

IMPROVING SOCIAL CAPITAL OUTCOMES FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:
A CASE STUDY OF FOUR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN WESTERN
UGANDA

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DEDICATION

To Frances

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ATC	apprenticeship training centre
BEIRD	Basic Education Integrated in Rural Development
CDO	community development officer
EFA	Education for All
ESAC	Educational Sector Adjustment Credit
EWLP	Experimental World Literacy Program
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GWP	Government White Paper on Education
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Scheme
IDAC	Institute for Cultural Action
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Service
NCNAE	National Council for Non Formal and Adult Education

NFE	non-formal education
NGO	non-government organisation
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SACCO	savings and credit cooperative organisation
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SHG	self-help group
SOCAP IQ	Social Capital Integrated Questionnaire
SOCAT	Social Capital Assessment Tool
UN	United Nations
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPPET	Universal Post-Primary Education and Training Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

WCUL World Campaign for Universal Literacy

ABSTRACT

With many people in Uganda, especially western Uganda, still limited in their access to formal education, the response of non-government organisations (NGOs) has been to offer non-formal education (NFE) programs. These programs tend to target adults without formal education credentials and out-of-school youth. The typical aim of these NGOs in providing NFE is to help people who have or have had limited access to formal education to improve their wellbeing. Yet such programs remain independently unassessed for the impact they are having on the livelihoods of learners. The implications of this lack of independent assessment and government regulation is that a wealth of time, energy and resources is being invested into activities without the confidence that such an investment is producing improvements in learner wellbeing.

The research on NFE indicates a preoccupation with its ability to improve the human capital of learners. This will only have limited effects on their overall wellbeing. This research project aimed to consider the impact of NFE on the social capital outcomes of learners. The concept of social capital was explored through a consideration of the work of four theorists, Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Putnam, James Coleman and Michael Woolcock. The works of the first three individuals are most often included in discussions of social capital. Michael Woolcock constructs a framework that synthesises the work of Bourdieu, Putnam and Coleman in a manner that is relevant to this research project. The resultant theoretical framework was most similar to Woolcock's work but does not overlook the contribution of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam to his conceptualisation of social capital. The framework suggested that NFE impacts on the social capital outcomes of learners by directly acting upon the sources of social capital creating changes to the learner's relationships with other individuals, groups and authority structures. These changes in learners' relationships lead to such things as trust and cooperation that enable individuals to become more active in

improving their own wellbeing across four dimensions: self-sufficiency, equity, health and social cohesion.

A case study was constructed of four NFE programs delivered by one organisation in western Uganda over a three-year period. Framed from an interpretive paradigm with a constructivist epistemology, the research design was developed to give the researcher the opportunity to explore how NFE has changed the relationships of learners (social capital outcomes) and how these relationships have impacted upon their wellbeing.

The two models being used by the providing organisation to implement NFE have had differential effects on the relationships of learners. The findings indicate the interplay of structural features and instructional mode in producing these social capital outcomes. One model has been more effective at bridging geographical boundaries, helping to widen learners' social contexts and consequently opportunities for knowledge growth and income generation. The other model has been more effective at bonding learners from a similar geographical location together in the establishment of village-level enterprises.

Alongside human capital outcomes, social capital outcomes are worth being sought after. The findings of this research project indicate that social capital outcomes help learners on their journey toward improved educational status and financial independence. Combined together, this pair of outcomes is capable of improving the holistic wellbeing not only of those who participate but their families and their wider community. The implication of this research is to inform the design of NFE programs that take into consideration the social capital needs of learners.