



DVV International

Education for Everyone. Worldwide
Lifelong

EVALUATION REPORT: DVV INTERNATIONAL PROJECT IN UGANDA

Maria Nandago, Robert Jjuuko & Ivor Baatjes

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Acknowledgements

The evaluation team thanks DVV International and the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development (MGLSD) for giving us the opportunity to play a role in the evaluation of the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) Pilot Project in Uganda.

We acknowledge the support and guidance provided by the leadership and support staff of DVV International's Regional and Country offices as well as the Ministry. We would like to express our gratefulness to Sonja Belete and Caesar Kyebakola, Regional and Country Directors of DVV International as well as to Commissioner Tumwesigye Everest and Paul Wetaya, MGLSD Coordinator of ICOLEW, for all their support.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the participants who have given generous amounts of their time to the evaluation process. We have learnt enormously from the knowledge that has been shared with us during interviews, dialogues and written in the vast sets of documents shared with us.

We trust that this evaluation report provides a meaningful contribution to the ongoing endeavours of DVV International and the MGLSD in working towards an expanded adult education system that serves the needs and interests of the citizens of the country.

The Evaluation Team

Maria Nandago, Robert Jjuuko and Ivor Baatjes

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AE:	Adult Education
CAO:	Chief Administrative Officer
DC:	District Chairperson
DCAO:	Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
CBOs:	Community Based Organisations
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CBSD:	Community Based Services Department
CDD:	Community Driven Development
DCDO:	District Community Development Officer
DICC:	District ICOLEW Coordinator
DTPCs:	District Technical Planning Committees
CDO:	Community Development Officer
CEG:	Community Empowerment Group
DVV:	German Adult Education Association
DLSP:	District Livelihood Support Programme
DEC:	District Executive Committee
EFA:	Education for All
FALP:	Functional Adult Literacy Programme
FAL:	Functional Adult Literacy
FBOs:	Faith Based Organisations
HIV and AIDS:	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HLG:	Higher Local Government
IPFS:	Indicative Planning Figure
ICOLEW:	Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation
NAADS:	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NAPAL:	National Action Plan on Adult Literacy
NALSIP:	National Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan
NGOs:	Non-governmental Organisations
NDP II:	National Development Plan II
LLG:	Lower Local Government
LAMP:	Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme
MIS:	Management Information System
MGLSD:	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MFPED:	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
PAF:	Poverty Action Plan
PEAP:	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PDCO:	Principal District Community Officer
PLO:	Principal Literacy Officer
PRA:	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RD:	Regional Director, DVV International
REFLECT:	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SAS:	Senior Assistant Secretary
S/Cs:	Sub-counties
SDCO:	SeniorCommunity Development Officer
SLA:	Sustainable Livelihood Approach

SUICOLEW:	Support to the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation
STPCs:	Sub-county Technical Committees
UBOS:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNESCO:	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
UGX:	Uganda Shillings
UWEP:	Uganda Women Empowerment Programme
VSLAs:	Village Savings and Loans Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project description

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, financed primarily by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Federal Foreign Office and the European Union. It remains one of the leading global professional Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for adult education (AE) and operates in more than 30 countries globally.

DVV International has a long history of working towards building a sustainable adult education system in Uganda. It has supported various adult education projects dating back to the 1980s and has carried out a variety of activities in adult education in partnership and collaboration with government, universities, local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and networks. Its role is well-documented in supporting the Ugandan government in its conviction to address illiteracy and basic education needs in the country and as an imperative to the realisation of effective participation in the socio-economic transformation and development of communities and society. Support from DVV International also includes support to other forms of non-formal education such as livelihoods skills development and business skills training.

DVV International supports the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) in the conceptualisation and implementation of the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation Pilot Project (ICOLEW) which is being implemented by the Ugandan government since 2016, following a year of joint preparatory work. The implementation of ICOLEW is currently in progress in Namayingo, Mpigi and Iganga under the leadership of the MGLSD responsible for adult education and with the professional guidance, technical and financial support of DVV International. In 2018, Nwoya became the fourth district to implement the project. This evaluation took place midway through the implementation and should not be regarded as an end-evaluation. Instead it reports and documents progress and expresses an assessment of whether the support from DVV International is on track to achieve the outcomes as defined in the project documentation.

ICOLEW emanated from a combination of lessons drawn from DVV International's experiences with Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) in a number of countries, insights developed during the implementation of Uganda's Functional Literacy Programme (FALP) and a number of related adult education projects implemented in Uganda. The implementation of ICOLEW was carefully considered with significant conceptual, technical and advisory support provided by DVV International including, amongst others, an exploration of systems and methodologies for the successful piloting, development and upscaling of the project. It was envisaged that ICOLEW would serve as an improved programmatic model for addressing the needs and interests of rural poor and marginalised communities on the basis of an improved service delivery design which fosters increased connections between adult learning and national development initiatives.

The MGLSD and DVV International formalised a partnership agreement which sets out their respective roles in the conceptualisation and implementation of ICOLEW (See MGLSD & DVV, 2017). In this partnership, the MGLSD is the key implementing agent through its district architecture and is supported by professional guidance, capacity building, technical and financial support provided by DVV International. A significant aspect of the pilot project is DVV Internationals' capacity programme at macro, meso and micro levels regarded as essential to ensuring the success of the project.

The overall objective for the programme of DVV International in Uganda is: *The adult education system in Uganda is more efficient and effective.*

The planned outcomes are:

Outcome 1: Adult Education provision is improved and expanded (micro level);

Outcome 2: The institutional capacity of partners and education networks in Uganda has been strengthened (meso level);

Outcome 3: Adult Education gained increased consideration in policies, poverty reduction and development strategies, in governmental budgets at local and national level (macro level).

Purpose of the evaluation

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to understand the extent to which DVV International has assisted the MGLSD in the establishment of a new, integrated adult education system that addresses the specific needs in the country and that is aligned to the long-term goals and objectives of the government as set out in key national documents.

This implied that the different building blocks of the adult education system should be considered across macro, meso and micro levels in terms of four major categories, namely:

- The enabling environment for an adult education system with specific reference to national policies, strategies, guidelines and how these are rolled out at local level;
- The institutional structures required and in place to deliver integrated adult education services to the target group at macro, meso and micro levels;
- The management processes in place in terms of planning, budgeting, coordinating and conducting monitoring and evaluation of adult education services;
- The technical processes in terms of a concrete adult education approach, methodology, curriculum, capacity building strategies and materials development.

Methodology

This evaluation process was qualitative using a case study approach. Data was collected over a period of two weeks in Namayingo and Iganga including a one-day dialogue in Mpigi. An important aspect of the data collection process in the districts was to understand how participants at all levels experienced ICOLEW. A second set of data was gathered through 16

telephonic and face-to-face interviews, and discussions with staff from the MGLSD and DVV International and politicians from the districts. As part of the approach the main sources of information included: (a) data collected from participants; (b) reports and documents provided; and (c) observations during peer-review colloquium. The evaluation methodology was also informed by: (i) theory of change; and (ii) the Configurations-Linkages-Environment-Resources model (CLER) of adult education systems design; and (iii) the five OECD-DAC established evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Key findings

The DVV International Country Programme is supporting the MGLSD in generating a responsive adult education system for the country. The evidence indicates that, in addition to the financial contribution, DVV International's professional and technical support is aiding the MGLSD to scale up its institutional and professional capacity as the lead agency for literacy and community development in the country. The support in terms of systems development and capacity building of technical staff and policy makers is increasing the ability of the Ministry to broaden its mission in adult education and development.

The ICOLEW pilot project is creating a meaningful foundation to further adult education systems building and best practices and could serve as an advocacy tool to further mobilise key state and non-state actors to effectively engage Cabinet and other branches of government to mainstream and institutionalise adult education policy, governance and financing. The project is on track to meet the objectives defined through the partnership model and further lays the foundation for expanding ICOLEW if additional resources are secured.

Relevance

The evidence from this evaluation suggests that DVV International's country programme intentions are aligned with the needs and priorities of the MGLSD at all three levels, as well as congruent with the key plans and strategies of government. The project objective and outcomes are well-aligned with the priorities of the partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries at macro, meso and micro levels. It further builds on previous experiences and past work undertaken to advance the adult education system of the country. The programme introduced a different approach and has brought the three tiers of government into practices that aid the transformation of the adult education system. The evidence further indicates that the programme: (a) is gaining greater relevance as reflects alignment to the national imperatives as well as the needs and interests of communities; and (b) is providing targeted professional and technical support and capacity building at all three levels which has been well-received and has shown effectiveness. The effectiveness of the training resulted in the development of a range of outputs including plans, guidelines, training programmes, curricula and technical instruments for monitoring and evaluation.

The ICOLEW project design is relevant in responding to the obstacles to adult education service delivery in the country. Institutional building and strengthening are highly valued by the

stakeholders at micro, meso and macro levels. Consideration, however, needs to be made to increase participation of strategic state actors outside the MGLSD in order to secure national commitment and political will across the entire spectrum of the state. Adult literacy education and VSLA are greatly valued by participants and facilitators at the micro level.

Effectiveness and efficiency

The ICOLEW project is showing potential to contribute to positive change to the existing adult education system. The targeted support from DVV International has increased the ability of stakeholders to provide effective and quality education and support to beneficiaries. Additional capabilities have been added to the system which require consolidation and reinforcement. Greater attention will be needed to promote professionalism and professionalisation at all levels. Due to a series of technical, organisational and logistical circumstances, as well as practical considerations, ICOLEW delivery across all its components is uneven. Literacy education, livelihoods skills development and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) are on course whilst the establishment of Community Learning Centres across the pilot districts is at a preliminary stage of site identification, contracting and organisational management development. Delays in the flow and utilisation of funds at service delivery points were reported to have been reduced at the time of the evaluation, and efforts to harmonise financial management systems and procedures were being explored.

Support to ICOLEW has helped to introduce a new philosophical and methodological approach to adult education provision and delivery in the country. It is evident that ICOLEW has been well-received and that it has triggered new ways of thinking about and delivering adult education. The introduction of an advanced REFLECT approach together with curriculum innovation has brought a new sense of hope about the possibilities of adult and community education. The delivery system at grassroots level has gained attention and additional structures have been created to support the new cultural practices that emanate from the implementation of ICOLEW. These developments are laying the foundation for promoting a new multi-dimensional adult education system that could better serve the needs and interests of communities. To date a total of 1650 participants in 60 Community Empowerment Groups (CEGs) and 60 facilitators across the three districts are participating in ICOLEW. In addition to this, more than 40 technical experts have benefitted from the capacity building programmes.

Impact

The ICOLEW primary beneficiaries at micro level are experiencing the potential benefits of the programme. Evidence from meso and micro levels indicate that established VSLAs are growing their increased savings, and a number of participants have started individual and group small-scale enterprises within their communities. VSLAs do require further attention in ways that could facilitate access to markets and value chains of businesses. In addition to this, experiences with VSLAs also open up possibilities for complimentary community economic development models including cooperatives. Active CEGs are having commendable influence on wider community welfare and development through the implementation of their VAPs.

The impact at both meso and micro levels among government staff is being experienced, despite ongoing challenges especially with coordination, management and administration. Coordination of the programme at the governmental, district, sub-county and village levels needs to be strengthened and reinforced. More capacity is required and affirmative action is needed to reduce attrition of critical agents of the project. Whilst the impact of the training is evident, more resources will be required to consolidate coordination at the meso level. The capacity building programmes at the district and sub-county levels have been well received and are greatly valued. Quality assurance needs to be enhanced in the future.

ICOLEW has introduced and enriched the ways in which people work and has encouraged fostering collaborative work and working across a wide range of disciplines resulting in an increase in local inter-governmental participation. At district level, DCDOs are working with 11 sector experts and 12 extension staff to support the livelihood component of ICOLEW. The transdisciplinary nature of ICOLEW now includes agriculture, agricultural technology and production; business skills development; health; education and environmental education. Partnerships between civil society organisations and Community Empowerment Groups (CEGs) in some district have emerged as useful, however, a more deliberate effort is required to harness the roles and long-term engagement of civil society organisations to compliment the programme.

Generally, the ICOLEW approach is gradually gaining traction amongst stakeholders at the three levels of implementation. It has triggered a lot of debate and new ways of thinking about and ‘doing’ adult education service delivery in the country. It has further inspired new creativity at the macro level. Although impact has not yet translated into new policy formation, some elements towards policy review have been identified. Unfortunately, the ICOLEW project is yet to secure the necessary mainstream financial support.

Sustainability

The evidence suggests that the systems approach to adult education design and delivery is being embraced and that there is a shift in consciousness in the way that stakeholders think about the future of adult education in the country. However, whilst a transformative learning process is in motion, more time will be needed for an alternative philosophical and methodological approach to gain dominance and preference by stakeholders across the three levels.

Participants at grassroots level have found the introduction of livelihood productions particularly meaningful because they connect directly with their expectations. The introduction of Community Learning Centres as multi-disciplinary points of convergence in communities is also raising great expectations and hope. The multi-disciplinary approach encourages intra and inter-governmental participation and ownership of ICOLEW. Whilst not yet operational, this approach creates the possibility for expanding government service delivery of education and development programmes as part of the growth of ICOLEW - Support to the future CLCs

may well be the area in which much greater resources should be allocated because they are located where the greatest impact of the adult education system should be felt.

Although political support to implement an integrated adult education system at the local government levels have been expressed, it is not yet supported by institutionalised procedures and norms at meso level. Resourcing of ICOLEW by local governments from locally-generated revenue and central government transfers is yet to be fully realised.

At the macro level ICOLEW implementation has helped to generate new energy, motivation and knowledge. This is useful for attracting national attention and commitment, but senior decision makers in government are yet to commit to the programme. Efforts are underway to mobilise economic support. Undoubtedly, given the nature, philosophy and approach of ICOLEW as multi-disciplinary and inter-ministerial, the responsibility for resourcing the programme is the responsibility of all government departments. By the end of 2018 the MGLSD developed a strategic document titled *Support to the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (SUICOLEW)* in which it sets out arguments in support of ICOLEW.

Suggestions and considerations for the future

On the basis of this summary, the following set of key suggestions for future consideration are made. The main thrust of these suggestions is tailored around the emergence of heightened consciousness about the possibilities presented by ICOLEW and the evolution of a “new” cultural practice that is emerging from the implementation of the Project. Furthermore, there is overwhelming support for ICOLEW to be at the core of the adult education system of Uganda. In essence ICOLEW is regarded as the genesis for expanding the adult education system, i.e. the cultural practices developed as part of ICOLEW have to shape the adult education system as a whole (and not the other way around). Therefore, the suggestions derived from the evaluation are intended to consolidate the work that has been done and to strengthen the adult education system by harnessing some of the essential capabilities that contribute to a fully-fledged adult education system.

The following section provides a set of suggestions and considerations for the future. Each suggestion concludes with action points for consideration by DDV International and the MLGSD. We acknowledge that all these recommendations cannot be implemented at once and should rather form the basis for setting short, medium and long-term priorities. We are also aware that the implications of these suggestions require enormous investment from the Ugandan government. Whilst all these suggestions are directly linked to adult education systems building, we would like to emphasise the key areas which we believe should be the focus of DDV International’s support given the time left to conclude the current phase of project. The four key areas: are (1) professional and technical support that strengthens the structures at district and sub-county levels through which ICOLEW is provided; (2) technical support for strengthening of coordination, monitoring and evaluation and review) at the meso level; (3) capacity building to strengthening key elements of service delivery at community level; and (4) technical support at macro level in the development of a funding and resource model

for the adult education against a multi-year service delivery plan that makes adult education gradually available to as many adults as possible. To realise these priorities will require a continuation of the close collaboration and partnership model that exist between DVV International and the MGLSD.

Developing adult education advocacy strategy

The ICOLEW Project has created a lot of debate. It has led to the co-construction of new knowledge and thinking within the system and has shifted the consciousness of people working at all three levels of the system. Whilst this is admirable, ICOLEW has not received sufficient publicity necessary to mobilise greater public participation and the latent support that may exist. It is proposed that a detailed advocacy strategy be developed using a multi-media approach. There is a need to share and publicise the good/best practices that have and are emerging from the various experiences of ICOLEW. An evidence-based advocacy strategy that permeates state machinery to catapult the adult education agenda from the periphery to mainstream policy discussions at Cabinet and Parliament is urgently required. This strategy should be based on a comprehensive communication strategy for adult education.

Action point:

- (a) DVV International together with the MGLSD prepare brief summaries and advocacy materials that form part of a dissemination strategy. The materials should be produced to target key people at all three levels and should be written in plain languages, and where possible, translated into different languages.*
- (b) The MGLSD should set up an electronic platform from where alerts to new materials be circulated to inter and intra-governmental departments, civil society and social media platforms. This platform should later interface with the Management Information System. Community groups (CEGs), universities and civil society organisations should also be encouraged to write about ICOLEW.*

Fast tracking adult education institutionalisation

MGLSD is encouraged to use the evidence, energy and goodwill created by the ICOLEW project to fast track the institutionalisation and mainstreaming of adult education policy, governance and financing. A key step, but not limited to, would include, drafting a position paper (also converted into a Memo to Cabinet) that succinctly captures the required reforms and changes in legislation, financing and governance. The position paper should be informed by a study and review of current national, regional and global trends in adult education service delivery. The adult education institutionalisation fast track initiative should be linked to the advocacy strategy with the ultimate goal of further advancing the adult education system.

The MGLSD should also initiate a process towards the development of an adult education framework that goes beyond FAL. With the implementation of ICOLEW, a range of policy issues have been illuminated and could form the basis for policy innovation and the possibility of the development of legislation for adult education. The current policy for adult literacy

should be revisited and revised based on the lessons learnt from ICOLEW. If ICOLEW is an expression of the new adult education programme of Uganda, work towards a new adult education policy could be initiated through such a framework.

Action point:

DVV International needs to provide professional guidance to the MGLSD in the development of basic norms and standards in key areas such as CLCs; educators; curricula; assessment and funding models for a new adult education system.

Establishing conceptual clarity

ICOLEW is a relatively new concept in Uganda and requires attention in order to provide and maintain conceptual clarity. It is also a concept that is broadening as additional components are added to it. It should also consider how government imperatives may shift in light of both global and national developments. At present the strong focus on agriculture is important, however, the NDP and Vision 2040 include adult education that could be related to infrastructural development, energy, mining and tourism. These additional areas suggest the need for a greater variety of vocational skills development that could be inserted into ICOLEW. The MGLSD is encouraged to lead the way in providing conceptual clarity of ICOLEW so that it is understood throughout the different levels and used to mobilise inter- and intra-governmental support, as well as support from other stakeholders and the donor community.

DVV International may consider supporting stakeholders to internalise and live the principles and values of the empowering nature of the ICOLEW as informed by its roots, which are derived from the emancipatory and critical pedagogical orientations.

Action point:

DVV International could support the MGLSD with the development of the production of a simple brochure that defines ICOLEW in relation to national and local imperatives. This could serve as a document to be used for broader public awareness, social mobilisation and public participation.

Improving planning, coordination and monitoring

The structure and model of governance at macro, meso and micro levels are well-designed to support ICOLEW. However, there is a need to strengthen the way these structures and systems function. With the implementation of ICOLEW, new cultural practices (the way of doing adult education) are emerging and they challenge the way the system is currently structured and how it responds to new demands. One of the key challenges is the human resource and the quality of human resources available to support coordination, planning and implementation. It is suggested that improvements in coordination, planning and implementation be done with the appointment of additional staff.

It is critical that educators are supported by reasonable conditions of service and remuneration packages that secure their longer-term participation in adult and community education work. Ideally, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary career paths should be developed for these educators.

The development of a fully-fledged Management Information System (MIS) is equally imperative. It is well known that data on adult literacy is poor and that it has significant implications for planning, monitoring and evaluation, and research and development. The MGLSD is strongly encouraged to establish a well-designed and comprehensive MIS for adult education. The MGLSD is strongly encouraged to undertake a comprehensive review of existing national adult literacy management information system (NALMIS) to provide a basis for redesigning an appropriate system for information utilisation and knowledge curation. The MGLSD should explore possibilities for digitised MIS to enhance information accessibility and usability. In the interim it would be useful to conduct quarterly monitoring sessions during which data is scrutinised and analysed for future actions.

Action point:

- (a) DVV International has played an important role in providing support related to coordination at all three tiers of government. It has also been proactive in the identification of gaps that could delay the implementation of ICOLEW. More time, energy and resources are required to strengthen coordination, especially at the district and sub-country levels. Joint planning and monitoring with the MGLSD is recommended with specific focus on ways to strengthen structures that require support for the smooth implementation of ICOLEW.*
- (b) In addition to this, coordination at district level should be improved through the appointment of dedicated staff allocated specifically to ICOLEW. The MGLSD should play a key role in motivating for the appointment of additional staff and/or the incorporation of coordination of CEGs into the job descriptions of relevant staff (CDOs; DCDOs & SASs)*
- (c) The development of a MIS should be developed by the MGLSD. We suggest that DVV continues to provide professional and technical support in the refinement of instruments to be used. This support could form part of the monitoring and evaluation framework which has already been developed by DVV.*

Establishing Community Learning Centres

The revitalisation and establishment of CLCs in villages as sites for community education has already been identified as part of the ICOLEW Project. It is suggested that CLCs be designed as multipurpose centres that offer a wide range of adult and community-related services to villages. These CLCs should be conceptualised as points of convergence of government services, community and civil society programmes, projects and campaigns directly connected to the needs and interests of communities. The establishment of CLCs will require resources which should be solicited from a variety of sources including government departments,

international donors and the business community. The variety of engineering-related skills that already exist within villages could be used in the construction of CLC-related infrastructure.

Action point:

The CLCs are the loci of service delivery and should receive much greater attention over the next period. CLC coordinators should be empowered and motivated to expand community development programmes and services. Knowing that these community-based institutions would require investment, we suggest that DVV International consider investing basic equipment and materials required at selected pilot-CLCs. These pilot sites should be used as demonstrations of what fully functional CLCs should look like.

Building a cadre of educators and curriculum development specialists

Educators/facilitators have a vital role to play in the provision and delivery of adult and community education and related services. There is a need to invest in the development of a well-trained and committed cadre of facilitators who could support the teaching and learning processes of community groups. It is critical that these facilitators are supported by reasonable conditions of service and remuneration packages that secure their longer-term participation in adult and community education programmes and work. Ideally, multidisciplinary/transdisciplinary career paths should be developed for these facilitators in order to ensure that the adult education system is supported by the multidisciplinary forms of knowledge and skills required by villages.

Further ICOLEW is developing into a multifaceted and multidisciplinary programme that will potentially expand to require growing sets of learning support materials. It is suggested that, given the complexities of curriculum development, this role be institutionalised and supported in order to ensure that the envisaged ICOLEW is enriched by carefully conceptualised materials across different languages and is congruent with the learning needs and demands of participants. It might be appropriate to delegate the mandate and function of continuous capacity enhancement and materials development to a dedicated team of trainers and curriculum developers drawn from the existing pool of practitioners at the different levels. The team could be guided to work with appropriate institutions to design and deliver appropriate training packages and materials. Curriculum development and human resource development are core elements of an adult education system and this capability needs to be plugged into the vision of expanding adult education in the country.

Action point:

(a) MGLSD should explore the establishment of a dedicated unit for curriculum development alongside the adult education training unit. This curriculum development unit should play a role in ongoing research and development of meaningful and attractive reading materials and resources that integrate ICOLEW components. These materials should be reflective of the principles of adult learning and based on adult education theory that undergirds REFLECT. These materials should be gradually available in all local languages.

(b) Facilitators play a vital role in the service delivery process. A number of key issues related to facilitators need to be addressed. (a) considering incentives such as free/subsidised medical care and transport as ways to motivate and retain facilitators; (b) the development and implementation of a reward system for facilitators for good performance; (c) facilitating access to development support and government grants such as YLP and UWEP; and (d) the establishment of opportunities for upgrading and ongoing professional development and career paths

(c) The capacity building of all participants involved in adult education service delivery is essential. A process is required to establish an institutional form that houses, reviews and develops ongoing capacity building programmes at community level. The immediate work of such a unit should focus on strengthening the existing curricula for facilitators as well as providing technical experts with the most relevant pedagogy in working with adults.

Establishment of a National Stakeholder Body

It is well-known that the national adult education system of Uganda should include a number of stakeholders who offer a variety of formal and non-formal programmes to youth and adults. For instance, in addition to the adult education-related services of government departments, there are also many NGOs and CBOs involved in the provision of adult education programmes. We suggest that the MGLSD facilitates the establishment of a National Stakeholder Body that brings the different voices in adult education together as a means to encourage collaboration and partnerships, collective actions and a wide variety of strategies that could further strengthen efforts in the country. Deliberate efforts to bring onboard institutions of higher learning and strategic state agencies including ministries and departments, particularly those responsible for agricultural extension, health education, youth employment, labour, civic education, ICT, vocational education and training, women and gender and environment, should be prioritised.

Action point:

The MGLSD is encouraged to establish a national and district multi-sectoral fora as part of a strategy to expand participation in adult education. This structure that should include intra and inter-ministerial groups and civil society groups and should convene regularly (quarterly) as a means to generate discussions and participation in policy and practice in adult education. Stakeholders involved in adult education should also be captured as part of the MIS.

Mobilisation of economic will

Whilst there is political will for adult education in the country, the economic will to expand provision and delivery remains inadequate. Long-term support for ICOLEW is required at all three levels of the system and various options need to be pursued in order to secure proper resources. Given the momentum of ICOLEW and the gains made, the government should give favourable consideration to mainstream funding from the fiscus. ICOLEW should be regarded as a catalytic programme with extraordinary high-level funding support.

Action point:

- (a) The MLGSD is encouraged to pursue the incorporation of ICOLEW into national planning mechanisms such as the National Development Plan III, the Social Development Sector Plan, District Development Plans (DDPs) as well as the local government development plans.*
- (b) The MLGSD should provide regular reports to Cabinet on progress made by ICOLEW as part of a broader strategy to generate support for ICOLEW to be scaled up as instrumental to advancing a fully-fledged integrated adult education system. The MGLSD is encouraged to develop guidelines for integrating ICOLEW into national and local government plans and budgets.*
- (c) The MLGSD should embark on the development of a funding model for adult education. This funding model should ensure that all costs for service delivery are included. DVV International could provide support with the development of the funding model.*

Establishment of a national research agenda

The experience with ICOLEW highlighted the need for further and ongoing research in adult education in the country. It is suggested that a national research agenda be developed that could enhance policy development, systems innovation and their impact. A key area of research should evolve around the ways in which communities experience community education programmes and actions required to ensure that their needs and interests are adequately addressed.

Action point:

- (a) MGLSD should use the experience of ICOLEW to generate a research agenda that could be the focus for both commissioned and independent research. This research agenda should be shared with universities so that it could form the basis for greater socially-engaged scholarship in aid of ICOLEW.*
- (b) Research themes that are relevant to ICOLEW could form the basis of investigation for post-graduate students who are committed to enriching adult education. It would be useful if funding for three research projects could be secured for topics related to the micro, meso and macro levels.*

Recognise and accredit learning achievements

Attention should be paid to the ICOLEW participants' overwhelming demand for external examination, specified durations and gazetted graduation period. We suggest that the MGLSD explores possibilities and opportunities for implementing a mechanism that recognises and accredits learning achievements through a comprehensive, transparent and efficient system that captures the whole spectrum of knowledge, skills and attitudes accrued from participation in the different ICOLEW components.

Action point:

There is a need to develop uniform assessment tools in addition to the LAMP scale while exploring possibilities for equivalencies or accreditation of learning achievements across the different components. In addition to this, it is important to introduce recognition mechanisms such as certification ceremonies for participants who have successfully achieved level 5.

Responding to learning needs and ambitions of adults and young people

ICOLEW curriculum design and delivery needs to be revisited and enriched to offer continuing education and lifelong learning pathways for participants to enhance their personal learning ambitions including English language learning as well as career and skills development. It suggested that this be linked to the mission and mandate of CLCs.

Action point:

DVV International should support the MGLSD in addressing the following key issues:

(a) Improve the social and physical environment in which adult learning is taking place. Learning facilities need to be appropriate for adults. Bureaucrats and facilitators could play a role in educative processes that address the stigmatisation of adults with low levels of literacy;

(b) Introduce flexibility as to when and where classes are convened as a way to address absenteeism and attrition. These arrangements should adhere to the minimum standards defined by the MGLSD;

(c) Strengthen methodologies that ensure a greater chance for the successful acquisition of literacy and numeracy. Facilitators need more training in the use of theory and practice (i.e. whole language philosophy) that encourages literacy acquisition; and

(d) Encourage a culture of regular record keeping amongst participants including their business enterprises.

VSLAs: Facilitate access to markets

The VSLAs are important mechanisms for operationalising sustainable livelihoods. This requires the establishment of clearly defined markets and mechanisms that can facilitate access to such markets for the goods and services produced by CEGs and VSLAs. The establishment of these mechanisms is also important to encourage and sustain participation of participants in ICOLEW.

Action point:

With the support of DVV International, MGLSD is encouraged to conduct the necessary research about markets specifically for participants in the VSLAs. It would also be useful if the capacity to conduct such research is built into the training programmes provided to communities. The MGLSD should further facilitate special access for VSLAs to markets and limit barriers that they may experience.

SECTION ONE: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

The evaluation of the DVV International Country Project in Uganda (2014-2018) commenced in mid-December 2018 and was completed in March 2019. This report provides the key evaluation findings, conclusions and suggestions derived from the evaluation. The report is based on an in-depth series of engagements with key stakeholders involved in the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) Project as well as valuable feedback received during a two-day debriefing conference held in Kampala on 26 and 27 February 2019.

The report is divided into three main sections. Section One of the report provides an overview of the role of DVV International in Uganda and its relationship with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) as collaborators in the conceptualisation and implementation of the ICOLEW Pilot Project. Whilst the roles of the two organisations are deeply intertwined, the section distinguishes the contributions of each of the two organisations. The section also provides an overview of the purpose of the evaluation and the methodology used.

The second part of the report discusses the findings and analysis. The findings and analysis is largely based on the perspectives and experiences of people who are currently participating in ICOLEW. The third section of the report provides a set of suggestions for DVV International and the MGLSD to consider. Whilst some of the suggestions are relevant to the overall improvement of the system, specific areas for DVV International's consideration are highlighted. We acknowledge that further suggestions may emerge towards the end of the project and are thus incomplete.

1.1 The Work of DVV International

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, financed primarily by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Federal Foreign Office, and the European Union. It remains one of the leading global professional Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for adult education (AE) and operates in more than 30 countries globally. Over the last 49 years, DVV International provided support for the development of sustainable solutions to youth and adult education and the right to lifelong learning. To achieve this DVV International works in partnership with CSOs, governments and academic institutions to foster sustainable, transformative change at the micro, meso and macro levels of adult education systems. DVV International's in-country and partner cooperation is orientated around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Education Agenda 2030 and Framework for Action (FFA), and the frameworks which emerged from the UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) held in Belém, Brazil in 2009.

Further information can be found on the DVV International website: <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/>

1.2 DVV International in Uganda

DVV International has a long history of working towards building a sustainable adult education system in Uganda. It has supported various adult education projects dating back to the 1980s and has carried out a variety of activities in adult education in partnership and collaboration with government, universities, local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and networks. Its role is well-documented in supporting the Ugandan government in its conviction to address the illiteracy and basic education needs in the country and as an imperative to the realisation of effective participation in the socio-economic transformation and development of communities and society (Openjuru, 2016; Jjuuko et al, 2007; Carr-Hill, 2001). Over the last two decades DVV International provided support throughout the initial conceptualisation and implementation of the Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FALP). In the last 10 years DVV International expanded its role through support provided to the Uganda Adult Education Network (UGAADEN). This initiative was pursued in order to broaden civil society participation in adult education and to increase and strengthen the capacity of a national network in the provision and delivery of quality adult education projects. At the same time DVV International continued its collaboration with government at the macro, meso and micro levels with a focus on supporting national planning and advocacy. Collectively these efforts culminated, amongst others, in the declaration of the National Adult Literacy Policy (2014) and the National Community Development Policy (2015). Today these two policies, alongside the Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP II) for the period 2015-2020, have created renewed interest in and heightened consciousness about adult education. These interests inspire hope and are foundational to new ways of thinking about and addressing adult education and development in Uganda.

The work of DVV International in the Karamoja Project (2010-2014) further contributed valuable lessons towards the conceptualisation of community integrated adult education programmes that focus on the interconnectedness of literacy, skills training, business skills training and access to start-up capital through savings and loan schemes. DVV International's involvement with local government and community structures demonstrated that quality adult education programmes are possible in often complex rural contexts such as Karamoja. DVV International's experimentation with and demonstration of the use of REFLECT -- as a different adult literacy acquisition approach to the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) methodology - signaled the possibilities that could be achieved through using more sustained community integrated, functional adult education programmes in both rural and semi-urban environments. On the basis of the Karamoja experience, a critical examination of FALP and key lessons drawn from international experiences with REFLECT resulted in the establishment of the ICOLEW Pilot Project which is the subject of this evaluation.

1.3 Adult education in Uganda

Uganda has a long history of implementing adult literacy, vocational education, skills development and community development programmes (Hufaad & Abdu, 2018; Akello et al, 2017; Openjuru, 2016; Jjuuko et al, 2007; Carr-Hill, 2001). There are a variety of adult education programmes from formal to non-formal applied across a variety of societal themes including health, food, voter education and so forth.

The government of Uganda has committed itself to provide adult literacy education with the aim of achieving permanent functional literacy and numeracy; the acquisition of skills relevant to life and community; and the promotion of lifelong learning in communities (See Carr-Hill, 2001). This commitment continues to be professed by the lead Ministry responsible for adult literacy in Uganda (See MGLSD, 2015). Despite government efforts, adult illiteracy remains a significant challenge. The National Household Surveys (NHS) of 2012/13 and 2016/17 show that the adult illiteracy rate for populations aged 18 years and older was 33 percent in 2012/13, reducing to 26 percent in 2016/17. The NHSs show that regional disparities in illiteracy rates persist and are also gendered with illiteracy rates for women being almost double that for men.

The NHS 2016/17 Report indicates that 27% of 37.7 million Ugandans who are poor corresponds to nearly 10.1 million persons in 2.1 million households (UBOS, 2017). According to the NDP 11 (2015/16 - 2019/20) there was an increase in household income as depicted in the increase in per capita income from USD 607 in 2008/09 to USD 788 in 2013/14.

While the national percentage of people living below the poverty line decreased, there remain significant disparities in poverty levels across regions, in the rural-urban divide, with the highest levels reported in Northern Uganda (44 percent) followed by the Eastern region at 24.5 percent. According to the 2015 MDG Report, the proportion of people whose income is less than a dollar a day, was reduced by two thirds, surpassing the 50% reduction specified under this target. Households with higher income levels are better able to meet the direct and indirect costs of accessing education and healthcare, so this progress has contributed to many other goals. Nonetheless, government continues to implement various measures to support the 10.1 million Ugandans who are still in poverty and the further 14.7 million who remain vulnerable.

There is a high relationship between illiteracy levels and nutrient deficiency intake. Over 40% of deaths among Ugandan children can be attributed in part to underfeeding. 29% of children below 5 years of age are stunted, 9% are severely stunted, 11% are underweight and 2% are severely underweight. Rural children are much more likely to be nutritionally disadvantaged (30%) than urban children (24%). The prevalence of stunting decreases with increasing levels of the mother's education. About 4 in 10 children born to mothers with no education (37%) are stunted compared with 1 in 10 (10%) of children born to mothers with more than a secondary education. Similarly, stunting decreases with increasing wealth quintiles, from 32% among children in the lowest wealth quintile to 17% of children in the highest wealth quintile (UDHS, 2016).

Food insecurity and malnutrition have been attributed, among others, to high poverty levels, low agricultural productivity, irregular food accessibility and inadequate food intake, pre-

disposing diseases, lack of knowledge, low education of especially mothers, cultural restrictions, poor child rearing practices, inadequate safe water supply, poor environmental sanitation and the effects of HIV and AIDS. There is a need to reduce the health burden at the individual and household level arising from food and nutrition insecurity. Malnourished individuals require more costly care and increased services, yet the problem is preventable.

Community Learning Centres initially established as sites for lifelong education and community training have been neglected, are largely not in use and, in other cases, are non-existent.

Adult education is therefore deeply rooted in the social, economic and political system of the country but remains a significant vehicle that could play a role in addressing the challenges faced by communities across the country. With Uganda's Vision 2025 (and now 2040), "***A Transformed Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country within 30 years***", new approaches in adult education are required which can respond to the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment in the country.

1.4 The Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation Project (ICOLEW)

1.4.1 Partnership model

The Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation Pilot Project (ICOLEW) is being implemented by the Ugandan government since 2016 in three of 127 districts. ICOLEW is implemented in Namayingo, Mpigi and Iganga since July 2016 (and in 2018 in Nwoya) by the lead Ministry (MGLSD) responsible for adult education and with the support of DVV International.

ICOLEW is a project supported by DVV International based on a partnership model between the MGLSD and DVV International. This partnership model was established to ensure the successful piloting, development and upscaling of the ICOLEW toward a new programme oriented to address the needs of adult learners. DVV International plays an important role in providing assistance "in key strategic initiatives and guidelines at macro level so as to create a conducive and informed environment for the implementation of ICOLEW at district levels" (See MGLSD & DVV, 2017). As part of this collaborative approach, the responsibilities have been delineated as follows:

DVV International:

- (a) Supports the pilot and the development and upscaling of ICOLEW;
- (b) Provides technical and financial support to ICOLEW;
- (c) Provides professional guidance and building capacity at macro, meso and micro levels;
- (d) Supports the MGLSD in the mobilisation of additional funding for ICOLEW;
- (e) Participates in and contributes to technical and management meetings to facilitate the effective implementation of ICOLEW;
- (f) Prepares technical and financial reports to MGLSD; and

(g) Allocates annual financial support as specified in the Memorandum of Understanding¹.

The MGLSDs role in the partnership include the following:

- (a) Participation in joint/regular annual planning processes and technical and management meetings;
- (b) Providing a link between the programme implementation districts and DVV International regarding efficient financial accountability;
- (c) Creating a conducive environment to build a sustainable system for the implementation of ICOLEW including policy, structures, strategies, management, planning, monitoring and evaluation, budgeting and quality assurance;
- (d) Providing regular progress and financial reports as per guidelines provided by DVV International; and
- (e) Facilitating support through government authorities to DVV International's operational presence in Uganda

Furthermore, this partnership is informed by a set of principles of collaboration as outlined below:

- (a) Ensuring an integrated approach of designing, piloting, developing and upscaling ICOLEW;
- (b) Working within the systems building framework focusing on four spheres of policy/strategy, structural/institutional as well as technical and management processes;
- (c) Conducting joint annual planning, monitoring and review sessions on ICOLEW;
- (d) Using an action-learning approach within regular corrective actions and replication and upscaling of best practices;
- (e) Signing annual agreements of cooperation to transfer funds according to agreed-upon annual plans and other guidelines; and
- (f) Taking joint decisions in the selection and termination of pilots and upscaling strategies.

1.4.2 ICOLEW objectives and outcomes

In operationalising this partnership, DVV International supports the ICOLEW project by providing clearly defined inputs as set out in its original proposal. These inputs include the following at micro, meso and macro levels:

Micro level:

- (a) Register 1500² participants of which 70% should graduate from ICOLEW classes;

¹Over the last three years, DVV International spent a total of 1,094,000 EUROS (an average of 365,000 EUROS per annum) on ICOLEW. Annual contributions from the MGLSD were not available.

²The initial target of 1500 learners have been exceeded and stands at 1650. This figure excludes adult learners enrolled in ICOLEW in Nwoya. Nwoya is not part of this project, but interviews were conducted to gain insight on developments on ICOLEW in that district.

- (b) Enrol 60% of adult learners in market related/livelihoods improvement skills training programmes;
- (c) Involve 60% of adult learners in VSLAs; and
- (d) Train 60 community facilitators in ICOLEW and implement village action plans.

Meso level:

- (a) Train CDOs and sector experts in three districts on ICOLEW and integrated skills training programmes (in order to train facilitators);
- (b) CDOs and sector experts (maximum of 20) produce training manuals and guides in local languages and use different technologies to enable access to information in districts and sub-counties;
- (c) Support the establishment of a functional coordinating structure for coordination, implementation and monitoring; and
- (d) Support the establishment of a functional Management Information System (MIS) and a monitoring and evaluation system.

Macro level:

- (a) Support the development of annual integrated adult education development plans and budgets;
- (b) Support the establishment of a MIS to capture data and learner progression and analysis;
- (c) Design upscaling plans based on lessons learnt; and
- (d) Training government sector officials in management tools for effective service delivery, planning budgeting and monitoring and evaluation.

The supporting evidence produced as part of the project is comprehensive and includes the following:

- (a) Attendance registers
- (b) Registration forms
- (c) Training reports and training manuals
- (d) Learner assessment reports
- (e) Village savings books and records
- (f) Supervisor reports
- (g) Monitoring reports
- (h) Workshop and conference reports
- (i) Minutes of meetings
- (j) Annual plans and budgets
- (k) Guidelines (curricula)
- (l) MIS inputs and outputs
- (m) Upscaling plans and budgets
- (n) Problem analysis charts/reports

1.4.3 ICOLEW: Approach and methodology

It is important to note that the approach and methodology that undergirds ICOLEW emanated from a combination of international experiences with REFLECT, lessons drawn from adult literacy and related projects in Uganda, and fostering of increased connections between literacy and national development initiatives associated with the rural poor and marginalised communities. Strongly based on REFLECT, ICOLEW is a philosophical, methodological and ethical endeavour that combines transformative adult education practices with contextualised sustainability livelihood approaches (SLAs). As a participatory approach to community development, ICOLEW centres the importance of community in literacy acquisition for community development; the community and lived experiences are the focus of learning through shared ideas, reading, writing and dialogue; a variety of teaching and learning methods and techniques encourage active participation; curricula extends beyond the ‘classroom’ (e.g. learning through action); skilled community development educators play multiple roles, have transdisciplinary knowledge and stand in solidarity with participants; and learning materials speak to, and reflect, the real-life realities of participants.

ICOLEW is also an approach that is informed by sustainable livelihood/s (SLA) as a means toward poverty reduction. Livelihood/s refers to a descriptive derived to show an understanding of the complex specificity of rural life in which people and communities undertake a set of varying productive and reproductive activities (e.g. farming). ‘Livelihoods’ are understood to encompass the capabilities, assets and activities a household/community can employ in order to make a living. SLA is premised on the proposition that people have assets consisting of: (a) natural capital (land, water); (b) physical capital (tools, equipment, infrastructure and transport, sanitation, energy); (c) financial capital (income, savings and credit); (d) human capital (education, skills, knowledge, health); and (e) social capital (households, networks, formal groups, institutions and information). Having the above, people construct a ‘livelihood strategy’ including: (a) the execution of a multiplicity of productive and reproductive activities using their assets; (b) carrying out diverse activities to achieve a range of different goals; and (c) viewing people as agents who can articulate the boundaries of their capabilities.

ICOLEW, as a holistic approach in Uganda, consists of five key components: (a) literacy and numeracy skills enhancement; (b) Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA); (c) livelihoods skills training; (d) business skills training; and (e) community development. These components are understood to form the basic ingredients for addressing poverty in materially poor communities.

The outcomes of this community-driven education programme include the following: (a) the acquisition of applied literacy and numeracy skills in local languages related to the other four components; (b) the cultivation of a savings culture amongst community groups; (c) the acquisition of technical skills for (sustainable) livelihood productions; (d) the acquisition of business skills related to livelihood productions; and (e) community planning and actions that

address community-related issues such as food and hunger, health and sanitation, early childhood development, housing and other contextual community needs and interests.

Essentially **ICOLEW** is an example of a community education programme in which educational components are identified and used to respond to people’s own concerns. It works to create a shared, active and political space where wider solidarities that encompass a multiplicity of perspectives can be developed (Baatjes et al, 2012). In this way **ICOLEW** is about encouraging and engaging members of a community into learning and doing based on what they are interested in, and that emerges in relation to problems and issues experienced on a daily basis. Education is developed that is relevant to the participants and is responsive to community priorities identified with people rather than for them (ibid). Three key principles of learning embedded in community education include: (a) learning that is holistic; (b) learning that is communal; and (c) learning through problem-posing activities related to daily lived experiences.

1.5 Evaluation design and methodology

1.5.1 Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation was intended to provide an independent assessment of the extent to which the adult education programme (**ICOLEW**) is a relevant and effective platform to enhance and improve national capacity for creating, developing and expanding the adult education system of Uganda. The assessment of the programme is necessary to inform policy makers, programme planners, decision makers and partners of successes, challenges and areas of improvement to strengthen and further development of the adult education system in Uganda.

The evaluation was informed by the key objectives, outcomes and key factors listed in the Terms of Reference (ToR)(See **Appendix A**). The evaluation considers the key criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) as integral to this evaluation.

OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES	KEY FACTORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is the Ugandan government partner putting the new system in place? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult education provision is improved and expanded (micro level). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an enabling environment for an adult education system in place with specific reference to national policies, strategies, guidelines and how these are rolled out at local level.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is DVV International’s role and contribution in the partners’ efforts and does it contribute to achieve the overall goal as per DVV International’s proposal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institutional capacity of partners and education networks in Uganda has been strengthened (meso level). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institutional structures required are in place to deliver integrated adult education services to the target group at macro, meso and micro levels.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult education gained increased consideration in policies, poverty reduction and development strategies, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management processes are in place in terms of planning, budgeting, coordinating and

	and in governmental budgets at local and national level (macro level).	conducting monitoring and evaluation of adult education services.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The technical processes are in place in terms of a concrete adult education approach, methodology, curriculum, capacity building strategies, materials development, etc.
CRITERIA	Relevance; Efficiency; Effectiveness; Sustainability; Impact	

1.5.2 Evaluation approach and design

This evaluation process was qualitative using a case study approach. The methodology was also informed by: (i) theory of change; and (ii) the Configurations-Linkages-Environment-Resources model (CLER) of adult education systems design; and (iii) the five OECD-DAC established evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

1.5.3 Systems theory and thinking

A systems theory approach to the implementation of adult education provides a good theoretical lens for looking at adult education programmes. It allows for a comprehensive interrogation of the political, social, economic and cultural contexts and environments, as well as the multiplicity (and complexity) of systems and sub-systems in their lateral and hierarchical configurations.

The application of systems theory and methodology has led to the elaboration of definitions of concepts of theory, structures and configuration, the delineation of a set of systems³ and their subsequent application to adult education in various countries. Bhola⁴ uses the term system to refer to “the larger social space within which structures can be constructed or installed” and where “configurations are seen as networks of relations that include both formal and informal structures and which are in relative state of impermanence” (Bhola, 1997).

Systems theory also encourages systems thinking, constructivist thinking and dialectical thinking which have, amongst others, important values including: (a) enabling us to accommodate the reality of interactions between sub-systems at various levels within a system; (b) anticipating consequences that might follow during implementation; and (c) anticipating process and policy changes located within the dialectic between macro and micro levels within a system.

³ In the taxonomy of systems, references include futuristic, real-time, technical rational and social-technical systems.

⁴See Bhola, H. 1997. Systems thinking, literacy practice: Planning a literacy campaign in Egypt. *Entrepreneurship, innovation and change*. 6(1)1: 21-35.

The Configurations-Linkages-Environments-Resources (CLER) Model⁵ is a useful “model in adult education based on systems theory” (Bhola, 2004). It was designed to increase the probability of a policy implementation project to be actualised. Its usefulness is found in: (a) it constitutes an empty set of theoretical categories which can be filled by agents of implementation applicable to a particular context (including their national ideologies, material and non-material endowments); (b) its use for programme administration and analysing ongoing processes of implementation including their effectiveness and efficiency; and (c) it allows for comparison and transplant into multiple contexts, encompassing a range of domains such as community development; poverty alleviation; education; health; food production and so forth.

Key categories commonly associated within the idealised adult education systems include twelve sub-systems: (i) ideology; (ii) policy, planning and programming; (iii) (social) mobilisation; (iv) institutional building and organisational development; (v) curriculum innovation and development; (vi) learning materials and methods; (vii) capacity building; (viii) pedagogical/instructional design; (ix) learning transitions/articulation; (x) professional development; (xi) monitoring and evaluation; and (xii) research and development.

1.5.4 Theory of Change

The proposed approach is underpinned by a structured methodology based on a “Step” model of programme evaluation informed by the *theory of change* and *logic framework* of the programme.

Evaluation usually focuses on trying to understand a programme/project and the problem it is addressing. Essentially, it is a discrepancy analysis putting objectives against actual results obtained from the implementation of a project, programme or campaign – rooted in empirical data, both quantitative and qualitative (Boone, 1985)⁶. It is therefore vital to outline the programme/project theory since social programmes and interventions are built using a set of beliefs or assumptions of how the intended social benefits can be achieved. Rossi et al (1999, 154)⁷ define programme theory as:

The set of assumptions about the manner in which the program relates to the social benefits it is expected to produce and the strategy and tactics the program has adopted to achieve its goals and objectives (Rossi, Freeman, & Lipsey, 2004).

⁵See Bhola, H. 2004. Policy implementation: Planning and actualization. *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration*. 6(3): 295-312.

⁶See Boone, E.J. 1985. *Developing programs in adult education*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

⁷See Rossi, P.H., Howard, H.E., & Lipsey, M.W. 2004. *Evaluation: A systemic approach*. London: SAGE.

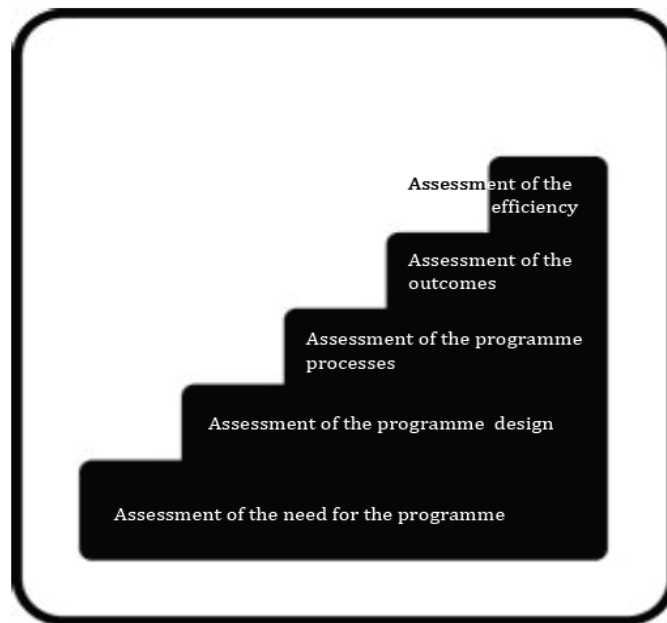
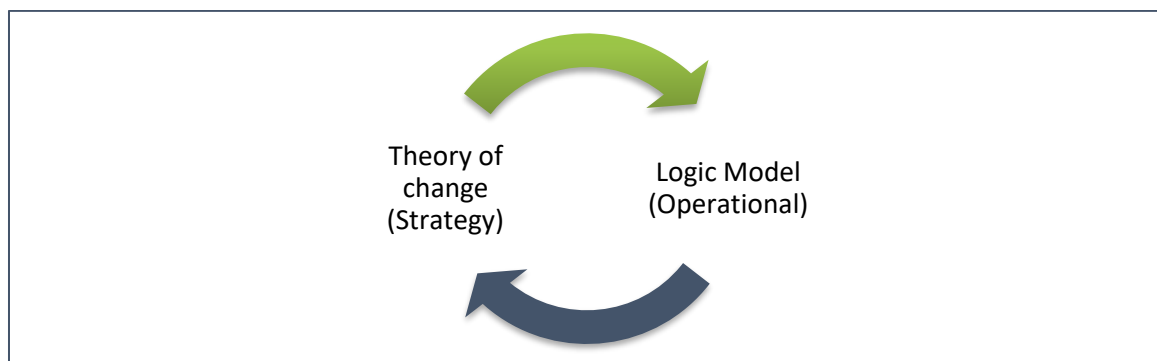


Figure 1: Step model of evaluation

Therefore the theory of change of the research programme was used to illustrate the main drivers and outcomes at a strategic level. The logic model was used to expand the theory of change to the operational level, including a more comprehensive set of inputs, outputs and outcomes as depicted in the following diagram.



The approach aligns to that adopted by the public sector in various countries, and is based on a performance management model known as Results Based Management (RBM). RBM is a management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts. Simply put, RBM is the way in which an organisation applies processes and resources to achieve targeted results. Therefore, RBM provides a logical framework for planning programmes, as well as for evaluating the worth of programmes based on a logical framework. The logical framework links all the elements described in RBM in a chain that produces results. The elements of an RBM model are listed and defined below, followed by a graphical representation of the logical framework that links all these elements in a results chain:

- **Inputs:** all the resources that contribute to the production and delivery of outputs. Inputs are “what we use to do the work”. They include finances, personnel, equipment and buildings.
- **Activities:** the processes or actions that use a range of inputs to produce the desired outputs and ultimately outcomes. In essence activities describe “what we do”.
- **Outputs:** the final products, or goods and services produced for delivery. Outputs may be defined as “what we produce or deliver”.
- **Outcomes:** the medium-term results for specific beneficiaries that are the consequence of achieving specific outputs. Outcomes should relate clearly to an institution’s strategic goals and objectives set out in its plans. Outcomes are “what we wish to achieve”.
- **Impacts:** the overarching results of achieving specific outcomes, such as reducing poverty and creating jobs.

To document the programme theory of change (**See Appendix B**) and project charter(**See Appendix C**) of the intervention, the evaluators were engaged in the following:

- Review of documents and reports to extract theory of change and logic model elements;
- Workshop/meetings with representatives of the project management team and/or programme managers to refine the theory of change and logic model;
- Drafting of the programme theory of change and logic model.

The methodology included the production of three key documents (outputs) consisting of:

- Notes on case study report on macro data (and selected meso level) for use by the evaluators;
- One draft report on dialogues in three sites; and
- One synthesis report (final evaluation report) for DVV International incorporating feedback from stakeholders.

1.6 Data sources and methods

The key data for this evaluation consisted of a variety of sources including the following: (a) a selection of people who was interviewed; (b) documents collected from DVV International; the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development (MGLSD); relevant literature, files and relevant publications; and (c) observations during field work in the country. A list of the secondary data was provided by the partner organisations (**See Appendix D**).

The data collection complied with the general conventions of ethical practices including protocols as defined by DVV International and the prescripts of the MGLSD. The research team asked that all participants be informed in writing about this evaluation process in order to obtain their full participation and cooperation (See **Appendix E** for list of participants).

The project was divided into four short phases.

1. Inception phase (10 - 21 December 2018)

The inception phase was used to clarify and develop the evaluation methodology and design of the research instruments/methods to be applied during the evaluation. This process also clarified the approach and the sample of key participants (stakeholders) to be reached during the fieldwork, including the sample of partners, stakeholders and participants to be included in the email/phone/Skype interviews. The outputs of this process were discussed with the Regional and Country Directors of DVV International and were documented as part of the evaluation report.

The inception phase of the project focused on the following:

- Identification, collection and review of relevant reports, project documents and records;
- Provisional interviews (background interviews) with DVV and the Ministry;
- Observation visits and peer-group discussions;
- Project scoping and instrument design;
- Development of a detailed project plan.

2. Data collection phase (14 January - 10 February 2019)

The data collection phase comprised of field visits to the evaluation target partners and stakeholders at macro, meso and micro levels. The purpose of the fieldwork phase for this evaluation was to gather information required to assist with the formulation of conclusions and suggestions for consideration for the future. The main data gathering methods within this phase were individual interviews with stakeholders, group interviews and three dialogues. All interviews and dialogues were set up with administration and logistical support provided by the DVV International country office in Uganda. During fieldwork, evaluators were also able to collect additional project documentation. Data collection included:

- Interviews with participants across the macro, meso and micro levels;
- Group interviews with facilitators and members of the CEGs/VSLA Groups;
- Interviews with politicians/district heads;
- Additional data collected from DVV International and the Ministry.

3. Data analysis phase (22 December 2018 - 12 March 2019)

Primary and secondary data collected during the first two phases were processed, analysed and integrated in the final evaluation report. The data and analyses were refracted through the lenses of the theory of change as well as the adult education systems model. In addition to these, the standard OECD-DAC evaluation criteria as stipulated in the ToR were applied. The data analysis phase consisted of the following:

- Analysis of data from documents and reports;
- Generation of data analysis report (case studies);
- Draft synthesis report.

4. Reporting phase (7 February – 30 April 2019)

The evaluation team ensured that all deliverables and outputs according to the contract were delivered to DVV International, including interview schedule (See Appendix F) and project documents. They were delivered according to the specifications agreed to with the client. The reporting phase consisted of the following:

- Production of the draft evaluation report;
- Editing of the report with the incorporation of feedback;
- Presentation of the report;
- Submission of the final report.

1.7 Limitations

The key limitations for this study were time and resources. The scope of the evaluation required that the evaluation include a sufficient depth of investigation of the programme as implemented by the main implementing agency. Given the multitude of participants at macro, meso and micro levels, there was not enough time to engage in sufficient depth all the details of the programme. For instance, the number of adult learners who participated in the evaluation process was quite small. Some of the participants in the community dialogues may also not have expressed their views freely due to power relations that existed in the groups. However, the team applied triangulation to identify inconsistencies and reduce potential ‘response bias’.

Being limited by time and budgetary constraints, the evaluation team was unable to attain the perspectives and opinions of some of the stakeholders. These include those who provide technical expertise and who have been beneficiaries of, and contributors to the ICOLEW training. Outside actors (i.e. civil society and higher education institutions) who are not part of the project were also not consulted. The report therefore only provides perspectives of those directly involved at the programme level. The evaluation team was also interested in the views of the Minister of MGLSD, but this could not be arranged.

Finally, this evaluation excludes a detailed cost-effectiveness study because of time constraints and limited access to financial data, mainly from the MGLSD. This study therefore does not express a view on the cost-effectiveness of the project. These constraints notwithstanding, the evaluation team has provided findings and recommendations as detailed and accurately as possible.

1.8 Ethical considerations

The evaluation process adhered to strict ethical prescriptions that guaranteed the freedom of participants to openly express their opinions and it protects the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses (See Appendix G). The evaluation team further adhered to the fundamental

international standards and codes of conduct including independence of judgement, impartiality, honesty and integrity, accountability, respect and protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, confidentiality, avoidance of risks, harm to and burdens on those participating in the evaluation, accuracy, completeness and reliability of report, and transparency.

SECTION TWO: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Impact

The relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the ICOLEW Project was assessed using a variety of data sources including reports, project documents, interview data and feedback related to the project implementation for the period 2014-2018. Given the nature of the evaluation, strategic documents provided by the MGLSD were also reviewed.

An important characteristic of this evaluation is its design which compelled the evaluation to focus on both the role of DVV International as well as that of the MGLSD in the conceptualisation and implementation of ICOLEW. An important distinction⁸ that needs to be highlighted as part of this evaluation is that: for DVV International, ICOLEW is a **project** with a timeframe with particular objectives, whereas for the MGLSD, ICOLEW has become a **programme** towards building a national adult education system using ICOLEW as a catalyst to do so. A second important distinction is the different roles played by the two partners (See 1.4 in Section 1). The MGLSD is the implementing agent of ICOLEW through its national, district and county systems, whereas DVV International provides specific support, mainly in the various forms of support (professional, technical, advisory, capacity building) at all three tiers of the system. Over the past three years, DVV International's capacity development programme included: (a) training of staff in the Ministry, districts and sub-counties as part of a strategy to create a cadre of master-trainers on ICOLEW; (b) support to implement the project; (c) conducting monitoring and evaluation of the programme; (d) support in the development of standards and guidelines for programme implementation; (e) regular refresher training; and (f) support in the form of the development of a series of programme implementation instruments. In addition to these, DVV International and the MGLSD convened joint strategic planning sessions and senior staff have been on study visits to Ethiopia and Morocco to gain insight into adult education systems in other parts of the continent. More recently, senior staff in the MGLSD have also benefited from training on adult education systems building approaches convened by DVV International. The country office of DVV International has also received regular support from the Regional Director based in Ethiopia who is closely involved in the conceptualisation, design and delivery of the capacity building programme.

⁸A number of reports and comments refer to ICOLEW as project and/or programme. We would like to note the differences between these two concepts. A programme is a planned and systematic activity, usually large-scale. It is developmental action -- one of the "most important tasks" a nation must accomplish. A programme is given a budget and is expected to get the most returns on the resources expended on the programme. Programmes are typically associated with reformist societies engaged in planned developmental change, concerned with growth with efficiency. A project is expected to be a relatively small-scale initiative, with its objectives very strictly (even narrowly) defined and confined, perhaps to a small area or a cluster of groups of stakeholders. Projects are typically associated with gradualist political cultures, justifying organic growth claimed to be built upon the needs and motivations of the people.

The evidence from this evaluation suggests that the project intentions are aligned with the needs and priorities of the MGLSD at all three levels, as well as congruent with the key plans and strategies of government. The evidence further indicates that: (a) the project is gaining greater relevance as it not only reflects alignment to the national imperatives, but is also relevant to the needs and interests of communities; (b) the project has provided targeted support at all three levels which has not only been well-received, but also shown effectiveness; and (c) the project is on track to achieve the intended results as defined in the original proposal and implementation plans. The effectiveness of the training, in particular, has resulted in the development of a range of outputs including plans, guidelines, training programmes curricula and technical instruments for monitoring and evaluation.

2.1 ICOLEW: The successor to the Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FALP)

The ICOLEW Project was implemented in 2016 and is gaining traction in the consciousness of participants at all tiers of the system. From the data collected it is evident that ICOLEW is perceived as more than a pilot, but rather as the emerging adult literacy programme that replaces the FALP. There is also an expectation that ICOLEW will receive greater support from government in order for it to be gradually expanded, ultimately to all 127 districts of the country.

In conversation with key respondents and discussants, the emphasis on ICOLEW as the new programme was emphasised. These are captured in the words of many of the participants interviewed across the macro, meso and micro levels.

The ICOLEW project is a programme that came in to replace the functional adult literacy programme that government was already implementing. FAL was quite narrow, it was specifically focused on literacy. ICOLEW came in to fill a gap in our district (DC, Namayingo)

ICOLEW is the successor of the FAL ... (CAO, Namayingo)

The Country Director of DVV International, who has been instrumental in advancing and consolidating the partnership with the MGLSD, captures the elevation of ICOLEW to programme status:

... we are not one year to the end because we are implementing a programme. ICOLEW is a programme... we are coming to the end of the pilot but this is the programme that the government is in the process of adopting and making their own. I already see that the programme is being taken up by the Ministry and even these districts where we are going... it is already said by so many people that ICOLEW is the successor of FAL (CD, Kampala)

Whilst there is a clear indication that ICOLEW is being promoted as the new adult education programme for the country, some of the respondents expressed cautiously optimistic views in light of experiences with adult literacy projects in the country.

In the beginning we implemented adult literacy programmes – the Non-formal Basic Education Pilot Project (INFOBEPP)... and then Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) but the constant question of ‘what next’ by the learners and other players... the fiscal implications of decentralisation and other factors, all led to the diminishing value of FAL, thus the inevitable adoption of ICOLEW (PT, Iganga)

Sustainability of adult education programmes has also been noted in response to ICOLEW:

What I would like to see happening is... to ensure the sustainability initiative, that they ensure continuity. I think that is one thing that I want us to do a bit of thinking on -- how do we ensure in a logical manner from the word go, how do we ensure sustainability and how we will walk it and see it happening... that the sustainability of the impact, that is created by the project. But you know we have ICOLEW. Tomorrow, another project will come that will take a lot of effort and time... we need to think through the sustainability stoppages that we can put in place for continuing our projects (DC, Iganga)

The District Chairperson of Iganga further highlights the importance of continuity and the need for sustained support for an adult education system. He pointed to the enormous efforts and resources that are being put in place to establish structures and systems for the delivery of programmes.

... so if we can try to establish self-driving, self-motivating structures, putting in structures when we leave that could actually remain behind to do the work without the project. Because it takes a lot of time to strengthen these structures because normally... what happens in one of the projects unfortunately... these structures can be put in place. But if they are not strategically aligned and strategically prepared, you find that these structures go as long as the project is ending then the structures also end. We need to also ensure that we strengthen and come up with different structures that are able to continue the project (DC, Iganga)

In essence, the mission of the MGLSD is to anchor the ICOLEW as a means to advance an adult education system that is justified and offers a long-term possibility for Ugandans, rather than pursuing project-based adult education that ends when project funding ends. Adult education systems building is a long-term endeavour and sustained support for building the system in Uganda as part of Vision 2040 will be important.

Given the three-year experience with ICOLEW as a new orientation and approach to adult education provision and delivery that shows potential to bring about socio-economic transformation, the MGLSD is pursuing recognition of ICOLEW as a national programme. In doing so, a strong motivation to the national government has been made to consolidate ICOLEW as the national programme and to expand it into other parts of the country.

The MGLSD Coordinator of ICOLEW argues:

We think that going forward -- as we plan for scaling up and rolling out -- the proposal to the Minister of Finance, is to support SUICOLEW [Support to Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation].

We are asking for recognition of **ICOLEW** as a national programme to be included in the National Investment Plan so that it [**ICOLEW**] can access the development budget. (Commissioner, MGLSD)

The desire for expanding **ICOLEW** has political support:

...we need to upscale this intervention, both horizontally and vertically. By horizontal I mean bringing in more ideas, bringing in more skills to the facilitators so that they can gain a wider scope of knowledge, and also horizontally meaning increasing in terms of numbers. We look at the increase in numbers of local facilitators...have more of them. Have more increase in terms of coverage, in terms of villages and sub-counties. That is what people are looking at (DC, Iganga)

I would highly recommend this programme to be rolled out to the rest of the district because I am seeing the impact that it is causing on the few people that are undergoing this training, it has intensified the programme and it is a big impact and I feel that these other areas of the district need to benefit from this kind of programming. And I know that there will be a lot of change in the minds of the people (DC, Namayingo)

...we are looking at scaling up to cover the whole district... we are looking at expanding the support that is given in terms of course materials and finances. You know we are going through an inflation period where the cost of living is hard. If we could enhance the structures, if we could have the supervision and monitoring courses it will help (DCAO, Mpigi)

In summary, **ICOLEW** is perceived by district and sub-county stakeholders as the successor programme to the Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FALP), and it is acknowledged that **ICOLEW** will offer lessons for expansion and replication. According to several stakeholders, the conceptualisation and implementation of **ICOLEW** are viewed as an alternative in addressing the blockages in building an adult education system in the country. The majority of the stakeholders at the meso and micro levels also speak with confidence about the relevance and usefulness of **ICOLEW**. For instance, the Community Empowerment Groups (CEGs) and the facilitators echo the usefulness and applicability of **ICOLEW** and value the emphasis placed on the integration of the five key elements of **ICOLEW**. They believe that **ICOLEW** is helping to improve service delivery through improved multi-stakeholder involvement and that it is increasing the popularity of adult literacy education.

2.2 **ICOLEW** as a methodological approach

ICOLEW has gained support from all stakeholders across the three tiers. There are a number of reasons for its support. Firstly, there is a growing awareness of and emphasis on the relationship between **ICOLEW** and national planning imperatives of government. This connection is best summarised in the words of the Commissioner, MGLSD. It is worth quoting him at length:

The national vision for Uganda is the transformation from the peasant economy to a prosperous and modern society by 2040. So household income, wealth creation,

governance, human skills involvement, skills development are all elements or components... for all the projects to be able to contribute to this long-term vision. The design of ICOLEW is in line with Vision 2040. When you look at the design, there's skills development for about ten million Ugandans who have not been able to get a chance to go through formal education and who are not able to read and write. So, the design of ICOLEW is meant to address the literacy and numeracy needs of these ten million in order to give them a foundation for vocational skills training, livelihood and skills training. And when they use their acquired knowledge and skills, they are able to engage in productive income generation, income generating projects, self-employment, wealth creation, poverty reduction and local governance. So ICOLEW is in line with the national vision for Uganda... As part of the requirement for any programme to be endorsed by the top policy management of the Ministry and the senior management is how well the programme is aligned to the policy frameworks. So, the question of alignment, how the programme is linked to the political economy of the country is one of those requirements we could not have afforded to miss.

A second important characteristic of ICOLEW is its approach to literacy acquisition which is integrated in the acquisition of learning and skills directly related to the context-specific socio-economic needs and interests of communities. This approach departs from the traditional approaches because the integrated approach argues for literacy through 'doing' and 'acting'.

The Regional Director (East Horn of Africa) of DVV International describes it as follows:

...it is more than simply a literacy approach, meaning that you must first be literate before you can access other things. The process should happen simultaneously. So, literacy is at the core, even at the core of the methodology... so the VSL together with other critical content are incorporated into the literacy acquisition process.

In essence participants of ICOLEW are encouraged to learn and develop their literacy skills through livelihoods, VSL, business skills training, vocational training and community development. Literacy teaching and learning is linked to people's participation in community-related issues and concerns, such as gender-based violence, early childhood development, participation in cooperatives and other forms of social organisation. The DCAO in Mpigi would like to see such integration, as highlighted below:

...all organisations that are working within the community in aspects of community development like medication, private healthcare, literacy programmes, production, VSLA can be incorporated at the district level and the sub-county level, the DCC level and at the sub-county coordination committee. We can cope with other partners that are involved in community work (DCAO, Mpigi)

In addition to this, the approach is also embraced by others for its potential to build cooperation, solidarity and collective actions in communities - these are also regarded as deeply-rooted values of Ugandan communities. Two of the District Chairpersons highlighted the significance of these values:

This programme has also filled the gap of bringing people together -people to work together. Remember the ICOLEW programme brings these people in their local

community to sit together regularly, think together, and learn together. This has helped to build great cohesion amongst the locals in the areas. It becomes easy for government to implement any other programmes through such a team who is bonded together (DC, Namayingo)

I have taken myself as a champion of ensuring that the different activities that are lined up under ICOLEW are actually implemented... ICOLEW programme involves mobilisation and putting people together. Organising people. Strengthening organisation (DC, Iganga)

This approach could be described as one that aims towards strengthening whole-community development through active community participation. Participation is viewed as a process of empowerment of people and their involvement in decision-making processes and the process through which stakeholders influence control of development initiatives, decisions and resources. Therefore, the approach further encourages community development and social action which could ultimately involve entire communities in concerted efforts to address local problems.

A third aspect of ICOLEW is the conception of integration as key to the development and implementation of a multipronged/multi-disciplinary approach to adult education provision, delivery and systems enhancement. The Karamoja Project is one Ugandan project that offered meaningful lessons around the significance of using integrated approaches to address various social and economic themes in local settings:

...the Karamoja project offered valuable lessons learned on the relevance of an integrated adult education approach. And by integrated we call it an integration matrix, where we look at integration across conceptual understanding, policy programme planning, and implementation right across. So I think Karamoja provided lessons... (RD, East Horn of Africa)

The focus on integration precipitated deliberate efforts by the partners to mobilise multi-disciplinary participation in ICOLEW. As a result ongoing attempts have been underway to encourage intra and inter-ministerial participation in ICOLEW at the macro, meso and micro levels. The significance of this development is twofold. Firstly, it highlights the shift in thinking about the kind of adult education system to be pursued. This is a system that emphasises the multi-disciplinary nature of adult and community education and that the participation of all government departments is imperative. It, therefore, decolonises traditional thinking ('silo syndrome') of adult education as a separate system divorced from all other government systems. The second important aspect of integration is about how government and communities think about resourcing the adult education system. This orientation to adult education systems thinking shows that adult education, in the case of ICOLEW, should not be viewed as the responsibility of a single state entity, but rather the responsibility of most government departments. It further suggests that, whilst interim measures to fund the adult education system are put in place, a longer term inter-ministerial/multi-disciplinary funding model be pursued that is more cost-effective, reduces wastage and repetition, and ultimately reduces demand on the fiscus.

2.3 Community Learning Centres

One of the prominent components that has gained support is the establishment, consolidation and conceptualisation of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) – a key pillar of ICOLEW. Whilst the concept of a CLC is not new to Uganda, its re-emergence transpired from engagements between DVV International and the MGLSD following a historical examination of CLCs in Uganda, exploratory visits to Ethiopia and Morocco, and in the context of the lack of institutional spaces for community education and development work. Since these investigations, the MGLSD has documented its conceptualisation of CLCs as a key pillar of its expansion of ICOLEW in various districts. According to the Senior Principal Officer who leads the work on CLCs:

The component of Community Learning Centres becomes very critical because if it is institutionalised, it means accessibility... and it is one way in which the government is thinking about transformation... the Community Learning Centre is an institution of the people by the people and for the people. So, it means that they are in charge, it is theirs and whatever is done in the centre is for their own benefit. It's not something that will be coming from outside. And we are looking at the Community Learning Centre as a one stop service delivery centre (SPO, MGLSD).

The importance of CLCs has been raised by many of the respondents and there is general consensus that CLCs could be the point of convergence and integration within the overall adult education system. There is further agreement that, if properly conceptualised, CLCs could serve as multipurpose centres that provide a wide range of educational and community-related services in communities. As a multipurpose point of convergence, it is suggested that CLCs should mobilise all forms of education – formal, non-formal, technical and vocational – into the service of the communities by drawing on a variety of networks that exist within and outside communities. These networks are inclusive of both state and non-state actors.

The idea of CLCs has taken root in all three of the districts as well as in the district of Nwoya – the fourth district in which ICOLEW was implemented in 2018. In fact, at the time of the evaluation, land was donated by a community for the construction of a CLC. From the discussions with individuals and groups, it would appear that CLCs need to be a key focus of adult education systems building, given their potential role in serving people where they live, and provided with an expanded menu of programmes related to their needs and interests.

The construction of CLCs will require enormous investment and the necessary funding will have to be sourced from all government departments, the business communities, as well as donor agencies.

2.4 Configurations and linkages

ICOLEW has played an important role in mobilising stakeholder participation. Several state and non-state actors are engaged in the provision of ICOLEW-related activities in one way or

another. The section below provides an overview of stakeholder participation at meso and micro levels and shows the configuration of involvement in ICOLEW and the linkages being fostered. It also indicates the network of relationships that exist in communities and the roles that these different groups contribute to community education and development programmes. These configurations and the agency that exist are important to consider in relation to expansion possibilities of adult education programmes in districts and communities.

2.4.1 Stakeholder participation

2.4.1.1 District and sub-county state actors

District and sub-county technical staff and political leaders were extensively engaged in the initial stages of the programme implementation. Mobilisation and training events conducted by DVV International were held centrally to induct the stakeholders on their expected roles and responsibilities. To date, over 40 sectoral specialists were trained in materials development. They worked with master trainers and supervisors in developing learning units. Some staff from the education department were involved as language specialists to support the translation of learning units from English into the local languages.

Field evidence further indicates that local government sectoral personnel, especially commercial, agriculture and veterinary staff, continue to provide extension services to the Community Empowerment Groups (CEGs). However their support has reduced over time. There is also a decline in awareness amongst councillors and political leaders regarding developments in the programme. For instance a few political leaders who participated in the evaluation dialogues in Namayingo and Iganga districts could not clearly express what they know about ICOLEW. Two sub-county local government councillors described ICOLEW as an NGO which supports communities in their sub-county. The chairperson of a sub-county in Iganga said categorically that:

In the beginning of ICOLEW all of us were considered important stakeholders, but as we progressed CDOs became the key stakeholders who are often invited to all sorts of workshops, meetings and seminars.

The decline in awareness and commitment is related to (a) the unrealistically high expectations amongst some individuals who participated in the initial project mobilisation and sensitisation events; and (b) reports on ICOLEW, in some sub-counties, not being provided to the regular local government council meetings where political leaders discuss the performance of government projects.

2.4.1.2 Civil society actors

Civil Society Organisations -- mainly NGOs -- use the Community Empowerment Groups (CEGs) as channels for delivering on their mandate, particularly in the fields of health and agriculture. The regularity of the engagement varies across the three districts. CEG-NGO engagements in Iganga are higher compared to Namayingo and Mpigi. Some of the NGOs mentioned by CEG participants, facilitators and supervisors include Once Acre Fund, Advocacy for Better Health, Water Mission and Hunger Project Uganda. In some cases, close

working relationships between NGOs and CEGs are visible such as in Mpigi where one CEG has signed a memorandum of understanding with PATH (Advocacy for Better Health). In this relationship the CEG was granted facilities and support to conduct public health education campaigns in their community. Non-state actors engage with CEGs for service delivery because they are regarded as organised groups that could assist in reaching the larger community. Whilst these linkages and partnerships are important, it is not the norm. Further work needs to be done to encourage and strengthen state and non-state interaction at meso, micro and macro levels.

2.4.1.3 Community institutions

Schools, both private and public, as well as places of worship, especially churches, are the main community-based institutions that provide infrastructural support for adult literacy provision. Schools and places of worship often offered space and furniture at no cost to the CEG participants.

2.4.1.4 Families

Families of participants also play a supportive role. In some communities they provide facilities to CEG participants to translate their acquired knowledge and skills into practice. The majority of CEG participants have family connections that are influential. Female participants, for instance, mentioned how the relationships with their husbands influence their attendance and participation in ICOLEW activities.

2.4.1.5 Individual citizens

Some individuals in communities also support CEGs in different ways, including offering their homes as learning venues and investing their time, local knowledge and expertise by serving on CEG management committees. In Namayingo one community member was reported to have offered land on concessional terms for the establishment of a CLC. This example is indicative of the kinds of agency and capacity that exists in communities.

2.5 Governance, coordination, management and administration

As part of examining the service delivery system, this section points to some of the structural barriers that exist and that need to be addressed in order to improve systems support to ICOLEW.

ICOLEW is generally governed within the framework of the local government system as provided for in the relevant laws of Uganda. It also links to the MGLSD extended structure at district and sub-county levels. A reconfiguration to match the programme's peculiar character of integration was made to enhance coordination. In this regard, a few new sub-structures were established to supplement the traditional local government structures – Councils, Executive Committees (ECs), Technical Planning Committees (TPCs) and Sectoral Committees (SCs). These structures were brought into existence to support both governance and implementation.

2.5.1 The traditional local government structures and ICOLEW

The traditional local government organs that are critical to the functioning of ICOLEW include Councils, ECs, TPCs and sectoral committees responsible for community development and related services at district and sub-counties levels. District and sub-county stakeholders confirmed that ICOLEW-related information and issues often form part of the official business of council meetings. Stakeholders reported that pertinent resolutions related to fiscal allocations to ICOLEW expenditure were sanctioned by district and sub-county councils.

The District Community Development Officers (DCDOs) and Community Development Officers (CDOs) praised the way in which TPCs conducted management, technical and administrative matters relating to the performance of ICOLEW. The Senior Assistant Secretaries (SASs), District ICOLEW Coordinators (DICCs) and parish chiefs echoed their views and highlighted the important monitoring and supervision role of TPCs. ICOLEW monitoring reports prepared by DCDOs and CDOs are reviewed on a regular basis. However, there was no evidence of explicit routine requirements to report on ICOLEW's performance during TPCs' meetings, although they continue to have ICOLEW on the agenda.

The Parish Development Committee (PDC) is the most pronounced local administrative unit with a connection to the management of ICOLEW. It was, however, reported to be largely inactive. At the time of the evaluation, there was no evidence of activities recorded that were undertaken by PDCs across the three districts. In addition to this, activities of village local councils were equally invisible. Efforts to revitalise PDCs were reported, including the appointment of parish chiefs as CLC coordinators. Reinvigorating PDCs remains complex and difficult because they appear as administrative units without functional systems and resources required for service delivery. For years the government of Uganda seems to be struggling to restore the vibrancy and usefulness of the parish administrative units. This structural issue needs to be considered as a potential blockage to the implementation of ICOLEW and other community education programmes.

2.5.2 ICOLEW-related structures

The three prominent structures which were created at the advent of the programme are the ICOLEW Coordination Committee, CEG Management Committee and the CEG Leadership Committee.

2.5.2.1 ICOLEW Coordination Committee

This structure appears to be ineffective in all districts owing to a number of logistical challenges. Generally no evidence was available to suggest regularity of ICOLEW Coordination Committee meetings, except for joint monitoring visits in some sub-counties. According to most of the district and sub-county stakeholders, the actualisation of the ICOLEW Coordination Committee as per the initial design proved very difficult. Stakeholders said that the districts lack financial resources whilst time constraints and other engagements have made meetings impossible. This matter should receive greater attention from the MGLSD.

2.5.2.1 CEG Management Committee

CEG Management Committees are ‘informal’ structures in terms of appointment, composition and mandate. Namayingo and Iganga facilitators said that the CEG Management Committees are ineffective. The sub-county stakeholders in Namayingo said: “CEG management committees are not empowered, they don’t know what to do”.

A review of a series of regular monitoring reports across the districts reveals that the CEG Management Committees are struggling and are weak in the execution of their oversight roles. There was no evidence of real functionality of the committees. No documentation, including minutes of meetings, was available. This is a key structure that requires much greater attention from the facilitators and the participants.

2.5.2.1 CEG Leadership Committee

All CEGs were reported to be registered CBOs. CEG participants and facilitators said that the groups have constitutions that were developed with the help of sub-county staff. A uniform template was used to draft constitutions (in English). During the facilitators’ dialogue, concerns were raised about how CEG participants understood and relate to the provisions of their constitutions. In some cases provisions suggested by CEGs were not captured in the final constitution. A group of participants expressed ownership and appreciation of the constitution-making processes, as well as their understanding of the content of the constitution.

CEG Leadership Committees are in place and fully constituted. In addition to the elected CEG participants, facilitators serve as secretaries to the committees. They are responsible for record management and they also assume the role of coordination and support to the committee leadership. The majority of the CEG management committees have served since the establishment of the CEGs. The facilitators too have continued to serve as secretaries to these committees. The CEG Leadership Committees were reported to be active in VSLA management, particularly on matters relating to credit administration. However, there was no record of minutes to suggest regularity of meetings, matters raised and actions to be pursued. This is a weakness that requires further investigation and analysis.

2.6 Staffing

The ICOLEW programme relies on existing local government personnel in the community-based services department. Those at the district level assume the management obligations of ICOLEW and are often referred to as managers. Their sub-county counterparts serve as supervisors. Parish chiefs and facilitators are the main technical staff at parish and community levels respectively. While parish chiefs are full-time paid government workers, facilitators are volunteers who receive a monthly stipend. This is not unique to the ICOLEW project—traditional public adult literacy education provision in Uganda has always relied on unpaid volunteers.

2.6.1 ICOLEW managers and supervisors

DCDOs head district community-based services department and provide overall technical, professional and management oversight. They report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) who is responsible for ensuring that the CDOs at all levels deliver on their mandate.

The CDOs, who are responsible for particular services such as to the elderly and physically challenged, are assigned to coordinate ICOLEW activities. They assume the functional title of DICC - a designation that does not exist within the district public service structure. District sectoral staff, especially those in charge of health, agriculture, and trade and commerce are a constituent part of the implementation personnel by virtue of their routine job responsibilities to provide extension services. This is replicated by their counterparts in the sub-counties.

At the sub-county levels, the CDOs and SASs execute the supervisory responsibility for ICOLEW implementation, with the former being the main technical personnel. At the parish level, parish chiefs assume the additional working title of CLC coordinators and hold letters of engagement. In Namayingo the parish chief's appointment letter, which outlines twelve roles and responsibilities, was signed by the SAS.

DCDOs, CDOs, SASs and parish chiefs assume the additional ICOLEW-related responsibilities, however, their routine job specifications and descriptions remain unchanged as per their appointment by the public service commission. According to the Namayingo stakeholders, the services that are provided to CEGs by the sector staff are not an assigned responsibility but can be captured during the staff performance appraisals.

In order to secure responsibility and accountability, deliberate efforts should be made to include responsibilities related to ICOLEW in the job descriptions of all relevant staff members. Such descriptions should reflect the amount of time dedicated to ICOLEW related tasks. It would be useful for the MLGSD to explore the roles and responsibilities at district and sub-county levels to ensure that ICOLEW receives the necessary dedicated staff to fulfil the obligations towards the programme.

2.6.2 Facilitators

ICOLEW employs 60 facilitators of which the majority are men. According to some stakeholders, gender parity is a challenge because it is difficult to secure female facilitators who meet the minimum requirement of a Uganda Certificate in Education (UCE). They further claimed that married women require consent from their husbands to become facilitators. We elaborate further on facilitators below.

2.6.2.1 Facilitators' profile, retention and attrition

The majority of ICOLEW facilitators hold a UCE. Some attained the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education, while others have diplomas. Very few hold Bachelor's degrees - which are mainly in rural and urban planning and social science-related disciplines. Iganga has the highest number of facilitators with diplomas, but also has the least qualified facilitators (with

senior grade three and grade two levels). Each of the three districts has a facilitator with a grade three teaching certificate.

The majority of the facilitators expressed a sense of appreciation and pride in their work and are committed to their roles in supporting their CEGs and individual participants. However the rate at which facilitators leave the service is of great concern. For instance in Mpigi, five of the 14 facilitators who attended the district dialogue were recruited recently. In Banda sub-county of the Namayingo district, three of the 10 initial facilitators left the programme.

2.6.2.2 Conditions of employment

Facilitators are volunteers and were selected through an elaborate process that involved the participation of community members and staff from the sub-county, district, DVV International and the MGLSD. Facilitators work for a minimum of 21 hours per week (50% of daily productive time) on ICOLEW activities. They prepare teaching/learning sessions; deliver the sessions; assess learning achievements; support learners to administer their VSLA routines; and supervise the implementation of group action plans (GAPs) and village action plans (VAPs). Furthermore, they prepare monthly progress reports; attend meetings on behalf of CEGs, including the monthly facilitators' fora; and undertake occasional courtesy visits to participants.

They currently work without appointment letters and identification cards. The lack of these has caused some frustration amongst facilitators. They are paid a monthly stipend⁹ of approximately \$13 and receive occasional tokens of appreciation as incentives from CEG participants and other members of the community.

Facilitators have different understandings of their employment status. The Mpigi facilitators view themselves as full-time workers because they work for three days a week, whilst the Iganga and Namayingo groups regard themselves as part-time workers. There is further confusion as to who their employer is. In January 2019, Iganga facilitators received letters signed by the SAS listing their roles and responsibilities. Facilitators expressed their discontent because they were under the impression that they are employed by the MGLSD. In Mpigi stakeholders are considering a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between facilitators and sub-county local government. The MoU is largely designed to strengthen the administration of VSLAs.

There is general consensus that the terms and conditions of employment for facilitators need to be clarified and addressed (i.e. who is their employer). It is also important to consider efforts toward longer-term participation in ICOLEW given the investments being made in developing this capability as part of the adult education system. One of the Mpigi CEG participants suggested that whatever criteria are used for selecting facilitators, current facilitators should be retained and supported as facilitators. In the interim incentives, such as providing transport for facilitators, were suggested.

⁹DVV International provides the budget for stipends to facilitators.

2.7 Financing and resources

ICOLEW benefits significantly from the funding provided by DVV International. The district and sub-county local governments provide material, human and infrastructural support¹⁰ within the framework of their routine service delivery mandate. Stakeholders feel that district financial revenue remains too low to contribute regular counter funding. However there were reports that sub-counties provided funds for procurement of furniture to some CEGs. The financial contributions of CEGs to ICOLEW are limited and restricted to the VSLA component. The CEGs' preparedness to financially contribute to the cost of the learning was also not visible. There is no indication of substantial changes with regard to financing of ICOLEW by district or sub-county sources since 2016.

District stakeholders said that they engage in joint annual planning workshops with DVV International and MGLSD staff to agree on priorities. Priority expenditure is targeted and focused on the training of programme personnel, exchange visits, development of teaching-learning materials, monitoring and supervision, and monthly stipends for facilitators.

The programme implementers at the different levels cited limited funding as one of the main constraints facing the programme. Most of them observed that the available funding falls short of what is required for the optimisation of the programme deliverables. Managers and supervisors expressed concerns about inadequate resources for joint monitoring and the procurement of computers essential for data capturing and management. Owing to budgetary and resource constraints at the different levels, crucial expenses such as facilitators' compensation continue to be regarded as unfunded priorities.

2.8 Monitoring, supervision and reporting

There are established practices, procedures and instruments for regular monitoring and supervision of ICOLEW activities at district, sub-county and community levels. Stakeholders at all levels demonstrated a good grasp of their monitoring and reporting responsibilities. The DICC, on a regular basis, collect and compile data on the performance of the programme for submission to the DCDOs. The DCDOs in turn report to the CAOs and other key actors through the routine meetings of Technical Planning Committees, Executive Committees and Full Councils. Delays in reporting from facilitators and CDOs were visible in Mpigi and were raised as a matter to be addressed.

A comprehensive support supervision checklist is in place to track and assess the performance of CEGs. DICC and CDOs use the checklist to generate the required data for capturing in monthly, quarterly and annual reports. CEG facilitators keep attendance registers, compile learning assessment results and submit related reports to the CDOs. VSLA records are also kept to ensure accountability and transparency.

¹⁰The actual financial data and MGLSD funding model for ICOLEW were not available.

The MGLSD and DVV International staff carry out occasional monitoring visits to check on programme progress. However, the visits appear to be too short. CDOs undertake regular visits to the CEGs to check on group learning and the implementation of GAPs and VAPs. The sub-county joint monitoring visits involving sectoral staff were effectively undertaken during the initial stages of the programme, but faced logistical challenges and were suspended.

Facilitators also visited their CEG participants to check on their functionality at household levels, in addition to monitoring the implementation of GAPs and VAPs. Participants also took part in monitoring their peers' progress through home visits mainly to check on progress and to support each other in the implementation of individual action plans and GAPs.

2.8.1 Monitoring information and management

Meetings are the main mechanism used for sharing data. CDOs convene monthly facilitators' meetings to consider and review the performance of CEGs. District and sub-county stakeholders mentioned that they use data collected in their TPCs, Executives and Full Councils. However the effective use of collected data to inform decision-making at the different levels of programme implementation was not evident because, as mentioned elsewhere in this report, structures that should engage with the data are not fully functional or are dormant. It remains unclear how data gathered is utilised for current and future planning and action.

2.9 Capacity building

The ICOLEW's capacity building approach use DVV International and the Ministry of Gender and Social Development programme staff as master trainers. A train-the-trainer model is in place which is used to cascade training down the system. Training capability finally rests with ICOLEW managers, sector staff and sub-county supervisors who are responsible for follow-up/refresher training programmes for facilitators. A description and examination of the trainings are summarised below.

2.9.1 Training

At the beginning of the process the master trainers, with the support of expert resource persons who have methodological experience, engaged with more than 100 ICOLEW managers, supervisors and facilitators in two-rounds of initial training. The first round introduced the participants to the programme purpose, objectives, implementation strategy, and teaching/learning methodology. It is reported that the first round had an additional focus of introducing the CEG facilitators to Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodology and to prepare them to conduct situational analyses, which they undertook in their respective communities immediately after the training.

The second round of training, which was also attended by all the ICOLEW managers, supervisors and facilitators, is said to have prepared the facilitators to address the prioritised issues from the situation analyses through participatory learning and action. This training

covered the ICOLEW learning process, delivery of ICOLEW learning units, lesson preparations, facilitating ICOLEW learning sessions, and assessment of participants' learning processes. The training is reported to have covered additional areas of relevance so that ICOLEW managers and supervisors could provide effective and efficient support to, and supervision of, the facilitators.

After the two rounds of training, refresher and follow-up training were provided to the different stakeholders on the basis of identified training needs. ICOLEW managers and supervisors have received a series of training sessions in materials development, VSLA methodology, monitoring, supervision and assessment. ICOLEW supervisors coordinate and provide training for CEG facilitators in different areas ranging from livelihood skills training cycles, identification of participants' income generating activities and market assessment, basic communication, multi-level teaching, ICOLEW structures and their roles, VSLA management, record-keeping and management, data collection and use, group dynamics, report writing, loan utilisation and repayment to livelihood and green jobs. Stakeholders, especially the facilitators, made positive comments about the relevance, usefulness and suitability of the training.

2.9.2 Effectiveness of training

A selection of participatory training methods are used during the training events. The use of '*learning by doing*' techniques is also evident. For instance the managers and supervisors were made to develop two learning units during the materials development workshop. The first round of the initial training required the design of a demonstration as a means to prepare the facilitators to apply the PRA tools during situational analyses. Whilst the training programmes are greatly valued, several issues about the effectiveness of the training have been raised. These include: (a) the effectiveness of training a large group of participants with different academic backgrounds and qualifications; (b) the need to deepen the conceptual, theoretical and practical understanding of participatory approaches and methodologies among the managers, supervisors and facilitators; (c) taking into consideration the academic literacy levels of facilitators who exhibited inadequacies such as expressing themselves, filling in basic forms, writing and comprehension of basic English instructions; (d) inadequate induction and training programmes for new stakeholders; and (e) a lack of induction programmes for new facilitators.

2.10 Curriculum

2.10.1 ICOLEW components and coverage

The focus on literacy and numeracy enhancement and VSLA promotion was evident in all three districts. All stakeholders affirmed that CEGs met regularly to undertake literacy and VSLA activities. All CEGs have bank accounts which, according to the participants, were opened intentionally to access matching funds. The majority of the CEGs said that they hardly use or access their bank accounts. Some participants in Mpigi and Namayingo raised concern about the relevance of those accounts.

Whilst the VSLA performance is promising, as evidenced by the substantial amount of savings and loans involved, literacy teaching and learning is lagging. The limited writings in the participants' notebooks are indicative of insufficient engagement with text. There is an asymmetrical learning process underway in which learning related to, and participation in the VSLAs seem to be preferred. Participants and facilitators exhibited a tendency to prioritise VSLA related activities. Some facilitators explained that some of them were driven by the adult learners' motivation and preferences. Others acknowledged that teaching literacy is not easy and motivating adults to maintain the zeal and energy for learning literacy and numeracy skills is difficult. This preference for VSLA and related income-inclined activities is a prevalent phenomenon among adult learners, as observed by an MGLSD official:

Numeracy and literacy is not well performing...But I can see people running quickly to engage in VSLA, to engage in livelihood support skills training. Because these things bring quick income, you understand. We need to mobilise effectively and ensure... a mind-set change (PCDO, Kampala)

The multiplier effect from the application of the REFLECT methodology is visible through several community development initiatives in the form of group and village actions, implemented by CEGs in partnership with communities, government departments and NGOs. According to the majority of stakeholders, the results from livelihood and vocational skills development are yet to materialise. This is currently attributable to the inconsistency in enterprise identification and selection, delayed establishment of CLCs, as well as the contradictions relating to procurement of training equipment as reported in one of the districts. These issues will require more attention over the next few months as the implementation of elements of VLSA was delayed.

2.10.2 Learning materials and support

Deliberate efforts were made to ensure that the content, learning materials development, as well as the teaching/learning methodology were contextualised to local community realities. The ICOLEW approach requires the involvement of managers, supervisors and facilitators in materials development. We provide a summary related to the development and use of existing learning materials, followed by a description of the dominant teaching/learning tools and the status of learning spaces.

2.10.3 Facilitator guides

The facilitator's guide is the main teaching/learning material available to the facilitators. The guide is made up of several units that were developed based on the issues identified from the situational analysis carried out in each of the pilot districts. The situational analysis was undertaken by the facilitators as part of their initial training. The six units synthesised broad themes that reflect community issues and concerns and focus on low agricultural yields, water borne diseases, food and nutrition, low household income, high school drop-outs and deforestation.

The process of developing the guide was undertaken at two levels: (a) - a team of master trainers comprising of DVV International and MGLSD staff; and (b) a team of supervisors at the district and sub-county levels. Master trainers developed the first three units, namely water sanitation and hygiene, food and nutrition, household income and expenditure. These were produced in English. The master trainers supported the supervisors to develop two more units as part of the training which was conducted to build materials development capacities at the local government level. Thereafter the supervisors were expected to develop additional units. Each district was reported to have at least six developed units by the time of the evaluation.

Language specialists were used to support the process of translating the units into the three main local languages. Stakeholders from formal education departments, language boards and community development were invited to provide language expertise.

Facilitators mentioned that they use a variety of supplementary materials including such things as posters and leaflets, mainly on health and agriculture. A few facilitators in Iganga and Namayingo presented samples of posters on child health provided by the Ministry of Health and modern farming produced by a consortium co-financed by USAID. One facilitator explained that at times he uses lower primary learning materials and finds them useful in testing his learners. One facilitator from Iganga uses the Bible in her literacy class. Facilitators and participants confirmed the use of locally available materials in the construction of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools.

2.10.4 Teaching and learning

The CEGs had a relatively good supply of teaching/learning materials. The facilitators reported that they had been provided with manila cards, markers, chalk, chalk boards, assessment tools, lesson plan books and visitors' books. However some facilitators expressed concern about the small size of their blackboards. All the CEG participants were provided with counter books for use in their learning.

2.10.5 PRA tools in use

The use of PRA tools was evident. Some of the participants' notebooks and graphic displays were indicative of the use of common tools such as maps and the 'problem tree'. The facilitators also demonstrated the process they go through in facilitating learning sessions within the framework of developed units. However, the discussion that generates actions (GAPs & VAPs) was not articulated.

2.10.6 Learning spaces

CEG learning sessions are conducted in a variety of places including the homes of facilitators and members of the community, schools and workshop venues. Mpigi has the largest number of CEGs using primary schools. In Iganga the majority of CEGs meet at the homes of community members.

Stakeholders, especially the CEG participants, raised a number of issues and concerns relating to the places where learning takes place. Those who meet at schools said that school children laugh at them and sometimes destroy their learning materials, and that schools are inaccessible over weekends and during holidays. In Mpigi participants stated that schools are not conducive learning spaces for CEGs. CEG participants expressed dissatisfaction with the absence of appropriate furniture and sanitation facilities at some learning spaces. Some of the participants and facilitators in the CEGs who meet at community members' homes said that it is inconvenient and interferes with privacy in the home.

2.10.6 Assessment and evaluation

CEG participants are continuously assessed. Facilitators are exclusively responsible for assessing the participants' learning outcomes. There is a need for a more elaborate assessment system that includes moderation of assessment results.

2.10.6.1 Continuous assessment

As a routine, participants are assessed every time they attend sessions. A review of a sample of participants' notebooks revealed marks and comments that are indicative of deliberate efforts by facilitators and supervisors to monitor learner progress. Facilitators, sub-county supervisors and some participants said that monthly and quarterly assessments are undertaken as a routine. However documentary evidence on how these periodic assessments are conducted was not available.

2.10.6.2 LAMP scale methodology

Facilitators were conversant with the use of the LAMP scale in the assessment of learners' literacy achievements. They explained how they use the LAMP scale in determining learners' literacy progression across the five levels. There was evidence of an established practice to compile literacy assessment results based on LAMP scale assessments. Facilitators displayed several copies of continuous literacy and numeracy assessment forms indicating each learner's current level with comments on attendance.

2.10.6.3 Assessment of knowledge and skills application

Facilitators and sub-county supervisors were reported to make regular visits to check on how the CEG participants are applying the knowledge and skills in practice. A good number of CEG participants reported on regular assessment visits by facilitators to their homesteads. However, there was no evidence to suggest a systematic and documented assessment of participants' functionality and practical application of their learnings.

2.10.6.4 External assessment demanded

While CEG participants acknowledged the use of regular assessment by the respective facilitators, they would like to undertake centralised examinations administered by a reputable organisation or agency. The majority of sub-county supervisors across the three districts support the participants' wish to be examined through a procedure that supplements the

current continuous assessment system. The participants argued that this is one way in which their learning achievements will become more recognised.

2.11 Learner experience

ICOLEW is designed to serve young people and adults with a focus on those who are considered to be disadvantaged educationally and socially. Participants'¹¹ backgrounds and experiences are summarised below.

2.11.1 Characteristics of current ICOLEW participants

The majority of the ICOLEW participants are aged between 20 and 45 years. There is a small number of participants in the age brackets of 16-20 and 50-66 years. Women constitute the majority of participants. Most of the participants have a lower primary level schooling history. There was one deaf participant and one with physical disabilities in two of the eight CEGs that participated in the evaluation group interviews. Participants derive their livelihoods from small-scale agricultural activities. Some of them supplement their meagre agricultural earnings with small-scale businesses.

2.11.2 Reasons for joining ICOLEW

Participants' decisions for joining ICOLEW can be attributed to the desire for the perceived changes that come with literacy and numeracy acquisition. In a variety of expressions, participants explained that they wanted to develop literacy and numeracy skills in order to deal with several shortcomings in their personal, family and community lives.

I wanted to learn writing my name, and read names on the phone (PT1, Iganga¹²)

I did not know how to write my name, so I would not be confident even in doing business (PT2, Iganga)

Because of not knowing how to write my name, I feared to be with people, and even could not attend seminars at the sub-counties (PT3, Iganga)

I did not know how to calculate balance which led to failure of my business. I would give more change... for three times my business was falling and coming up (PT4, Mpigi)

In addition to literacy skills attainment, participants were motivated to participate in ICOLEW activities because of the assumed opportunities associated with belonging to community development groups. Increased access to loans and extension services, as well as opportunities for increased social connections, were the main expectations mentioned by the majority of participants.

¹¹Participants other than 'learners' is the label for beneficiaries in the context of ICOLEW

¹² We used the abbreviations PT for participants.

2.11.3 Benefits of ICOLEW

Participants spoke proudly about a range of personal and socio-economic changes derived from their engagement in the programme activities. These included increased self-esteem and confidence, improved social visibility and recognition, improved hygiene and sanitation, increased access to credit, improved domestic relationships and improved household nutrition and food availability.

Reference to the attained benefits and changes point to outcomes relating mainly to the components of literacy, numeracy and VSLA. The participants' most pronounced literacy achievement is the ability to read and write their own names and those of their family members. The ability to read and save names on their mobile phones was mentioned by a few participants as a great literacy achievement. An increased sense of worthiness as people, self-management, better relationships, and improved household conditions were also expressed as benefits. In a joint testimony during the Mpigi district evaluation dialogue, four CEG participants said that:

We have got friends. Our homesteads are better and different from those who are not CEG participants. We use the phones and calculators. We have the confidence to speak in public.

2.11.4 Learner-facilitator relationships

CEG participants and their facilitators maintain good relations. The majority of the respondents expressed great appreciation for their facilitators. Learners explained how facilitators have had an impact on their lives in different ways. Facilitators talk fondly about their learners. A few facilitators in Iganga mentioned that they are connected to the social lives of their learners. For example, in times of sickness, cultural ceremonies and burials, they are always in contact with their learners.

2.11.5 Barriers to effective participation

Attrition rates remain a concern. A drop-out rate of 40% was recorded in one district. In addition to this, absenteeism and late-coming were mentioned by all respondents in the pilot districts. Over and above issues related to illness, participants reported their struggle in managing and balancing their social obligations with attending CEG activities. Some participants think that investing more than two hours every three days per week is too much, given their social responsibilities as parents, spouses and their other roles as community members.

Connected to challenges of attendance and time management, poor learning environments impede effective teaching and learning. As discussed elsewhere in the report, the majority of participants dislike some of the venues where learning sessions and related ICOLEW meetings take place. Inappropriate furniture, such as unsuitable tables and chairs, are impediments to learning.

At the emotional level, participants said some community members, especially men, laugh at them. Female participants were assertive in their narration of how this stigmatises them. There appear to be a number of structural, situational, psychological and other deterrents that contribute to attrition and non-participation. These require further investigation in order to maximise participation.

2.11.6 Participants' perceptions of themselves

It was evident that the majority of the CEG participants view themselves as formal school students. This is reflected in the way they refer to themselves as *abaana*¹³; their demand for school uniforms and periodic examinations; and school holidays. The problem with this view reinforces conservative views of adult education and reproduces banking education models. This development is also contradictory to the REFLECT approach. Whilst this view is prevalent, some participants transcend the conservative view. The quality of arguments and submissions by a few participants during the group interviews were reflective of learners participating in learning spaces that are empowering. For instance, the Mpigi participants made very pertinent arguments against the unethical business practices in Uganda which flood the farm supply markets with fake seeds and implements.

2.11.7 Wishes and demands

Participants would like to learn English in order to engage and interact in discourses that require English language competencies. Respondents with political leadership ambitions shared their frustration over the absence of English language in the ICOLEW learning programme. Two CEG participants in Namayingo explained how a lack of English proficiency prevented them from becoming local council leaders. To some respondents, being able to speak English is not only prestigious but also a demonstration of the value of learning in CEGs. For instance one participant from Iganga said that:

We need to learn English so that those who were laughing at us can confirm that we have learnt.

Another said:

We want to upgrade more in English because we get guests who speak in English but if they don't translate we cannot get anything. We also want to learn English and be able to speak it (P1, Iganga)

Participants expressed a number of needs, namely:

- The need for English skills in order to support their children with school work;
- The desire for vocational and professional skills to enter the trade and services labour market;

¹³Abaana is a bantu language word meaning school children in the context of schooling

- Expressed aspirations include, amongst others, professional tailors, mechanics, carpenters, and drivers;
- Centralised assessment, set and administered by a central assessment agency;
- The recognition and certification of learning achievements properly recognised and certificated;
- The need for a formal ICOLEW graduation ceremony;
- The quick release of ‘matching grants’ as promised; and
- A reduction in the number of meetings for three to two in order for participants to fulfil their other social responsibilities.

2.12 Social/community impact

ICOLEW’s methodological orientation, that makes action planning and implementation a mandatory element of learning engagements, is yielding positive outcomes. In addition to helping participants make changes in their lives, individual and group actions seem to turn CEG participants into agents of change in their communities. The VAPs and other spontaneous engagements by CEGs were reported to have positive effects on the wider community.

2.12.1 CEG participants as change agents

Some participants said that, through their improved practices, other members of the community members have come to adapt some of the good practices, such as establishing drying racks, kitchen gardens and rubbish pits. Documentary sources further suggest that a few of CEG participants had been elected to serve on community management institutional structures such as local council committees and school management committees.

2.12.2 Impact on wider community

It is evident that ICOLEW, through the implementation of VAPs, is making important contributions to the improvement of social service delivery in the communities. There are clear examples of how the relationships involving CEGs, state and non-state actors have helped to increase access to community services and facilities.

Beyond the VAPs, there was also reference made to spontaneous actions by CEG participants in response to social issues and concerns. For instance, CEG participants in Nawanyingi explained how their advocacy intervention resulted in the transfer of a head teacher from a poor-performing school in the 2018.

2.12.3 Community demand for ICOLEW

ICOLEW stakeholders, including district officials, mentioned that many community members wish to join CEGs and that there is a demand for programme expansion within the sub-counties. Stakeholders were clear about the increasing demand CEG membership as people recognise the potential material improvements associated with financial and extension services. Unfortunately incidents of stigmatisation by some community members have been recorded,

which highlights the need for more advocacy work that increases awareness, especially amongst young people and men, who may not understand and recognise the value of ICOLEW.

SECTION THREE: CONCLUSION

3.1 Summary

DVV International has made good progress in assisting the MGLSD in **building a new, integrated adult education system** that addresses specific needs in the country and which is in line with the long-term goals and perspectives of the government as set out in key national documents. ICOLEW is gradually gaining attention and support at both national and local levels. The project is aligned to the national plans and strategies and concerted efforts are underway to ensure that the connection between national imperatives and ICOLEW is maintained. Like most adult education systems-building projects and processes, it will take time for ICOLEW to gain national prominence, especially given that the project has only been implemented in 4 of 127 districts. It is therefore unrealistic to expect that 3 years of work in a complex and challenging context could give birth to a **fully-fledged national adult education system**.

This evaluation shows that a new system of adult education is emerging and that the key building blocks of the adult education system are being put in place. There are a number of indicators of progress being made.

1. DVV International's collaborative work with the MLGSD has produced a conceptual shift in the way that policy makers, district politicians and stakeholders are thinking about adult education. The main shift relates to how literacy is more concretely connected to socio-economic issues faced by communities and integrating literacy with vocational and livelihood-related skills. This is a departure from more traditional approaches to literacy education which focus narrowly on the acquisition of reading, writing and arithmetic. This conceptual shift is significant because it introduces a new consciousness amongst policy makers, implementers and beneficiaries. We suggest that this is an important starting point and that a new meaning perspective has taken root. Many respondents within the state system refer to ICOLEW as the successor of FALP and as the new national programme. This consciousness needs to be developed with stakeholders who are currently not part of ICOLEW.
2. The approach introduced through ICOLEW is inspiring a new cultural practice of adult education in the government system and at community level. The professional and technical support from DVV International, combined with the capacity development programmes, have contributed to new ways of 'doing' adult education. Simultaneously areas within the existing bureaucratic system that could be improved are being exposed. Whilst policy renewal is premature, the support from DVV International has resulted in **the development of guidelines in areas related to curricula, pedagogy, capacity building, implementation strategies and monitoring and evaluation**. These guidelines are currently being implemented across the three tiers of the system. Important advances related to the establishment of **Community Learning Centres** have also been made as a key policy development. An **enabling environment** for the implementation of ICOLEW has been established and needs

to be consolidated. An important aspect of this broadening enabling environment is the good professional, collegial and interactive relationship that exists between DVV International and the MLGSD.

3. The technical support provided by DVV International has contributed to **capacitating the system** to serve the beneficiaries at community level. Service delivery currently reaches the target set in DDV plans. These structures are not operating optimally and are experiencing difficulties. The structural limitations within the bureaucratic system should be the focus of remedial actions that, if addressed, could facilitate effective service delivery to communities. Through DVV International's support, the system has also been endowed with a variety of technical instruments required to make it work better. These instruments are in use, but their effectiveness will only be optimal if the limitations of the structural delivery system are addressed.
4. DVV's professional support in the design and use of instruments for **planning, coordination and monitoring and evaluation** across the three tiers are in use. During the implementation of ICOLEW the need to establish new structures within the system, especially at the grassroots to enable service delivery, were addressed. The system for adult education is therefore undergoing transformation in ways that could only enhance provision and delivery. Grassroots structures are new and it will take time for them to mature and they will require the necessary support from the state. Although, like all new systems, difficulties emerge that require remedial actions and ongoing review and development. More work is required to strengthen structures and systems at grassroots levels.
5. DVV International's intervention at micro, meso and macro levels is bearing favourable results. At the micro level, the number of participants has reached 1650 across the three districts. The total number of CEGs (20 in total) have been established and are supported by a total of 60 facilitators. DVV International, together with the MLGSD, has succeeded in **reaching set targets** as part of their commitment to improve and expand adult education provision. CEGs and VSLAs are functional and supported by a growing set of materials that forms part of the teaching and learning process. The overall approach of ICOLEW is underpinned by REFLECT with an orientation toward the establishment of adult and community education programmes that respond to the needs and interests of communities. More work is needed to improve retention rates of both participants and facilitators.
6. DVV International's role in building institutional capacity has also been meaningful. **Programme and curriculum guidelines** have been put in place and the capacity building system to support the meso and micro levels is implemented. More than 40 sector/technical experts have been trained alongside Community Development Officers. These training programmes are building capability into the system. Sector experts have been drawn from different disciplines including agriculture, health, education, commerce and green economy (including language specialists). This initiative is significant because it **broadens participation** in ICOLEW and establishes a meaningful basis for intergovernmental involvement and collaboration. The great challenge for the MGLSD is the institutionalisation of

intergovernmental collaboration and exploring ways to sustain such collaboration. More work will also be required to win the consciousness of public and other important stakeholders, especially civil society organisations and universities, involved in adult education in the country.

7. **Joint planning and review mechanisms** have also been initiated through DVV International's support. At this point in the evaluation two key challenges remain. Firstly, whilst the importance and development of a MIS has been highlighted, progress has been slow. DVV International has taken initiative in providing support in developing instruments for data collection at district level. However the MGLSD has to play a prominent role in establishing a comprehensive MIS. Secondly, despite the expressed intentions to secure institutionalised funding from the state, the future of ICOLEW financing remains uncertain and this could be attributed to the dependence on donor funding, occasional and off-budget support for non-formal adult education programmes. The lack of long-term programme funding often leads to many challenges including an overreliance on, amongst others, volunteer facilitators and under-qualified personnel, and resorting to inappropriate learning spaces for adults.

3.2 Suggestions and considerations for the future

The concluding section provides a set of suggestions and considerations for the future. Each suggestion concludes with action points for consideration by DVV International and the MLGSD. We acknowledge that all these recommendations cannot be implemented at once and should rather form the basis for setting short, medium and long-term priorities. We are also aware that the implications of these suggestions require enormous investment from the Ugandan government. Whilst all these suggestions are directly linked to adult education systems building, we emphasise key areas which should be the focus of DVV International's work for the remaining period of the current phase of the project. The four key areas: are (1) professional and technical support that strengthens the structures at district and sub-county levels through which ICOLEW is provided; (2) technical support for strengthening of coordination, monitoring and evaluation and review at the meso level; (3) capacity building to strengthen key elements of service delivery at community level; and (4) technical support at macro level for the development of a funding and resource model for adult education against a multi-year service delivery plan that makes adult education gradually available to as many adults as possible. To realise these priorities will require the continuation of the close collaboration and partnership model that exists between DVV International and the MLGSD.

3.2.1 Developing adult education advocacy strategy

The ICOLEW Project has created a lot of debate. It has led to the co-construction of new knowledge and thinking within the system and has shifted the consciousness of people working at all three levels of the system. Whilst this is admirable, ICOLEW has not received sufficient publicity necessary to mobilise greater public participation and the latent support that may exist. It is proposed that a detailed advocacy strategy be developed using a multi-media approach. There is a need to share and publicise the good/best practices that have and are

emerging from the various experiences of ICOLEW. An evidence-based advocacy strategy that permeates state machinery to catapult the adult education agenda from the periphery to mainstream policy discussions at Cabinet and Parliament is urgently required. This strategy should be based on a comprehensive communication strategy for adult education.

Action point:

- (a) DVV International together with the MGLSD prepare brief summaries and advocacy materials that form part of a dissemination strategy. The materials should be produced to target key people at all three levels and should be written in plain languages, and where possible, translated into different languages.*
- (b) The MGLSD should set up an electronic platform from where alerts to new materials be circulated to inter and intra-governmental departments, civil society and social media platforms. This platform should later interface with the Management Information System. Community groups (CEGs), universities and civil society organisations should also be encouraged to write about ICOLEW.*

3.2.2 Fast tracking adult education institutionalisation

MGLSD is encouraged to use the evidence, energy and goodwill created by the ICOLEW project to fast track the institutionalisation and mainstreaming of adult education policy, governance and financing. A key step, but not limited to, would include, drafting a position paper (also converted into a Memo to Cabinet) that succinctly captures the required reforms and changes in legislation, financing and governance. The position paper should be informed by a study and review of current national, regional and global trends in adult education service delivery. The adult education institutionalisation fast track initiative should be linked to the advocacy strategy with the ultimate goal of further advancing the adult education system.

The MGLSD should also initiate a process towards the development of an adult education framework that goes beyond FAL. With the implementation of ICOLEW, a range of policy issues have been illuminated and could form the basis for policy innovation and the possibility of the development of legislation for adult education. The current policy for adult literacy should be revisited and revised based on the lessons learnt from ICOLEW. If ICOLEW is an expression of the new adult education programme of Uganda, work towards a new adult education policy could be initiated through such a framework.

Action point:

DVV International needs to provide professional guidance to the MGLSD in the development of basic norms and standards in key areas such as CLCs; educators; curricula; assessment and funding models for a new adult education system.

3.2.3 Establishing conceptual clarity

ICOLEW is a relatively new concept in Uganda and requires attention in order to provide and maintain conceptual clarity. It is also a concept that is broadening as additional components are

added to it. It should also consider how government imperatives may shift in light of both global and national developments. At present the strong focus on agriculture is important, however, the NDP and Vision 2040 include adult education that could be related to infrastructural development, energy, mining and tourism. These additional areas suggest the need for a greater variety of vocational skills development that could be inserted into ICOLEW. The MGLSD is encouraged to lead the way in providing conceptual clarity of ICOLEW so that it is understood throughout the different levels and used to mobilise inter- and intra-governmental support, as well as support from other stakeholders and the donor community.

DVV International may consider supporting stakeholders to internalise and live the principles and values of the empowering nature of the ICOLEW as informed by its roots, which are derived from the emancipatory and critical pedagogical orientations.

Action point:

DVV International could support the MGLSD with the development of the production of a simple brochure that defines ICOLEW in relation to national and local imperatives. This could serve as a document to be used for broader public awareness, social mobilisation and public participation.

3.2.4 Improving planning, coordination and monitoring

The structure and model of governance at macro, meso and micro levels are well-designed to support ICOLEW. However, there is a need to strengthen the way these structures and systems function. With the implementation of ICOLEW, new cultural practices (the way of doing adult education) are emerging and they challenge the way the system is currently structured and how it responds to new demands. One of the key challenges is the human resource and the quality of human resources available to support coordination, planning and implementation. It is suggested that improvements in coordination, planning and implementation be done with the appointment of additional staff.

It is critical that educators are supported by reasonable conditions of service and remuneration packages that secure their longer-term participation in adult and community education work. Ideally, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary career paths should be developed for these educators.

The development of a fully-fledged Management Information System (MIS) is equally imperative. It is well-known that data on adult literacy is poor and that it has significant implications for planning, monitoring and evaluation, and research and development. The MGLSD is strongly encouraged to establish a well-designed and comprehensive MIS for adult education. The MGLSD is strongly encouraged to undertake a comprehensive review of existing national adult literacy management information system (NALMIS) to provide a basis for redesigning an appropriate system for information utilisation and knowledge curation. The MGLSD should explore possibilities for a digitised MIS to enhance information accessibility

and usability. In the interim it would be useful to conduct quarterly monitoring sessions during which data is scrutinised and analysed for future actions.

Action point:

- (a) DVV International has played an important role in providing support related to coordination at all three tiers of government. It has also been proactive in the identification of gaps that could delay the implementation of ICOLEW. More time, energy and resources are required to strengthen coordination, especially at the district and sub-country levels. Joint planning and monitoring with the MGLSD is recommended with specific focus on ways to strengthen structures that require support for the smooth implementation of ICOLEW.*
- (b) In addition to this, coordination at district level should be improved through the appointment of dedicated staff allocated specifically to ICOLEW. The MGLSD should play a key role in motivating for the appointment of additional staff and/or the incorporation of coordination of CEGs into the job descriptions of relevant staff (CDOs; DCDOs & SASs).*
- (c) The development of a MIS should be developed by the MGLSD. We suggest that DVV continues to provide professional and technical support in the refinement of instruments to be used. This support could form part of the monitoring and evaluation framework which has already been developed by DVV.*

3.2.5 Establishing Community Learning Centres

The revitalisation and establishment of CLCs in villages as sites for community education has already been identified as part of the ICOLEW Project. It is suggested that CLCs be designed as multipurpose centres that offer a wide range of adult and community-related services to villages. These CLCs should be conceptualised as points of convergence of government services, community and civil society programmes, projects and campaigns directly connected to the needs and interests of communities. The establishment of CLCs will require resources which should be solicited from a variety of sources including government departments, international donors and the business community. The variety of engineering-related skills that already exist within villages could be used in the construction of CLC-related infrastructure.

Action point:

The CLCs are the loci of service delivery and should receive much greater attention over the next period. CLC coordinators should be empowered and motivated to expand community development programmes and services. Knowing that these community-based institutions would require investment, we suggest that DVV International consider investing basic equipment and materials required at selected pilot-CLCs. These pilot sites should be used as demonstrations of what fully functional CLCs should look like.

3.2.5 Building a cadre of educators and curriculum development specialists

Educators/facilitators have a vital role to play in the provision and delivery of adult and community education and related services. There is a need to invest in the development of a well-trained and committed cadre of facilitators who could support the teaching and learning processes of community groups. It is critical that these facilitators are supported by reasonable conditions of service and remuneration packages that secure their longer-term participation in adult and community education programmes and work. Ideally, multidisciplinary/transdisciplinary career paths should be developed for these facilitators in order to ensure that the adult education system is supported by the multidisciplinary forms of knowledge and skills required by villages.

Further ICOLEW is developing into a multifaceted and multidisciplinary programme that will potentially expand to require growing sets of learning support materials. It is suggested that, given the complexities of curriculum development, this role be institutionalised and supported in order to ensure that the envisaged ICOLEW is enriched by carefully conceptualised materials across different languages and is congruent with the learning needs and demands of participants. It might be appropriate to delegate the mandate and function of continuous capacity enhancement and materials development to a dedicated team of trainers and curriculum developers drawn from the existing pool of practitioners at the different levels. The team could be guided to work with appropriate institutions to design and deliver appropriate training packages and materials. Curriculum development and human resource development are core elements of an adult education system and this capability needs to be plugged into the vision of expanding adult education in the country.

Action point:

(a) MGLSD should explore the establishment of a dedicated unit for curriculum development alongside the adult education training unit. This curriculum development unit should play a role in ongoing research and development of meaningful and attractive reading materials and resources that integrate ICOLEW components. These materials should be reflective of the principles of adult learning and based on adult education theory that undergirds REFLECT. These materials should be gradually available in all local languages.

(b) Facilitators play a vital role in the service delivery process. A number of key issues related to facilitators need to be addressed. (a) considering incentives such as free/subsidised medical care and transport as ways to motivate and retain facilitators; (b) the development and implementation of a reward system for facilitators for good performance; (c) facilitating access to development support and government grants such as YLP and UWEP; and (d) the establishment of opportunities for upgrading and ongoing professional development and career paths

(c) The capacity building of all participants involved in adult education service delivery is essential. A process is required to establish an institutional form that houses, reviews and develops ongoing capacity building programmes at community level. The immediate work of such a unit should focus on strengthening the existing curricula for facilitators as well as providing technical experts with the most relevant pedagogy in working with adults.

3.2.7 Establishment of a National Stakeholder Body

It is well-known that the national adult education system of Uganda should include a number of stakeholders who offer a variety of formal and non-formal programmes to youth and adults. For instance, in addition to the adult education-related services of government departments, there are also many NGOs and CBOs involved in the provision of adult education programmes. We suggest that the MGLSD facilitates the establishment of a National Stakeholder Body that brings the different voices in adult education together as a means to encourage collaboration and partnerships, collective actions and a wide variety of strategies that could further strengthen efforts in the country. Deliberate efforts to bring onboard institutions of higher learning and strategic state agencies including ministries and departments, particularly those responsible for agricultural extension, health education, youth employment, labour, civic education, ICT, vocational education and training, women and gender and environment, should be prioritised.

Action point:

The MGLSD is encouraged to establish a national and district multi-sectoral fora as part of a strategy to expand participation in adult education. This structure that should include intra and inter-ministerial groups and civil society groups and should convene regularly (quarterly) as a means to generate discussions and participation in policy and practice in adult education. Stakeholders involved in adult education should also be captured as part of the MIS.

3.2.8 Mobilisation of economic will

Whilst there is political will for adult education in the country, the economic will to expand provision and delivery remains inadequate. Long-term support for ICOLEW is required at all three levels of the system and various options need to be pursued in order to secure proper resources. Given the momentum of ICOLEW and the gains made, the government should give favourable consideration to mainstream funding from the fiscus. ICOLEW should be regarded as a catalytic programme with extraordinary high-level funding support.

Action point:

- (a) The MGLSD is encouraged to pursue the incorporation of ICOLEW into national planning mechanisms such as the National Development Plan III, the Social Development Sector Plan, District Development Plans (DDPs) as well as the local government development plans.*
- (b) The MGLSD should provide regular reports to Cabinet on progress made by ICOLEW as part of a broader strategy to generate support for ICOLEW to be scaled up as instrumental to advancing a fully-fledged integrated adult education system. The MGLSD is encouraged to develop guidelines for integrating ICOLEW into national and local government plans and budgets.*

(c) The MGLSD should embark on the development of a funding model for adult education. This funding model should ensure that all costs for service delivery are included. DVV International could provide support with the development of the funding model.

3.2.10 Establishment of a national research agenda

The experience with ICOLEW highlighted the need for further and ongoing research in adult education in the country. It is suggested that a national research agenda be developed that could enhance policy development, systems innovation and their impact. A key area of research should evolve around the ways in which communities experience community education programmes and actions required to ensure that their needs and interests are adequately addressed.

Action point:

- (a) MGLSD should use the experience of ICOLEW to generate a research agenda that could be the focus for both commissioned and independent research. This research agenda should be shared with universities so that it could form the basis for greater socially-engaged scholarship in aid of ICOLEW.*
- (b) Research themes that are relevant to ICOLEW could form the basis of investigation for post-graduate students who are committed to enriching adult education. It would be useful if funding for three research projects could be secured for topics related to the micro, meso and macro levels.*

3.2.11 Recognise and accredit learning achievements

Attention should be paid to the ICOLEW participants' overwhelming demand for external examination, specified durations and gazetted graduation period. We suggest that the MGLSD explores possibilities and opportunities for implementing a mechanism that recognises and accredits learning achievements through a comprehensive, transparent and efficient system that captures the whole spectrum of knowledge, skills and attitudes accrued from participation in the different ICOLEW components.

Action point:

There is a need to develop uniform assessment tools in addition to the LAMP scale while exploring possibilities for equivalencies or accreditation of learning achievements across the different components. In addition to this, it is important to introduce recognition mechanisms such as certification ceremonies for participants who have successfully achieved level 5.

3.2.12 Responding to learning needs and ambitions

ICOLEW curriculum design and delivery needs to be revisited and enriched to offer continuing education and lifelong learning pathways for participants to enhance their personal learning ambitions including English language learning as well as career and skills development. It suggested that this be linked to the mission and mandate of CLCs.

Action point:

DVV International should support the MGLSD in addressing the following key issues:

(a) Improve the social and physical environment in which adult learning is taking place. Learning facilities need to be appropriate for adults. Bureaucrats and facilitators could play a role in educative processes that address the stigmatisation of adults with low levels of literacy;

(b) Introduce flexibility as to when and where classes are convened as a way to address absenteeism and attrition. These arrangements should adhere to the minimum standards defined by the MGLSD;

(c) Strengthen methodologies that ensure a greater chance for the successful acquisition of literacy and numeracy. Facilitators need more training in the use of theory and practice (i.e. whole language philosophy) that encourages literacy acquisition; and

(d) Encourage a culture of regular record keeping amongst participants including their business enterprises.

3.2.13 VSLAs: Facilitate access to markets

The VSLAs are important mechanisms for operationalising sustainable livelihoods. This requires the establishment of clearly defined markets and mechanisms that can facilitate access to such markets for the goods and services produced by CEGs and VSLAs. The establishment of these mechanisms is also important to encourage and sustain participation of participants in ICOLEW.

Action point:

With the support of DVV International, MGLSD is encouraged to conduct the necessary research about markets specifically for participants in the VSLAs. It would also be useful if the capacity to conduct such research is built into the training programmes provided to communities. The MGLSD should further facilitate special access for VSLAs to markets and limit barriers that they may experience.

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