



COUNTRY PRESENTATION – ZAMBIA

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The Use of ODL in Zambia

At the World Education Forum held in Dakar, April 2000, the international community including Zambia, adopted the EFA goals and, later in the same year, the MDGs. EFA called for and aimed at expanding and improving early childhood education and care, providing access to and completion of free and compulsory basic (primary) education of good quality, meeting education and training needs of all children, youths and adults as may be appropriate to their level and needs (adult literacy included), eliminating gender disparities and improving quality of education and training at all levels. The latter (MDGs) aimed at eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability, developing a global partnership for development and, like for EFA goals, achieving universal primary education and promoting gender equality.

There are many private institutions that are offering various courses through distance learning. Distance education is one of the prominent strategies proposed to assist Africa escape from educational crisis. As such, Africa and in particular, Zambia is making considerable use of distance education to extend access to formal education though most public institutions have been severely constrained by lack of finance and manpower. It is probable that distance education will continue to be used to strengthen formal education by training primary teachers, extending access to secondary education and by providing tertiary education although, so far, few African countries are offering degree level studies at a distance, Zambia included.

Since independence, distance education has played an important role in the nation's quest to increase access to education including use of a variety of alternative teaching and learning modes and materials. Many private and public institutions offer distance education programmes from basic to university level. The University of Zambia offers distance courses contributing to six degree programmes (five in Education and one in the Humanities and Social Sciences) and a certificate and diploma programme in Adult Education. The Copper belt University has been offering a certificate course and has developed distance learning courses at degree level. The

Zambian Open University, a private institution registered by the Ministry of Education, was established in 2004 and is already offering a wide range of programmes through distance learning.

The Ministry of Education is the leading provider of distance education programmes in the country. Its most notable of these are the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) and the secondary distance education programmes, and the primary Teachers' Diploma by Distance Learning (PTDDL). Nkrumah College of Education also offers some courses by distance learning, as well as Copperbelt Secondary Teachers' College.

The Directorate of Open and Distance Education (DODE), is mandated to provide quality education, to all, using alternative methodologies and technologies. The Directorate developed a customised Strategic Plan based on the objectives and goals outlined in the overall MoE 2003 – 2007 Strategic Plan. The government has supported establishment of community schools through community initiatives over the years.

The Directorate is offering Basic Education Radio Programmes (Grades 1 – 7) through one of the units called the Educational Broadcasting Services. This unit also offers lessons to learners using the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) methodology. Presently the number of such schools is 3,200. The Directorate has in addition to this, been offering lessons to learners in grades 8-11 through print based self study materials around the country.

The Five Top Priorities

1. Quality Assurance

- Development of Quality Assurance systems, implementation of relevant guidelines.
- Development of appropriate ODL and technology mediated approaches.
- Continuous monitoring of outputs and impact for learning and improvement.

2. Teacher Development

- Facilitate Teacher Training; through ICT and related training of educators and managers,
- Distance Education; selection and development of delivery modes.

3. Open and Alternate Schooling

- Selection and development of appropriate materials for the curriculum
- Development of appropriate Learner support and delivery systems
- Continuous update of content, training and technical support

4. e-Learning for Education Sector Development

- Finance; start-up funding and integration in regular budget
- Needs assessment and Awareness creation; Development of implementation plan
- Content and Curriculum; development of ICT curriculum and digital education content
- Infrastructure; procurement and installation of hardware and software including connectivity
- Actual integration of ICT in the classroom and administration.

5. Learning and Skills for Livelihoods

- Increasing access to basic literacy through the development of strategies to curb illiteracy
- Provision of technical assistance and development of appropriate ODL methods for low technology environments.