



**LABE Mid-Term Review of the
Mother-Tongue Education Project:
Improving Educational Access and
Outcomes for Marginalised Children
in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda
(Phase 2)**

Main Report

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List of Acronyms

AET – Africa Educational Trust

CAO – Chief Administrative Officer

CASAS – Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society

CCT – Coordinating Centre Tutor (teacher educator)

CDOs – Community Development Officers

CPD – Continuous Professional Development

DEO – District Education Officer

DHT – Deputy Head Teacher

DIS – District Inspector of Schools

DLG – District and Local Government

EfA – Education for All

GoU – Government of Uganda

HLC – Home Learning Centre

HLCMC – Home Learning Centre Management Committee

HT – Head Teacher

IDPC – Internally Displaced People’s Camps

LABE – Literacy and Adult Basic Education

LBs – Language Boards

LL – Local Languages

MLEN – Multi-Lingual Education Network (see also UMLEN)

MoES – Ministry of Education and Sports

Mol – Medium of Instruction

MT – Mother Tongue

MTE – Mother-Tongue Education

MTE 2 – Mother-Tongue Education Project: Improving Educational Access and Outcomes for Marginalised Children in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda (Phase 2)

NCDC – National Curriculum Development Centre

PE – Parent Educator

PO – Programme Officer

PTA – Parents and Teachers’ Association

PTC – Primary Teachers’ College

RTI – Research Triangle Institute

SHRP – School Health and Reading Programme

SIL – Summer Institute of Linguistics

SMC – School Management Committee/Council

SWT – Senior Woman Teacher

UMLEN - Uganda Multi-Lingual Education Network (see also MLEN)

UNATCOM – Uganda National Commission for UNESCO

UNESCO – United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organisation

UPE – Universal primary education

1. Background

Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE) is a non-government organisation (NGO) operating in Uganda. LABE has extensive experience in adult and basic education, particularly in relation to women and girls' education in remote and difficult settings of Uganda. Between 2009 and 2013 LABE successfully initiated and implemented the Mother-Tongue Education (MTE) Project in six post-conflict districts of West Nile and Northern Uganda. The first purpose of the original project was to find ways to build multi-stakeholder capacity that would result in returning pupils to primary schools at the end of a 30-year period of war and conflict. The second purpose was to assist the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), the National Curriculum and Development Centre (NCDC) and its District and Local Government partners to implement the new national curriculum with specific reference to the first three years of lower primary schooling, Primary (P) 1, 2 and 3. The new curriculum, commonly known as the 'Thematic Curriculum' (see NCDC 2013) is based on the use of local languages as the mediums of instruction for the first three years of school, followed by a transitional year (P4) in which the medium of instruction is to transition towards English medium education that follows a subject-based rather than thematic-based curriculum.

A recommendation of the *Final Evaluation of the Mother-tongue Education Project* (Heugh and Mulumba 2013) to LABE and its funding partners (Comic Relief, facilitated by Africa Educational Trust, AET), was to encourage LABE to seek an extension of the MTE project for a further four years. This was in order to build on strengths of the project and to increase local capacity in districts. A particular recommendation was to focus on the potential to build on community initiatives in the Home Learning Centres (HLCs). One of these was an emerging community-led establishment of provision for early learning and childcare that begun in some of the existing HLCs.

LABE has been successful in achieving funds to conduct a second phase of the MTE Project, supported by Comic Relief, Grant Number 172887. This grant is again managed by AET on behalf of Comic Relief (UK).

2. Purpose of the Mid Term Review

The purpose of the Mid-term Review is to assess the extent to which the delivery of the second phase of the MTE Project, 'Improving Educational Access and Outcomes for Marginalised Children in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda (Phase 2)' (hereafter, called the MTE 2), has either already met or is likely to meet the project objectives by September 2018. It is also to identify any areas in which adjustments need to be made during the second half of the project.

Specific tasks/scope of the review

The expectations of the review are to address issues at the level of the Project, i.e. MTE 2, at the LABE as an NGO level, and at the level of key partnerships.

At project level

The objectives are to:

1. Assess the project's progress and whether it is on track to meet its objectives.
2. Review significant achievements brought about by the project.
3. Assess the attitudes and perceptions of teachers, PEs, District education officials of the MTE Project's focal areas.
4. Identify any issues and problems which need to be addressed.
5. Gather feedback about the project from people affected by the work and provide an opportunity for them to participate in analysing the work and inform future activities and implementation methods
6. Make recommendations for the remaining implementation period including monitoring of the project

At LABE level

1. Provide an opportunity for LABE staff to build their capacity in monitoring and review processes.
2. Find out whether the project was well structured to meet the objectives and demands of the project.
3. Establish whether the project can be structured differently to enhance the impact.
4. Assess effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system of the project.
5. Review actual expenditure against planned expenditure and assess whether spending reflects project priorities.

On partnerships

Assess the project partnerships and their influence on the project specifically:

- a. The identity of the partners
- b. The quality of the partnerships between the project and the project partners
- c. The challenges faced by the project with regards to partnerships.

Additional questions

1. How have partnerships helped or hindered project implementation?
2. MTE policy – are people’s attitudes beginning to change with respect to the Government of Uganda’s MTE policy? How successfully is the MTE policy being implemented in schools?
3. What advocacy, networking and inter-agency coordination has been taking place? What has this achieved so far?
4. Is the project reaching adults as well as children with disabilities?
5. How effective has the monitoring of the project been to date? Are monitoring activities sufficient to enable measurement of the impact of the project?

3. Data collection for the Mid-term Review of MTE 2

The data collection period for the mid-term review of MTE 2 took place from 21 September to 6 October, in Kampala and in the W Nile and Northern Uganda districts of Arua, Koboko, Yumbe, Adjumani, Gulu and Nwoya. Two evaluators worked together to refine the data collection instruments in liaison with LBE staff on 22 -24 September, and departed for the field on 25 September. Field research was conducted between 26 September and 3 October in the districts, and in Kampala between 3-6 October 2016.

Table 1: Summary of Data Collected for the MTE 2 Mid-Term Review

Summary of Primary Data Collected	Number
Interviews with Senior Officials in MoES, NCDC, UNATCOM	5
Interviews with District & Local Government Officials	24
Interviews with Language Board Members	9*
Interviews with Core PTC Staff & Centre Co-ordinating Tutors (CCTs)	15
Interviews with School Administrators, Teachers	177
Interviews/discussions with Parent Educators, HLC members, Parents	423
Interviews and consultations with LABE staff and LABE Board members	16
Meetings/consultations with AET staff	1
Meeting UMLEN (excl. evaluator)	13
Total Number of Respondents (see also Appendices 3, 4 & 5)	682
School Visits	15
Classroom observations	33
ICT Hub visits	3
Home Learning Centre (HLC) site visits (included participation of representatives from an additional 20+ HLCs)	11
HLC learning observations (literacy, numeracy, child, adult)	5
Questionnaires – district stakeholders and MLEN members	87
Secondary Data Reviewed / Consulted	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. TOR for the Mid-term Review ii. The Project Log-Frame iii. Literacy and Adult Basic Education Strategic Plan 2016-2020 iv. Final Report: An Evaluation of the Literacy and Basic Education Mother-tongue Education Project v. Baseline Survey for MTE LABE Project Phase II, Kyambogo University, 2014. vi. International Annual Report Form, Comic Relief 2015 (Year 1 Report) vii. International Annual Report Form, Comic Relief 2016 (Year 2 Report) viii. Basic Education Curriculum Framework for Uganda 2013 (NCDC) ix. Pedagogy Handbook for Teaching in Local Language (NCDC & LABE) 2013 x. Bilingual Teacher’s Voice, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2015; Volume 1, Issue 2, 2015; Volume 2, Issue 3, ,2016 xi. District Reports prepared by the District Project Officers xii. 4 X AET Reports on Training Workshops with LABE <p>Additional documentation provided by senior LABE staff including the Executive Director, Head of Programmes, Head of Finance, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. See also list of References and Appendices.</p>	

*Note: some language board members are also CCTs or senior staff in CPTCs, so they are counted as representing each function.

4. Summary of the Findings of the Mid-term Review according to the terms of reference (TOR)

REVIEW OBJECTIVES AT MTE 2 Project Level	
<p>1. Assess the project's progress and whether it is on track to meet its objectives</p>	<p>The project is half-way through its life-cycle. Significant progress on activities and outcomes has been made particularly in regards to the establishment and support of Home Learning Centres (HLCs) (approximately three per primary school in which LABE contributes to local language teaching and learning support). The status of the progress in relation to specific outcomes is reflected in the 'International Annual Report Form, Comic Relief 2016 (Year 2 Report)' compiled with the assistance of AET in September 2016. Detailed discussion of progress is included in the main part of the report below. Obviously, the MTE 2 is only half-way through its implementation and some parts of the project implementation are ahead of others. Overall it is anticipated that the implementation of MTE 2 is on track and that LABE will satisfy its commitments to its stakeholders, including its funding partners, Comic Relief and AET.</p>
<p>2. Review significant achievements of the project</p>	<p>The most significant of the achievements of the LABE project during its second term has been the expansion of the number and reach of <u>Home Learning Centres (HLCs)</u> since 2013. At the time of the Mid-term Review in October 2016, 342 HLCs had been established. As should be expected, the establishment of the HLCs occurs in a staged manner, i.e. not all can be established and supported at the same time or same stage of development. Therefore the degree of establishment and functionality varies according to the length of time since inception and respective stage of establishment. As should be anticipated, there are a few cases in which the establishment of HLCs has been unsuccessful. There are likely to be unanticipated challenges that are unique to particular communities and contexts that do not favour success. With the possible exception of some frailties in Yumbe and Adjumani, for the most part, significant progress and participation is in evidence.</p> <p>LABE has exceeded the terms of its contract in regard to its work in establishing and strengthening the HLCs through the implementation of <u>Home Learning Centre Management Committees (HLCMCs)</u>. These comprise members of the local or village community who accept various responsibilities that relate to the running and monitoring of the HLCs. The HLCMC members are given training by the LABE Team Leaders for each of the West Nile and Northern Uganda districts and Programme Officers (POs) stationed in each district. This results in building capacity and agency at the community level.</p>

There is evidence that the establishment of the HLCMCs has already increased community participation and a sense of pride in the HLCs. It has also resulted in community monitoring of the Parent Educators delivery of quality teaching and learning. Overall, it is evident that the establishment of the HLCMCs has resulted in the development of a strong sense of community ownership of the HLCs.

Parent Educators (PEs) attached to each of the HLCs have received or are in the process of receiving training to teach reading, writing and numeracy to ECD children, in-school children during after school hours, out-of-school children, and adults. There may be some unevenness in relation to the quality of training received by PEs. It appears that there has been stronger support in Arua, Koboko, Gulu and Nwoya than there has been in Yumbe and Adjumani. On-going and further support of PEs will be required since these are mostly people who have not received formal teacher education qualifications.

HLC multi-age classes facilitate a number of inclusive approaches to education that partially fill a gap in terms of vulnerable (e.g. disabled or orphaned) children/youth/adults for whom formal education is not possible. Youth, orphaned during the insurgencies are frequently unable to attend primary school owing to poverty. Classes in the HLCs for children and adults provide opportunities for such learners to be included in community learning environments that partly fill a gap in relation to the lack of provision of formal education for vulnerable learners. This is particularly in relation to post-war and ongoing trauma experienced by many members of these communities. A notable achievement is a partnership arrangement between the HLCs and local primary school teachers who assist in the training of PEs for age-appropriate teaching and materials development to suit different cohorts of learners.

ICT Hubs in/for schools: two ICT Hubs have been established at schools in each of the 6 districts. These cater for the P1-4 teachers and HTs of the schools in which they are located, but also to a nest of surrounding schools and their P1-4 teachers. The ICT Hubs are very well received and there is evidence of productive use of the resources in the production of bilingual learning materials. There is a demand for increased provision of ICT equipment and training for teachers in P5-7 and in schools where access to the ICT Hubs is difficult.

Newsletter – the *Bilingual Teacher’s Voice*: The initiation, training of teachers to write for this newsletter, and publication of teachers’ voices in the newsletter contribute towards teachers’ sense of investment in and ownership of

	<p>educational developments, particularly the use of local language and the Thematic Curriculum. The potential of this newsletter to support positive perceptions of the value of local languages in primary education could be a matter of focussed attention in the second half of MTE 2.</p> <p><u>P4 Transition Class:</u> LABE has begun to work with P4 teachers to assist in the development of pedagogically appropriate processes. However, it is understandable that because most of the focus of attention has been directed towards establishing and supporting the HLCs during the first half of the MTE 2 project, this is an area that has not received the degree of attention that is required to prepare teachers to meet the challenge of the transition year. Teachers will also need to have assistance in order to meet the reality of bilingual teaching and learning (i.e. in both local language and English) needs in P4 and beyond. It should therefore be one of the areas to receive greater priority in the second half of the project.</p> <p><u>P1-3 Classes and use of Local Language:</u> Although this part of the first priority of the MTE 2 project, it seems that this has not received the necessary degree of focussed attention during the first two years of MTE 2. First there seems to have been a deterioration of expertise in the schools in regard to the implementation of local language teaching in P1-3 since 2013. Partly this is owing to the NCDC policy and practices of teacher transfers which results in teachers who have received the benefit of LABE’s earlier training have been transferred elsewhere. Replacement teachers have not had the earlier training. Greater attention needs to be directed towards this priority during the second half of MTE 2.</p> <p><u>CCTs and PTCs:</u> LABE continues to collaborate with teacher educators (tutors) and teacher training colleges in a positive and enabling manner. There are specific policy issues relating to the use of English as the medium of teacher education in the PTCs which do not synchronise with the use of local language/s in the Thematic Curriculum. Interviews with CCTs and senior staff from PTCs suggest that owing to retirements, new senior staff do not have the depth of experience in the use of local languages in primary education and are not adequately familiar with NCDC policy and practices (e.g. NCDC 2013). Teacher education takes place in English not in the local languages and thus teachers do not receive pre-service or even formal in-service teacher training in the use of local languages across the curriculum. These are matters for NCDC and MoEs to address and are not the responsibility of LABE.</p>
<p>3. Assess the attitudes and perceptions of</p>	<p>The Mid-term Review employed a series of instruments to gather information from the various stakeholders that would</p>

<p>the teachers, PEs, District education officials their attitudes and perceptions about the MTE 2 focal areas</p>	<p>provide adequate evidence to address this question. The data were collected through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A questionnaire administered to samples of stakeholders in the Districts and in Kampala ○ Interviews/focus group discussions (FGDs) including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers at schools ○ PEs, Parents, HLCMC members ○ CCTs, CPTC officials, Language Board members ○ Consultative meetings with officials in the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Districts ○ Ministry of Education and Sports ○ NCDC ○ UNATCOM ○ Attendance of a Uganda Multilingual Education Network (MLEN) meeting in Kampala. <p>Details of the findings are discussed in the main body of the Report.</p> <p>Overall, the vast majority of informants indicated strong support of LABE interventions and contributions in regard to MTE 2. The majority of informants accept responsibility for ensuring sustainability of the interventions and support, but nevertheless indicate a desire for LABE to continue to contribute to educational developments in the six districts. At the national level, NCDC and MoES indicate a strong recognition of the value of LABE’s contributions as ‘informing and making policy’ (Director NCDC, 3 October 2016). The Minister of State for Primary Education specifically recognises the value of LABE’s contributions to ECD provision via the HLCs, and she regards this as a possible model for Uganda. It would be difficult to find a higher recognition for LABE’s contributions to national education than this.</p>
<p>4. Identify any issues and problems which need to be addressed</p>	<p>LABE staff are fully aware of what they need to be doing over the next two years in order to comply with the terms of their contract.</p> <p>LABE will need to address potential weaknesses of the PO staff in Yumbe and Adjumani as a first priority. The second priority is to consolidate and ensure that the targeted number of HLCs has been established and that the HLCMCs increasingly aware of how they can assume ongoing responsibility for the management and financial (or in-kind) resourcing of the PEs and building requirements of the HLC structures. The third priority it to return attention to the MTE schools. It needs to be emphasised that it is understandable that the greater attention of the first two years has been on the capacity-building and resourcing of HLCs for ECD, in-school and adult learners. It further needs noting that there are approximately three HLCs to each school in which LABE</p>

	<p>contributes to local language development. However, there now needs to be a clear focus on LABE contributions in primary schools.</p> <p>LABE has kept up with its commitment to teacher development and support for P1-4 teachers and HTs in relation to ICT training as well as some support for teachers to manage the transition from local language medium to English medium teaching in the transitional year (P4). However, further support is required in schools.</p> <p>Owing to transfers and natural attrition of teachers, there are many teachers now in P1-3 who have not previously been exposed to LABE training in the implementation of the thematic curriculum as occurred in the first phase of the MTE Project. This means that there is a noticeable unevenness of teaching in the local languages in schools. While there are brilliant, passionate and creative teachers who are making use of LABE training, resources and inventing their own approaches to effective teaching, there are also many teachers who lack passion, understanding and apparent willingness to adjust their approaches to static approaches to teaching. The evaluators also found some evidence of unwillingness on the part of some teachers to teach through the local language/s, although this evidence is not borne out in the questionnaire data.</p> <p>Focus on teaching practices in P4 needs to be given emphasis in next two years in order to meet the contractual obligations of MTE 2. However, it also appears that there will need to be some form of intervention that involve NCDC, Local and District Government stakeholders, CPTCs and CCTs in relation to P1-3. Specific suggestions regarding this challenge are included in the list of recommendations that are discussed in the main report.</p>
<p>5. Gather feedback about the project from people affected by the work and provide an opportunity for them to participate in analyzing the work and inform future activities and implementation methods</p>	<p>As indicated above, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held at the HLCs with HLCMCs, Parents, Parent Educators and at schools with Teachers (including Head Teachers, Senior Teaching Staff and Senior Women Teachers).</p> <p>In almost all cases, these stakeholders indicated strongly positive and appreciative views of LABE contributions to educational developments that result in strengthening communities in the post-war and conflict period. Here and there, stakeholders express a desire for increased assistance provided via LABE. This takes the form of requests for increasing the token stipends paid to PEs, requests for provision of iron sheets for HLC structures, additional provision of ICT equipment, and so on. These requests are often opportunistic and unrealistic given that LABE makes it clear that it is not a funding and development agency, and</p>

	<p>that there is a shared responsibility that includes community contributions.</p> <p>At a more substantive level there are pedagogical and theoretical issues that have relevance for future educational developments in Uganda as well as at the district level.</p> <p>The first of these has to do with different approaches to current provision of ECD by various private sector agencies as well as LABE. Private sector provision of ECD lies outside of MoES education policy and there is a stark difference between the use of English as a medium of instruction in ECD provided by 'private' schools and MoES policy of local language use to the end of P3 (if not beyond). LABE's approach is to work according to the implications of MoES policy, i.e. local language medium of instruction for pre-school children.</p> <p>Teachers and parents are confused by the different approaches and assume the 'private' school provision of ECD in English is the preferred and most advantageous approach for their children. This is an issue that cannot be addressed by LABE alone and it is a matter that requires NCDC (and possibly MoES) attention. Secondly, the integrated approach of the Thematic Curriculum through the local language has different pedagogical approaches from the subject-based approach of the curriculum through English medium from P (4 and) 5-7. This is a further layer of confusion for both teachers and parents in an environment of changing and relocating staff. Again, this is a matter that is largely outside of LABE's hands. The best that LABE can do is to alert national and district level stakeholders to these issues that are faced on the ground.</p>
<p>6. Make recommendations for the remaining implementation period including monitoring of the project</p>	<p><u>ECD</u>: LABE holds an advantageous position of having pre-empted the national policy on ECD provision. The Minister of State for Primary Education has already indicated as much in a consultative meeting with the Evaluation Team and LABE Executive staff on 5 October. LABE must seize the opportunity to strengthen good practice expertise in the HLC development and particularly in relation to ECD, but also in relation to the HLC provision of: multi-grade classes; opportunities for alternative schooling for vulnerable and out of school youth and adult learners.</p> <p><u>Primary school interventions</u>: LABE needs to develop a strong and theoretically principled approach to assisting teachers in relation to P4, the transition year. This requires a strong bilingual approach (local language and use of English as bilingual mediums of instruction) and possibly also bilingual forms of assessment of students in P4.</p> <p>Realistically this is likely to be required beyond P4, in P5-7 as a gradual shift from local language medium to English. For the next two years, however, the focus needs to be on a bilingual</p>

	<p>approach. This has already been pre-empted by the LABE initiated teacher’s newsletter, <i>The Bilingual Teacher’s Voice</i>. This newsletter has the potential to disseminate useful pedagogical information to assist teachers in this regard.</p> <p><u>Staffing in Yumbe and Adjumani:</u></p> <p>POs in Yumbe and Adjumani don’t appear to be as strong or diligent as in the other four districts. The LABE Executive has already taken action to identify weaknesses and it would be useful to identify a clear strategy that includes transparent accountability statements and requirements that are upheld across the districts.</p>
<p>REVIEW OBJECTIVES LABE LEVEL</p>	
<p>1. Provide an opportunity for LABE staff to build their capacity in monitoring and review processes</p>	<p>LABE Staff have expertise in monitoring and reviewing of their own work. They were involved in the process of and accompanied the evaluators throughout the Mid-term Review both in the field and in Kampala. The Executive contributed to the shape and nature of the evaluation instruments. Each of the senior or executive staff have contributed to or been involved in different aspects of the Mid-term Review. It is also clear that staff have attended the AET workshops on capacity development, including M & E, and that they demonstrate significant levels of expertise.</p>
<p>2. Find out whether the project was well structured to meet the objectives and demands of the project</p>	<p>The planning of the MTE 2 Project has been very well planned however, as is always the case, conditions on the ground change over time. There are also budgetary issues that cannot be predicted ahead of time, including fluctuations in currency exchanges that may impact on the availability of funds to meet planned activities. For example, BREXIT resulted in a drop in the exchange value of the GBP which had a knock-on effect for LABE income mid-2016. This has negatively impacted upon LABE’s plans and some activities have had to be trimmed down as a result. LABE Head of Finance is able to provide details.</p>
<p>3. Establish whether the project can be structured differently to enhance the impact</p>	<p>The major change that could occur is to place greater emphasis on the HLCs, training and capacity development of PEs, and ECD provision. This is to take up the opportunity that presents itself in relation to the new MoES ECD policy of a national pre-school year in each primary school across Uganda.</p> <p>In addition to the expertise gained in HLC establishment, PE training and materials development, LABE may suggest various possible collaborations with MoES and NCDC, e.g. the development of a training manual for ECD teachers in rural and remote areas of the country. There is significant potential for LABE to contribute to the development of materials that draw attention to the advantages of multi-age classes that</p>

	<p>include vulnerable learners who are unable to reach regular state provided schools.</p> <p>However, we do not advise jettisoning involvement in working with capacity development of P1-3 teachers and in the transition year, P4 so that teachers understand the principles and practices of successful bilingual teaching. This includes continuing with ICT development, and a possible growing or expansion of the <i>Bilingual Teacher's Voice</i>. The main concern is whether or not LABE currently has sufficient capacity (numbers of senior staff) to accomplish both school-based and HLC-based development to an optimal degree. One possibility would be to give serious consideration to expanding the size and expertise of LABE staff in order to take up the opportunities in the current environment. This has implications also for the funders, Comic Relief and AET.</p>
4. Assess effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system of the project	<p>LABE has historically had effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place. The financial management systems are orderly and these are an excellent mechanism to track whether or not expenditure on activities matches targets and timeframes. The Financial Manager of LABE maintains a tight grasp of expenditure and has up to date information readily at hand in this regard. The staff member responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation in general changed in early 2016 and the new incumbent seems to have gained a good grasp of LABE projects, systems and information management already. We can also indicate that the M & E staff has been most willing to provide professional assistance to the evaluation team and that all staff continue to participate in regular AET development workshops and training.</p>
5. Review actual expenditure against planned expenditure as assess whether sending reflects project priorities.	<p>We are satisfied that this process is in accordance with generally accepted principles and minor deviations per fluctuating exchange rates and other unexpected occurrences such as BREXIT. Regular financial reporting to the funders via AET assure quality control in this area.</p>
<p>REVIEW OBJECTIVES on PARTNERSHIPS - Assess the project partnerships and their influence on the project specifically:</p>	
1. The identity of the partners	<p>AET, Comic Relief NCCD MoES UNATCOM District & Local Government (including Sub-counties with concerns for health and social services) Language Boards (indirectly during MTE 2) PTCs & CCTs Uganda MLEN Schools</p>

	Communities (village communities associated with the schools and Home Learning Centres)
2. The quality of the partnerships between the project and the project partners	<p>There is a strong, positive, mutually respectful and productive partnership between AET and LABE. AET provides professional development (training) opportunities for staff, and manages the liaison between Comic Relief and LABE for overall monitoring, evaluation and financial reporting purposes. National, District level and local community level partnerships all report significant satisfaction with and appreciation of the interventions and support provided by LABE. There is no indication of dissatisfaction in relation to LABE’s contributions or in relation to the LABE approach to collaborative work. A particular characteristic of LABE’s approach in building partnerships is one of reciprocity, facilitating empowerment, and ensuring that communities are able to express voice and exercise agency.</p> <p>With the focus on developing HLCs and the HLCMCs, LABE has formed a new or strengthened partnership with the sub-county structures. Training of HLCMCs has included a dovetailing of training facilitated by health workers in hygiene, sanitation and nutrition.</p> <p>There is considerable evidence that LABE is regarded very highly at every level of government and that its reputation is gaining substantive ground, particularly in relation to the advances it has made in rural educational development.</p>
3. The challenges faced by the project with regards to partnerships	<p>LABE is able to work with relative speed to take up government policy initiatives, whereas the wheels of government turn very slowly. There is a time-lag and a resource-lag between national education policy and implementation and its roll-out in the rural and remote areas of the country. In particular, NCDC is responsible for the resourcing of learning materials and has not yet been able to provide adequate learning resources for pupils (readers and textbooks). NCDC is also responsible for the rolling out of the <i>Pedagogy Handbook</i> co-authored with LABE, but so far only limited numbers have been printed. Although each school we visited has been provided with at least one copy of this handbook, it was either in a state of disrepair or unavailable for us to view.</p> <p>Many CCTs that have already been trained by LABE are in the process of retiring. There appear to be a disproportionate number of men vs women CCTs, and new appointees are not yet prepared/trained for Thematic Curriculum & local language as medium of instruction (MOI). This is a concern in terms of capacity development and for the roll-out of policy as well as for LABE’s preparations to hand over implementation to other stakeholders.</p>

ADDITIONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

<p>1. How have partnerships helped or hindered project implementation?</p>	<p><u>Conditions that hinder LABE progress</u> <u>MoES, NCCD</u>: National government stakeholders have their own internal resourcing, including budgetary, challenges which delay implementation or make it difficult to synchronise implementation processes where LABE has greater flexibility to move ahead of government initiatives or provisioning. <u>PTCs</u> are responsible for pre-service teaching and there are pedagogical and theoretical mismatches between PTC teacher education curriculum, including the use of English as medium of teacher education and the use of local languages in the Thematic Curriculum. It is not possible to prepare teachers to teach in the local language via English. This is a serious matter for PTCs and NCCD to resolve. <u>Language Boards & relationship with NCCD</u>: The current approaches to orthographic development under consideration or employed by the language boards appear to be influenced by linguists associated with the Summer Institutes of Linguists (SIL). These systems do not coincide with the approaches favoured by linguists attached to universities such as Makerere, and they do not coincide with a long trajectory of discussions of the harmonisation of the orthographies of languages in Africa that date back to the 1928 Rejaf Conference in Sudan. SIL favours the separation of closely associated varieties of languages and orthographic systems that increases the number of vowels and / or adds tonal marks to letters. This increases teaching difficulties and will reduce the likelihood of publishing sufficient reading materials in local languages. This also creates difficulties in relation to historical documents already published using earlier orthographic systems, including bibles and other literature. The mismatch between two different orthographic systems is a risk to the effective implementation of the local language in primary education and also to the long-term development of the indigenous languages in Uganda. <u>Conditions that support LABE progress</u> Almost all stakeholders indicate a strongly positive view of LABE's involvement in educational development in schools and in rural communities. The only slightly negative responses are related to opportunistic or unrealistic expectations that LABE is not able to meet and should not be expected to meet. These are expectations that are either the responsibility of communities themselves or government agencies.</p>
<p>2. MTE policy – are people's attitudes beginning to change with respect to the</p>	<p>District and local government officials report that parents are still not keen on MTE as part of the Thematic Curriculum. However, these officials refer to parents from all of the schools under their authority, whereas LABE works in only 20</p>

<p>Government of Uganda’s MTE policy? How successfully is the MTE policy being implemented in schools?</p>	<p>schools per district. However no data were found to indicate that parents of pupils in the MTE Project schools hold similarly negative views (see also discussion of the Questionnaire data). Parents consulted in the HLCs, however, indicate positive views of the use of local language both in the HLCs and in the primary schools.</p> <p>CCTs, DEOs, DISs all indicate support for local language in schools (in both interview discussions and in the Questionnaire dat).</p> <p>HTs, DHTs, SWTs and teachers in schools responded positively to the use of local language in primary schools and admit that the de facto practices include code-switching between local languages and English all the way to P7 (i.e. they make use of bilingual practices even if these are not officially sanctioned from P5 onwards).</p> <p>Classroom-based observations of pupils in P1-4 and occasionally also P6, revealed some excellent pedagogical practices and use of appropriate, even exceptional creativity, among some teachers.</p> <p>However, at least half if not more of the teachers observed are not doing well. This may be because teachers trained by LABE have been transferred. It may be because some teachers do not appear to exhibit enthusiasm for their profession. Some teachers should probably have chosen another profession.</p> <p>LABE reports that most of the emphasis has been on getting the HLCs up and running (three per project school) and establishing a Management Committee at each HLC. The establishment and support of the HLCMC has taken up the bulk of LABE’s attention, leaving less time and attention for the schools. Nevertheless, LABE has established ICT Hubs (two per district), trained teachers from surrounding schools (P1-4 and the HTs) with basic ICT skills. Teachers have also been trained to write for the newly established newsletter, <i>The Bilingual Teachers Voice</i>. We understand that LABE will focus more on teacher development in the schools over the next two years. These shifts in focus are likely to decrease ongoing antipathy towards MTE. Having said this however, it has been noticeable that since the Mid-term Review, NCDC officials appear to have been making public statements reiterating their commitment to local language in early primary and this should have a positive effect over time.</p>
<p>3. What advocacy, networking and inter-agency coordination has been going on? What</p>	<p>The International Mother Language Day celebrations were not held in 2016 owing to the national elections held on 22 February, although there is a report of the day being celebrated in April.</p>

<p>has this achieved so far?</p>	<p>However, LBE has been working at community capacity building and the organisation of these events has not been possible given the degree of attention invested in the HLCs. Establishment of the HLCs is in itself a significant process of advocacy and local networking.</p> <p>The <i>Bilingual Teachers Voice</i> has the potential to become an important advocacy forum for teachers and educational stakeholders.</p> <p>LBE plays a leading role in the Uganda Multilingual Education Network (UMLN) and collaborates with several other organisations, including NCDC, SIL, and RTI, that are part of this network. UMLN is an important forum for exchanging views and engaging in collaborative dialogue with other NGOs and providers working in early primary education.</p> <p>Active involvement in this kind of networking, especially with NCDC and MoES has led to the Pedagogy Handbook jointly authored and published with NCDC in 2014 and in regular meetings with NCDC and MoES officials who have travelled to W Nile and Northern Uganda to see LBE’s work in situ.</p> <p>Arising from the latest developments LBE can expect a close working relationship with MoES in regards to ECD provision, especially in rural and remote communities.</p>
<p>4. Is the project reaching adults or children with disabilities?</p>	<p>Yes – in terms of inclusive and multi-age classes in the HLCs, although the extent to which this occurs has not been calculated by the evaluators.</p>
<p>5. How effective has the monitoring of the project been to date? Are monitoring activities sufficient to enable measurement of the impact of the project?</p>	<p>We believe LBE maintains a professional level of its own monitoring and evaluation, in relation to activities of the project, and in relation to its financial expenditure and reporting. We also believe that there is significant evidence of AET’s regular support and attentiveness to the detail of LBE’s projects, objectives and activities, as well as its needs in terms of staff development. This means that both internal and external monitoring are ongoing.</p> <p>Measurement of impact is more difficult to assess or quantify. LBE is able to maintain records of community and stakeholder participation in educational development processes in both school and HLC interventions, and also in relation to support of CCTs, language boards, and local and district education office holders. LBE is also able to maintain records of school attendance through school attendance record-keeping systems. However, ‘learning’ impact is not easy to quantify. The statistical data however are an indication of activities and participation.</p> <p>What we are able to report is that the stakeholders consulted, see Table 1 and Appendices 2, 3, 4 & 6, provide positive reports on the impact of LBE’s work. We suggest that the</p>

	obvious respect with which LABE is held among the stakeholders at national, district and local level suggest that LABE's impact is considerable.
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Major Findings and Recommendations

We found no stakeholder who suggested that LABE should discontinue working in the area of pre-primary, primary, out-of-school youth and adult education. Instead, we found almost universal endorsement of LABE's work and desire for the organisation to continue to support local, district and national initiatives in building education capacity, particularly in relation to the use of local language in education. We further found that LABE has anticipated new policy in relation to a national ECD policy and that its ECD work in the HLCs offer a strategic advantage to LABE in further strengthening its relationship at the national level with both NCDC and MoES. Finally, LABE also has the strategic advantage of being able to develop and lead stronger implementation of local language and bilingual education in primary education in Uganda. We therefore strongly recommend that LABE extend and strengthen its leadership expertise in ECD provision, use of local language in learning and bilingual education from P4 onwards in primary schooling.

4. Home Learning Centres (HLCs) and Home Learning Centre Management Committees (HLCMCs) - building local community level capacity

HLCs and HLCMCs

In this section we focus on the data collected in the field in relation to Home Learning Centres (HLCs). A primary commitment of MTE 2 has been the establishment of and building of capacity in Home Learning Centres (HLCs) (approximately three per school associated with MTE 2, i.e. 3 HLCs X 20 schools per district X 6 districts = 60 per district = 360 HLCs in total). This is on track (272 established at the time of the Mid-term Review). LABE's original plans for the establishment of each HLC as recorded in the contractual obligations with Comic Relief did not include the establishment of a Management Committee (MC) for each HLC. However, owing to work in the field, LABE came to the realisation that capacity development that would secure community ownership and sustainability of each HLC would be enhanced by a Home Learning Centre Management Committee (HLCMC) in each case. This is a notable addition to and strengthening of the original plans for MTE 2. It has required additional investment in terms of training of community members to take on a range of roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of each HLC. It demonstrates also that the LABE team demonstrates flexibility on the ground and exceptionally committed work ethics.

We found that HLCMC members in the majority of cases we came across have undergone systematic training in leadership and management skills by LABE staff. Because of this training, they are aware of their roles and responsibilities and they acknowledge that this has enhanced their own opportunities and those of their communities.

LABE has strengthened the prospects of each HLC through partnerships with other stakeholders in the districts. For example, in Koboko, HLCMC chairpersons are encouraged to work closely with the District Local Government (DLG) to ensure that they take the HLCs to another level of independence. Plans are underway to have these HLCs registered as pre-schools at the district level. However, a clear framework of co-operation between each DLG and HLC and one that clearly spells out the process of how a HLC can become registered as a pre-school is still in development or not yet in place. We do not see this as a deficiency, rather as a work in progress.

In some HLCs permanent or (semi-permanent) structures (classrooms / huts specifically dedicated to housing teaching and learning materials as well as classes during rainy weather) have been built with help of other stakeholders like parents, community leaders including Sub-county and Local Council leaders. In Koboko these stakeholders have provided some HLCs with iron sheets and cement to construct these buildings. This has particularly occurred in Ayilenga, Purinita, Ajeteku and Nyeite

HLCs. We are not sure whether or not this level of co-operation is evident in other districts. However, we can say that in Nwoya, for example, LABE has encouraged co-operation between Sub-county health workers and the HLCMCs. Here, health workers visit the HLCs and train HLCMC members to understand the principles of providing and teaching children and parents with basic training in hygiene (washing hands), clean drinking water, and sanitation (constructing easily accessible urinals and toilets) suitable for rural conditions while ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people.

LABE has also encouraged partnerships with other NGOs for the improvement of HLCs. For example, in some HLCs in Koboko, Aga Khan has equipped HLCs with story books for children. This has helped to encourage the culture of reading among pre-schoolers, pupils and other learners in the communities.

In many cases, HLCMC members have been trained and equipped with fundraising and lobbying skills. This skill is fundamental if HLCs are to be sustained beyond LABE's MTE 2 life span.

As part of their capacity building initiative, HLCMC members visit each other on a regular basis with a purpose of sharing and learning from each other. Some HLCs which were hitherto weak have learnt lessons and good practices from their colleagues. HLCMC members report that they now feel more confident to carry on with or without LABE.

As a strategy for sustainability, some HLCMC have recruited retired teachers to serve as voluntary PEs and advisors on their HLCMCs. This move has helped them to learn more about education management and leadership skills. They serve as peer instructors providing extra guidance where necessary, as well as training PEs especially on how to draw schemes of work and lesson plans and how to use appropriate pedagogical approaches.

The POs sometimes hold seminars and workshops when new members are recruited to the HLCMCs. This serves to equip new members with management and leadership skills as well as reminding the old committee members of their roles and responsibilities. However, in some cases they have not been trained owing to lack of funds and time.

Some HLCs under the leadership of HLCMCs in Koboko have come up with a constitution / memorandum of understanding (MoU) to guide them on how to manage the centres. These MoUs spell out the functions of the HLCs, the dos and don'ts, and the roles and responsibilities of HLCMC office bearers. This is a strategy to minimise conflict that may arise in future.

HLCMC members have made a deliberate effort to serve on Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs). This to ensure that they are up to date with what is happening in the schools. They make use of this opportunity to learn more of good practices in an education institution which they borrow and implement in their HLCs.

On a rotational basis HLCMC members are encouraged, for example in Koboko, to go to and attend classes at school. When they come back they hold meetings to discuss what they learnt and how they can help the PEs to improve their teaching of children.

Some HLCMCs have encouraged their PEs to undertake distance education training with hope that they will be recognised as professionals. This has come as a result of some criticism from private ECD schools and even some primary schools that PEs do not have recognised qualifications. This is a matter that may require further attention in the future (particularly if MoES and NCDC work more closely with LABE in relation to ECD provision).

At this stage we should like to signal that we found well-organised and systematic adherence to the terms of the MTE 2 contract in regard to the establishment of the HLCs in four of the six districts. We have reservations about the level of commitment and attention to detail that we found in Yumbe and Adjumani. Although HLCMCs admit that they have received some training, we are concerned that the POs in these districts are not fulfilling their obligations to ensure that the HLCs are progressing towards sustainability. We are concerned that some of the HLCs that were established in these districts are no longer functioning. We are also not sure whether or not the POs and their activities in these districts are as regularly or closely supervised and monitored as they are the other four districts. This is a matter that requires the attention of the LABE executive as the good name of the organisation is compromised if service delivery is not at optimal levels across all districts.

Parent Educators (PEs) – roles, responsibilities, successes, risks

Roles and responsibilities

During the first phase of the MTE Project (2009-2013) LABE established a process of collaborating with each village community to identify members of the community with an interest in teaching children and adults to take up a community position of being a Parent Educator (PE). The PE would act as the community liaison person/s between the village and school and also take on non-formal teaching activities in the HLCs developed at that time.

Currently, the role of the PEs is to teach basic literacy (reading, writing and numeracy) to pre-schoolers, children attending primary school after school hours, out-of-school youth and adults. The teaching is conducted in the local languages namely, Lugbarati, Kakwa, Madi, Aringati and Acholi (Lwo). Classes are conducted on average of two to three days per week for pre-schoolers. Non-formal classes/tutoring, locally known as coaching, is offered to primary pupils who wish to improve on their MTE based literacy. Young people who are not able to attend formal schooling (for various reasons including early marriage, disability, poverty and other vulnerabilities) are also able to participate in these classes which are held after school hours and during holidays. The PEs also offer basic literacy (reading, writing and numeracy) classes to adult learners. Adult learners are mainly women who never had the opportunity to go to school (for reasons including the 30 years of insurgencies, war and conflict). Their age ranges from 20-60. Male enrolment is lower than that of women in almost all learning centres that we visited.

The PEs work closely with the HLCMC to mobilise communities for meetings, to provide play materials among other things. Of particular note is the playground equipment built from local trees (swings, see-saws, and climbing equipment). The PEs also sensitise community members about the importance of HLCs within their community and the importance that accrues from using local languages in the early years of the child's learning. They also support the HLCMC's work towards community ownership of the HLCs.

As part of their teaching responsibility, they prepare learning aids using locally available materials e.g. charts, dolls, pots, balls and ropes. They involve parents and children in this activity. In addition, they prepare lessons plans, keep records of attendance, store and take stock of the HLC's property on a regular basis.

Many of the PEs house the HLCs in their compounds. Thus, they provide shelter to pupils especially during rainy sessions. They serve as intermediaries between the HLCs and the school within their communities, i.e. share their success stories as well as challenges with the schools. Some reported seeking assistance on how to make lesson plans from primary teachers.

PEs hold meetings to sensitise parents about good parenting practices including obligations they have for their children's welfare (e.g. providing their children with scholastic materials, giving them food to take to school, buying school uniforms and encouraging their children, especially girls, to remain in school).

There is evidence that in several HLCs, PEs have mobilised stakeholders, including parents, local government and politicians to provide resources for the construction of permanent structures for classes (e.g.in Ayilenga, Purinita, Ajeteku and Nyeite HLCs in Koboko district as mentioned earlier). Children also now have uniforms and shoes, and porridge is provided for children when they attend HLC classes in many instances.

PEs provide security to pre-schoolers while at the HLC. After school they assist those who have to cross roads to do so in order to avoid accidents. Part of the teaching process includes giving children survival skills (e.g. how to defend themselves) as well as teaching them societal/cultural knowledge like sharing, caring for one another, and greeting and helping elders.

PEs are encouraged to engage in sourcing teaching materials, especially books, from nearby schools and other NGOs operating in the region. In many cases, LABE has worked towards encouraging partnerships between local school teachers and the PEs in order to support capacity development of PEs and appropriate materials development for the HLCs. PEs follow up the progress of children who graduate from their HLCs. In doing so they monitor their experiences especially performance and retention at primary school. These experiences help them to improve their teaching in HLCs.

They invite or collaborate with Village Health Teachers (VHTs) from the sub-counties to talk to parents on health-related issues like HIV, family planning, hygiene and nutrition. They work closely with religious institutions. For example, they invite Sheiks, Pastors and Catholic priests to speak to the parent learners and children at the HLCs on topics such as the importance of adult education and keeping the girl child in school.

Finally, they hold learning competitions between children and parent learners and they invite pupils from nearby primary schools to serve as peer teachers. These pupils teach children (pre-schoolers) nursery rhymes, tell stories and at times help them to read alphabets.

Successes noted as a result of PEs /HLCMC interventions

We draw on a series of consultative meetings with DLG officers, HLCMC members, PEs and separate meetings with parents at the HLCs in order to make the following observations. Parents appear to have gained positive attitudes towards the use of local language/s in education. They can now understand what their children are learning and where possible they can provide assistance. Their own attendance of literacy and numeracy classes empowers parents to engage with their children's learning and to follow their progress. Parents express particular pride in this development. DLG officers indicate that they observe improved parental views of local languages in school and that

they feel that the LABE interventions, including local language use for educational programmes for children and adults has resulted in strengthening parental support of their children's education and retention in schools.

PEs and HLCMC members report that several different stakeholders support the HLCS, including the Sub-counties, Local Councils and DLGs, as well as parents. DLG officers in several districts, including Koboko, Arua, Nwoya and Gulu report that children from the ECD classes at the HLCs are performing better in the early primary school years than those who have not received HLC teaching and support. These stakeholders note that children from ECD classes in the HLCs are more confident and socialise freely in communities especially during social gatherings. For example, they willingly sing in Sunday school choirs during church services, they are invited to perform during district functions; they participate in community radio talk shows (children's radio programs). In addition, children (including pre-schoolers) stage drama shows with their parents.

In some districts the HLCs are partnering with other NGOs (e.g. RTI and Aga Khan) that provide instructional materials. On the one hand this may be useful on the other hand it may also serve to be a risk where there are different approaches and agendas. For example, other NGOs sometimes offer PEs stipends that are ten times as much as those that can be afforded by LABE and then LABE suffers a loss of the PEs to other organisations. There are also different teaching methodologies and different uses of orthographies favoured by RTI, as discussed elsewhere in the Report. This has the potential to create confusion.

Some PEs, for example in Ngola and Kupajo (Koboko) have been elected as political leaders (councillors) at sub-county level. Others have been appointed as youth representatives to sub-county local councils. This is attributed to their roles in the community and the invaluable support they have given to both parent learners and pre-schoolers.

In some HLCs parents are now paying a small fee to PEs. In many cases parents contribute towards the PE's livelihood by providing 'in-kind' contributions such as taking it in turns to provide meals or food for the PE, or working in the PE's field/s while the PE is engaged in teaching children and other learners. This is important in terms of the HLCs developing sustainable educational practices, taking responsibility for and ownership of these. However there is also a (small) but possible risk that parents may start insisting on educational approaches that differ from LABE's programmes.

Risks

There is evidence that in some HLCs there has been pressure to start introducing children, even pre-schoolers to English (e.g. in Yumbe). This could undermine the focus on local language and may delay reading and writing with comprehension.

Some PEs are not yet trained or are only in the beginning stages of their training. LABE is aware of this and these PEs are scheduled to attend training programmes in the second half of MTE 2.

Each HLC may need to have more than one PE because of increased enrolment of pre-schoolers and adult learners. (This is especially the case in Koboko.) In some HLCs, however, PEs are often afflicted by ill-health or are absent from duty for a variety of reasons. These include social pressures, poverty in the area and lack of commitment. (This appears to be especially the case in Yumbe and Adjumani.)

In several instances we found that trained PEs are abandoning HLCs for better paid up jobs. For example, some go to Aga Khan ECDs and others to nursery/kindergarten schools in the area. Others have shifted to conducting petty trade in the refugee camps that have become occupied over the last two years by refugees from South Sudan. This is especially the case in Yumbe and Adjumani. There was one case where it was reported that a PE left a HLC and started his own nursery school.

Members of some HLCs claim that they have no instructional materials. They claim that LABE promised to give them these materials but that these have not been received. Most negative claims made by disgruntled community members were not substantiated except possibly in Yumbe and Adjumani.

Risks identified specifically for Yumbe and Adjumani

In Yumbe district, 60 HLCs were established. However 20 have closed and only 40 are currently working. Out of the 40, only about 15 are working /functioning well. In Adjumani, the PO did not provide statistics, however, he reported that almost half of these are not functioning properly. The shortcomings are explained as follows.

- Weak HLCMCs.
- Community failure to own the HLCs. They view the HLC as a LABE rather than a community enterprise.

- There is an unrealistic expectation of receiving funds from LABE. When the HLCMC members realised that LABE would not be able to meet expectations, they withdrew their support for a HLC.
- HLCMCs claim that LABE did not meet expectations of providing iron-sheets for roofing or solar energy.
- PEs withdrew and went to work in refugee camps.
- Parents failed/refused to provide local materials to construct play materials for pre-schoolers and primary school children.
- A high influx of refugees in Yumbe and Adjumani has increased the cost of living. Parents and children are working for survival.
- High competition with nursery schools that promise to teach children in English so that they can compete with urban children.
- Most PEs in Yumbe and Adjumani have not been (adequately) trained by LABE staff.
- Enrolment of parent learners is still very low. Parents think that this something for children not adults.
- There is still some resistance to the use of local languages. (The evaluation team had some concerns about the level of support for MTE in schools offered by the DLGs in these districts.)
- Local support and involvement is still very low.
- The community is hesitant to contribute voluntary work.
- High levels of poverty in the area mean that people are struggling to survive and therefore education does not appear to be a priority at the moment.

5. Implementation of Local Language in the Thematic Curriculum in Primary Schools (with a focus on P4)

In this section we draw on classroom observations in primary schools. We also draw on focus group interviews with senior school management, teachers, CCTs, senior staff of PTCs, and DLG officials. We further draw on interviews with LABE POs and Team Leaders.

During MTE 2, LABE's focus of attention thus far has been largely in relation to building capacity of teachers in P4. This is the 'transition' year between local language medium and English medium from P5 onwards. P4 is essentially a year in which teachers need to understand how to make best use of both the local language and English. As indicated above, because LABE has been committed to the establishment of up to three HLCs per primary school in which the MTE 2 Project is involved, the first two years of the project has seen greater attention devoted to the HLCs. Nevertheless, we obtained

evidence from the POs in Arua, Koboko, Gulu and Nwoya of systematic delivery of the activities and interventions scheduled for primary schools. This includes training P4 teachers and it includes the establishment of two ICT hubs per district. The ICT hubs include computers for use of P1-4 teachers and the Head Teachers. Teachers are expected to use their computer skills to develop teaching materials in the local language. We had expected to find an on-going and continued focus on teachers in P1-3 since these are the teachers who are expected to teach almost entirely in the local language. The POs informed us that owing to the scale of intervention in the HLCs and the need to establish ICT Hubs and to support P4 teachers, there has thus far been less attention paid to the P1-3 teachers.

Opportunities, successes and strengths

In many of the lower classes (P1-3) observed the use of local languages under the thematic curriculum is promising. Teachers are using local languages to teach across the curriculum. There are some excellent and highly talented teachers whose work we witnessed in particularly in Koboko, Gulu and Nwoya. Teachers we visited during the Mid-term Review were keen to show us their lesson plans drawn up in local languages. However, we realise that teachers had been given prior warning of our visit and thus demonstration lessons and prepared materials were clearly prepared for our visits. This is only to be expected.

Materials in local languages have been developed by teachers who have been trained in ICT. The *Pedagogy Handbook* prepared by LABE in collaboration with NCDC was in evidence and being used in many of the schools we visited. However we noted that insufficient numbers of these have been printed and provided by NCDC to the schools. Most of the LABE project trained teachers have appreciated the resources developed/provided by LABE. They are handy, easy to understand and in line with NCDC set curriculum and syllabus.

Various stakeholders report that teachers' attitudes towards the use of local languages have improved. They see the advantages associated with the use of local languages in lower primary years. For example, teachers have higher hopes in students who started learning in local languages than those who were exposed to English in lower primary. This information is corroborated in the Questionnaire data discussed below.

The stakeholders report that LABE has conducted the contractually specified training in the transition year (P4) for teachers in how teachers should use both local language and English medium in this year.

CPTCs have introduced the teaching of local languages (as subjects) in their curriculum, but not the use of local languages for teaching across the curriculum. Student teachers can choose to specialise in the teaching of mother tongue or in the teaching in English, however it needs to be emphasised that the CPTCs are not training teachers through the local language/s. They use English as the medium of teacher training. Thus there is a mismatch between what the CPTCs tell teachers to do and how they conduct their teacher training pedagogy.

Challenges and risks

Despite the registered success in advancing the use of the local language as medium of instruction (especially in a transitional arrangement in P4) in most primary schools we visited, we also found evidence of ambivalence towards the use of the local language and in some cases also evidence that schools have taken a decision to abandon its use in favour of English medium. This is a disappointment and significant challenge.

In comparison with the overall degree of competence in teaching through the local language witnessed during the Final Evaluation of the MTE Project in 2013, there appears to be an overall decline in teacher preparedness and commitment to MTE. In part this may be ascribed to the transfer of teachers who had previously been trained to use local language in the Thematic Curriculum. Teachers who have not received the earlier training are now in schools where LABE has had a historical association and in which LABE has not been able to sustain a focus on capacity development for P1-3 during the first two years of MTE 2.

We noticed that there were occasions when prepared lessons were clearly staged for the visiting evaluators. In at least one school the senior management and teachers admitted that they had taken a decision to abandon what they claimed 'LABE was forcing them to do'. This of course is not an appropriate claim since LABE's interventions are fully supported by NCDC, compliant with the Thematic Curriculum, and part of a multi-stakeholder collaboration with DLGs, the core PTCs, CCTs. The schools are obliged in terms of national policy to implement the local language education. What this demonstrates rather is that the schools may not be regularly monitored and held to account by DLG and other responsible stakeholders and this in turn is a reflection of weaknesses at the local government level. It is also a reflection of the system of teacher transfers and a failure to ensure that there is an appropriate transfer of skills or capacity development when transfers occur. This is outside of LABE's realm of responsibility but it does have a negative impact on the smooth running of LABE's work and can result in intervention fatigue.

There is some confusion between the use of local language as a medium of instruction and theme based curriculum. It was evident in many schools that although they were using local languages, they are still using a subject based curriculum in the early primary school classes.

As implied earlier, some teachers have not been trained in using local languages as a medium of instruction. Others claim that although they are native speakers of the local languages in area, they do not have the competences to translate technical terms into these languages. Thus teaching in these languages becomes a big challenge.

Apart from resistance at the school level, we did encounter residually negative attitudes towards the use of the local language among individual teachers at some schools. For example, teachers who teach in local languages resent being labelled as rural or vernacular teachers and believe that they are thus stigmatised. They express a concern that this may limit their opportunities for mobility or career advancement if they learn to teach in a local language that does not correspond the local language of a school to which they might later be transferred.

Another challenge is that there are frequently either no, or not enough, teaching and learning resource books and other materials available in local languages. DLGs argue that this is a shortcoming of the NCDC, and NCDC argues that DLGs need to include line-items for these in their budgetary planning. Apart from deficiencies in the volume of published materials required for successful implementation of the curriculum, there are problems in relation to competing orthographies for languages and the use of two different sets of orthographies in different generations of teaching and learning materials, including reading materials. The relatively recent interventions of SIL linguists in the orthographies being developed within the Language Board for each of the local or area languages is a problem that will escalate unless MoES and NCDC address this issue at a national level. This matter is discussed in relation to the section that addresses Language Boards more directly. New orthographies with increased numbers of vowels and diacritics or tonal marks are reportedly too difficult to learn to use for teachers and too difficult to learn to use by pupils. We found that as a result of the use of these orthographies in the materials produced by RTI (and Aga Khan), that several teachers have decided to abandon the use of local language altogether. This has a negative knock-on effect for LABE's interventions which have made use of earlier iterations of orthographies which are likely to be more user friendly for teachers and pupils. The earlier orthographies are also consistent with the publications of bibles and other printed materials that were in existence prior to LABE's first MTE Project (2009-2013).

The use of local languages especially in P.4 is still a big challenge. In most of the P4 classes observed, teachers immediately switch to English. They do not know how to use both local language and English simultaneously. This comes as a shock to the pupils. Unfortunately, by this time pupils have not yet attained a good mastery of English i.e. they cannot read, write or speak English fluently. As a result, learning becomes tedious and students gradually begin to fall out of regular patterns of school attendance.

There is considerable research evidence of this phenomenon from across sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. Alidou et al 2006, Heugh 2011, Ouane and Glanz 2011). There is a serious need for a strong and coherent approach to bilingual teaching (local language and English) from P4 onwards. This is where LABE needs to bring in a particular focus and it is an opportunity to lead the way for NCDC.

In a few schools Like Dranya Primary in Koboko district where bilingual teaching is practised, still the teachers do not yet have adequate training and support in how to use bilingualism as a pedagogical approach. The practice we observed is to translate sentence by sentence written on the blackboard. This was not only draining on the part of the teacher but also time consuming.

Finally, the teaching of English as a second language is poor. Although this is outside LABE's intervention areas, in the long run it affects pupils' performance in upper primary.

ICT interventions in primary schools

Successes including materials development, teacher's magazine

As indicated above two ICT hubs have been established in each of the six districts. Usually these are located at centrally located primary schools so that teachers from other schools can reach the ICT hubs and make use of the available resources. At the time of the Mid-term Review, a sizable number of P1-4 teachers and Head Teachers had been trained in basic ICT skills. This has led to availability of learning materials (charts, notes) prepared by teachers. These materials are tailor-made to the needs of the pupils and the school.

It has become easier for teachers to share notes/ instructional materials since they are computerised. Teachers who have not yet got the opportunity to train in ICT can photocopy and share in their use.

Teachers have also been trained and equipped with writing skills. They can therefore write articles which are published in the teachers' bilingual magazine, the *Bilingual Teachers Voice*, which has been initiated by LABE during MTE 2. Teachers participate in this process enthusiastically. This

magazine serves as an outlet for the views of teachers and opportunity through which they share the advantages, good practices, and challenges associated with the use of local languages as a medium of instruction.

ICT training has exposed teachers to online resources. Many now know how to use internet (to varying degrees of proficiency). Teachers report that ICT training has led creativity and knowledge production by the teachers and that it has changed the learning environment. There are more visual aids in classroom than before. Teaching and learning is now more enjoyable

Challenges

Putting in place and servicing ICT equipment in schools in sub-Saharan Africa has a number of difficulties and risks. One has to do with intermittent power availability. Another has to do with servicing equipment. At present, faulty equipment has to be returned to Kampala and there are delays.

As might be expected, teachers for the P5-7 classes also want to have access to the ICT equipment and there is some unhappiness that they have not received training to use the equipment. Schools that do not have ICT hubs clearly also want to have these provided, even if they are within accessible proximity to the ICT hubs which they are supposed to be able to share. The distance between the participating schools and the ICT hubs is a challenge for many teachers. First, they have no one to take their classes when they attend practice/training because schools are understaffed. Second, transport costs for teachers to access the ICT hubs for post-training materials development is high. Third, there are not enough computers for all teachers who may wish to access them at any one time.

These are challenges which could be overcome in time and with additional resourcing. However there is another challenge with long-term policy implications. This has to do with controversial changes to orthographies of local languages in Uganda. The new orthography with diacritics or marks makes typing very slow and cumbersome and is likely to hinder the use of ICT equipment for the development of learning materials in local languages. Instead it is more likely that teachers will use the equipment for the development of learning materials in English which will be easier and less time-consuming to prepare.

Other challenges include budgetary matters where schools have either not budgeted for the purchase of new ink cartridges or they expect LBE to continue to provide these. Teachers request that ICT and other training sessions need to be scheduled in order to avoid clashes with school

timetables. This is of course difficult to achieve since LABE has to service two ICT hubs, each serving approximately 10 project schools in each district. A further complication is that power disruptions cannot be anticipated where these relate to electric storms (lightning) and resultant power outages.

Recommendations made by stakeholders

The stakeholders including DLGs, CCTs, school management teams and teachers conveyed the following recommendations to the evaluation team as follows:

- The transition class is still a challenge. Teachers need to be trained and equipped with skills of bilingual teaching.
- LABE might consider introducing a post of Community Mobiliser at the sub-county level. It is anticipated that this would assist the POs with monitoring of schools and HLCs. It seems that the responsibilities are too many to be accomplished by one person.
- LABE should identify a local computer engineer to repair ICT equipment rather than have the equipment sent back to Kampala for repairs.
- LABE might consider training more PEs because the number of pre-school and parent learners is steadily increasing. Some of those who are trained are apparently abandoning teaching in the HLCs for more lucrative alternatives offered by other NGOs or in refugee camps.
- LABE should (re-)introduce radio programs on area community radio stations to ensure continuous sensitisation of the locals on the importance of local languages.
- LABE should provide rewards for HLCs that are performing well. This to motivate them as well as to encourage others to work harder.
- LABE should continue working in the area beyond the remaining two years of MTE 2. Some HLCMCs doubt that their HLCs are sufficiently well-established to ensure sustainability.

6. Consultative Meetings with Partners and Stakeholders:

a. District and Local Government

The primary focus of our meetings with District and Local Government Officials in each of the six Districts was to gain a perspective of how LABE's partnership with government is perceived at the district level. A second concern was to gain an understanding of government perspectives of the quality of LABE interventions and delivery at the district level. In particular, we focussed on LABE initiatives to establish and support the development of (1) Home Learning Centres and (2) the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum (in local languages) in P1-3, and in P4, a year in which there is a transition from local language medium to English as the medium of instruction. A particular feature of the latter is the establishment of a small number of ICT hubs in each district with the intention of equipping teachers with the expertise to develop their own teaching and

learning materials in the local language (i.e. particularly for teachers in P1-3 and also P4). A third focus of attention relates to the sustainability of LABE interventions at the end of the present cycle of project funding and the degree to which officials believe that there will be sufficient local capacity to continue without LABE's contributions by mid-2018. The consultations with the district officials, however, went beyond these concerns, as indicated below.

The greater part of LABE's attention has been focused, first on the establishment of the HLCs during the first two years of the second phase of the MTE project, and second, on the establishment of ICT hubs, as specified in the contractual obligations with Comic Relief and AET, and third in relation to the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum. This includes teacher education/ teacher support and materials development in the use of local language/s in P1-3 and in the transition year, P4.

Officials across the six districts hold similarly positive views of LABE's contributions and commitment to collaborate with government (district, local and national) to implement the Thematic Curriculum (using a pedagogy based on the local language in each district). Government officials emphasise that LABE is working within or supporting national government policy (i.e. MoES policy) in education through collaboration with NCDC in regard to the Thematic Curriculum. In other words, there is no doubt that LABE is understood to be a significant partner of government at both local/district and national levels. Officials report that they understand their responsibilities and in some districts anticipate that they will be ready to take over from LABE by mid-2018. Although we did not find clearly articulated and systematic plans for implementing the thematic curriculum beyond the life of the LABE project, and specifically the local language in most districts, we did find clear evidence of sustainability in Koboko.

In Koboko the District and Local Government officials indicate a number of clearly mapped out strategies to continue and scale up the interventions in which LABE has initiated or supported in the district thus far. These include the following:

- i. The district has instituted a program for continuous professional development of teachers. The district officials have already trained teachers in various schools where LABE is not operating. LABE's teacher training approaches and activities have been followed, thus the good practices and lessons learnt from LABE are shared with other schools.
- ii. The district has acquired equipment for mass production of materials/resources developed in local languages. These include a heavy duty printer, photocopier and computers which are kept at the district offices. Head Teachers are free to come and make as many copies as they need at the district's expense.

- iii. There is constant evaluation and monitoring of children being taught through the Thematic Curriculum. Challenges and successes are documented and used to improve the program.
- iv. There is a district program geared towards continuous sensitisation of the community to appreciate the use of local languages in the early years of child education. For example, the respondents report that: government officials are routinely accommodated on community radio talk shows; and they make use of any public function to talk about LABE initiatives in general and the importance of mother tongues.
- v. The district has requested all schools to budget for materials' development in local languages. This is compulsory in all government primary schools.
- vi. The Inspectors of schools conduct routine evaluations of teachers who teach in local languages to ensure that they are implementing their training in the use of the local language (Kakwa) in teaching.
- vii. The inspectors work closely with PTCs to ensure that student teachers specialise in the teaching of the local language. This is a strategy to increase the number of local language trained teachers.

During the consultation meetings in Nwoya, Yumbe and Adjumani officials expressed the view that national government was having difficulty in producing adequate teacher education and teaching materials in local languages. LABE is recognised as having been playing an important role in working with various stakeholders, including teachers, to ameliorate these gaps. Because there is a concern that national authorities will not be able to provide adequate support for the districts in both West Nile and Northern Uganda, officials in each district indicate a wish for LABE to continue to support primary education beyond 2018.

The establishment of ICT hubs is regarded as significant for each of the schools, and those that are in sufficiently close proximity to the ICT hubs. The ICT hubs provide an opportunity for teachers to make use of the equipment to develop teaching and learning materials in local languages in a context in which there is a paucity of published materials in local languages. Just as the officials asked that the evaluators report that they wanted LABE's contributions to apply to more schools in each district (possibly all) in the Final Evaluation of the Mother-tongue education (MTE) Project in 2014, so do they now request that LABE resource more ICT hubs in each district during the second phase of the MTE project. This is clearly not feasible nor a responsibility for LABE to take on. This kind of resourcing is clearly a national government responsibility.

In Arua we found recognition of LABE's role in capacity development of teachers, teacher educators, parent educators, and district officials, is readily acknowledged by officials and this is echoed in each

of the districts as positive and collaborative. Recognition of LABE's positive role in training parents to take on the role of Parent Educators in the HLCs, and as members of the HLC Management Committees (HLCMCs) is similarly noted in each of the districts.¹ Officials regard this process as bringing about community ownership of the HLCs. They see this as a significant contribution to the educational provision for pupils in the early years of schooling, vulnerable out-of-school students, after school hours education for primary school pupils, and adult learners (literacy and numeracy). Officials in Gulu point out that MoES has recently announced that there will be a national ECD class in each primary school from 2017 onwards. They indicate that LABE's HLC interventions that bring ECD to the village and community level have the potential to align with new national government policy for ECD. Private ECD providers are not obliged to follow government education policy whereas LABE's work with ECD provision in the HLCs is aligned with government policy for early primary education. Officials in Nwoya claim that pupils who have experienced HLC ECD are well-prepared for P1 and are more likely to succeed in P1 than are those pupils who have not had HLC ECD.

Officials in Gulu raise a number of concerns about the sustainability of the local language policy at a national level. They argue that the policy needs stronger and clearer national support if the use of local language medium of instruction is to succeed in lower primary education. Some parents and teachers in the W Nile and Northern Uganda districts continue to hold ambivalent views of the efficacy and usefulness of local language in education. Officials suggest that this is unlikely to abate unless local language is used for the duration of primary school and students are assessed (examined) in the local language at the end of P7. In other words, the early transition to English beginning in P4 suggests to parents that local languages are not rich enough to convey educational knowledge. Unless the use of local language is extended through primary school, parents will not be convinced of the viability of local language as an educationally sound policy. (See also discussion of parents views of local language that emerged from the Questionnaire data discussed below.) It was noted that although Luganda is not taught as a subject beyond P4 (nor examined at the end of P7) it has nevertheless been developed for use to university level. This implies that the same may be possible for other languages of Uganda.

A further weakness of the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum at present is that teacher education programmes use English as the medium of instruction and it is difficult for teachers to conceptualise how to teach through the local language in P1-3 (4) in this language if they do not experience this in the teacher education colleges. If local languages are not used in teacher

¹Nevertheless it appears that the establishment and ongoing life of HLCs seems to be stronger in some districts than in others (as discussed in the HLC section of the report) and in the list of recommendations.

education, this suggests that the policy is not being taken seriously in the teacher education institutions, and this affects teachers' confidence in the classroom.

Officials in several districts report that at least two other providers are involved in primary school interventions that have some similarities but also differences of approach in relation to the teaching of reading. RTI and the Aga Khan Foundation are also working in district schools, but these are not the same schools as the schools in which LABE intervenes. All three organisations 'target' early grade reading. LABE's interventions began earlier than either those of RTI or the Aga Khan Foundation. It would appear that there are theoretical and possibly ideological differences in relation to RTI's use of new, more complicated, orthographic conventions recommended by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). District and Local Government officials appear to be aware that the existence of two orthographic systems for local languages may add further complications and possible confusion for teachers and students. Together ambiguities and confusion feed parental belief that perhaps children should be taught in English from P1 particularly because English represents aspirational capital for parents who wish their children to escape poverty and a rural existence. In other words, this works at cross-purposes to the local language policy.

In summary, District and Local government officials indicate very high regard for LABE's many different kinds of contributions to primary education. LABE is regarded as a significant partner that works collaboratively among various stakeholders at the district level whilst also working alongside NCDC and MoES. LABE's foresight in fostering the development and establishment of HLCs, together with an ECD curriculum that ties in with and prepares pupils for entry to P1, is regarded as a contribution that has national significance particularly in the light of the new ECD policy announced by MoES in September 2016. Although officials do indicate that they are working towards strengthening their implementation of the Thematic Curriculum (i.e. use of local language in P1-3, and in the transition year, P4), it is clear that there is a strong wish for LABE to continue to work in the six districts beyond 2018 in order to continue to strengthen capacity in these districts. In addition, the recently announced MoES policy to introduce a national pre-school year in each primary school adds a further challenge to stretched resources in each of these districts. LABE's initiatives in ECD education in the HLCs is regarded as an important resource and potential source of expertise that will be needed in the districts as they endeavour to respond to policy ECD policy from 2017 onwards.

b. Consultative Meetings with Language Board Members

Two consultations were held with members of various language boards. The first was a meeting organised in LABE's Arua office. This meeting included members of the Aringati, Kakwa and Lugbarati Language Boards. The second included members of the Acholi Language Board at LABE's Gulu office.

Language Boards have a number of responsibilities in regard to the development (including refinement or elaboration) of the orthographies of local languages in W Nile and Northern Uganda districts that are included in the LABE project. During the first phase of the MTE Project, LABE provided significant human resources to collaborate with the Language Boards in order to build capacity, particularly in relation to the development of written materials, including story books and other reading materials for P1-3 primary school children and for use in the HLCs.

During consultations in relation to this Mid-Term Review, Language Board members discussed their ongoing contributions to the literary development of each respective local language. Their enthusiasm for their work is palpable. For MoES, NCDC and for District and Local Governments, the Language Boards and their members are valuable participants in, and agents for, the development of literary materials (story books, riddles, rhymes, proverbs and traditional songs). They play an important role in documenting local knowledge (Indigenous Knowledge Systems /IKS) which has particular historical relevance for future generations but which may not yet have been fully appreciated for historical reasons at this time. For this reason it is vital that people with significant IK are included in the Language Boards and that members of each community who still retain memory of IKS and their languages are able to participate and contribute to the Language Boards as fully as possible.

Language Boards and their informants (speakers of the various languages spoken in area) also play a key role in other aspects of corpus development (terminology and lexicography) necessary for the implementation of education in the local languages. They play and have the ongoing potential to play an important role in providing translation and interpreting services for various government and civil society organisations. Language Boards do and can play a pivotal role in advancing public perceptions about the role and value of local languages in society and in education.

During the consultative meetings, members recognised and valued the historical support which LABE has provided over the last six or more years. (One of the members has been attached to the Kakwa Language Board since 1997, which pre-dates LABE's involvement.) Recently, some Language Boards in the W Nile and Northern Uganda have been approached by the Aga Khan Foundation to work alongside this body for the purposes of developing reading materials for use in school. The board members lament the limited resources available for the development of adequate reading materials

for use in primary school. They also indicate a desire to receive additional training in the use of information technology and computers to assist their work.

As part of the language education policy incorporated in the Thematic Curriculum, NCDC has since 2005 been working with several organisations (including CASAS, RTI and LBE among others) to establish and build capacity in language boards. While many language board members volunteer to serve and their work is on a voluntary basis, there are many constraints under which they work. Financial hardship is one of these especially where members need to travel for reasons of their work. In the process of implementing regulatory changes, the membership of some boards in the six districts currently served by LBE's MTE Extension Project has changed. Several of the original board members with valuable expertise are no longer members. This is a potential risk for each language board, the linguistic community/ies it serves, and for languages and Indigenous Knowledge (IK) preservation, and advancement for Uganda.

As indicated above, LBE is not the only NGO working to build capacity of the Language Boards. Other agencies, such as the Summer Institute of Linguists (SIL) has a presence in W Nile and Northern Uganda districts. SIL linguists, or linguists who act as consultants to SIL, have been working to regularise orthographic development in rural and remote areas of Uganda, in much the same way that they do in other parts of the world. In the course of advising NCDC and the Language Boards, SIL encourages the use of tonal marks and an increase in the number of vowels in some languages. This approach to orthographic development serves to emphasise differences between (among) languages in close proximity to one another. So whereas people used to recognise Lugbara to be used with some differences in vocabulary and pronunciation (as is usual everywhere in the world), we now find the emergence of at least two languages, Lugbarati and Aringati, with two separate orthographies that emphasise and increase linguistic differences where previously people accepted 'dialectal' differences in a common spoken language, Lugbara.

There are other theoretical approaches to orthographic development that have since the 1928 Rejaf Conference on the Harmonisation of Orthographies in Africa, emphasise the bringing together rather than emphasising difference and fragmentation. This has been advocated and implemented in many African countries including Uganda by CASAS and many other eminent scholarly linguists around the world. This has implications for the viability of print-runs of school textbooks and reading materials. Obviously the larger the print-run, the more cost effective it is to publish, print and supply educational materials to schools. Over-emphasis of difference and linguistic fragmentation may in the long-term serve to disadvantage the further development and use of Ugandan languages in education. During the consultation, members of the Kakwa Language Board drew attention to

pressure (from NCDC among other stakeholders) to include tonal marks in the Kakwa orthography. They refer to the historical source of Kakwa and its cross-border usage in South Sudan and DRC. It would be problematic if in Uganda an orthography were to emerge that did not align with cross-border orthographic conventions, and language board members do not believe that tonal marks or additional vowels would be suitable for Kakwa. (Subsequent to the mid-term Review, NCDC has formally accepted the Kakwa orthography, without additional vowels or tonal marks.)²

Members of the Acholi Language Board indicated controversies that have arisen since the establishment of a new Acholi Language Board in 2013. The first matter relates to the naming of the language spoken in Gulu and Nwoya and adjacent districts. Many people prefer to identify themselves as speakers of Luo or Lwo rather than Acholi. Secondly, an existing orthography has been replaced by one that increases the number of vowels from five to nine. By orthographic standards this is a fairly radical change and decision with both short- and long-term consequences. This means that previously published materials, including bibles, hymn books, story books, riddles, proverbs and alphabet charts in classrooms; need to be replaced by new materials that reflect the new orthography. Whether or not there are the resources to do this and whether this is desirable is debatable.

Many of the changes have come subsequent to SIL involvement in the redevelopment of the Acholi orthography and SIL's advocacy of increased vowels has been taken up by RTI which is a USA-based organisation that provides early primary school reading materials for pupils (currently for P1 in most districts and P1-3 in Gulu). World Vision is another NGO that is assisting in the training of teachers to use local language in 20 schools in Gulu and Amuru. The Aga Khan Foundation also engages in training of teachers to develop materials in the local language for teachers and students to use.

Acholi Language Board members were consulted at the same time as PTCs and CCTs for Gulu and Nwoya and teacher educators were able to contribute their views on the impact of the new orthography in the teaching and learning process. The most significant point is that our informants report that RTI has spent much time convincing teachers that students will read more effectively with the new additional vowels in place. However, it appears that teachers are now more confused than ever. Despite all of the arguments put forward about new vowels, these do not appear to be uniformly accepted by the stakeholders. A further concern regarding Acholi emerged during FGDs with teachers as well as District and Local Government officials in Nwoya. Several informants

² Subsequent to the Mid-term Review, in early 2017, NCDC officially recognised the Kakwa orthography developed by the Kakwa Language Board with assistance from LABE (Keihangwe Tumwebaze, personal correspondence, 2 February 2017)

identified as speakers of Luo rather than Acholi. Luo is regarded as larger cross-border language that is spoken in several East African countries. Acholi is regarded by many as a dialect or variety of Luo. Luo speakers often prefer to identify with the larger language family than with a section of this language family. (See also discussion of Questionnaire data in relation to Luo and Acholi below.)

Together, issues with the new orthography and people's own linguistic identity in Nwoya and Gulu districts may have long-term consequences that need to be carefully thought through at a national level. Preferably this should be in consultation with Ugandan linguists based at Makerere and other universities as well as with prominent linguists knowledgeable about the history of orthographic development in Africa since the 1920s and knowledgeable about the consequences of one theoretical approach over another.

Comments:

One of the evaluators with specific knowledge of languages in Uganda, Dr Namyalo found that in many of the schools that she visited, the impact of introducing a new orthography with an increased number of vowels and or tonal marks is already felt. Some teachers have abandoned teaching local languages in lower primary arguing that they are not able to write using the new orthography with tone marks. It was also observed that teachers do not make a difference between apostrophes that are used to mark a vowel deletion. Distinction of low, high and floating tonal marks is also a problem. The children can hardly make sense of them. Dr Namyalo also notes that at secondary level teachers indicate that they use the old orthographies. This is true at Makerere University in the department of African Languages. In the teaching of Luo, which includes languages like Acholi, Madi, Kakwa, university teaching staff use the old orthographies. The discrepancy between newly introduced orthographies in schools that do not appear to be consistent with university-based linguists in Uganda indicate that there is an urgent need to have these orthographies harmonised.

c. Partner and stakeholder consultations in Kampala

Key Kampala-based partners Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and several other stakeholders including the Uganda National Commission for UNESCO (UNATCOM) and the Honorary Consul for Australia were consulted during the evaluation process. In addition, an evaluator attended a Uganda Multilingual Education Network (UMLEN) meeting in order to gain a perspective of the current issues and concerns of this network. This meeting proved to add valuable information that contributes to this report.

Meetings with Key Partners are listed and discussed below.

Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)

Two consultative meetings were held with MoES officials, the Minister of State for Primary Education and the Assistant Commissioner for Primary Education.

Minister of State for Primary Education

The purpose of the consultative meeting with the Minister, Ms Rosemary Seninde, and two senior members of the LABE executive, was to gain an understanding of the Minister's view of LABE's contribution to the education system and also to discuss some of the findings of the Mid-term Review of the LABE MTE 2 Project. This was particularly in relation to (1) the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum; (2) the establishment of the HLCs; and (3) HLC provision of Early Child Development (ECD), multi-age classes for in-school children and out-of-school youth (including vulnerable and disabled children), and adult learners. In respect of the latter, the intention was to draw attention to how the HLCs serve to empower communities by closing the gap between home and school, and to highlight provision of early ECD and education for children who for various reasons (including disabilities and other vulnerabilities in the post-insurgency years) are out of school.

The Minister was particularly concerned with matters relating to LABE's involvement in ECD classes in the HLCs. This was because of the recently announced MoES policy (September 2016) in which a decision has been taken to implement a pre-school year in every primary school from the beginning of 2017. She expressed an interest for several reasons. One of these is to do with sustainability and low-cost provision of a national system of pre-school education. Although national government requires provision of an additional pre-school class from 2017, there are as yet no infrastructural provision or support for this (i.e. that includes at least one additional classroom in each primary school, and additional and trained pre-school teachers). MoES recognises that it does not have the capacity at this time to take over all ECD provision. There is another consideration and this is that primary schools are often some distance from village communities especially in rural areas and this makes it very difficult for young children to walk these distances and it is time-consuming for parents to accompany small children to and from pre-school when they have pressing agricultural (or farming) duties and responsibilities. The HLC provision of pre-school classes offers a potential alternative for the new MoES pre-school policy. LABE's experience in establishing HLCs, training Parent Educators (PEs) to provide suitable pre-school learning opportunities, and the relatively low cost of provision, is of particular interest to the ministry.

LABE's collaboration with NCDC in the preparation and publication of the *Pedagogy Handbook* for the teaching of local languages in primary schools, and also as a member of the Basic Education

Working Group, signals an excellent working relationship with both MoES and NCDC. This is a strong foundation for further collaboration in ECD provision. The Minister indicated that she would like to visit LBE HLCs in W Nile and Northern Uganda to see for herself how pre-school provision can be made at the village level.³

Assistant Commissioner for Basic Education

The purpose of the meeting with the Assistant Commissioner for Basic Education was to gain insight on the views within MoES of the partnership with LBE and the sustainability of LBE's interventions in W Nile and Northern Uganda. Dr. Tony Musaka-Lusambu, the Assistant Commissioner, was clear that sustainability of implementation and capacity-building in relation to the use of local languages in the Thematic Curriculum was the responsibility of the various government agencies and not LBE. He focussed his discussion on LBE's contributions and drew attention to the role that LBE has played in facilitating adult literacy programmes for people affected by three decades of war, insurgencies and conflict. In his view, LBE has contributed towards the Education for All (EFA) frameworks to which the Government of Uganda (GoU) is committed and the GoU national agenda targets for 2040. MoES recognises that the educational programmes offered through LBE in the HLCs provide an opportunity for non-formal education for pupils who have 'dropped out' of school or who have not been able to access school (e.g. vulnerable and orphaned youth and those with disabilities). Dr Lusambu suggested that government could learn from LBE's experience and expertise in the HLCs to provide alternative ECD centres.

Discussion turned towards the evaluators' concerns regarding orthographic developments in some districts and the challenges of developing a comprehensive and clearly articulated language policy for Uganda. Dr Lusambu drew attention to the challenges of 'thinking locally and acting globally'. In this regard there has been substantial research in sub-Saharan Africa, for example by UNESCO on the use of African languages in education systems and the development of high-level proficiency in regional and international languages of wider communication (e.g. Alidou et al., 2006; Ouane and Glanz 2010; Ouane and Glanz 2011).

Dr Lusambu's appreciative view of LBE is summed up in the following: 'You bring issues that are not business as usual, you prompt people's thinking, and this is how new knowledge comes on board' (Lusambu, personal communication, 3 October 2016).

³ Subsequent to the completion of this evaluation, the Minister visited LBE HLCs in W Nile and Northern Uganda in order to assess the viability of a partnership with LBE and she indicated strong approval of LBE work and the potential for establishing such a partnership.

National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC)

Two meetings were held at the offices of the NCDC, the first with the Director of NCDC and the second with the Specialist for Local Languages. These meetings were relatively brief and therefore are discussed together, below.

The Director of NCDC, Ms Grace Baguma, expressed serious interest in the progress of MTE 2. She noted that the developments within the HLCs, particularly in relation to provision of ECD classes for pre-school children that dovetails with recently announced ECD policy provision for a pre-school year in each primary school of the country. Secondly, she expressed particular interest in relation to the implications for bilingual pedagogy in the transition from local language to English in P4 that were raised during the meeting. She commented that LABE's work is 'informing policy at the national level' (Director of NCDC, personal communication, 3 October 2016). She expressed concern regarding the sustainability of local language education in the Thematic Curriculum at the District and Local Government (DLG) level. She noted that there needed to be a specific budget at the DLG level for effective implementation of the Thematic curriculum. The implications for LABE are that at NCDC level, there are concerns about the budgetary allocations to sustain language education policy in primary schools across Uganda, but particularly in remote and rural areas. Ms Baguma advised that the evaluation team accompanied by a senior member of the LABE executive meet with the Specialist for Local Languages, in order to discuss issues relating to the orthographic development of local languages in the light of controversial developments identified during the field research.

The evaluators concerns regarding the theoretical basis upon which new orthographic development was taking a path that may be counter-productive to the long-term development, implementation and use of local languages in primary schools and publishers in Uganda were raised with the Specialist for Local Languages, Philip Oketcho. He recounted that one of the external providers, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), assisting NCDC and hence the Government of Uganda (GoU), brought with it a reading programme for use in the early primary years. RTI had indicated that it required assistance with orthographic development with Acholi. Oketcho reported that at the time, an eminent scholar, Professor Kwesi Prah of CASAS had been working with various stakeholders in Uganda, including NCDC, using a theoretical approach which sought the 'harmonisation' of orthographies. This is an approach that is consistent with mainstream linguistic developments in Africa since the Rejaf Conference in Sudan in 1928. This is a conference in which prominent linguists with expertise in Ugandan languages participated.

Oketcho reported that RTI preferred another approach, one that is currently favoured by the Summer Institute of Linguists (SIL) and that RTI had been working closely with at least one SIL

consultant linguist. The current SIL approach is to emphasise differences and hence create orthographic distance between languages that are closely related. This process results in what many linguists would argue in the 'artificial' separation of languages. This separation between closely related varieties is accomplished by introducing additional vowels and tonal marks. RTI has adopted this process in the development of reading materials in Acholi (P1-3) and in Lugbarati for P1. However, since RTI's project is a five year one that is shortly to terminate, Oketcho is not sure whether this approach to orthographic development in W Nile and Northern Uganda will continue or not. We were able to indicate that teachers appeared confused by the introduction of a new expanded orthography, and that despite claims that it was more readable by pupils and teachers, we found no reliable evidence to show substantiate this. On the contrary we found evidence to suggest that teachers found new orthographies more difficult and cumbersome to use and simply gave up trying. In any event, LBE's materials development and work with the Language Boards until 2013 included the use of the earlier orthographies that pre-date those that have adopted the addition of the SIL advocated additional vowels and tonal marks since this time. We note that many published materials, including bibles and other reading and educational materials have already been published using the earlier orthographies and that it would be costly to re-publish these with the revised orthographies. In the absence of scientific and reliable research on the advisability of pursuing this approach we advocate caution.

This meeting concluded with an agreement that it would be important to develop a clearly articulated theoretical approach to the further development and standardisation of orthographies in Uganda. In order to achieve this, the evaluators have suggested that a national conference be called for the 'democratic approaches to the harmonisation of the orthographies of languages in Uganda', and that such a conference should include specialist linguists of Uganda and eminent linguists with expertise in the orthographic development of African languages from the international community. It is of long-term importance to Uganda to be careful not to follow well-intentioned but perhaps misguided approaches that are advocated by agencies without nationally accountable credentials or internationally recognised expertise.

It was suggested by Oketcho that LBE might draft a concept note for a national conference on this matter.

[Uganda National Commission for UNESCO \(UNATCOM\)](#)

A courtesy meeting was held with Ms Rosie Agoi, Acting Secretary-General, Uganda National Commission for UNESCO (UNATCOM). The purpose of the meeting was to inform the Acting Secretary-General of the preliminary findings of the field research conducted for the MTE 2 Mid-term Review, and to draw to her attention a few key issues. These include the advances made in the

establishment of the HLCs and the HLCMCs. They also include concerns with regard to the use of local language in the Thematic Curriculum in P1-3 and the implications for the transition to English medium identified for P4. In particular, attention was drawn to the research in sub-Saharan Africa that shows that transition to English medium has not been feasible in P4 in any country. Rather, an extended period of bilingual (local language and English) medium of education is the de facto practice in primary schools across the former British territories of Africa and South Asia (Alidou et al., 2006; Heugh et al., 2007; Ouane and Glanz 2010; Ouane and Glanz 2011). The concern regarding new expanded orthographies encouraged by SIL and via RTI was raised. It was noted that the Secretary-General for UNATCOM had offered to facilitate a national conference on orthographic development for local languages in Uganda during a meeting with the evaluators of the MTE Project in 2013. It was suggested that this remains a priority for Uganda.

The Acting Secretary-General expressed her concern regarding the status of the language policy embedded in the Thematic Curriculum and suggested that since it remains as a White Paper, its legal standing is vulnerable and she would urge national stakeholders to strengthen the position of the policy. In this she includes a concern regarding the status of Luganda and Kiswahili in the country and she believes that this needs to be clarified as soon as possible because lack of clarity permits slippage and disengagement with the substance of language policy matters.

Her second concern relates to teacher education and the capacity development of teachers to teach through local languages. In particular the quality of both pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher development are matters of strategic and substantive relevance for a country that embarks on serious educational transformation for purposes of socio-economic and well as educational development.

UNATCOM and LBE have engaged in partnerships in relation to various educational initiatives over the years and UNATCOM views LBE as a valuable collaborator and partner of substance. UNATCOM plays a role in monitoring educational developments and initiatives and provides qualitative information to both MoES and NCDC. In this regard UNATCOM confirms LBE's positive role in educational developments that concern local language use in primary school and in the multi-stakeholder participation and community involvement in ways that are directed towards community sustainability. Specifically, she regards LBE as playing a complementary role to that of NCDC and the District and Local Governments.

[Courtesy Meeting with the Honorary Consul for Australia](#)

A courtesy meeting with the Honorary Consul for Australia, Mr Patrick Bitature, was held partly owing to the advice provided by the Honorary Consul in relation with field visits by the Australian

evaluator for the Mid-term Review. Partly also it was to inform the Honorary Consul of the preliminary findings of the field visits to W Nile and Northern Uganda and to signal LABE's contributions and achievements to educational developments in northern districts of Uganda. It was also to signal potential risks relating to orthographic development, difficulties of resourcing local languages in education in vulnerable contexts, and the challenge of bilingual education from P4 onwards. Finally, it was to indicate possible areas in which the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) may wish to consider in terms of educational and development support in Uganda in future. Mr Bitature believes that it is unlikely that DFAT would develop an approach specifically helpful to Uganda although it might consider one for East Africa. He would explore this with DFAT if the opportunity were to arise.

d. UMLEN Meeting in Kampala 5 October 2016

The meeting was attended by one of the evaluators in order to understand the nature of the activities and collaborations among members of the network. Only information that has direct bearing on the use of local languages in the Thematic Curriculum is included below. The focus of the meeting was to share information about how best to support the use of local languages in education through the network.

Lydia Teera, representing SIL, explained how this organisation has been involved in activities that relate to the use and development of local languages in Uganda. In particular, she indicated that SIL has an interest in 'publishing the New Testament in new languages, literacy and language development'. She indicated that Richard Nzogi (Richard.Nzogi@sil.org) has been responsible for working on orthography in the SHRP and RTI programs and that Barbara Trudell 'set everything up' in Uganda.

The Reading Association of Uganda, an affiliate of the International Literacy Association, works with most people in UMLEN in order to set up libraries and help to get children to read. AET in Eastern Uganda supports libraries and primary and secondary schools, and it collaborates with the LABE project in W Nile. Two teachers from LABE MTE 2 Project schools (one from Padrombu Primary School in Koboko and another from Agojo Lower Primary in Adjumani) brought innovative learning materials that they have developed (in ICT Hubs) in order to teach through Kakwa and Ma'di respectively, to demonstrate to participants in the meeting. The participants in the meeting included a representative of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, Special Interest Group (SIG), for Africa, with a particular concern for publishing in local languages in ways that would disseminate positive information through mothers.

A significant feature of the meeting was a presentation by Ms Deborah Rebecca Magera, Curriculum Specialist, ECD, NCDC, ; The National Primary School Curriculum for Uganda Thematic Curriculum' with specific reference to the connection between the Thematic curriculum and its linkages with MTE. Of particular relevance she explained that teaching and learning materials for:

Primary one to four in English and twelve local languages in Ateso, Lumasaaba, Runyankole/Rukiga, Runyoro/Rutoro, Lusoga, Lugwere, Lukhonzu, Lebacoli, Leblang, Ngakaramajonjo, Luganda have been developed to support the teaching of Local Language. This has been supported by USAID/RTI Uganda School Health Reading Program and engaging the NCDC Writing panels

Resource books in English and Local languages [have also been developed] as follows:-Ateso, Lukhonzu, Lusoga, Ngakarimajongo, LebThur, Luganda, Lugbarati, Acoli, Lubwisi, Pokot, Runyoro/Rutoro, .Runyankole/Rukiga and Lango. Supported by UNICEF (Magera 5 October 2016).

The presentation slides include important information regarding challenges experienced by NCDC in relation to the time-lag it has taken (10 years) for materials to be produced to accompany the use of local languages in schools. Despite this time-lag the materials are not adequate and there is a long way to go. Further issues relate to attitudinal problems where NCDC has anecdotal reports that there is still some resistance to the use of local languages. This is where parents remain convinced that English teaching and learning will deliver equity. Private schools use externally produced materials in English and this serves to undermine government policy. Other matters for example those relating to the status and use of Kiswahili remain vexed.

Ms Magera referred to the *Pedagogy Handbook for Teaching in Local Language* (NCDC and LABE, 2013) indicating that there are insufficient numbers in the colleges and schools although they should be readily available in these institutions. She also distributed copies of the *Basic Education Framework for Uganda* (NCDC, 2013) to members of UMLEN present at the meeting.

Birungi Musa, Senior Education Officer for Primary Education, gave a presentation on the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum from Basic Education, Ministry of Education and Sports. He drew attention to both successes and challenges. His presentation indicates strong commitment from MoES for the development of local language in education noting also evidence of increased enrolments and reduction of school 'drop outs' (attrition). However, he also noted: negative attitudes among teachers and parents, insufficient learning materials for the thematic curriculum, poor infrastructure in schools, frequent absenteeism of teachers and learners, overly large classes, teacher transfers and inadequate training of teachers for the Thematic Curriculum, budgetary constraints, amongst other difficulties. He highlighted the need to raise awareness amongst parents

and other stakeholders of the positive value of local languages in education and capacity building of teachers.

Humphry Muhangi of LBE provided an overview of LBE's experiences of the Thematic Curriculum. He drew attention to the number of languages in Uganda that they are at different stages of development, and that the number of languages could be viewed as a liability or advantage. The socio-political context and dominance of English risk what has been called 'elite closure' where marginalised communities are excluded from participation in matters of citizenship. On the other hand the decentralisation of governance permits greater prospects for democracy as many districts seek to profile their own language and identity. The LBE experience suggests that successful implementation of local language in education requires: parental and community support, teacher preparedness, corpus planning activities, instructional materials, and consultative and participatory process to accommodate top-down decisions. (The full paper presented by Muhangi is a useful and informative analytic document for Comic Relief, AET and other stakeholders.) LBE has found that a key principle for success is consultative and participatory processes with all stakeholders. A concern raised by Muhangi is whether or not the current trajectory that encourages differences and increases distance between closely associated languages is likely to be sustainable over the medium to long term.

A lengthy discussion that related to differing trajectories in regards to orthographic development ensued, including the stronger of the trajectories that favours 'harmonisation' of orthographies rather than differentiation (or linguistic balkanisation).

A recommendation to hold a National Conference on a systematic, democratic and harmonised approach to the development of Orthographies for Languages of Uganda was strongly emphasised at the meeting. It was advised that this should bring together Linguists from Uganda; Members of Language Boards, Specialist Linguists from Africa (ACALAN and others) and a cross-Section of Linguists from accredited International Associations of Linguists – whose work is regarded as academically sound.

Concluding comment: UMLEN is clearly a useful clearing house for ideas, debates, opportunities and risks relating to issues of multilingual education that face the GoU and various stakeholders that support current curriculum and language policy in primary schools. LBE plays a significant role in this network and collaborates with other stakeholders and shares its insights with members of the network. This is a therefore also a useful mechanism for the dissemination of expertise and knowledge gained in the field that would contribute towards positive change in schooling.

7. Analysis of questionnaires administered during the Mid-term Review

During the Mid-term Review of MTE 2, questionnaires were prepared for administration among a cross-section of stakeholders in each of the six districts and a small group of participants who attended the UMLEN meeting in Kampala. The purpose of the questionnaires was to sample stakeholders' perceptions of LABE's interventions in the MTE 2 project. It was also to gain an understanding of the attitudes that various stakeholders have in relation to the use of local languages in primary schooling, especially in the W Nile and Northern Uganda districts involved in this intervention. We used a modest sample size of approximately 18-20 questionnaires per district, (approximately 5 per school visit, 2 per HLC visit, 3 per district and local government office, 2-3 per meeting with senior staff of a core teacher college / group of CCTs / language board members / UMLEN meeting). A total of 87 questionnaires were returned. In each case either the Project Officer (PO) or the Team Leader assisted in the administration and collection of the instruments. In a few cases a Project Officer or Parent Educator (PE) assisted HLC members who had difficulty in reading and or writing English. In such cases the PO or PE read the questions to the stakeholder/s and then filled in the answers provided by the respondent/s on the questionnaire sheet.

The questionnaire was developed in two parts. The first was to gather background information relating to the respondents' gender, age, years of educational experience, and language/s background. The second was to gather data on attitudes towards LABE's interventions and language in education policy and practice more generally. This was in order to supplement the main body of data collected through various forms of interview and observation during the field visits to the districts and in meetings with key partners, stakeholders or personnel in Kampala.

The discussion of the background data has been informed by the statistical data analysed by LABE's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer for the evaluators. In the discussion below, we show the background data relating to the respondents.⁴ Table 2 and Figure 1 indicate the gender distribution of respondents.

Table 2: Gender of respondents

Gender	Number	Per cent
Female	33	37.9%
Male	54	62.1%
TOTAL	87	100.0%

⁴ The evaluators acknowledge and thank Edmund Kamyia and two interns at LABE for inputting the data from the questionnaires, and particularly Edmund Kamyia for working together with the evaluators to undertake the statistical analysis of the baseline / background data relating to the sample of respondents, and for developing the tables and figures below.

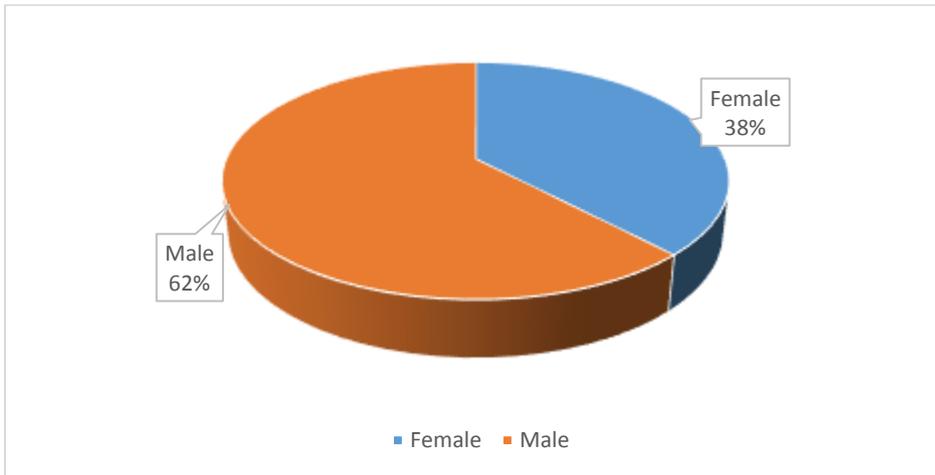


Figure 1: Pie-graph showing gender distribution of respondents

In Table 3 and Figure 2, the age distribution of respondents is shown.

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

Age range	Number	Per cent
Fewer than 20 years	11	12.8%
30-39 years	19	22.1%
40-49 years	27	31.4%
50-59 years	23	26.7%
60 years and above	6	7.0%
TOTAL	86*	100.0%

*Note: one respondent did not indicate her/his age range, therefore we show data for 86 not 87 respondents here.

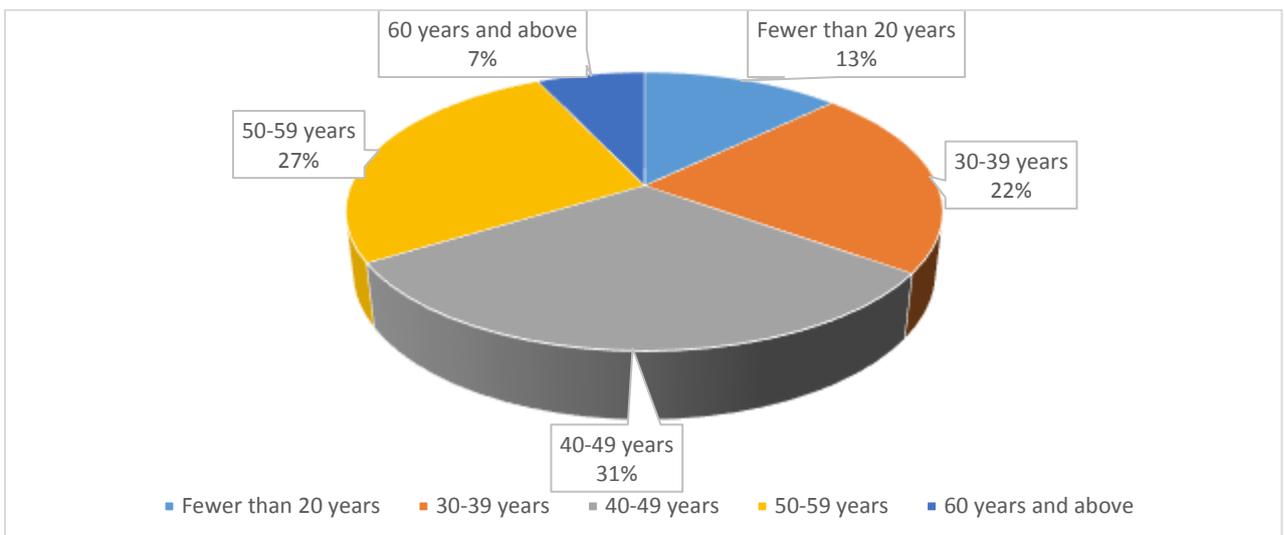


Figure 2: Pie-graph showing age distribution

In Table 4a and 4b we show the current educational experiences and / or interest of respondents to the questionnaires in relation to the MTE 2 project.

Table 4a: Respondents' educational experience or designation

Respondents' educational experience / designation	Number of responses
HT/DHT/DOS	16
P1-P3 Teachers	23
P4 Teachers	10
P5-P7 Teachers	14
District & Local Government Officials	11
CCTs	11
Parent Educators	2
Parents/Parent Teacher Committee members	4
HLC Management Committee members	4
Language Board members	8
Other	7
TOTAL responses from 87 respondents	110*

*Note: many respondents have more than one role, hence the total number of responses exceeds 87.

Table 4b: Other respondents

Other	Number
DPO	1
LC1	1
Lecturer	1
Librarian	1
NGO	2
Researcher	1
TOTAL	7

In Table 5 and Figure 3 we show the languages which respondents report that they speak.

Table 5: Languages that respondents speak

Language	Number	Per cent
Ateso	1	1.1%
Lango	2	2.3%
Aringati	6	6.9%
Kakwa	10	11.5%
Luganda	13	14.9%
Kiswahili	14	16.1%
Madi	14	16.1%
Acholi	17	19.5%
Luo	20	23.0%
Lugbarati	22	25.3%
English	72	82.8%
Total Responses	191	N/A
Total Respondents	87	100.0%

*On average, respondents are at least bilingual, thus the total number of responses exceeds 87. Since the majority of respondents have experience of or responsibility for formal education and are likely to have received formal education in English the high percentage of speakers of English should be expected. Although there has been an attempt to identify Acholi rather than Luo as the language of some Northern Uganda districts, 20 of the respondents identify as speaking Luo and 17 as speaking Acholi.

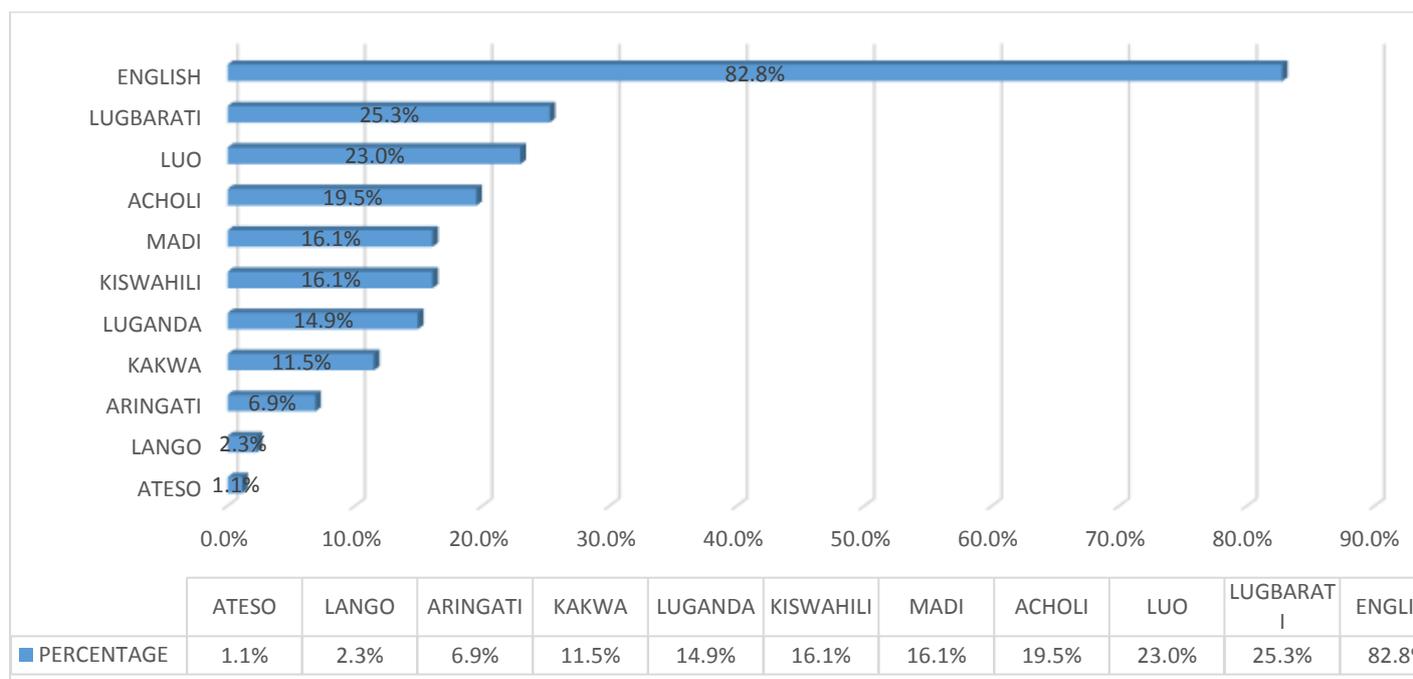


Figure 3: Bar graph showing the languages that respondents speak

In Table 6 we show the languages that respondents report being able to write.

Table 6: Languages that respondents can write

Language	Total	Per cent
Lango	2	2.3%
Aringati	5	5.7%
Luganda	6	6.9%
Acholi	8	9.2%
Kakwa	10	11.5%
Luo	14	16.1%
Kiswahili	17	19.5%
Madi	17	19.5%
Lugbarati	19	21.8%
English	63	72.4%
Total number of responses	161	N/A
Total respondents	87	100.0%

Note: Most respondents recorded being able to write more than one language, however respondents indicate that they are able to write fewer languages (161) than they are able to speak (191). Thus the total number of responses exceeds 87. Note also that more people (14) indicate that they can write Luo than can write Acholi (8). This points to a possible need to investigate language and identity issues in Nwoya and Gulu districts and it points to a possible need for experienced specialist linguists to assess whether or not there is a scientifically defensible rationale to implement a new Acholi orthography rather than retain the pre-existing orthographic conventions for Luo in Northern Uganda. See also related comments beneath Table 5.

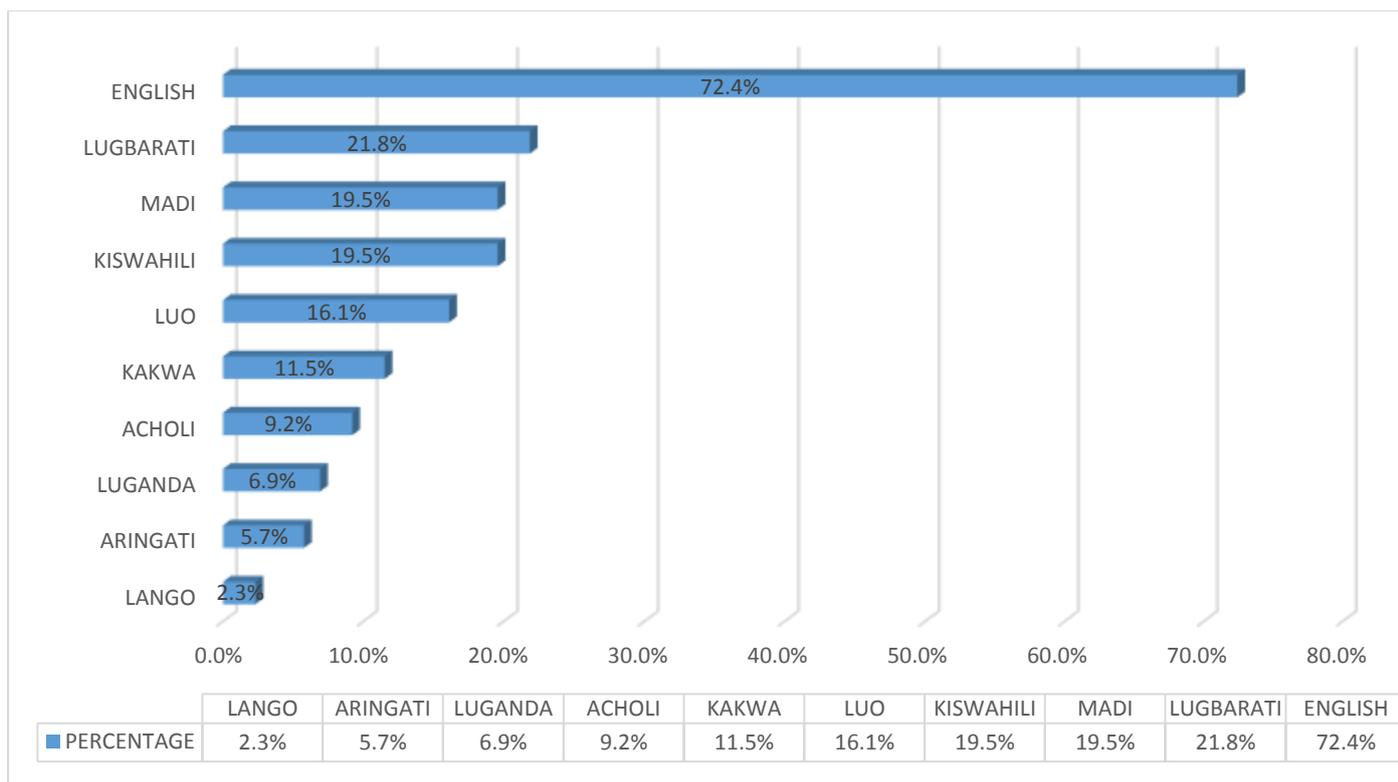


Figure 4: Bar graph showing the languages that respondents write

Comments on the background data

The baseline data were collected in order to demonstrate the demographic profile of respondents invited to complete the questionnaire. The first observation of these data is that more men than women completed the questionnaire. This is owing to a disproportionate number of men compared with women in senior educational positions. The second observation is that on average, most respondents are at least bilingual, with the majority reporting that they speak English. Although it is commonly believed by sociolinguists who work beyond sub-Saharan Africa, that people even in rural areas are likely to be highly multilingual, these data do not indicate this. These data suggest that most people are bilingual with a small percentage of people speaking three or more languages. This has positive implications for the retention of the use of a single local language alongside English in the schooling system in W Nile and Northern Uganda. Similar data were found in a national sociolinguistic survey in South Africa conducted by the Pan South African Language Board in 2000 (PANSALB 2000).

Discussion of respondents' responses to the questionnaire

Part 2 of the questionnaire was designed using the Likert scale. Table 7 below includes the questions and responses. The evaluators acknowledge LABE's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer's role in compiling these data. The design of the questions here were informed by

the development of a national sociolinguistic survey of South Africa conducted by the Pan South African Language Board in 2000.⁵

Table 7: Questionnaire and responses

		No Resp.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1. Local language in the Thematic Curriculum (TC) benefits children	Nr.	5	0	0	1	22	59	87
	%	5.7	0	0	1.1	25.3	67.8	100
2. Local language & English in the TC benefits children	Nr.	2	1	2	2	39	41	87
	%	2.3	1.1	2.3	2.3	44.8	47.1	100
3. Local language literacy learning & numeracy benefits parents	Nr.	3	0	3	4	34	42	87
	%	3.4	0	3.4	4.6	39.1	48.3	100
4. Home Learning Centres benefit adults	Nr.	4	0	4	3	36	40	87
	%	4.6	0	4.6	3.4	41.4	46.0	100
5. Home Learning Centres prepare young children for school	Nr.	3	0	1	1	20	62	87
	%	3.4	0	1.1	1.1	23	71.3	100
6. Home Learning Centres benefit pre-school children	Nr.	4	0	1	2	26	54	87
	%	4.6	0	1.1	2.3	29.9	62.1	100
7. Home Learning Centres provide after-school classes for children	Nr.	7	0	3	9	34	34	87
	%	8	0	3.4	10.3	39.1	39.1	100
8. These classes help children to do well at school	Nr.	3	0	0	6	40	38	87
	%	3.4	0.0	0.0	6.9	46.0	43.7	100
9. Home Learning Centres celebrate International Mother Tongue Day	Nr.	12	5	11	16	26	17	87
	%	13.8	5.7	12.6	18.4	29.9	19.5	100
10. Language Board work supports local language in schools	Nr.	6	0	7	4	36	34	87
	%	6.9	0.0	8.0	4.6	41.4	39.1	100
11. CCTs provide useful teacher training in local language in schools	Nr.	6	2	5	5	39	30	87
	%	6.9	2.3	5.7	5.7	44.8	34.5	100
12. Teachers know how to teach well in local language	Nr.	3	1	12	14	39	18	87
	%	3.4	1.1	13.8	16.1	44.8	20.7	100
13. Teachers know how to teach well in English	Nr.	4	1	5	14	42	21	87
	%	4.6	1.1	5.7	16.1	48.3	24.1	100
14. Head Teachers (HTs), D-HTs & Directors of Studies support local language teaching & learning	Nr.	3	0	9	13	44	18	87
	%	3.4	0	10.3	14.9	50.6	20.7	100
15. District & Local Government supports local language in schools	Nr.	3	3	8	9	40	24	87
	%	3.4	3.4	9.2	10.3	46.0	27.6	100
16. MoES supports local languages in schools	Nr.	3	1	2	4	35	42	87
	%	3.4	1.1	2.3	4.6	40.2	48.3	100
17. NDCDC supports local languages in schools	Nr.	5	0	3	5	38	36	87
	%	5.7	0	3.4	5.7	43.7	41.4	100
18. LABE supports local communities to develop adult and child learning	Nr.	5	1	0	2	17	62	87
	%	5.7	1.1	0	2.3	19.5	71.3	100

⁵Kathleen Heugh, led the design of the language in education questions for this survey.

19. LABE provides teacher training support for local language in schools	Nr.	2	1	2	2	28	52	87
	%	2.3	1.1	2.3	2.3	32.2	59.8	100
20. Students do not want to learn the local language	Nr.	3	13	36	13	13	9	87
	%	3.4	14.9	41.4	14.9	14.9	10.3	100
21. Parents do not want their children to learn the local language	Nr.	3	10	25	16	18	15	87
	%	3.4	11.5	28.7	18.4	20.7	17.2	100
22. Parents want their children to learn another language of Uganda which is more widely spoken than the local language	Nr.	3	10	27	9	21	17	87
	%	3.4	11.5	31	10.3	24.1	19.5	100
23. Parents want their children to learn the mother tongue and another language of Uganda in school	Nr.	2	3	18	13	32	19	87
	%	2.3	3.4	20.7	14.9	36.8	21.8	100
24. Parents want their children to learn local language and English	Nr.	3	0	8	9	35	32	87
	%	3.4	0.0	9.2	10.3	40.2	36.8	100
25. Parents want their children to learn local language, another Ugandan language and English in school	Nr.	3	2	23	16	24	19	87
	%	3.4	2.3	26.4	18.4	27.6	21.8	100
26. LABE has provided useful support to Language Boards	Nr.	2	0	3	4	30	48	87
	%	2.3	0.0	3.4	4.6	34.5	55.2	100
27. CCTs have been well-trained and supported by LABE	Nr.	4	1	2	8	48	24	87
	%	4.6	1.1	2.3	9.2	55.2	27.6	100
28. Parents and children benefit from joint parent-child classes at schools	Nr.	4	1	6	12	42	22	87
	%	4.6	1.1	6.9	13.8	48.3	25.3	100
29. Parents attend joint parent-child classes regularly	Nr.	6	1	26	16	33	5	87
	%	6.9	1.1	29.9	18.4	37.9	5.7	100
30. Parent Educators have been supported to provide parent classes in HLCs	Nr.	7	1	6	10	43	20	87
	%	8	1.1	6.9	11.5	49.4	23	100
31. CCTs and District Education Officers will continue to support local language teaching after LABE's project ends	Nr.	6	0	3	10	40	28	87
	%	6.9	0	3.4	11.5	46	32.2	100
32. The HLC Management Committee can continue to support the HLCs when the LABE project ends	Nr.	6	1	6	15	44	15	87
	%	6.9	1.1	6.9	17.2	50.6	17.2	100
33. The CCTs, local government and other stakeholders in the district will help the HLC Management Committee to keep the HLCs going when LABE's project ends	Nr.	6	1	7	19	41	13	87
	%	6.9	1.1	8.0	21.8	47.1	14.9	100
34. The local community wants their children to have strong local language and strong English teaching in schools	Nr.	4	0	1	5	31	46	87
	%	4.6	0	1.1	5.7	35.6	52.9	100
TOTAL	Nr.	145	60	275	291	1130	1056	2958
	%	4.9	2	9.3	9.8	38.2	35.7	100

More than half of the respondents were teachers. Because the evaluators had been told that teachers expressed some reluctance towards the use of local languages in primary schools, we anticipated that these data would support this anecdotal information. However, these data do not align with the anecdotal information. Rather there is a positive perception that all of the educational partners are working towards the goal of strengthening primary school education and national policy. At least 71% of teachers appear to know how to teach in the local language and support local language teaching and learning (questions 12 and 14). These data also confirm that there is a very strong positive perception about the value of LABE's contributions to support the MOES and NCDC language education policy embedded in the early primary curriculum (P1-3). In other words, there is a strong perception that LABE's work is highly regarded in relation to supporting the use of local language as medium of instruction (i.e. MTE). The data from the questionnaires also indicate that stakeholders believe that there is, and will be, support for the continuation of local language in education, including in the HLCs, at the end of LABE's MTE 2 project. However, there appears to be some uncertainty about the readiness of all stakeholders to continue without LABE's prominent role (see question 33).

These data also show a surprising degree of support for the use of local language when local language is presented together with English. The data do not indicate that stakeholders hold a strongly negative view of the role or use of local language in primary education. In response to questions 20-23 and 25 and in relation to parents we see cautiously positive and some ambivalence towards the use of local language or local language plus other Ugandan languages in primary education. However, the responses to question 24, indicate that 77% of parents support the use of local language and English in primary education. Question 34 (a control question to double check the consistency of responses to question 24), poses the question with some emphasis, asking whether parents wanted 'strong' provision of both local language and English. The responses to this question indicate that 88.5% of parents are likely to support 'strong' provision of both local language and English. Of these 88.5%, 52.9% of respondents report that parents would strongly agree with this position.

These data are particularly interesting. They correlate with scientific samples conducted in a national sociolinguistic survey in South Africa, under the auspices of the Pan South African

Language Board (PANSALB 2000). In that study 88.7% of adults over the age of 15 reported that they wanted 'good' provision of 'mother tongue' and 'good' provision of English throughout school education. These data surprised most linguists, educational linguists and government stakeholders at the time because it had been widely anticipated that most parents would want English only education. The South African data were discussed at a Biennial Meeting of the Ministers of Education in Africa in Libreville in 2006, and during discussion time when the Director of the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning asked the Ministers if any of them had conducted a scientific study to assess parents attitudes towards the use of African languages in education alongside English or French or Portuguese, none were able to report that s/he had done so. At an international conference on language education in Suzhou, China in 2014, the Minister of Education from the Central African Republic drew this point to the attention of the international audience. His point was that there are often widely-held, but incorrect, assumptions about the general public's view of African languages in education. From the South African experience and the experience of the 25-country study of mother-tongue and bilingual programmes in sub-Saharan Africa (Heugh in Ouane and Glanz, 2011), language in education attitudes of the general public are often misunderstood or miscommunicated. When parents are asked if they prefer mother tongue or English, then they will answer, 'English'. If they are asked whether they want good or strong mother tongue and English, they will take this option.

Somewhat disappointing is the response about attendance of parents at joint pupil-parent literacy classes (question 29). Parent involvement appeared to be stronger during the first phase of the MTE project reported on at the end of 2013 (Heugh & Mulumba 2013).

The questionnaire data are useful in terms of sample data to provide an overview of the attitudes and perceptions of stakeholders involved in the MTE 2 project. Given that the questionnaire was prepared in English, it could only really be administered easily with stakeholders who have the literacy expertise in English. This means that there is a limitation in that more teachers were surveyed than parents and members of the HLCs. A further limitation is that more men than women responded. This is partly owing to the gender disparities in education and also in relation to senior positions, such as in the District and Local Government offices. One of the specific requirements of the TOR was to establish whether or not stakeholders continue to hold negative views of the use of local language in

primary education or whether or not earlier negative perceptions had shifted towards a more positive view of the use of local language in primary education. The data suggest that 'negative' perceptions of the role of local languages in primary education may be unnecessarily over-emphasised in anecdotal discussions and reports. They suggest instead that more than two-thirds (at least 70% of teachers) support the use of local languages and 88.5% of parents support local language when offered together with English, i.e. in a manner that would result in bilingual proficiency and achievement.

8. Recommendations to LABE arising from the Mid-term Review

- a. The new MoES policy announcement that introduces a national pre-school year class is an opportunity for LABE to expand her work in regard to pre-school provision in the HLCs, especially in rural areas where the distance between home and the local primary school is too great for young children to walk. The growing interest in the pre-school year in the HLCs by the Minister of State for Primary Education and Sports is an opportunity that cannot be missed. This does create a dilemma for LABE, as suggested below.
- b. In some districts, the establishment and capacity development activities in relation to the HLCs appears to be working very well (Arua, Koboko, Gulu and Nwoya), and LABE's success outstrips expectations. This is particularly in regard to the establishment and capacity development of a HLCMC at each of the HLCs. This had not been part of the original plans for the MTE Extension Project, but LABE came to recognise that sustainability of HLCs would be dependent upon community ownership of these, and hence a community management committee has been established at each of the HLCs. However, there appear to be some fragilities in Yumbe and Adjumani where the evaluators have some concerns that the District Project Officers may not be working as effectively as they could. This is a matter about which the LABE Executive is aware and we understand that the Executive is already addressing potential fragilities in these two districts. It may be necessary to appoint an additional Team Leader who specifically focuses on these two districts for the next two years.
- c. Even if LABE did not originally plan for the establishment of HLCMCs and these were not originally part of the budgeting for the MTE Extension Project, we believe that it would be important to work on strengthening the HLCMCs' ownership of the educational provision in the HLCs, and also capacity development (teacher education) of the Parent Educators. By this we mean that LABE cannot be expected to provide ongoing financial support by way of stipends for Parent Educators who run the classes for children and adults. Rather, the HLCMCs need to take on increasing responsibility for subsidising HLC costs, including financial or 'in-kind' payment to the Parent Educators, and also building supplies (e.g. iron

sheeting for the HLC classroom/s). LABE's reputation to some extent depends upon good feedback from all stakeholders but AET and Comic Relief need to be aware that some of the requests by HLCMCs for additional LABE support are not realistic nor advisable if the communities are to become increasingly self-sufficient and empowered.

- d. Whereas Parent Educators have undergone some LABE provided training, this may not be adequate for sustained attention to the teaching of young learners. Dr Namyalo observes that some Parent Educators in Yumbe and Adjumani districts are either inadequately trained or not yet trained. In her view, they hardly know what they are supposed to do and they may eventually have a negative effect on the viability of some HLCs.
- e. Although LABE staff are currently stretched to the limit in at least four of the districts (Arua, Koboko, Gulu and Nwoya), there has been less attention to continuing the work on the implementation of the local language within the Thematic Curriculum (P1-3). Nevertheless, this is a priority of the MTE 2 Project and needs greater attention in the remaining two years of the project. A focus on capacity development in P4 where both local language and English are used as the medium of instruction in the 'transition' year is an extension of this priority. The health of the HLCs, especially in relation to language, depends on how seriously local languages are being taken in formal (school) education and LABE cannot afford to take her eye off the early primary years of education in which the local languages need to receive specific attention. Having said this, it is really the CCTs and the District authorities that should be taking the lead on implementing local language in schools. This may point towards greater direct collaboration between LABE and the various stakeholders to raise awareness and to engage in a targeted timeframe for the District and Local Government authorities' implementation of MoES and NCDC education policy. In addition, and most significantly, it is clear that MoES and NCDC may not fully recognise the difficulties of transition from local languages to English in P4 and beyond. There is a significant need for a clearly principled approach to bilingual education in P4 and possibly also in P5-7, especially in rural and remote contexts. For this reason we recommend that LABE continue with this priority and give it serious attention in the remaining two years of this project.
- f. Dr Namyalo has found that in town schools, there is still some resistance to teaching local languages and local language policy within the Thematic Curriculum has not been fully embraced compared with rural-based schools. This has implications for advocacy work and this should be the responsibility of the District and Local Government Agencies. Nevertheless the data from the questionnaires indicate positive views of the use of both the local language and English (i.e. bilingual education) on the part of parents and significantly greater

support from teachers and district and local stakeholders than the anecdotal evidence would suggest. We recommend that LABE, perhaps in association with UMLEN, lobby the government authorities and also university departments of Ugandan languages to take local languages education far more seriously and to develop a partnered advocacy campaign to provide parents with responsible and useful information about the prospects of their children's achievements in education with and without local languages.

- g. The ICT hubs have been successful but of course, teachers not included in this project would like to be included. This has resource implications and obviously cannot be addressed by LABE on its own. This is also probably quite a time-consuming project given issues with repairs to equipment etc. It may be that this activity is one that LABE considers downplaying in the future while attention is focussed elsewhere. What LABE has already shown convincingly is that teachers are interested and willing to develop materials of their own provided that they have adequate access to computers and IT equipment. An alternative suggested by AET is that teachers who have already been trained might be able to share their expertise with other teachers. This would fall under the process known as 'cascade effect'. This may work well for ICT, although it has yet to show desired results in other areas of educational innovation in Africa (e.g. Heugh et al. 2007).
- h. Orthographies: we note the ongoing issue relating to the way some linguists are encouraging the fragmentation of larger language families. For the sake of Ugandan history and future education of Ugandan children, we suggest that LABE continues to lobby influential stakeholders to hold a national conference that looks at the best possible orthographic system to adopt across Uganda for use in universities, language boards, teacher-training colleges, schools, and book publishers. This needs to be decided by a multi-stakeholder constituency, rather than through ad hoc decisions made by consultant linguists (e.g. SIL) who may be connected to or who inform short-term external donor or development agencies involved in education (including USAID, RTI etc.).

9. Emerging issues of national importance with specific implications for LABE

There are at least four issues of national importance that have become evident during the Mid-term Review.

The first is the national policy shift to include a universal one year pre-school class to serve each primary school. This issue is threaded into the discussion throughout this report. LABE's interventions in the HLCs, particularly in relation to the introduction of a pre-school class has pre-empted the national move and offers a strategic opportunity for LABE's work to be taken up at national level.

The second has to do with the transition from local language medium of instruction to English medium instruction. This coincides with a shift from an integrated Thematic Curriculum to a subject-based curriculum for senior primary classes. The switch over is confusing for teachers and pupils. Whether children are taught in rural and remote schools or whether they are taught in the urban centres, teachers and pupils will need to use both the local or area language that is used as the medium of informal communication outside of school as well as English, simultaneously. The practice of switching back and forth between languages has been known as code-switching for several decades. More recently educational linguists refer to this practice as translanguaging. Whether or not the term code-switching or translanguaging is used is not important. What is important is that de facto practices that are often discouraged by educational authorities are ones that are practiced in almost every government funded school in sub-Saharan Africa. Internationally this is now recognised as an important resource and one that should be encouraged and used systematically. It is part of the natural way in which people develop their bilingual and multilingual proficiencies. NCDC will need to accept this as a normal practice and find ways to integrate this practice in a systematic approach to develop high level proficiency in children's local or area language and English.

In other words there needs to be a clearly mapped out approach to bilingual education (local language and English) and how to make best use of the knowledge and expertise that children bring to school and their learning. This needs to be informed by the best available research in sub-Saharan Africa and it needs to be brought into teacher development programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers.

The third matter relates to the need for a national coherent plan that addresses cross-border languages of wider regional communication (e.g. Kiswahili and Luo / Acholi) as well as the status of Luganda. In most countries of the global south people need to be proficient in at least three, often four languages: local language, national language, regional language of wider communication and international language of wider communication (e.g. English or French in Africa). Over time, MoES and NCDC will need to expand the language policy of Uganda to encourage multilingualism.

The fourth major challenge is to address the issue of what would be the most theoretically sound and practical approach to take in terms of orthographic development in Uganda. This decision should not be left to external providers. It is one of long-term importance for Uganda and it should be one that is thoroughly debated and democratically decided in the context of the best international and national advice available.

It is our view that LABE could make a significant contribution to the first two of these priorities and be at the forefront of developments in both ECD and bilingual education in its next phase of growth and prioritisation. We further recommend that LABE raise the issue of the harmonisation of Ugandan languages and related issues of orthography development with stakeholders as appropriate.

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