5. Concluding reflections

5.1 In the three pilot programmes the REFLECT approach proved to be both more effective at teaching people to read and write and more effective at linking literacy to wider development.

5.2 Of those adults who initially enrolled in REFLECT circles 65% in El Salvador, 60% in Bangladesh and 68% in Uganda, achieved basic literacy over a one year period. This compared to 43%, 26% and 22% in the respective control groups [and a typical 25% according to Abadzi (1994)]. REFLECT was particularly effective with women (and in

Bangladesh specifically with younger women in the 15-19 age group). Participants in REFLECT circles remained well motivated and dropped out in much lower numbers than those in the control groups. There were positive signs that the participants are developing literate habits but it is too early to evaluate fully the extent to which literacy skills have been permanently consolidated.

5.3 In respect of empowerment the three evaluations identified the following major outcomes:

- Participants in all three pilots spoke of self realisation as one of the major benefits of the REFLECT circles. Most spoke of better self esteem and the increased ability to analyse and solve problems as well as articulate ideas. Furthering their knowledge of the local environment (agriculture, health, income generation and survival skills) helped this process of self realisation, which was also

reflected by improved relations within the community (and within the household).

● Increased participation in community organisations was a concrete outcome of the REFLECT circles in Uganda and El Salvador. Most strikingly, 61% of learners in El Salvador reported that they had now assumed formal positions of responsibility in community organisations which they did not hold before the REFLECT literacy programme (eg chair, secretary or treasurer on the Community Council, Cooperative Directorate, Credit Committee, PTA, health committee, women's group or church group).

● The discussions in the literacy classes often led to community level actions to improve local conditions. These actions ranged from the economic sphere (constructing grain-stores, diversifying crops, cooperative buying or selling) to community projects

(small infrastructure such as re-grading access roads, school repairs, water pipes); from the environmental sphere (terracing, organic fertilisers, tree nurseries, tree planting) to the health sphere (digging a tubewell, building latrines, clearing rubbish, cleaning stagnant water). The key factor in achieving the implementation of these actions was felt to be that the learners had independently arrived at decisions to do something through their own analysis - they felt a local ownership of the problems and of the possible solutions.

● The evaluations also revealed that the REFLECT circles had a positive influence on people's resource management at an individual or household level. Women in Bangladesh repeatedly spoke of the value of calendars and matrices to strengthen their analytical skills, enabling them to plan better, develop more effective coping strategies (eg bulk

buying and storing goods) and have more control over decisions regarding loan use (which was previously dominated by men). In Uganda there were what appeared to be the beginnings of significant attitudinal changes seen in relation to child spacing, polygamy and traditional cultural practices which can undermine food security.

● The REFLECT pilots appeared to have had a positive initial impact on gender roles and relations in Uganda and Bangladesh. In Uganda learners and facilitators reported that many men have taken on domestic work, such as carrying water and fetching fuel wood, previously carried out by women. Women are now more vocal and more involved in key household and community decisions. In Bangladesh women attributed their growing involvement in household decision making to the REFLECT circle. However, in El Salvador, where the organisations

and individuals involved in the pilot lacked basic gender awareness, there was no significant impact on gender roles, revealing that much depends on how the methodology is interpreted and applied.

● The evaluations revealed that the REFLECT circles had a positive impact on health awareness, typified by the comment of one woman from Bangladesh: *"We learnt something of health before but it was not very practical and felt like a lot of rules. With making maps it was a lot more helpful and we understand things a lot better."* This was translated into concrete actions in many communities, particularly involving latrine building and more effective disposal of waste.

● In respect of children's education the most dramatic results were seen in Uganda. Government schools fed by REFLECT parents have experienced

a 22% increase in enrolment; and parents in over one-third of the REFLECT classes have started their own NFE centre for primary age children. A more modest increase in school attendance was registered in the other pilots.

5.4 The REFLECT approach proved to be low cost and cost effective in Bangladesh (£12 per learner) and Uganda (£11 per learner), in both cases cheaper than an equivalent primer-based programme. In El Salvador, the only pilot programme to use volunteer teachers, the costs were surprisingly higher (£34 per learner) owing to the small scale of the programme in a country where costs are high. In a REFLECT programme resources are shifted from printing to training, which makes the REFLECT approach generally cheaper than a primer-based approach at a time of high printing costs.

5.5 A process of methodological learning has taken place

through the pilot programmes so that the REFLECT approach is now stronger. Certain core recommendations are made. For example: facilitators should normally have at least 6th grade primary education in order to teach other adults; visual cards should be made much more simple than in the pilots; a broad range of approaches to reading and writing integrated with the graphics should be stressed (avoiding the use of key words throughout) and training for facilitators should be ongoing. Most of these observations are relevant to making any adult literacy programme effective. The essence of the REFLECT method has been compiled into a REFLECT Mother Manual available from ACTIONAID.

5.6 Literacy does not empower people. The control groups showed very few signs of having changed peoples lives. It seems that many of the past claims about the benefits of literacy are bogus. Literacy in itself probably does not empower and does not bring benefits in respect of health, productivity or population growth.

However, this is not to say that literacy can never bring huge benefits. This research has shown that the REFLECT methodology has brought quite dramatic benefits in the three pilot projects. This appears to be because the REFLECT approach involves two parallel and interweaving processes: a literacy process and an empowering process. The literacy gives people practical skills which will help in the empowerment process (eg as they assume positions of responsibility in community organisations) and the empowerment process in turn creates uses for literacy in people's everyday lives. This mutual consolidation and reinforcement is the essence of why it makes sense to fuse the two processes. Literacy programmes, then, can be very empowering if the literacy process is interwoven with other processes through a well structured participatory methodology.

Literacy programmes in the past (especially since Freire) have tried to fuse the two processes and some have

succeeded, with remarkable results. However, most have failed because they have fallen into believing that either literacy in itself is sufficient (so they have ignored other processes and focused on the product) or they have assumed that empowerment in itself is enough (but have in practice tried to *"indoctrinate"* people into new ideologies). REFLECT holds these two processes in an effective balance and helps them to build on each other.

5.7 There are many unanswered questions that remain. How flexible will the REFLECT approach prove to be? Will it work in urban areas, with refugees, with adolescents, within a government programme? Will it work on a large scale or will the participatory essence be lost? Will people who have learnt in the original pilots retain their skills in the longer term? Three things are needed:

- ongoing evaluation of the original pilot programmes and of new REFLECT experiences;

● a capacity to train others and promote best practice so that methodological learning is continuous.

● the continual experimentation and scaling up of the approach in different contexts.

ACTIONAID is planning to address all three of these in the coming three years.

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6. A dialogue on reflect with critics

Rather than write a conventional set of conclusions we felt it might be better to anticipate some of the questions that arise from this report (and which have arisen when we have shared REFLECT with people in various international workshops) and to offer some initial responses to them. The answers do not aim to be comprehensive as space will not permit this. However, they give some indication of how responses might be framed. The questions that have arisen include:

- Aren't there many other participatory approaches to adult literacy? Is there really anything new about REFLECT?

- Doesn't REFLECT require highly trained experts?

- There have been many examples of successful literacy campaigns - the history of literacy is not a catalogue of disasters - look at Nicaragua, Cuba, Vietnam, etc.

● Can REFLECT be adapted to different settings?

    * urban areas
    * adolescents/ children's education.

● Is it feasible to apply REFLECT on a large scale/ at a national level?

● Does REFLECT add anything to current theoretical debates on literacy? Is it an autonomous or ideological approach?

● REFLECT seems to involve initial intervention with literacy but isn't it better to link literacy to other projects so literacy come second not first?

● Could REFLECT survive outside the umbrella of an international NGO?

● Won't the REFLECT approach suffer the same distortions as have occurred with so many other good innovations?

● Isn't primary education a bigger priority when resources are scarce?

● Can REFLECT (or any other literacy programme) assist people to challenge the power structures which cause poverty?

● Can you really make claims about REFLECT based just on three pilot programmes?

● What do Freire and Chambers think of all this?

● What happens next?

● What are the areas for further research?

There is nothing so new about REFLECT. Aren't there many other innovative and participatory approaches to adult literacy?

There are indeed many other participatory approaches to literacy which have been developed as small scale pilots or experiments over the years. Most have depended on highly innovative and creative individuals who have motivated and inspired others. Most people involved in such projects will readily acknowledge that promoting such participatory approaches is extremely hard work and requires highly skilled workers who are flexible (and can work in a largely unstructured environment) and ready to adapt to changing demands.

In general participatory approaches and methodologies are seen to be in contrast or opposition to structured, vertical or pre-packaged approaches. This is rightly so in most cases. However, the lack of structure in most participatory

methodologies makes them highly dependent on individual leadership or creativity - which in turn makes them extremely hard to replicate in areas where such individuals cannot be found.

What REFLECT appears to offer is a structured participatory approach. The manuals produced in each project provide a very clearly defined set of steps. There is a sequence of 20 or 30 Units and within each Unit clear steps on how to elaborate the map or matrix and how to use it for literacy and numeracy work. This is not the same as structuring or pre-packaging the content, rather it is a structure to the process. In REFLECT training we have said we want the facilitators to dominate the process or the method - but not the content.

Once this structure has been provided it is possible for learners or facilitators to break out of it at their own pace - so that some circles will re-sequence the Units, others may spend more time on numeracy than literacy, others may

decide to ignore certain Units and go on to others. Groups of local facilitators can work on developing new Units or adapting Units that are in the manual. However the initial manual is sufficiently structured to be something that can be used by facilitators who are not highly trained exceptional individuals - but rather are the type of person available in most communities. There are many things to be learnt from other

participatory methodologies. The REFLECT Mother Manual has tried to draw on some of these and weave them into the wider REFLECT approach. For example, the use of local songs, proverbs and traditional dance as a starting point for literacy (cf LABE in Uganda) offers some exciting possibilities - effectively using people's own existing cultural codes as an entry point into literacy. The use of *"real materials"* from the local environment (brought in by the learners) is another approach. Role plays or drama can also be introduced and there are hundreds of *"games"* (or *"dinamicas"* in Latin

America) for warming up which can be used within literacy circles.

All of these other approaches are compatible with REFLECT. It is not a competition. We are seeking to bring together best practice in participatory approaches and to provide these with a core structure around the construction of graphics (and the basic belief in learner generated materials). REFLECT is still incomplete. It is still evolving and will go in different directions in different contexts. It is not pre-packaged. It is not a matter of adopting it but adapting it.

Doesn't REFLECT require highly trained experts to be successful?

The literacy facilitators in each of the three pilots were local people and had the same profile as the facilitators in the control groups. Their education level on average ranged from 6th grade primary (in El Salvador) to fourth grade secondary

(in Bangladesh). This is the typical education range of facilitators in most primer-based programmes. Facilitators with less initial education (eg those with just three years of primary education in El Salvador) did have difficulty with REFLECT but would almost certainly struggle with any method (their problems were largely related to their own difficulties in reading and writing).

The facilitators in the three pilots received two weeks initial training at the most. They do not therefore qualify as *"highly trained experts".* There was a strong emphasis placed on ongoing training through exchange workshops with other facilitators but this should be regarded as good practice in any literacy programme. No amount of initial training is a substitute for ongoing training once facilitators have field experience.

There have been many examples of successful literacy campaigns - the history of literacy is not a catalogue of

disasters -look at Nicaragua, Cuba, Vietnam etc.

There is no doubt that there have been successful literacy campaigns but these are the exception rather than the rule and where they have worked has tended to be at very specific historical moments - particularly after a revolution. When other processes of radical social change are taking place then literacy can become of interest and practical use to many people. In such a context the acquisition of literacy can be rapid if there is a massive national mobilisation (eg in Nicaragua where secondary schools were suspended for the five months of the Literacy Crusade). In these cases, any literacy methodology might work, because it is the political context that is decisive.

Most countries do not have many such *"historical moments" where* suddenly literacy can become the focus of high profile mobilisation linked to wider social change touching everyone's lives. Should we wait for such moments or should we

perhaps try to create such moments on a local scale? Moments where people, at the village level see a real opportunity to change their lives and where, in the process of learning, people organise and engage in actions which will contribute to change? If we wish to create such *"moments", a* primer-based methodology seems inadequate, whereas the REFLECT approach offers some positive hope.

Can REFLECT be adapted to different settings:

Urban areas

The feasibility of adapting REFLECT to urban areas was addressed in a workshop in Uganda with some fascinating and detailed results. It is a particular challenge because of the origin of many of the techniques in Participatory Rural Appraisal. However, many Units can be designed either for work in neighbourhood -based urban programmes or in employment based/ sectoral-based programmes (eg with

prostitutes/ street traders etc).

Neighbourhood programmes can be designed in many cases with maps of households, human resource maps, mobility maps (identifying sources of employment and location of services), seasonal migration maps, historical maps, health and hygiene maps, land-ownership and tenancy maps, income and expenditure trees, credit matrices, preference ranking of employment, calendars of price changes, calendars of work-availability (perhaps over 5 years), neighbourhood timelines, gender workloads, venn diagrams of government and non-governmental agencies or of informal power structures in the neighbourhood, matrices analysing different types of crime or vice, calendars of cultural celebrations etc.

The list of possible Units for a REFLECT programme in urban areas could go on and on. However, there is a need to develop these Units in practice in new pilot programmes to

see how they really work and identify problems which may be specific to working with REFLECT in urban areas. The REFLECT Mother Manual has a section on adapting REFLECT to urban areas.

Adolescents / children's education.

Much work has been done by ACTIONAID Nepal on adapting Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques for work with children (see *"Listening to Smaller Voices"* 1994). This establishes a strong foundation for adapting REFLECT to work with children. A curriculum based on REFLECT for work with children is being developed in Uganda and looks very promising. It is hoped to consolidate this into a *"Daughter Manual" at* some point in the future. The REFLECT Mother Manual has a section devoted to adapting the method to work with children.

Is it feasible to apply REFLECT on a large scale /

national level?

Yes it should be feasible because although it is a very
participatory approach it is also a highly structured approach.
It would be necessary to develop either a series of manuals
adapted to different parts of a country or a modular manual
which had certain core Units and then a series of choices
which could be made by local teams. Decentralisation in the
administration of national literacy programmes is already
widely acknowledged as important (see Iredale 1994,
Uganda Review 1995) and this would be very consistent with
such an approach. Moreover, national programmes such as
that in India are emphasising inter-agency cooperation at the
local level and that is certainly very compatible with
REFLECT. However, until REFLECT is taken up on a larger
scale some of the potential problems (and advantages) will
not be fully known.

Nilufer Rahman, Director of INFEP (government of

Bangladesh) and Habibur Rahman of CAMPE (NGO education network) did not anticipate a problem: *"REFLECT will receive massive attention. With the pilot having been successful REFLECT will work as a paradigm not only in Bangladesh but in the whole Asia-Pacific region... The REFLECT programme will receive support as an effective instrument of mass literacy."*

Does REFLECT add anything to current theoretical debates on literacy?

Is REFLECT an autonomous/ ideological approach?

REFLECT could be regarded as a methodology for the ideological approach in various respects:

- as all materials are learner generated there is more scope for participants to define the functions of literacy than if they are reading pre-packaged

materials. A literate environment created from below (eg with village level silk screen printing) might reinforce this.

● REFLECT does not claim magical powers for literacy and indeed suggests that literacy in itself is nothing - but rather emphasises the wider processes involved. Literacy is not seen as the thing which leads to logical analytical thinking (Goody 1986) or as the only real knowledge. Rather the process of learning can be transformative. Some of the visualisation techniques involved with REFLECT may be of practical value for systematising and analysing knowledge within a group but this is quite different from suggesting that literacy itself transforms people.

REFLECT seems to involve an initial intervention with literacy but is it not better to link literacy to other

projects (eg income generation)? Literacy should come second not first.

This is a false debate. There are development processes constantly happening in any community and so literacy (if learners are motivated to join) will always be related (in their lives) to other processes. Those who argue for *"literacy comes second"* seem to assume that only western inspired external interventions in a community are a development process on which literacy can then be inserted. This is an outsiders view and can be condescending. The key is for the literacy programme to respond to local conditions and the local reality. The methodology is thus essential.

As long as people are not coerced and the literacy programme does not try to pre-define the uses of literacy then the first/second debate is redundant. Besides, a broad motivation to learn is a stronger foundation in many respects than something linked to one activity. There are risks in trying

to link literacy programmes to other externally induced development programmes eg income generation -as people need very little literacy for any specific activity and so there is very limited scope. Literacy needs to be looked at more generally - as something which can have an impact in various areas of someone's life. People's motivations are complex and it is naive to assume that they will want to learn only to help them in one particular activity.

Lind and Johnston (1990) identify another core problem:

"The promotion of literacy linked to income-generating projects, among women in particular, is very common today. However, most such projects do not generate income due to underfunding and underqualified staff."

It is possible to use REFLECT in a "literacy comes second" model. The Bangladesh pilot was very much of this model, working with women previously organised into shomitis. It

would also be possible to work with pre-existing informal or semi-formal groups within a community (see the work of LABE in Uganda with cultural groups). The debate should be focussed on how literacy is introduced and conceived rather than on whether it comes first or second.

Could REFLECT survive outside the umbrella of an international NGO?

Yes. No special support was given to these three REFLECT pilots. Initial training was of short duration. The conditions were the same as in the control groups (which were also under the umbrella) where the results were very different. As a low cost approach (see cost effectiveness section) REFLECT should be feasible in a government programme (one is presently planned within the government's NFE programme in Bangladesh) and with local grassroots organisations (eg COMUS in Salvador where ACTIONAID's input was very minimal).

Won't the REFLECT approach suffer from the same distortions as have occurred to so many other good innovations?

Any methodology can be distorted and we have seen some examples of how this might happen in the pilot programmes (particularly in El Salvador). This needs to be guarded against. The REFLECT Mother Manual which has been prepared will be one means of communicating the essential elements of the method, but if there is no will to engage in a participatory process and empower people then the methodology will be distorted in one way or another (and probably in ways which we cannot anticipate).

What REFLECT offers is an effective approach for those who are committed to the fundamental principles behind it: for example that poor communities have knowledge and that development programmes which aim to empower them must be built on that knowledge.

Isn't primary education a bigger priority when resources are scarce?

Investing only in primary education at a time of widespread adult literacy is problematic. Parents are the ones who have to decide whether to send children to school (and often have to pay for their children's education) so they cannot be ignored. Literate adults are a key to a literate environment at home and in the wider community and can be a good guarantor of the quality and accountability of primary schools (through PTAs and school management committees). Investment in adult literacy programmes may therefore enhance the effectiveness of children's education (see section on Children's Education in Uganda). The debate should not be posed in terms of *"either/or"*. An integrated or *"inter-generational"* approach should be pursued - so that adult literacy and children's education are mutually reinforcing.

Can REFLECT (or any other literacy programme) assist people to challenge the power structures which cause poverty or does it just help to alleviate the worst effects?

No methodology is the answer to everything. Much depends on context. REFLECT could be used as a means to mildly improve the lot of the poor or to challenge overall power structures. It all depends

on who is using the method and in what context. Alone it is never going to be enough to change power structures but is could act as a catalyst for people taking control of their lives and the agenda of local development. This is a strong foundation for radical change. However, a REFLECT programme may lead to frustration in some places if it is not backed up.

The evaluators in Bangladesh noted:

"The REFLECT method is not appropriate for learners at all socio-economic levels since this approach is basically designed for the disadvantaged people of society. Social consciousness created through this programme may not be acceptable to influential people. The situation could be combated through creating peoples organisations."

(Nilufer Rahman, INFEP; Habibur Rahman, CAMPE)

Can you really make large claims about REFLECT based just on three pilot programmes?

The pilots were in very diverse settings so something larger can be intimated. This is enough to warrant wider scale experimentation with REFLECT but it is certainly the case that close monitoring and evaluation of future projects is required to see whether the REFLECT approach does adapt well to different settings.

What do Freire and Chambers think of all this?

The REFLECT approach has been welcomed by both Paulo Freire and Robert Chambers. Freire commented: *"This is exactly what I sought to do - but you give it more structure and stronger roots. The literacy process will be based on people's own experience, their language and their reality - so that the transition from reading the world to reading the word wilt be more organic and clearer. This is very exciting work."* He later added: *"Please feel free to use my name in the title of the new approach to literacy"*

Robert Chambers commented: *"I have read your manual with fascination and excitement. My own experiences with adult literacy programmes have been uniformly negative, and at last here is an approach which looks credible in terms of maintaining interest and commitment."*

What Happens Next?

The three pilot programmes were always conceived as starting points rather than end points. It was assumed that if they were effective they would be a source of learning and could influence other literacy programmes both in their countries and internationally. This has been the case. Other literacy practitioners came to hear of the REFLECT pilots through Education Action magazine, field visits and various journals, seminars and conferences. In November 1994, it became clear that a seminar that was designed as an internal workshop between the three pilot programmes would have to be opened up and 80 participants came from eight countries. By July 1995, when a final exchange seminar was planned the event in Uganda attracted 130 participants from 19 countries. Many of these people are now planning their own REFLECT programmes.

Interest has been shown in REFLECT by most major players

in adult literacy, including the International Council of Adult Education (and sister organisations ASPBAE, AALAE and CEAAL), UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank.

The World Bank Review of Education *"Priorities and Strategies for Education"* which was published in August 1995 focuses on children's education but acknowledges that the six key reforms identified *"will not however, contribute significantly to solving the problem of adult illiteracy today, in a world with more than 900 million illiterates. Programs of adult education are necessary, but such programmes have a poor track record. One study showed an effectiveness rate of just 13 percent for adult literacy campaigns conducted over the past thirty years (Abadzi 1994), and there has been little research into the benefits and costs of literacy programmes.*

"Several new approaches to adult literacy appear promising

however, in large part because they address motivation - the key factor in all successful programmes.

"In the REFLECT program, being developed with the help of the NGO ACTIONAID in Bangladesh, El Salvador and Uganda, poor communities are encouraged to construct maps, calendars, matrices and diagrams based on their local circumstances and are helped to analyse and systematise their knowledge. The alphabet and literacy then become a more elaborate way of representing this local knowledge and literacy is linked much more tightly to other aspects of development in the local area. These new approaches will be reviewed in detail in a future World Bank paper."

There are now plans to develop Regional REFLECT Training Centres in at least six countries (in Bangladesh, Uganda, and perhaps in El Salvador, Ghana, Burundi, India, the Yemen,

Peru). These centres will offer training to other NGOs and government literacy programmes in their own country and in neighbouring countries.

The scaling up process is most advanced in Bangladesh (with ODA funding), involving a training centre on Bhola Island offering extended training courses to NGOs and government personnel committed to replicating REFLECT. In the capital, Dhaka, a REFLECT Coordination Unit will identify suitable partners and provide funding and support to selected organisations for the replication of REFLECT. Shorter training courses (and issue based/ refresher courses) will be run. The exchange of experiences will be promoted through a regular newsletter as well as through workshops, evaluations and field visits. Specific research will be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of REFLECT in new contexts (eg in urban areas, within the government programme, with volunteers, with fishing communities etc) and this will be widely disseminated.

Other countries where REFLECT initiatives are underway or planned include: Ghana, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Kenya, Malawi, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sudan, The Lebanon, Egypt, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru and Ecuador. An International REFLECT Unit is being established within ACTIONAID in the UK. This will ensure a continual flow of documentation and experiences between countries and continents; undertake cross-country research programmes; provide an international training resource; publish materials on REFLECT and liaise with other agencies.

What are the areas for further research?

There are several areas for further research on REFLECT. These can broadly be divided into two areas: continued longitudinal research of the initial pilot projects and research relating to new projects taking up REFLECT in different contexts.

Longitudinal studies of impact

The time frame of the action research project presented here was short (two years). There is a need to continue close monitoring and evaluation of these pilot projects to determine the longer term impact.

Such studies would consider the extent to which the literacy and numeracy skills of REFLECT participants have been retained or consolidated. If the skills are retained, how are they being used? What functions have been defined locally for literacy?

Longitudinal research would also consider the extent to which the empowerment of participants identified in this report is sustained. The initial impact of the REFLECT circles on community participation, local action or gender roles may decline for a number of reasons (eg backlash, resistance, frustration, exhaustion). It may, on the other hand be

maintained. Determining which conditions or factors are conducive to sustaining change will be important.

Related to the above work would be a study of alternative strategies for the post-literacy phase. What approaches to creating a more literate environment have been most effective? Which strategies are most consistent with using the REFLECT approach at the initial phase? To what extent can the same methods be incorporated into a post-literacy course?

REFLECT in New Contexts

REFLECT is now being taken up in many different countries by many different organisations (see *"What Happens Next?").* This opens up new areas for research. Establishing a strong international network of REFLECT practitioners will facilitate ongoing research on the relevance and effectiveness of REFLECT in new contexts.

Areas which offer immediate possibilities for research include:

- To what extent can REFLECT adapt to urban areas, having emerged from the use of Participatory **Rural** Appraisal techniques? Does the lack of close-knit community and shared experience in many urban contexts limit the value of the approach?

- Can REFLECT work with children/ adolescents (within formal schools/ non-formal education centres)? If so, how does it need to be adapted? Which elements work most effectively?

- Will the REFLECT approach be feasible within a government literacy programme (even on a pilot basis) where the structures involved may allow for less flexibility?

● Can REFLECT work on a large scale (either in a government or NGO programme)? Will facilitators' manuals end up with such generalised Units as to reduce participation and lose essential relevance to the participants lives (in the same way as has happened to primers?).

● Can REFLECT work effectively in the North (eg in the UK)? If so, in what contexts and how does it need to be adjusted?

● What adjustments to the REFLECT approach would be needed if working in an ideographic language like Chinese (where characters represent the meaning rather than the sound of words)?

● Can REFLECT be adapted to a wide range of different communities, such as pastoralists, fishing communities or refugees?

In each of these cases specific research projects could be framed which compare REFLECT to control groups using existing literacy methods/ materials to determine which approach proves more effective (and more cost-effective). It is likely that some work on all the above will be undertaken over the next three years.

As REFLECT is taken up in different settings the process of scaling up itself could become an area for research. Which approaches to replicating REFLECT prove successful and which do not? Is a Mother Manual sufficient for people to produce their own materials or are intensive training programmes essential? Is it better to scale up through NGOs, through governmental programmes, through the private sector or through a combination of these?

How can we find out more about REFLECT?

The main source of practical information on REFLECT is the

"REFLECT Mother Manual" (published by ACTIONAID UK, March 1996). This manual aims to enable literacy planners to produce their own REFLECT manuals adapted to their own local conditions in different countries. It is practical, easy to use and available free of charge to organisations in the South (£10/$20 for organisations in the North) whilst stocks last.

Ongoing information about the development of REFLECT internationally can be obtained from:

David Archer or Sara Cottingham at: ACTIONAID, Hamlyn House, MacDonald Road, Archway, London N19 5PG.
Tel: 0171 281 4101 Fax 0171 263 7599
E-mail: davida@actionaid.org.uk
or
sarac@actionaid.org.uk

Information about the training centres in Uganda and Bangladesh can be found out from:

ACTIONAID Uganda c/o Anthony Wasswa / James Kanyesigye, PO Box 676, Kampala, Uganda Tel/Fax: 256 41 267738

ACTIONAID Bangladesh c/o Ton van Zutphen/ Mukul Rahman, House 9/4, Street 2, Shyamoli, Dhaka 1207 Tel: 880 2 811763 Fax: 8802813150

Further information on REFLECT is also available from the national ACTIONAID offices or partners in Burundi, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru and Sierra Leone. Telephone or fax numbers and addresses can be obtained via AAUK.

Other materials that are available include:

Uganda Workshop report - August 1995 Country by Country evaluations -1995

Bangladesh Workshop report - Nov 1994 (also in Spanish)

Original REFLECT manuals from the three pilot projects (1993/4)

Briefing Notes

Using PRA for Adult Literacy - article in PLA Notes (June 1995)

Various conference papers and presentations

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Acronyms

AA - ACTIONAID **AAB -** ACTIONAID BANGLADESH

AAES - AYUDA EN ACCION (ACTIONAID) EL SALVADOR

AALAE - AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION

AAU - ACTIONAID UGANDA

AAUK - ACTIONAID UNITED KINGDOM

ARENA - NATIONAL REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION (EL SALVADOR PARTY)

ASPBAE - ASIA AND SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU OF ADULT EDUCATION

CAMPE - CAMPAIGN FOR MASS POPULAR EDUCATION (BANGLADESH)

CEAAL - CONESEJO DE EDUCACION DE ADULTOS DE AMERICA LATINA

CIAZO - CORPORACION INTER-GREMIAL DE ALFABETIZACION DE LA ZONA ORIENTE

COMUS - COMUNIDADES UNIDAS DE USULUTAN

FIVDB - FRIENDS IN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BANGLADESH

FMLN - FRENTE FARABUNDI MARTI DE LIBERACION NACIONAL

ICAE - INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADULT EDUCATION

IG - INCOME GENERATION

INFEP - NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME (GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH)

LABE - LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION (UGANDAN NGO)

NFE - NON FORMAL EDUCATION

NGO - NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

NRM - NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (UGANDA)

ODA - OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (UK)

PDC - PARTIDO DEMOCRATO CRISTANO

PRA - PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL

PTA - PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

RC1 RC2 - RESISTANCE COUNCIL (LEVEL 1 = VILLAGE/ 2 = PARISH ETC); ELECTED LOCAL AUTHORITY IN UGANDA

REFLECT - REGENERATED FREIREAN LITERACY THROUGH EMPOWERING COMMUNITY TECHNIQUES

SHOMITI - SAVINGS AND CREDIT GROUP. BANGLADESH

UNESCO - UNITED NATIONAL EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION

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Overseas Development Administration - Education papers

Acknowledgements

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