

# Management of a community literacy and development program

## Establishing a self-managing and self-sufficient ethnic program

by Uwe Gustafsson

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In 1955, Uwe Gustafsson received a diploma as a horticulturist in the former East Germany after which he worked in the horticultural field for seven years. He then attended a Bible school in Switzerland from 1962 to 1964, graduating with a diploma. He was accepted as a member of SIL in 1965. From 1965 to 1966 he attended SIL at the University of North Dakota. He became a citizen of Canada in 1966. Uwe and his wife, Elke, began their work in India among the Adivasi Oriya speaking people in October 1970 and have been working on a literacy and development program there since.

## 1. Introduction

The goals of a community literacy and development program (CLDP) are:

- (1) A literate majority of men and women within the ethnic community
- (2) Literates using their skills for an improved personal, family, and community life

(1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

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To accomplish this the program needs capable administration. The national or expatriate literacy team will be the chief management team while at the same time establishing and coordinating an ethnic management team. It is essential for the national or expatriate team (NET) to involve ethnic personnel in all management activities of the program from the beginning in areas such as planning, writing of books, selection of literacy classes, training, and development programs.

A successful CLDP calls for the entire management team to be actively involved in the literacy and development programs as supervisors, monitors, or evaluators, thus constantly interacting with the teachers, learners, and village elders, as well as all employees and workers in various development enterprises. In most situations, experienced ethnic personnel will not be available and in-service training and partial outside training will be necessary. The NET will have ethnic personnel at their side in all program activities—teaching, guiding, and encouraging them in management activities. The responsibility of the NET is therefore twofold: (1) managing the CLDP, and (2) preparing an ethnic managing team for self-management of the program. The NET must assign responsibilities to the ethnic management team in training, while at the same time assuring successful learning in the village literacy classes. At all times the focus must be kept on the illiterate and the learning adults on their way to full literacy!

Future self-management of the program by the ethnic group is essential and must be one of the goals of the CLDP from the beginning. On the subject of self-management, Agenta Lind and Anton Johnston in *Adult literacy in the third world: A review of objectives and strategies* quote from the International Council for Adult Education, “If literacy programs are imposed on people and are not related to the total development and/or local conditions, they have little chance of improving people’s lives. They should encourage the skills of participation and self-management ...” ([International Council for Adult Education 1979:12](#)).

Aside from self-management of the program by the ethnic group, development activities must also be part of a good community literacy program. And, to make development activities really effective, self-sufficiency should balance the scale with self-management. The program must be functional, benefiting the learning ethnic community in all ways. A recommendation following the evaluation of experimental literacy projects by the United Nations Development Programme declared:

... the concept of functionality must be extended to include all its dimensions: political, economic, social, and cultural. Just as development is not only economic growth, so literacy—education more generally—must aim above all to arouse in the individual a critical awareness of social reality, and to enable him or her to understand, master and transform his or her destiny ([UNESCO, UNDP 1976:191](#)).

Including functionality will add a much more complex dimension to management and management training of the program. Margaret Bendor-Samuel in her article, “Branch literacy units” brings out an excellent strategy for establishing literacy programs with functionality.

I believe we should take serious note of our need to show the same level of professionalism in the implementation of literacy programs as we do in our linguistic research. The strategy I am suggesting takes these two factors into consideration: greater support for the literacy worker and a more professional approach to literacy program management. It also considers the possibility of adopting a functional approach to literacy programs ([Bendor-Samuel 1990:3](#)).

Her strategy for setting up branch literacy units will be a real boost to establishing CLDPs which in favorable conditions can become self-managing and self-sufficient.

Julia Van Dyken also expressed this need for functionality to some degree in her paper, “The role of literacy in development.”

At the policy level, because they believe in autonomy of each team and trust that the workers will be sensitive to the ethnic group members among whom they work, SIL would not want a policy explicating precise ways and means for community and national development, but they should want a policy which shows concern for the well-being and participation of the community ([Van Dyken 1988:20](#)).

In preparing an ethnic group for self-management and self-sufficiency of a literacy and development program, the NET is the chief facilitating “outside” party assisting the ethnic group in achieving this goal.

This article will outline some of the management needs for a CLDP. The basis of the information will draw mainly from our experiences in India as we continue to learn to manage the Adivasi Oriya—Telugu Adult Literacy. Twelve years of literacy work have thus far been completed among this ethnic group of over 100,000 speakers, and the work of the past seven years has been concentrated on development activities with a number of income generating projects established. The project is on the way to self-management and self-sufficiency.

The term *manager* is used to designate the position. In only a few situations will qualified ethnic (or *net*, for that matter) personnel be available.

## **2. Management of the total program**

### **2.1. Team effort with NET’s organization and the funding agency**

The NET is responsible to coordinate the entire program with its own organization and the funding agency. Although each ethnic group setting will determine the course of the community literacy program in specific ways, there are certain pressures acting upon the program from outside. The NET’s organization and the funding agency will have guidelines for the program. The NET must be sensitive to these, and if feasible, incorporate into its own program whatever requirements there may be. The funding agency may very well require incorporating development activities with the goal of self-management and self-sufficiency of the program.

(1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

As the program gets underway, a team spirit between the outside agencies, the NET, and the ethnic management team should develop. But this team work is by no means an easy task since some members of the outside agencies have never worked in an ethnic group. And yet, participation in the program by “outsiders” is inevitable. The NET should include the ethnic management team in all planning and implementation of requirements from outside agencies. The ethnic managers must be aware of what their responsibilities will or might be as they work with outside agencies which have a legitimate “voice” in the program, while remaining autonomous. Along with the NET, the ethnic management team must learn to discuss these requirements and recommendations with responsible persons from outside agencies. This is very crucial, for only the NET and the ethnic group managers really know how these can be realistically incorporated into the program. Only through teamwork can maximum benefit for the illiterate ethnic population be achieved and development accomplished.

## **2.2. Cooperation with government agencies**

All CLDPs are in essence accomplishing national and international development goals while working in cooperation with government agencies. The NET and the ethnic managers should offer their services and expertise to government agencies and assist them in specific areas of literacy and development. It is very important that the NET and the ethnic team be aware of government policies and programs in the area. If possible, they should fit into these policies and programs, and thus become part of national development. As a voluntary agency, the ethnic group will have a real contribution to make to national literacy and development efforts.

## **2.3. Program teamwork between NET and ethnic group managers**

Management of the total program must be coordinated from the beginning by all participating management personnel. All phases of the program such as writing primers and readers, surveying for new village literacy classes, selection and training of teachers, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation, along with development must be harmonized. The chief responsibility falls upon the NET, always having some members of the ethnic management team at their side.

Since most CLDPs are located in remote areas, much forethought must be given to have all materials in place ahead of time. There will be unforeseen delays which can be disastrous to the success of the program. Management must not take for granted that all materials will be available when needed or printing completed when promised. The entire program must be reviewed and discussed on a weekly basis by the NET and the ethnic management team. A general manager or coordinator will have to coordinate the entire management team and the program to maintain harmony. This person will probably have to be a member of the NET team, but two or three ethnic managers should work alongside him from the beginning. One of these can potentially become the future general manager or coordinator.

## **2.4. Program management personnel**

The need for a general manager to coordinate the program is clear. In time the program will need to have ethnic managers for several departments. While it was practical to have these departments looked after by

(1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

one and the same person in the beginning of the program, this will not be possible with expansion of the program. The NET should plan for ethnic managers for each of these departments: writing, editing, and proofreading; supervision and monitoring; shopping, stocking, and distribution of supplies; and office management. Even if the manager is the only person in the department at first, it is wise to have a responsible person in charge. It may not be possible to have experienced ethnic personnel, and in such case the NET should place a person with talent in the certain area into that department. The NET will know ethnic members from the linguistic program and thus be able to select a promising individual for management position. Mistakes or wrong decisions will be made, both by the NET and the ethnic team, but only by taking risks will success be achieved.

The ethnic management team will be given responsibility very soon under the general manager. Together they will manage the program. The ethnic team must soon realize that in time they will be responsible for the management of the entire program. There is, therefore, a need by the NET to be liberal in handing out praise and awards for good accomplishments. This goes right across the board for all participants in the program, not only the management team. Very soon there should develop a real spirit of cooperation and appreciation among all program men and women in the ethnic group for literacy and development of their own people.

It must be emphasized again that all management personnel need to be personally involved with both the learners in the literacy program and the development personnel. The ethnic management and the NET will participate in the supervision in the villages and the monthly meetings at headquarters of teachers and supervisors. In order to reach maximum results in bringing illiterates to full literacy, there must be a close cooperative spirit between all participants in the program. There must be openness about all plans and the implementation of them; the ethnic team will soon participate in management suggestions which are best suitable for their people.

In traditional ethnic cultures, it may be difficult to have full-time commitment by ethnic staff at first. Though eager to be punctual and steady, they may not even be aware of how their cultural commitments will interface with regular attendance to program duties. Or, if their regular program duties are interrupted, they will not find that unusual. For the management of the program (especially for the NET) this can be extremely frustrating. The NET will know about the cultural timetable, but when the literacy and development program begins, these interruptions can result in varying degrees of frustration.

The answer to this problem is to have substitutes (fillers) who can quickly step in. It is advisable to plan ahead and not be stranded in the program, because these sudden absences are inevitable. This problem is serious enough for literacy programs; for income generating projects it can be disastrous.

In some cultures too much attention is given to “pleasing the supervisor.” Not that this is wrong in itself, but it will divert attention that must be given to product quality and goal accomplishment. The NET must in this case carefully guide the ethnic management team to always see that the actual work is done, and the goal is reached. Once this has succeeded, pleasing the supervisor will not be a problem.

Another common problem is bureaucracy. For those ethnic groups which have come under government administration, individual members have observed government administrative procedures. When the CLDP has to set up its own administration, some ethnic personnel will already “know” how to do certain office procedures. And this will be very valuable. However, most of the work is out in the literacy classes (1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

and doing development activities and not in the office. We are emphasizing, therefore, participation of the management staff in the actual program.

The research done by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman Jr. bears out the importance of management working very closely to the workers. In their book, *In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies*, they give numerous examples of top managers having a close relationship with their work force.

In one study, 18 out of 20 Hewlett-Packard executives interviewed spontaneously claimed that the success of their company depends on the Company's people-oriented philosophy. It is called "The HP Way." Here is how founder Bill Hewlett describes it: "I feel that in general terms it is the policies and actions that flow from the belief that men and women want to do a good job, a creative job, and that if they are provided with the proper environment they will do so. It is the tradition of treating every individual with consideration and respect and recognizing personal achievement" ([Peters and Waterman 1982](#):243–244).

Nothing more effectively involves people, sustains credibility or generates enthusiasm than face to face communication. It is critical to provide and discuss all organization performance figures with all of our people ([Peters and Waterman 1982](#):248).

Ethnic groups often lack some of the background necessary for acquiring management skills. It will take time for them to learn and be confident to take on the leadership roles in literacy and development. Therefore, adequate training time should be built into the program.

In many ethnic groups the value of relationships will often overrule merit in consideration for placement and promotion in the workplace. In managing a CLDP, however, the NET must work with its most trusted ethnic coworkers to have them understand the importance of merit (if possible alongside relationship) for staff appointments.

## **2.5. Program administration**

Each CLDP needs to have an administrative setup, the size being in relationship to the size of the program. A small beginning is very desirable. The chief language assistants will very often be able to fill the slots for the initial administrative work along with the NET. As the program grows, and especially when income generating projects are established, the administration becomes more complex. Having an administration is essential, and yet, in most cases there are no trained ethnic personnel available.

Our language assistant typist (trained by my wife) had worked with us for five years before the literacy program began. With the beginning of the literacy program he, along with the others, became involved in supervision. He displayed exceptional honesty as well as talent for record keeping, by designing new record-keeping systems, and a knack for general administrative work. And he enjoyed his work. Today he is the president of the registered ethnic society (the legal body of this literacy and development project)

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and its chief administrative officer. Another member of the original group of language assistants became an excellent supervisor. But he is an artist by nature, and thus the chief ethnic writer, translator, and editor of the project. Other ethnic personnel in the project are now in responsible positions who started out as language assistants or in other supportive work. Unfortunately, all are not successful.

The administrative staff of the CLDP will be concerned with correspondence within the ethnic group as well as outside. Since many of them will have worked or are working as supervisors, they will do the evaluation of learner records and class records month by month. They will prepare for the monthly meeting with the teachers and supervisors, keep account books and the individual learner's biographical data, and literacy records. They will also be involved in public and government relations.

The administration under the leadership of the NET must establish a filing system for the literacy program from the beginning. All village names and dates, records of individual learners, and literacy teachers and supervisors participating in the program (past and present) must be properly documented. Accurate record keeping can be invaluable to both present and future documentation of the work.

A further responsibility of the administrative staff is the collection and editing of stories and articles written by new literates. Well-written ones will be selected for publishing, hopefully in the program's own periodical on agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, health and hygiene, nutrition, and family planning (most of these written by government officers, published in their magazines, translated into the ethnic language and published by us with permission). All this is accomplished with ethnic staff under the supervision of the NET.

The administration will coordinate all supervision of village classes on a monthly basis, all monthly meetings with teachers, supervisors, and ethnic managers, the twice-yearly (more or less) examinations for new literates, and International Literacy Day and Literacy Year closing functions.

## **2.6. Establishing a legal ethnic organization**

If possible, a legal ethnic organization is the first step to self-management and self-sufficiency of the program. A formally registered body of ethnic leaders and managers will be necessary, if income generating projects are started for self-sufficiency of the program. A legal, ethnic organization will help advance the goal of self-management and self-sufficiency. This organization will establish a tie with nonethnic national and international entities, which will help it gain recognition and respect in the national society. Since government development programs may be implemented in the ethnic area, government departments may assist and involve a registered national (ethnic) organization for development among their own people.

## **3. Management of the literacy program**

### **3.1. Preparing for the literacy program**

It will be advantageous to have ethnic managers managing specific departments with the assistance from the NET. The main attention must be placed on having all materials ready on time. This is important for (1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

the NET to achieve but more so for the ethnic management team, especially during the first year when there are so many unknowns. The goal is for a smooth running literacy program with few disappointments for the learners. It is the responsibility of the NET in close cooperation with the ethnic management team to have everything in place when the program begins.

Depending on the culture, getting things done ahead of time is not always part of their past experience, especially not in literacy. The NET will have to take responsibility and repeatedly encourage the ethnic management team to see the need for planning well ahead.

### **3.2. Preparing for village classes and teacher**

The ethnic management team will have valuable input into the selection of villages and teachers, since they know places and people. The ethnic team and the NET will prepare for the survey, selecting potential villages before visiting them. The meetings with the village elders and the potential teachers will be conducted mainly by the ethnic team with a NET member present.

The NET and the ethnic managers will discuss these visits at headquarters and make selections together. Once the NET is confident these visits can be made by the ethnic managers and supervisors, they can turn this part of the program over to them.

### **3.3. Training of ethnic managers, supervisors, and teachers**

Ethnic managers for the community literacy programs will best be trained in-service. Each individual will develop the managerial skills needed for literacy as he works under the guidance of the NET. It is therefore imperative to have ethnic personnel involved along with the NET in all activities of the program from the beginning. The ethnic management team will have to learn quickly that the program they are working in is **their** program and **their** future. This more than anything will motivate them to seriously take on leadership and make the CLDP a success. Specific management training for income generating projects (for example, a printing press) must be provided outside the ethnic area in most cases. If the ethnic person is not enthusiastic, then he should be disqualified from management.

Supervisors are also best trained on the job. But some basic skills, such as how to treat teachers and learners, how to fill in monitoring and evaluation forms, and when to visit classes and for how long will be taught in special training sessions. His real learning experience is gained as he accompanies the NET on supervisory trips. The supervisors, as previously mentioned, will most likely be the language assistants of the linguistic team with additional persons joining as the program grows. From among these will emerge the future managers. For the management of the program this is an ideal situation since these ethnic staff are intimately familiar with all phases of the program, including its philosophy.

Teacher training will be managed by the NET in close cooperation with the ethnic supervisors and managers. It is important for all participants to realize that everyone is working for the literacy and development of their own people. Yes, there are differences in responsibility and position, but all must work together to accomplish this goal (that is, majority literacy). During teacher training, the NET must see that all ethnic supervisors and managers attend, and as far as possible, participate. Attendance and



participation is also compulsory for the monthly meetings, important occasions in the program for interaction, instruction, and learning.

Ethnic literacy teachers will receive training from the NET with assistance from the ethnic supervisors and managers. The training period must be set well ahead of time so that all potential teachers will be able to attend. With the passing of time, responsibilities of the ethnic staff will increase until they are fully in charge.

Training of teachers will (a) be given prior to the literacy year, (b) continue during the year as supervisors visit the classes monthly, and (c) be given during the monthly meetings at headquarters. The close contact between all program personnel and learning adults is of utmost value.

### **3.4. Management of monitoring and internal evaluation**

The literacy classes have begun. Management must now begin with monitoring and internal evaluation of literacy teachers and individual learners. The forms for monitoring must be in place. A member of the NET, together with some ethnic supervisors and managers, will visit each class once a month.

Again, there are two main goals for the NET: first, monitoring and assisting each learner in the class while at the same time teaching the teacher as checking is in progress; and second, having the ethnic supervisors and managers learn the procedures. During the second and third month the roles can be reversed with the ethnic staff taking the lead and the member of the NET monitoring supervision.

Back in the office, they will discuss the data and proceed. The NET with the ethnic supervisors and managers will prepare the monthly evaluation forms from the data for all classes in the program, to be ready for the monthly meeting (compare [Gustafsson 1991](#):107–109).

The monthly meetings for teachers and supervisors are well prepared. During the meeting, the NET and ethnic staff will have interviews with individual teachers, discussing with them their performance and the progress during the past month. One member of the NET will have to lead these discussions for several months, after which he will observe an ethnic supervising manager conducting these interviews. Here, too, interaction and group spirit are very important and will further the success of the program.

The supervisors and the NET will be very busy during the last month of the literacy year conducting tests of all learners during class time. All learners who completed the entire course will be tested as they qualify for examinations. Towards the end of the literacy year the results from the monthly monitoring are combined for preparing charts.

### **3.5. Management of supervision**

The importance of supervision cannot be stressed enough. It is here where the literacy program gets its vitality. Supervisors are an integral part of the entire literacy program, and the best staff must be assigned. Much care must be taken in developing their skills. Some of the chief supervisors bring along their experience and learning as language assistants to the NET or village class teachers. They have helped write primers and readers as well as assisted with the test classes. They have been important in surveying (1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

for new literacy classes, or they have taught classes in the past. Now they are developing their skills under the supervision and coordination of the NET.

One of the best supervisors, who is also good with people, should be assigned as supervision manager. The NET will still keep close contact with him and his work and help him in the management of the ethnic supervisors. Time management is an important factor in supervision, and this should be learned by the ethnic manager. He will be responsible to assign supervisors in such a way as to have reports and data back at headquarters early enough to allow for discussions, evaluation, and writing of the monthly evaluation form for the monthly meeting. Since the monthly meeting date is set at the previous meeting, there can be no change of date, and it is the responsibility of the supervision manager to have all requirements ready **before the meeting**.

The supervision manager is responsible to organize packing of needed materials (such as more primers, readers, chalk, notebooks, and pens) to be taken back to the classes by the teachers after the monthly meeting. He has to coordinate this with the manager for supplies and books, who in turn is responsible to have these ready at headquarters. The coordinating of all these requirements ahead of time is really the responsibility of the NET, and they must train the ethnic managers to pay very close attention to time management.

### **3.6. Salaries, wages, allowances, rewards, and awards**

The ethnic staff must be paid punctually in accordance with local standards. The NET with their administrative staff is responsible for fair and prompt payment. Apart from all enthusiasm, good will, and possible offers of voluntary work, ethnic staff must be paid to guarantee continuity of the program. The NET should have the funds on hand and prearranged paydays must be kept.

Rewards and awards make for good working relationships. The recipient will be thankful to know that his work is appreciated. The NET must be liberal in this regard and award those of the ethnic staff who deserve recognition. Recognition should be given right across the board to any deserving person participating in the program. It can be either monetary, in kind, or in the form of a certificate. The NET should take care to make the decisions for rewards and awards together with the ethnic management, so that in future they can extend these on the same merit basis.

### **3.7. Writing proposals, budgets, accounts and reports**

The NET, in consultation with their organization, may have to write the proposal for the program, or, if it is being written by the organization, the NET must have a heavy input. The toughest job is the budget. There are so many unknowns! Only those who have worked on budgets and then had to manage a program with them for the next few years can empathize here. Most likely the NET's organization will write the budget, and they in turn may have to write it according to rules and regulations given by the funding agency. In most cases, it will take a year or more before funds are available, and then the NET with the ethnic management team will have to live and work with it. To manage the program within the budget is a great task and will take time for the NET and the ethnic management team to learn.

Accounting is the responsibility of the NET. They should employ ethnic staff to help keep the books. Before too long an ethnic business manager will be needed. The NET, together with the ethnic accounting staff and the other ethnic managers, should review the accounts in the light of the budget from time to time.

Writing reports is a necessary and valuable exercise for the NET. Reporting periods will probably be decided by NET's organization, the funding agency, or both. Here, the data from the monthly supervision will be of tremendous value. Also, all accounting and reporting data from the income generating projects are of utmost importance. Without these no report of any value can be written. The NET will have the responsibility to write the reports but should be assisted by the ethnic management team. Reports on the program must **not** be missed in the hope that the NET's organization staff will write them. The ethnic management team must learn the importance of accurate data at this point in order to write a reliable report. (In the Adivasi Oriya—Telugu Adult Literacy Functional Education and Development Project the ethnic staff provides the data for the reports, but they are not yet able to write them.)

### **3.8. Government and public relations**

The NET will be visiting the area government officials from time to time, and they in turn may be visiting the program's area. From the beginning the NET must be accompanied by ethnic language assistants and later by ethnic management personnel. The officials will appreciate knowing the involvement of the ethnic people in the program and the ethnic staff must learn to communicate openly with the officials. This goes for all other business outside the ethnic area where the ethnic staff must learn to handle work in offices and business establishments. Because the program is aiming for self-management and self-sufficiency, these relationships with nonethnic people become all the more important.

## **4. Self-management and self-sufficiency of the program**

### **4.1. Achieving self-management of the program**

During the first few years of a CLDP, the ethnic management team will progressively take on more responsibility. In most cases, they want to do so. If the NET feels confident that a certain ethnic team member can handle a department, he should be given this responsibility and work under the NET. This trust will not be abused and learning goes much faster. If outside funding is still being received, then the NET has the responsibility, and therefore a valid reason, to evaluate the work of the ethnic management team. This is an excellent transition time from NET management to ethnic management. The members of the ethnic management team will also feel good if their work is being evaluated and approved. As long as the NET is in the ethnic group area, they will be consulted by the ethnic management team, thus having a continuous input in successful self-management achievement.

Since the NET wants to assure successful continuity under ethnic management, the NET should be instrumental in putting ethnic staff into positions for which they have shown ability but are not really qualified culturally. These situations are extremely delicate, but seeing such placements through is paramount to the survival of the program under ethnic management.

(1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

The NET will have to carefully observe any move towards an ethnic bureaucracy by ethnic management. Such a move would certainly stagnate, if not destroy, the entire program. The program must be viewed as a business establishment and must be managed as such in order to guarantee success.

## **4.2. Management for literacy and development**

As mentioned in the introduction, it is imperative to combine literacy with development activities. The community literacy program will only be effective for the ethnic population when it integrates with development and aims for better nutrition, health, education, and employment. As the ethnic staff is assisted with self-management of the program, development activities should also be included along with the education of the ethnic managers as to the importance of these development activities in their program. It is through development that they can reach their goal of self-management and self-sufficiency by and for the ethnic population. The literature supports this strongly, world bodies and funding agencies certainly see no other way, and the need demands it.

The Honorable Mrs. Sheila Kaul, Minister of State for Education and Culture, Government of India, New Delhi, India, in her inaugural address for the International Seminar on Campaigning for Literacy held at Udaipur, India during January 4–11, 1982, points out,

It must be admitted that the task of this Seminar is a difficult one. There was a time when literacy training aimed at giving the illiterate sufficient command of the mechanisms of reading, writing and elementary arithmetic to afford him the access to the written or printed word. But the situation has changed vastly during the last two decades. There has been a significant shift, and literacy training is being conceived to aim at an integrated instruction in reading and writing and in technical, occupational, scientific and civic activities. In other words, there has been a shift from mere literacy to functional literacy. As a matter of fact, since the World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, which was held at Teheran in September 1965, interest in functional literacy training has grown steadily. There has been a sustained search to provide more efficient instruments for combating illiteracy than those which were available in the past. And significant experience in different parts of the world have given rise to new approaches that render literacy as an integral part of a total process that aims at the ultimate acquisition of vocational skills and usable knowledge ([Bhola 1983](#):36).

Professor John C. Cairns in his Luncheon Address to the Canadian Organization for Development through Education, at their Annual General Meeting held June 23, 1990 at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada said,

In all of this, what is the role of literacy? Let me make a few points. First, literacy should be a means to an end, it should never be an end in itself. In the Third World context, I believe literacy must be functional. It must be directly related to the practical needs ... if it is designed as a functional tool by which people master and interact with their day-to-day environment, it is the

(1995). *Notes on Literacy*, 21(3).

step upon which most further progress depends. The issue then is the type of literacy and the quality of literacy, not literacy in a general or abstract sense ([Cairns 1990:4](#)).

Furthermore, Naihuwo Ahai, National Literacy Secretariat, Papua New Guinea, in his paper presented at the International Literacy Day Colloquium held October 9–13, 1990 at Washington, DC, brings out the following:

LAP (The Literacy and Awareness Programme) has been designed to achieve National Objective No. 13 of the National Constitution which aims: “to help people understand the changes occurring in contemporary PNG society and to improve their ability to maintain and enhance this awareness and their participation in development through the improvement of basic literacy and access to development information.” This is envisaged to be done through the linkage of the literacy programmes with development information needed and desired by the local communities. It is hoped that such a linkage will promote participation in development and government ([Ahai 1990:10](#)).

And finally, Agenta Lind and Anton Johnston write in *Adult literacy in the third world*:

If there are no concomitant perspectives of improved political, social and economic conditions for the population, even with literacy skills, why should the illiterates then use their time for literacy classes?

The Declaration of Persepolis stated: “Successes were achieved when literacy was linked to man’s fundamental requirements, ranging from his immediate vital needs to effective participation in social change” ([Bataille 1976:273](#)).

We have argued throughout this paper that this factor underlies success in achieving and retaining literacy, whatever type of program or activity is involved (Lind and [Johnston 1986:83](#)).

Once we are decided to include development activities into our literacy program we need to prepare the ethnic management team for development activities as well. This will most certainly involve training by an outside agency in whatever field. This will be accomplished either by sending ethnic trainees outside their area or by bringing trainers to them, the latter being much preferred. Here Margaret Bendor-Samuel’s Branch Literacy Unit (BLU) will play an important role ([Bendor-Samuel 1990](#)).

### **4.3. Management for self-sufficiency**

We are convinced that real and lasting development must have the full participation of the people, both in their accepting the development activities and getting involved in them. The ethnic management team must be fully convinced of the value of a particular development activity for their people and have them accept development for themselves.

To aim for self-sufficiency of the CLDP, it will become necessary to start income-generating projects. Here a completely new area of management and management training is involved. Again, most of this training will have to be given outside the ethnic area. Once vocational skills have been learned and some of the ethnic staff have received specialized management training, it is the task of the NET to help the ethnic management team achieve self-sufficiency in the newly-established income generating projects.

The NET will have to spend much time in observing the ethnic trainees and the management team in order to place people into the right position. The NET, however, will also be in the best position to understand ethnic culture and how all new development will in some ways interface with traditional culture. Here understanding and counseling ethnic personnel is needful to make the income generating projects a success.

#### **4.4. Self-management and self-sufficiency of the program**

Whatever the size of the project, it should work towards self-management and self-sufficiency by the ethnic group. If the ethnic management personnel realize that they are working for their own welfare and the welfare of their people in the future, commitment will become evident.

The ethnic management team will be an effective communication link between the government and the government literacy and development agencies. For this very reason a program owned and operated by the ethnic group should become a registered legal entity. If that has been accomplished, government agencies feel free to extend financial, material, and training aid to this legal ethnic group. The NET is still very much needed to coordinate and assure that the income generating projects are successfully managed.

#### **4.5. An ethnic program management committee**

The chief language assistants, who are the potential supervisors and managers, should be the members forming an ethnic committee. This committee will be chaired at first by one of the NET members but must be turned over to an ethnic chairman within two to three years. Although the NET member is still “active” in the background, the ethnic member is leading. Such a committee is extremely valuable in achieving self-management.

### **5. Conclusion**

The scope of this article on the management of a CLDP has gone beyond just literacy. The “total package” includes management and development activities as well as the monitoring of a self-managing and self-sufficient program. Very few of us in SIL have had previous experience in management. We will be learners as we lead, coordinate, and guide a literacy and development program headed for ethnic management and ownership.

In SIL, we have all the tools, the commitment, and the mandate from the Bible to accomplish this worthy work. We who are working in traditional ethnic communities have an inside cutting edge, a prerequisite for being effective catalysts between ethnic communities and the modern world. In fact, we have a moral responsibility to make available our expertise for the total well-being of the ethnic communities.

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