therefore establishes the position of NFE in Kakamega district in the face of declared free primary education. The study was carried out to fulfil the following objectives:

- Assess, describe and analyse the status of NFE in Kakamega district with special emphasis on access, participation and quality of NFE.
- Assess the impact of the government declaration of free primary education on NFE in Kakamega District and analyse the suitability NFE in this context.
- Identify any gaps/weaknesses that need to be addressed in order to strengthen and enhance the recognition of NFE as a contributor to EFA
- Highlight the cause(s) of marginalization of NFE and describe the current partnership, co-ordination and linkage between NFE and formal education.
- Based on the findings, make conclusions and recommendations and suggest the best advocacy approaches/targets that NFE promoters can engage on.

A total number of 213 respondents were individually interviewed, participated in debate, conducted teaching lessons or responded through focus group discussions [FGDs]. The methods of investigation included consultative meetings, administration of questionnaires, key informant interviews and observations. Literature review formed the basis of understanding the role of NFE and provided information about kakamega district. The study encountered a serious limitation in the form of lack of data on non-formal education generally in Kenya and specifically in kakamega district.

The main findings can be summarised as follows:

- 1) Although parents were of the view that the declaration of free education is a political gimmick by a new government, there will be a serious impact on NFE staffing, enrolment, and shift in government focus. Similarly, NFE promoters have found that their efforts in promoting NFE have not been recognised by the government in its planning of Education for All.
- 2) Most learners are mainly orphans, children from single parents and those abused in terms of child labour. These learners joined NFE to achieve literacy and numeracy within the shortest time possible. This needs to be sustained. Although NFE in

Kakamega endeavours to enable learners achieve their right to education, non of them have graduated and can be said to have been empowered socially, economically, and politically to actively participate in community development.

- 3) NFE in Kakamega has contributed to providing education to the disadvantaged children, but quality is compromised. The major cause includes inadequate facilities, unqualified, poorly remunerated and motivated teachers, and lack of professional supervision.
- 4) Several factors, among them perception, lack of financing from government, lack of clear policy and lack of certification has seriously contributed to the marginalisation of NFE.
- 5) Several gaps were identified in the areas of NFE operation, monitoring, re-entry, lack of data, and low media participation in the promotion of NFE.

The study recommends that NFE be included as part of primary education through making NFE centres feeders to formal primary schools. It is, therefore, imperative that all actors in NFE develop re-entry programmes that will take into consideration flexibility and learner-centred methods already being practised. To this effect, its strongly recommended that the government finalises the draft NFE policy and embarks on instituting the process of certification, teacher deployment, curriculum development and financing NFE activities.

Increased partnership with the government, strengthening and expanding co-operation to include the private sector for resource mobilisation, management and planning are strongly recommended for the NFE promoters. It is further recommended that co-operation be extended to Primary Teacher Training Colleges with the purpose of designing courses focussed on NFE teaching methodologies, learning assessment, evaluation and teaching /learning materials development.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The NFE situation in Kakamega can not be fully understood without understanding the formal basic education sub-sector in Kenya in the late 1980s and 1990s. During this period, formal basic education in Kenya was faced with a number of challenges. The Comprehensive Education Sector Analysis [CESA] of 1994 revealed a declining trend in participation rates at the primary level of formal education.

The study reported that Gross Enrolment Rate [GER] dropped by 6.6% between 1989 to 1993. This was six times the gain made during the preceding 10 years. For example, GER dropped from 95% in 1989 to 75.9% in 1998. Completion rate during this period was less than 50%. As a consequence of high drop out and low retention, transition rates declined, with less than 45% transiting to secondary school, the report concluded.

The declining trend above was described by CESA report as “*quite alarming*” bearing in mind that primary education was seen as the only opportunity through which a majority of the population in Kenya can attain formal education.

The challenges facing the education sector in the 1980s and 1990s were a consequence of low economic growth and the effects of structural adjustment programmes [SAPs]. The cost-sharing policy introduced by the Government of Kenya, as a consequence of SAPs, was reported to have imposed an unbearable financial burden on parents. Parents were forced to assume more responsibility for the education of their children.

Thus, many children dropped out of school as a result of lack of parents’ ability to meet prohibitive costs of education. Other pertinent factors to this effect included cultural attitude against girl child and the impact of HIV/AIDS.

### **1.2 AREA OF STUDY**

Kakamega District, where this research was done, is one of the eight districts of Western Province. The district has seven divisions comprising of 27 locations and 97 sub-locations. The research covered fourteen locations in three of the seven divisions. Kakamega District is the second most populated district in Western province after Bungoma. It has a population of 603,422 people.

The district has the highest unemployment rate in Western Province [31.37%]. Poverty levels are high, with more than half of Kakamega residents living below the poverty line [less than 1 US dollar a day]

Kakamega district also has the lowest primary school enrolment rate of 41.5%, in the province and among the bottom ten in the country [IEA: 2002].

The major economic activity is small-scale agriculture, specialising in food and cash crop production. The average farm size is 0.7 hectares. The main food and cash crop includes maize, beans, finger millet, sorghum, cassava, sweet potatoes, banana, tea, coffee and sugarcane. Between 70-80% of the population [as at 2000], work on the agricultural sector.

HIV/AIDS is a major public health, socio-economic and development challenge. The prevalence rate is at 23.8%, far above the national figure, which stands at 13%. The bed occupancy at public hospitals stands at 55% [KDP:2002]. By 1999, 2% [2,518] of households in Kakamega were children-headed households out of a district total households of 125,901[KDP: 2002]. With the HIV prevalence rate of 23.8%, the number of children headed households may have doubled since 1999.

It is against this background that one can understand the context of non-formal education in Kakamega District. Such issues as child labour, orphanhood, and the overall poverty can be understood from this context.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

This study was inspired by a combination of several factors. First, in 2003, the Kenya Government declared Free Primary Education (FPE) from class 1 to class 8. As a result, over one million children, who until then, were unable to access primary education due to its high cost and several inherent weaknesses, joined formal primary schools. This pushed the number of children in formal primary schools from an estimated 6.5 million in November 2002 to 7.5 million in January 2003. This meant that the over three million children estimated to be out of school was reduced by more than a million.

Many children, it is believed shifted from non-formal centres to formal schools, thus creating concern in many quarters over the survival and relevance of NFE programmes in Kenya.

Secondly, although in Dakar,(2000),Kenya committed itself to the six EFA goals, much emphasis has only been on formal education, while NFE as an alternative approach to achieving this goal, was pushed to the periphery and left to NGOs, CBOs and religious organisation. Despite various criticisms levelled against NFE and lack of government support, it has continued to offer basic education opportunities to numerous learners. Of particular concern is what make NFE survive.

Equally important is the existing gap in mainstreaming NFE within MOEST operation. MOEST efforts in the last five years have not met the expectations of communities, pupils and promoters of NFE. Thus the feeling that they are marginalised.

The primary target area of the study is Kakamega District including the Government [MOEST, county council, municipal council etc], NGOs, CBOs, learners, teachers and communities. It's hoped that the findings and recommendation of the study will be of assistance to the NGOs, and NFE policy making, planning and implementation activities.

## **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study attempts to establish the position of NFE in the face of declared free primary education in Kakamega district, with a view to establishing the viability of NFE as a strategy of achieving quality education for all.

## **1.5 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

Specifically the study was carried out to:

- Assess, describe and analyse the status of NFE in Kakamega District with special emphasis on access, participation and quality of NFE.
- Assess the impact of the government declaration of Free primary Education on NFE in Kakamega District and analyse the suitability of NFE in this context.
- Identify any gaps/weaknesses that need to be addressed in order to strengthen and enhance the recognition of NFE as a contributor to EFA
- Highlight the cause(s) of marginalization of NFE and describe the current partnership, co-ordination and linkage between NFE and formal education.
- Based on the findings, make conclusions and recommendations on crucial issues to consider in the draft NFE policy and suggest the best advocacy approaches/targets that LIFA can engage.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the methodology used in carrying out the research is outlined. The chapter consists of study design, target population, sampling procedure, instrument used and the procedure for data collection and analysis

### **2.2 Study Design.**

The survey design was used in this study. The design was used because it allowed triangulation of information from case studies, direct quotation from interviews with respondents, and from unquantifiable forms of information such as focus group discussions.

### **2.3 Target Groups**

The study targeted stakeholders both in formal and non-formal education as follows:

- Headteachers
- Formal primary school teachers
- Non-Formal education teachers
- Education officers[district, divisional and zonal]
- Parents and members of the community
- Local leaders[councillors, chiefs, religious leaders]
- Pupils[formal primary schools]
- Learners[NFE centres]
- KANNET Board members
- NGOs/CBOs staffs promoting NFE
- AEO Municipality

### **2.4 Sampling Procedure.**

In order to obtain the study sample from each of the above groups, sampling procedure was used. The entire targeted population of education officers, KANNET board, AEO municipality, chief, councillor, and Headteachers of primary schools was included in the study without sampling because of the small numbers.

The study sample for formal primary school pupils, who debated, was drawn from class 4 and 5, and only those with interest and knowledge of NFE were included. As for the NFE learners, their interest to debate was the most important factor. Each group was divided into two to obtain opposing views.

A sample of 10 NFE centres was drawn from a population of 16. A stratified sampling technique was used and random sampling technique was further used to obtain the 10. From the 10 NFE, 3 were again randomly picked for a FGD with parents. Five parents from each of the 3 centres were randomly picked for questionnaire administration.

Three formal primary schools were all included in the study because of the small number and 5 parents randomly selected from each school for questionnaire administration. In each primary school 4 teachers were randomly sampled for questionnaire administration and FGD.

During the sampling, every effort was made to ensure that the sample reflected the characteristic of the population. A total number of 213 respondents were individually interviewed or responded through focus group discussions [FGDs], debates, teaching lesson or through consultative meeting. Table one below shows the total number of those who provided information.

**Table 1. Number of respondents**

RESPONDENTS	NUMBER
LIFA staff	3
KANNET Board members	5
District Education Officer	1
Education Officers	4
AEO[municipality division]	1
Headteachers	3
NFE Teachers	15
Primary school teachers	12
Chief	1
Councillor	1
FGD with NFE Teachers	7
FGD with primary school teachers	12
FGD with Parents	30
NFE learners	26
Primary school pupils	14
Individual Parents	33
Teachers observed teaching	6
Children's debate	36

Church leaders	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	213

## 2.5 Data collection procedures

### 2.5.1 Process

The research was conducted in a participatory way in addition to the collection of qualitative data for verifying the position of non-formal education. The research followed a systematic approach in the use of Participatory Learning and Action [PLA] techniques, among other research tools used for generation of quantitative data.

It is important to mention that the data collection tools were designed in close collaboration with LIFA Project co-ordinator, LIFA Staff and KANNET members and it took into consideration the research objectives.

Enumerators were trained on questionnaire administration for one day to equip them with the necessary skills for the job.

Data collection took three days, covering the three divisions of Ikolomani, Lurambi, and Shinyalu.

### 2.5.2 Consultative Meetings

The consultative meetings were held with LIFA staff, NFE promoters, ministry of education officials, and key stakeholders. It was aimed at obtaining information about the position of NFE in Kakamega. The meetings were held in various places and were conducted using both open discussions forums and semi-structured interviews.

### 2.5.3 Literature Search.

A review of available literature particularly examined the position of NFE before the declaration of free primary education [FPE]. The review looked at both published and unpublished materials. The major aspects looked at included roles and perceptions of NFE. Besides this, the session comprised of identification of study indicators, which formed the basis for the development of research tools.

### 2.5.4 Development of Tools

The process started by two crucial activities running simultaneously: refining the tools and a training workshop for the enumerators. Both took one day and were conducted by the consultants. The training equipped the team with the necessary tools and skills for the administration of the questionnaires.

### 2.5.5 Field Data collection

Ten enumerators supervised by research assistants carried out data collection. Questionnaires were administered on a daily basis for three days. Specifically, the tools were administered to NFE learners, NFE teachers, formal schoolteachers, head teachers, parents and others as list in table one above. A total of 213 respondents were achieved through various data collection instruments.

## 2.6 Data Collection Instruments

### 2.6.1 Questionnaire

Three different questionnaires were designed for three categories of respondents: learners, teachers and, parents - both from formal and non- formal centres. The

questionnaires, which had both closed and open-ended questions were either dichotomous, with both yes and no answers or multi-dimensional with a variety of options, provided for the respondent to choose from. The open-ended questions solicited unprompted response from the respondents.

### **2.6.2 Focus Group Discussions**

A focus group discussions guide was used to gather information from learners, teachers, parents, LIFA team, and network members [KANNET]. FGDs were organised and moderated by the research team through participatory methodologies.

### **2.6.3 Key Informant Interviews**

Key stakeholders in education were interviewed in-depth using pre-developed pillar guided questions. The interviews enabled them to provide further insight into the issues of both formal and non-formal education. Those who provided information were the DEO, MEO, Chief, Councillor, Programme Co-ordinator LIFA and Headteachers.

### **2.6.4 Observation**

Data was also collected through observation of facilities, teaching/learning materials. In three primary school and three NFE centres, teaching was observed in progress. In another two NFE centres and one primary schools, pupils debated on the merits and demerits of NFE as compared to formal primary school.

## **2.7 Data Analysis and Report Writing**

This report is the result of five days of fieldwork carried out in the three divisions of Kakamega.

Data analysis was done in collaboration with the enumerators. The closed ended responses with multiple response options underwent multiple response analysis while the open-ended responses were first grouped and categorised before being coded and analysed.

Information obtained from FGDs, debates, lesson observation and interviews were analysed qualitatively.

The report is based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis modes based on literature review, analysis of primary and secondary data. It also contains gathered opinions and views of the various interest groups.

The conclusions and recommendations are based on discussions of qualitative and quantitative analysis.

## **2.8 Study limitations**

This study had several limitations. One of the serious limitations encountered during the review was the lack of any useful data on non-formal education. In many centres visited, including the district education office, there was lack of up-to-date data on enrolment, transition and performance of the NFE learners. For example, very few centres had records on learners' attendance and background. This made valid conclusions difficult.

The second limitation relates to the actual collection of data. Due to various factors, some enumerators were forced to leave the information schedule with the headteachers to be completed and collected later. When the members of the research team verified the completed schedules, it was found that many questions were left incomplete and non-availability of data was cited as the main reason.

Many of the formal primary schools were neither mobilised in advance nor provided with an official letter from the authorities [e.g. DEO, TAC Tutor or AEO]. Thus a number of the respondents restrained themselves from discussing or volunteering information without authority from their bosses/senior officers. However, the research team assured them of full blessing from the district offices to conduct the research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In the immediate and post-colonial period in Kenya, formal schooling was considered the only method of achieving education. One's status in society was based on the level of formal education attained. It was believed that formal schooling was the single most important indicator of developed society. Many Africa governments, including Kenya, became focused on developing formal education and were supported by bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors in this endeavour. The huge government spending on formal education being witnessed today has its origin traced from this viewpoint.

In the 1970s, people began to question the schooling problems and to look for possible alternatives. Schools everywhere had failed to meet their development promises and many education scholars and communities gradually began to realise that world education was moving into a crisis. Coombs [1968], for example, identified the dimensions of these crises as lack of educational equality, shortage of funds, and unemployment. Coombs therefore advocated for adoption of NFE programmes and practices as a substitute or a complementary form of education to permit developing countries to “*catch up, keep up and get ahead*” in education. Coombs perspective was that NFE would reach maximum number of people, upgrade competencies and provide employment to school leavers.

In Kenya, the crisis described above was noticed as early as 1966. The National Conference on Education, Employment and Rural Development, during the same year underscored the need for full mobilisation of the nation's human resources through co-ordinated programme for youths and adults.

The conference emphasised further that “*people have to be mobilised outside the school system, as schools constitute only one method of producing sufficient volume of educated persons for development*”. The sentiment of the conference was later to form the basis of NFE programmes in Kenya.

The need for NFE programmes intensified in the 1980's with the impact of structural adjustment programmes [SAPs], coupled with frequent droughts and declining economy. Poverty increased among many parents, making formal basic education unaffordable.

Local primary schools were forced to attract children from relatively wealthier families while most of the children from poor families who did enrol dropped out after a few years, having learnt very little. For instance, Kakamega had lowest primary school enrolment rate, 41.5%[2002] in Western Province and among the bottom ten in the country [IEA, 2002].

This implied that about 58.5% of eligible children were out of the formal primary school. In 1999, it was estimated that Kakamega District had 111,882 children (57,699 girls, 54,183 boys) out of formal school i.e. 48% of children from the entire Western Province [GOK: 1999]. The province had 232,603 children out of school. The total enrolment of the province that year was 325,263 out of 851,438 school-going- age children. The declining status of education was also witnessed in other provinces and was highest in the semi-arid areas.

The period of 1980s witnessed a number of NGOs, religious organisation and CBOs starting various initiatives outside government/public schools systems, usually known as non-formal education, to provide literacy and numeracy programmes to the disadvantaged out-of-school youth and adults.

They had realised that EFA could not be achieved through the formal system alone and that there was need for different approaches of providing education on a sufficiently flexible basis and is accessible to socially and economically disadvantaged learners.

In 1993, the GOK and UNICEF *Situational Analysis of Women and Children in Kenya* recorded 30 NFE centres in Nairobi with an enrolment of 10,500 children, Kisumu had 3 centres with 250 children. However, by 1998, NFE centres in Nairobi had increased to 120 enrolling 27,268 while those in Kisumu had increased to 11 with 11,114 children enrolled [ROK, 1999].

In the 1990s a number of NFE initiatives were started elsewhere in other parts of the country. In Laikipia district there was the *Shepherd schools*, Samburu district had *Lchikuti schools*, and Malindi district had *ACCESS centres*. In Wajir district there emerged the *Mobile schools*. These initiatives were clear indications of dire need of learning opportunities that addressed a unique problem that was not being addressed by the formal education.

The causes for the emergence of these initiatives seemed to lie in the rigidity and inaccessibility of formal school system, seen both in terms of physical distance and social distance from the livelihoods and culture of local people. Other facilitating factors could have included high financial and opportunity costs [CESA Team, 1994, Rok and UNICEF, 1992], excessive regulations and top-down bureaucracy by government itself.

NFE programmes became known by several names in different regions of Kenya as mentioned above. However, all of them had the following characteristics.

- ◆ Curriculum based on practical skills
- ◆ Child – centred teaching methodologies
- ◆ Use of mother tongue as initial medium of communication
- ◆ Active community involvement
- ◆ Use of local youths as teachers
- ◆ Use of churches and under trees as learning centres. Buildings were constructed at very minimal costs.

Increased poverty within household due to SAPs lead to many children being left outside the formal school system in Kakamega. It is out of this fact that many players concern with education as a basic right began to think of initiatives that would address the fundamental rights of the disadvantaged children in Kakamega, leading to the emergence of NFE.

### **3.2 DEFINITION OF NFE**

NFE programmes, though they have been misunderstood, are not substitute or parallel system to formal schools but rather an approach to complement formal education in order to achieve higher rate of education in society. The term “non- formal education” was used to denote an approach to education rather than a specific education domain” [CESA, 1994]. The Koech Commission [ROK 1999-2000] looked at NFE as “efforts that address the learning needs of learners outside the mainstream formal education.

The commission however, took a generic perceptive of NFE, in the name of “*Adult, Alternative and Continuing education Programme*”. This could have been in line with the broad view of NFE taken by Agency for International Development. The agency defined non-formal education as the myriad of means and approaches other than those of formal school structure by which skills and work-related knowledge and attitudes are acquired, updated and adapted [AID.1970].

The Commonwealth Secretariat [1972] on the other hand, defined NFE as “ an organised, learning activity outside the structure of the formal system that is consciously aimed at meeting specific learning needs of particular sub-groups in the community – be they children, youth or adults”

*ROK and UNICEF, 1999* on their part defined NFE as “any organised system of learning activity outside the framework of formal education system”

The word “organised” appearing in the definitions connote that NFE is planned in a pattern of sequence with established aim, a curriculum and specific outcome. That, it is structured and systematic. At the same time, these definitions strongly point out the fact that NFE is not standard in its delivery or facilitation methods, approaches and techniques. Thus it embraced programmes designed both for broad national goals and individual learners development objectives as well as academic ones. The emphasis of all definitions is on non-conventional delivery or facilitation methods, approaches and techniques.

Thus NFE can be operationally defined as an organised, structured and systematic learning service delivered outside the framework of formal school system to a specific group [s] of people for a specific objective, at low cost in terms of both time and resources. By nature and process it is suppose to be learner–centred and provides learning by objective. It can be hierarchically organised but not rigidly structured. It has to be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of learners without compromising quality of either inputs or output.

Evans [1981] concluded that NFE could be highly instrumental in solving problems of equity, access to education and the promotion of citizens’ effective participation in national development.

### **3.3 Non Formal Education: viewpoints in relation to development**

#### **3.3.1 Non Formal Education and Human Rights:**

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared among others things that “*Everyone has the right to education.....education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.....*” This perspective acquired renewed impetus in the World conference on Education For All held in Jomtien, Thailand in (1990), World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal (2000) and restated in the two education related Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The renewed impetus has provided the framework within which non-formal education can be planned and made available to all those who do not have access to formal learning opportunities.

Education [non-formal and formal] seen from this light is a means of unlocking and protecting other human rights. For instance where the right to education is guaranteed, people’s access to good health, security, economic well being and participation in social and political activities is enhanced. Education is one of the basic human rights which all people should have access to for their overall development.

In 2001, Kenya formalised this understanding through the enactment of the Children’s Act, which gave every child a right to free basic education. The Act places the responsibility of ensuring that this right is catered for by the Government and the parents of the child.

#### **3.3.2 Non Formal Education and Politics:**

Paulo Friere[1970] articulated the positive use to which NFE can be put in the political process. Introducing the concept of education for ‘conscientization’, a process of consciousness development, he argued that formal education is oppressive and the process of conscientization through NFE channels such as literacy will bring about cultural revolution to end class stratification and exploitation promoted by formal education.

Suzanne Kindervatter[1979] too, strongly supported NFE as an instrument of ‘empowering process’ oriented towards systems change rather than individual change. Thus for Kindervatter NFE can be transformative in ‘empowering’ disadvantaged classes to understand and change the relation of domination and subordination in their society.

It can be argued that for political socialisation, NFE programmes can be used to reach a larger audience represented by millions of school dropouts and non-school-goers. And that through NFE more opportunities for identification and civic training of local leaders can be done.

In conclusion, politically, education can be said to have a positive impact on making informed decision and choices. It strengthens good governance and evolution of strong civil society. Education is, therefore, one of the key factors in enhancing political maturity in an area.

#### **3.3.3 Non Formal Education and Productivity:**

Numerous researches have shown that investment in education improves productivity, especially among people who have received a minimum of five to six years of full time

good quality primary education. Harbison[1973] looking at productivity from the human resource point of view, defined human resource as ‘the energies, skills, talents and knowledge of the people, which should be applied to the production of goods or rendering of useful services in an economy’.

Harbison noted that human resources is a form of largely unexploited or underdeveloped capital and that development of basic economy through human resource is an approach to ‘maximise the effective development and promote the fullest possible utilisation of persons who are or potentially will be engaged in the production of useful goods and services’.

For purpose of skills and knowledge maximisation, he rejected formal education on the premise that it is ‘subject to the iron law of rising cost’ and excludes ‘the uneducated from the process of modernisation’. He advocated for the expansion of NFE programmes as a way of developing skills and knowledge of those already employed, preparing youths for job entry, and developing skills, knowledge and understanding which transcend the world of work.

### **3.3.4 Non Formal Education and Socio-Cultural Change.**

LaBelle [1976] defined social changes as implying ‘not only an alteration in people’s behaviour and in the relationship between that behaviour and the respective human and physical environment, but also an alteration in societal rules and structures enabling the new behaviour and relationship to be established’.

According to him, NFE was one way of supporting social change with respect to facilitating the transfer and application of new behaviour to the environment and establishing linkages between the programme and the components of a wider system.

Bock and Papagiannis[1983] on their part, described NFE as social organisations embodied with important socialisation and stratification potential that also serves as a system of social exchange. They, therefore, identified three major social functions performed through NFE. These included [a] exchange, [b] socialisation and mobility,[c] and selection and recruitment. These functions mainly emphasised on NFE as enabling learners to link to the occupational structure of the society, move to new socio-economic status and performing new roles, and finally, enabling the most disadvantaged to obtain maximum output from socio-economic investment.

NFE is crucial in complementing, formal schooling in the process of education and cultural development. According to Schwartz [1975] lack of cultural continuity between school and home turns school socialisation into nearly an acculturation mode. As such, NFE should be conceived, as suggested by Nyerere[1976], that it is an instrument to inspire a desire for change and a way of identifying what kind of change is needed and the best way of inducing it.

### **3.3.5 Non Formal Education and “Modernisation”**

Modernisation is defined as bringing up-to-date or improving one’s status within a society. The modernisation theorists on their part view NFE as a way of obtaining the necessary skills, attitude and traits needed in the modern society. Smith and Inkeles [1974] argued that factories, agricultural co-operative and mass media are sources of non formal learning of modern behaviour. These views are supported by Edward [1979], who believed that NFE is not different from formal education, as both activities are intended to produce people capable of performing effectively within a capitalist production system

without challenging the legitimacy of that system. He contended that NFE develops attitudes, personality and cognitive skills useful to capitalist mode of production.

### **3.3.6 Non Formal Education and Poverty:**

In another context, education has a powerful role of liberating and empowering the poor. Illiteracy and lack of basic education do not cause poverty, but are directly correlated with it. People are illiterate because of poverty which limits their access to all other social and economic benefits and also prevents them from having access to systematic, organised learning (Ranawarce, 1989). Similarly, higher illiteracy rates are associated with other socio-economic causes of exclusion, gender, and cultural isolation.

It's against this background that provision of NFE becomes imperative. However, over the years it has become clearer that the need for education for all can't be effectively met through the traditional approaches and formal structures. Many countries, Kenya included, have therefore made attempts to set up alternative approach to learning to cater for the educational needs of non-school-goers, early school leavers and to meet the needs of adults as well as other groups whose education is incomplete (Ranawarce, 1989) as a way of eradicating poverty.

### **3.4 Critique of Non Formal Education.**

However, not all see NFE from the same tenet. Harison[1973] critiquing NFE claimed that NFE is a way of legitimising inequality. He argued that NFE targets the poor and even though it is a way of improving their political and socio-economic conditions, it does not match formal education in terms of quality, further marginalising the poor. While looking at the extent to which NFE is linked to the occupational structure of the society, Bock and Papagiannis, concluded that NFE has the potential of widening the gap between the rich and the poor segments of the population.

This view was supported by the Koech Commission [ROK.1999-2000] that reported "many of these schools [informal schools] although catering for many poor children, are lacking infrastructure, qualified teachers, teaching/learning equipment and are generally offering a very low quality education". This may explain Karabel's [1972] point of view that many NFE activities actually lower the expectations and aspirations of disadvantaged youth.

J. D Thompson's [2001] view that the definition of NFE through characteristics as "content dictated by the functional needs of the learners, duration and timing are flexible, cost is low, rewards tend to be immediate and management is expected to be participatory" has raised a number of issues and concerns with regard to equity. Bock and Papagiannis[1976], writing on the same, argued that lack of credentialing power by NFE, may reinforce inequity within the society.

From the discussions above, it emerges that the strategy of using NFE as a complementary opportunity to education, is a sure way of reaching a maximum number of people with an aim of upgrading their skills and competencies, facilitating transfer and application of new behaviour, and, finally, empowering disadvantaged within a society.

NFE, though seen to have certain inherent weakness, can generally be said to be purposeful, cost-effective and has the potential to be a powerful instrument for economic growth and a source of accelerated political and social development in the rural areas.

### 3.5 Environment for Non-Formal Education in Kenya

Overall, the environment for NFE in Kenya remains a relatively fragile one. It is recognised in policy as a crucial tool for strategic socio-economic development, but tends to be still under-recognised in practice. It is through its education programmes that there is considerable expectations to overcome the poverty and exclusion facing a majority of the poor population, but one which continues, in practice to be under-funded and accorded too few professional resources [Thompson: 2001].

As a result, its programming remains somewhat of a patchwork of discrete activities with limited reach and impact [**Anne Bernard: 2001**].

In Kenya, NFE policy environment, seems less the result of failed political will, than of the enormity of the problem and the scarce human, institutional and financial resources available to address it. The Kenya Rural Literacy Survey[1988] indicated a national literacy rate of 69%. Thus the scope of illiteracy and exclusion from basic education remains overwhelming. More are being pushed into this category annually by the school system, which is unable to provide either the physical facilities, or the quality of teaching needed to serve all children.

In 1998, the government, through the Kenya Institute of Education and UNICEF, drafted a policy document for NFE. The document provided for the assessment of curriculum in non-formal centres, issue of certificates and setting up of a separate examination to address the needs of the learners[ ROK,1998]. In the year 1999/2000 MOEST, CIDA and a few NGOs implementing NFE developed a 5-year NFE strategic plan to give directions in terms of targets, objectives and strategies.

These two policy documents that could have provided the strategic direction for NFE implementation have never been finalised and legalised, thus leaving a gap in the planning, implementation and evaluation of NFE.

In the late 1990s, MOEST established a desk to co-ordinate NFE and other alternative approaches as part of its commitment to achieving EFA [ROK,1998]. The effectiveness of this desk in strengthening links among NGOs, private sector, religious organisations and development partners at the national, provincial and district level still remains to be seen. In Kakamega District, such a desk has not yet been established. The full range of a government department, which could play a significant role in advancing the NFE sector, has not yet been fully recognised.

In terms of financing NFE, the government has heavily relied on the NGOs, communities and households to mobilise resources. Education budget allocation over the years has been skewed in favour of formal education. As a consequence, NFE has suffered a relative neglect. The truth is that donor and NGO involvement in NFE has helped keep the flag flying.

Although on paper, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is required to register all NFE centres offering education to out-of-school children and youth, in practice this does not happen. Almost all are not registered and neither is MOEST aware of their number. Canadian International Development Agency [1998] reported that: “*Most NFE centres are private or community initiatives that have been established in*

*response to a felt need ... some are registered as homes, community centres, rehabilitation centres under the Ministry of Culture and Social services and not as schools under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology”*

The current assessment and examination practice in NFE centres is that learners sit for various types examinations including Kenya Certificate of Primary Education[KCPE], Proficiency Test Certificate[PT] examination, Government Trade Test, and End Term Examination[J.D. Thompson,2001]. The Adult Education Department as opposed to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, has been in the forefront in assisting NFE learners as private candidates for KCPE and in conducting Proficiency Test and Trade Test.

The above analysis indicates that though a lot of NFE activities take place within the communities, and very little seems to be happening at the MOEST. MOEST need to be proactive in the development of NFE in Kenya.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

#### **4.1 Introduction:**

The research sought to establish the position of NFE in Kakamega District in the face of the declaration of free primary education. Specifically, the study looked at the position of NFE in terms of access and participation, impact of declaration of free primary education on NFE, gaps and weaknesses in NFE and finally highlighted causes of marginalisation

#### **4.2 Status of Non Formal Education with Special Emphasis to Access, Participation and Quality of NFE in Kakamega**

Under this area, the research endeavoured to investigate the perceptions of NFE, its type, ownership and management, legal status, NFE beneficiaries, enrolment, drop out, quality and factors affecting it. Further, the topic is concluded by having a critically look of the factors promoting NFE in Kakamega District.

##### **4.2.1 Perception, ownership, management and Type of NFE**

Analysis of the data showed that the community had different perceptions based on what they have heard, seen or orientation. The general perception amongst 40% of the local population interviewed in the district indicated that non-formal education is an alternative way of educating poor children and youth who dropped out of formal school or never had an opportunity to participate in the formal education system. 62.2% of the sample agreed that it does not only aim at improving literacy and numeracy, but also provides life skills that would enable learners to participate effectively in the development of the community.

This understanding, it was realised has played an important role towards the support communities have provided towards planning and implementation of the NFE

programmes in Kakamega District. Because of this, the present changes in education, according to them, will have minimal or no change in NFE.

78% of the interviewed perceived NFE to be a flexible approach to education that enabled learner to participate in productive economic and social activities before and after learning sessions. This perception concurs with Harbison's [1973] finding that NFE promotes skills and talents development for production of goods in an economy.

To this regard, 55% felt that NFE programme accommodates the orphans and the vulnerable learners who depend on their own income to survive.

In a discussion with MOEST officials, some of them took exception to this view and strongly castigated NFE for encouraging child labour and laziness within the community. Laziness because parent's contribution is either minimal or nil. Such an attitude as was expressed by the KANNET Board during a focus group discussion, has contributed to lack of support from education officers at the district level.

Whilst a minority [20%] of teachers interviewed from formal schools, perceive NFE as an education

programme meant for rehabilitation of deviant learners in the society, 48.2%, especially lower primary school teachers, felt that NFE should be modelled to cushion overage learners who need a chance to learn but cannot easily fit in the formal school due to their high level of socialisation and exposure. Such learners, they suggested, should attend NFE and be allowed to re-enter formal schools at

**MUNASIO NFE: From the Bird's Eye view.**

This centre is situated about one and a half a km from the main Kakamega-Kisumu highway off road at Ilesi. It is hosted by Baptist church as a Non-Formal school. The centre was originally established in 1994 as a "Gumbaro" school for the local community. It later on collapsed after the founder moved out of the area as a result of her husband's death. In 1997, the centre was revived as a non-formal school with the help of the church. To sustain itself parent paid fee and other levies just like the formal schools. Many parents could not afford to pay the levies and the centre collapsed again in 1999.

In the year 2000, LIFA in collaboration with the community revived it. Today the centre has picked up very well and it is a pride to the community. A part from serving children from poor families, the centre has a number of disabled children.

Hillary, an orphan and a learner at the centre stays with his grandmother. He was brought to the centre because grandmother could not afford levies required within formal school. Even at the NFE centre she is always in arrears of the Ksh. 10 per month required for mid-break porridge, explained the Locational Assistant.

Hillary's dreams is to become a teacher. He has lots of hope that he will make a good teacher in future. He plea to the government and any other organisations to help support their centre.

"I like this school because it provides me with slate, chalk and porridge everyday.

I cannot afford enough food at home, this centre carter for it. I'm grateful to all that support us and wish that we will do our best, so that in future we help our community" tearfully he said.

Sylvia a third level pupil joined this centre in 2001 in level 1. She has been here since then.

"I was living with both my parents then my father was taken ill and he died. So my siblings and I were left with my mother. Little did we know that mum would abandon us. My mother decided to take us to our grandparents and after a few days she abandoned us. I understand she is married somewhere else".

The grandmother is old, she cannot do any manual work, therefore, Sylvia and her sibling have to start their day very early in the morning, by working on other people's garden to earn some money for their survival. The practice is that grandmother would get the contract and negotiate the price, thereafter Sylvia and her sibling will do the work. After completing, she would pick money.

Their school programme starts after doing the work. Apart from the problems and pressures from home I also face challenges from my age mates in the nearby school. Bearing in mind that this is a non-formal school, they refer to me as 'chokora'. This makes me feel bad and keep me off them.

Sylvia fondly described the grandmother as very supportive and a person who would want them to learn up to University. "Even though she never went to school, she always wants us to be the best in class. I want to be a tailor, and am working towards attaining this", Sylvia concluded.

upper classes after they have developed basic skills in numeracy and literacy. A number of head teachers supported this view, as they felt helpless in the face of a MOEST directive to admit any learner who came to school.

65% of people interviewed, especially parents, took NFE as an alternative and parallel education system. This group proposed that NFE centres be turned into fully pledged primary schools. 51.36% of sampled parents in NFE were averse to any proposal for the learners to re-enter formal schools on the ground that NFE centres had less or no demands or requirements. At the same time, they preferred the flexible timetabling of learning activities, which they described as short, purposeful and responsive to learner needs.

80% of interviewed parents concurred with their children on the fact that there is no need for going to formal primary schools because of high chances of getting post-primary sponsorship from development partners supporting NFE programme in Kakamega. This impression was strengthened by the fact that some NGOs currently operating in Kakamega have post-primary support programmes for learners from poor families. The organisations that have offered this type of support include ACCESS, CHESS, the Catholic Church and Compassion International.

Though the idea of having NFE centres develop into fully-fledged primary schools was popular with both parents and learners, they had no solutions to such challenges as inadequate facilities, lack of trained teachers, and rigid registration requirements. The fact that presently 90% of the NFE centres depend on church premises for classrooms put this perception to serious test.

The worrying trend was that many parents viewed these centres as owned by promoters of NFE and supported by church. According to them, MOEST had no role whatsoever in the centres. Critically, this notion does not conform to the current changing trend of broad-based and partnership approach to achieving EFA.

NFE centres in Kakamega are housed in existing structures, especially local churches. The following churches anchor a number of NFE centres and are active in supporting NFE. Friends Church [1] Baptist [3], Methodist [1], Church of God [1], BALL Church [1], Catholic Church [2].

The study realised that it was not easy to categorise NFE centres into any grouping. As defined elsewhere within this text, NFE are learning operated outside the framework of the established formal system of education. This broad definition encompasses all the NFE learning centres in Kakamega. In all, NFE centres, management had some similarity with the formal primary schools. Each NFE is headed by an equivalent of head teacher, who among other responsibilities, is in-charge of liaison and day to day administrative duties.

Except for LIFA centres, where head teachers have the title of Locational Assistant, other promoters had no titles for the head teachers. In some programmes, it was realised some co-ordinators also doubled as head teachers. In all NFE programmes, criteria for appointing and promoting the heads was not clearly spelt out and defined.

The day to day management of the centres is in the hands of these head teachers. The overall management, is carried out by the Centre Management Committees [CMC]. The composition of management committee in other NFE programmes were not clear, however, in the LIFA managed NFE centres, CMC consists of two church leaders, six parents, co-opted member and a Locational Assistant/headteacher – who doubles as the secretary.

Parents are responsible for electing centre management committees. In Kakamega, NFE promoters, rather than the MOEST officials, supervised such elections, an indicator of the inability of the government to control and co-ordinate NFE. Even though elections represent a significant principle of community participation in provision of education at

the NFE centres, involvement of the community in management decision making is generally low as promoters decides on and gives most strategic directions.

The study found that there is need for promoters of NFE to bring all executive managers of NFE together for sharing and articulating of issues facing the centres and, if possible, to form an umbrella body for all NFE managers in the district. Such a structure can easily be linked to other donors, MOEST officials, and be used in providing strategic direction for NFE centres.

The study noted that there has been very little effort to include representative of local primary schools, education officers and local authority in the centre management committee. Through key informant interview with LIFA Programme Co-ordinator and a focus group discussion with committee members, it was revealed that, whenever committee members invited local councillors and education functionaries to committee meetings, their response has been negative.

The researchers are of the opinion that inclusion of these people in committee meetings is a strategy of broadening and expanding NFE operations thus gaining recognition and ensuring sustainability.

The research found that 90% of the interviewed, NFE committee members have never been trained in institutional and financial management skills. It was realised that NFE promoters have put little effort in building the capacity of committee members so that they can play their roles and duties effectively. Through a discussion with committee members, researchers concluded that they understood their duties to revolve around mobilisation of building resources and putting up and maintaining classrooms, and nothing else.

All NFE centres in Kakamega are either owned by the CBOs /NGOs or the church, and in a majority of cases they were started to address community felt needs. With the exception of two, the rest of the centres were started basically to offer basic literacy and numeracy skills to the out-of-school youths. The two remaining were initiated as rehabilitation centres for the street children. Thus the perception of NFE as rehabilitation programme by parents is confirmed.

100% of the NFE centres are not legally registered with either Ministry of Education, Science and Technology or Ministry of Culture and Social services. This confirms CIDA[1998] findings that where NFE centres exist, they are not registered with MOEST as schools.

During FGD with the KANNET board members, it came out that conditions set by MOEST before getting registered is unattainable with the meagre resources available such as land and money. They also feared that if MOEST set guidelines were to be followed then none of the centres would exist and that even some primary schools would be closed. These sentiments questioned and challenged conformity of MOEST guidelines with the existing reality.

#### **4.2.2 Beneficiaries of NFE**

Focus Group discussion and interviews revealed that most learners in the NFE centres are from poor and economically disadvantaged homes and that:

[a] Approximately, 60% of these boys and girls are involved in child labour activities. They work in jaggaries[producing molasses from sugarcane], tea farms, small gardens and household chores before and after school in order to take care of their siblings or support parents in income generation activities.

[b] 85% are orphans, living with old grand parent or relatives, having lost their parents through HIV/AIDS. For instance, out of a sampled 165 complete orphans in LIFA centres, 106 stay with grand mothers, 36 stay with grand fathers, and 23 stays with other relatives.

[c] Some stay with unsupportive parents, 80% being uneducated parents who don't believe in the benefits of education. They don't show any concern when a child misses going to school.

[d] Most of NFE learners in Kakamega are either of single mother or single fathers. It was realised that 66 learners stay with single mothers and 26 with single fathers.

[e] Ages range from 8 years to 18 years.

NFE beneficiaries are quite a number in the targeted area, that even if the government made basic education free, not all will attend formal schools. This finding calls for expansion of NFE and as Coombs[1968], said there is serious need to for adoption of NFE programmes as complementary form of education to permit such learners *to catch up, keep up and get a head in education*. Thus NFE is one of the methods that would be used to reach a maximum number of disadvantaged children in Kakamega.

Because of their background, these learners seek flexible, innovative learning opportunities with an expectation of quick results. The major challenge is for NFE to achieve this expectation. In an attempt to meet this expectation, many of the NFE, it was found, have their classes running from 8.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. This daily timetable is flexible enough to accommodate the economic activities in the community, especially during the farming seasons, like planting, weeding and harvesting.

In conclusion, the demand for expansion of NFE, to tap the disadvantaged children, is also supported by recommendations of the National Conference on education, employment and Rural Development[1966] that schools only constitute one method of producing sufficient volume of educated persons.

#### 4.2.3 NFE Enrolment.

According to the questionnaires results enrolment figures of learners in NFE in Kakamega as at January 2003 totalled to 1495 as shown below. 709 learners were female [47.4%] and 786 were male [forming 52.6%]. There was near parity between female and male learners in enrolment.

The attendance figures varied greatly from month to month due to the flexibility of the NFE system. However, the study found that there was lack of congruency in data at the district education office, NFE promoters' offices and at the NFE centres.

**Table 2: NFE enrolment as at November 2002 and January 2003.**

SUPPORTING ORGANISATION	CENTRES NAME	2002		TOTAL	2003		TOTAL
		November			January		
		Boys	Girls		Girls	Boys	
Literacy For All [LIFA]	Ematsayi	68	68	136	68	81	149
	Emukaba	64	60	124	73	77	150
	Ikonyero	53	53	106	51	54	105

	Imbale	67	47	114	33	51	84
	Munasio	79	63	142	66	80	146
	Shitaho	84	63	147	56	69	125
	Isulu	-	-		33	37	70
	Tumaini				31	43	74
Bushangla Lutheran	Bushangla Lutheran NFE	82	152	234	68	61	129
Mushunga Rural Child Rehabilitation	Mushunga Rural child rehabilitation	85	40	125	40	45	85
Muma Rural Urban Development Foundation [MURDEF]	Town	-	125	125	33	37	70
	Butsheho	20	75	95	50	48	98
	Shikummu	16	60	76	12	33	45
Ivakale	Ivakale NFE	50	42	92	40	22	62
Catholic Church	Calvary	20	40	60	28	27	55
Redeemed Gospel Church	Redeemed Gospel				27	21	48
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>688</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>1576</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>1495</b>

Source: data collected during the research

It was evident that there was a reduction in enrolment in most NFE centres in the month of January 2003. The enrolment dropped by 5.1% from 1,576 to 1,495, with the highest rate being noticed among boys. It was revealed that 20.1% of boys dropped out from NFE.

Most teachers attributed this trend to the declaration of free primary education, where there was a general influx of learners into primary schools, some of them from NFE centres. 47.62% of NFE teachers interviewed confirmed that they knew of 74 learners who had moved from NFE to the neighbouring formal schools. And 66.67% of learners interviewed at the NFE centres were also aware of their friends and relative who moved from NFE to formal primary schools in January and February.

According to LIFA records [2003], 60 learners [24 girls and 36 boys] moved from three NFE centres to 27 different formal schools in Kakamega, joining at various classes ranging from nursery to class 6.

Table 3: No. of learners who transferred to Formal Schools.

<i>NFE Centre</i>	<i>Total No. that moved to formal school</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>No. of Formal School joined</i>
<b>Ematsayi</b>	9	4	5	7
<b>Emukaba</b>	6	5	1	2
<b>Ikonyero</b>	11	6	5	4
<b>Shitaho</b>	34	21	13	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>

Source: LIFA records [2003]

From the above findings, a total of 60 learners from 4 centres moved to formal primary school after the declaration of Free Primary education.

Statistics from the District Education Office, as shown below, on the formal primary schools further corroborates the fact that many schools received learners in January, of which some could have come from the non-formal centres.

Table 4: Formal primary school enrolment for the months of November 2002 and January 2003.

	<b>Enrolment in November 2002</b>	<b>Enrolment in January 2003</b>	<b>Increase in Enrolment</b>
<b>Girls</b>	80,562	91,451	10,891

<b>Boys</b>	78,886	90,419	11,533
<b>Disabled</b>	164	178	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>159,612</b>	<b>182,048</b>	<b>22,438</b>

*Source: MOEST, Kakamega DEO's Office, May 2003.)*

The various reasons advanced for this trend included; government declaration of free primary education; recommendation by some of the NFE teachers that the children move to formal schools; lack of feeding programme at some of the NFE centres due to lack of donor support; lack of permanent learning structures and high staff turnover at NFE centres.

However, come the month of March to May 2003, the trend started changing in favour of NFE. Primary schools started recording significant dropouts. For example, Emusala Primary School in Lurambi Division, which had enrolled 789 children in January 2003 had only 727 by the end of February i.e. 62 children [7.86%] dropped out.

However, a sample taken indicated the NFE centres recorded a 17.6% increase in enrolment by May. The enrolment moved from 1,495 in January to 1,759 in May. Table below shows this trend and compared it with January 2002 enrolment.

*Table 5: a Comparison in NFE enrolment between May and January 2003.*

Name of Centre	MAY, 2003			January 2003
	Male	Female	Total	
<b>Literacy For All Centres</b>	518	448	966	<b>903</b>
<b>Calvary Temple</b>	38	40	78	<b>55</b>
<b>MURUDEF</b>	131	128	259	<b>213</b>
<b>Ivakale</b>	50	42	92	<b>62</b>
<b>Mshunga Rural Child Rehabilitation</b>	58	49	107	<b>85</b>
<b>Bushangala</b>	88	71	159	<b>129</b>
<b>Redeemed gospel church</b>	50	48	98	<b>48</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>1,759</b>	<b>1,495</b>

*Source: LIFA documents)*

From this presentation it can be safely argued that NFE centres have provided access to education for hundreds of learners who, as Coombs argued elsewhere in the paper, will upgrade their competencies, which could not have happened in the absence of such centres.

#### 4.2.4 NFE Drop out.

Though the study could not establish the actual statistical data of dropouts, 56% of the learners interviewed at the NFE centres confided that they knew of some of their colleagues who had dropped out. This is authenticated by records from LIFA [2003] which showed that 4 learners[2 girls and 2 Boys] dropped two from two of their centres. The real reasons for dropout were not established but some of the explanations included: negative labelling of learners in NFE centres as *gumbaru* and *chokoras*, devil worshippers, bullying and canning by teachers. Thus it could be safely alleged that some reasons for drop out from formal primary schools could be the same reasons for drop out from NFE. However, 70% of the learners interviewed never attributed age difference as a factor for drop out.

Similarly, the study could not calculate the percentage of dropouts and completion rate because it was not possible to do a time series cohort analysis. While all the centres were in existence for less than five years, 40% were only one year old. Another dilemma was that all the NFE promoters in Kakamega had not established at what level is course work completed. So it was not easy to compute completion rate. It was noted with concern that continued drop out of children from NFE will lead to having many children with a desolate future.

#### CASE STUDY: NOEL KHAOYA

Noel, a very jovial girl would attract any person to this NFE as a girl who is confident and knows what she wants in life. Being in level three, Noel has been in the centre for two years, this year being her third year. She talked of her challenges in a manner that showed she had been there. She started by saying desks are a great problem. *"Some of us sit on the floor and it is very serious when it comes to writing. We kneel on the floor in order to write properly, I hate this very much"*, she said.

On what people perceive of NFE learners She continued: *"Pupils in the neighbouring school, Emunasio primary, have a negative attitude towards our centre. They call us "chokoras" or "gumbaro", she said this while laughing. This name is very abusive to us"* we are like them she concluded

On the issue of teachers, Noel was no match to any other learner in the centre. Looking down she started *"some teachers are good except one, he is harsh. He hit me with a cane until the cane broke my pencil. When he comes to the class I fear learning during his lessons and concentrating on what he is teaching is a problem. This has led to my failing in his subject. I hate this teacher. I am not the only one, every pupil at this centre"* she concluded.

The interview lasted this long as she had to run and attend English lesson, which she described was her best subject. Her future ambition is to become a councillor and latter a parliamentarian on Ford Kenya Ticket.

#### 4.2.5 Quality and Issues affecting quality of NFE.

The World Declaration on Education For All [1990] recognised that the provision of basic education is only meaningful if people actually acquire useful knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. It stated that the focus of basic education must be "on actual learning acquisition and outcome, rather than exclusively based upon enrolment, continued participation in organised programmes and completion for certification requirements"[EFA Report 2002].

All the NGOs and CBOs in Kakamega have a similar aim of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable learners to be useful members of the society. Their focus is mainly on acquisition of literacy and numeracy by the learners than on the total number of learners enrolled. The research basically looked at ability of learners to read and write, handle numbers, analyse situations and apply new ideas.

Although there was limited data on what is actually is happening or being achieved in the NFE programme, there appeared to be general consensus that they are reasonable successful. 57% of parents interviewed agreed that NFE offered quality education to their children. Comparison of literacy and numeracy abilities of their children both in NFE and formal primary school revealed that learners in NFE level four, equivalent of class 5, could effectively compete with those in class 7 in mathematics, reading and

writing. The same parents confirmed that their children at level 4 can successfully write and read letters.

On the importance of acquiring skills in literacy and numeracy. 56% of the parents were of the opinion that literacy and numeracy skills will not only enable their children to easily converse, especially with people of different languages, but also to do business locally and nationally. They also saw their sons and daughters becoming competitive in the semi-skilled job markets. This confirms LaBelle[1976] that NFE can be a powerful tool in enhancing social change with respect too facilitating the transfer and application of new behaviour to the environment and establishing linkage with the wider society.

The view of becoming competitive in the labour market supports Bock and papagiannis[1983], that NFE enables learners to successfully link to the occupational structure of society.

80% of parents interviewed had noticed behaviour change in NFE learners, specifically they said learners are receptive to advice and largely participate in household work and household income generation activities. This confirms modernisation theorist's idea that NFE enables learners acquire the necessary skills, attitudes and traits needed in modern society.

As concerns learners' ambitions, they were as many as the interviewed individuals. 100% of non- formal learners had such ambitions as being President of Kenya, teacher, policeman, tailor, nurse, mechanic, businessman, and provincial administrators. Asked if the type of education they are undergoing will allow them to achieve these ambitions, all were affirmative and positive. This indicated a high level of confidence that they had for the education they are receiving at the NFE centres.

However, the study realised that the following factors have got repercussions on the quality of services offered at NFE centres.

#### **[a] Teaching Force**

Teachers plays a crucial role towards quality performance of NFE learners. There are all the advantages of having a technically competent, self-confident and innovative NFE workforce that practises the principles of learner-centred and demand-driven delivery.

There are a total of 147 NFE teachers in Kakamega, 60.5% are females while 39.5% are male as shown below.

**Table 6: Status of NFE Teaching force**

Name of NFE centre	No. of Trained teachers	No. Untrained teachers	Male	Female	Total
<b>LIFA</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Calvary Temple</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Adult Education</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>MURUDEF</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>

<b>Ivakale</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Musunga</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Bushangala</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Redeemed Gospel</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Perez</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>147</b>

Only 31.9% of the NFE teachers are professionally trained to teach. The remaining 68.1% of the teachers is untrained with “O” level C+ grade. Teachers work 5-6 hours daily for five days a week. Teachers are rewarded for the voluntary services they offer at the centres. To strengthen teachers teaching skills, it was realised that only LIFA conduct teacher enhancement programme through workshops and seminars.

Lesson observation in three NFE centres to determine methods and techniques of facilitating learning revealed that teachers over-use the lecture method and particularly liked chorus-type of teaching. During key informant interviews with the NFE teachers, it came out that they had no knowledge of any other alternative methods of delivery. The lecture and chorus method, commonly used, gives impression that all learners actively participate in the teaching/learning process. Fast learners are more advantaged than the slow learners are. The striking feature noticed during the lesson was that teachers were friendly to learners and they put effort in attending to learners needs. The close link these teachers had with the learners was encouraging and should be emulated.

70% of interviewed teachers expressed their handicap in handling overage learners and children with special ability. It was noted that there is the danger of not giving special attention to these disadvantaged learners.

An area that critically challenges the competency of NFE teachers is their ability to handle children ranging from those who had not attended schools through to those who had dropped from formal primary schools in one classroom at a time. This is contrary to formal primary school situation where teachers handle one class at a time, with pupils of almost similar experience.

75% of the NFE teachers interviewed recommended that a deliberate effort should be made by NFE promoters to train them on: handling learners of different abilities in the same room at the same time, learner-centred teaching methodologies, guidance and counselling and centre management techniques.

Despite the fact that 68.9 % of teachers are untrained, 60% of learners who had dropped from formal primary schools and joined NFE expressed that NFE teachers gave a lot of individual attention to both their health and academic progress. This has a lot of bearing towards quality performance.

NFE promoters in the Kakamega lacked proper schemes of services to attract qualified teachers into the programmes. 90% of the organisations registered high staff turnover because they relied on volunteers to provide teaching/learning services at the centres. LIFA, the study found, is the only organisation paying teachers regularly. The pay however is low, ranging from Ksh. 2500.00 to Ksh.4, 000.00 per month. All [100%] of the teachers interviewed were not satisfied with the remuneration given to them and they indicated that this demotivated them whenever they compared their salary with

colleagues in the formal schools, who were employed by Teachers Service Commission (TSC). A demotivated teacher may not perform as highly as is expected thus affecting quality.

The study also found that CBOs, NGOs and religious organisation promoting NFE programmes in Kakamega suffer shortfall of qualified personnel to offer effective professional supervision to teachers. Even though visits by the co-ordinators are frequent and regular as indicated by reports, 50% of teachers interviewed felt that there is no value added to their work out of that supervision. The teachers described the co-ordinators as “*people on a faultfinding mission*”. As much as 50% of teachers watered down the efforts of their supervisors, the study found teachers with up-to-date teaching records, an indication of good work by the supervisors.

The current on-going teachers’ college recruitment and the pending teacher recruitment by Teachers Service Commission based on increased enrolment so far realised in formal primary schools is likely to affect teaching force in NFE. For instance, all the 31.9% of trained teachers are waiting for an employment opportunity by the TSC. If all are recruited, then quality teaching/learning will be affected further.

Most of the promoters, it was realised recruit teachers without the involvement of either the centre management committee or education officers. Although all the teachers come from the vicinity of the NFE centres, 90% of the parents confided during the FGDs that they did not know how the teachers secured employment and they did not have the authority to supervise them. This brings to sharp focus ownership of the learning centre and participation of the parents. It also brings to the fore sustenance and maintenance of the teachers in NFE centres in the event of some of the promoters pulling out of the project.

Within the current trend of downward and upward accountability, there is serious need for the promoters to be accountable to community for every undertaking.

In general, it was observed that the NFE programme in Kakamega has provided an alternative channel to basic education for over 1700 schoolchildren and youth. Through this, many learners have been able to improve their basic literacy and numeric skills. Above all, it emerged that NFE programme has managed to tap back some school dropout.

#### **[b] Physical facilities**

The study found that 97% of all the NFE centres were based of church buildings. Some of the churches had poor floors, which during the dry session accumulated a lot of dust, constituting a health hazard. Some of the centres had no toilet facilities. Learners were forced to visit the nearby bushes or homes for toiletry. This scenario seriously affects the girl child, both management and promoters are urged to urgently provide this essential facility.

#### **[c] Class size.**

The study found that class size was average and manageable. They ranged between 25 to 30 learners per class. That NFE centres are not congested and therefore facilities are not over-stretched was attested to by 96.29% of the total sample. At the same time, 48.51 of the parents felt that the low PTR ensured that teachers are able to give individual attention to learners’ needs. Thus contributing to the effectiveness of NFE outcomes in terms of learners’ quick mastery of literacy and numeracy.

The table below indicates performance of learners at the four sampled LIFA NFE centres in literacy and numeracy, and indicating above average achievement.

**Table 7. Learner Achievement**

Name of School	Level	English	Kiswahili	Maths	M/T	Total
Ematsayi	L1G	56.06	40.97	52.5	80.67	57.55
	L1B	73.41	76.69	75.35	98.94	81.10
	L2	84.77	68.62	78.85		77.41
	L3					0
<b>Total</b>						<b>54.02</b>
Emukaba	L1G	64.6	38.5	21.75	44.8	42.41
	L1B	42.6	39.73	64.33	76.2	55.72
	L2	75.42	50.46	62.23		62.70
	L3	71.23	76.31	74.46		74
<b>Total</b>						<b>58.71</b>
Imbale	L1G	51.77	66.77	42.94	70.63	58.03
	L1B	50.76	53.38	70.21	77.66	63.00
	L2	36.27	37.36	42.18		38.60
	L3	75	90	81.8		82.27
<b>Total</b>						<b>60.48</b>
Isulu	L1G	72.04	69.52	65.33	65.78	68.17
	L1B	69.52	79.59	84.04	95.26	82.10
	L2	74.86	68.29	81.57		74.91
	L3	72.14	86.29	85.43		81.29
<b>Total</b>						<b>76.62</b>

Source: LIFA records 2002

The biggest problem noticed, during lesson observation was two to three different teachers conducting two to three different classes at the same time under the same roof, which is not partitioned. The place was noisy. Even though NFE teachers during the FGD confessed that they have learnt to cope and contain the situation, during lesson observation, it was noticed that some learners' attentions are easily diverted by activities of the other group.

The average class size it was realised, is conducive to the use of multi-level teaching methodology, and it encouraged teachers'/ learners' interaction.

#### [d] Curriculum

Over the last two years all the NFE centres operated without any specific curriculum for the learners. During FGD with the Network members, it came out that different promoters used different curriculum including formal primary, adult education and Early childhood development. Presently, through the efforts of LIFA, they have developed a curriculum that takes into cognisance learner's individual difference in terms of age, ability, experience and exposure and consequently allows for accelerated promotion based on ability.

The emphasis of the Kakamega NFE curriculum, specifically is based on “*I*” and not “*we*”, and realisation/achievement is based on “*module*” and not “*years*”. This allows learners to join, leave and re-enter as may be dictated by various circumstances.

Major curricular subjects are Maths, English, Kiswahili and General Studies, with a lot of infusion of guidance and counselling.

80% of the curriculum is based on the formal 8-4-4 curriculum. The five [5] years formal primary school curriculum has been compressed to be covered in three years. A child that, therefore, successfully completes the three [3] years' academic work joins the formal primary school at class six [6].

The curriculum content for every subject is divided into Four [4] modules. Each module is made up of three [3] units to be completed in a maximum of 9 months. The module approach to learning is a preferred strategy for self-learning and accelerated promotion. It is seen as the best alternative to avoid class and year tenor. Further-more, arrangement of modules into units allows teachers in both NFE and formal schools to gauge learner's achievement and to determine entry level.

The finding during this study indicated that the development of this curriculum formed the basis of providing a guided direction towards quality and mainstreaming NFE in Kakamega. Though the curriculum does not offer a complete basic education, it is geared towards solving the problem of illiteracy among the youths.

#### **[e] Assessment**

It was realised that assessment of learners is not based on any well-designed programme. Through a focus group discussion with NFE teachers and key informant interview with the LIFA Programme Co-ordinator, the study found out that learners are continuously assessed in all aspects of learning including behaviour, health and academics. Learner's literacy and numeracy standards are assessed at the end of every Unit. However, teachers have deliberately avoided many sit-in-examinations in order to encourage self-learning.

According to expectations of NFE promoters, assessment is supposed to be done through observation, tests and records of results kept. Teachers are expected to discuss their observations and test results with parents/guardian and the learner.

### **4.2.6 Factors promoting NFE in Kakamega**

The declaration of Free primary education (FPE) by the Government in January 2003 was a significant development in the whole country. It led to an influx of a number of school going age children, who had hitherto been out of school either working or idling in the streets or villages, to join the formal primary schools.

In Kakamega, primary schools registered an increased enrolment from 159,612 to 182,048 pupils in January 2003. A total of **22,438** new learners were registered. The total increase in enrolment realised was 14.5% in formal primary schools.

It is, however, important to note that although the declaration of FPE created educational opportunities for many eligible children, quite a significant number was still locked out of the formal system. Kakamega GER stands at 41.5% indicating that 58.5% of eligible school age children are out of formal primary school [IEA, Kenya: 2002]. This makes Kakamega to have the lowest primary school enrolment in Western Province.

The goals of Education for All in this district through enrolment and participation in formal primary schools are therefore still militated against by a number of factors including:

The rigidity of the teaching and learning timetable in formal system prevented learners who had erstwhile been engaged in other economic activities from continuing with their work. 60.24% of the interviewed learners complained that going to school between 6.30 a.m. and 7.00 a.m. denied them opportunity to engage in any productive labour, through which they depend for their survivals, many of them being orphans.

The overage learners who had stayed out of school for several years found it difficult and embarrassing to interact and participate in learning activities in the classes filled with young children who were many years younger than them and frequently teased them. In a school in Lurambi Division the headmaster concurred with 55.67% of interviewed that the way monthly Continuous Assessment Tests [CATS] results were displayed everywhere in the compound and low achievers paraded during assembly embarrassed new overage learners, forcing them to drop out of formal schools.

40% of interviewed learners confessed that they found themselves in unfamiliar grounds, where they were required in school at 7.00 a.m. and in full school uniform. Without proper induction and guidance from teachers, they found themselves in lists of late comers, noise-makers, and all the time being given “disc” [meant for those who communicate in mother tongue and not English]. They felt formal school was not their place.

45% of the interviewed learners who had dropped out of formal school after one month described their teachers as indifferent, non-accommodative and discriminative. One pupil expressed that whenever they deviated from the school’s expectations, they were referred to as “*NARC Children*” indicating they were in school at the mercy of NARC government.

Some teachers were hostile to the new pupils who did not perform well and even administered various types of punishment, including pinching, an experience the new learners had not gone through for years. During Focus Group Discussions, over 80% of the lower primary school teachers were of the opinion that it is not easy to give any individual attention as classes were overcrowded, desks meant for three learners were being shared among six, and one textbook shared by over 10 learners. They have to shout all the time to be heard. They concluded that shouting all the times in classroom could easily be misinterpreted by pupils to mean being harsh.

90% of primary schools in Kakamega have no feeding programmes. Thus hunger in school and at home, especially for orphans and those from poor backgrounds, resulted into loss of concentration and eventual dropout. This is unlike a majority of NFE centres, where a part from feeding programmes other services as basic health care and guidance and counselling were being provided.

It was noted that the majority of parents discovered that education in formal schools was not yet as free as they thought. Despite the scrapping of levies, learners were still expected to purchase uniforms and teaching and learning materials like exercise books and pay for examination fee. Though MOEST sent money for stationary to every school, parents and teachers complained of serious delays, some times as long as two months, thus forcing them to purchase these items.

At the same time, it was noted that many head teachers do not adhere to MOEST regulations requiring children to be in school with or without such requirements as uniform and textbooks.

There was a strong belief amongst a number of parents during the FGDs that the declaration of FPE is a mere political outburst and gimmick and will not be sustained in the long run. Parents related this experience to when the *Nyayo* government came to power in 1978/79 and education was declared free. In less than 7 years up to the time the *Nyayo* government left office in 2002, education became increasingly expensive and unaffordable. Others cited the excitement through which *Nyayo milk* was introduced and the way it exited without explanation. Hence, the adage of “once bitten, twice shy” is very much applicable and parents remains sceptical of the declaration of free primary education by the NARC government.

Conservative parents, forming 20%, were of the opinion that NFE was free long before the government declared free primary education, Therefore, to them there was no need to disrupt their children’s learning environment. Furthermore, they said that learners found NFE centres very close to homes, and as parents they had invested their efforts, which they saw would go to waste. For such parents, changes in education had no effect on their children’s learning programmes.

From the above discussions, it was observed that there is minimal effect of declaration of Free Primary Education on NFE. Majority of NFE centres only realised decreased enrolment in January 2003, however, many children began to stream back from end February.

In summary, those learners who joined formal primary education and returned to NFE cited, strict timing of school programmes and being made to sit in class with toddlers, harsh teachers, need for uniform, rejection by fellow pupils, humiliation of being paraded for not performing well in monthly tests and in very minimal cases lack of a feeding programme.

It, therefore, suffices to conclude that although the declaration of FPE caused a hiccup in the NFE at the beginning of the year, the impact has generally subsided and the demand for NFE is on the increase. This is primarily because the household cost of supporting formal education is still high owing to the requirements such as uniform, textbooks and other materials and equipment from learners as opposed to NFE where these are not mandatory requirements and in many cases supported by NGOs and CBOs.

The relevance and quality of the education offered in formal schools is also questioned by communities who feel that the curricular being administered at NFE centres are demand driven and relevant to the local environments. This, therefore, builds a strong case for a continued support to an alternative and complementary approach to education under the Non Formal Education (NFE) banner.

From the foregone discussions, this research concludes that the established management structures, support from parents based on perception and increased enrolment in NFE centres are some of the strong pillars that anchors NFE in Kakamega. Based on access and participation findings, NFE therefore remains a viable programme for the disadvantaged children and it should be encouraged and promoted. As quoted elsewhere

in this research, NFE is one of the methods of reaching a sufficient volume of educated persons.

### **4.3 Impact of government declaration of free primary education on NFE.**

The impact of free primary education on NFE was arrived at after discussions with parents, teacher, promoters, and district education office. The major finding included:

Whereas it was not possible to assess the effectiveness of current changes in education on NFE, it is clear from people's perception that the current changes will have minimal effects on NFE. Majority of parents was sceptical about the changes and they viewed it as political gimmick by a new government. In a FGD, parents equated the present declaration of free primary education to the 1979 declaration of free education and introduction of free milk in the same year.

These, they argued were meant to popularise the Nyayo government. All these frizzled out and by 1990s education became expensive, locking out of school over 3 million children. Majority of parents were of the opinion that the present changes too are meant to popularise the NARC government.

20% of interviewed parents preferred the status quo [continuing with NFE] arguing that they have invested their time and money into it. Learners, who felt that NFE centres had such advantages as closeness to home, flexibility and approachable teachers also, supported them. This understanding, enhanced communities support towards planning and implementation of NFE programme. As to such, declaration of free primary education, according to them, will have minimal or no effect on NFE.

It was evident that there was a reduction of 5.1% in enrolment of sampled NFE centres in the month of January 2003. Most teachers attributed this trend to the declaration of free primary education, leading to influx of learners [14.5%] into all primary schools in Kakamega, some of them from NFE centres. However, from the month of March the trend started changing, and by May 2003, NFE centres had recorded an increased enrolment of 17.6%. It is not definite that this backward trend will continue limitless but the magnitude will be felt at the formal primary school.

From FGD with KANNET Board and an interview with LIFA Programme Co-ordinator, it was revealed that declaration of free primary education has had negative impact on parent's participation towards the development of the NFE centres. Many parents feel that they have alternatives because it is free education both at the NFE and formal primary school. Some parents are deliberately avoiding attending meetings or giving any contribution to sustain the centres. The onus task is for the NGOs/CBOs to explain the essence of parents' participation in NFE centre development. Similarly, NGO/CBOs should allow parents to decide on strategic directions of the centres.

The other impact of declaration of free primary education that is likely to affect NFE teaching force is the just concluded teachers' college recruitment and the pending teacher recruitment by Teachers Service Commission based on increased enrolment so far realised in formal primary schools. For instance, all the 31.9% of trained teachers are

eligible and qualify to be recruited. NFE stands to substantially lose and teaching/learning quality will be affected.

It also came out during the study that since declaring free primary education, the government has increasingly focussed on seeing this pet programme being successfully implemented. Most resources being mobilised from multi-lateral donors e.g World Bank, UNICEF and DFID are being targeted at formal primary education. NFE and ECD are presently forgotten and a chance of government revisiting these areas may take a long time. In fact, a comment by an education officer that if *“there were no NGOs this thing called NFE would not be there, it is NGOs encouraging it”* during data collection, is an indicator that NFE will continue to be neglected by the government and may not get attention in terms budget in the near future.

Even the Draft NFE Policy and strategic plan developed with the help of partners will remain as it is and will be shelved as there is an assumption that children are in school. There seems to be a perception that EFA should only be confined to formal primary from class 1 to 8 but not as a life long skill targeting all learners.

Furthermore, the government has never allocated budget to children learning in NFE centres for the last two quarterly disbursements of funds, despite the fact that NFE has enrolled over 1,700 learners in Kakamega.

From the FGDs, it emerged that there is already an agitation among NFE providers and parents that with declaration of FPE, the government has relegated NFE to a peripheral treatment and left it in the hands of NGOs and the community. Promoters are building blocks and partnership to campaign for finalisation of draft policy and implementation of NFE Policy. In Kakamega, KANNET is already becoming such a strong voice campaigning for recognition and acceptance of NFE. Such an approach will go along way in streamlining NFE in Kakamega.

From the above discussion, the declaration of free primary education will affect NFE in the areas of staffing, policy direction, parents participation and allocation of resources by the government. However, NFE will continue surviving because of strong support from parents and its approach which so far has continued to attract more learners.

#### **4.4 Gaps and weakness that needs to be addressed in order to strengthen and enhance the recognition of NFE as a contributor to EFA.**

In discussing the gaps and weakness the study used SWOT analysis to arrive at the following findings

##### **4.4.1 Perception**

Although parents and learners in Kakamega continue to implement NFE with a lot of enthusiasms, many of them as well as teachers in formal schools, media practitioners and education officers don't understand the concept of NFE or its purpose. Thus the different perception of NFE learners as *poor, chokoras, gumbaru, devil worshipers*. The centres too are referred to and perceived differently as rehabilitation centres, schools for the poor, and schools for street children among others. Such varied perception and understanding may not lead to unanimous support towards NFE. A lot of effort is thus required in reinforcing positive perception of NFE.

Various churches host 90% of the NFE centres. The inclination by the sponsor church on emphasising their principles to learners, though good for spiritual growth, may not augur well with parents of other faiths, who may perceive this as an attempt to convert their children. Activism along this line can easily dent the good image of NFE

Many people, including children in formal primary schools, perceive and equate NFE to poor quality education meant for poor children. During one of the debate by children in a formal school titled "*Non formal is better than formal school*" a learner opposed the motion, supporting his view with the following example:

**"2 out of the 5 [40%] of NFE learners who had crossed over to our formal schools had to repeat class 5 because they could not pass the end year exam. It therefore means that the system is poor compared to ours, he conclude".**

This sentiment seems to support ROK, 1999-2000[Koech report] that NFE offers very low quality education. If this true then it confirms Karabel's [1972] opinion that NFE lowers the expectations and aspirations of the disadvantaged youth.

Quality issues need to be addressed and it is researchers' opinion that NFE promoters should organise for workshop/conference in Kakamega targeting education officers, community leaders, donors, provincial administration and other stakeholders. The purpose of the workshop should be to address quality issues in addition to: [a] situate NFE locally as a strategy for addressing poverty and social exclusion [b] generate and confirm partnership for action in NFE [c] change various perceptions and develop an NFE implementation plan for the district.

While there is considerable evidence that education officers know what needs to happen, there is less evidence that many of them know how to make it happen or have skills needed to follow through. There is need to strengthen professional and technical skills of education officers at the local and district level.

This is critical towards having an education department that thinks broadly, holistically and long term about goals, directions and strategic choices for NFE. In the long run, it will help the education office to take a position and possibly establish an effective desk to co-ordinate NFE.

#### **4.4.2 Re-entry Programme**

None of the NGO or CBOs had any well thought out re-entry programme in place. Similarly, none of the CBO/NGOs could explicitly explain when NFE course work would come to an end. Neither did any promoter have clear focus as to what happens to learners after NFE. Re-entry programmes, both to the working world and formal school, are necessary and is all about putting strategy for the future of NFE learners.

A re-entry programme to the formal schools is intended for those out-of-school children who need and want to return to formal education, probably after a fairly short time away or whose initial enrolment has been delayed. Even though LIFA and other promoters plan to have learners go up to level five before they can move to formal school, the formal schools themselves are not aware and not prepared for the same.

The NFE promoters in Kakamega have not designed and focussed on the fundamental question of “*After NFE what next?*” For now NFE centres are considered as an end in themselves. It is absolutely necessary that the promoters begin developing links with such institutions as Technical Institutes, for instance, Sigalagala Technical Training Institute and other middle level colleges that teach skills and entrepreneurship related subjects to prepare them for the world of work. As said elsewhere in this research, an NFE learner volunteers to learn and has a purpose to achieve. If there is a missing link they are likely to drop out.

The re-entry programme should be developed in collaboration with district education office, formal schools, technical institutes and parents, specifically on how to share responsibilities. Children who are target group need to remain closely tied to the curriculum and daily life of the school, to ensure their being able to re-enter as quickly and smoothly as possible.

Eventually, most of these children should be supported by the formal system directly, through remedial programmes of various kinds.

Furthermore, there is considerable confusion as to whether the centres will run up to class 8, thus parallel schools or they reach level 5. This clarification is needed, as there are serious attempts by some communities to develop these centres into full primary schools not taking into consideration the enormous resources required to achieve this.

#### **4.4.3 Institutional barrier.**

No full range government department, which could play a significant role in advancing NFE, has yet been fully recognised. There seems to be a serious competition between MOEST and MOCSS – Adult Education Department over ownership and control of NFE at all levels. Both ministries seem to want to control NFE but not to be responsible for financing and giving strategic direction.

Even though, the draft Education Sector Strategy Plan, 2003 – 2007, developed by MOEST, placed Adult and Continuing Education under MOEST, this has not been harmonised and formalised. Until then conflict between the two ministries will persist.

In Kakamega NFE centres have not endeared themselves to many head teachers of formal primary school and education officers. Five head teachers interviewed see these centres as competitors denying them enough enrolment, and therefore should be closed. They do not see them as complementing their efforts in promoting literacy and numeracy in the community. Harmonisation to remove this barrier is a prerequisite to advancing NFE in Kakamega. Thus KANNET should take this as a priority advocacy issue.

#### **4.4.4 Operation Issues**

The major operation issue that needs to be addressed is teacher selection, promotion and remuneration. There is need for clarity on criteria and involvement of the parents and

education office in the whole process. As it stand now it is the NGOs and CBOs that are aware, leaving others in the dark.

#### **4.4.5 Monitoring , Evaluation and Database**

Couple with the persistent lack of reliable and comprehensive information about where the effective programmes are and what kinds of factors are enabling them, the limited capacity to create, share and expand effective methods is seriously diminishing. Apart from enrolment data being scanty, there is very little or no data on transition/re-entry rate, completion and retention rate.

The lack of data is seriously undermining the effectiveness of NFE. Without evidence of progress, the place of the NFE will continue to be seriously undermined by the government and left solely as an NGO and donor activity.

Monitoring and supervision appeared to be a major gap with NFE. Furthermore, there is need to prove that these NFE centres are effective.

While MOEST officials supervise formal schoolteachers, there are no similar arrangements for NFE teachers. Instead they are supervise by sponsors' staff, which teachers consider inadequate. Evidence in form of data is required to prove co-relation between supervision and performance.

Very little efforts have been put to monitor the impact of NFE on learners both at home or in formal schools. Performance of NFE learners needs to be monitored against formal school pupils to prove the so much talked about "they are clever" or to demystify the commonly held belief that "NFE is inferior"

NGO and CBOs in Kakamega need to build data bases, which will answer the questions above. The focus should be on fundamentals as who and where the respective target communities are, what range and amount of resources are available and what programmes are actually being delivered and how effectively.

#### **4.4.6 Internal Inefficiency:**

There is the confusion and concerns about the internal inefficiency of NFE programming, beginning with critique of the current programme as financially unsustainable. This is apparently borne out of the fact that NFE centres are initiated and sustained by donor funds targeting the poor, have elaborate free feeding programmes plans, adequate teaching/learning materials and frequent monitoring activities by NGOs and other donors.

Based on this perception, there are allegations that it takes much more to educate a child in NFE than in formal school. There is no information as to actual cost of educating a learner in NFE over a given period. Thus chances of replicating NFE managed by one NGO / CBO in another area without knowing what it costs is difficult. It is a known fact that NFE learners are provided with reading and writing materials free of charge, NGO/community pays teachers and centres charge no fee. These need to be costed per child per given period. There is need to prove that NFE is more efficient than formal education.

NGO/CBOs in Kakamega should begin a serious systematic review of the full cost, and internal efficiency of developing and delivering of non-formal education programmes

#### **4.4.7 Viability**

Viability refers to the capacity of the NGOs and CBOs in Kakamega to provide NFE successfully within the current changes in education. The study realised that the NGOs and CBOs have the capacity to offer quality NFE. Indeed, as indicated earlier on, they are the pacesetters in NFE in Kakamega. However, they are constrained by a number of factors:

- They operate in selected areas, some times at specific centres and administrative locations with specific targets in terms of number of teachers and pupils. Therefore, their scope is quite limited.
- Another constraint is staffing. All the NGOs and CBOs suffer from manpower shortages. Most of the staffs and teachers employed are not trained in techniques of teaching.
- NGOs and CBOs depend on donated funds, which sometimes are for specific activities. Thus they can not offer NFE to as many learners as they could have wished. Sometimes, it is not even possible for them to retain permanent staff. It was noted that one or two CBOs are almost discontinuing the programme because they no longer receive funds from donors. In any case, the funds are irregular and inadequate. This affects the NFE activities.

Thus to make them more effective in the provision of this service, there ought to be networking and collaboration with Ministry of Education

#### **4.4.8 Donor syndrome**

NFE programmes are donors driven, and the study found that three NFE programmes are likely to close due to withdrawal of donor funds. Similarly, most programmes are designed, implemented and reported on as per the donors conditions, leaving out aspect of community in-put.

Over dependence on donor support is one of the greatest weaknesses that organisations need to evolve from. NGO/CBOs working on NFE need to tap local funding to supplement donor funds, for instance, from Local Authority Transfer Fund[LATF], Local Banks such as Barclays, Standard Chartered and Kenya Commercial Bank, and raising fund from sale of calendars among others.

#### **4.4.9 Sharing Experiences.**

The most serious critique that was made against NGOs/CBOs by some MOEST officials during the interview was that they have diverted themselves from the complex business of working for the improvement of the formal education system.

Secondly, that NGOs/CBOs rarely share their experiences with other stakeholders, and that formal primary schools do not know the successful NGOs/CBOs innovations. For instance, some of the methodologies involved in effective NFE programmes, e.g. multi-grade teaching, may be valuable for improving the quality and effectiveness of formal schools. This is a serious weakness and NGOs/CBOs need to initiate a sharing process with both education office and formal primary schools.

The alternative is not only for NGO/CBOs to preserve the independent space for creativity and criticism, but to also find ways to leverage change within formal system. It is only through this that they will enhance the process of non-formalising the formal system and formalise non-formal experiences.

#### **4.4.10 Media.**

The overall print and electronic media coverage of NFE issues in Kenya, and specifically Kakamega District, is still low compared to other issues of formal education. In terms of space and frequency, all the electronic and print media do not prioritise NFE. The analysis of the Three daily newspapers [The Daily Nation, East African Standard, Kenya Times] over the last two years in terms of NFE coverage in Kakamega revealed that only The East African Standard newspaper once reported on NFE [2003]. None of the other dailies has ever covered NFE in Kakamega, even in their pullouts on education. A discussion with NFE Network members revealed that their attempts to involve the media have been futile as most of the reporters have either little or no knowledge about NFE.

Thus the media has not played its crucial role in the promotion of NFE through setting agenda, highlighting NFE activities, encouraging excellence, pointing out gaps, and drawing comparisons both locally and nationally. There is need to call all education writers and correspondents in Kakamega to a workshop to be taken through the concept, management, and contributions of NFE in EFA.

#### **4.5 Highlight of causes of marginalisation and the current partnership, co-ordination and linkage between NFE and Formal education.**

The study briefly looked at factors that have made NFE dispensable and considered by many as non-essential thus drawing peripheral treatment. At the same time issues of partnership and co-ordination was looked as a way of promoting NFE in Kakamega. This involved a critical look at their perceived and real roles and functions of promoters, local authority, community, and how this link with Formal Education

##### **4.5.1 Perception**

The study found that many people perceive NFE centres in Kakamega as para -formal primary schools. It was clear that a number of parents and community members also perceive NFE to be an education established for the poor and vulnerable members of the community. Some education Officer saw NFE as an NGO agenda that encourages child labour.

The study found that there is lack of common understanding of the concept, approach and standard of education provision that fully conforms to the non-formal characteristics, and fulfils the objectives of non-formal education. Thus, so long as there is no common understanding, approach, and established standard, NFE will continue to draw peripheral treatment from the government. This may not augur well with the aspirations, thoughts of proponent of NFE.

The objectives of NFE at individual level include conscientization [Freire, 1970], and empowerment [ Kindervatter, 1979]. While at the society level, NFE could be instrumental in solving the problems of access, equity and promotion of effective citizens [Evans, 1981]. Based on the enrolment figures above, NFE centres in Kakamega have provided access to education for learners, who in the absence of such centres would have been left out.

##### **4.5.2 Duration of NFE course.**

Even though curriculum diversity was realised among the NFE providers in Kakamega, 90% of the centres visited used formal school curriculum and had an obsession of preparing learners for KCPE. Even though KCPE was the ultimate wish, there was no

clear programme as to how this would be achieved since these centres are neither legally registered with MOEST nor have the capacity in terms of teachers and other physical facilities. The biggest dilemma and unanswered question was how long is the NFE course and what next after NFE centre. As was put by a headteacher of a primary school *“what is the future of these children beyond those learning centres”*. Lack of clarity and profound plans for the children has contributed most to NFE being considered non-essential. There is need to clearly contextualise the future of NFE learners for certainty.

#### **4.5.3 Poor learning environment.**

The physical and social environment of the centres depicted the general situation of poverty of the area and characterised the learning environment and had a lot of implications on the learning outcomes. As said elsewhere in this report, one church hall contains two to three classes, has no latrines, has dusty floors, and sometimes, poor ventilation. This is in addition to high number of untrained teachers. The preponderance of untrained teachers, poor learning environment, extreme deprivation, and inadequate learning materials can be easily associated with low quality of education and low achievement. Lack of proof that, within such an environment, quality learning can be achieved has led to conclusions that NFE is of poor quality and thus unimportant.

#### **4.5.4 Certification**

Even though learners are well assessed after every given period of time, as the study realised, none of the NFE promoters confers any form of certification of level attained. Through a FDG with KANNET board, it came out that it is possible to confer certificates, however, the issues of recognition of that certificate by prospective employers or formal schools is the biggest dilemma. Since Kenya National Examination Council has not implemented proposals of the NFE Draft policy little or nothing can be done to learners who drop before taking any examination such as KCPE, PTE or Trade Test.

The study found that formal primary school teachers and some local leaders use this as a weapon to persuade parents against NFE. This confirms Bock and Papagiannis that lack of credentiality power by NFE may reinforce inequality within society, thus the stigmatisation that it is an alternative education for the poor.

#### **4.5.5 Lack Clear Policy to Guide NFE**

Inadequacy of a clear policy framework to guide and regulate the players in the sector, including CBOs and NGOs, has made NFE dispensable and has left the field free for all who claim to have capacity to implement NFE. For instance, absence of clear policy and guidance on certification, re-entry, examination and financing have contributed to marginalisation of NFE.

#### **4.5.6 Partnership in development of NFE**

The analysis of data showed that the initiation and management of non-formal education in Kakamega District has brought together various players who have key roles to play. The main players who partner in the provision of NFE in the district are the communities, the Non-governmental Organisations and Churches.

##### **(a) The Communities.**

Communities living within the catchment area of the NFE centres are in the forefront of mobilising people and learners to address specific issues as they arise. Such mobilisation has taken the form of organising parents to provide land and to participate in the construction of physical infrastructure like building classrooms.

In some centres the church has provided physical facilities [classroom] and parents ensure the maintenance of the church, as a learning centre. Communities, especially parents, are mobilisers of learners and potential learners to attend the programmes.

Even though the community partakes in the day-to-day management of the centres through meetings and supervision, key policy decision making still lies with personnel employed by the NGOs and CBOs. Finally, on the book value, communities provide volunteers to teach at the centres. However, practically they are not involved in the recruitment, selection and supervision of volunteer teachers.

Although, the same members of the community are committee members of formal primary schools by virtue of being parents, the study never established any official links between the management of both the NFE centres and formal primary schools.

### **[b]The Churches.**

The church is a major player in the provision of NFE in the district. All the centres visited were based in church compounds, using the buildings therein as classrooms. Some church faithful offered voluntary service in spiritual growth of learners in the centres. Although it did not boil down to conversion, the churches insisted on teaching the principles subscribed to by the churches.

Some of the parent churches, like Calvary Temple, also pay sustenance allowance to their volunteer teachers out of offerings and donations received by the church. The study found that these churches too, sponsor formal primary school, however, there was no attempt by the church leaders to promote a strong link with NFE

### **[c] The NGOs and CBOs.**

NGOs are in the forefront in mobilisation and allocation of resources. The major Non Governmental Organisation working in the provision and promotion of NFE in the district is Literacy for All (LIFA). 66.67% of NFE teachers interviewed were employees, whose honoraria is paid by LIFA. NFE promoters also provided teaching and learning equipment, including desks and textbooks at a number of centres. The major donors in this project were mentioned to be ACCESS and CARE Kenya.

The NGO/CBOs also plays an important role in the capacity building of the teachers and management of the centres in development and implementation of curricula. At the same time, these NGOs and CBOs are in-charge of supervision of the centres, supporting supervision of the teaching and learning process to ensure that it is achieving the set goals. The other important role played by these organisations is that of networking with Government, communities, churches, centre management and donors to ensure all the players collaborate for efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of NFE.

The other players in this category are local CBOs, Muma Rural Urban and Development Foundation (MURDEF), Bushangale Lutheran NFE, Ivakale Community organisation, Mushunga Rural Child Rehabilitation, Catholic Church, Tumai Community Organisation and Redeemed Gospel Church

It is important to note that the local NGOs and CBOs are now in the process of developing a network called Kakamega Non Formal Education Network. (KANNET) to enhance their partnership and collaboration.

The study never established any existing linkage between these NGOs and the formal primary school. This, it was concluded, may not to be the advantage of proposed re-entry programmes

#### **[d]The Government.**

Albeit the fact that MOEST headquarters has established an NFE desk to co-ordinate NFE and other alternative education approaches, none so far has been established in Kakamega District. The research found out that there is no officer at the district education office specifically designated to co-ordinate NFE activities within the district.

The District Education Office does not carry out any supervision on the learning and teaching activities within the NFE centres. The only link between the centres and the education office occurs when either NFE centres invite the officers for a functions, or when education office is looking for enrolment figures, probable needed by MOEST headquarter.

The Government plays no role in the provision of teaching and learning material and equipment, let alone in the recruitment and remuneration of teachers. The District Education Office, for instance, has no register of number of NFE centres, total enrolments figures and has never conducted any visit or professional inspections at the NFE.

Even though, the community felt that the government has a role, they saw government negligence to the plight of vulnerable children in the NFE. These children, as one parent said, have a right to education, security, food and shelter as any other child.

It was established that the Kakamega Municipal Council has no department dealing with NFE. The Council, at the same time, has neither a committee on non-formal education, nor an officer designated to handle NFE issues. The Council has no budgetary allocation to support NFE despite education being listed as one of the services that the local authorities provide for, from its internal revenue and from the Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF).

The research, therefore concluded, that the working relations, among the various groups, including the GOK, community, church and NGOs, aimed at promoting NFE in Kakamega District, is so weak, giving an impression that NFE is independent and all together a different system.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

## **5.1 Introduction:**

These conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study to determine the position of NFE in Kakamega after the declaration of FPE. Available evidence was that communities and individuals welcomed NFE programme. NFE centres in Kakamega have grown out of felt needs and they are responding to education needs of out-of-school learners.

### **5.1.1 Access and Participation.**

It was evident that there was a reduction of 5.1% in enrolment in most NFE centres in the month of January 2003, when FPE was declared. However, come the month of March 2003, the trend changed as primary schools started recording significant dropouts. By May, NFE centres had regained and registered a 17.6% increase in enrolment. Although the declaration of FPE caused a hiccup in the NFE at the beginning of the year, the impact is gradually subsiding and the demand for NFE is on the increase.

The findings also indicated high dropouts, which renders participation unsustainable. It can be argued that low cost NFE does not seem to contribute to keeping learners in the centres. Other factors that militate against persistent and dropouts included tagging of learners in a manner tantamount to innuendoes, bullying and canning by teachers.

### **5.1.2 Beneficiaries**

Most learners who come to non-formal classes do so as volunteers and most of them want to learn. They are easily dissuaded from continued participation and learn less effectively where the methods and content do not respect what they contribute, reflect the reality of their lives or provide them with what they want to learn. The study realised that learners are interested in learning and they are driven by their ambitions.

NFE learners comprise of orphans, children from single parents, boys and girls who are involved in child labour activities, and whose ages range from 8 to 18 years. Most of them stay with illiterate and unsupportive parents.

Although, NFE centres in Kakamega endeavours to enable NFE graduates to achieve their right to education, as enshrined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, they have not yet achieved the objective of empowering them economically, socially, and politically so as to actively participate in community development processes.

### **5.1.3 NFE Centres**

Even though all NFE centres are not registered with any government authority, they are recognised by communities and the choice of venue are flexible. NFE centres are situated and use available community settings, mostly churches. The hosting churches, the findings indicated, are inclined towards teaching church principles to the learners.

Management committees, who have very little management skills or know-how, depend on promoters for the strategic direction and major decisions. They understand their management roles to revolve only around maintaining classroom and locating learning venues.

Quality of education in the centres is compromised by inadequate facilities, unqualified, poorly remunerated and poorly motivated teachers. NFE centres, though have reasonable PTR, that encourages pupil-teacher interaction and possible use of multi-grade teaching,

the main teaching methodology commonly employed is the lecture method, characterised by chorus responses.

Though promoters regularly inspect the centres, professionalism that accompanies this essential service is still inadequate. Thus NFE centres have contributed to providing education opportunities but without quality. The concept of lack of quality here is based on an inadequate learning process that includes teacher, teaching /learning materials and learning environment.

#### **5.1.4 EFA goals.**

The NFE programme has provided an alternative channel to basic education for quite a number of out-of-formal schoolchildren and youth. Without looking at quality, one of the successes of NFE in Kakamega District is that many learners have been able to improve their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Above all, it emerged that the NFE programme has managed to tap back the school dropout.

#### **5.1.5 Accountability.**

Within the current trend of downward and upward accountability, there is serious need for the NFE promoters to be accountable to community, education officers and, above all, to build strong partnerships with all stakeholders in promotion of NFE. MOEST and local authority personnel need to be strongly involved in the planning and development of NFE.

#### **5.1.6 Impact of current changes in education**

Whereas it was not possible to exhaustively assess the effectiveness of current changes in education on NFE, it is clear from people's perception that the current changes will have minimal effects. The community continues to participate and provide management support to sustain NFE. The majority of parents was sceptical about the declaration of free primary education and they viewed it as political gimmick meant to popularise the new government. The present changes in education, according to them, will have minimal or no effect on NFE.

However, the impact will be felt in NFE staffing, enrolment, and shift in government focus. NFE promoters are coming together as a block to champion for recognition of NFE as a contributor of EFA.

#### **5.1.7 Marginalisation**

Several factors have contributed to the marginalisation of NFE in Kakamega. These factors range from lack of clear policy to wrong perceptions and lack of certification.

#### **5.1.8 Gaps.**

Several gaps were identified in the areas of NFE operation, monitoring and evaluation, data, cost, viability and involvement of media. Each of these areas needs to be addressed for NFE to reach optimum recognition.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATION**

These recommendations are made after consultation and with the hope that if implemented they will contribute to making NFE one of the most important strategies of achieving EFA.

### **5.2.1 Making NFE centres feeder schools to primary schools.**

In order to be at par with formal education in terms of recognition and to be considered as a major contributor to EFA, it is recommended that NFE be included as part of primary education. This can be achieved through making NFE centres feeder to the formal schools system. Such a move will encourage joint activities with formal primary schools. The activities may include secondment of teachers, exposure visits, joint training, joint continuous assessment and debates.

It is expected that this will provide excellent opportunities for cross learning and to solve the puzzle of different perceptions of NFE. It is also strongly recommended that the government initiates this move and establishes a mechanism that will lead to funding, secondment of teachers, ease in registration and inspection.

### **5.2.2 NFE Re – Entry Programme.**

It is recommended that NFE promoters, in collaboration with parents and the District Education Office, work out a re-entry programme, which should include re-entry to formal primary schools and skills training institutions. This should involve exploring options on how best to share responsibility for extending remedial programmes.

The children, who are its target group need to remain closely tied to the curriculum and daily life of the school, to ensure their being able to re-enter as quickly and smoothly as possible. It is further recommended to the government that the programme should be designed using more flexible learner-centred methods and schedules of non formal education in order to address the problems or constraints which caused these children to leave the school or falter in their learning in the first place.

### **5.2.3 Quality NFE**

It is recommended that the government and NGOs/CBOs undertake a thorough assessment of the current scope and quality of NFE in terms of needs identification, teacher deployment and effectiveness, and relevance of materials.

There exists limited evaluative data on what is actually happening or being achieved in quality of learning at NFE in Kakamega. Though, there appears to be a general consensus that quality is being achieved, it needs to be authenticated. What will be critical, however, is that the NGO/CBO through partners and in association with the government, seriously takes stock of who is being reached, the quality of the teaching and the appropriateness of the materials, in both their content and how they are used.

It is further recommended that a study be conducted targeting different NFE programmes to assess common strengths, weakness and opening for improvement of quality education.

### **5.2.4 Increase partnership with government.**

The study recommends that NFE promoters make deliberate attempts to forging working partnerships with education officials. This will resolve NGO/GOK relationships, which are currently full of suspicion. Such working partnership has borne fruits for such

programmes as COPE [*Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education*] and ABEK [*Alternative Basic Education for the Karamajong*] in Uganda. This will mean involving education officials in all activities of planning and monitoring, sharing information, refresher training and teacher recruitment. Both will capitalising on their strength and learning from the opportunity.

#### **5.2.5 Strengthen and expand co-operation:**

It is recommended that NGOs and CBOs strengthens and expand co-operation with the Local Authority, local communities, the private sector and , religious organisations to mobilise resources and form a common front for co-ordination, sharing and learning and advocacy for NFE reforms such as flexible time table, local adaptability of curriculum and community management. Formal primary schools management should also be involved in the expanded co-operation.

#### **5.2.6 Magnet of Community education:**

It is recommended for the NGO/CBOs that NFE centres should be developed and allowed to be the magnet for wider community education. The Adult Education Department should be encouraged to use these centres as their base. Even though 70% of these centres are hosted in church premises, community members should be encouraged to use the premises for community education. Community education will not only improve management, it will also facilitate mobilisation of the community towards basic education and ultimately the eradication of illiteracy. The use of REFLECT as a method of enhancing literacy can be explored.

#### **5.2.7 Curriculum:**

It is recommended to both the government and promoters that the NFE curriculum should be designed in open-ended ways to build on what learners bring to the class and take into account the challenges they face. That the literacy and life skills materials should be flexible, culturally and gender sensitive and varied enough to suit different levels of capacity and types of interest.

It is further recommended the government develops a curriculum framework that can be adopted in all situations/areas. The research noted that a unified and centralised curriculum is not possible for the NFE, since each NFE programme address different unique problems.

#### **5.2.8 Teachers:**

The study strongly recommends that the government deploy trained teachers to NFE centres as a step towards improving quality teaching/learning process and lessening the burden of parents. Meanwhile, NFE promoters in Kakamega should continue planning and supporting the professional growth of teachers. They should critically explore the option of closely collaborating with one of the Teachers Training Colleges [TTC] in Western Province to develop a course focussed on NFE teaching methodologies, learning assessment, locally based material development and achievement evaluation.

The study further recommends that the option of joint supervision of NFE teachers by MOEST and NFE promoters be immediately formalised

#### **5.2.9 Documentation:**

The organisation involved in promotion of NFE should make deliberate efforts to document cost effective outcomes in key areas as improved performance of socially and economically disadvantaged children, strong community role in quality assurance. Documents should then be widely shared both for education and information. The study further recommends that the government should build up systematic “maps” of key NFE-related data [e.g. enrolment, retention, consistency and achievement] as a base for assessing the current situation and tracking progress towards goals

### **5.2.10 NFE Policy**

The study strongly recommends that the government should review and finalise the draft NFE policy and to implement it in full. The review should be done through a stakeholders’ forum and the final draft presented to parliament for ratification. In the policy document, the government should undertake to fund NFE in Kenya

### **5.2.11 Lobbying and Advocacy**

It is recommended that the NGOs and CBOs embark on a serious lobbying and advocacy in order to influence the political authorities to adopt measures that will benefit beneficiaries of NFE. Popular lobbying for NFE can be based on three principles

- Policies adopted must benefit the majority of affected learners. Such policies must be reached through consultations and consensus building
- Only popular organisations known for good results in Kakamega to be involved
- Lobbying should not be based on use of money or other inducements but must focus on values and information. The NGOs/CBOs should not be thrift free as a way of influencing policy makers.

The lobbying tools for the NFE includes lobbying through visits or personal contact with MOEST officials including the DEO. This is the most effective method and has the greatest impact on persons in authority. Many officials are extremely busy and might not find time to read documents or papers on a given policy.

The use of letters is another effective tool for lobbying. A well-written letter is an effective way of influencing an official.

Finally, documentation has played important role in advocacy. Information on such issues as NFE financing, quality of education and teaching force will be very useful in an attempt to win over the person who makes decisions. These persons are often dealing with a variety of matters at the same time, may lack the research material and data that you are in a position to give them. The effort of sharing documents also shows that you are on top of things.

In influencing the government, one needs to get in touch with the responsible official, for whom you should have a clear message or demand courageously stated. Make visits and write letters accompanied with supportive data, and materials.

The other strategy is the use media. The NFE promoters should send articles, press releases and statements to journalists dealing with the matter. If possible, record interviews and send them to radio stations.

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## RESEARCH TOOLS

**RESEARCH ON NON FORMAL EDUCATION WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT OF CHANGE IN KAKAMEGA DISTRICT**

**TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE**

**1. Basic Information.**

Name of the School \_\_\_\_\_

Division \_\_\_\_\_

Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Type of School \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor of the school \_\_\_\_\_

Year the school was established \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name of respondent (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your understanding of Non Formal Education?
2. In view of declaration of Free Primary Education, do you think that Non Formal Education is still necessary?
  - a. Yes  
Explain
  - b. No  
Explain
3. Who has employed you?
  - (a) Community
  - (b) NGO
  - (c) Self employment
  - (d) Voluntary
  - (e) Others: (specify)
4. Are you trained or untrained? If trained, up to what level? If untrained, what is your highest level of education?
4. Who pays your salary?
  - (a) NGO
  - (b) Community
  - (c) Others (Specify)
5. In comparison with your formal education colleagues, are you satisfied with your remuneration terms?
6. As a teacher, what is your perception of Non Formal Education?
7. How has the declaration of Free Primary Education affected Non Formal Education with regard to:

**Enrolment Pattern**

January 2002	May 2002	Dec. 2002	Jan. 2003	May 2003

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8. What are the criteria of assessing and evaluating the performance of learners in your school or centre?
9. Do children move from Non Formal Education centres to Formal Education centres and vice versa? If yes, then how many have moved to and from your centre/ school in the last four months?
10. In your opinion, what is the motivation for children to join Non Formal Education Centres?
11. How do you motivate your learners to improve on their performances?
12. Are you supervised? If yes by who?
13. In your own opinion is the supervision necessary and effective? Explain.
14. What are the sources of teaching and learning materials used in your centre?
15. What are the challenges that you face in your career as Non Formal Educator?
16. In your opinion, what are the major challenges facing Non Formal Education?
17. How do you cope with/ overcome these challenges?
18. What advise/recommendations can you give for improvements of Non Formal Education?

### TOPIC TO GUIDE FGDs WITH SCHOOL/CENTRE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

#### Guidelines for researchers:

- ◆ Record the name, sex of each participant and append a comprehensive list to your final report
- ◆ Request the group to nominate/elect a chairperson from among participants. This allows you to participate as a facilitator
- ◆ Explain the purpose of the study. *The purpose is to* establishes the position of NFE in Kakamega district in the face of declared free primary education.  
Encourage participants to freely express their opinions. Assure them that their views will only be used for the purposes of the study and that what individual say will be kept confidential and will not be quoted against the names of individual speakers.
- ◆ Make notes of what each participant says. Where possible record important phrases, clauses or sentences in the speaker's own words. Write up the discussions in a fuller form as soon as possible after the FGD

#### Question to be posed to FGDs

1. What are some of the changes you have seen take place in education since 1979?
2. What are some of your views on the current changes in education, especially the declaration of free primary education?
3. How does the parents' body [PTA] benefit from the declaration of free primary education?
4. Are there conflicts between the NFE and formal education in this area?
5. What are the responsibilities of the NFE committee as compared to primary school committee?
6. As NFE committee members do you feel empowered enough to manage the centres? Do they have a role on what is taught in school? **Probe**
7. How successful is the committee in carrying out its responsibilities
8. What roles do field education officers play in the management of NFE centres. Do you feel that these officials are helpful in improving management of the centres.
9. What is the role of provincial administration, e.g sub-chief or chief or Divisional Officer plays in the management affairs of the centres. Do you feel that these officials are helpful in improving management of the centres.
10. As managers of the school what are their experience in terms of the committee and teachers relationship. Do they feel teachers and pupils are sufficiently involved in the management of the school and decision making. **Probe [a] in what ways are teachers and pupils involved**

11. As managers of the school, do they feel that they are sufficiently involved in the management of the school and decision making?. **Probe [a] in what ways are they involved?**
12. Who gives them the mandate to manage the centres. How would they describe the leadership styles of most of the co-ordinators and promoters.
13. If the communities around the school are supportive of the centres.
14. What they don't like most about the school NFE and what they wish to see changed about it.
15. What they like most about the NFE centre management.
16. What need to be done to empower parents and communities in order for them to actively participate in the management of both primary schools and NFE centres?

## RESEARCH ON NON FORMAL EDUCATION WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT OF CHANGE IN KAKAMEGA DISTRICT

### LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

#### 2. Basic Information.

Name of the School \_\_\_\_\_

Division \_\_\_\_\_

Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Type of School \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor of the school \_\_\_\_\_

Year the school was established \_\_\_\_\_

Name of respondent (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. QUESTIONS:

1. Do you know why you are enrolled in a Non Formal Education centre rather than a formal school? *If yes, explain.*
2. Is this your first learning centre/school or did you transfer from another school/ centre?
3. If you transferred from another institution, what was the name of the institution? Was it a formal school or a Non Formal centre?
4. Which subjects are you taught in this school?
5. Which teaching/learning activities are undertaken in your school?
6. Indicate the availability of your class text books and other teaching and learning aids in the table below:

*(Please tick where necessary.)*

Teaching and Learning Aid	Own	Sharing with one other	Sharing with two others	Sharing with more than two others	Only teachers use aid.
Text books					

Others ( <i>Specify</i> )					
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7. Do you know of any of your friends/ relatives/ neighbours who have moved from Non Formal Education to Formal Education within the past four months?

If yes, what were the reasons for their transfer?

8. What is the highest level of education attained by your mother/ father/ guardian.

(Tick as appropriate)

	Father	Mother	Guardian
<b>Did not attend school at all</b>			
<b>Primary</b>			
<b>Secondary</b>			
<b>Middle Level Colleges</b>			
<b>University</b>			

9. What do you want to be provided to your centre to make learning more interesting?

10. In comparison to formal education, is the learning environment in your centre interesting?

11. What is your parents' support towards your education at the centre/ centre?

12. Are you aware of those learners who have moved to formal education?

13. What do you want to be after your education?

14. Do you think the kind of education you are receiving at this centre/ school will enable you achieve your dreams.?

15. Ever since you came to this centre, have you witnessed any of your colleagues drop out? If yes, why?

16. Do you particularly like your school/ centre? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

17. What do you hate most about your school/ centre?

18. What do you like most about your school/centre?

19. What do you think is the role of education for:

(a) Society

(b) Your own life

20. Given a choice between going to school/ centre and staying at home, which one would you prefer?

(a) Going to school /centre

- (b) Staying at home

Reasons for your answer

21. How far away from school/ centre do you live?

- (a) Not far (below 5 km)

- (b) Far (5-8 km)

- (c) Very far (over 8 km)

20. Do you have any brothers and/or sisters who should be attending school/ Non Formal centre but are not?

21. Do you have any other recommendation you wish to make towards improvement of Non Formal education in particular and/or education in general?