EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS IN MONGOLIA

(SURVEY REPORT)
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(SURVEY REPORT)

Ulaanbaatar 2012
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FOREWORD

NFE Enlightenment Centres which organize NFE activities and service at grass-roots level had been established within framework of UNESCO Project “Learning for Life” 1997-2001. As of today, there are 370 NFE Enlightenment Centres and 492 NFE facilitators/teachers conduct various of training on literacy, equivalency programme and livelihood/life skills at national level Those plays a significant role to fulfill goals of EFA and MDGs of Mongolia.

Therefore, reestablishing NFE Enlightenment Centres as CLC in 20 soums of 5 aimags within framework of the Joint Project of Mongolian Government and UN “Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Populations in Mongolia” has shown that of NFE activities could be expanded for community people and adults. As of results of those best practices, requirement has raised to put activity and environment of NFE Enlightenment Centres on new step to give lifelong learning services as a core centre.

In order to do that, we had a need to conduct a survey on conclusion of achievements since establishment NFE sector and current situation of NFE Enlightenment Centres to determine faced challenges and difficulties. Hence, the survey had been conducted by the National Centre for Non Formal and Distance Education in pilot areas of 20 soums of Tuv, Dundgobi and Uvurkhangai provinces within project “Effective Management and Sustainability of Community Learning Centers in Mongolia”. And it is considered that outcomes of the survey will be a rational to define further measurement on NFE.

On the other hand, we hope that conducting the survey, publishing and distributing its report to policy makers, partner organizations and other stakeholders is very important and useful resource for further development NFE Enlightenment Centre still there is no substantial survey and analyses specialized on situation of NFE Enlightenment Centres.

National Centre for Non Formal and Distance Education would like to extend deep appreciation and special thanks to all those involved in this survey, namely the participants, resource persons, organizers and advisors and UNESCO Beijing Office.

Dr. Batchuluun Yembuu
Director,
National Centre for Non Formal and Distance Education
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was conducted by the team set up within the National Centre for Non-formal and Distance Education (NCNFDE), T. Khantulga, Ts. Bayarjargal, Z. Togtokhmoa, and G. Iderjargal, under the guidance of Batchuluun Yembuu, Director of the NCNFDE.

UNESCO Beijing Office not only provided financial support to the study and its publication, but also contributed to improving its quality. Miki Nozawa and Tserennadmid Nyamkhuu especially contributed to restructuring and rewriting of the study report for its improvement. Xu Jieying also assisted at both concept and final review stages. The texts for the section 1.2. General concept of Community Learning Centres (CLC) and international experiences and for the section 4.1. Positive lessons drawn from the project “Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Populations in Mongolia” were contributed by Min Bista and Miki Nozawa respectively.

The English version of the report was edited by Sheila Moultsu..

The Mongolian National Commission played a coordination role at the designing stage of the study and dissemination of its preliminary findings.

Special thanks go to those officers, Non-formal Education teachers and residents, who participated and contributed to the field study involving 9 soums from 3 aimags of the central region of the country, namely Adaatsag, Erdenedalai soums of Dundgobi aimag and Bayan-Unjuu, Lun, Erdenesant soums of Tuv aimag, and Bayan-Undur, Sant, Ulziit, Yesun-ziul soum of Uvurkhangai aimag.

Lastly, it should be noted that the views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of UNESCO.
Lifelong learning is a key underlying principle of education and development at large and is at the heart of UNESCO’s mandate. UNESCO has long been promoting a comprehensive approach to learning throughout life.

Lifelong learning encompasses learning at all ages and includes formal, non-formal and informal learning. Community-based learning through the development of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) has proven to be an effective approach to promote the principles of lifelong learning by reaching out to those who are outside the formal school system.

Mongolia’s experience and efforts in promoting non-formal education activities through its Non-Formal Education Enlightenment Centres, the Mongolian version of CLCs, are noteworthy. These Centres have been established across this vast country and have been providing various learning opportunities to community people, including those in remote and rural areas. However, managing and ensuring sustainability of such Centres, which are set up and managed locally, poses a number of challenges. It is therefore important to review the current status of the CLCs to identify and discuss challenges and to draw lessons in order to move forward.

The report of the study on Effective Management and Sustainability of Community Learning Centres in Mongolia conducted by the National Centre for Non Formal and Distance Education (NCNFDE) with UNESCO’s support, presents an overview of the current situation of these Centres taking into account Mongolia’s specificities. The report highlights the issues of effective management and sustainability with the purpose of building on achievements and addressing challenges.

UNESCO Beijing Office has facilitated the expansion of NFE and lifelong learning in Mongolia through its long-term partnership with the NCNFDE. As a Cluster Office for the Northeast Asian region we are committed to strengthen inclusive approaches to education in Mongolia in the framework of Education for All.

The report provides insights for policy makers, research institutions, educators and other interested parties that should stimulate debate on NFE.

Abhimanyu Singh
Director
UNESCO Beijing
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADRA</td>
<td>Adventist Development and Relief Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>APPEAL</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Program of Education for All</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLC</td>
<td>Community Learning Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>Equivalency Program</td>
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<td>GoM</td>
<td>Government of Mongolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>MECS</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Culture and Science</td>
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<td>MGT</td>
<td>Multi-grade Teaching</td>
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<td>NCNFDE</td>
<td>National Center for Non-Formal and Distance Education</td>
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<td>NFE</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children Fund</td>
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### GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aimag</td>
<td>Administrative unit equivalent to province</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bagh</td>
<td>An administrative unit or subdistrict within a soum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ger</td>
<td>A tent-like traditional dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khoroo</td>
<td>An administrative unit or subdistrict within a city district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soum</td>
<td>An administrative unit or subdistrict within aimag or province</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tugrug</td>
<td>Currency of Mongolia</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study reviews the history and current status of Community Learning Centres in Mongolia, assessing their strengths and limitations in meeting the evolving needs of Mongolia's population. A Community Learning Centre (CLC) supports empowerment, social transformation and improvement of the quality of life of people in the community it serves by providing non-formal education (NFE) and lifelong learning. CLCs in Mongolia are known as NFE Enlightenment Centres (Gegeerel Centres in Mongolian). The study draws on both reports and reference materials (the desk review) and a small scale field study.

The Introduction sets the context for the review by describing the concept of Community Learning Centres, the historical context for their establishment in Mongolia, the relevance of Centres to achieving Education for All goals, and the study methodology. Sections 2.1 and 2.2 discuss the policy, legislative, funding and management issues as they have developed to the present. Services provided by the NFE Enlightenment Centres, the results obtained and the resources used are reviewed in sections 2.3-2.5. Section 3 presents the findings of the field study, while Section 4 introduces lessons from a recent project that worked with a number of NFE Enlightenment Centres and provides recommendations for improvements in the sufficiency, quality and management of centres.

NFE Enlightenment Centres were first established in Mongolia in 1997 to respond to a pressing need to provide literacy and equivalency program (EP) training for out-of-school and drop-out children and youths whose education was affected by the socio-economic transition period of the early 1990s. Centres were initially set up with the support of the UNESCO project “Learning for Life”. The policy and legislative framework for non-formal education and the NFE Enlightenment Centres was also put in place in 1997 in the “National Program on NFE Development”. NFE Enlightenment Centres have been increasingly recognized and incorporated in national policies and legislation concerning education, with funding and service delivery becoming a core responsibility of national and sub national administrations. However, the paper discusses major limitations in the current management and financial structures for NFE Enlightenment Centres.

First, funding levels are insufficient to meet the growing needs of learners, particularly adult learners seeking to improve their income generation skills. Funding for non-formal education as a proportion of overall education spending has risen but is still significantly lower than that for other countries with similar levels of development. Funding is also overwhelmingly directed at only literacy and equivalency programs rather than the full scope of Centre responsibilities, which include adult life skills training and community development. Learning venues, materials and equipment are limited and inadequate and suffer from lack of investment. Even more problematic, there is no secure national source of funding for teachers' training and ongoing professional development, which is currently supported on an ad-hoc basis through different donor driven programs.

Second, mechanisms are weak to ensure both community ownership and active support and participation of local administration. Most local administrations appear to have limited understanding of the role or potential capacity of NFE Centres, leading to lack of funding and support. Centre planning and accountability structures do not effectively reach out to and include local people. These two elements are mutually reinforcing, as Centres may not fully understand or respond to local community needs and development priorities, and are not able to mobilize resources to meet those needs. Individuals who have participated in NFE Enlightenment Centre training are positive about the benefits to them, but this has not translated to wider awareness.

It is noteworthy that NFE Enlightenment Centres have had a significant and enduring impact on literacy and educational attainment for Mongolians, particularly for those adversely affected during the economic transition of the 1990s. Access to non-formal education has made it possible for school
drop-outs to rejoin the formal school system or complete their education, and Mongolia's high level of general literacy has been regained.

The challenge for Centres now is to be as relevant and to have as strong an impact for adult learners seeking to improve their livelihoods and their level of involvement in the economic and social development of the society. Where centres have had the support and resources to deliver relevant and timely training, learners have benefitted. There are excellent models of community involvement, where skilled local residents are able to pass their knowledge on to others through the NFE Enlightenment Centre, garnering respect for themselves and direct benefits for learners. The potential for Centres to act in concert with other organizations to respond to community needs in health and economic development has been demonstrated in the UN joint project described at the end of the study.

The study concludes with a set of recommendations based on the findings of the research, as well as on practical, working examples and lessons learned over the past decade and a half of experience in Mongolia. In summary, the recommendations call for:
1. Continuing to improve the policy and legislative basis for non-formal education, including integrating all elements of lifelong learning into a comprehensive policy, and focusing attention on implementation of policies.
2. Building a stronger financing basis for non-formal education and the NFE Enlightenment Centres by increasing budgets and incorporating stronger monitoring and evaluation to ensure that funds are used effectively and that services respond to needs.
3. Strengthening administration and management of NFE Enlightenment Centres through improved clarity on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, and by including a wider range of partners for non-formal education.
4. Improving the knowledge and professional skills of NFE teachers through introducing minimum standards for qualification and supporting ongoing in-service training.
5. Raising public awareness of NFE Enlightenment Centres as source for lifelong learning that is relevant to people at every stage of their lives, and for local development.
6. Increasing public participation in planning and delivering NFE Enlightenment Centre services.
7. Improving data collection and documentation through the use of standardized formats and data management systems for NFE Enlightenment Centres, and improved capacity of all staff to collect, analyze and apply relevant information.
I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

At the beginning of the transition period from a centrally planned economy to a market-driven one, from the late 1980s to the early 1990s, many pressing issues emerged in the education sector in Mongolia. The relatively high level of educational attainment achieved in the pre-transition period suffered from the decrease in investment in the sector and the school drop-out rate reached a high of 8.8 per cent during the academic year 1992/93. This decreased steadily to 3.8 per cent by the academic year 1996/97 as a result of the economic recovery and education system reform efforts. However, it was very likely that children who had dropped out of education during the earlier period would have matured as illiterate and undereducated adults. The necessity of meeting the needs and demands of education for both children and adults outside the formal sector was recognized. To meet this need, Community Learning Centres, popularly known as CLCs, were introduced in Mongolia in the late 1990s.

CLCs have been established in many countries in order to respond to the need for non-formal education (NFE) and lifelong learning. The purpose of a CLC is to promote human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to everyone in the local community. CLCs support empowerment, social transformation and improvement of the quality of life of the people. CLCs, called Non-formal Education (NFE) Enlightenment Centres or Gegeerel Centres in Mongolian, have existed in Mongolia since 1997. There are currently 370 active NFE Enlightenment Centres throughout the nation. When they were first established, NFE Enlightenment Centres served mainly to provide literacy and equivalency program (EP) training for primary and basic education for out-of-school and dropout children and youths whose education was affected by the socio-economic transition period. NFE Enlightenment Centres are recognized for effectively addressing the challenges faced by school drop-outs and illiterate populations through EP and literacy training in recent years.

Today, new needs and demands for training and activities for adults have arisen, particularly for adults living in rural areas, such as nomad peoples who herd in remote areas with seasonal movements. Providing these people with socio-cultural services and helping them participate in local development has been increasingly recognized as contributing to improved quality of life. It is considered that NFE Enlightenment Centres can play an important role in meeting these new needs and demands. This study has been conducted with the objective of improving the capacity of the NFE Enlightenment Centres by identifying their challenges and obstacles, reviewing management and sustainability issues, and developing recommendations that disseminate good practices of the Centres and strategies to address challenges.

1.2 General concept of Community Learning Centres (CLC) and international experiences

The concept of a CLC is built on the premise that community participation is key to empowering communities and addressing local development challenges. It recognizes that local people are best prepared to identify their problems and seek solutions. Externally supported community initiatives have failed many times due to inadequate community involvement. Drawing from painful experiences of community development in the past, the CLC initiative puts local communities at the heart of local development efforts. The initiative also responds to the failure of the formal education system to meet the diverse learning needs of different types of learners. For instance, the formal system can only meet the learning needs of certain types of learners, mostly children and youth, who can afford to attend formal institutions. The irony is that schools may not be able to serve those who do not...
meet the requirements of formal systems. The CLC thus provides an alternative and efficient mode of delivering service at the community level to those who are less likely to be served by schools in the formal system. In countries where the formal educational infrastructure is weak at the community level, especially in serving marginalized and underprivileged populations, CLCs have been a major provider of educational services.

UNESCO defines a CLC as a "local educational institution outside the formal education system, for villages or urban areas, usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of people's quality of life". So, a key concept in CLC is that learning can take place outside the formal system to meet the needs of different types of learners. This learning is not always aimed at certification or to earn academic recognition; it is intended to improve the quality of life of learners by equipping them with knowledge and skills relevant to their needs.

The Community Learning Centre may be a new concept but it must be recognized that indigenous systems of educating people and mobilizing local communities have existed for a long time in every society, including in the Asia-Pacific Region. Drawing from these experiences as well as the results of small scale pilots launched in the 1980s, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Program of Education for All (APPEAL) started the Community Learning Centre (CLC) project in 1998 to develop effective community-based non-formal education delivery mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific region. Under the project, CLCs were established in many countries with UNESCO's support. The project aimed at institutionalizing CLCs as a key Education for All (EFA) program strategy within the national education plans of various countries.

UNESCO's long involvement in the promotion of CLC has been quite positive. The experience suggests that CLCs can play an instrumental role in promoting human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community. The CLCs have served local communities in numerous ways by organizing education and training activities, providing community information and resource services, initiating community development activities, and providing co-ordination and networking among the various services and entities. Regional and country level evaluation studies have reported that CLCs can be a powerful vehicle of empowering communities and improving the quality of life of people. UNESCO's initial effort has motivated many governments, agencies and even local communities to create CLCs and as a result the CLC movement has taken the shape of a national agenda in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

The definition of Community Learning Centres continues to evolve, particularly in recent years. Initially, CLCs had the role of delivering educational services, in most cases externally designed. Their role was limited to implementing literacy and NFE programs and they often targeted out-of-school children and illiterate youth and adults. In many countries CLCs were initiated in the form of pilots driven or initiated by external agencies and their activities were more short-term, one-off and donor-driven. Some communities created CLCs on a voluntary basis without external support. One key characteristic of CLCs is that for the most part they are located in needy and under-served areas both urban and rural. From these beginnings, CLCs are increasingly becoming community-driven initiatives performing multiple roles including education and training, community development activities, community information and resource services, coordination and networking, recreation and sports, cultural promotion and income generation. CLCs are serving a wider range of learners of all age groups, including young children and elderly people. In many regions, CLCs have launched long-term, sustained activities with system-wide application and impact. In terms of organization, the CLC has been transformed from a single-purpose to a multidimensional/multipurpose organization. While CLCs used to be an externally initiated activity, they are now locally planned, managed and financed grassroots initiatives.

UNESCO Bangkok training materials for education personnel, 1995
A review of country experiences suggests that CLCs are involved in a range of activities to address the local needs. In China, for instance, CLCs are involved in providing community education, literacy education, health care, income generation/poverty alleviation, training/retraining of the labour force and lifelong learning. In Indonesia, CLCs implement activities such as functional literacy classes, equivalency programs, libraries, early childhood care and education, maternity clinic points, culture, sports, and recreation in urban areas and vocational and entrepreneurial skills courses. CLCs in Thailand provide training in sustainable agricultural development and farming, income generation, farm produce management, capital management, community enterprises, public health, traditional healing and treatment, tourism promotion, community forest and water resource management, language, art and culture, folk dancing, traditional music, and martial arts.

Nepal has launched a national drive to set up CLCs in every village. These Centres provide services and training in areas such as preservation of natural resources, the environment and historical places, health, hygiene and counseling, women’s rights, reproductive health, tourism promotion and small enterprise development, construction skills training, support to conflict-affected children, animal raising, small businesses, and agriculture. Bangladesh is another country where CLCs play an important role in providing access to education and vocational training at the basic level, raising community awareness and transforming the lives of community people, especially women and marginalized populations.

A number of factors are known to contribute to the effective functioning of CLCs and these can be listed as follows:

- Local ownership and participation
- Enabling national policies and programs to respond to local realities
- Policy linkages and multisectoral support
- Strong support of central, provincial and local governments
- Strong management
- External support or interventions that help maximize local potential
- Strong social capital (homogeneity and unity among community members guided by similar values and aspirations)
- Multisectoral support with good networking, collaboration and cooperation with different stakeholders.

Despite the positive experiences and lessons learned from CLCs in the region, a number of challenges remain. In many countries CLCs are not supported by or linked to national policies and programs. In some cases, they operate as parallel institutions with separate and/or additional programs not integrated to local development plans and programs. In some countries, CLC programs are too thinly spread and have little impact. Sustainability is a major issue faced by CLCs in almost every country and how to support CLCs and their activities has been on the agenda in most countries.

1.3. NFE Enlightenment Centre development in Mongolia

NFE Enlightenment Centres were first established in Mongolia in 1997 as part of the “National program on NFE development”. NFE Enlightenment Centres were intended to provide educational and training services for remote communities which lacked access to other educational services, and initially concentrated on providing literacy training for adults and educational re-training for out-of-school children.
Between 1997 and 2001, NFE Enlightenment Centres were established in all soums of the country directly under each local governor, with the human and material resources provided by the “Learning for Life” project supported by UNESCO. The project played a key role in introducing the concept of CLCs to the country, but ensuring sustainability after the completion of the project was an issue. When the project was completed in 2001, more than 50 NFE Enlightenment Centres closed and the contracts of more than 100 NFE facilitators were discontinued due to the cut in financial investment. Also, soum administrative authorities changed with each election, making it impossible for NFE Enlightenment Centres to operate directly under the local soum governor. Starting in 2003, NFE Enlightenment Centres have mainly operated under local secondary schools and this arrangement has contributed to improved sustainability of the Centres.

Some NFE Enlightenment Centres were initially established within the framework of another project implemented by a non-governmental organization with support from UNESCO from 1998-2001. These “Information and Research Centres” were established in cultural centres under the authority of the office of the secretariat of each soum governor. The centre staff roles included a specialist (methodologist) for cultural activities, an NFE teacher, several staff in charge of social welfare and sports activities and a manager. The NFE Enlightenment Centres established within this project differed from other NFE Enlightenment Centres in their ability to offer not only educational activities but other cultural and sports related activities. However, due to a lack of financial and management support, this approach, which was practiced in all soums of Uvurkhangai province, several soums of Zavkhan, Bulgan, Gobi-Altai aimags and Songino-Khairkhan districts of Ulaanbaatar (UB) city, could not be sustained and these NFE Enlightenment Centres now operate like others.

At the beginning of the “National program on NFE development” in 1997, there were 56 active NFE Enlightenment Centres, which grew to 358 in 2000. With the end of the investment from the “Learning for Life” project in 2001 the number decreased to 309. Since 2008, the number of active NFE Enlightenment Centres has increased and as of 2011, there are 370 Enlightenment Centres in operation (Chart 1).

![Chart 1: Total number of NFE Enlightenment Centres](image)

Sources: NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009); NFE data base (2011)

These NFE Enlightenment Centres are geographically distributed so that one Centre exists in each soum of the aimags and two or more Centres in cities and aimag Centres with higher populations, as shown in Table 1.

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3 Soum is an administrative unit or subdistrict within aimag or province
4 NCNFDE (2005) Implementation report of national program on NFE development (1997-2004), pg 9, UB
5 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009), Non-formal education sector analysis, pg 41, UB
6 Aimag is an administrative unit equivalent to province
Table 1: Geographical distribution and categories of NFE Enlightenment Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Provinces/City</th>
<th>NFE Enlightenment Center</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Under secondary school</td>
<td></td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Ulaanbaatar</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td>341</td>
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<td>370</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: NFE data base (2011)

1.4. Contribution of the NFE Enlightenment Centres to achieving the Education for All goals

It is well known that non-formal education in coordination with formal schooling can play an important role in achieving Education for All (EFA) goals as it can respond to the needs of people in disadvantaged situations through flexible programs and a range of activities. As such, NFE Enlightenment Centres in Mongolia have made a valuable contribution to accelerating the progress of achieving EFA goals within the country.

NFE Enlightenment Centres support Goal 2 of EFA: “ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality” through the equivalency program (EP). This program provides out of school children, school drop-out children and youth with opportunities to obtain primary, secondary and upper secondary education. The number of participants of EP has been increasing steadily, from 2,839 enrollees in 1997, when NFE started in Mongolia, to 11,668 in 2010. This four-fold increase indicates that NFE has been reaching its target population.

In the academic year 2006/07, out of 8,229 learners enrolled in EP, 6,913 or 84 per cent were school age children. Of these, 63.4 per cent were enrolled to obtain primary education while 36.6 per cent were pursuing secondary education. In 2008/09 the total enrollment in EP increased to 12,319, out of which 9,212 (75 per cent) were school age children, 58 per cent per cent enrolled in primary and 42 per cent in secondary education EP. In 2011, 12,024 children were enrolled in EP training, 5,642 (47 per cent) of them involved in primary education while 1,472 learners (12.2 per cent) obtained a lower secondary education certificate and 815 learners (6.7 percent)

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NCNFDE (2010)Analysis on the provision of equivalency program of basic education, pg. 30-33, UB
acquired an upper-secondary education certificate. NFE Enlightenment Centres attempt to reach out and provide educational services to the children of ethnic minority or those from remote rural areas. For example, the number of school age Kazakh (ethnic minority group) children of Bayan-Ulgii aimag enrolled in EP increased from 79 in 2007/08 to 450 in 2008/09, demonstrating improved access to the program.

Mongolia has achieved significant progress in Goal 2 of EFA: "ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality". The net enrollment rate for primary education in 2010 is 95.3 per cent and for secondary education in 2009 is 82.9 per cent, with a school drop-out rate of 0.8 per cent, shown in Charts 2 and 3. Hence, Mongolia is included in UNESCO's category for countries with "high intake, low dropout and high completion rates, reflecting strong progression through the school system".

Chart 2: Net enrollment rate of primary and secondary education

![Chart 2: Net enrollment rate of primary and secondary education](image)


Chart 3: Drop-out rate

![Chart 3: Drop-out rate](image)

Source: MECS (2011)

NFE Enlightenment Centres support Goal 3 of EFA "ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs" by organizing life-skills training based on the needs of the local community. Training is focused on helping youth and adults to improve their livelihood and expand income generation opportunities. Life skills training make up all NFE Enlightenment Centre programs other than EP and literacy training. Programs include general educational upgrading, livelihood, health, ecology and legislation. Most training is short term. For instance, in 2007, 152,600 people enrolled in educational upgrading training while 12,774 people participated in vocational training.

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8 MECS (2012) Education statistical data base, UB
9 NCNFDE (2010) Analysis on the provision of equivalency program of basic education, pg.36, UB
Improving adult literacy, Goal 4 of EFA\textsuperscript{12}, has been one of the main activities of NFE Enlightenment Centres since their establishment. The number of participants in literacy training increased from 6,995 learners in 1997 to a high of 10,441 learners in 2004. Numbers have declined since then\textsuperscript{13}. In 2011, 5,684 people were enrolled in literacy training. Of these 2,047 (36 per cent) acquired literacy skills and 3,423 (60 per cent) increased their literacy level\textsuperscript{14}. The declining number of people enrolled in literacy training is believed to be a result of the lower proportion of illiterate people in the population as a whole.

Table 2: Literacy Rates, age 10 and over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>1,763,973</td>
<td>2,142,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>204,621</td>
<td>159,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>34,011</td>
<td>36,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>1,729,962</td>
<td>2,106,315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the Population and Housing Census of 2010, 159,726 people or 7.45 per cent of the population over age 10 are uneducated (defined as not having completed primary education) of which 36,519 are illiterate. While the total number of people classed as illiterate rose slightly between 2000 and 2010, the overall illiteracy rate declined despite a significant increase in the overall population. The literacy rates for the over age 15 population is even more impressive, with 2.2 per cent of this group being illiterate in 2000, and only 1.7 per cent in 2010. Despite the overall improvements, the quality of literacy skills is still a matter of concern.

1.5. About the study

Although NFE Enlightenment Centres are well distributed geographically and meet important educational needs of the country, problems such as poor quality, inefficient management, insufficient funding and low community participation persist. This study aims to document the current situation of NFE Enlightenment Centres, determine the underlying challenges and obstacles faced by NFE teaching and administrative staff, develop recommendations to tackle these challenges, and share best practices that can be adopted and implemented by Centres. Most importantly, the study aims to inform policy makers and key stakeholders about the value of adult education. The study presents data and information on current NFE Enlightenment Centre activities, management, partnerships, resources, and community engagement. The study uses data gathered through desk reviews and field visits to build towards guidelines for NFE Enlightenment Centres on policy, management and service delivery to improve community engagement and long-term sustainability.

The desk review included examining official documents, reports, quantitative and qualitative data related to NFE Enlightenment Center activities and services. These included the NFE sector analysis survey conducted in 2008, the NFE electronic information database, and documents related to the “National Program on NFE Development” and the “National Program on Distance Education”. Individuals consulted during the field study included teaching staff at NFE Enlightenment Centres, local administration officials, and local community members. Questionnaires were distributed to NFE teachers, NFE learners and administrative officials. In addition, individual interviews were held with NFE teachers and local officials, local residents were invited to participate in focus group interviews, and site observations were carried out. Findings are reported in this study.

\textsuperscript{12} “achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults”

\textsuperscript{13} National Statistical Office of Mongolia (2011), Population and housing census2010, UB

\textsuperscript{14} NCNFDE (2011) Non-formal education data base, UB
II. CURRENT SITUATION

2.1. Policy and legal environment

The first legislation on NFE was an Article incorporated into the “Education Law” in 1991 confirming that the citizens of Mongolia could obtain education in formal and non-formal settings. This was the basis for developing a non-formal education system in Mongolia. A revised “Education Law” adopted in 1995 stated that the Mongolian education system was composed of formal and non-formal education, reinforcing the development of the NFE system within the country.

The first major policy document that provided direction for NFE was the “National Program on NFE Development”, adopted by the Government of Mongolia (GoM) in 1997. This established the legal environment for NFE Enlightenment Centres as a means to serve the educational needs of the people through delivering non-formal training. According to the program, the main goal of local NFE Enlightenment Centres was to improve the quality of life through organizing literacy training for adults, EP training for out-of-school and school drop-out children and youth, lifeskills training oriented towards increasing the household income, training to upgrade educational level, and vocational training.

The “Education Law” of 2002 specified that NFE Enlightenment Centres are responsible for delivering non-formal training at aimag, UB city, soum and district level and for assisting independent learners. Centres could operate either as an independent centre or an affiliate to other educational organizations. This led to a significant expansion of the number of NFE Enlightenment Centres.

When the “National Program on NFE Development” was approved in 1997, 56 centers were established. Between 1998 and 2002 this number grew to 326. In order to ensure more consistency in structure and activities, the “Model Regulation for NFE Enlightenment Centres” was approved by the 169th order of Minister of Education, Culture and Science in 2003. These regulations defined NFE Enlightenment Centres as educational organizations whose goal is to provide non-formal educational services to local communities, to deliver training, to advocate, to distribute information, and to actively participate in community local development activities. It also specified that Centre services should be “open, continuous and sufficient”.

In 2010, this regulation was revised by the 556th order of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science enabling NFE Enlightenment Centres to be established with the status of an affiliate to secondary schools in soums with population of less than 6,000 residents, to be established as an independent center affiliated to the Secretariat of the Soum Governor in towns with a larger population, and to be established independently or as an affiliate to the Secretariat of the district governor in Ulaanbaatar.

Despite progress made in establishing the legal and policy basis for NFE Enlightenment Centres, full implementation of the policies has not yet been realized. Contributing factors to this gap include:

- While the Model Regulation requires NFE Enlightenment Centre services to be continuous, open and sufficient, in some soums Centres provide only EP training. This is related to funding: while the government supports EP training with an annual budget of approximately US$1 million per year, there is no source of funds for any other training or service. The Model Regulation states that NFE Enlightenment Centre budget share financed through state and local budgets.
projects, donations, aid as well as income and other financial resources specific to each centre. However, local budget support to NFE Enlightenment Centre activities has been insufficient. It may not be fair to blame local administration for this shortfall as they are usually not given authority to allocate the budget at local level. In the last few years, government has been moving to grant local administration greater authority to allocate their own budget which may help increase local administration support to and participation in NFE Enlightenment Centre activities.

• NFE Enlightenment Centres have not been able to meet the responsibilities assigned to them due to gaps in their human and material resources. For example, teachers working at NFE Enlightenment Centres tend to have relatively short periods of employment, either because they are working a few years past retirement from the formal system, or are waiting for positions in the formal system. A study of 458 NFE Enlightenment Centre teachers in 2008 shown in chart 4 found that 62 per cent of teachers had three or fewer years' experience in NFE. Of 4,329 teachers/facilitators involved in training organized by the National Centre for Non-Formal and Distant Education (NCNFDE) in 1998-2010, fewer than 20 per cent have remained employed in NFE Enlightenment Centres.

Chart 4: Working years of the teachers/facilitators of the NFE Enlightenment Centres

![Chart](chart.png)

Source: NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009)

• The low rate of retention for teachers in NFE Enlightenment Centres is attributed to relatively lower salaries, poor reputation and fewer social welfare services compared with teachers in the formal system\(^\text{19}\). Salaries of NFE teacher/facilitators currently depend on the local authority or school director. The average salary may be similar that of formal school teachers, but does not include subsidies received by teachers in the formal system. This is a point of dissatisfaction for NFE teachers. In addition, as of 2008 35-45 per cent of NFE teachers/facilitators are paid by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) such as Save the Children UK, World Vision, ADRA and Ekhel\(^\text{20}\).

2.2. Structure, administration and management

As specified in the "Model Regulations" an NFE Enlightenment Centre can operate either as an independent organization or as an affiliate of another organization. Of 370 NFE Enlightenment Centres that are currently active:

\(^{19}\) NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg. 69, US.

\(^{20}\) NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg. 70, US.
EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS IN MONGOLIA

- 341 Centres are affiliated to educational organizations or formal schools;
- 220 Centres are affiliated to other organizations;
- 9 Centres are established as independent organizations.

The benefit for NFE Enlightenment Centers of being affiliated with secondary schools or educational organizations is that they can rely on the material and human resources available at the formal system schools. Most of these Centers have only one teacher or up to three in soums of aimags with higher populations. The affiliated school can offer monitoring for the Centre’s literacy and EP training and ensuring correspondence between formal and non-formal education by utilizing formal system teachers. An important disadvantage, however, is that association with the formal school system and facilities may actively discourage the participation of adults in training offered by the Centre. It is very difficult for herders, who grew up believing that ‘school is a place only for children’, to see the benefits of training as part of a life-long process of learning.\(^{21}\)

Eight independent NFE Enlightenment Centers are located in districts of UB city and one is in Bayan-Undur soum of Orkhon aimag. These NFE Enlightenment Centers run their activities independently. Their staff members usually include director, methodologist, social worker, teacher, accountant and bookkeeper. The district NFE Enlightenment Centers of UB city operate as service delivery offices for the district governor’s office and report their activities back to them. The NFE Enlightenment Centre of Bayan-Undur soum of Orkhon aimag is considered a branch of the aimag’s Department of Education and Culture. In this Centre, the director is a specialist in the Department of Education and Culture responsible for non-formal education. Independent NFE Enlightenment Centers deliver literacy and EP training as well as life skills training on various subjects oriented towards adults. These Centers are able to offer this additional programming as they have more staff resources than the centres that operate as affiliates to schools.

Of the twenty NFE Enlightenment Centers that are affiliated to other organizations, two operate under the administration of the soum governor. The main advantage of this arrangement is that it is easier to reach herders and adults who would be reluctant to attend a school. However, in these cases the finance and budget of the Centre still pass through a school director. For example, the NFE Enlightenment Centers of Kharkhorin soum, Uvurkhangai aimag and Ulaangom soum, Uvs aimag operate under the authority of the secretariat to the soum governor but the Centre teachers receive their salary from the school budget.

The administration and management of NFE Enlightenment Centers differ depending on their structure. NFE Enlightenment centers that are affiliated to schools or to the secretariat of the soum governor have an “NFE Development Commission” consisting of 6 to 10 people who monitor Centre activities and provide administrative support. This commission is usually made up of the soum governor, director of the secretariat, school director, director of the health care center, school social worker and teachers of NFE Enlightenment Centre. Depending on whether the Centre operates as an affiliate to the school or to the secretariat of the soum governor, either the school director or the director of the secretariat of the soum governor are responsible for monitoring the Centre’s daily operations and providing administrative guidelines. This is shown in Figure 1.

\(^{21}\) NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non formal education sector analysis pg. 30, UB.
However, several surveys suggest that the NFE Development Commissions are not an effective management structure in terms of securing support for the full range of centre services. A survey of 98 NFE teachers in 2008 showed that while school directors on development commissions were rated more highly than soum governors, for both groups the majority were rated as average to poor.

Table 3: NFE teacher assessment of responsibility and participation in NFE Development Commissions, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soum Governors</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Directors</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg. 34, UB

A 2009 survey of 45 NFE teachers found that one in seven respondents said they faced challenges due to poor support from local communities, while only two reported poor support from school directors due to their lack of understanding and knowledge regarding NFE and EP. The overall weakness of participation, and understanding of centre roles and responsibilities by NFE Development Commission leadership contributes to limited budget and support for the centres’ activities.

Independent NFE Enlightenment Centres operate as a department of the district governor’s office. The district governor is responsible for general oversight of centre services while the centre’s director is in charge of coordination and management of its daily activities.

Figure 2: Organizational structure of independent NFE Enlightenment Centres

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22 NCNFDE (2010) Roles and participation of parents and guardians on increase of secondary education’s distribution, Survey report, pg. 57, UB
The governors of bagh and khoroo are responsible for providing support to the daily activities of NFE Enlightenment Centres. They support centres by surveying local population needs, registering participants for enrollment, and distributing information and announcements of the available training. The governors of bagh and khoroo are important in helping centre teachers to reach remotely located households and communities. However, participation and cooperation of bagh governors is similar to that of soum governors. The 2008 survey of teachers showed that only one third of governors were rated as good or very good.

Table 4: NFE teacher assessment of responsibility and participation in NFE Enlightenment Centres, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bagh Governors</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg. 34, UB

In addition, of 150 learners surveyed in the same study, only 9.3 per cent stated that they received information about NFE and Enlightenment Centres through the bagh governor.

These results indicate a need to increase the awareness of soum and bagh administrators regarding NFE Enlightenment Centres and the services they offer. Training provided to administrators in several aimags (Dornod, Uvs, Tuv) in 2008 was effective in raising their awareness and improving the support they gave to NFE Enlightenment Centres, but this training has not been repeated with other aimags due to lack of funds. While it is possible for NFE teachers to actively raise the awareness of the aimag administrators, few teachers have the ability or initiative to carry this out; and the high rate of turnover of aimag administrators means there is little corporate memory.

2.3. Services and target groups

NFE Enlightenment Centre training services are delivered in response to local community needs, and fall into three main areas: literacy; elementary, lower and upper secondary EP; and life skills training. A fourth responsibility for centres is to mobilize local people in development activities for their communities. Finally, these centres are expected to serve all residents of a community, which in practice will mean a main population and a number of target groups.

Chart 5: Number of learners enrolled in NFE training

Source: NFE data base (2011)

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23 bagh is an administrative unit or subdistrict within soum
24 khoroo is an administrative unit or subdistrict within city district
25 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non formal education sector analysis pg. 34, UB.
2.3.1. Literacy training

One of the main objectives of the “National Program on NFE Development” approved in 1997 was to improve the literacy level of the population through NFE Enlightenment Centres which would deliver non-formal training to local communities. During the socio-economic transition period of the early 1990s the main livelihood of most Mongolians was cattle husbandry. When this activity was privatized, it became common for children, especially boys, to stay out of school in order to support their family through herding. By 1999 there were total of 40,500 out-of-school children from 8 to 15 years of age of whom 8,700 or 21.5 per cent had never entered primary level schools. According to the census of 2000, 34,011 or 2.2 per cent of adults over 15 years of age were illiterate. Literacy training was therefore a high priority for both out-of-school youths and adults.

NFE Enlightenment Centres have been delivering literacy education at two levels: primary and re-training. Training curriculum and materials were also developed for each of these two levels. School age children’s literacy training is mainly delivered at schools while adult literacy training is usually organized during the summer in 14 to 20 day sessions. Although these sessions are too short to allow new learners to become fully literate, this schedule best suits their free time, work load and financial ability.

A total of 81,214 people were registered for literacy training during the implementation period of the “National Program on NFE Development” (1997–2004), and 65 per cent of these learners have become functionally literate. The remaining 35 per cent either did not complete training or did not enroll after registration. In addition, because the literacy training usually took place during the summer, many learners did not retain what they learned when they returned the following summer. Nevertheless, it was a considerable achievement that almost 53,000 children and adults became literate or improved their literacy level over the seven years of the National Program. This success was based in part on the availability of approximately 1,000 visiting teachers, who were trained by the “Learning for Life” project from 1997 to 2001. When this project and its funds ended, teacher training became the responsibility of local administrations, which has led to a reduction in the quality and availability of training.

According to the “Law on Administration and Finance of Government Organizations”, starting in 2002 the aimag, district, and soum governor’s “productive performance contracts” are being evaluated on their performance in delivering effective literacy training to local communities and illiterate groups, including enrollment out-of-school children. This has led to an increase in the number of local administrations that fund delivery of literacy training programs within their local area. Specifically, according to section 52.1.2 of the law on administration and funding specifies that “Parliament is to supply services (education, healthcare and others) by contract and through state budget” and section 53.1.2 states that these contracts are made at the level of aimag and UB City governors.

The overall proportion of illiterate people has declined in recent years and illiteracy has been eradicated in a number of soums and local areas. Consequently, the number of summer literacy training sessions and participants has also decreased. For instance, as shown in Chart 5, over the course of thirteen years the number of participants grew from 6,995 in 1997 to a high of 11,561 in 2000 and declined again to 5,505 in 2010.

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26 NCNFDE (2005), Implementation report of national program on NFE development, pg 17, UB
28 NCNFDE (2005), Implementation report of National Program on NFE development, pg 13, UB
29 Undrakh, Ts (2001), Management of distance education, pg 60, UB
30 Aimag is an administrative unit equivalent to province
2.3.2. Equivalency Program Training

Another important goal for the "National Program on NFE Development" was to re-educate the children, adolescents and adults who had never enrolled in school or had dropped out of school in the 1990s. This target group was defined by the "Population and Housing Census" of 2000 as "literate but uneducated" and accounted for 3.2 per cent of the total adult population. In addition to the adult population, in 1999 there were 40,500 out-of-school children aged from 8 to 15. Of these, one third (13,300) had dropped out of school between the 1st and 4th grade.

To meet the needs of out-of-school youth and the adult uneducated population, NFE Enlightenment Centres began delivering primary and secondary education training in 1997. In 2001, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science approved the "Equivalency Program for Primary Education" (159th decree) and the "Equivalency Program for Secondary Education" (283rd decree). These policies established NFE Enlightenment Centres' responsibility for providing equivalency programs for out-of-school youth and adults. From 2,839 enrolled in 1997, this stream has grown steadily and by 2010 there were twice as many learners in EP as in literacy programs, at 11,668 for that year, as shown in Chart 5. The policy basis for equivalency programs has continued to develop, with two decrees by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science in 2005: "Equivalency Training Program for Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary Education" (358th decree) and "Regulations of Equivalency Training Program for Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary Education" (362nd decree). These in turn formed the basis of articles 8.231 and 40.232 of the "Education Law" revision of 2006 which specified that variable expenditures for the learners of EP would be financed from the state budget, starting with the academic year 2007/08.

Improved budget support for EP training has supported growth in this area. Overall this budget support has increased the amount of training to over 10,000 learners annually since 2007/08. Between 1997 and 2010 close to 100,000 learners participated in EP.

Equivalency program learners may subsequently transfer to formal school, although the majority remain in the EP stream. Of a total of 31,566 EP learners enrolled from 2006/07 to 2008/09, 84.5 per cent continued to enroll in EP. The majority of those transferring to the formal system, 2,639 (8.3 per cent of all learners) went into primary grades; 1,366 (5.9 per cent) into lower secondary level grades, and 380 (1.2 per cent) into upper secondary level.

2.3.3. Lifeskills training

Life skills training was the third core program offered by NFE Enlightenment Centres from their establishment. Life skills fall into three main groups:

- promotion of general education and awareness in the fields of economics, ecology, legislation and health;
- increasing household income through developing skills in areas such as baking, hairdressing, beauty, carpentry, felt production; and,

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31 "it is possible to acquire primary and secondary education through non-formal education's equivalency program in order to receive or self learn the education of certain time periods and contents of this program and regulations for its training activities would be approved by a government member in charge of educational issues"

32 "fixed expenditure for government property schools at all levels and gross budget for dormitories of formal secondary schools, vocational-industrial educational centers and part of children garden's meal budget and normative expenditure for each students enrolled in formal and non-formal educational trainings of children's garden and secondary education regardless of its property type should be allocated from the state budget"


34 NCNFDE (2010) Analysis on the provision of equivalency program of basic education, pg. 45-46, UB
promoting and developing individual skills in areas such as self-confidence, time management and decision making.

The content of life skills training offered by centres varies depending on the needs and interests of each community and the availability of teachers, and is usually short term. On average, between 100,000 and 150,000 learners participate in life skills training annually. One example of the type of training offered was a program on “Preventing STDs/HIV/AIDS” delivered over 8 to 12 hours to 4,822 out-of-school children in 2010 and 1,600 teenagers in 2011.

2.3.4. Other activities

In addition to providing training services, NFE Enlightenment Centres are responsible for increasing the participation of local people in community development. NFE Enlightenment Centres act as “Local Community Development Centres” using four main strategies:

a) Mobilizing the community;
   b) needs assessment;
   c) program planning and
   d) implementation and evaluation.

a) Mobilizing the Community

‘Mobilizing the Community’ means changing public awareness and attitudes by improving community members’ understanding of local issues. Tactics such as distributing questionnaires, sponsoring individual and focus group discussions, role playing and public broadcasting are very useful in mobilization. NFE teachers are expected to act as ‘advocator and enlightener’, be able to identify important issues for the communities, and to support members of the community to understand causes and identify solutions. However, few centres are able to fulfil this responsibility. Relatively few community residents may be aware of this role of NFE Enlightenment Centres (one survey found that 76 per cent of those surveyed had not heard of or visited a centre). As well, few NFE teachers have skills and experience in mobilizing the community. Improving teacher skills in this area would be a necessary first step.

b) Needs Assessment

It is very important for the services provided by NFE Enlightenment Centres to respond to the needs of people in their local communities so that learners are motivated to acquire skills and can use them to improve their income and quality of life. However, in practice it appears that NFE teachers lack skills in needs assessment methodology and do not carry out effective pre-training needs assessments. This indicates another area where capacity building for teachers is needed.

c) Planning, choosing and implementing the program

NFE Enlightenment Centres are responsible for planning and implementing training and services based on local needs assessments. As a result of the poor quality of needs assessment, centres do not effectively respond to public needs when planning, choosing and implementing programs.

d) Informative data collection and distribution

Collecting, analyzing and reporting on data such as the educational level of the local community, their needs, services provided by NFE Enlightenment Centres, and the number of participants and their outcomes, is an important responsibility of NFE teachers. However, most teachers lack the ability to do this effectively. They are not sure of which data to collect and lack time and resources to reach out to the majority of households and people. Their limited written communication skills affect their ability to report on the services they provide. Use of standard forms to collect and report on participants, services, and results would be a significant benefit.

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NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg 45, UB.
2.3.5. Target groups

In principle every resident is served by the local NFE Enlightenment Centre. In practice the population served by each centre falls into either the main or special target groups, defined by the type of services received.

The main target group consists of those receiving literacy and EP training. This includes schooldrop-outs, out-of-school children, adolescents, illiterate and semi-literate adults. The special target group are learners participating in other types of training, and includes those who wish to increase their household income with additional skills, unemployed people, women working at home, parents and guardians of young children, disabled citizens, returned emigrants and other community members.36

Data on the learners in the main target group, shown in Table 5, confirm that the majority are school age children between 10 and 18 years old.

### Table 5: Number of learners enrolled in EP training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr</th>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Total number of EP learners</th>
<th>School age children</th>
<th>Learners above 19 years old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Male Female</td>
<td>Total Male Female</td>
<td>Total Male Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>8229 5 162 3 067</td>
<td>6913 4366 2 547</td>
<td>1 316 796 520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>10 069 6 376 3 693</td>
<td>7946 5027 2919</td>
<td>2 123 1 349 774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>12 336 7 888 4 448</td>
<td>9205 5926 3 279</td>
<td>3 131 1 962 1 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>11 668 7 501 4 167</td>
<td>7 240 4 765 2 475</td>
<td>4 428 2 736 1 692</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MECS (2011)

Chart 6: Percentage of learners of school age and of over 19 years old in EP training

However, the proportion of EP learners who are 19 years old and older has been increasing over the past few years, even though the total number of learners enrolled in EP remained similar. This is believed to be related to a dramatic decrease in the number of school drop-outs, and also to the fact that some learners who have remained in EP are now older. For literacy training, as of 2009, 43 per cent were aged 15-23 years old and 37 per cent were 24-49 years old. Only 20 per cent of literacy learners are under age 15.37 These findings suggest that NFE Enlightenment Centre training should be increasingly tailored towards adult needs and life skills oriented courses.

36 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg 52, UB.
37 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis, pg 75, UB
As Chart 7 shows, over sixty per cent of all EP learners are male. This higher percentage of male learners in the informal system reflects parents’ preference for educating girls and to the tendency of male students to drop out to contribute to their family’s livelihood by livestock herding or other work. The majority of learners in the special target group are adults and women’s participation and enrollment is usually higher than that of men.

2.4. Quality, outcome and satisfaction

The quality, outcomes and level of customer satisfaction for NFE Enlightenment Centre services helps determine the potential for future expansion. Outcomes can be divided into direct and indirect outcomes. Direct outcomes are measured by the number of learners enrolled in each type of training, the knowledge and skills gained and whether the learners were satisfied with the training. Indirect outcomes can be assessed on the basis of changes individuals experience after participating in the training, such as improved demean or, behaviour, communication skills, socialization, impact on others, and increases in household income.

The quality and outcomes of EP training is measured in terms of meeting educational standards. Specifically, learners should be able to transfer to the corresponding grade at a formal system school or continue in EP to complete primary and secondary education certification. Of all the learners enrolled in EP from 2006/07 to 2008/09, 15.4 per cent transferred to the corresponding grades of secondary schools. This indicates that the EP training provided by NFE Enlightenment Centres play an important role in ensuring every Mongolian citizen’s right to education.

There is no comparable common measure for the quality and outcome of life skills training, which is mostly delivered on a short term basis. The quality and outcomes of life skills training are usually measured by the number of learners, and their assessment of their satisfaction and knowledge acquisition.

2.5. Resources

2.5.1 Physical resources

Physical resources consist of three elements:
- human resources;
- material resources; and
- information and communication technology (ICT) resources.

NCNFDE (2010) Analysis on the provision of equivalency program of basic education, pg. 46, UB.
a) Human resources

As of 2011 there are 458 teachers working at NFE Enlightenment Centres but only 364 of them are recorded in the non-formal education database. The human resource information presented here is based on the information in the database.

Most teachers are female: 282 (77.4 per cent), while only 82 (22.6 per cent) are male. Most teachers have completed higher education with only 6.5% having completed lower secondary or lower levels. Of the 340 teachers who had completed either higher education or a diploma, 277 (81.4 per cent) had majored in teaching and the remaining 63 per cent had completed other majors such as translation, law, finance, educational social work, psychology, engineering or journalism.

Of the 340 teachers completing higher education or diploma, 251 (73.8 per cent) have a bachelor's degree, 77 have a diploma and 12 have a master's degree.

Two hundred and eighty-six (78.5 per cent) of all 364 teachers work full time at NFE Enlightenment Centres and 78 teachers work there in addition to their main jobs. Of the teachers with other jobs, the majority are teachers (primary and speciality courses) and other professions associated with education (librarian, school manager etc.) while 18 (23 per cent) work in other professions.
The majority of teachers who work part time in NFE do not receive additional pay for this work and tend to focus more on their main job. They often do not have a dedicated classroom for NFE training and may use their main job’s work space (social worker’s room, school manager or dormitory teacher’s room) for NFE. While it is useful for NFE Enlightenment Centres to have a multi disciplinary team of professionals to provide a range of educational services for local communities, it appears that staff assigned to part-time NFE work in addition to their other responsibilities may not be able to do both jobs effectively.

NFE teachers have relatively little work experience, with the majority having less than 5 years’ experience, and only nine per cent having ten or more years of experience, as shown in Table 6.

The short span of most teachers’ careers in NFE is believed to be a result of the limited understanding and awareness of non-formal education by local authorities, communities and individuals and the under-developed social welfare support and low salaries provided for NFE teachers. With half of the NFE teachers having 2 or fewer years of experience, they may lack a solid understanding of their roles and responsibilities, leading to many communities describing them as ‘not performing their job properly’ or ‘acting as a middle man who is used for any momentary task’.

Despite the lack of a coordinated step-by-step approach, The National Center for Non-Formal and Distance Education (NCNFDC) has developed and delivered short term training programs to improve teacher skills. Between 2002 and 2010 nineteen courses averaging 24 instructional hours were delivered to 2,938 teachers and specialists with the support of donor organizations and projects39. However, there is still a need to improve the skills of NFE Enlightenment Centres’ teachers and specialists.

Volunteer activists and subsidiary households play an important role in supporting NFE.

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39 NCNFDE (2011), Implementation report of national program on distance learning (2002-2010), pg. 12, UB
Enlightenment Centres by distributing information to local communities. Improving their effectiveness through increasing their knowledge, skills and capacities is an important role for NFE Enlightenment Centre teachers.

Information available on all 458 NFE teachers shows that most are the only teacher at their centre, suggesting that most centres would not have the human resources needed to deliver literacy, EP and life skills training effectively or provide additional educational services to the local community. Soum NFE Enlightenment Centres usually have only one teacher, but aimag centres may have 2-3 teachers. The independent NFE Enlightenment Centres in Ulaanbaatar (UB) city and Orkhon aimag have a larger staff complement including a director, a methodologist and a number of teachers depending on the number of learners and financing. The Songino-Khairkhan district of UB city has a population of 256,000 which is about 4 times larger than an average aimag. The district grows every year due to in-migration and the rate of school dropouts is high. In 2010 there were 368 illiterate adults and 165 out of school children enrolled in EP training in the district, more than six times the number in an average soum centre. The Songino-Khairkhan district NFE Enlightenment Centre has one director, 2 methodologists responsible for ECE and NFE and 13 teachers of whom 2 are visiting teachers and 2 are part time subject specialists.

b) Material resources
The material resources of NFE Enlightenment Centres include training venues, classrooms, equipment and technology, textbooks and other tools.

Training venues and classrooms: The majority of NFE Enlightenment Centers deliver their training in one to two-room venues serving 20 people located near or in the premises of the organization they are affiliated with.

Independent NFE Enlightenment Centres in the Bayan-Ulgii soum of Orkhon province and in the Bayangol, Sukhbaatar, Chingeltei and Nalaikh districts of UB city have their own buildings with four to ten rooms. Other UB City centres in Songino-Khairkhan, Bayanzurkh and Baganuur districts have two to seven rooms at schools or other education facilities while the centre in Khan-Uul district has two to four rented rooms. NFE Enlightenment Centres of the central districts of UB city each have one classroom at a school located in their districts.

The 341 NFE Enlightenment Centres that are based at schools normally use one room of either the school or dormitory building to deliver training. A few have two to four rooms. However, some of the soums were able to improve their facilities through the UN joint project “Comprehensive community services to improve human security for the rural disadvantaged population in Mongolia” (2009-2012). Under this project rooms were added to 20 soum NFE Enlightenment Centres in five target provinces: Bayan-Ulgii, Dornod, Uvs, Khovd, and Khuvsgul. These centers now have two to four rooms and improved capacity to serve local communities. Two NFE Enlightenment Centres affiliated with schools, in Choibalsan soum of Dornod aimag and Jargalant soum of Khovd aimag, have four to eight room training facilities.

NFE Enlightenment Centres based in the office of the secretariat of the soum governor usually have one to two rooms for training delivery.

In summary, NFE Enlightenment Centres either operate in one or two rooms at their affiliated organizations or, if they are independent, in their own facilities with six to ten rooms. However, the quality of the rooms and facilities is also of interest, with many being of low quality. For instance,
the NFE Enlightenment Centre of Bayan-Undur soum in Orkhon aimag has been operating in an old facility of the local agricultural college which has been declared unfit for use several times by the National General Inspection Agency. The NFE Enlightenment Centre of Songino-khairkhan district of UB city is always under pressure to vacate the rooms they use at the school building and the NFE Enlightenment Centre of Khan-Uul district has had to move at least twice per year because they lack money to rent space.

Training equipment and technology: Training equipment such as radios, TVs, computers and projectors are necessary for Enlightenment Centre services. This equipment is also required for printing training materials to meet the specific needs of a local community, for collecting information and as training tools. The NFE database shows a wide range of equipment held by centres to use in their activities, including computers, LCD projectors, printers, copiers, music players, and cameras, shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Training equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD projector</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD player</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCD player</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead projector</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo camera</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music player</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copier</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NFE data base (2011)

However, with almost 400 Enlightenment Centres in operation, this is a very limited amount of modern training equipment, and not all of it is in use. At the time the information was collected, 9 out of 44 computers were not working. This is seen as one of the main factors constraining the development activity of NFE Enlightenment Centres. Limited improvements are being made with the support of international programs and projects which equip about 10 Enlightenment Centres with computers, printers and other equipment annually.

Conventional training tools such as student desks and chairs, shelves, cupboards and so on are usually donated by schools when the schools replace these items. Table 8 shows that a small number of Enlightenment Centres have vocational and professional training tools and equipment for occupations such as hairdressing, beauty, handphone repair, cooking, carpentry and felting.

Table 8: Vocational tools and equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beauty and hairdressing equipment</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood cutting machinery</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment for handphone repair</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen tools</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing machine</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool combing tools</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NFE data base (2011)

Vocational tools and equipment are essential for Enlightenment Centres’ services to adults, particularly life skills training. One cause of local communities’ limited participation in and support for Enlightenment Centres is directly related to the lack of facilities and tools to provide training which meets community needs, particularly for skills to improve their income. Centres need suitable tools and equipment to provide effective services.

Textbooks and other materials: Adequate supplies and appropriate quality of training materials is one of the most important issues in the training environment. Training materials specifically for NFE Enlightenment Centres were developed by the National Centre for Non-Formal and Distance Education (NCFD), a professional methodology organization affiliated with the Ministry for Education, Culture and Science. Be-
between 2002 and 2010, a total of 751 different textbooks and other printed materials on 181 different subjects, and 420 minutes of audio and video materials on 15 subjects were produced and distributed to Enlightenment Centres. However, this does not begin to meet the needs of students. For example, a single EP training module may be shared by 15 to 25 students while one literacy or life skills training textbook is used by 7 to 13 students. To partially address this challenge some materials have been produced in CD versions which can be used by those teachers and learners who have access to computers. Electronic materials produced to date include texts and video lessons for literacy and life skills and EP modules for primary, lower and upper secondary education. However, there is still a significant shortfall in the quality and quantity of materials available for learners and teachers.

c) Information and Communication Technology

ICT is an important tool for training and other activities. Technologies such as handphones, computers and the internet have become part of daily life. For Mongolia, a country with a scattered population and poor infrastructure, internet-based communication plays an important role in education. Soum schools have been connected to the internet and teachers and students have begun to benefit from access to the world-wide information base. Teachers can also be supported and their performance monitored through the internet. Although relatively few NFE Enlightenment Centre teachers use the internet to communicate for professional development and to report on their activities, as younger teachers move into the field their use of ICT has been increasing.

2.5.2. Financial resources

Financial resources for NFE’s Enlightenment Centres can be divided into two categories: internal and external.

a) Internal resources

The internal sources of funding for NFE Enlightenment Centres are state and local budgets.

State budget: NFE Enlightenment Centres began to be funded by state budgets in 2003. From 1997 to 2003 all expenses related to NFE Enlightenment Centres were funded by the “Learning for Life” project. Starting in 2003 each soum’s NFE Enlightenment Centre was provided with 750,000 tugrugs annually from the state budget. However, this amount was not sufficient to deliver training in all three areas of literacy, EP and life skills. In addition, some local authorities redirected the funds to other priority areas. The existence of state budget support and its significant growth over the past eight years, shown in Table 9, has been critical for ensuring the ongoing presence of NFE Enlightenment Centres.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total education expenditure</th>
<th>Expenditure on NFE sector</th>
<th>NFE spending as a percentage of total education expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>136609.3</td>
<td>430.25</td>
<td>0.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>143573.3</td>
<td>433.25</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>189691.5</td>
<td>469.25</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>243712.2</td>
<td>456.25</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>432980.5</td>
<td>2122.95</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>430533.9</td>
<td>2393.87</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>523949.6</td>
<td>3356.20</td>
<td>0.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>655300.0</td>
<td>4277.02</td>
<td>0.65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009); NFE database (2011)

42 NCNFDE (2011), Implementation report of national program on distance learning (2002-2010), pg. 15, UB
43 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non formal education sector analysis pg 68, UB.
44 MECS (2003) Minister’s 1/3016 decree on “Fund disbursement”, UB
45 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non formal education sector analysis pg. 42, UB
The changes made to the “Education Law” in 2006 requiring that all student costs for primary and secondary education through EP training would be provided by the government budget took effect in 2008. This resulted in an appreciable increase of governmental funding to NFE Enlightenment Centres. Budget support for EP training now accounts for all of the funding received annually by NFE Enlightenment Centres from the government. According to the “Master Plan to develop education of Mongolia 2006-2015”, an average of 1.2 billion tugrugs were planned for EP training from 2008 to 2011 and 1.8 billion for 2012 to 2015. Government support for EP training has also increased the number of children and adolescents who enroll from 8,000 to 12,000.

Table 10: NFE sector expenditure by location and training program (2004-2011) (in million tugrugs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>430,25</td>
<td>433,25</td>
<td>469,25</td>
<td>456,25</td>
<td>2122,95</td>
<td>2393,87</td>
<td>3356,20</td>
<td>4277,02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For NFE in UB districts</td>
<td>160,0</td>
<td>160,0</td>
<td>160,0</td>
<td>160,0</td>
<td>200,0</td>
<td>112,7</td>
<td>144,0</td>
<td>152,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For EP training</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>1599,70</td>
<td>1204,90</td>
<td>1590,93</td>
<td>2118,80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For literacy training</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>33,0</td>
<td>20,0</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009); NFE data base (2011)
Note: *no allocated funding from state budget.

For NFE Enlightenment Centres based at schools, the state budget is mainly spent on teachers' salaries and social insurance taxes with only a small portion remaining to be spent for delivering training. It is common for soums with few EP students to be unable to cover both teacher salaries and other expenses related to training delivery.

Independent NFE Enlightenment Centers receive funding to support delivery of EP, literacy and life skills training as well as the cost of office rent and salaries for teachers and staff. As of 2009, a total of 300 million tugrugs were allocated to NFE Enlightenment Centres within UB city including 40 million for the centre in Khan-Uul district and 70 million for the one in Bayanzurkh district.

Local budget: The “Education law” and “Model Regulation of NFE Enlightenment Centres” specify that some expenses are to be covered by local budgets. To reinforce this, certain earmarks are included in the “Productive Performance Contract” between the Minister of Education, Culture and Science and the governors of UB city and aimags. However, in reality local government support and funding to the local Enlightenment Centre is very limited, and at soum level centres receive virtually no funds. This is due in part to local administrations’ lack of understanding about NFE but it is undeniable that their authority and budget is insufficient to support centre services.

In the future, state funds should be allocated for literacy and life skills training as well as for EP training. Local budgets should also allocate funds for NFE Enlightenment Centers. In turn, centres should spend the allocated budget optimally.

46 Education Law section 39.6: “All expenses related to educational activities of providing citizens with primary, lower and upper secondary education through evening classes, non formal and correspondence types should be covered from state and local budget.”
47 Model Regulations for NFE’s Enlightenment centers section 4.1: “State budget should be comprised of following resources: State budget; Local budget; Project, donation, aid; Income of self-activities; Others”
49 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis pg. 43, UB
b) External resources

External sources of NFE Enlightenment Centre funding include international organization programs, projects, donations and aid.

International organizations have played an important role in funding centres since they were first established in 1997 under the "National Program on NFE Development". The 1997-2001 UNESCO-led project "Learning for Life" supported all expenses related to NFE Enlightenment Centres at the national level. This included training teachers and facilitators, strengthening facilities and material resources and overall coordination. All service delivery expenses were also covered, unlike other projects. The "Basic Education" program was implemented in 2003 by MECS with UNICEF, and includes a "Non-formal education" sub-project. This project focuses on EP training, supporting teacher development and producing the training materials.

International organizations such as World Vision, ADRA and others have provided NFE Enlightenment Centres with modern training equipment and tools. For instance, World Vision International's "Herder's Livelihood Improvement" project supplied NFE Enlightenment Centers located in Bayannuur, Bulgan, Deluun soums of Bayan-Ulgii aimag, Bayan-Uul, Bulgan, Khalkh gol, Kherlen soums of Dornod aimag, Baruu-turuun, Undurkhangai soums ofUvs aimag, Tsenkhermandal, and Kherlen soums of Khentii aimag with used technical equipment, chairs and tables and training materials worth 4-5 million tugrugs.

The project “Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Population in Mongolia” (2009-2012) implemented by the Government of Mongolia and UN agencies led by UNESCO supported NFE Enlightenment Centres in 20 soums in Bayan-Ulgii, Dornod, Uvs, Khovd, Khuvsgul aimags. Under the project, centres were transformed into "model" centres, with renovated facilities and capacity building for teachers and staff to better serve the local communities. The lessons drawn from this project are further discussed in Section 4.1.

International organization programs and projects are usually implemented through central organizations. Before 2008, priority was given to training teachers who were to develop training materials and policies. Since 2008, the focus has shifted to support the activities of NFE Enlightenment Centres as units. For example, UNICEF’s program for 2012-2015 is oriented towards units. Projects that have been or are being implemented according to this approach include the “Herders livelihood improvement” project and its sub-projects, “Literacy education” and “Distance education for herder’s children and adolescents”, implemented cooperatively by the National Centre for Non-Formal and Distance Education (NCNFDE) and World Vision Mongolia. In the distance education and literacy sub-projects a total of 37 million tugrugs was allocated to 23 soums from Bayan-Ulgii, Dornod, Uvs, Khuvsgul and Khentii aimags. Another project, “Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Populations in Mongolia” allocated 70 million tugrugs to support EP training delivered by NFE Enlightenment Centres.

While the provision of more direct budget support is welcome, it is important to monitor income and expenditure to ensure the funds are being utilized for their intended purposes and teachers and staff have the skills to perform their tasks effectively.

Funds provided by GoM and international organizations to NFE from 2003 to 2008 are shown below.
III. FIELD STUDY

3.1. Findings and Discussion

A number of field visits were undertaken in order to better understand the work of NFE Enlightenment Centres and to explore the issues identified through desk review and analysis of information in the data base. The field study involved 9 soums from 3 aimags of the central region of the country, including Adaatsag, Erdenedalai soums of Dundgobi aimag and Bayan-Unjuul, Lun, Erdenesant soums of Tuv aimag, and Bayan-Undur, Sant, Ulziit, Yesun-zuil soum of Uvurkhangai aimag. A total of 297 people including 281 adult residents, seven NFE teachers and nine administrative officers participated in the survey. The local administrative officers in the survey include deputy governor, director of secretariat to governor, government administration officer and school director.

The sample of adult residents participating in the survey was well distributed by age and gender, as shown in Chart 14. A slight majority (58.4 percent) were female.

The limited sample size of the survey was due to budget constraints as well as difficulties in reaching NFE Enlightenment Centres in remote areas. In addition, during the survey many centre staff were absent due to the holiday season. In those cases, a local official or a formal system teacher who assists with summer literacy training were included in the survey.
Table 11: Background information on NFE Enlightenment Centres in the field study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aimag</th>
<th>Soum / population</th>
<th>Year established</th>
<th>Funding source</th>
<th>NFE teachers</th>
<th>Types of training (in 2011)</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuv</td>
<td>Bayan-Unjui (2,500)</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>State budget (from fund for EP)</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>Ger-school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erdennesent (5,000)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lun (2,400)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP, Literacy, Lifeskills</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>Printer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dund-gobi</td>
<td>Adaatsag (3,000)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP, Literacy, Lifeskills</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erdenedalai (6,142)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP, Literacy, Lifeskills</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>Printer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uvur-khangai</td>
<td>Ulzii (2,700)</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 part-time</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Governor’s office</td>
<td>Well equipped including internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bayan-Undur (1,300)</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP, Literacy, Lifeskills</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sain (3,434)</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yesunzui (3,400)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>State budget</td>
<td>1 full time</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>Well equipped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*- relevant information is not available (N/A)

3.1.1. NFE activities and their relevance

The NFE Enlightenment Centres reviewed predominantly deliver literacy and EP training rather than life skills and other training for adults due to financial constraints. Most of the life skills training delivered are oriented towards increasing household income with traditional industries such as felt and wool ware, dairy product processing and leather ware. Training in other areas such as beauty and barbering, baking, sewing and driving are also offered. However, training oriented towards improving adult learners’ general awareness on issues such as healthcare, legislation, economy and the environment are very rarely offered.

The study found that the majority of participants (172 out of 195) found training delivered by Enlightenment Centres to be beneficial. It is clear from the responses from local community residents that those who think the activities of NFE Centres are adequate had benefitted from services provided by the centres. Fifty one (26.2 percent) of the participants said that they obtained new information and knowledge while 50 (25.6 percent) said they learned some life skills and 26 (13.3 percent) reported that they became literate.

I studied in the equivalency program for 3 years at the NFE Enlightenment Center and received a secondary education diploma upon completion. Last year, I graduated from “Gegee” college in Orkhon aimag. I am currently studying political science through a correspondence college and expect to graduate in 2012. Thanks to life skills training, I run my own cafeteria, barber shop and beauty salon to increase my household income. I have also participated in tailoring training and have started to rent the dresses I sew for 8,000-10,000 tugrugs during the New Year festival and other holidays. By participating in life skills training, many positive changes have been made in my life and my household income has increased so I am ever grateful for the NFE Enlightenment Centre. Our cafeteria’s ‘Suulen khuu’ dish has won an award from the aimag’s food exhibition.

N.Narantungalag, female, Lun soum, Tuv aimag
NFE Enlightenment Centres are proving to provide a range of valuable benefits for those who have taken part in training, with impacts ranging from making friends to becoming literate and learning skills that enable them to improve their household income.

Despite the benefits reported in the field study, responses suggest there is still room for improvement, especially in life skills training. Almost half of centre participants responding (94 out of 195) think that the Centres should organize training and distribute information that is directly relevant to individuals' daily lives and would help them to increase their household income. This strong interest in more life skills training may reflect the fact that for most centres much more funding is allocated to literacy and EP training than to life skills training, so that relatively few life skills programs are available. This may not meet the needs of local people or support local development.

3.1.2. NFE Enlightenment Centre structure and management

As mentioned earlier, the majority of currently active NFE Enlightenment Centres are affiliated with other organizations, mainly schools in the formal system. The nine centres studied were typical, with seven based in secondary schools and two in the office of the secretariat of the local governor.

According to the teachers, there are some advantages when the NFE Enlightenment Centre is based at a school. For instance, local residents are able to visit the centre when they come to meet with their children's teachers, and it is convenient for formal system teachers to lead EP training in the centre.
In the survey, almost two thirds of respondents who were not aware of the NFE Enlightenment Centre responded that they would prefer to have a centre located at a school building while only one person chose home as the preferred location for NFE activities. This suggests that the local community does not expect NFE services to come to their homes but are willing to access NFE services where they are located. Formal schools seem to be the preferred location for both the supply and demand sides, probably because people tend to associate the activities of NFE Enlightenment Centres with literacy and EP, skills and training provided by formal schools.

The local governor’s office, the Department of Social Affairs, the Education Inspection Agency and school authorities play a crucial role in developing and sustaining NFE Enlightenment Centres. They are responsible for providing overall management services and administrative guidelines and for monitoring NFE activities. All nine soum administrations in the field study had included NFE Enlightenment Centre services in their 2011 action plans and procurement contracts. Each soum planned for thirty learners to be enrolled in literacy, life skills and EP training. In addition the action plans for Sant and Ulziit soums of Uvurkhangai aimag included providing NFE Enlightenment Centres with equipment and learning materials to improve the quality and sufficiency of their services.

Despite these examples, lack of support from local administration has always been a concern and has been noted in previous surveys on NFE in Mongolia. The 2008 NFE sector analysis report described in section 2.2 and Tables 3 and 4 emphasized the need for more active support from government officials for NFE. In the field study, seven soums had an “NFE development commission”. Four of these were rated as ‘average’ and 3 as ‘good’ in carrying out their functions. However, the majority of teachers responding to the field study considered the support from local administration to be insufficient. This view was shared by local community representatives, who stated that local administration officials should pay more attention to the local NFE Enlightenment Centre and NFE services. Lack of resources to support NFE and lack of understanding of NFE may contribute to the poor performance of local administration. Most local administration officials participating in the study believed their role was to provide management and administrative leadership, while two believed their main role was to provide financial support from the local budget and one saw his responsibility as providing equipment. It is likely that local administration officials do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities for NFE. Raising officials’ awareness and ensuring adequate budgets for NFE will enable local administrations to provide better support.

3.1.3. NFE teaching staff and their professional development

Seven teachers participated in the field study. Six have a higher education degree or qualification as a professional teacher, and the seventh has a different specialization. All seven work full time, and two have additional work responsibilities. Teachers have between 1 and 36 years’ experience,

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Table 12: Preferred location for NFE Enlightenment Centre by respondents not aware of the centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School building</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor’s office</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural centre</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
up to 13 years' experience specifically in NFE. Most of the NFE Centres have experienced teachers not only in their profession but also in the NFE field. All nine soum administrations rated their NFE teacher's work experience as "good", even in the two soums where they rated the overall performance of the NFE Enlightenment Centres as "average".

The quality of teaching is influenced by teachers' attitude towards work and their job satisfaction. Pay is a significant contributor to job satisfaction and is also associated with retention. In Mongolia, teachers, including NFE teachers, frequently express dissatisfaction with their salaries and benefits. The average salary of NFE teachers is similar to that of formal school teachers, but as they do not receive additional subsidies, it is not surprising that 73.5 per cent of the teachers from the NFE sector analysis survey were found to be dissatisfied with their salary.\(^{52}\)

This dissatisfaction was also found in the field study where four out of seven teachers stated that their salaries did not fully compensate them for their work. Low salaries are also seen as a reason that formal system teachers do not assist with NFE. For example, some school teachers in Bayan-Unjuul soum, Tuv aimag said that they stopped working part time at their local NFE Enlightenment Centre because they were not paid for the 21 days' additional work. Failure to pay for NFE work is contrary to the 600th decree of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science of Mongolia in 2010 which establishes the job description and salary for NFE teachers.

In order to provide quality service to learners, it is crucial to continuously update the knowledge and skills of NFE teachers to improve their professional capacity. In Mongolia, NFE teachers are trained by NCNFDE on a short-term basis in the

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52 NCNFDE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal sector analysis, pg 70, UB
absence of a fixed curriculum and formal preparatory training. All of the teachers in the field study improved their NFE skills by participating in short-term training one to six times at the local level. Four teachers participated in short-term training or seminars at the national level one to three times. All of the teachers involved in the field study were interested in continuing to improve their knowledge and skills. Chart 16 shows that life skills training was most commonly identified as an area for professional development, followed by multi-grade teaching (MGT), EP training and methodology for teaching children with disabilities.

Chart 16: Areas where NFE teachers want to improve their knowledge and skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life skills training</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGT methodology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP training</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodologies for children with disabilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.4. Financial and material resources

The budget for the non-formal education sector has always been insufficient. It was substantially increased from 430.25 million tugrugs in 2004 to 4,277.02 million tugrugs in 2011 following the “Education Law” of 2006 which allocated additional funding for NFE training. In addition, the “Master Plan for the Education Sector” (2006-2015) provides for an 8 per cent increase in the budget for soum and district NFE Enlightenment Centres. However, overall expenditure on the NFE sector is still low in comparison with other countries at just 0.65 per cent of total education expenditure compared with an average of 1-3 per cent elsewhere. The overall increase in budget does not cover all areas of work; the 8 per cent increase was dedicated to EP training and does not increase funds for literacy or life skills training. Lack of adequate budgets for non-formal education has prevented NFE Enlightenment Centres from fulfilling all of their functions. Teachers in the field study reported that lack of funds was the most important barrier preventing them from delivering literacy and life-skills training. They stated that they use all of their resources to deliver training in classrooms, non-classroom settings and when necessary in learners’ homes. Local administrators in the study also reported budget limitations. None of the soums in the field study had allocated money for their NFE Enlightenment Centres’ activities in 2010 except Lun soum of Tuv aimag which allocated 250,000 tugrugs. Local administrators also reported that it was challenging to run NFE training with limited funding and agreed that NFE Centres need additional financial support.

After budgets, teachers and local administrators agreed that inadequate training materials, textbooks tools and equipment for training are a common problem. They see a need for greater supplies of textbooks, manuals and modern training technology to improve the success of NFE training. In addition, local administration officials emphasized the lack of vehicles and fuel to enable teachers to reach learners, lack of capacity to enroll learners in classroom courses and lack of teachers for life skills training as obstacles hindering the proper functioning of NFE Enlightenment Centres.

Community participation and support are essential for the development and sustainability of NFE Enlightenment Centres, because they are intended to respond to the needs of local people. Based on the findings of the field study, local communities in Mongolia do not seem to be very supportive of centres. Teachers and local administration officials consider that inactive or unmotivated learners are one of the biggest challenges faced in delivering NFE services. According to the administrative officers in the governor’s office in Ulziit soum, Uvurkhangai aimag it is difficult to get adequate enrollment in life skills training. Training is delivered in each bagh during the preferred seasons of spring and autumn as participation is very low during the summer season. Increasingly, local people are reluctant to participate in any type of training unless monetary rewards are provided. Teachers also report that local people do not understand the purpose and value of NFE training. Efforts to improve awareness through providing information and advocacy could help to improve the motivation and active involvement of community members.

Table 14 shows that in the field study, over two thirds of the respondents were aware of the existence of NFE Enlightenment Centres while the remainder stated that they did not know about NFE services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of aimags</th>
<th>Name of soums</th>
<th>Total number of participants</th>
<th>Answered “know”</th>
<th>Answered “do not know”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>per cent</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuv</td>
<td>Bayan-Unjuul</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erdenesant</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luri</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundgobi</td>
<td>Adaatsag</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erdenedalai</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uvurkhangai</td>
<td>Sant</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bayan-Undur</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ulziit</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yesunzuul</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>281</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the 195 respondents who knew about the centres thought that all residents of the local area should benefit from NFE Enlightenment Centre services. This suggests changes in the conventional understanding that only ‘illiterate people, school drop-outs or people from vulnerable groups go to NFE’. This could be the result of expanded education sector services and improved public awareness, or it could be related to local residents seeing NFE Enlightenment Centres as organizations which deliver financially well-funded EP and literacy training.

Table 15: Services provided by NFE Enlightenment Centres, responses from people who were aware of the centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training for illiterate people</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for school drop-outs</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for adults</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EP training for school drop-outs and literacy training are still seen as primary services of the centres by those respondents who are familiar with them. Almost one quarter (22.6 per cent) see children as the main beneficiaries of NFE services. Of those familiar with centres, 28.3 per cent visit them only to enroll their family members (children or siblings). Only 20 per cent of respondents aware of the
centres think they deliver training for adults and only 25 (less than 15%) of the total of 195 have actually taken part in centre activities.

The response from participants in the field study shows a real need for raising public awareness and organizing advocacy campaigns. Of the 180 people responding to a question about advocacy, almost half (44.6 per cent) agreed that more advocacy among local residents was needed to strengthen NFE services. And among the 86 respondents who were not aware of NFE Enlightenment Centres, over 80 per cent expressed interest in taking part in NFE either regularly or occasionally if they received relevant information. These responses confirm that current levels of information and advertisement about NFE Enlightenment Centre services are inadequate and should be expanded.

Overall, the vast majority of respondents (92.8 per cent) believe that their participation is crucial in enhancing the quality of NFE services. They believe they can support NFE Enlightenment Centres by sharing their knowledge and skills with others or by contributing to service planning or by providing donations and aid. Examples of this level of active participation by local people were evident in the field study. This reinforces the observation that those familiar with NFE services are eager to participate in training as they have seen real benefits or advantages from the programs. Encouraging local community support and involving local people in the daily activities of centres will promote their sustainability.

3.1.6. Cooperation and partnership

Cooperation and partnership with local communities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, international organizations, programs and projects help ensure sustainability, better resource mobilization and good management for NFE Enlightenment Centres. Teachers in the field study stated that they cooperated with the office of the secretariat of the local governor, and with the local hospital, school and cultural centre. The field study researchers observed various kinds of collaboration between NFE Enlightenment Centres and local administrative offices, projects, schools and communities. For example, the centres in Lun soum of Tuv aimag and Adaatsag soum of Dungobi aimag work with their respective Labour Welfare service centres to deliver life skills training. The Lun soum centre delivered training in felt ware, sewing, pearl work and wood carving to 160 participants in 2011 while in Adaatsag soum 67 learners were enrolled in life skills training for bakery and musical instrument making. The NFE Enlightenment Centre in Erdenesant soum of Tuv aimag collaborates with the Welfare Office of the governor’s office and with NGOs to deliver life skills training and annual literacy training for children and adolescents. The local administration in Ulziit soum of Uvurkhangai aimag is planning to establish a Law and Jurisdiction Department in cooperation with the local NFE Enlightenment Centre.

Centres also cooperate with and receive valuable support from projects. The NFE Enlightenment Centres in Bayan-Unjuul soum of Tuv aimag and Bayan-Undur soum of Uvurkhangai aimag benefitted from the “Sustainable Living-2” project implemented in both soums. The project provided a five-wall ger54 to the centre in Bayan-Unjuul soum, which has been used to deliver summer literacy training for the last four years. The project also supplied equipment worth approximately 9 million tugrugs to Centre in Bayan-Undur soum including a personal computer, scanner, LCD projector, printer and camera.

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54 Ger is a tent-like traditional dwelling
As most NFE Enlightenment Centres are located in school buildings, schools are some of the most important partners for centres. According to an NFE teacher of Lun soum in Tuv aimag, the local school administration tries to provide as much support as it can. For example, since the NFE Enlightenment Centre is small, training is delivered in school classrooms and the school also provides funds for gasoline needed to conduct surveys in remote areas every summer. In Bayan-Unjuul soum of Tuv aimag the school provides desks and chairs for learners during summer training and has allocated a room for the NFE Enlightenment Centre in the new school building currently under construction. School directors’ support for NFE activities has been noted by teachers as superior to that of other local officials. In the 2008 survey, the majority of teaching staff assessed the participation of school directors as ‘good or very good’.

Another example of good collaboration noted in the field study is the practice of utilizing locals and retired teachers as NFE instructors. The NFE Enlightenment Centre in Adaatsag soum of Dundgobi aimag hired four local people as home teachers for 77 learners during the annual summer literacy training of 2011. The school provided the teachers with a salary depending on the learning achievement of their students. The centre in Ulziit soum of Uvurkhangai aimag contracts with retired teachers to deliver various kinds of training.

While the field study found that some NFE Enlightenment Centers have built effective partnerships and cooperate with local, and national government and non-governmental organizations to implement projects and programs, there are many other centres which are not active in finding partners or cooperating with relevant stakeholders. The good practice examples show that partnership and close cooperation with local institutions and the local community is one of the best ways to ensure effective training programs, efficient resource mobilization, good management and sustainability for NFE Enlightenment Centres.

**IV. POSITIVE LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

My wife has participated in a 21 day life skills training program and now she makes felt, wool, pearl beads and silk products and sells them at local markets, which increases our household income. Local residents gather in the fall and winter seasons to learn to make felt boots. Currently she is producing felt boots with her friend Munkhtuul. I make wooden carvings at home and also deliver training together with an NFE teacher. I have worked as facilitator/teacher in Darkhan, Bayankhongor, Nalaikh and Dornod aimags. Many local youngsters come to me with a desire to learn from me. I teach these kids everything I know and do not charge any fees.

Kh.Tumennast, male, Lun soum, Tuv aimag

While the field study found that some NFE Enlightenment Centres have built effective partnerships and cooperate with local, and national government and non-governmental organizations to implement projects and programs, there are many other centres which are not active in finding partners or cooperating with relevant stakeholders. The good practice examples show that partnership and close cooperation with local institutions and the local community is one of the best ways to ensure effective training programs, efficient resource mobilization, good management and sustainability for NFE Enlightenment Centres.

**NFE Enlightenment Centres in Zuungobi soum, Uvs aimag and Tolbo soum, and summer training Ulaankhus soum, Bayan-Ulgii aimag**

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NCNFE and UNESCO (2009) Non-formal education sector analysis, pg. 34, UB
4.1. Positive lessons drawn from the project "Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Populations in Mongolia"

This section briefly presents some of the positive lessons from the UN joint project "Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Populations in Mongolia" (2009–2012). Improving access to and quality of non-formal education in rural areas is one of the goals of this three-year project, coordinated by UNESCO with the Government of Mongolia, implemented together with three other participating UN agencies (UNICEF, WHO and UNDP) and local partners. In twenty soums in remote areas of the five project aimags (Bayan-Ulgii, Dornod, Uvs, Khovd, and Khuvsgul) where a large percentage of ethnic/linguistic minorities and herders reside, twenty NFE Enlightenment Centres were established or rehabilitated. The project introduced new and strengthened approaches to literacy and life-skills training and management of these services, thus significantly enhancing the centres' capacity. The project addressed a number of issues discussed here, and there is much that other NFE Enlightenment Centres can learn from this rich experience. Some of the key elements are discussed below.

**Synergies with other sectors:** One of the strengths of the activities undertaken by the NFE Enlightenment Centres under the project stems from their close collaboration and synergies with other sectors. The project employed a multi-sectoral approach, covering four sectors, education, communication, health and local business development. The synergies created between these different sectors helped widen the scope and improve the quality and relevance of the NFE Enlightenment Centre offerings. For example, under the component related to communication, community-run radios were established and housed in the same buildings as the NFE Enlightenment Centres. These community radios helped disseminate information on training and other activities held at the centres. The soums' hospitals in the project used the centres to sensitize community people on health-related issues and the centres and the National Chamber of Commerce collaborated to improve small business training and enhance business opportunities.

**Local government's commitment and support:** Another positive feature for NFE Enlightenment Centres was the active involvement of the local government in particular the soum governor's office and the mechanisms set up to support and monitor the activities of the centres. Under the project, the NFE Enlightenment Centre no longer operated in isolation but was recognized for its value by the community leaders and various stakeholders who supported their activities. It became evident that NFE Enlightenment Centres were particularly successful where the local governments recognized the value of non-formal education for community development and were actively involved in promotion of the centres' activities.

**Enhancing the capacity of NFE teachers:** In the target soums, all in remote areas, there was usually only one NFE teacher in each centre. Centres were still expected to provide a wide range of services, Equivalency Programs, literacy and life skills training. The project emphasized development of the NFE teachers through training and technical backstopping by the NCNFDE and the aimag education departments. The NFE teachers were trained and equipped with materials and tools to deliver new life skills training that better responded to community needs. Teachers were also given training to help them to improve their management of the centres. These capacity development activities, together with enhanced recognition of the role of NFE teachers by the local government and the community,
have contributed significantly to improving the confidence and professionalism of the teachers. The project fostered the emergence of new initiatives and model teachers. For example, some NFE teachers took the initiative during the summer time to travel out to those living in remote areas and to conduct literacy and life skills training for herders and their drop-out children.

**Responding to adult learners needs:** To facilitate access for adult learners, NFE Enlightenment Centres were set up in new premises provided by the soum governments outside schools, or where centres continued in schools, separate entrances were created. NFE teachers responded to the diverse learning needs of adults by identifying and mobilizing other members of the local community to conduct training in specific skills, acting as learning coordinators as well as teachers.

Overall, the project raised renewed interest in the NFE Enlightenment Centres among adult learners and succeeded in mobilizing widespread community engagement. They became recognized as “hubs for socializing, sharing experiences and ideas” and for being able to “support the development of self-esteem, self-confidence and hope for the future among the rural disadvantaged populations” as the external evaluator of the project noted in the evaluation report57.

### 4.2. Recommendations

Based on the desk review and the findings from the field study, the following measures and policy supports are recommended to improve the sufficiency, quality and management of NFE Enlightenment Centre services:

**NFE policy and legislation**

- Improve the capacity of NFE Enlightenment Centres and their learning environments and funding through a comprehensive policy mechanism.
- Refine the policy and legal environment of the NFE Enlightenment Centres, paying particular attention to implementation.
- Encourage intersectoral cooperation by integrating national programs of lifelong learning from different sectors at the government policy level.
- Develop new legislation that defines the concept, structure, content, management, administration and funding of lifelong education and the rights, roles and responsibilities of the main stakeholders in this field.

**Monitoring & Evaluation and Financing**

- Develop a monitoring and evaluation system and create financial levers that will lead to better implementation of NFE related policy and legislation.
- Monitor the implementation of the “Regulations of NFE Enlightenment Centre” as revised in 2010 by relevant specialists at the office of the secretariat of the governor and the Department of Education and Culture of aimag, soum, UB city and districts to ensure centres support lifelong learning for the local community. These other organizations should enhance the environment for service delivery through disseminating information, supporting development of the human resources and creating a positive working environment to ensure teacher retention.
- Allocate a budget for literacy and life skills training to improve the quality, accessibility and frequency of these services in addition to the existing support for EP training at NFE Enlightenment Centres.
- Allocate relevant funding from the state budget to implement newly developed NFE training

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57 Baltzersen, J. and Bunkhoro, T. (2012)
programs and to improve the supply of training materials and handbooks.
- Strengthen the material resources of NFE Enlightenment Centres, especially the supply of equipment and tools needed for the life skills training most in demand by the community.

Administration and management

- Amend the “Regulations of NFE Enlightenment Centre” approved by 556th decree of Minister of Education, Culture and Science in 2010 to classify NFE Enlightenment Centres at soum, aimag, capital and other city levels and specify different criteria for NFE Enlightenment Centre roles and responsibilities, staffing, capacity and services range depending on the level.
- Support local authorities at soum and bagh level to fulfill their roles and responsibilities for ensuring out of school children benefit from educational services as required in the “Education law”.
- Engage professional institutions at aimag and national levels in supporting NFE development commissions by distributing information on NFE Enlightenment Centres and their services to members of the commission, conducting frequent monitoring and evaluation on their performance and providing them with regular guidance and advice.
- Improve the accessibility and quality of NFE training programs, particularly for adults, by working closely with school administrations or the Department of Education and Culture to offer training at suitable times and in home-based locations including launching a mobile “gerschooling” strategy.

Human capacity development

- Introduce NFE elements into college and university curriculum for all teacher training and introduce a coherent system of preparation and in-service training with minimum course and credit hour standards for NFE teachers.
- Make specific budget allocations from the Government of Mongolia for in-service training for NFE teachers to provide for regular training of longer duration. This would replace the short term training currently provided on an ad-hoc basis by donor organization projects.

Local community participation

- Increase public participation by establishing management teams consisting of representatives from soum citizens to plan the activities of NFE Enlightenment Centres, report on outcomes to higher level administration, and mobilize additional support as needed.
- Support and encourage volunteers and households to actively participate in NFE activities as both learners and instructors.

Public awareness

- Raise public awareness of NFE as a lifelong educational resource offering services to people at every stage of their lives. Advocacy activities could include field visits during community events and open days for bagh and soum and timing awareness events to coincide with election campaigns to raise the awareness of local authorities.
- Raise the awareness of policy makers to the contribution NFE Enlightenment Centres make to local development to.

Data collection and documentation

- Engage NCNFDE to develop standardized guidelines for centre documentation and bookkeeping and ensure they are used by local administration and NFE teachers.
• Further improve the NFE information data structure and strengthen the current NFE information
data system using an improved methodology for data collection. Increase the knowledge and
capacity of staff at all levels from grassroots to administration in data collection, data process­
ing and application of data to the delivery of NFE services.
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