

**MEASURING THE IMPACT OF LITERACY PROJECTS ON RURAL POOR IN
NORTHERN UGANDA: THE CASE OF RURAL EDUCATION EMPOWERMENT
PROJECT IN NEBBI DISTRICT**

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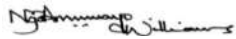
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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND
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AWARD OF A MASTER'S DEGREE IN PROJECT MONITORING AND
EVALUATION OF UGANDA TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

I, **Willy Ngaka**, hereby declare that this dissertation entitled *Impact of Literacy Projects on the Rural Poor in Northern Uganda: The case of Rural Education Empowerment Project in Nebbi District* is my own original piece of work and has not been submitted in part or wholly for any degree or examination in another University or any other Institution of Higher Learning in the world. In all cases where other people's works or ideas have been used, I have duly acknowledged them by complete references using American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style at the end of chapter five. The work was done under the competent supervision of Professor Benon, C. Basheka.



Signature of the author

August 5, 2016

Date:

APPROVAL

This proposal has been submitted with my approval as the Supervisor.

Name: Professor Benon, C. Basheka

Signature..... *Date*.....

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Jordan MugufeniNgaka and Clinton Prince AsianzuNgaka, my two adorable little boys who have sometimes stayed with me late in the night to try to emulate what I was doing with the hope of doing the same in future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONMYS

| | |
|--------|--|
| AEA | = African Evaluation Association |
| AIDS | = Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| APA | = American Psychological Association |
| B.C | = Before Christ |
| CBO | = Community Based Organizations |
| CSOs | = Civil Society Organizations |
| DAC | = Development Assistance Committee |
| DFID | = Department for International Development |
| EWLP | = Experimental World Literacy Programme |
| FAL | = Functional Adult Literacy |
| FGD | = Focus Group Discussion |
| HIV | = human immunodeficiency virus |
| MDG | = Millennium Development Goals |
| NAADS | = National Agricultural Advisory Services |
| NORAD | = Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation |
| NorSED | = Norwegian Baha'i Office of Social and Economic Development |
| NUSAF | = Northern Uganda Social Action Fund |
| OECD | = Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OWC | = Operation Wealth Creation |
| PAF | = Poverty Action Fund |
| PSOs | = Private Sector Organizations |
| RBME | = Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation |

REEP = Rural Education Empowerment Project

REFLECT = Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Technique

UEA = Uganda Evaluation Association

UNDP = United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO = United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE = Universal Primary Education

USAID = United States Agency for International Development

USE = Universal Secondary Education

UTAMU = Uganda Technology and Management University

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examined the impact of literacy projects on the rural poor in Northern Uganda with specific reference to the Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP), which the Uganda Programme of Literacy for Transformation (UPLIFT) implemented in partnership with Norwegian Baha'i Office of Social and Economic Development (NorSED) from 2007 to 2009. The study considered literacy as the independent variable and the impact of the project on the rural poor as its dependent variables. It had to be undertaken because it would enhance an understanding of whether REEP generated and/or was continuing to generate the intended effects; help promote accountability in the allocation of resources across public programmes; and expose what works, what does not, and how measured changes in well-being on the people in Nebbi are attributable to it. Drawing from data collected through qualitative methods immersed in an interpretive paradigm and case study design, the study revealed that REEP activities: (i) were relevant and largely achieved the objectives of the project; (ii) utilized the least costly inputs to realize the project objectives; and (iii) positively impacted the environment and the local population in Nebbi district. It however, revealed that the sustainability of the benefits accruing from REEP was questionable. The study concluded that whereas the activities were able to contribute towards the realization of the set objectives of the project using the least costly inputs; there was very little to guarantee the sustainability of the benefits accruing from it. It recommended that future efforts should be directed towards adopting a results-based project monitoring and evaluation mechanism so as to track not just inputs and outputs but also the project outcomes, impact and sustainability.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study aimed to examine the impact of Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) projects on the rural poor in Uganda with specific reference to Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP), Uganda Programme of Literacy for Transformation (UPLIFT) implemented in partnership with Norwegian Baha'i Office of Social and Economic Development (NorSED) from 2007 to 2009 (UPLIFT &NorSED, 2009). It focused on literacy as the independent variable and the impact of REEP on the rural poor as its dependent variables. It was seen to be very important because it would: (i) help policy makers decide whether programs are generating intended effects; (ii) enhance promotion of accountability in the allocation of resources across public programs; and (iii) fill gaps in understanding what works, what does not, and how measured changes in well-being of the people in Nebbi are attributable to REEP (Khandker, Koolwal, &Samad, 2010).

This chapter presents the background to the study, the problem statements, the general and specific objectives, and the key questions that were used to guide the study. It also defines the scope of the study, provides the conceptual framework, and discusses the significance and justification for the study. It ends with the operationalization of the key concepts that were used in the proposal. The following section presents the background to the study.

1.2 Background of the study

1.2.1 Historical background

Available historical accounts on evaluation suggest that it is not easy to pinpoint the start of programme evaluation. Bowman, cited in Mouton (2010, p. 10), points out that the notion of

“planful social evaluation” dates back to as early as 2200 B.C. with personnel selection in China. Rossi and Freeman (2004), and Babbie and Mouton (2001) point out that activities related to programme evaluation were already evident in the eighteenth century in the fields of education and public health. Potter and Kruger (2001) recall the work of Ralph Tyler as being the catalyst in establishing evaluation as a distinct field. According to Khandker, Koolwal and Samad (2010), and Basheka and Byamuhisha (2015), evaluation approaches for development programmes have evolved considerably over the past two decades and have been encouraged by the rapidly expanding research on impact evaluation and growing coordination across different research and policy institutions in designing programmes.

According to Mouton (2010, p. 10), most scholars have traced the history of programme evaluation to the World War II when the US federal government’s vast expenditure on the social sphere required a more systematic and rigorous review of spending. This resulted in the emergence of the field of programme evaluation. However, by the time it reached South Africa, scholars in the US had already been debating its legitimacy as a discipline. They had also conceptualized the different training options and delivered a multitude of theories and evaluation paradigms. These were the guiding principles for the design and use of monitoring and evaluation in rural development projects and programmes in which monitoring and evaluation were seen primarily as project-related activities. Whereas monitoring was by then considered as a continuous assessment, evaluation was presented as a periodic assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency, and impact of a development intervention.

However, 20 years later, the above terms have been revised by Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Development Evaluation. In the revised form, monitoring is now considered to embody the regular tracking of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts of development activities at the project, programme, sector, and national levels; while evaluation is seen as the process of determining the worth or significance of a development activity, project, programme or policy to establish its relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Although this had been going on for some time in other parts of the world, in Africa in general and Uganda in particular, monitoring and evaluation are a recent and important phenomenon. For example, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2009, p. 5) in its 2008 – 2011 strategic plan states that “all UNDP work – policy advice, technical support, advocacy and contributions to strengthening coherence in global development is aimed at one end result - real improvements in people’s lives and in choices and opportunities open to them”. Globally, monitoring and evaluation is now a requirement to assess the effectiveness and impact of the donor aid being invested in different countries. It is on this basis that the emergence of the African Evaluation Association (AEA) and Uganda Evaluation Association (UEA) in 1999 and 2001 respectively are signs that the field of monitoring and evaluation are beginning to take a firm root as a discipline and profession in the Continent.

It should be pointed out here that while the above positive developments have emerged in the field of monitoring and evaluation, a lot of emphasis had been placed on tracking project inputs, activities and outputs; that is, the resources and procedures. However, from 2000 onwards, International Development Agencies (IDAs) such as UNDP, Organization for Economic and

Development Cooperation (OECD), Department for International Development (DFID), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) etc. started getting concerned that the impact of development aid was not being felt. Baker (2000), for instance, points out that despite the billions of dollars spent on development assistance each year, there was still very little known about the actual impact of projects on the poor.

Because of these concerns by International Development Agencies, there was a turn from focusing on tracking project inputs, activities and outputs, to results or project outcomes and impact and the need for sustainable benefits; giving birth to the concept of results-based monitoring and evaluation of development interventions. The key question mostly asked here is: What are results? Results or outcomes are the changes occurring as an effect of a development intervention, which imply that a change of behavior by an individual, group of people, organizations, government bodies or society has taken place. Also within the results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, the Department of Business Innovations & Skills (2011) distinguishes between output, outcome and impact, and points out that impact evaluation studies seek to prove that the intervention had an effect (outcomes) that would not otherwise have been achieved without the intervention. Some studies, given methodological or data constraints, are able to measure outcomes and are not able to estimate impact, that is, they are not able to show whether the measured outcomes would have happened in any way without the intervention or not. Distinction between these terms is important because the current focus of monitoring and evaluation is to go beyond inputs, activities and outputs and to include results/outcomes and impact; and most importantly, sustainability. The need for measuring results and impact is very

important for donors because the knowledge gained from impact evaluation studies provides critical input to the appropriate design of future programmes and projects (Baker, 2000).

1.2.2 Theoretical background

Although reference to theory is widespread in the contemporary evaluation literature, what is meant by theory encompasses a confusing mix of concepts related to three things namely: evaluators' notions about how evaluation should be practiced; explanatory frameworks for social phenomena drawn from social science; and assumptions about how programmes function, or are supposed to function (Donaldson and Lipsey, 2005). According to Chen (1990), a theory can be described as a frame of reference that helps humans understand their world and how to function within it. Donaldson and Lipsey (2005) distinguish the three most common types of theories encountered in evaluation and outline them to include: evaluation theory, social science theory, and program theory and discuss their respective roles and limitations. Shadish, Cook and Leviton (1991) also trace the history of theories of evaluation as having evolved through three stages and according to them they include: (i) theories that emphasized the discovery of truth; (ii) theories that focused on the way evaluation was used and its social utility; and (iii) theories that addressed the integration of inquiry and utility. This means theories play important role in monitoring and evaluation of projects, programs or policies.

Alkin and Christie (2004) discuss evaluation theory and specify that accountability and control, social inquiry and methods are the most important issues of concern in evaluations and use Ralph Tyler's work to group evaluation into four branches namely: (i) objectives-oriented evaluation theories commonly linked to Huey-Tsyh Chen, Carol Weiss and Lee J. Cronbach; (ii) valuing

evaluation theories commonly associated with Michael Scriven and Elliot Eisner; (iii) adversary evaluation theories commonly associated with Thomas Owens/Robert Wolf, Robert Stake, Ernest House and Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln; (iv) and evaluation use theories commonly linked to Daniel Stufflebeam, Michael Patton, Marvin Alkin, Hallie Preskill, Jean King and David Fetterman. However, some distinguished evaluators such as Scriven (1998) and Stufflebeam (2004) have asserted that there is little need for theory or, at least, some forms of theory, in evaluation. Similarly, Stufflebeam (2001) particularly suggests that there really is not much need to recommend theory-based evaluation, since doing it right is usually not feasible and since failed or misrepresented attempts can be counter-productive.

Notwithstanding the above views, some scholars are of the view that an understanding of theories in monitoring and evaluation is very important because they act as a frame of reference that helps humans understand their world and how to function within it (Chen, 1990). For example, Bhola (2006, p. 2) notes that advances in theory and methodology of Monitoring and Evaluation have been impressive in the past four decades and cites the move away from linearity to a systems view, in which the application of the systems view becomes more systematic and less systemic as one of the most important advances in the theory and practice of monitoring and evaluation. Again in the case of evaluation theory, Shadish (1998) for instance introduced his presidential address to the American Evaluation Association, entitled “Evaluation Theory is Who We Are,” and asserts that all evaluators should know evaluation theory because it is central to their professional identity. It is what they talk about more than anything else.

From the forerunning discussions, it can be said that theories play an important role in monitoring and evaluation of development interventions, and that there are different theories one can choose from depending on the context. There is therefore no best theory or approach or design to be used for conducting an evaluation and that is why it is sometimes better to use mixed designs than a single method and theory as suggested by Gayfer, et al., (2014). Bhola (2006) defends this view and maintains that along with the advances in evaluation theory is what has come to be called the paradigm dialog and resulting accommodations between positivism and constructivism. Mixed models are now routinely used, where quantitative methods are joined with qualitative; and analytical with historical methods to create fuller understandings of reality. More evidence to support the mixed methods approach is seen in the discussions surrounding the theory of change and programme-based evaluations (Bamberger & Fujita, 2008; Brest, 2010; Clark & Taplin, 2012) that offer a usual way to understand impact evaluations.

1.2.3 Conceptual background

The key terms in the conceptual framework that informed this study were: literacy, empowerment, sustainability, impact, outcomes, outputs and activities. They provided a conceptual basis of the study and were derived from the results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, which can best be explained in the context of the theory of change and empowerment theory (Stein & Valters, 2012; Zimmerman, 2000; and Adams, 2008). One of the concepts that needs to be defined here is empowerment, used in this study to refer to some kind of increase in the degree of autonomy and self-determination in the lives of people and in communities in order to (re-)enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. This is why evaluation scholars sometimes talk of empowerment evaluation. A detailed discussion of the term is provided in chapter two.

The term impact as used in this study refers to the net project impact, which means the total observed change minus the change which should be attributed to other factors not related to the project. The net impact can either be positive or negative. It can also be intended or unintended. According to International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, high-quality impact evaluations measure the net change in outcomes amongst a particular group, or groups, of people that can be attributed to a specific programme using the best methodology available; feasible and appropriate to the evaluation question(s) being investigated and to the specific context. Hence, impact evaluations seek to answer cause-and-effect questions. In other words, they look for the changes in outcome that are directly attributable to a programme (Gertler, et al., 2011).

1.2.4 Contextual background

Globally, donors are beginning to make results-based monitoring and evaluation a requirement or pre-condition for accessing development aid. This is important because they are interested in measuring the value of every dollar they spend in the form of development aid. This means that countries receiving development aid must develop and embrace policies to support monitoring and evaluation of development interventions being funded in the respective countries.

In Uganda, the National Policy on Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation of 2011 provides a platform for CSOs and Private Sector Organizations (PSOs) to participate more actively in the evaluation field to aid decision making at various levels. Uganda signed the International Health Partnership (IHP+) Global Compact in February 2009, representing a commitment to get better health results by increasing support for national health strategies and plans in a harmonized way,

including a strong emphasis on mutual accountability for results. Central to IHP+ is a commitment to get better health results by increasing support for national health strategies and plans in a well-coordinated way (Boerma& Gore, 2010). The Uganda Evaluation Association, a not-for-profit organization, was therefore formed in 2001 to bring together evaluation practitioners to promote the practice, use, quality and ethics of Monitoring and Evaluation in Uganda's development process. Quality evaluations provide credible and useful evidence that strengthens accountability for development results as well as enhancing organization learning.

Hague (2001) acknowledges the successful implementation of development programmes and an impressive set of economic and budgetary management reforms Uganda has registered in the recent decades and points out that the immediate challenge for national development management, as a whole, is to translate success in the macro-economic arena into greater success in poverty reduction. He adds that value for money in expenditures and quality of budget execution – or effectiveness of public service delivery, are serious concerns. However, from a monitoring and evaluation perspective, he notes the major problem is that both information management and decision making are focused on the administrative process of expenditures and activities rather than on the poverty outcomes, impacts and goals that are being pursued. Monitoring and evaluation remain overly centred on compliance with government requirements and regulations rather than end-results of policy, programme and project efforts. Civil servants get rewarded for doing paperwork well rather than making a difference in people's lives. However, government has recognized the importance of improving results orientation and has defined the effectiveness of public service delivery as its highest priority, though these initiatives have often been approached from the perspective of narrow departmental responsibilities rather

than comprehensive goals and government-wide ownership. Judging from the perspective Basheka and Byamugisha (2015) provide, the trend in evaluation is positive and the future prospects appear to be bright.

REEP was a three-year project conceived and implemented by UPLIFT in partnership with NorSED in Nebbi District from 2007 to 2009. It was funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation to the tune of NOK 1,340,000. Although its mid-term review report produced in 2009 showed a rosy picture, no attempts have been made to assess the impact of the project on the local people in particular and the environment in general. In the context of Uganda, this is not surprising because most development interventions in the country have not been properly monitored and evaluated to assess their worth, partly due to the fact that the field of evaluation is very young in the country and the political environment is unfavourable to conduct impact evaluation studies. It is on this basis that this study was conceived to assess the impact of the project on the rural poor in the district.

1.3 Problem statement

The genesis of the discipline and practice of programme monitoring and evaluation is old in continents like America and Europe and can be traced way back to the 1960s and 1980s (Mouton, 2010). Though old in developed countries, the practice is relatively new and emerging in most developing countries (Mouton, 2010; Basheka&Byamugisha, 2015). Interest in monitoring and evaluation began to emerge in developing countries in the late 1990s when donors started demanding that development projects, programmes and policies be monitored so as to determine their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability for the intended target group. Even after this became a pre-requisite for accessing aid, the emphasis in

most developing countries has always been on tracking inputs, activities and outputs with little attention being paid to outcomes, impact and sustainability of the development interventions. Baker (2000) alludes to this idea and points out that although billions of dollars have been invested in form of aid in developing countries across sectors, the impact on the poor is not seen. In fact, the situation in Uganda is not any different. Examples of interventions with literacy dimensions in which funds have been invested to reduce poverty and illiteracy are indeed many (see Ezati, 2011; Ngaka, 2009; Rogers, 2008; Okech, et al., 1999; and Frederiksen, 2009). The FAL programme under MoGLSD, and the REEP which was implemented by UPLIFT and NorSED from 2007 to 2009 in Nebbi district are some of the typical examples in point. Whereas the above interventions have been in operation for some time in Uganda, their impact on the population in general and that of literacy projects in particular have not been assessed. Although REEP, which was conceived and implemented to equip 6,000 people with literacy skills, reduce illiteracy rates among women and build institutional capacity did yield impressive outputs as reflected in its mid-term evaluation report (Frederickson, 2009), no studies have been conducted to assess its long term intended and unintended impact on the population in Nebbi district. Besides, no any other study that has been carried out in Nebbi district has ever focused on the impact of literacy projects on the local people. It was on this basis that this study was conceived and designed to measure the impact of REEP on the local population in Nebbi district in the period from 2010 to 2015, using the 5 criteria specified by DAC to evaluate the impact of projects, programmes and policies namely: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (Chianca, 2008, p. 42).

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to measure the impact of the rural education empowerment project on the people using the DAC evaluation criteria of: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

1.5 Objectives

The study specifically sought to:

- a) Assess the extent to which the REEP activities were relevant and suited the priorities and interests of the target group and the funders in Nebbi district.
- b) Establish the extent to which REEP was effective and its activities contributed towards the realization of its set objectives.
- c) Find out whether REEP was efficiently implemented and used the least costly inputs to produce the expected outputs.
- d) Examine the impact on the population resulting from the outputs or services produced under REEP; and
- e) Establish the extent to which the benefits from REEP activities had continued to accrue to the target group and/or were likely to continue after the withdrawal of donor funds.

1.6 Research questions

The study was guided by the following five key research questions:

- a) To what extent did the REEP activities suit the priorities and interests of the target group and the funders in Nebbi district?

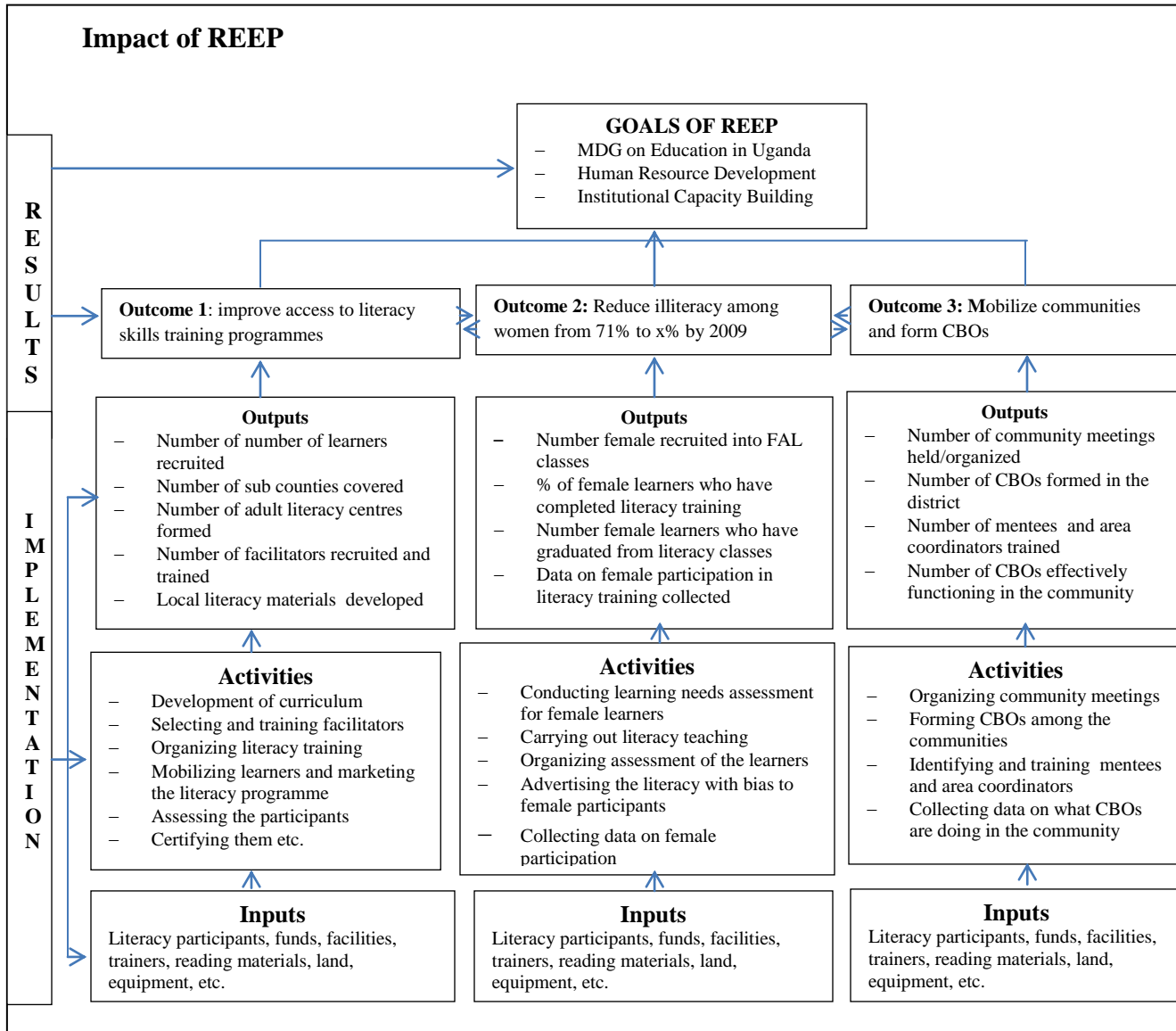
- b) To what extent did the REEP activities facilitate the realization of its set objectives?
- c) How efficient was REEP in using the least costly inputs to produce its expected outputs?
- d) What are the impacts on the population resulting from the outputs or services produced under REEP?
- e) To what extent have the benefits accruing from REEP activities continued or are likely to continue after donor funding was withdrawn?

1.7 Conceptual Framework for the Study

The conceptual framework that informed the study illustrated diagrammatically in figure 1 below, used ideas from the results chain drawn from Khan (n.d, p. 15); UNDP (2009) and Waidyaratna (2012, p. 13) and embedded the in Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBME) framework in which emphasis is put on project outcomes, impact and sustainability instead of tracking inputs, activities and outputs. The conceptual framework assumes that usually a project like the REEP aims to achieve positive results (intended and unintended changes occurring as an effect of a development intervention) by carrying out activities that produce certain products or services known as outputs for its stakeholders. It is further assumed that if the stakeholders utilize the outputs very well, they will then change the way of doing a certain thing and experience benefits known as outcomes as a result. These outputs may eventually contribute, together with results of other development interventions, to higher development goals known as impact. The idea behind this study is that REEP consumed some inputs in the course of implementing the above listed activities. The listed activities in turn led to some products and services which communities utilized or are utilizing, hence leading to changes in behaviour, service delivery, people's participation in different activities and increase in the number of

people graduating from literacy training. It is therefore expected that the long-term impact of REEP would be a meaningful contribution to the attainment of the MDG on education, human resource development efforts and institutional capacity building in Nebbi district, as illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Assessment and Analysis of the Outcomes and



Source: Adapted from Waidyaratna (2012, p. 13), UNDP (2009), Edmunds & Marchant (2008, pp. 20 - 22) and Khan (n.d, p. 15).

1.8 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is described in three dimensions, namely; geography, time and content. Geographically, this study was limited to Nebbi District in North-Eastern Uganda, in which REEP was implemented, which by 2009 consisted of 18 Sub Counties.

In terms of time scope, the study focused on the period starting from January 2010 to June 2015. The focus on this period was considered to be very appropriate because it provided an opportunity to see the impact of the intervention after the mid-term evaluation, which was conducted in 2009. A five years' period after the mid-term evaluation of REEP was considered to be sufficient enough to see the impact of the project outcomes on the population in Nebbi district.

In terms of content, the study focused on two of the three REEP goals, namely; (i) contributing towards realization of the MDG on Education in Uganda and (ii) developing human resources with a strong focus on gender and four outcome areas, which included: (a) delivery of literacy skills, (b) training of mentors and area coordinators, (c) establishment of CBOs; and (d) community mobilization. The impact assessment further laid emphasis on: (i) a review of various documents that depicted the pre-REEP situation, an assessment of the intended and unintended changes the project brought about on the population; and an analysis of the sustainability of the changes brought about by the project. Hence, the evaluation criteria of interest in the study were the project outcomes, impact and sustainability.

1.9 Justification for the Study

This study was considered to be very important and had to be undertaken because of the following three important reasons evaluation experts have advanced:

First, the researcher strongly believed that the findings of the study would contribute towards improving the design and implementation of similar programmes outside Nebbi district. As Noar (2006) observes, periodic assessments and adaptation of lessons learnt to ensure that activities are effectively implemented to contribute towards the outputs upon which project outcomes depend help in identifying areas for improvement and realization of the stated project goals.

The second justification was that the findings of this study would demonstrate the impact of REEP on the poor in the current districts of Nebbi and Zombo. The information the study collected was expected to provide an opportunity to communicate and share the impact of REEP with other stakeholders, which was seen to be critical for public relations, staff morale, and attracting as well as retaining support from current and potential funders as expressed by Hornik and Yanovitzky (2003).

The third justification for the study stemmed from the fact that the researcher had not come across any study that had focused on the impact of REEP on the population in Nebbi and Zombo, save for the mid-term evaluation report which was produced in 2009. Hence, this study hoped to contribute towards answering the key questions for evidence-based policy making, namely; what worked, what did not, where, why and at what cost? This was seen to be very important because impact evaluation studies have received increasing attention in policy making in recent years in

both Western and developing countries' contexts as an integral part of the global efforts to improving effectiveness of aid delivery, public spending and more generally in improving living standards of the development aid target beneficiaries (Stern, 2015).

1.10 Significance of the Study

This study was seen to be significant for some individuals, groups and institutions who could benefit from its findings in different ways. It was thought that the following individuals and entities could variously benefit from the study:

- a) Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), who are responsible for promoting best practices in evaluation use in different sectors of the economy. It was hoped that the findings of the study would expose what worked and what did not work; that is, the unintended long-term effects of the project on the people and environment, which would influence future decisions on similar projects in other areas.
- b) The Project beneficiaries and CBOs that were formed out of REEP, as the findings of study would enable the planners and managers look backwards and use the lessons learnt to improve future interventions in the districts; and
- c) Academics and students who could use the findings of the study as part of their academic work, as the report of the study would enrich the existing body of literature on the impact of literacy projects on the rural poor. In fact, the researcher actually aimed to use the report of the study as a partial requirement for the award of a Master's Degree in Project Monitoring and Evaluation of UTAMU. Hence, the findings of the study were expected

to contribute towards some of the knowledge gaps in the body of literature on literacy, empowerment and poverty reduction.

1.11 Operational Definitions

A number of unfamiliar terms were both implicitly and explicitly used in this study and some of them are defined below. The researcher wishes to caution the readers of this report that terms should be used within the context of the study. They include the following:

Empowerment - The term empowerment was used in this study to refer to some kind of increase in the degree of autonomy and self-determination in the lives of people and in communities in order to (re-)enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way and acting on their own authority.

Impact evaluation – This term was used to refer to an evaluation conducted to measure outcomes and impacts of an activity and to distinguish these from influence from other factors. It assesses the specific outcomes attributable to a particular intervention or programme and does so by comparing outcomes where the intervention is applied against outcomes where the intervention does not exist (Rappaport, 1984).

Functional Literacy – This term was used as suggested by Gray (1956, p. 21) to refer to “the training of adults to ‘meet independently the reading and writing demands placed on them’”. In this case, the ‘functional illiteracy’, the opposite of functional literacy is the reading and writing skills that are inadequate to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level.

Rural education – The meaning of rural education as used in this study was adopted from the definition Dunne (1981, p.4) offers, in which the term is used to refer to:

A system of education characterized by rural strengths - a lack of distinction between what belongs in school and what belongs in the community, a kind of generalism which expects people to do whatever they are able to without filling specialized roles or performing strictly age-graded functions, close and supportive ties between families and schools, a sense of comfort and cooperative spirit among school children; and rural independence and self-reliance translated into the school.

CHAPTE TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on a review of literature that is relevant and related to the impact of functional adult literacy programmes on the rural poor in Northern Uganda, with particular emphasis on REEP in Nebbi district. The purpose of the chapter was to provide an overview of the relevant theoretical perspectives on evaluation studies in general, and impact evaluation in particular; and the available empirical studies scholars have conducted on the impact of literacy projects on the poor with a view to identifying the existing missing links and knowledge gaps in the body of literature reviewed. The following section focuses on the theoretical perspectives on impact evaluation.

2.2 Theoretical Review

A growing body of literature exists on a number of theories that scholars can use to understand evaluations in general and impact evaluation in particular. According to Abrahams (2007), a theory connotes a body of knowledge that organizes, categorizes, describes, predicts, explains, and otherwise aids in understanding and controlling a topic. He cites objectivity through indicators as an important theoretical aspect of monitoring and evaluation and makes reference to three theoretical perspectives one can choose from, namely; (i) manipulable solution theory that aims to reduce uncertainty about programme effects; (ii) generalizable explanations theory, which admits the knowledge of complex inter-relationships among multiple causal determinants; and (iii) stakeholder service theory, which is tailored to the information needs of stakeholders. In light of the above views Abrahams (2007) provides, it is possible to use a mixture of the

theoretical perspectives to explain the complexity involved in the processes and activities the current research topic is focusing on, that is, an assessment of the impact of literacy projects on the rural poor in Northern Uganda in general and Nebbi district in particular. Two possible theories that were chosen to locate the study briefly highlighted below are the theory of change and empowerment theory.

2.2.1 Empowerment Theory

The first theoretical perspective in which this study was located is the notion of empowerment, a term that has been used to mean different things to different people. In simple terms, it refers to policies and measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in the lives of people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. This idea is emphasized in the work of Adams (2008, p. xvi) in which he defines empowerment as:

the capacity of individuals, groups and/or communities to take control of their circumstances, exercise power and achieve their own goals, and the process by which, individually and collectively, they are able to help themselves and others to maximize the quality of their lives.

Judging from the above definitions, it can be said that theoretically, empowerment revolves around power and control over resources which individuals and groups need to transform their lives. Talking about power and control, Zimmerman (2000, p. 43) discusses empowerment and refers to it as:

Both a value orientation for working in the community and a theoretical model for understanding the process and consequences of efforts to exert control and influence over

decisions that affect one's life, organizational functioning and the quality of community life.

According to him, while value orientation of empowerment suggests goals, aims and strategies for implementing change, empowerment theory provides the principles and a framework for organizing our knowledge. This idea of focusing on people was very important in this study because all development interventions whose impact we seek to examine are about transforming the quality of lives of the people. Rappaport (1984, in Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43) supports this idea, in that she defines empowerment as “a process; the mechanism by which people, organizations and communities gain mastery over their lives”. Related to the above definition is the view from Mechanic (1991, in Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43) who conceptualizes empowerment as “a process through which individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them and a relationship between their efforts and life outcomes”. A further and more comprehensive definition of empowerment was provided by Cornell Empowerment Group (1989, in Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43) in which they define the term as: “intentional ongoing process centred in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of the valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources”. However, it is worth noting at this point that of all the literature the researcher reviewed about the topic of this research to establish what has so far been done in the study area, no study has used the empowerment theory to examine the impact of literacy projects in Northern Uganda in general and Nebbi district in particular.

Overall, it can therefore be said that the views by Cornell Empowerment Group (1989), Rappaport (1984), and Zimmerman (2000) presented above are all relevant for this study because the rural education empowerment project, which was implemented from 2007 to 2009, was a complex social process with a variety of activities involving people of differing socio-economic backgrounds whose impact could best be understood using such a theoretical frame of reference and another one called the theory of change, briefly described below.

2.2.2 The Theory of Change

There is a wealth of literature available on theory-based evaluations in general and impact evaluation in particular, but experts disagree on whether theory-based evaluation is a common and clearly defined approach. For instance, Bamberger and Fujita (2008, p.3) discuss programme theory-based evaluations in which the observed changes in performance or output indicators in a project are compared with the pre-project situation (“before/after” comparison).

According to this approach, the observed outcomes are results of the project, “more or less.” However, they reject this assumption and argue that it is almost never valid because almost all projects operate in dynamic environments where many social, economic, political, environmental and demographic changes are occurring, any of which might have influenced the observed outcomes. Similarly, Stein and Valters (2012) discuss the theory of change approach to evaluations and link its origin to the United States in the 1990s, in the context of improving evaluation theory and practice in the field of community initiatives. One key tenet of the theory of change according to them is that it represents an increased desire for organizations to be able to explore and represent change in a way that reflects a complex and systemic understanding of a given development intervention. According to Stein and Valters (2012), the theory of change is

essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It particularly focuses on mapping out or “filling in” what has been described as the “missing middle” between what a programme change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved. It does this by first identifying the desired long-term goals and then works back from these to identify all the conditions (outcomes) that must be in place (and how these relate to one another causally) for the goals to occur. These are all mapped out in an outcomes framework. The outcomes framework then provides the basis for identifying what type of activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes identified as pre-conditions for achieving the long-term goal.

In a related development, Brest (2010) and Clark and Taplin (2012) discuss the theory of change and refer to it as a specific type of methodology for planning, participation and evaluation that is used in various disciplines and sectors to promote social change. According to them, it defines long-term goals and then maps backward to identify necessary pre-conditions, and explains the process of change by outlining causal linkages in an initiative in terms of its shorter-term, intermediate, and longer-term outcomes. The identified changes are mapped as the “outcomes pathway” – showing each outcome in logical relationship to all the others, as well as chronological flow. The links between outcomes are explained by “rationales” or statements of why one outcome is thought to be a prerequisite for another. According to Clark and Taplin (2012), the theory of change is very innovative, in that: (1) it makes a clear distinction between desired and actual outcomes, and (2) it requires stakeholders to model their desired outcomes before they decide on forms of intervention to achieve those outcomes.

It is expected that through the above approaches, the precise link between activities and the achievement of the long-term goals are more fully understood. This then leads to better planning, in that activities are linked to a detailed understanding of how change actually happens. It also leads to better evaluation, as it is possible to measure progress towards the achievement of longer-term goals that goes beyond the identification of programme outputs. This is reflected in results-based monitoring and evaluation approaches which lay particular emphasis on going beyond project outputs and focusing on outcomes, results, impact and sustainability of a particular intervention (Kuseka & Rist, 2004). Weiss cited in Alkin & Christie (2004), for instance simply describes it as a theory of how and why an initiative works. This is clearly depicted in the conceptual framework the researcher designed to guide this study presented in figure I above. Though very interesting and important for conducting impact evaluation studies, it was surprising to find that very little intellectual attention if not none has been put to the use of the theory of change to design studies that have focused on assessment of the impact of literacy interventions in the Northern Uganda in general and Nebbi district where this study was conducted in particular.

In view of the forerunning discussions, it can be said that both programme theory-based evaluations and the theory of change are related to and relevant for understanding the dynamics in this study, which attempts to examine the impact of literacy programmes on the poor because they offer a unique opportunity for evaluators to assess whether the observed changes can be attributed to the project impact and the extent to which projects, programmes, and policies have produced their intended impact and benefited the intended target populations. Impact in this context refers to the net project impact; that is, total observed change minus change which should

be attributed to other factors not related to the project. It is important to note here that impact can be positive or negative and intended or unintended. Unfortunately, most of our projects which have significant components of literacy have not been well monitored and evaluated using the ideas depicted in the conceptual framework presented in figure 1 above. As a result of this, some of them have tended to miss their target group and end up benefiting those who were not meant to be the primary target beneficiaries as suggested by Rogers (2008) and Okwir (2012), meaning that it is actually very important for all projects to be thoroughly monitored and evaluated so as to determine their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, as well as drawing lessons for future interventions.

In the following section, an attempt is made to review of some of the empirical studies on interventions that have tried to use literacy and education to empower the deprived and marginalized rural people with risk-prone livelihoods in different parts of the world. The review pays special attention to the five DAC evaluation criteria outlined by Chianca (2008, p. 42) which were used to formulate the objectives and research questions that guided the study, namely: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the development interventions as described in the conceptual framework presented in figure 1 above.

2.3 Literature review

The connection between literacy and development on the one hand, or illiteracy and poverty on the other has been a matter of ongoing debate for a long time and has been reported in a number studies (Oekch, et al., 1999; Ngaka, 2009; UNESCO, 2005; Torres, 2006). Whereas a consensus appears to be emerging from the various studies mentioned above that people experiencing high levels of poverty tend to have low literacy levels, differences in opinions regarding the nature,

meaning, uses and consequences of the concept of literacy has remained a recurrent theme in literature on literacy, poverty and development (Ngaka and Masagazi, 2015; Ngaka, et al., 2016). However, what many seem to suggest is the fact that literacy plays a fundamental role in facilitating the acquisition of other skills that are necessary for survival in the present knowledge-based economies (Stromquist, 1992) and is closely related to human dignity, self-esteem, liberty, identity, autonomy, critical thinking, creativity, participation, social awareness, and transformation (Torres, 2006, p. 11). Viewed from these angles, the concept of literacy should be broadly conceptualized as the minimum ability to read and write in a designated language, as well as a mindset or way of thinking about the use of reading and writing skills in everyday life, requiring active, autonomous engagement with print and stressing the role of the individual in receiving as well as assigning independent interpretations to messages for addressing everyday life challenges (Venezky, 1995, in Ngaka, 2009, pp. 103-104). This suggests that the literacy interventions we seek to implement should meet the immediate and real needs of the target beneficiaries.

A burgeoning body of literature is emerging on the role of literacy in development and this has motivated international development agencies and national governments to direct their efforts towards trying to fight illiteracy among the people. For instance, a study by the World Bank (1996) reported that illiteracy among the productive sector of the Ugandan population was one of the major setbacks for growth in the country. Indeed, illiteracy - especially among the Ugandan women as reflected in United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] (n.d.) report which puts the adult literacy rates (15 years and above) among Ugandan females and males in the period 1995 – 2004 at 58% and 77% respectively - has been a cause for worry. For example, the illiteracy rate among females in Nebbi by the beginning of 2000 stood at

71% (UPLIFT & NorSED, 2009). It was this unprecedented level of illiteracy among the women which actually prompted UPLIFT and NorSED to join hands to conceive and implement REEP in the district. However, six years down the road, there have been no attempts to establish the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of REEP for the people of the Nebbi.

It is worth noting that before REEP was implemented, several other literacy projects had already been piloted in different parts of the world. A study by UNESCO (1974) describes attempts the agency made to implement the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) in the 1950s to 1960s in many countries to test and demonstrate the social returns on literacy and more generally, to study the mutual relations and influences which exist or may be established or strengthened between literacy training (particularly among the working population) and development. According to Moran and Jacobi (1990), this ambitious project did not yield the expected results. In fact, they put it that, “by all estimates, the EWLP Campaign was unsuccessful. Jonathan Kozol claimed that UNESCO in its own assessment of the efforts [made], virtually conceded that it had just wasted thirty-two million dollars” (Moran & Jacobi, 1990, p. 57). At the end of it all, some concerned individuals asked themselves the question: what have we learnt?

The first lesson was that the extreme complexity they came to experience was unexpected (UNESCO, 1976). Their self-reflection on why EWLP failed made them conclude that the meaning of literacy was more complex than what they thought at the beginning of the project. They argued that literacy is not solely a technical problem, just as lack of development in a country is not just the result of uneducated and illiterate workforce and that, for literacy

programmes to be fully functional, the programmes must accord importance to social, cultural and political change as well as economic growth. One of the reasons reflected in this study for the decimal performance they recorded had to do with lack of monitoring and evaluation at different stages of the project, thereby raising the issues of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency at the time of design and implementation of the project.

The case of EWLP reported above underscores the importance of monitoring and evaluation in campaigns to promote literacy interventions across the world. Bhola (2006) emphasizes the need for establishing appropriate, organized, and duly comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems, integrated into the programmes and projects of education and development, so as to inform the processes of policy formulation and policy analysis on the one hand, and to enable an efficient and effective achievement of program objectives on the other. This process helps researchers assess the long term effects of literacy campaigns on the rural poor in different parts of the world, but this has not been a common practice, especially in developing countries; though cases of search for evidence of the impact of literacy on people's lives have been reported in a number of studies (Oxenham, et al, 2002).

Archer and Cottingham (1996) studied the effect of literacy on participation in formal and non-formal organizations using Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Technique (REFLECT) programme in Bangladesh, Uganda and El Salvador as a case study and found out that although the programme positively affected the nature of women's interaction within the all-women committees, it was unable to change men's and women's attitudes towards women's participation in public formal and non-formal organizations. A similar study on women's literacy and health by Robinson-Pant (2001) conducted in Nepal, Asia found out that

adult literacy programme participants developed positive attitudes towards family planning and made them more open to speaking up for change in practice. She noted that participants valued learning reading and writing for symbolic as well as functional reasons, in preference to receiving health and other development knowledge. Similar claims have been reported about literacy projects in different countries of Africa (Oxenham, et al., 2002; Oxenham, 2004). However, nothing of this nature has been done in Nebbi district as far as REEP is concerned.

A study by Ayodele and Adedokun (2012) in Nigeria attributes women's exclusion from effective participation in development activities to lack of functional literacy and recommends that improvements in the area may be achieved by including training in life skills under the umbrella of literacy and numeracy, which are generally designated as adult literacy and basic education. They call for the establishment of more centres for adult education in the country so that everybody will have easy access to education and thus become more functional on their job performance and in the community in which they live. Adedokun (2008, in Ayodele&Adedokun, 2012, p. 212) summarizes why literacy projects are important and notes that: Adult literacy, adult basic and continuing education and lifelong learning are key tools to address global challenges in such areas as democracy, peace and human rights; preservation of diversity, education for all, learning for sustainability, HIV and AIDs, conflict resolution and work force development.

Although similar claims about the effect of literacy on people have also been reported in Uganda in general, studies specifically focusing on literacy projects in Nebbi are difficult to find. A survey that Okech, et al. (2001) conducted in Uganda revealed that graduates of a literacy programme expressed somewhat more modern values than those who have not attended at the same time; the difference in attitude was found narrower than the difference in knowledge.

Rogers (2008) conducted a process review of Uganda's FAL in Kalangala and Buvuma Islands and reported that although FAL sought to combine the teaching of adult literacy with functionality, the relationship between these two elements in the programme was uncertain and the measures of success are not clear. As if that is not enough, little efforts have been made to assess the impact of the FAL programme on the rural poor in Uganda. Rogers' finding is particularly disturbing because of the low status accorded to literacy programmes by the government as opposed to the high status formal education enjoys, in which skills acquired outside the formal setting do not count as literacy (Ngaka, 2009, Ngaka, Openjuru & Mazur, 2012; Ngaka & Masagazi, 2015). It is important to note here that the studies whose findings have been reported above are relevant for the current study because they have raised a fundamental issue related to unclear measures of success of the interventions they focused on. Besides, the studies also suggest that issues of long term intended and unintended impact and sustainability of the interventions mentioned have been critically examined, hence the need for the current study which aimed to establish the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of REEP for the stakeholders in Nebbi district.

2.4 Synthesis of the Literature

There exists burgeoning literature on the effects of literacy programmes on the lives of people in different parts of the world. A good number of it refers to change of attitude, increase in level of participation by women, taking up positions of leadership in society and social inclusion as some of the positive effects of literacy on participants. Although there are many evaluation studies that report effects of literacy programmes on various aspects of human life across the world, many of the projects have tended to fail because they missed their intended target group (Okwir, 2012) and this is partly due to lack of monitoring and evaluation of the project. Most of the reports on

literacy projects that have been evaluated suggest that the majority of the evaluation studies have focused on process or formative evaluation and not the impact. This is crucial in the present world because the donors and project beneficiaries are now more interested in the outcomes, impact and sustainability of development interventions than merely focusing on tracking project activities and outputs. Most improbably, the body of literature reviewed reveals that no ex-post evaluation studies have been undertaken to assess the impact of literacy projects on the rural poor in northern Uganda and no evidence is available to show that the impact assessment of REEP on the local people of Nebbi district had been undertaken at any point in time. This explains why it was important to undertake the current study in the context of a case study design immersed in an interpretive paradigm to produce a thick description of the processes and activities of REEP in accordance with the five evaluation criteria, namely; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. This description is presented, analyzed and interpreted in chapter four later.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological parameters of the study. It presents with justification the details regarding the research paradigm, design and approach that were adopted in the course of the study. It also describes study population, study sample, sampling techniques, data collection methods and instruments; and the research procedures that were used during the study. The chapter ends with description of ethical considerations and the methodological as well as the practical challenges that the researcher encountered in the course of the study. In the following section, the study paradigm, design and approach that were employed during the study are described.

3.2 Study paradigm, design and approach

Usually, a study needs an appropriate design chosen from many alternatives and needs to be located in a relevant paradigm. A research design is defined as “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings” (Burns and Grove, 2003:195). Taylor, Kermode and Roberts (2007, p. 5), define a paradigm as “a broad view or perspective of something”. Weaver and Olson (2006, p. 460) assert that “paradigms are patterns of beliefs and practices that regulate inquiry within a discipline by providing lenses, frames and processes through which investigation is accomplished”. This particular study was located in an interpretive qualitative research paradigm and adopted a multi-design approach anchored on a case study that draws heavily on a qualitative comparative analysis approach and used lenses from non-experimental and counterfactual evaluation designs. A case study design and a qualitative comparative analysis approach were seen to be appropriate

for this study because of the complexity of the problem at hand. A case study design is an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed. Stake (1995) further argues that whether the study is experimental or quasi-experimental, the data collection and analysis methods are known to hide some details, and case study designs are therefore intended to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data.

Ragin (n.d.) and Stern (2015) defend a case study design and approach because they focus on combinations or configurations of factors within single cases; and allow generalization only to the extent that these holistic combinations are preserved. Stern (2015, p. 3) argues for multi-designs and multi-methods in evaluation studies and asserts that relying only on traditional approaches and designs to undertake impact evaluation does “not fit well with the kind of customized, complex, locally engaged and often sensitive programmes that CSOs undertake”. Hence the design adopted for this study used ideas from ex-post evaluation designs which lay emphasis on issues of sustainability in evaluation (Stockmann, 1997) and Jean King's 'interactive evaluation approach' which leads to participatory evaluation. The ex-post evaluation approach was found to be relevant for this study because it usually focuses on the assessment of the impact of a project whose mid-term evaluation was conducted in 2009 rather than on inputs, activities, and outputs for which adoption of multiple designs, approaches and methods was necessary (Cresswell, 2014; Yin, 1994). Triangulating designs, approaches and methods is important because using only one approach may be defective (Barifaijo, Basheka&Oonyu, 2010).

3.3 Study Population

A study population refers to generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query. Akuezilo (1993: 43) describes it to include ‘people, events, animals

and objects who/which are members of the target of the study'. It is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. Hence, the population for this study was constituted by the different Functional Adult Literacy programmes in Northern Uganda and the target beneficiaries, project staff and leadership of the respective district and sub county levels of local governments who interacted with REEP. Some of the Sub Counties in which REEP was implemented include: Ndhew, Parombo, Atego, Akworo, Nyaravur, Kucwiny, Jang-Okoro, Nyapea, Warr; and Atyak.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Strategy

A sample is a sub set of a particular population in a given study (Mugenda&Mugenda, 1999). Hence, sampling is the process of selecting sufficient numbers of elements from the population so that a study of the sample and its characteristics would make it possible for the researcher to generalize such characteristics to the population elements (Sekeran, 2003). This particular study was based on a sample of 46 participants comprising 18 individuals who participated in REEP activities, 18 of those who did not participate (randomly chosen), six sub county officials; and four project staff (purposively selected). The various categories of participants, sample sizes chosen, sampling strategy and data collection methods that were used are as shown in table 1 below. Two sampling methods, namely; purposive and random were employed. The purposive sampling strategy was used to pick the key informants because they had specific knowledge and experience in REEP that the researcher was interested in. According to Amin (2005), purposive sampling is preferred in selecting people holding positions that are more knowledgeable about issues going on in their areas. The former REEP beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were randomly selected because they shared common characteristics. Given the case study design adopted for this study, focusing on a small sample helped the researcher to optimize time,

money, efforts and other resources needed to accomplish the objectives of the study. Creswell (2014) observes that there is no definite sample size in qualitative research tradition. Whatever study sample one chooses to use depends on the qualitative design which in this case is a case design.

Table 1: Sample Size, Sampling and Data Collection Methods

| Category | Population | Gender | | Totals | Sampling method Used | Data Collection methods Used |
|---|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| | | Males sampled | Females sampled | | | |
| Project Staff | 14 | 1 | 3 | 4 | Purposive | Key informant interview |
| Sub County Chiefs | 13 | 4 | 2 | 6 | Purposive | Key informant interview |
| Project participants and non-participants from 6 Sub Counties | 2,772 | 8 | 28 | 36 | Random | Focus group discussion |
| Totals | 2,799 | 13 | 33 | 46 | | |

3.5 Data Collection Methods

When thinking about evaluation studies, researchers often consider the merits of combining methods; that is, using the mixed methods approach that borrows from both quantitative and qualitative methods instead of using a single method. REEP was a complicated dynamic and multi-dimensional social reality for which a single method approach with rigid designs would probably not work; so this study had to adopt multi-method approach (Talisayon, 2009, p. 33). Mixed methods can refer to the use of multiple types of data collection methods that are aligned with both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Cohen et al., 2011). It is particularly justified by the need for completeness, abductive inspiration and to a less extent, confirmation (Robson, 2011).

Palinkas, et al. (2013) advocate for the use of mixed methods when “interventions and programmes are sufficiently complex that a single methodological approach is often

inadequate". This was exactly the picture portrayed of REEP in this study. The use of mixed methods was found to be the most convenient as it would strengthen confidence in conclusions when they are based on several different sources of information gathered in different ways, therefore avoiding the risk of what researchers sometimes call 'instrument effect' (Christensen, 2007, p. 377). The logic impact evaluation design underlines that in impact evaluation in particular, it may be mixed designs rather than mixed methods that are most useful. Often what is required are several well-chosen designs, each of which will use a variety of methods, and be tailored to answer the various impact evaluation questions posed by evaluation commissioners and other stakeholders (UNDP, 2009; Stern, 2015; p.13). Data for this study was derived from both primary and secondary sources and collected using documentary reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and direct observation of some of the activities going on in the community as described below.

3.5.1 Documentary reviews

As explained by Bowen (2009), documentary analysis is a social research method which is used as a tool for obtaining relevant documentary evidence to support and validate facts stated in a research question, especially during literature review. It involves analytic reading and review of lots of written material. In this study, the researcher reviewed various documents related to literacy projects in general and REEP in particular to complement data from other sources. Although documents are associated with a number of challenges such as the need for consent, inaccessibility and obsolescence, Hardon, Hodgkin & Fresle (2004) defend their uses because they are a cost-efficient way of doing research and tend to avoid duplication of efforts.

3.5.2 Key Informant Interviews

Amin (2005) describes an interview as an oral questionnaire where the investigator gathers data through direct verbal interaction with participants. In light of this study, key informant interviews are qualitative in-depth interviews with people who know what is going on in the community with the purpose of collecting information from a wide range of people who have first-hand knowledge about the community. In this study, 10 key informant interviews were conducted to get data from people who are knowledgeable about REEP.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussions

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a form of group interviewing in which a small group, usually ranging from 9 to 12 people is led by a skilled moderator in a loosely structured discussion on different topics of interest in a study. It is a method of data collection used to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest (Ames, 1998). Though associated with a number of weaknesses such as the need for a skilled moderator, the unpredictability of a group discussion, and dominance of few participants, Hardon, Hodgkin & Fresle (2004, p.30) defend their use because the method is quick and cheap; it offers a greater pool of expertise that can be tapped at a go as compared to individual interviews, and it offers a more diverse picture of the whole process and activities. In this study, the researcher conducted four FGDs, each consisting of nine participants to gain in-depth understanding of perceptions on the intended and unintended changes that were brought onto the people in the project areas and also whether those who participated in the project had some observable changes as compared to those who did not participate in REEP.

3.5.4 Observation

McLeod (2015) describes the observation method as the process of watching what people do for purposes of collecting data. There are different types of observation, some of which include controlled observation, naturalistic observation and participant observation. He notes that observations can either be overt or disclosed, in which case the participants know they are being studied; or covert/undisclosed where the research keeps their real identity a secret from the research subjects, acting as a genuine member of the group. Although the observation method is criticized for pretense on the part of some participants when they realize that they are being observed, the method is advantageous because data obtained through structured observations is easier and quicker to analyze - making it a less time-consuming method as compared to naturalistic observations. Hardon, Hodgkin & Fresle (2004, p.31) add that direct observation produces more reliable information than interviews on actual behavior. The above named data collection methods in general and direct observation in particular were complemented by the photographic method.

3.6 Data collection instruments

The researcher employed a number of research tools, some of which were conceptual and theoretical, while others were practical in nature. Four appropriate data collection tools, namely: documentary review guide, key informant interview guide, Focus Group Discussion guide and observation checklist were used, and these are shown in Appendices 3 - 6. The selection of these instruments was guided by the nature of data that were collected, the time available and the objectives of the study. Digital audio recorders and digital cameras were used to complement the conceptual/theoretical tools.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

‘Validity’ and ‘reliability’ are very important concepts in research. Validity refers to accuracy in measurements to ensure that a particular data collection instrument actually measures what it was intended to measure, or the extent to which inferences or conclusions drawn from data are reasonable and justifiable; while reliability refers to the consistency of measurements to ensure that a particular data collection instrument, such as a questionnaire, elicits the same or similar response if administered under similar conditions on the different respondents (UNDP 2009, p. 54).

Validity and reliability in a qualitative study are usually handled differently as compared to those in quantitative research (Golafshani, 2003; Jalil, 2013) using terms like credibility, which according to UNDP (2009, p. 54) concerns the extent to which the evaluation evidence and the results are perceived to be valid, reliable and impartial by the stakeholders, particularly the users of evaluation results. Golafshani (2003), and Lincoln and Guba (1985) discuss the reliability issues in qualitative research and identify credibility, neutrality, confirmability, consistency, dependability, applicability and transferability as the essential criteria for quality in qualitative research. Mays and Pope (2000) add that validity of qualitative research should be addressed through triangulation, respondent validation, clear exposition of methods of data analysis, reflexivity, careful attention to negative cases and fair dealing.

Validity and reliability in this study was addressed in accordance with the parameters suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Mays and Pope (2000). Accordingly, the researcher ensured scientific rigor and trustworthiness described in detail by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006)

through various means, including member checks, interviewer corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, confirmability, and bracketing (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). As is the practice in qualitative research, the researcher maintained reflexivity journals, which Saladana (2009) also calls analytic memos. These notes later helped him to reflect on the patterns, themes, and concepts that were emerging from the data he was collecting.

3.8 Data analysis

Qualitative researchers suggest that data analysis in qualitative studies starts as soon as the collection process begins and then continues after data collection ends (Creswell, 2009; 2014). In light of the research design and approach proposed, data in this study was analyzed using mainly qualitative methods described in Creswell (1998). Data was therefore analysed thematically following the various steps outlined in Creswell (2009; 2014). Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data and this approach was found to be good in this study because it helped the researcher in organizing the raw data into meaningful patterns and themes. However, simple quantitative techniques such as fractions, percentages and degrees were used to complement qualitative analysis.

3.9 The research procedure

This study started with identification of a topic and discussion with an appointed supervisor. After approval of the research topic, the researcher focused on development and defense of the research proposal and research instrument that were later used to aid data collection. A successful defense of the research proposal led the researcher to seek an introductory letter from UTAMU as part of the ethical requirement. This letter was then used to introduce him to gatekeepers and targeted research participants in the course of accessing the community. The

researcher identified a guide in the research area with good local language skills to assist him in the course of the study. Before going to the field he tested the research instruments on a sample outside Nebbi, but exhibiting similar characteristics of the actual sample. The researcher then proceeded to administer the research instruments to the target research participants. Before starting the key informant interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher asked the participants to sign a consent form shown in appendix 2. Detailed field notes were taken and edited after every day's work. The data was then organized, cleaned and used to compile a report which was defended and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Masters in Project Monitoring and Evaluation of UTAMU. A detailed work plan for the study is illustrated in Appendix 1.

3.10 Ethical considerations

In conducting this study, the six ethical principles discussed in the American Psychological Association [APA] (2010) were strictly adhered to. Ethical issues in a study focus on relationships with research participants, in terms of dos and don'ts a researcher must observe while in the field. These may include: choice of field sites; providing feedback; clarifying the rights and 'ownership' of evaluation outputs; ensuring confidentiality and avoiding endangering participants; and maintaining the independence of the evaluation, such that it is not captured by any one interest group (Stern, 2015, p.9). The researcher first sought the consent of the respondents and assured them of anonymity, and the confidentiality with which the data collected would be kept and accessed. In conducting the observations, analysis of available documents, informal interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher made sure that he adhered to all the protocols involved in negotiating access into the community and other

gatekeepers (Campbell, 2012). Also prior permission was sought before taking photographs of the research participants.

3.11 Measurement of variables

The key variables in this study, namely; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability were measured using the operational definitions provided in section 3.12 below. According to Newman (2012), operationalization is the process by which the researcher forms conceptual definitions out of rudimentary “working ideas” used while making observations or gathering data in the field, and does this by describing how specific observations and thoughts about the data contributed to working ideas.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study sought to examine the impact of literacy projects on the rural poor in Northern Uganda with special emphasis on REEP, which was implemented by UPLIFT and NorSED in Nebbi District of North Western region of Uganda in the period starting from 2007 to 2009. This chapter presents, analyzes and interprets the findings of the study in accordance with the five research questions which were formulated to guide the study as re-stated below:

- a) To what extent did the REEP activities suit the priorities and interests of the target group and the funders in Nebbi district?
- b) To what extent did the REEP activities facilitate the realization of its set objectives?
- c) How efficient was REEP in using the least costly inputs to produce its expected outputs?
- d) What are the impacts on the population resulting from the outputs or services produced under REEP?
- e) To what extent have benefits from REEP activities continued or are likely to continue after donor funding was withdrawn?

The research questions are re-stated at this point to restructure the findings' chapter in line with the five evaluation parameters: relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

The Chapter is divided into three main sections. First, it describes the response rate attained in the course of the study; second, it describes the demographic characteristics of the people who were sampled to take part in the study; and third, it presents analyses and interprets the findings of the study to ascertain whether the research questions have each been answered or not. In the

following section, the response rate the researcher managed to attain in the course of the study is presented.

4.2 Response rate

The data used to generate the study findings presented in this chapter came from a sample of 46 participants depicted in table 1 in the previous chapter. In the course of the study, the researcher made efforts to ensure all the 46 persons picked using purposively and randomly sampling method were reached. This helped him to attain 100% response rate as illustrated in Table 2 below. Response rate refers to the percentage of persons asked to answer questions in a given study who actually did answer the said questions as planned. This was deliberately ensured through re-visits to the study area to collect data from the sampled participant who were not able keep their interview appointments during the first visits. In line with qualitative research tradition described by Creswell (2014), this particular study with a sample of 46 participants did not aim to generalize its findings, but rather generate data to produce what Preece and Chilisa (2005) describe as a thick description of the phenomena of interest so as to obtain a fair picture of the state of affairs concerning the impact of REEP on the local population in Nebbi district.

Table 2: Response rate

| Category | Population | Gender | | Totals | Percentages (%) |
|---|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| | | Males sampled | Females sampled | | |
| Project Staff | 14 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 09 |
| Sub County Chiefs | 13 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 13 |
| Project participants and non-participants from 6 Sub Counties | 2,772 | 8 | 28 | 36 | 78 |
| Totals | 2,799 | 13 | 33 | 46 | 100 |

4.3 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

4.3.1 Gender of study respondents

Of the 46 individuals sampled to take part in this study, 33 (72%) were female and the remaining 13 (28%) were males. This was not a surprise to the researcher because of two reasons. First, the main issue of interest in REEP was literacy and experience has shown that men usually tend to shy away from FAL activities; and second, when choosing the former REEP participants and non-participants through moving from one household to another based on a specified formula, it was not easy to find men at home. So most of the persons found at home were women who also happen to be the majority in the literacy classes. However, when it came to the sub county chiefs, there were more males than females. This was because most sub county chiefs are now university graduates and it is most likely that more male university graduates than females who are likely to get more chances to be recruited as Sub County Chiefs. The distribution of the participants by gender is presented in table 3 below.

Table3: Distribution of research participants by gender

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Males | 13 | 28 |
| Females | 33 | 72 |
| Total | 46 | 100 |

4.3.2 Age of study respondents

In terms of their ages, 7% of the research participants fell in the age bracket of 0 - 14, 17% were in the age bracket of 15 - 29, 65% were in the age bracket of 30 – 44; and 11% fell in the age bracket of 45 – 59. No participant fell in the age bracket of 70 and plus. This is illustrated in Table 4 below. This means that the majority of the participants who were randomly sampled for this study were aged between 30 – 44.

This did not surprise the researcher because that age bracket represents the group that is still active and would be interested in developing their literacy skills to actively engage in various livelihoods-related activities that presented themselves in the form of different government programmes in the district such as National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), Poverty Action Fund (PAF); and Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) to all the government's overall goal of Prosperity for All (PFA) in the county. It was also not strange that some studies have found out that women are more likely to be poor and non-literate in rural areas and therefore more attracted a project that focuses on raising literacy levels among the female population in the district.

Table4: Distribution of research participants by age

| Age Bracket | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 0 – 14 | 3 | 07 |
| 15 – 29 | 8 | 17 |
| 30 – 44 | 30 | 65 |
| 45 – 69 | 05 | 11 |
| 70 + | 00 | 00 |
| Total | 46 | 100 |

The fact that only 7% of the participants fell in the age bracket of 14 and below was expected because Uganda is at the moment implementing the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programmes and most of the persons in that age group would not be interested in taking part in adult literacy programmes because they are already beneficiaries in the formal education systems under the two programmes.

4.3.3 Marital status of respondents

As depicted in table 5 below, 63% of the people who took part in this study were married, 17% were widowed, 11% were divorced and only 9% were yet single. This means that the majority of the participants in this study were married. It is also possible that these are the people who fell in the age group of 30 – 44 represented in table 4 and most likely had family responsibilities that were putting pressure on them to develop their literacy skills to participate in government programmes listed above. The small figure of participants who were not married was also not a surprise to the researcher because the population is now being educated and sensitized about the dangers of child marriages and most of them might not have been interested in getting married at that age.

Table5: Distribution of research participants by marital status

| Age Bracket | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Single | 4 | 09 |
| Married | 29 | 63 |
| Widowed | 8 | 17 |
| Divorced | 5 | 11 |
| Total | 46 | 100 |

4.3.4 Level of Education

In terms of level of education, 63% of the study participants had no formal education, 15% stopped at Primary level, 13% had attained University education and only 9% had attained tertiary education. The large figure for the participants who had no formal education is understandable because REEP was meant to benefit the rural poor who had never gotten the opportunity to study and the 15% figure for those with primary education is attributable to the fact that in rural areas most people tend to drop out of school at primary level of education. The 13% of the participants had University degrees because they were mostly sub county chiefs who

were University graduates, which is the minimum qualification for the job in the present Uganda. The distribution of the study participants in terms of their education is reflected in table 6 below.

Table6: Distribution of research participants by level of education

| Level of Education | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| No Formal Education | 29 | 63 |
| Primary Education | 07 | 15 |
| Secondary Education | 00 | 00 |
| Tertiary Education | 04 | 09 |
| University Education | 06 | 13 |
| Total | 46 | 100 |

4.3.5 Languages spoken

With regard to the number of languages spoken, 65% of the study participants could only speak their mother tongue (Alur), 22% were able to speak more than two languages and only 13% could speak two languages. This means that the majority of the participants could only communicate effectively using their local language and those who were able to speak more than two languages were those with University degrees who had studied outside their districts and were in position to speak another language in addition to English. Those who spoke only two languages indicated that they were only able to speak their mother tongue and English. The issue of language was important in this study because language plays important role in the learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy. The distribution of the participants in terms of the number of languages they spoke is reflected in table 7 below.

Table7: Distribution of research participants by languages spoken

| Number of Languages Spoken | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 30 | 65 |
| 2 | 06 | 13 |
| 3 + | 10 | 22 |
| Total | 46 | 100 |

4.4 Relevance of REEP

The research question that was formulated to establish the relevance of REEP was: To what extent did the REEP activities suit the priorities and interests of the target group and the funders in Nebbi district? Much of the data used to answer this research question came from ten key informants and four focus discussion groups. These were complemented by evidence obtained from reports.

All the ten key informants and participants in the four focus groups indicated that REEP activities were relevant and in line with the needs of the local people in Nebbi district. Evidence from documents analyzed and activities observed seemed to have supported this point. This was because one of the main problems facing the communities in Nebbi district that REEP was designed to respond to was the issue of illiteracy among the women. Because of this challenge, REEP aimed to equip its beneficiaries, the majority of whom were women, with literacy and numeracy skills through running literacy classes which revolved around the daily activities of the women. When the participants were asked to describe the activities they were involved in using their own words, the most common words that the researcher picked included: important, necessary, essential, useful, interesting, inspirational etc. When they were asked to give a specific response to the question as to whether the activities of REEP were relevant, one of the participants in the focus group discussions expressed the programme's relevance as follows:

At community level, REEP has been embraced and supported. It has played a key role in reducing illiteracy, improving civic competenceies and increasing rural household incomes for the people. In fact, it has gone a long way in reducing domestic violence that

arose out of suspicion and misinformation among household members which used to be a big problem for women in homes.

This means REEP played an important role in the lives of the people in the area and can therefore be said to be relevant. In fact, the project was responding to the real needs of the local people in Nebbi district and also addressed an area of strategic interest to the funders, that is, to reduce illiteracy among women, develop human resources with particular focus on gender and contribute to the Millennium Development Goals on education in Uganda.

Data obtained from the annual report prepared in 2012 indicated that the first target group of REEP was illiterate young adults, mainly female, in Abanga, Jangokoro, Kucwiny, and Atego Sub Counties. The second target group in the above Sub Counties was boys and girls for moral education and community service. By focusing on addressing the challenge of illiteracy among women and moral education, as well as community service among girls and boys, REEP was really aiming at meeting the immediate needs of the members of the community and was therefore relevant.

Literacy activities for the communities became the best strategy to address the problem facing the communities. Figure 2 below in which a group of women are displaying the literacy materials they were using to learn literacy and numeracy skills is a further proof of the relevance of the project. This is also reflected in the way the teaching and learning of literacy was structured or built using activities that mattered most to the women and helped them to meet their immediate needs in their context. A typical example of this is seen in structuring literacy and numeracy

learning around village saving scheme to help participants gains skills of borrowing and returning money, as well as keeping records of the transactions they were involved in as shown in figure 2 below.

Further evidence of the relevance of the programmes was reflected in the range of activities outlined in the workplan of UPLIFT, some of which included: training of mentors and local coordinators, tree planting, community meetings to discuss issues that were pertinent to them, and establishing resource centres for the local communities to access information and share knowledge.



Figure 2: Literacy learners display materials that they had been using to learn the skills needed for maintaining their village savings scheme.

As seen in figure 2 above, the literacy teaching and learning materials being used also seem to be appropriate and relevant for the context.

4.5 Effectiveness of REEP

The research question that sought to establish the effectiveness of REEP was: To what extent were the REEP activities able to lead to the realization of its set objectives? Data gathered to answer this research question came from key informant interviews, FGDs, observations and analysis of available documents. Information obtained from the above sources showed that the activities of REEP did contribute towards the realization of the objectives REEP was designed to pursue. For example, there was evidence showing that literacy classes were run to increase literacy levels of the people which would in turn contribute to the MDG on Education. Data obtained from Semi-Annual Report 2012, indicated that UPLIFT Uganda, which implemented REEP together with NorSED provided literacy training of 75 sessions to 1,650 individuals, provided moral education to at least 500 boys and girls, and sent 5 girls to a 9month's tailoring course in Nebbi and Zombo districts.

Through enrolling women into the literacy classes, REEP was already developing human resources with particular focus on women; and building institutional capacity had been done through forming Community Based Organization (CBOs) and organizing community meetings. All the ten key informants explicitly acknowledged that the FAL classes in which majority of the participants were women did take place. A typical example is as depicted in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3 FAL session in Padoch Parish Panyango Sub County

In addition to participating in FAL classes, the women participating in FAL were involved in Village Savings and Cooperative Societies that were later registered as CBOs. This position was equally confirmed in all the four FGDs held with the participants. Indeed when the researcher went to some of the villages he was able to see some of the FAL classes. Also the fact that almost all the participants in Figures 3 above and 4 below are female is another proof that REEP was indeed realizing its set objective of developing human resource with deliberate focus on gender. It can therefore be said that to a great extent, REEP activities did meet the needs of the local people and were therefore meaningfully contributing towards the realization of the MDG

related to increasing the number of literate people in the community by 50 % by the year 2015. This according to the report, was to be done through graduating at least 1000 learners every year.

4.6 Efficiency in REEP

The question that the researcher formulated to establish the efficiency of REEP was: How efficient were REEP activities in using the least costly inputs to produce its expected outputs? Data to answer this research question came from direct observations, responses from key informant interviews and from the FGD. A consensus emerged that REEP was efficient because its activities used the least costly inputs during its implementation. According to data provided by the key informants, REEP mainly relied on local facilitators and used local languages as the medium of instruction during the literacy classes, as depicted in figure 4 below. The instructors also largely depended on local literacy materials to enhance teaching and learning of the literacy and numeracy skills.

A closer look at the papers and texts the participants were using in the course of the literacy classes indicated that the materials were translated into local language and the whole process of learning and teaching was conducted in vernacular instead of a foreign language. Using materials in local language and instructors picked amongst the local people was an indication that the cost of materials and labour/resource persons were cheaper than if the project had hired foreign resource persons or materials. For example figure 4 shows a local instructor training the literacy participants on flip charts; and most likely the things being written on the flip charts was in the local languages of the learners. To prove this point, one of the participants had this to say:

As a community based literacy programme, we are very happy because all the activities are conducted in the local language (Alur) including our Functional Adult Literacy class

sessions. This is because most of us who joined the programme have either never been to school or have never smelt the inside of a classroom, or completed formal education joining, hence can only comprehend in Alur.

Another participant in one of the Focus Group Discussions was also quoted as saying:

The use of local manpower to facilitate teaching in the literacy classes and activities has made it easy for the project to attract more participants. Our FAL instructors are got from within the community, and so are the skills trainers. Since we come from the same area, this helps us avoid paying expenses of transport or accommodation in the course of skills learning.

The advantage of using local resource persons was further echoed by one of the key informants as follows:

UPLIFT's approach of using the local language of the people (Alur) and the local resource persons as mentors has greatly facilitated the acceptance of the project among the community members. This approach has also led to continuous increase in enrolment of learners as they can easily associate with their mentors who are picked within the community. It has helped to solve the problem community members would face by having to leave their homes to go and study far away.

All the above expressions point to the fact that the activities of REEP were implemented efficiently by using the least costly materials or inputs. For example, when one looks at figure 4 below, the project managers could have chosen to build a complicated house with white boards, glass doors and windows and use expensive materials. However, to save costs, the learning and

teaching of literacy and numeracy took place outside in an open environment and using very simple and cheap materials that are readily available in the country.



Figure 4 A local facilitator taking learners through practical session in a FAL classe

Efficiency in REEP which was funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation to the tune of NOK 1,340,000 can further be seen in the statistical summary of 2014 which

demonstrates how UPLIFT handled the literacy training programmes in terms of the different aspects as reflected in Table 8 below.

Table 8 West Nile End of Course Statistical Summary 2014

| Districts | Number enrolled | | Drop outs | | Number completed | | Number attended exams | | Number certified | | Number died | | Number of trees Planted |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | |
| Nebbi | 652 | 236 | 00 | 00 | 650 | 236 | 650 | 231 | 622 | 228 | 01 | 00 | 4435 |
| Zombo | 506 | 363 | 01 | 01 | 505 | 362 | 505 | 362 | 482 | 349 | 00 | 00 | 4345 |
| Sub Total | 1157 | 599 | 01 | 01 | 1155 | 598 | 1155 | 593 | 1157 | 577 | 01 | 00 | 8780 |
| Grand Total | 1756 | | 02 | | 1753 | | 1748 | | 1681 | | 01 | | 8780 |

Source: Adapted from UPLIFT-Uganda statistical summary 2014

One interesting thing about table 8 above is the fact of all the persons who enrolled for the literacy training in the two districts, only two dropped out. This seems to confirm the idea discussed above regarding the use of local facilitators who were picked from within the community, the use of the learners' first language, the use of local literacy materials and the natural environment as having been the least costly inputs while implementing the project. Using the statistical summary in table 8 above, it can therefore be said that the implementation of REEP was efficiently done using the least costly inputs to realize its set objectives.

4.7 The Impact of REEP

The question that sought to establish the impact of REEP was: What are the intended and unintended long-term changes that resulted from the outputs or services produced under REEP? When the key informants were asked to point out whether REEP had given rise to some unintended effects on the population, some indicated that there were certain things that they never anticipated but came up as a result of the implementation of REEP in the area. One

prominent thing that came up in Focus Group Discussions and was observable in all the groups was the issue of lack of gender balance in the FAL classes. However, when the participants were asked whether REEP discriminated against men, one of the members in Focus Group Discussions offered this answer:

I think REEP is an inclusive and all community focused project which was intended to reach all the illiterate persons in our Sub County, but as you may know the nature of Alur society; men, they feel too superior that they are better than women and as a result do not admit their inadequacies especially when they are to be combined with women in a literacy programme like this brought to us by UPLIFT.

The absence of men in the FAL classes was therefore explained in terms of the attitudes of men have in the Alur society. Consequently this led to decline in the enrolment of male learners in the FAL classes as men tended to either stay away or dropout of the classes and yet they equally face challenges with their lack of literacy in carrying out their activities.

However, when they were asked to state the positive side of REEP, they mentioned a number of things such as: opportunity to freely participate in community meetings as seen in figure 5 below, the emergence of village savings and cooperative societies, a feeling of being somehow liberated as seen in some members standing for some positions in Local Council I elections, formation of groups that were later registered as CBOs etc.

When the FGD participants were asked to be specific, they for instance pointed out that 9 women's groups had transformed themselves into CBOs and were now able to access further assistance from other agencies which they were not able to do before participating in REEP

activities. The key informants also indicated that 6,910 participants had become functionally literate in the district, which was a big boost in terms of human resource development. When asked which other Organizations were supporting the CBOs that had emerged, the women mention Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD) and West Nile Private Sector Foundation.



Figure 5: One of the groups attending community meetings focusing on issues affecting them in Pacego parish, Panyango Sub County

When the participants were further asked what the main impact of REEP in the community was; one of the key informants said:

There has been a general feeling and call within the communities that the programme be expanded to cover the entire SubCounty. This is because we have seen it has empowered communities to actively participate in other programmes introduced by the government and other non-governmental organizations. In my view, this is good because it is changing the living conditions of the members of the community in our Sub County.

Another old man in one of the focus group discussions on his part cited the issue of education and said:

REEP came to us as a blessing because many of us at our age did not go to school as the only school was very far away. During our times, one had to travel long distance to access education and as such very few people had the opportunity to attain basic education. As a result, people currently above the age of 40 – 60 have had limited access to education, especially the women as priority to go for education in the family those days had always been given to the boys as opposed to the girls. To me REEP's coming was a very big relief for the people of Nebbi district, I really like it.

Another lady in one of the focus group discussions mentioned the issues of reduction in gender inequality and had this to say:

One difference I have seen after REEP was brought to us is the gradual reduction in gender inequality. I think gender gaps are slowly closing among the target groups in the Sub County. I say this because through the literacy programmes women are increasingly beginning to realise and claim their rights. This has also helped to make the level of domestic violence in the homes go down over the last three years. Care for the family and domestic chores are now being distributed equally among men and women and boys and

girls, and this used to be a very big challenge in our community. Both boys and girls are now been given equal opportunity in education and primary health care by the parents, which was not the case in the past.

According to another FGD participant, another unexpected but very positive change REEP was able to bring about was related to the issue of environment protection. He said:

I have been seeing our environment changing because of deforestation and was getting worried about it and yet nobody seemed bothered about it. However, when REEP came here, it has started having a very good effect on our environment, in that it initiated an idea of planting trees to mitigate environmental degradation. I was told that to date, the project has planted over 25,359 seedlings in Nebbi district, these are both fruit and wood trees which in the nearest future will lead to increase in income levels and provide nutritious food for the local people in Nebbi. I praise REEP for that.

So it can be said that REEP really had many positive impact on the population in Nebbi district as described variously above.

4.8 Sustainability

The question that was asked regarding the sustainability of REEP was: To what extent have benefits from REEP activities continued or are likely to continue after funding from NorSED was withdrawn? This question generated mixed responses from participants of focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Majority of the participants in the Focus Group Discussions expressed concerns and fears about continuation of their activities; arguing that lack of funds was threatening the existence of their groups and activities. Some pointed out that the

FAL classes were even diminishing in number because of lack of motivation for facilitators. Others said that since funding from NorSED ended, it had become difficult for them to continue because in some cases participants are asked to make contributions, which is very difficult to afford.

However, the key informants differed on the issue of sustainability of REEP, arguing that a number of things had been put in place to ensure that the activities continue beyond the NorSED funding. They for instance cited the training of mentors in the communities to continue with the literacy classes, the initial instructors remaining to work as volunteers on the programme; and transforming the women's groups to CBOs as one of the strategies that were put in place to ensure sustainability. For example a key informant working with one of the sub counties said:

The respective sub county local governments of Kucwiny, Atego and Ndhew have provided additional support to the FAL groups that started under REEP with specific targets from projects like the Community Driven Development, National Agricultural Advisory Services and the Youth Livelihood Programme. These for sure will help the interventions to continue yielding benefits for the target groups in the district.

Another key informant talked about the institutional capacity building aspect of REEP and said:

Most of these groups which were formed have registered with the local governments as community based organisations and integrated the village saving (VLSA) initiatives in their activities that has kept the members together over the time. This approach has further increased on activities of FAL groups, empowered them economically and

increased on membership as well as led to creation of more similar groups in the communities.

One last aspect of sustainability participants pointed out was that a number of other NGOs working in those respective sub counties had started using the FAL groups as entry points for their own interventions including recruiting the learners as community monitors, using them as resource persons and agents of change in the community. According to them, these would help to ensure that the outcomes of the projects are sustained and expanded beyond the original expected scope.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented, analyzed and interpreted the key issues that emerged from the study. In this chapter, the findings from the study are discussed to pave way for drawing conclusions and making recommendations. The first part of the chapter presents a summary of the findings to guide the discussions that follow. The second part discusses the findings to facilitate the process of drawing conclusions. In the third part, the conclusions are used to make recommendations. The last part highlights the areas recommended for further research. The following section presents a summary of the findings from the study.

5.2 Summary of the key findings

The analysis and interpretation of data for this study collected using multiple sources and methods as recommended in qualitative research tradition yielded the following results about the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of REEP:

- a) The project was relevant and addressed the immediate needs and strategic priorities of the target group and the funders in Nebbi district,
- b) The activities facilitated the achievement of the objectives for which REEP was conceived and implemented,
- c) The implementation of REEP utilized local resources and the least costly inputs to realize its objectives,
- d) REEP affected the population positively thereby fostering empowerment of women in different spheres of life; and

- e) Although several arrangements were put in place to ensure that the benefits generated by REED continue, there were no permanent strategies to guarantee that benefits of REEP would continue to accrue to the population after the withdrawal of external funding

Hence, the issues summarized above are discussed in detail in the following section to pave way for drawing conclusions and feasible recommendations.

5.3 Discussions of the findings

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the five criteria usually applied in evaluating the impact of development interventions which for this study was the rural education empowerment project implemented in Nebbi district from 2007 to 2009. These are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

5.3.1 Relevance

Relevance of a project or programme refers to the extent to which its objectives are continuously consistent with recipient needs and the funder's mandate and the overarching strategies and policies. In this study the question raised was whether REEP activities suited the priorities and interests of the target group and the funders? This means the study aimed to assess whether the objectives of REEP were really in line with the needs and priorities of the target group and the funders. The initial aims of REEP were to equip 6,000 people with literacy skills, reduce illiteracy rates among women and build institutional capacity through forming CBOs. Evidence gathered from various data sources to a great extent showed that REEP indeed appropriately responded to the real needs and priorities of the target group and addressed the strategic interest and mandate of the funders. This was because the main issue of interest to the funder hinged on

education, illiteracy, human resource development and institutional capacity building in the district. Hence REEP was designed in response to these challenges. Consequently REEP aimed to equip its target group with literacy and numeracy skills through running literacy classes which revolved around the daily activities of the women as demonstrated in figure 2 above. In fact, this was in line with the authentic and real literacies materials approach, in which learning activities must be designed around the learners' immediate needs and within the context of their local environment.

Authentic and real literacies materials approach to literacy learning and teaching usually lays emphasis on starting literacy learning with what the learners have and know before moving to what they do not have and know. It uses local materials, ideas and informal knowledge and practices of the literacy learners to enhance the teaching and learning of literacy (See Rogers, 1999; Ngaka and Masagazi, 2015). Seen from this perspective, it is probably safer to conclude that REEP activities were relevant because they met the real need of the learners; were framed around what the learners knew and were doing on daily basis; and perfectly suited the priorities and strategic interests of the key stake holders. Since poverty and illiteracy among the women were some of the major concerns of the funders, the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy had to be designed in a way that it attracted many women and focused on issues like village saving and cooperatives in which the women were involved on daily basis to meet their immediate needs.

5.3.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in any given project refers to the extent to which a project or programme achieves its objectives and outcomes. Hence the question posed in the case of REEP was whether its

activities were able to lead to the realization of the objectives the designers set for it to achieve. Judging from findings based on multiple sources of the data, REEP was effective. This is because it was designed to contribute to the MDG on education through running adult literacy classes, develop human resources with focus on gender, and build capacity of local institutions in the district. If human resource development (HRD), which was an important aspect of the project, is defined as the integrated use of training, organizational development, and career development efforts to improve individual, group, and organizational effectiveness, then it is safe to say that REEP did attain a reasonable degree of effectiveness. This stand is based on the fact that REEP offered a framework for helping people develop their personal and organizational skills, knowledge and abilities that would in the long run develop human resources and at the same time build capacity of local institutions in the area. This was reflected in the number of people who graduated from the FAL classes, the number of women who benefitted from the literacy projects and FAL groups that were formed and subsequently transformed into community based organizations as a result of the efforts of REEP. From practical point of view one can say that REEP did realize its objectives.

5.3.3 Efficiency

Efficiency in the context of a project refers to a measure of how resources or inputs such as funds, expertise, time, land, materials etc. are converted into outputs using the least possible cost. In this particular case, the question the researcher raised was whether REEP used the least costly inputs to produce its expected outputs. To arrive at the answer to this question, the researcher compared what REEP was able to do with available resources within its disposal with what it could do with the same consumption of resources differently. This comparison was important because efficiency usually serves as a determinant of productivity. To attain efficiency, the

managers of REEP looked at the available resources within their reach that they could use to implement the activities at the least possible cost and compared them with other alternatives and decided to focus on local resources to attain that efficiency. For instance, emphasis was laid on using the natural environment, local facilitators selected from among the community, local language of the people and literacy materials that were readily available locally. In that way, it can be said that the activities of REEP were efficiently implemented because the project designers and managers emphasized the use of local resources to realize its set objectives.

5.3.4 Impact

Project impact is defined as the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term economic, environmental and social change(s) produced or likely to be produced by a project; directly or indirectly, intended or unintended, after the project has been implemented. Baker (2000) points out that despite the billions of dollars spent on development assistance each year, there is still very little known about the actual impact of projects on the poor. This therefore means that continuous attempt must be made to assess impact of development interventions, including literacy projects. In this particular case study, the question the researcher raised was: what intended and unintended long-term changes (both positive and negative) had resulted from the outputs or services produced under REEP? The answer to this question is very important because the knowledge gained from impact evaluation studies provides critical input to the appropriate design of future programs and projects (Baker, 2000).

When key informants and participants of the focus group discussions in this study were asked about the negative impact of REEP, nothing specific came out. However, when they were asked to point out things they never expected would have happened in their environment but later

emerged after REEP, two issues emerged namely: the conspicuous absence of male participants in FAL classes and the efforts to conserve and protect the environment. The lack of male participants was a negative impact attributed to the cultural norms, values and practices among the Alur people, in which men tend to think they are superior to women and do not want to equate themselves with women and yet they too, were suffering from lack of literacy. It was seen as an impact of REEP because it only became apparent when the UPLIFT started the literacy classes and participants began to openly talk about gender inequalities in their society. On the other hand, the management issue was an unexpected positive impact because for a very long time the issue of environmental degradation had been going on and no one was bothered about it until REEP started the literacy classes and embarked on the campaign to plant trees in the area.

When the research participants were asked to talk about the positive aspects of the project, they mentioned many things. These included: the opportunity REEP brought for them to freely participate in community meetings, such as the one illustrated in Figure 5 above; the emergence of village savings and cooperative societies, a feeling of being somehow liberated, as seen in some members standing for certain positions in Local Council I elections, and formation of groups that were later registered and transformed into CBOs to operate in the district. The impact of REEP on the population was very empowering. For example, freedom of interaction in the literacy classes seems to have brought back the idea of indigenous education in African traditional context where education was not conducted abstractly in schools, but rather in situated daily life around the fireplace, in the fields, through storytelling, and in other settings around which diurnal activities took place, where all children participated as learners, and all adults were responsible for instruction (Ngaka, et al, 2016). Similarly, the ideas of empowering some women

appears to fit very well with meaning of empowerment that Adams (2008, p. xvi) provides, in which he sees empowerment as the capacity of individuals, groups and/or communities to take control of their circumstances, exercise power and achieve their own goals; and the process by which, individually and collectively, they are able to help themselves and others to maximize the quality of their lives. It is also similar to the view offered by Rappaport (1984, in Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43), where empowerment is defined as “a process; the mechanism by which people, organizations and communities gain mastery over their lives’. Related to the above definition is the view from Mechanic (1991, in Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43) who conceptualizes empowerment as “a process through which individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, and a relationship between their efforts and life outcomes”. These views are very important in this study because the consensus that is emerging about literacy is that it facilitates the acquisition of other skills that are necessary for survival in the present knowledge-based economies (Stromquist, 1992) and is closely related to human dignity, self-esteem, liberty, identity, autonomy, critical thinking, creativity, participation, social awareness, and transformation (Torres, 2006, p. 11). A similar view was also echoed in a study on women’s literacy and health by Robinson-Pant (2001) conducted in Nepal, Asia which found out that adult literacy programme participants developed positive attitudes towards family planning and became more open to speaking up for change in practice. It also pointed out that participants value learning reading and writing for symbolic as well as functional reasons, in preference to receiving health and other development knowledge. It can therefore be said that the positive impact of REEP was very empowering for the community and could possibly lead to the desired socio-economic transformation among the communities in Nebbi district.

5.3.5 Sustainability:

Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of a project or programme are likely to continue after its termination. In this study, the question raised was whether the benefits from REEP activities have continued or are likely to continue after funding from NorSED was terminated in 2009,

It is important to note that sustainability, which Khan (2000) defines as the ability of a project to maintain its operations, services and benefits during its projected life time, is a complicated thing because it has many dimensions, some of which include: logistics, economic, community, equity, institutional and environmental. When the issue of sustainability was raised with specific reference to REEP, many of the participants in the Focus Group Discussions were concerned about continuation of their activities and argued that lack of funds was threatening the existence of their groups and activities. Some pointed out that the FAL classes were in fact even diminishing in number because of lack of motivation for facilitators. Others said that since funding from NorSED ended, it had become difficult for them to continue because in some cases participants had been asked to make contributions, which they found very difficult.

However, the key informants in this study had a different view on the issue of sustainability of REEP. They argued that some arrangements had been put in place to ensure that the activities continue beyond the NorSED funding. Examples they cited included the training of mentors in the communities to continue with the literacy classes, the initial instructors remaining to work as volunteers on the programme; and transformation of the women's FAL groups to CBOs; and integration of Village Saving Initiatives into the activities of the groups. However, the above

arrangement appeared to be temporary and may not necessarily guarantee sustainability of the benefits accruing to the members from REEP.

5.4 Study conclusions

Based on the forerunning discussions, the study draws the following conclusions:

1. REEP as rural community focused intervention was highly relevant. This is because its aims and objectives were continuously consistent with the needs and interests of the local people in Nebbi district, the mandate of NorSED and the Norwegian government who funded the intervention; and the overarching strategies and policies.
2. Since REEP was able to set up literacy classes, attract very many women to learn literacy and numeracy skills, equip them with skills and knowledge they were later using to manage their local community based organizations, the project was largely effective.
3. In the course of implementing the different activities of REEP, emphasis on utilization of the natural environment, reliance on local facilitators, the use of the local language of the target group as the medium of instruction during the literacy classes as well as dependence on authentic and real literacies materials was responsible for the attainment of the required level of efficiency in the project.
4. Notwithstanding the minor unexpected negative outcome of REEP related to lack of male participation in the FAL classes, the project appeared to have enormously contributed to empowerment of the local communities.
5. Although several arrangements were being put in place to ensure sustainability of activities and benefits accruing from REEP, their temporal nature seemed to offer limited guarantee for sustainability for REEP beyond NorSED funding, as seen in the decline in the number of FAL classes.

5.5 Study recommendations

In light of the forerunning conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations which should only be applied to the research area and similar contexts since it was based on a relatively small sample:

1. In order to maximize the relevance of any given literacy intervention, it is important that the planners, designers and managers undertake a serious needs assessment to understand the local environment as well as the root causes of the problems affecting the target group and determine the main interests and overarching strategies and policies of the funders.
2. If future literacy projects are to be effective, the designers and managers must formulate clear goals and objectives that can pass the SMART test. That means the objectives must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound. Short of that, it will be very difficult to see if the intervention is effective or not.
3. For a project to be efficient, designers and managers need to thoroughly analyze the costs and benefits associated with the available resources and strategies in relation to the alternative resources and strategies to arrive at the least costly option to attain the desired project outcomes.
4. For a literacy intervention to bring about a desired socio-economic transformation in the community, a participatory approach with critical and transformational pedagogy that uses authentic and real literacies materials is necessary.
5. Since sustainability is a complex thing with multiple dimensions, efforts to ensure that benefits of literacy projects go beyond the available funding requires an adoption of a results-based monitoring and evaluation so as to document lessons learnt in the course of

implementing the project and gain a holistic understanding of the issues involved in the project's life cycle.

5.6 Limitations of the study

The researcher was aware that the sample for this study would be opposed by those who subscribe to quantitative research tradition because the findings cannot be generalized to the entire population. This became apparent when some of the key informants were very hard to access thus threatening the shrink the sample further and trying to confirm the fears usually expressed by quantitative researchers concerning the small sample for the study which they claim cannot be representative. This challenge was rectified by making sure that each key informant who would not be available for the first visit would be offered two other opportunities before leaving them. If this continued, then such a key informant got replaced by another one. Furthermore, case studies are known for small samples and their main aim is to produce detailed description of the phenomenon of interest in the study and not generalization of the findings to the entire study population (Yin, 1984; Schell, 1992).

5.7 Contribution of the study

The available body of literature on literacy projects indicates that studies that have assessed the impact of development interventions in general and literacy programmes and projects in particular are very difficult to come across. It becomes even more difficult when looked at in terms of northern Uganda. It is the hope of the researcher that the findings from this case study presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed above would contribute towards improving the design and implementation of similar programmes not only in Nebbi but also other districts in similar contexts who want to implement literacy projects to benefit the poor. As Noar (2006)

observes, periodic assessments and adaptation of lessons learnt to ensure that activities are effectively implemented to contribute towards the outputs upon which project outcomes depend help in identifying areas for improvement and realization of the stated project goals.

Secondly, the information provided through the findings of the study will enhance the opportunity to communicate and share the impact of REEP with other stakeholders, which will be critical for public relations, staff morale, and attracting as well as retaining support from current and potential funders as expressed by Hornik&Yanovitzky (2003). The findings will therefore contribute towards answering the key questions for evidence-based policy making namely: what worked, what did not, where, why and at how much?

5.7 Suggestions for future research

This study adopted a qualitative approach and a case study design immersed in an interpretive paradigm to assess the impact of literacy projects on the rural poor in Northern Uganda with specific emphasis on Nebbi district as a case study. Being a qualitative case study, it did not aim to generate findings that would be generalized onto the entire population. It aimed to produce what Chilisa & Preece (2005) call a “thick description of the issues related to the impact of literacy projects on the poor, which according to Baker (2000) have not still been accurately established. Because of this, future research efforts should be directed towards designing a bigger quantitative study whose findings are generalizable onto the entire population to offer a better opportunity for further understanding the real impact of literacy projects on the poor. Another challenge faced in the course of the study was related to access real information on how the budgets were managed. In most case people see evaluation as a fault finding mission, which is not always and necessarily true. This means that a lot needed to be done on management of the

funds as it has a direct bearing on sustainability of a given project. Future research could address this subject in a little more detail.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: WORK PLAN/GANTT CHART - SHOWING THE STUDY TIME LINES



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| ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE COURSE OF THE STUDY | 2015 | | | | | 2016 | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG |
| Continuous and extensive search for relevant and related literature | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Developing a proposal and research tools in consultation with the allocated supervisor | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Effecting corrections in the proposal and research tools as per the supervisor's suggestions | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Presenting and defending the proposal | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Identifying relevant journals for publishing at least two papers from the research process | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Field reconnaissance visit and pre-testing the research instruments | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Field work to collect data | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| preparing and field notes for writing the draft dissertation | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Analyzing field data and writing draft chapters in consultation with the supervisor | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Effecting changes recommended by the supervisor | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Submitting the draft dissertation and preparing for defense and including comments and corrections per the thesis panel | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Submit final thesis to MUST – UTAMU | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clearing with administration and awaiting graduation | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

APPENDIX 2: DRAFT CONSENT FORM



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Iagree to participate in this study to be conducted by Dr. Willy Ngaka, a graduate student of the Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU) (Reg. No. MAY15/PM & E/0403U) under the supervision of Prof. Benon, C. Basheka, which focuses on the Impact of Literacy Projects on Rural Poor in Northern Uganda with specific reference to Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP) in Nebbi District

I do understand that:

- 1) The information I give will be used as part of the data for writing Dr. Ngaka's Master's thesis
- 2) The data will be kept with the highest degree of confidentiality it deserves and that my right to remain anonymous in the course of reporting the findings of the study will be observed
- 3) My participation in the study is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time of my choice
- 4) I am entitled to question anything that is not clear to me in the course of the interview
- 5) I will be given time to understand and where necessary, consult other people about certain points expressed in this document
- 6) In event of wanting to seek more clarification concerning my participation in this study, I can refer to the supervisor of the research project, Prof. Benon, C. Basheka using the contact details of the school as shown above

On the basis of the above clear points, I hereby give my informed consent to take part in the interview that is expected to generate information to realize the set objectives of this study.

Name of the Research participant:.....

Signed..... **Date**.....

Name of the Witness:

Signed..... **Date**.....

APPENDIX 3: DOCUMENTARY REVIEW/ANALYSIS GUIDE



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This guide is aims to guide the process of accessing and analyzing documents related to the Impact of Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP) in Nebbi District on the local population. The review process shall be shall be guided by and tailored to the following:

- Location of the documents and the relative ease of access to the
- Recognizing the type of document accessed
- The generator of the document
- The conditions and circumstances under which the document was generated
- Purpose the document is/was meant to serve
- The contents of the document and the potential target audience for the document
- The language in which the document has been prepared
- The level of the document and its suitability for the present research

In view of the guidelines above, some useful documents to look for shall include the following:

- UPLIFT &NorSED. (2009). Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP) Under the UPLIFT Adult Literacy Program in Uganda: A Midterm Review Report
- UPLIFT Uganda Annual reports from 2010 - 2014.
- UPLIFT Uganda records of minutes of meetings held about REEP
- Some Statistical Summaries and correspondences about the project if available

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS



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1. Introduction

This key informant interview is intended to generate information on the impact of literacy projects on rural poor in Northern Uganda with specific reference to Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP) which UPLIFT implemented in Nebbi District in the period 2007 – 2009. You were purposively selected to take part in this study because of the wealth of experience and knowledge you have accumulated over the years as you interacted with various people and processes in the course of undertaking REEP activities. The information being gathered will be used by the interviewer Dr. Willy Ngaka, a graduate student of the Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU) (Reg. No. MAY15/PM & E/0403U) under the supervision of Prof. Benon, C. Basheka to write his dissertation for submission to the School Business and Management of UTAMU in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Project Monitoring and Evaluation (MPM&E) of UTAMU. Your responses will be kept with the utmost degree of confidentiality they deserve and strictly used for academic purposes. Also note that your anonymity in the course of reporting the findings of the study will be ensured through the use of pseudonyms instead of your real names. Your cooperation on this subject will highly be appreciated.

2. General/Personal Information

FGD date.....

Name of the Group.....

FGD venue..... Number of participants in the group.....
FGD start time..... Number of female participants.....
FGD duration..... Number of male participants.....

3. Educational and Socio-economic Background of the Participants

- Age
- Gender
- Religion
- Marital status
- Village of residence
- Languages spoken
- Etc.

4. Experience in and Knowledge about REEP

- Length of time taken in the project
- Activities participated in
- Mechanism for joining the project
- Languages used in the project work
- Lessons learnt in the course taking part in the project
- etc

5. Relevance of REEP

- The extent to which the project was:
- in line with the needs of the local people
- liked by the people

- appropriate for the environment

6. Effectiveness of REEP

The extent to which the project was able to achieve its set objectives and meet the needs of the people

7. Efficiency of REEP

- The extent to which the project used least costly inputs to successfully implement the activities that were designed to yield benefits or contribute to the outputs

8. Impact of REEP

- What are the long term effects, both good and bad the project has left on the people?
- Were/are there some unintended effects of the project on the people and the environment?
- How has the project affected those who did not take part in it directly?
- What do the local people best remember the project for?

9. Sustainability of REEP

- What has happened or is happening to the benefits the project has been generating after donor funds dried up

10. Any general comment

Thank You Very Much for Your Time and Cooperation

The End

APPENDIX 5: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR BENEFICIARIES



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1. Introduction

This focus group discussion is intended to generate information on the impact of literacy projects on rural poor in Northern Uganda with specific reference to Rural Education Empowerment Project (REEP) which UPLIFT implemented in Nebbi District in the period 2007 – 2009. Your group was purposively selected to take part in this study because of the wealth of experience and knowledge it has accumulated over the years as members interacted with different groups, people and processes in the course of undertaking REEP activities. The information being gathered will be used by the researcher Dr. Willy Ngaka, a graduate student of the Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU) (Reg. No. MAY15/PM & E/0403U) under the supervision of Prof. Benon, C. Basheka to write his dissertation for submission to the School Business and Management of UTAMU in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Project Monitoring and Evaluation (MPM&E) of UTAMU. Your responses will be kept with the utmost degree of confidentiality they deserve and strictly used for academic purposes. Also note that your anonymity in the course of reporting the findings of the study will be ensured through the use of pseudo names instead of your real names. Your cooperation on this subject will highly be appreciated.

2. General/Personal Information

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| FGD date..... | Name of the Group..... |
| FGD venue..... | Number of participants in the group..... |
| FGD start time..... | Number of female participants..... |
| FGD duration..... | Number of male participants..... |

3. Educational and Socio-economic Background of the Participants

- Age
- Gender
- Religion
- Marital status
- Village of residence
- Languages spoken
- Etc.

4. Experience in and Knowledge about REEP

- Length of time taken in the project
- Activities participated in
- Mechanism for joining the project
- Languages used in the project work
- Lessons learnt in the course taking part in the project
- etc

5. Relevance of REEP

- The extent to which the project was:

- in line with the needs of the local people
- liked by the people
- appropriate for the environment

6. Effectiveness of REEP

The extent to which the project was able to achieve its set objectives and meet the needs of the people

7. Efficiency of REEP

- The extent to which the project used least costly inputs to successfully implement the activities that were designed to yield benefits or contribute to the outputs

8. Impact of REEP

- What are the long term effects, both good and bad the project has left on the people?
- Were/are there some unintended effects of the project on the people and the environment?
- How has the project affected those who did not take part in it directly?
- What do the local people best remember the project for?

9. Sustainability of REEP

- What has happened or is happening to the benefits the project has been generating after donor funds dried up

10. Any general comment

Thank You Very Much for Your Time and Cooperation

The End

APPENDIX 6: OBSERVATION CHECK LIST



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In the course of data collection, the researcher will make efforts to observe some of the following things:

- Overt differences between project participants and non-participants
- Participation levels by gender in different community activities such as:
 - Community meetings
 - Political rallies/campaigns
 - Religious functions
 - Adult literacy classes
 - Socio-cultural events
 - Etc
- Physical state of adult literacy learning centres that were established
- Possible impact of the project on the state of physical environment in the project area
- What is happening in different groups that were created
- Different activities women are currently undertaking in their respective CBOs
- Any other strange thing that might catch the researcher's eyes in relation to REEP

APPENDIX 7: CERTIFICATE OF PROOF

MUKOTANI RUGYENDO

P.O. BOX 31178

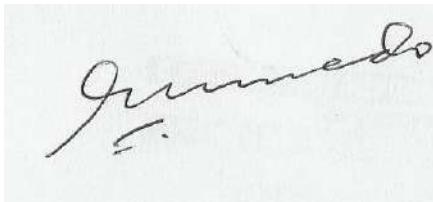
KAMPALA

TEL: 0701707093

27 September 2016

CERTIFICATE OF PROOF THAT DISSERTATION HAS BEEN EDITED

This is to certify that the Master's Degree dissertation entitled, **Impact of Literacy Projects on the Rural Poor in Northern Uganda: The Case of Rural Education Empowerment Project in Nebbi District by Willy Ngaka** , has been reviewed and corrected in order to ensure clarity of expression and consistency regarding key style aspects like general grammar, sentence structure to ensure logical flow and effectiveness of meaning, all-round punctuation, consistency in citation and referencing.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature is cursive and reads "Mukotani Rugyendo".

Mukotani Rugyendo

Professional Editor