Adult Learning Network – KwaZulu-Natal
Workshop guide
Number 1

Literacy and sustainable development

Adult Learning Network – KwaZulu-Natal
Literacy and sustainable development

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The ***Adult Learning Network – KwaZulu-Natal***

This guide is one of a series on the design and implementation of a set of workshops related to literacy and adult basic education and training. The original workshops were funded by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and took place at various centres in KwaZulu-Natal in 2002 and 2003. They were run by staff from the following organisations:

Tembaletu Community Education Centre

Natal Adult Basic Education Support Agency (NASA)

Centre for Adult Education (CAE)

Contents

Introduction

Purpose of this guide

The ***Adult Learning Network – KwaZulu-Natal*** workshop guide on **Sustainable development** is an outline of a general workshop on sustainable development in relation to literacy and adult basic education and training initiatives.

This guide has been provided as a resource for organisations who wish to provide such a workshop for the voluntary or paid educators or developers who work for the organisation or who are supported by the organisation.

Assumptions about the workshop leader having adult education skills

This workshop guide refers to a variety of ideas and methods used by adult educators and development workers. It also assumes that the person using the guide in the planning of a workshop will have some familiarity with adult education principles, training methods and techniques. These would include small group discussion, report back techniques, brainstorming and appropriate ways of recording information. The design of this workshop also assumes that the trainer or trainers leading this workshop will be able to incorporate local, contextually relevant, material.

Relationship between this guide and the other guides in this series

This workshop can be run as a stand alone workshop or as part of a series of workshops. Each workshop in the series has been designed in the same way – all can be used stand alone or together. Workshop guides that will be developed are :

1. Literacy and sustainable development
2. Literacy, ABET and the SETAs
3. Outcomes Based Education, the General/Basic Education curriculum, and the General Education and Training Certificate – a revisit and update
4. The promotion of reading
5. Assessment in literacy and adult basic education instruction
6. The Asifunde! literacy materials and their use

The contents of this guide

The guide comprises this Introduction and a number of Workshop Units.

Workshop Units

Each unit presents a possible component for inclusion in the workshop. Each unit can be seen as a separate coherent part or mini-workshop within the whole workshop.

Together the units make up a workshop that could last about seven hours. Naturally, resources and time may not be available for a full seven hour workshop. Though less desirable, it would be possible to run the workshop in separate parts over a more extended period, for example over a couple of days, or to condense it drastically and use only a few key units. If the condensation or 'using parts only' option is taken, a decision has then to be made on which units are actually essential. There is no easy answer to this as it is very dependent on the reason for running the workshop.

The units have been designed for use by a trainer with a maximum of about 24 participants. Larger numbers of participants may require co-trainers.

Sessions

Each unit contains one or more sessions. Each session within the workshop design has been described using the following items:

Title of session
Purpose
Procedure
Time
Materials
Notes to the trainer
Text of reading(s)

Suggested time allocations for each session have been given. These are only approximations and, as the suggested times given have erred on the side of the maximum rather than minimum, in most cases the trainer may be able to shorten the times.

The list of workshop units

Unit	Topic	Outcomes	Time
	Welcome	Introduction of participants and their expectations	30 minutes
1	Literacy and development	Deeper understanding of some of the links between literacy and development	90 minutes
2	What is sustainable development?	Understanding of basic concepts of development and sustainability	80 minutes
3	Literacy and livelihoods	Knowledge of some possible models for the linking of literacy instruction and livelihoods training	40 minutes
4	Doing something about literacy and sustainable development	Knowledge of simple model for analysis of a context and starting to develop a plan	15 minutes
5	Building a picture of literacy and development in the local context	Skills in the simple analysis of the local literacy and development context and identifying needs and problems	100 minutes
6	Choosing strategies for literacy related development in a community	Skills in choosing strategies for literacy related development	45 minutes
7	Evaluation	To evaluate the educational process of the workshop	20 minutes
	Closure	To provide a suitable closure to the workshop [within the context of series of workshops].	10 minutes

A note on evaluating the workshop

It is always desirable to evaluate the running of a workshop. This enables the trainer to adapt the workshop to the needs of future participants and improve its effectiveness. Such evaluation need not be lengthy or complicated. It can be done briefly at the end of the workshop or even of particular units within the workshop.

An evaluation unit is provided in this guide (Unit 6).

If you wish to evaluate particular units within the workshop, or, if the workshop has been spread over more than one day and you wish to evaluate each day, you may wish to use this simple set of questions:

Evaluation

1. What went well?
2. What went less well?
3. What would you change or adapt?
4. What have you learned from this unit?/ What were the most important things you learned?
5. What did you find most interesting/ least interesting/ difficult?
6. What can you use in your work?

This could be followed by brief reports back.

Welcome Unit

This unit provides a welcome to the participants and acts as an introduction to all the units. It is particularly appropriate when the units are being presented in a single workshop and the participants do not know each other or have not previously worked with each other.

Depending on circumstances and numbers of participants this unit can take from thirty to fifty minutes.

There are two sessions, the first to introduce the purpose of the workshop and the second to introduce the participants to each other.

Session 1: Introduction and statement of purposes

Purpose: To introduce the workshop and state the aims and objectives/outcomes and attend to any important housekeeping matters.

Procedure: Talk by lead trainer.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Printed timetables, statements of aims and objectives of the workshop, prepared newsprint or overhead projector transparencies of aims and objectives, timetable, map of venue, etc.

Note to the trainer: The purposes of the whole workshop should be briefly explained and the necessary timetable and housekeeping information given. A brief explanation of the similarities and differences between this workshop and the other workshops in the series may also be required.

Text of reading(s): Wherever this heading appears it means that the next page or pages in the workshop guide should be copied as handout readings for the participants. The handout pages are clearly identified and numbered in this guide.

You, as trainer, should use your discretion as to whether you hand out each handout in turn at the appropriate time or hand out a full set of the handouts at the beginning of the workshop.

Aims and objectives

- To examine some linkages between literacy and development
- To understand some of the basic concepts of development and sustainable development
- To learn about possible models for linking literacy instruction and livelihoods training
- To learn about a simple seven step model for the analysis of a context and developing strategies to meet needs and solve problems within this context.

Session 2: "Getting to know you" exercises

Purpose: To introduce the participants to one another and to enable them to share their expectations of the workshop

Procedure: Any standard "getting to know you" and expectations sharing procedures

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: As needed, especially for the recording of participant expectations.

Note to the trainer: The length of these exercises will partly depend on your estimation about how well the participants know each other and the extent to which they are familiar and comfortable with a workshop situation. Within the constraints of a one day workshop it is important not to allow this exercise to take up too much time. However, if participants are going to be working together in the future, more time may need to be budgeted.

It is important the participant expectations and needs are recorded in some form so that they can serve as a reference point during the workshop. They can also serve as an important starting point for an evaluation of the success of the workshop.

Depending on the expectations the participants express, the trainer may need to identify which expectations are likely to be met and which may be unrealistic.

Unit 1: Literacy and development

The purpose of Unit 1 is to deepen participants' understanding of some of the links between literacy and development.

The unit is useful for development coordinators who are about to start a literacy programme or for education coordinators who are beginning to work in development. This unit is particularly important if literacy or development work is a new activity for the organisation.

There are two sessions, one that looks at what literacy is, and the second which looks at the relationship between literacy and development in the participants' current context.

Session 1: What is literacy?

Purpose: To enable participants to develop an understanding and definition of literacy appropriate to their context

Procedure:

1. Participants brainstorm around the idea "What is literacy?" by writing up their ideas about the word "Literacy" circled on a whiteboard, chalkboard or newsprint (8 minutes).

2. Participants are divided into appropriately sized groups and look at the text *Why is literacy important?* and compare it with the ideas they have just generated (12 minutes).

3. Working in their groups, the participants rank the ideas on what literacy is in what they consider to be their order of importance to illiterate adults (10 minutes).

4. Each group reports back to plenary on why they ranked the ideas in the way that they did and these ideas are discussed in plenary during which new ideas can be added (10 minutes).

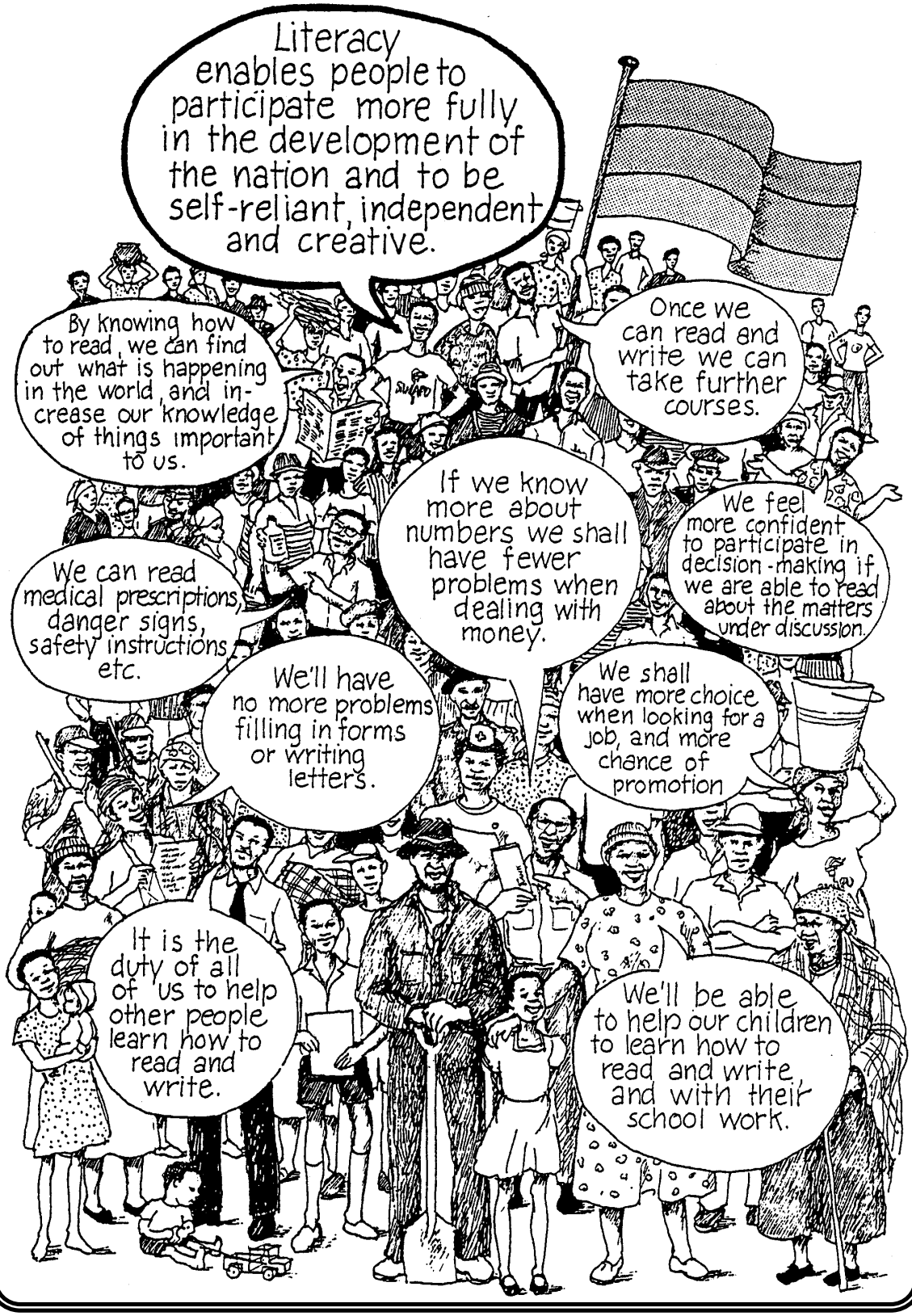
5. There is general discussion on what are the most important things to be included in a definition of literacy (5 minutes).

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard, chalkboard or newsprint with corresponding writing material; Copies of the reading *Why is literacy important?* in sufficient quantities for all participants.

Text of reading:

Why is literacy important ?



Session 2: How can literacy contribute to development in our context?

Purpose: To enable participants to develop an understanding and definition of literacy appropriate to their context

Procedure:

1. Depending on the number of participants, keep them in a plenary group or break them into smaller groups of four people. Ask them to discuss the important development needs of their communities or poor communities in their area or broader region.
2. Report backs or a summary of the plenary discussion should be given so that a number of important development needs are identified and agreed upon by the whole group.
3. Participants discuss in plenary how literacy can contribute to the achievement of development.
4. Distribute the reading on *Literacy and Development* and discuss it in relation to the previous discussion on literacy in this session.
5. After this, the lead trainer can break the participants into groups of four to discuss the links between literacy and different aspects of development such as:
   - Literacy and housing
   - Literacy and employment/income generation
   - Literacy and family health
   - Literacy and democracy/citizenship
   - Literacy and human rights
   - Literacy and consumer affairs (shopping, banking, travelling, etc.)

   The reading on *Why is literacy important?*, used in the previous session, can also be referred to and used here.
6. Each group could then report back on the links that they identified.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Copies of *Literacy and Development* in sufficient quantities for all participants

Note to the trainer: The trainer should be careful to stress that, on its own, literacy is not the full or immediate answer to development but that it can contribute to development along with other factors such as employment opportunities, infrastructure, investment, and so on.

Text of reading:

Literacy and Development

It is very important for the people of our country to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can collectively help improve the lives of all who live in this country. South Africa has suffered greatly in the past because of apartheid policies, political turmoil and violence. We all know of the low levels of education that resulted from this.

Millions of people need to gain basic skills so that they can manage their lives better. If people are illiterate they will have less chance of getting information about health issues, about jobs and economic opportunities. They will also not be able to help their children with their education. This will result in many more people not having the means to lead a healthy and productive life.

There is, therefore, a close link between literacy and development. If there is development of the individual, she or he will be better able to contribute to the development of the community. People are more likely to make such a contribution if they are confident about how to manage their own (and their families') lives better. To do this they must be able to get access to and use information in their environment in a meaningful way. In the modern world, to be able to do this, everyone needs to have a basic level of literacy (including numeracy).

However, it is important to recognise that though literacy is necessary, by itself it does not automatically lead to a better life. As we know, there are many people with quite high educational qualifications who are unemployed. Some countries and areas have rich resources, others do not. Together with literacy and education there must be other things that must also happen in a community for people with education to benefit themselves and the community.

In order to develop a person fully, there must also be a commitment to lifelong learning. Literacy and basic education are the first steps in the process of lifelong learning. It is therefore very important for us to remember that relevant basic education programmes must seek to equip learners with skills to participate in all forms of economic, social, political and cultural activities.

This is well expressed in the famous declaration made at the **International Symposium for Literacy** which met at **Persepolis** in 1975.

> Literacy is not just the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. It is a contribution to the liberation of people and their full development. With literacy, people should be able to identify the aims and the contradictions of the society they live in, and be critically aware of the need for change. Literacy should stimulate a person's initiative and encourage him or her to create projects to change the world around him/her. Literacy should help people feel free to say how they want to develop themselves, and give them ways to relate effectively to other people. Literacy is not an end in itself. It is a basic human right.

Unit 2: What is sustainable development?

The purpose of Unit 2 is to provide a simple outline of some of the concepts related to development, sustainability, and the current economic order.

There are two sessions, the first looks at what development is and the second examines the concept of sustainability.

Session 1: What is development?

Purpose: To provide a simple outline of some of the concepts related to development in the context of the current economic order.

Time: 45 minutes

Procedures: Talk by trainer or suitable speaker that deals with the concepts and history of development (25 minutes) interspersed with or followed by plenary discussion and questions (20 minutes)

Materials: Copies of *What is development?* in sufficient quantities for all participants

Notes to the trainer: The talk by the trainer or speaker should be carefully prepared and broadly follow the outline of the reading on *What is development?*, namely:

- Assumed linkage between literacy and development
- Meaning of the term 'development'
- Common indicators of development
- Contradictions of development
- Development theories:
  - modernisation
  - underdevelopment and dependancy
  - neo-liberal
  - people centred development
  - alternate

Text of reading:

What is development?

Popular assumptions about the linkage between development and literacy

People often say that successful literacy and adult education campaigns and programmes will develop people and the society that they live in. In other words, people assume that there is a connection between literacy and adult basic education projects and something called 'development'. This belief builds on the widely held, more general assumption that education improves the chances for 'development' - indeed this is often a basic reason given for prioritizing education in a society.

This belief can be found expressed in the ***Reconstruction and Development Programme*** of the African National Congress published in 1994:

> The challenge that we face at the dawning of a democratic society is to create an education and training system that ensures people are able to realise their full potential in society, as a basis and a prerequisite for the successful achievement of all other goals in this Reconstruction and Development Programme. (p. 59)

So the idea of development is a powerful one in our situation in South Africa – almost everyone (government, political parties, business, trade unions, civil society) seems to want it and claims to be committed to making it happen here – but what is it?

A definition of development

There are numerous definitions of development but most of them include something like this:

- Development is a process of social, economic and political change that will make things better than they were or enable full potential to be reached. These processes can operate at international, national, local, community, organisational or personal levels

- These better things are often described in terms of society, the economy, the environment and institutions. In each of these areas there different indicators or criteria for these better things have been chosen (often for very different reasons and based on very different assumptions).

What are commonly used indicators of development?

Economic	
Gross National Product increases (that is, the country produces more goods and wealth)	
Per capita and family income adequate and rising	
Unemployment low	
Debt to other countries is low	
People's basic needs are satisfied	
Energy (in the cleanest form possible) is readily available and efficiently used	
Hazardous waste is carefully dealt with	
Adequate foreign investment	
Institutional	
Political freedom and equality exists	
Regular free and fair elections	
The country is politically autonomous	
Human rights exist for all	
Adequate amount of foreign and humanitarian aid given to other countries	
Social	
Poverty is eliminated	
Equity is maintained (there is not too big a gap between rich and poor, powerful and less powerful) [Note the Gini Coefficient]	
Female/male wages are the same	
Child weight is normal	
Life expectancy high and increasing	
Low child mortality rate	
Clean water available for all	
Sanitation is available for all communities	

Health care is available for all	
Crime and corruption are low	
Homicides are low	
Primary schooling (general or basic education) is available for all children and they complete it	
Availability of secondary education is high	
Illiteracy is low or insignificant	
Family planning is effective/low population growth	
Adequate expenditure on research and development	
High percentage population is urban areas	
Adequate housing for all	
High number of telephones available	
Internet use high	
Environment	
Key ecological systems are maintained in a healthy state	
Arable land remains fertile and productive	
Woods and wilderness areas are protected	
Abundance of animals and birds	
Deserts and arid land does not spread further	
Fish farming and other forms of aquiculture are used	
Emissions of carbon dioxide do not increase	
Consumption of CFCs kept low	
Wood harvesting is controlled and sustainable	
Pesticides do not damage the environment	
Fertilisers are not overused	
Squatters do not damage the environment	
Faecal contamination is controlled	
Population is not all concentrated in coastal areas	

What goes together with development or contradicts it?

Development is often being closely linked to certain things but as also being contradicted by the same things.

For example, it might be common sense to think that wealth goes together with development. Strong economic growth in a country will help it develop because there are more goods and greater wealth in the country. However this is not always true. If only a small part of the population controls most of the wealth then the other larger part of the population may not have the resources to develop. The great inequalities in wealth may lead to other things, such as crime and political instability, that may harm development,

Another connection and contradiction is seen in relation to the issue of how equality and fairness are linked to development. People sometimes ask the following sort of question: 'Which would you rather have, a wealthy society which has a big gap between rich and poor or a very equal society which is much less wealthy as a whole?'

Other debates occur about what should come first: should redistribution of wealth and resources come first or growth of the economy? Currently most countries in the world seem to assume that growth should come before development, indeed they assume that development can only happen as the result of growth. It is worth noting that the Reconstruction and Development Programme of 1994 did not follow this approach.

Literacy and adult basic education practitioners face a similar set of questions about the relationship of education to development. Does education cause or help development or is it that you need development first before education is of much use?

History of the idea of development

The idea of development is closely linked to the idea of progress, the idea that human society can in fact get better and continue to get better. It is important to understand that this idea has not been common to all societies. For many societies the idea of continual progress was absent. The rise of the modern Western world was crucial for the rise of the idea of development as we commonly understand it today. In other words, people in the West now thought of their civilisation as something that was moving forward in history toward something better. The belief in progress had much to do with the rise of powerful nation states and the increasing wealth and prosperity that came with the growth of industrial capitalism and scientific knowledge. Alongside this grew a belief that, from the viewpoint of Western Europe, some societies were 'advanced' while others were 'backward', some were 'civilised' while others were 'barbarian', some were 'modern' while others were 'traditional'. This idea of development as growth through stages leading to a fuller and more advanced form is often called the 'evolutionary' idea of development.

The first development theory - modernisation

Development theories only really became important in the period of decolonialisation after the granting of independence to Africa and Asia in the 1940s to 1960s.

It was assumed that the Western history of development was the best (in fact the only possible) pattern for poorer countries to follow and that the aim of development was to achieve a Western-style society and economy. This approach to development adopted by Western countries came to be called 'modernisation'.

The 'modernisation' approach to development became dominant in the 1940s and continues to be a very significant set of ideas in the world of development thinking and development programmes. Both capitalist and communist development thinkers shared 'modernisation' beliefs : progress was essential and that it would be achieved through economic growth and industrialisation.

In this view, the underdeveloped regions are simply at the early or 'traditional' stage of development. The transfer of knowledge, technology and capital from the 'advanced' societies to less advanced ones will speed up their advance through various stages of development. These transfers (or 'diffusion') will bring 'backward' societies to a point of economic 'take off' after which progress will be self-sustaining, and a high-consumption, welfare-type society will emerge as it has done in the advanced Northern countries.

Modernisation theory tends to assumes that productivity is synonymous with development and it emphasises large-scale industrial production. Although modernisation theory knows that small groups of people benefit most and first from the kind of development they propose, it is argued that the benefits of the system will 'trickle down' to reach everybody eventually. People whose way of life does not fit the model of modernisation – for example, tribal people – are considered backward and unimportant and their culture and rights are threatened and sidelined by 'progress'. A major problem with this model of growth is that so much of the natural world is used up and cannot be replaced. Our earth could not cope if every society were to copy the Western life-style and economy.

Underdevelopment theory

When the development plans for the newly independent countries were implemented from the 1950s onward they did not produce all the good things promised, leaders and thinkers in the 'Third World' (that is, the poorer group of countries as distinguished from the rich Western countries (the First World) and the industrialised countries of the Communist block (the Second World)) began to question the mainstream development theories of the Western and Northern hemisphere countries. In the mid-1960s the modernisation theory came under attack. These people argued that the newly independent states could not develop along the same model as Europe and North America had because the 'Third World' countries were poor and powerless as a result of the West's own development processes. The same things that

had contributed to the West's development were the main causes of 'Third World' misery. This was an important insight because it recognised that being 'underdeveloped' was not a passive situation that was just an accident of history but rather the result of 'development' processes happening elsewhere in the world. While people in the 'Third World' were still committed to the struggle to overcome underdevelopment and achieve development, they no longer thought this could happen without changing the way the world's economic and political systems ran.

The 'Third World' was the way it was as a result of its being dependent on the major powers of the world economy who had shaped the economies of the 'Third World' to suit the needs of Western capitalist development (for example by buying raw products very cheaply from them and the using manufacturing goods and processing them into expensive goods which were sold back to the poorer countries at a great profit). Therefore, development in the 'Third World' was only possible on condition that this relationship of **dependency** was either changed dramatically or broken off entirely.

Underdeveloped countries were also thought to be 'dependent' in another way too. Their involvement in world trade was usually limited to exporting a few primary products. (Primary products are raw materials like farming crops, or minerals like copper, which have not been processed in industrial firms or factories.) This feature of many developing economies means that:

- the profits they get from selling primary products are fixed by world markets and the needs of those countries which consume and process these products;

- they miss out on making the really big profits which come from processing these primary products into finished goods;

- they must import expensive finished products from outside their own economies since they do not have the means to produce these goods internally.

Even those small groups of people (the local elites) within underdeveloped countries which did profit in these situations were usually 'dependent' on foreign companies or governments for their livelihood and very little of their wealth found its way into the underdeveloped country's economy.

Like modernisation theory, dependency theory puts most emphasis on economic growth for development.

'Neo-liberal' or 'Neo-classical' model of economic growth

Although some people think the international economic system is so unfair that developing countries should have nothing to do with it, others say that taking part fully in the international economic system is the best way to achieve development. These 'neo-liberals' claim that all the different types of trade, and the competition

between producers across the world, make the best environment for everyone to achieve economic growth by finding out which of the products or resources they can trade can be sold or exchanged for the most benefit. In this view, every economy or country has something (or a range of things) that they can trade better and more profitably than anyone else in the world markets. This is called the theory of 'comparative advantage'.

This approach argues that everyone who participates in the global free market benefits - including developing countries. Their advice for development in poorer countries is:

- do not try to protect your own economy from competition from international forces because you will only be protecting things that are not efficient and therefore (in the long term) expensive for your own people. (This advice is often heard in South Africa when people argue for removing 'trade barriers' and ending 'protectionism' of South African industries.); and,

- make sure that you make things in your country as attractive as possible for those with money and resources in the world economic system. (This advice is often heard in South Africa when politicians and business people say that we must create the right conditions to attract foreign investment.)

Those with the most power and influence in the world economy favour this approach to development. They often force poorer countries to accept their advice by making it a condition for giving poor countries development loans. These sets of conditions that come with loans to 'Third World' countries are usually called 'structural adjustment programmes' (SAPs) or 'economic structural adjustment programmes' (ESAPs) because the country that receives the loan has to adjust its economic structures and policies to make them as friendly as possible to foreign investors.

As in the modernisation approach, it is argued that the profits that are made in international trade will 'trickle down' and that the whole economy will benefit, though it is conceded that sometimes the benefits of being open to international trade and competition take time to be felt in developing countries. Often the first effects to be felt are bad because local industries and producers cannot compete successfully and they are forced to close and the workers become unemployed.

A Pietermaritzburg case study - the death of the shoe industry

South Africa once made about 30 million pairs of shoes a year (about half of the actual demand) and Pietermaritzburg was once the centre of the South African leather shoe industry. Unfortunately, a vicious cycle of interconnections related to globalization and branding resulted in the retrenchment of 7000, mainly Indian leather workers, and the closing of all but one tiny craft factory in the city over a period of 12 years.

Factors that directly led to this include the following:

- Leather tanneries in Pietermaritzburg and elsewhere in South Africa began to close down because they could not compete with the cheap hides that were being exported from Brazil and India to the rest of the world. (The ones from Brazil reflect the growth of the beef industry (to supply the meat for hamburgers in North America) and which leads to the cutting down of the Amazonian rainforests to create pastures, which in turn influences global warming.)

  Most of the South African made shoes were leather ones of fairly modest and conventional design. And now leather was more difficult to get because the local tannery had closed.

- Nike, Adidas and Reebok, through their advertising and marketing began to destroy the local market. “Nike and Adidas killed the South African shoe market.” according to the National Organiser of the South African Clothing and Leather Workers Union).

- Cheap imports from Indonesia, China and India priced the South African made shoes out of the market.

- The government, in obedience to the “free market” trade dictates of the major Western Industrial powers lifted protective tariffs on the import of shoes in 1998.

‘People-centred’, ‘Community-based’, and ‘Self-reliant, participatory’ development

These similar approaches stress the needs and participation of ordinary people and communities (and their organisations) in defining development, as well as in implementing projects. The emphasis on the role of local people developed as a critical response to mainstream development models which tended to assume that development planning was best done by experts.

Many expert development plans, that had been designed far away from the actual people and situations they were meant to benefit, failed to improve their lives in any meaningful and long term way. Development workers began to realise that effective development was only possible when it, amongst other things:

- addressed the needs that local people actually felt were important;
- used the resources (physical resources as well as local knowledge) of the local situation in designing and implementing projects;
- fitted the local conditions appropriately;
- had the support of the local people;
- was initiated and driven by local people and their interests;
- was not completely dependent on inputs that came from outside the local situation.

Other theories of development

Over the last couple of decades women’s movements have stressed the importance of gender issues in development work; environmentalists have asked whether industrial growth can really be a long term model; indigenous peoples have asserted their right to their own culture and aspirations; the roles of governments, economic markets and non-governmental civil society continue to be hotly debated; and development activists disagree about the impact of the present world economy on the prospects for genuine development.

Session 2: What is sustainability?

Purpose: To provide a simple outline of some of the concepts related to sustainability in the context of development

Time: 35 minutes

Procedures: Plenary brainstorm on the meaning of the term sustainability (10 minutes); discussion (10 minutes); discussion of handout on *What is sustainable development?* (10 minutes); concluding remarks stated by trainer or suitable speaker (5 minutes)

Materials: There are two handouts, one on *What is Sustainable Development?* provides a simple definition of sustainable development and is used during the session. The other reading, *Sustainable development: Who controls the food?* is the summary of a talk by bio-diversity activist Vandana Shiva and can be used as an after the workshop reading.

Notes to the trainer: The trainer should ensure that the ambiguity and multiple meanings of the concept of 'sustainability' are noted.

Sustainability can be viewed in a economic way (everything must pay for itself in the long run) which often may be biassed by a view that the state or society has no responsibility for the underprivileged or for social welfare, or, in ecological way from a perspective that the natural resources of the earth are finite and that human beings must reduce their demands on the earth (everything must be ecologically viable in the long run) which often may be biassed by a view that poor uneducated people should not desire to emulate the living standards of the already developed countries.

One also has to beware of the misuse of the language of sustainability by governments or corporations when what they really mean is that they are not going to pay for something. Terms such as "cost recovery" and "income generation" are often deployed in such a context and may have very little to do with genuine issues of sustainability.

Text of readings:

What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development has been defined as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Thus sustainable development is about living within one's means both in the present generation and for future generation.

What does sustainable development mean to individuals and communities?

Sustainable development is about a better way of approaching the management of natural resources and the adverse effects of globalization in order to address a range of problems. These include loss of biodiversity, pollution and destruction of natural resources (such as forests, fisheries). This impact is not limited to the developing world. Many in the industrialised world also suffer the consequences of mismanagement of the Earth's environmental and human resources – and that trend is likely to grow as the world's economic and social systems become increasingly inter-linked. Some examples are as follows:

- About 1.2 billion people worldwide lack sufficient access to fresh water, and water-borne disease causes millions of deaths every year.
- Air pollution, which crosses national borders and affects us all, is one of the major causes of illness and death worldwide.
- Preventable diseases such as malaria and AIDS kill millions each year, but could be largely prevented with the support of developed health care systems and improvements in sanitation.
- Wasteful use and destruction of forests, fisheries and agricultural land leads to poverty and famine, which can create breakdowns in civil society and governments, leading in some cases to armed conflict.

Sustainable development: Who controls the food?

By Vandana Shiva

Dr Vandana Shiva is a trained physicist, who has shifted her focus to grassroots activism. She is a world-renowned authority on agricultural and environmental issues. In 2002 she was in South Africa for the World Summit on Sustainable Development and delivered the Gandhi memorial lecture in Durban. This is an edited version of her address at a Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness presentation on 20 August 2002.

I see the current food system as a system of slavery at every level. We used to worry when people of Africa were captured and put on ships to grow cotton in America, and many would die. What we are seeing now is much worse but the chains are invisible. New tricks are being created by which the slave owner gives you the chains to chain yourself. That is what is happening to farmers and consumers now.

Myths about chemicals and food

There are two sets of myths being spun around food, preventing people from having livelihoods from growing food and from having nutrition from food. The first grand myth of food systems is that chemicals produce food. They do not – chemicals poison the earth. The second myth is that they produce more food. But they produce less food. They produce more commodities at cheaper prices, not because it is cheaper to produce them, but it is cheaper to buy at a low price when you are making every farmer compete with everyone else for the same tomatoes. All you have to do is change agriculture around so that everyone else here grows tomatoes, that you will have such cheap tomatoes here. They won't be cheap here – they will be cheap at the auction mart, from where they will be shipped back here. So there is this idea of cheap food, in a system that is very costly. It is costly to the earth, to the producer and to our health. It is costly to life on earth, as all the tools of agriculture – chemicals, machines or now genetic engineering – are designed to kill life. This cost is not a side-effect – a herbicide is *designed to kill* biodiversity. Broad-spectrum herbicides like ***Roundup*** are designed to "round up" all life – the Monsanto literature says that it kills everything green it comes into contact with. They justify it by saying that all those weeds are stealing the sunshine!

Genetically engineered food

Pesticides are designed to kill life in its diversity. They say they achieve their target, but most of the pesticides designed so far have been smarter at killing non-target species, and making the ones they are supposed to kill more resilient.

Genetically engineered crops like BT cotton or BT maize were promoted to combat hunger. But they are genetically engineered with a ready-made toxin. Normally these plants have a toxin that is only harmful to a few families of insects, becoming a toxin in their digestive tracts. However, genetic engineering removes that gene for producing toxin and produces the toxin *per se* without the need to go through the digestive tract. So it is ready-made toxin being produced in the plant all the time. What then of the ladybirds and butterflies who eat it? It will obviously kill them too. They justify it by saying that it kills the American bollworm (which should not be a problem outside of America!), but it targets everything else also. The American bollworm has in fact become a super-resistant bug. It has mutated in self-

defence! In turn, you get destruction of species that are beneficial and a surge in species that destroy your agriculture. This is similar to malaria's resistance to DDT. At the Mafakatini flats there has been a 300% increase in new pests – pests that were never a problem before. Farmers are not told that they will get locked into this genetically modified (GM) system of agriculture if they start using it. It is built into the GM seed to buy it every year. It is illegal to save the seed. A few companies have bought up all the other seed companies. Sometimes they work through local companies and labels, but they are still controlled by the parent company. Monsanto is the most aggressive, and does not care how much it must lie, corrupt and trick. It learnt these tricks in Vietnam where it developed "Agent Orange". They fudge data and accounts, but they do so very cleverly. This rule through deceit allows them to say that they will give you 50% more yield. But there is no place in the world where any agricultural crop designed by genetic engineering has given such a yield. Yield is a complex trait – it is multi-genetic, composed e.g. of resistance to drought and pests. You can produce a gene for resistance to a herbicide, but need far more time for breeding for higher yields.

Genetic engineering and molecular biology was still at a kindergarten level when it was rushed through Wall Street, without information about how these modified engineered organisms would affect us. Its claims have nothing to do with its performance, as the companies doing the claims are the same ones doing the testing! It is a revolving door policy. Monsanto sneaked through their clearance in India, and hoped to use this to promote their seed worldwide, saying that now Europe needed to "catch-up". But this is a catch-up game no one should try to follow.

Genetic engineering boasts about "golden rice". However, the myth of the "golden rice" is a fallacy. It is called golden, as it has a petunia gene that gives beta-carotene – but this is a very small amount of beta-carotene, compared with say coriander. It is no big deal to make rice yellow, but they make it look like a big deal by shutting our minds to all the options we have! In organic literature we are seeing that so many of the vital nutrients are micro-nutrients. They make the real difference to our health and sense of community. They disappear when we imagine that agriculture is fed by industrial practices and all we need is big sacks of urea spread around, instead of organic inputs. But nature knows how to recycle itself. Our agricultural scientists won't catch up a deficiency until years later, and by the time they have there will be another deficiency. They are always running behind the problem. Organic farming recycles all the beneficial nutrients you need through manuring into the plant and then into our bodies. That is the way to produce healthy, nutritious food.

AIDS has caused the collapse of community and nutrition. There is so much land available in South Africa to solve the problems of the poor, but no opportunity is given to them. Furthermore, apartheid's displacing and dispossession of people has destroyed people's basic knowledge of farming. They need to be taught to farm again – but in partnership with nature.

The models of technology and trade that are creating hunger have the same basic principle behind them. This is that systems are empty. So much change has come through thinking that places elsewhere are empty. For instance,

- The colonizers regarded the colonies as "empty" – the local people were just part of the fauna and flora!
- They said there is no beta-carotene in a plant until you can add it; or that there is no pest control out there until you can spray your toxins.

But all these things are externally added, and dismantle the local, self-organised system. You end up with growth where the next step cannot be taken without dependence – e.g. without waiting for the seed or food to come from far away.

Africa as such a large continent with so much land is trying to afford food. This is not because its soils are poor. Rather, these externally monitored and managed systems kill the self-organising potential of the local community, farmers and country and in turn kill food security. This creates tremendous markets, so destruction is actually a market opportunity. Farmers have to buy hybrid seed every year. Structural adjustment programs come in. They even use “women's liberation” as a ruse to get rid of food security to create their market opportunity!

Food and hunger

Food production is the only activity that the majority of people throughout the world can be engaged in. How do you measure productivity in producing food? You should include all the inputs that have gone into producing the food – including land, water and energy, and then you will see that industrial systems actually have very low productivity. The system is designed to get people out of agriculture. They encourage you to buy rather than produce your food. These export-oriented systems result in land moving out of the hands of peasants to big corporations. It is easier for the system to buy from 1 person on 500 000 acres than to buy from 500 000 persons on 1 acre each! It shifts to production that is non-sustainable. Local destruction and poverty is increased. Women lose their water; fishermen lose their livelihoods; rice growers cannot grow rice anymore. These factors are not reflected in the trade statistics. The world financial systems and powers twist our local systems so that subsidies and public resources do not get to the poor. In India even while 300 million people are without adequate food, 65 million tons of grain are rotting, because people cannot afford to buy! So surpluses are pseudo, hiding the real hunger.

World Bank subsidies do not go to the poor but to multinational companies. They use their subsidies to artificially reduce grain prices, move in and capture local markets, displace local producers and create hunger. That is why as more and more imported food comes into Africa, more hunger is created. Imports at prices below the domestic production prices are dumping – this is at the root of hunger. But it is legalized through the World Trade Organisation rules. So the corporations and their profits grow bigger. For instance, in India Kargill bought wheat domestically at $60 per ton. They then sold it internationally at $240 per ton. Because of structural adjustment, there was a food shortage in India and they had to re-import wheat – at $240 per ton, that they had sold at $60 per ton!

Solutions

Solutions lie in bringing back resilient systems into the community itself. The means of production – the seeds and knowledge – are in the community, not in imports. We need to build up food security from the base itself, from the land and local community, The National Alliance of Women for Food Rights in India reacted to local starvation in India while surpluses were making their grain rot by saying “let the leftovers of people’s needs reach the global market”, We need to bring back community control of agriculture, food, water and nutrition. These are aspects of life that are too vital to be governed by rules of profit. Communities need to exercise their rights to govern these systems creatively for the common good. Then we will start finding solutions to poverty.

Unit 3: Literacy and livelihoods

The purpose of this Unit is to provide information on research into literacy and livelihoods in Africa and to discuss the implications of these research findings for literacy and development programmes.

Purpose: To provide information of recent research on the ways of linking literacy and livelihoods instruction and to consider the implications of this research for literacy and development programmes and projects

Time: 40 minutes

Procedures: The trainer takes participants through the reading on *Strengthening livelihoods with literacy* (15 minutes); discussion in small groups on the implications of this for programmes and projects that participants are involved with (10 minutes); reports back and plenary discussion (15 minutes)

Materials: Handout on *Strengthening livelihoods with literacy*

Text of reading:

Strengthening Livelihoods with Literacy

John Oxenham, speaking at the Project Literacy Conference held in Johannesburg in late 2001 on *The role of adult education in sustainable development*, reported on research done for the World Bank in Africa (later published as ***Skills and literacy training for better livelihoods*** in 2002).

The researchers identified and studied five categories of literacy programme:

1. Literacy is a **prerequisite for further training** in income-generating activities (people seeking occupational training are required to learn how to read, write and calculate first).

2. Literacy (valued in itself) may be **followed by separate livelihood training** (for which literacy may not necessarily be a prerequisite).

3. **Literacy instruction follows after livelihood training** (the usefulness of numeracy, along with writing and reading, is 'discovered' through learning a livelihood and learners may then seek or demand literacy instruction or be encouraged to seek it).

4. Livelihood and literacy are **integrated and engaged in simultaneously** (with the literacy content often initially derived from livelihood vocabulary and discourse).

5. Livelihood and literacy training are both valued and take place in **parallel but separately**

Oxenham argues that, although there are good and effective programmes using all of the above variations, ideally, the following are probably the most effective:

- Programmes that combine livelihood training with literacy
- Literacy programmes with components of income generating activities or occupational training
- Occupational training programmes with components of literacy and numeracy

Among his and the report's conclusions he notes:

1. Effective programmes of all types are possible, provided they are well run by competent, reliable and properly supported instructors and are well adapted to the interests and conditions of the learners.

2. Using livelihood training to drive literacy content and instruction seems most promising.

3. Agencies focussed on livelihoods seem more effective than agencies focussed on education.

4. Incorporating training in savings and credit and organising access to credit can reinforce success in both livelihoods and literacy.

5. Working with already established groups of learners seems more promising than recruiting learners individually.

6. For the 'average' learner, 360 hours of tuition in reading, writing and calculating seems to be a safe minimum to achieve lasting skills.

7. Livelihood training with literacy requires two types of instructors: livelihood specialists and literacy instructors.

Unit 4: Doing something about literacy and sustainable development – starting to plan

The purpose of this Unit is to outline a seven step process for beginning to develop an action plan to do something in relation to literacy and sustainable development.

Purpose: To outline a seven step process for starting to plan action around literacy and sustainable development

Time: 15 minutes

Procedures: Talk by trainer explaining a simple seven step model for starting to plan a development activity

Materials: Copies of *Starting to plan : a seven step model* in sufficient quantities for all participants

Notes to the trainers: The trainer needs to explain that there is not enough time in the remaining hours of the workshop to systematically do an exercise employing these seven steps. However, the next three units do make use of some of the steps in this model.

Reading:

Starting to plan : a seven step model

Step		Purpose
1	Build a full picture of the situation	To build up a richly detailed picture of facts, opinions and perceptions around the issues you are looking at and to start thinking critically about this picture
2	Identify main issues/themes	To extract a limited number of issues or **themes** (from the picture and notes developed in Step One) which are believed to be key to transforming the situation and problems shown in the picture
3	Make a problem solving statement related to a chosen issue or theme	To restate the issue or theme by putting it in the form of a problem solving statement.
4	Make a thorough and clear explanation of this problem solving statement	To make a detailed explanation of this problem solving statement that examines its purpose, the assumptions behind it, and the factors that would influence, the operation of any plan or system that was created to solve this problem
5	Plan a system or set of activities to solve the problem together with any necessary subsystems	To design a more detailed system or set of activities to implement the desired transformation, taking into account the possibilities and constraints discovered in the Step Four
6	Examine the environmental forces affecting the plan	To identify the major environmental conditions (as (1) driving forces and (2) constraining forces) in which the plan would have to be implemented
7	Engage in participatory debate about desirable and feasible changes to the original problem situation	To engage in participatory debate about desirable and feasible changes (to the original problem situation).

Notes:

Towards transformation: seven questions

Transformation	What is to be changed?
World view	What beliefs and assumptions are there?
Owners	Who owns the problem?
Actors	Who needs to be involved?
Clients/Beneficiaries	Who will benefit and who not?
Environment	What forces exist for and against the transformation ?
System:	What systems are needed to make it happen?

Unit 5: Building a picture of literacy and development in the local context

A thorough understanding of the local literacy and development context is vital for the successful initiation of a literacy campaign or project in that area (whether it is run independently or as part of a broader development project).

Purpose: To enable participants to identify and analyse key themes or features relating to literacy and development in a locality or community

Procedure:

1. In groups of four, the participants discuss the locality or localities from which they come. (Some of this work will already have been done in Unit 1, Session 2). The group should identify the similarities and differences between the communities or localities. (10 minutes)

2. Each group then chooses one community, people group or locality and builds a detailed **picture** or community map to show the activities within that community, reflecting that community's state of development. (25 minutes)

3. The groups then display their picture/maps on the wall. The trainer then conducts a "gallery walk" – stopping at each map and asking the group responsible for that picture to explain it main features (or themes). Other groups ask questions and notes the similarities and differences between communities or localities and what **issues or themes** seem to be emerging. (25 minutes)

4. Each small group then considers all the activities going on in the community or locality that relate to these issues and list them, together with the literacy needs associated with those activities, on a chalkboard, whiteboard or flip chart with columns having the headings listed below. In the fourth column they list what specific competency or **problem-solving** skill would need to be developed amongst learners to meet each of these literacy needs or problems. (25 minutes).

Activity within the community	**Literacy needs associated with activity**	**Effect of illiteracy related to activity**	**Competencies needed to meet needs/solve problems**
e.g. Clinic	Reading medicine labels, dosage	Risk of overdose	Read labels Understand measuring quantities Measure quantities

6. The groups report back to plenary and there is general discussion on the implications these lists of needs and required competencies would have on the nature of, and the running of, a literacy campaign or project in these localities and how the literacy activities relate to development activities (15 minutes).

Time: 100 minutes

Materials: Materials for recording reports back

Note to the trainer: The trainer should point out how the first four steps of the Seven step model explained in the previous Unit 4 are being used in the process of this Unit, namely:

1. Building a map or **picture** of a situation
2. Identifying the main features, issues or **themes**
3. Making **problem solving** statement (in this case identifying literacy related competencies needed)
4. Giving a clear explanation of why these competencies are needed.

The "picture" each group builds up (and draws on the newsprint) should reflect all the different views in the group about the issues involved - the perceptions, opinions, information, feelings, etc. All participants should be free to express their own personal feelings, their perceptions and their local or " indigenous knowledge" about any matters they feel are relevant to the development issue they are dealing with. Indeed the more they focus on their own work and experience the more "real" the exercise will be.

There is no prescribed or correct way to draw the group's "picture". It could be in words or could quite literally be a labelled picture or take the form of patterned notes (sometimes called "mind-maps" or "spider" or "network diagrams"). Patterned notes start with the general issue written in the centre of the sheet with related ideas joined to it with lines. Links between ideas can be drawn in easily. It is simple to add extra information and one avoids the need to decide on the final order or sequence. Patterned notes are interesting to look at and easy to remember.

The trainer may wish to contribute information and statistics on the state of development of the local community or communities, literacy and other statistics. If this training workshop is also doubling as a real planning workshop for an intervention in a particular area, clearly accurate information and good analysis of this information is a necessity.

Unit 6: Choosing strategies for literacy related development in a community

This Unit continues the contextual analysis and planning process begun in the previous Unit.

Purpose: To enable participants to discuss and prioritise strategies to improve literacy-related development in that community

Procedure:

1. Each group of four should list a set of possible strategies to improve development in the chosen community through teaching and developing the competencies listed in the previous session.

2. Each group then prioritises those strategies in the order they could most usefully be implemented.

4. Each group reports back on its prioritised list.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Materials for recording reports back

Notes to the trainer: It needs to be stressed that this is a very brief start of a strategic planning process (Steps 5 and 6 in the Seven step model) that would require much time and effort to be worthwhile. Make the point that it is what happens after the workshop that is important.

Unit 7: Evaluation of the workshop

The purpose of this unit is to evaluate the educational process and initial outcomes of the workshop.

Purpose: To evaluate the educational process of the workshop and its initial outcomes and to provide a suitable closure to the workshop.

Time: 20 minutes

Procedures: As chosen by workshop leader. These could include closing remarks by the leader trainer or a re-look at the objectives and expectations from the beginning of the workshop. Some form of evaluation of the workshop and its initial outcomes should be done.

Notes to the trainer: This closing part of the workshop is vital. It is vital that the **educational process** of the workshop be evaluated and reflected upon.

Sometimes a very simple evaluation form is the most effective way of starting this evaluation process. A simple form could include the following questions:

What worked well in the workshop?
What did not work well or less well in the workshop?
What would you want to change?
What important learning did you make?
Any other comments?

An example of a somewhat more extended form is attached:

Adult Learning Network – KwaZulu-Natal
Workshop Evaluation form

1. Tell us what you think ...

About how the workshop was organised	
About the topics covered	
About the time allocated to each topic	
About the facilitator	
About the style of facilitation	
About the refreshments	

2. Which topics did you like the most and why?

3. Which topic did you like the least and why?

4. Which topic did you not understand?

5. To help us plan future workshops, which topics would you like added and why?

Thank you.

Closure Unit

This should take the form of some suitable ending off for the whole course.

This may include thanks to various support people and announcements of other workshops.