SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Master Thesis: MSc in Management of Development

By

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Social inclusion through non-formal education

Assessing the contribution of a non-formal education programme towards social inclusion of rural illiterate young adults in the Plateau central region of Burkina Faso

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Dedication

To my family, Adeline, Romaine, Patricia for the unconditional support. Special regards to my mother for serving as a light for me and building the person I am today…

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List of acronyms

Acronyms	Meaning
CR	Community Representative
CVD	Conseiller Villageois de Développement (Village Development Counsellor)
FGD	Focus group discussion
FONAENF	Fonds pour l'Alphabétisation et l'Education Non Formelle (Funds for literacy and non-formal education)
FTS	Formation en Technique Spécifique (Training in Specific Techniques)
INSD	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie (National Institute of Statistics and Demography)
KI	Key Informant
MENA	Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation (Ministry of National Education and Literacy)
MESRSI	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation (Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation)
MJFIP	Ministère de la Jeunesse, de la Formation et de l'Insertion Professionnelle (Ministry of Youth, Training and Professional Insertion)
NFE	Non-formal education
PSE/BF	Politique Sectorielle de l'Education du Burkina Faso (Education Sector Policy of Burkina Faso)
PSEF	Plan Sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation (Sector Plan on Education and Training)
RGPH	Recensement Général de Population et de l'Habitat (General Population and Housing Census)
SSI	Semi-structured interview

Abstract

Non-formal education (NFE) has emerged as an integral dimension of the education system in Burkina Faso, and one of the key priorities in development strategies since the adoption in 2007 of the Law on Education Orientation. The education system is characterised par significant disparities between urban areas and rural areas where 75% of men and women aged 15 and above are illiterate (INSD, 2022). Rural illiterate young adults (men and women), are confronted to social exclusion exacerbated by a combination of factors related to their illiteracy, their age, their gender and the location they live in. NFE is primarily intended for rural communities in Burkina Faso, and the programme intends to be a tool towards the inclusion of rural illiterate young adults.

The objective of this research was to gain insights about the contribution of NFE programme towards social inclusion of rural illiterate young adults. The research was based on a qualitative approach and engaged a diverse range of participants. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 25 men and women as participants of a NFE programme (primary respondents), along with key informants interviews with community representatives, trainers, and a young man and woman who dropped out from NFE. Also, Focus group discussions were held with non-NFE participants and NFE participants.

Social inclusion is defined in this research as a "process that provides people at risk of poverty and social exclusion with the opportunities and resources needed to complete their participation in economic, social and cultural life" (Benkova & Mareva, 2019). The research found that social exclusion was experienced by individuals as a state of dependency, low self-esteem, inability to access services and opportunities, or lack of participation in social and economic life of their community. The research found that participants gained an increased level of self-confidence, communication skills and technical skills. This correlatively supported them to improve on their participation in decision-making processes and in the socio-economic life at community level. Still, gender differences were noticed with regards to the outcomes of NFE, and it appeared that the content and duration of the training did not always match with participants' needs, availability or expectations. As such, recommendations to take into account the complexity of social inclusion, and gender differences, are formulated to programmes managers and policy-makers, to adapt trainings content and ensure beneficiaries participation.

Chapter I: Introduction

This document is a research report written as partial fulfilment for the Master's degree of Applied Sciences in Management of Development, with a concentration on Social inclusion, Gender and Youth, at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences. The research has been commissioned by Kabeela, a local NGO in Burkina Faso, which aims to investigate on the contribution of its non-formal education (NFE) programme towards social inclusion of rural illiterate young adults in its area of intervention.

The current introductory chapter provides an overview of the country, the research background, problem owner, problem statement, research objective and research questions.

I.1: Overview of Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso, meaning land of upright people, is a landlocked country located in the heart of West-Africa. Burkina Faso, according to data from the General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) realised by the National Institute of Statistics and Demography (INSD) in 2019, has a total population of over 20 million people among which women represent 51.7% of the total population (INSD, 2020). The majority of the population lives in rural areas as it is estimated that the rural population accounts for 69% of the total population (World Bank, 2020), and the population of the country is mainly comprised of young people. Indeed, 77.9% of the total population is under 35 years old, the age range 15-34 representing 32.6%, the active population (15-64) 51.3%; and only 3.4% of the population is aged 65 and above (INSD, 2020). According to statistics from the International Labour Organisation (2022), the unemployment rate in Burkina Faso is 4.7% with a larger unemployment rate for youth aged 15-24 (8.4% for women and 8.9% for men). Since 2015, the country has been dealing with a security crisis characterised par communal violence and attacks from armed groups which led to nearly two millions of displaced persons, and more than four thousand schools closed due the crisis (UNICEF, 2022).

I.2: Research background

From low literacy rates to education reform

At the independence of the country in 1960, the schooling rate of children aged 7-14 was 6.5% which led the government into different policies with the goal of increasing the indicators of education (Ministère de l'éducation, 2013). There has been major improvements since then, though the education system in Burkina Faso still have lower literacy rates compared to the average in Sub-Saharan Africa which has an average literacy rate of 77% for youth aged 15-24 (World Bank, 2020). In fact, the country has a literacy rate of 39% for people aged 15 and above, 54.5% for women aged 15-24 and 63.9% for men aged 15-24 (UNESCO Institute for statistics, 2022). The literacy rate in rural areas is significantly lower than urban areas, as only 25% of people aged 15 and above are literate in rural areas against 65% in urban areas (INSD, 2022).

In 2007, the National Assembly adopted the Law on Education Orientation to set the reform for the education system in Burkina Faso. This law organized the education system into four categories comprising the formal education, the non-formal education, the informal education, and the specialised education (Assemblée Nationale, 2007). Under article 3 of the law, education is a national priority and every citizen without discrimination is entitled to the right to education on the basis of equity and equality. This law introduced a principle of compulsory schooling from 6 to 16 years old.

Also, under the provisions of the law, in order to tackle illiteracy of young adults above 15 years old who didn't get the chance to attend school or dropped out from school, NFE should contribute to make them gain literacy skills, specific trainings and contribute in local development. Following this education act, several policies were adopted to improve the schooling and literacy rates in Burkina.

Current main education policies

One of the most recent policies on education is the Education Sector Policy of Burkina Faso (PSE/BF) 2014-2023 adopted by the Ministry of education in 2013, after the Education reform Law of 2007. The policy intends to be a unifying framework taking into account the development strategies adopted by the government, as well as the existing sub-sector education policies across the different departments of the government. This policy was adopted to meet an "Education for All" goal, to align with the Millennium Development Goals, and aims to ensure the rights of all citizens to an inclusive education system, by developing access to formal education and NFE (Ministère de l'éducation, 2013).

Subsequently, the government adopted in 2017 an interdepartmental Sector Plan on Education and Training (PSEF) 2017-2030 to revise and adapt its education policies with the UN Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015. This plan was jointly elaborated by the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation (MESRSI), the Ministry of National Education and Literacy (MENA), and the Ministry of Youth, Training and Professional Insertion (MJFIP). The plan sets the vision of "a democratic, efficient, inclusive and open-to-the world education system, developing the necessary and sufficient skills and expertise for the socio-economic development of Burkina Faso" (MESRSI, MENA, and MJFIP, 2017).

Despite, the different policies on education, disparities in access to education still exist as the majority of young adults aged 15 and above still remain out of the education system and the disparities are accentuated for rural youth. Yet, the country ratified international conventions on human rights, among which the African Youth Charter. This Charter for instance notes that African Youth (people aged 15-35) are marginalised from mainstream society, and calls upon member parties to make available multiple forms of education including NFE for literacy and skills development of young people (African Youth Charter, article 13). In this situation, NFE has appeared to be an alternative chance to illiterate young people, particularly in rural areas for their social inclusion and participation in socio-economic development of their communities (Ouedraogo, 2018).

Main Actors of non-formal education

For the implementation of NFE policies, the government has entitled the FONAENF (Funds for literacy and non-formal education) as the instrument for implementing the government's policy on literacy and NFE (FONAENF, 2019). To make the programme accessible to rural communities who are the most illiterate, the NFE programmes (trainings) are funded through the FONAENF but are implemented by NGOs and local associations called NFE operators, who provide trainings to illiterate young adults. In this scheme, local communities through their representatives are responsible for identifying trainings needs as well as identifying the target men and women for NFE trainings. Public structures at government level (Ministry of National Education and Literacy and representative bodies in regions and provinces) and municipalities are responsible for the policies and to provide resources to FONAENF for the operationalisation of its mission (FOANENF, 2019).

Presentation of research commissioner

Kabeela, the commissioner of the research and problem owner, is a local non-governmental and a community-based organisation founded in 1997. Kabeela means "Grains of millet", a symbolic reference to millets crops which have a significant importance in rural livelihoods in Burkina Faso. The organisation intends to provide vital support to communities to generate opportunities for them to live in dignity; and operates primarily in the Plateau-Central Region of Burkina Faso. The office of Kabeela is located in Guiloungou, a district in the municipality of Ziniaré (The Capital City of the Plateau Central Region in Burkina Faso), at 35 Km from the Country Capital, Ouagadougou.

The vision of the organisation is "a world where human being is at the centre of major concerns in order to achieve sustainable and equitable development for all". The mission of Kabeela is to "contribute to human and sustainable development so that the most vulnerable and marginalised populations generate opportunities to improve their living conditions".

Kabeela runs interventions mainly in rural and semi-urban areas, with a focus on women empowerment, gender equality and social inclusion of marginalised groups, nutrition, community-based health and education. Regarding the education aspect, Kabeela has been implementing a NFE programme for "vulnerable communities" by targeting illiterate rural adults to provide them with training in literacy, numeracy, as well as trainings in specific techniques (called FTS). This programme is implemented through a partnership with FONAENF, the agency funding NFE programmes in Burkina Faso.

I.3: Problem statement

The education system in Burkina Faso is subject to disparities and inequities related to area of residence, age and gender, which accounts for literacy rates significantly lower for rural young adults aged 15 and above (MESRSI, MENA, and MJFIP, 2017). In such a situation, the education system replicates inequalities and strengthens poverty and social exclusion. NFE aims to offer a perspective for targeting social exclusion (Baba-Moussa, 2020), and to offer rural young adults particularly, a way for developing skills for their inclusion in the socio-economic life of their communities.

In Burkina Faso, NFE programmes are mainly implemented by NGOs and community-based organisations, and the available data about these programmes are usually quantitative data pertaining to the number of trainees or the completion rates but don't put an emphasis on the actual contribution the programme towards social inclusion. It appears that there is generally a lack of "extensive research on social inclusion based on non-formal education" which brings the need to assess the experiences of NFE programmes (Benkova et al., 2020).

Therefore, there is a lack of knowledge about the contribution of NFE programmes on social inclusion. In order to better fulfil its mission to contribute towards social inclusion of young men and women, and to scale its NFE programmes, Kabeela needs to gain more knowledge about the contribution of NFE to social inclusion of illiterate young adults.

I.4: Research objective

The objective of the research was to gain insights about the contribution of NFE programme towards social inclusion of rural young adults, in order to formulate recommendations to Kabeela for enhancing interventions that meets the needs of rural young adults.

I.5: Research questions

The main research question was:

What is the contribution of non-formal education programme towards social inclusion of rural illiterate young adults?

The following sub-questions were addressed:

- What are the lived experiences of social exclusion from rural illiterate young adults?
- What is the contribution of NFE programme towards the trainings and skills needs of rural illiterate young adults?
- What is the effect of NFE programme towards socio-economic participation of rural illiterate young adults?
- What are the perceptions and expectations of social inclusion through NFE by rural illiterate young adults ?

Chapter II: Review of related literature and conceptual framework

This chapter provides a definition of key concepts and major subjects discussed by authors about NFE and social inclusion. It also presents the conceptual models on which research was based.

II.1: Definition of key concepts and terms

Non-formal education, formal education and informal education

The commonly accepted form of education happens in schools (formal education) and is widely considered as the normal way for teaching and learning (Benkova et al., 2020). Benkova et al. (2020) consider that the current understanding of formal education gives the idea that this model is the "real education space" as promoted by policies. However, education has always appeared to have different forms, essential part of education is actually realised out of school; and NFE is now viewed as complementary of the formal-education system. In this way, NFE programmes are increasingly developed in Southern countries to support youth development (Simac et al., 2021) and which could ultimately bring changes in social inclusion.

NFE takes various forms and is usually considered as a second chance for those who didn't get the opportunity to attend school or those who dropped out early from school. Non-formal (incidental) education is defined as an institutionalised process happening out of the formal education system, leading to qualifications recognised within a given institution or limited related institutions; however not leading to a change in the level of education (Denkowska et al., 2020). In developing countries, the NFE programmes include among others: inclusive education for excluded people, youth groups, knowledge and skills development in specific fields, literacy, numeracy and basic education for adults and youth out of school (Latchem, 2014). Latchem (2014) notes that some governments have specific departments, typically within Ministries of Education, which deal with NFE and adult education; and mostly NGOs are the ones providing NFE programmes through partnerships with governmental agencies. It can be an instrument for achieving the social inclusion of vulnerable groups (Benkova et al., 2020). NFE differs from informal education which, according to Denkowska et al. (2020), "takes place outside the main educational system and is a non-institutionalised, intentional (self-education) or unintentional process". In informal education, the responsibility of learning depends on individuals and the learning process is unconscious (Grajcevci & Shala, 2016).

In Burkina Faso, the Education orientation law adopted by the National Assembly in 2007 provides a framework for the education system and gives the scope for four different types of education (Assemblée Nationale, 2007); which also served as a reference for this research:

- *Formal education*: Formal education covers all educational and instructional activities that contribute to the acquisition of general, technical or scientific knowledge by learners. It consists of formal basic education, secondary education, higher education and vocational and technical training.
- *Special education*: Special education is provided by public or private structures recognized by the State in institutional or non-institutional settings. A decree shall provide for the organisation of special education.
- *Informal education*: Informal education is acquired in a fortuitous and diffuse manner, notably through channels such as the family unit, traditional and religious communities, the mass media or associative movements.
- *Non-formal education*: NFE is aimed at adolescents aged 9 to 15 who are not in school or who left school early, but also at young people and adults over 15 who are offered literacy programs or vocational trainings, organised in a non-school setting. The NFE of adults aims to reduce the

illiteracy rates, provide specific trainings, promote exchanges around development issues, support research and experimentation efforts for community development.

Social inclusion

Social inclusion can be defined as a process of ensuring conditions for equality and equal opportunities for vulnerable groups, people at risk of poverty and exclusion, in order to facilitate their full participation in the social and economic life of society (Benkova & Mareva, 2019). This process implies participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives and enjoyment of their basic human rights. In a similar way, social inclusion, according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, is the process of enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights of people who are disadvantaged in society due to age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). Social inclusion may also refer to a process encouraging social interaction between people with different socially relevant attributes or an impersonal institutional mechanism of opening up access to participation in all spheres of social life (Silver, 2015).

Social exclusion

Social exclusion is often considered as an opposite definition of social inclusion and vice versa. It refers to a situation in which people are unable to fully participate in economic, social, political, or cultural life, as well as the process that leads to and maintains such a situation (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). Social exclusion occurs when men and women or areas suffer from issues such as unemployment, low incomes, poor skills, low incomes, or poor housing (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). Social exclusion relates also to the experience of people. Indeed it is people's lived experiences of lack of opportunity, or the incapacity to take advantage of given options, which prevents their full participation in society (O'Donnell et al., 2021).

According to these definitions, social exclusion appears to not only be a process, a state, but also the experiences men and women considered at risk or vulnerable go through.

II.2: Factors and experiences of exclusion

The definitions of social exclusion often integrate the notion of vulnerability though it is assumed that anyone can be vulnerable at a certain moment due to life hazards or unexpected situations and circumstances (Pérez-Escolar & Canet, 2022). Still, the vulnerability conditions of socially excluded people or groups can be related to different reasons, social, physical, emotional, or intellectual. According to a study carried out by Pérez-Escolar & Canet (2022), gender, geographical location, age, poverty and education, and personal limitations are main factors of exclusion. Considering the age factor, the authors found that young adults and children are at higher risk of exclusion, and the same applies for the people living in a rural area, those lacking education or those being women. Regarding the different factors of exclusion, we also consider for the purpose of this research that the age dimension (young people aged above 15), the education factor (illiteracy) and also the location (rural area), all combine to create factors for the situation of social exclusion; which can also be experienced in different ways regarding the gender status of those illiterate young people, disability status, ethnic group or displacement status.

The experience of exclusion is usually related to the fact of not having access to resources citizens generally have the right to, not being able to participate in society, or the perception of being viewed in a different way by other members of the society (O'Donnell et al., 2021). O'Donnell et al. (2021), in their study on social exclusion, pointed out that participants related also their experience of exclusion to the fact of being excluded from access to basic services such as education, because such services are designed in a way that cannot meet their needs.

The gender aspect is important in addressing social exclusion as men and women experience differently exclusion. Indeed, the perception that a gender group is inferior to another may affect how this group is treated and how this group feel about their abilities (Hoff & Walsh, 2018). In rural areas particularly, where subsistence is based on agriculture, men have an advantage on women in access to resources and opportunities (Hoff & Walsh, 2018); and women roles and time budget is less valued not only by men but also by women themselves (Momsen, 2019).

II.3: Social inclusion and skills development opportunities through NFE

Social inclusion, on top of the dimension of participation of excluded people or people at risk of exclusion, also entails access to opportunities (and resources) for those people. O'Donnell et al. (2021), consider that opportunities are the basic needs that must be satisfied to emerge from social exclusion. These needs are also referred to as resources, and the authors have identified finance, education, and employment among the critical resources needed for excluded people to be socially included. Education is particularly seen as a resource which serves as a basis to acquire other resources (O'Donnell et al., 2021).

Within the European context, NFE through for the European voluntary service, is seen as an opportunity for young people to gain experience, to learn through experiences, acquire new language skills and increase their mobility (Norqvist & Leffler, 2017). Indeed, when targeting youth, NFE in Europe is commonly associated with youth work, and youth work programmes aim at building the skills and confidence required for overcoming social exclusion (Devlin et al., 2017).

In developing countries, the sustainable development goals have different implications for education and training, particularly for young adults who lack basic knowledge and skills to improve their conditions. In this situation, NFE in developing countries aims at building different skills, ranging from employment skills, to entrepreneurial, literacy, numeracy, civic or life skills for illiterate young adults (Latchem, 2018). In West Africa, Adjimon & Rakotondrazafy (2016) reported that under the leadership of NGOs, some NFE programmes have successfully targeted the skills development of illiterate young adults. These programmes deliver learning content that is adapted to the learners and integrate two dimensions: socializing and qualifying (Adjimon & Rakotondrazafy, 2016). NFE, also considered as alternative education, produced some positive outcomes in countries like South Sudan by enhancing the life skills and basic occupational skills of displaced persons and non-traditional learners (Rogers, 2019).

II.4: NFE contribution to youth participation

In the European youth sector, social inclusion is presented as an end goal of youth work and also as a means towards achieving young people self-accomplishment, acceptance and participation in the society (Devlin et al., 2017). In a study conducted in Germany on the effect of NFE on political participation, the authors found that adult NFE was likely to increase the socio-economic status of learners (Busse et al., 2019). And as the socio-economic status is a determinant of political participation, NFE therefore proves to be an opportunity for ensuring political participation. The authors found that this situation is induced by the skills adults managed to develop in NFE, which enables them to enjoy participation; however NFE has a bigger impact on adults with higher social class than the ones with less socio-economic status.

Besides, NFE is also seen as a driver of rural illiterate young adults' social, economic and political participation in Sub-Sahara Africa countries. This is the case for example in Nigeria, where NFE and adult literacy programmes have increased political participation of rural populations as well as

community participation (Olojede, 2013). Yet, for NFE to ensure socio-economic participation within communities, it appears that the way NFE programmes are run matters a lot. Indeed, according to Benkova et al. (2020), the introduction of "inclusive practices" in the implementation of NFE activities is a condition for achieving social inclusion. The authors stress on the fact that activities should ensure the full participation of the trainees regardless of their gender, age, ethnic group, social class; in the planning of activities and the learning process.

II. 5: Improvement of community roles, expectations and perceptions of social inclusion through NFE

The achievement of some social outcomes participates in the experience of a person feeling excluded to start feeling included. According to a study conducted in the Republic of Ireland on the understanding of social exclusion, O'Donnel et al. (2021), figured out that the ability of self-care, the feeling of acceptance and finally the experience of social participation are considered as the main signs of change, showing that excluded men and women are now enjoying social inclusion. On the level of self-care, the authors note that it refers to the ability of a person to make a living, to take care of himself or herself. Social acceptance and social participation relate to the perception of a person to feel valued and welcome in the society, to be effectively able to interact with other members of the community on an equal basis, participate in decision making processes, and raise their voices on issues that affect their lives. In this sense, Olejede (2013), argues that literacy and adult education programmes bring a perspective for social equality and community participation and give a sense of freedom and responsibility for the concerned ones.

II.6: Conceptual framework of social inclusion through NFE

The definition of social inclusion adopted for the purpose of this research is a "process that provides people at risk of poverty and social exclusion with the opportunities and resources needed to complete their participation in economic, social and cultural life" (Benkova & Mareva, 2019). Social exclusion in the other hand, is "the experience of lack of opportunity, or the inability to make use of available opportunities, thereby preventing full participation in society" (O'Donnell et al., 2021).

The research was based on two conceptual models. First, the research took into consideration aspects of the conceptual model of social exclusion developed by O'Donnell et al. (2021), where the individual needs an access to resources (education being one of them) in order to achieve outcomes of social inclusion (participation e.g.). Some factors like the life experiences of the individual may influence the process of leaving exclusion to inclusion.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of social exclusion
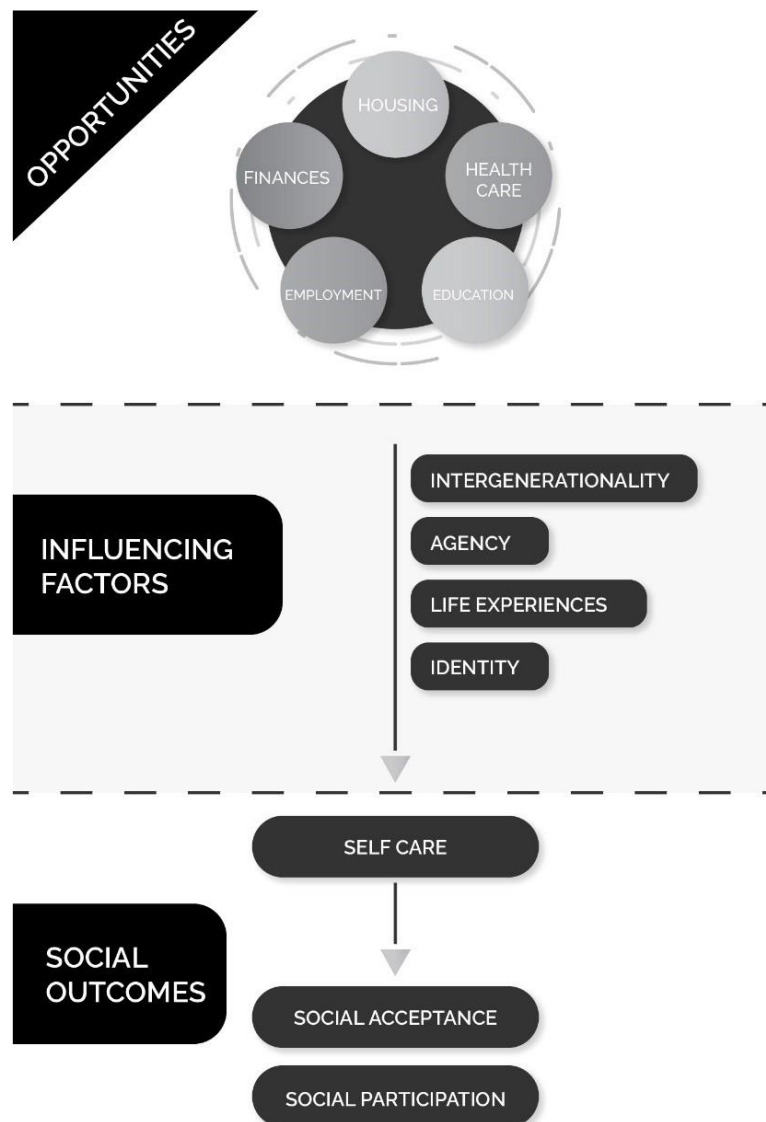
Source: O'Donnell et al. (2021)

At the top of this model, are the opportunities that need to be accessed for an individual to leave social exclusion. In the centre, stand the factors that influence the individual as they move from exclusion to inclusion. At the bottom, the outcomes that result from the opportunities, being moderated by the influencing factors. The indicators of social participation and social acceptance (in social outcomes), as well as life experiences (the researcher assumes for his research that identity and agency are part of life experiences), and education opportunities are considered in this research. Other aspects of the framework are beyond the scope of this research.

The second model on which the research was based, is the Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion (GYSI) analysis framework developed by EngenderHealth (2021):

Figure 2: Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion (GYSI) analysis framework
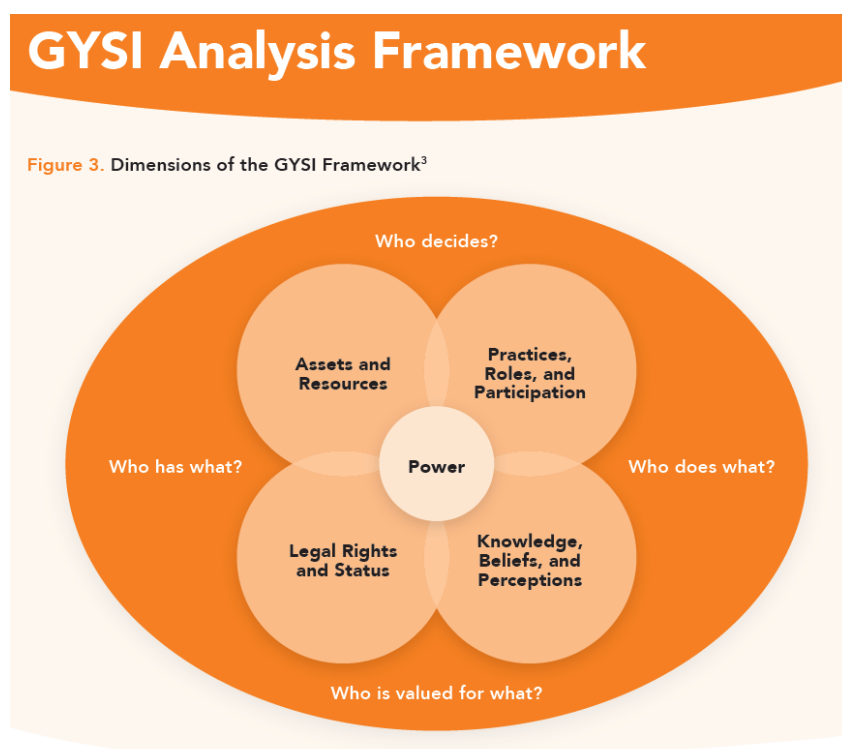
Source: EngenderHealth (2021)

The GYSI Analysis Framework, according to the author, is important for development programmes, including education programmes, at any stage for assessing and fostering social inclusion of less privileged and excluded groups. There are four main dimensions as determinants of social inclusion which intersect which each other; and power is a crosscutting aspect as any change in the four dimensions may affect the power relations, and the four questions in the outer circle serve as a means for questioning how the determinants affect the lives of men and women.

For this research, the legal dimension of the GYSI was not considered, since the NFE policies in Burkina clearly outlines the rights pertaining to NFE. The three other dimensions were taken into consideration for this research and also related to the framework of O'Donnell et al. from which the researcher considers that opportunities relate to assets and resources in GYSI, life experiences to perceptions and practices, and social acceptance and social participation to roles and participation.

Therefore, the following dimensions and indicators (from which the research sub-questions are based on) are adapted from the two above-mentioned frameworks and considered as focus for the conceptualisation of social inclusion through NFE in Burkina Faso:

Table 1: Adapted dimensions and indicators of conceptual model

Dimensions	Indicators
Perceptions and practices	Lived experiences and perceptions of exclusion Expectations and perceptions of social inclusion
Assets and Resources	Trainings Skills
Practices, Roles, and Participation	Participation in decision making processes Socio-economic participation Community roles

In order to achieve social inclusion of rural illiterate young men and women, an understanding of perceptions and practices is necessary. Depending on factors, men and women experience exclusion in different ways, which also influence their expectations of social inclusion. These perceptions, experiences, and expectations, are also influenced by (and may influence) their access to assets (trainings and skills). The assets and resources are meant of socialise and qualify the individuals. All these play an influence towards their access to participation, not only at household level but socio-economic participation at community level.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the study area and provides explanation of the research strategy that was undertaken for the fieldwork.

III.1: Study area

The location for the research was the Plateau Central Region, located in the centre part of Burkina Faso (See map 1 below). According to INSD (2021) the Plateau central region has a literacy rate of 32.4% for people aged 15 and above, which is under the national average literacy rate for this age range (39.3%). The region is mainly comprised of rural municipalities (MATD, 2020) and has registered in 2020 the fourth largest number of young adults enrolled in NFE programmes in Burkina Faso (INSD 2021).

The Plateau-central region was chosen as a target area for this research for one main reason: the commissioner of the research, operates in the Plateau Central region, and mainly runs interventions in rural and semi urban areas. The commissioner has been implementing a NFE programme in the region for rural illiterate young adults, aims at assessing the programme, hence the selection of this region for the purpose of the research.

Map 1:Map of Burkina Faso
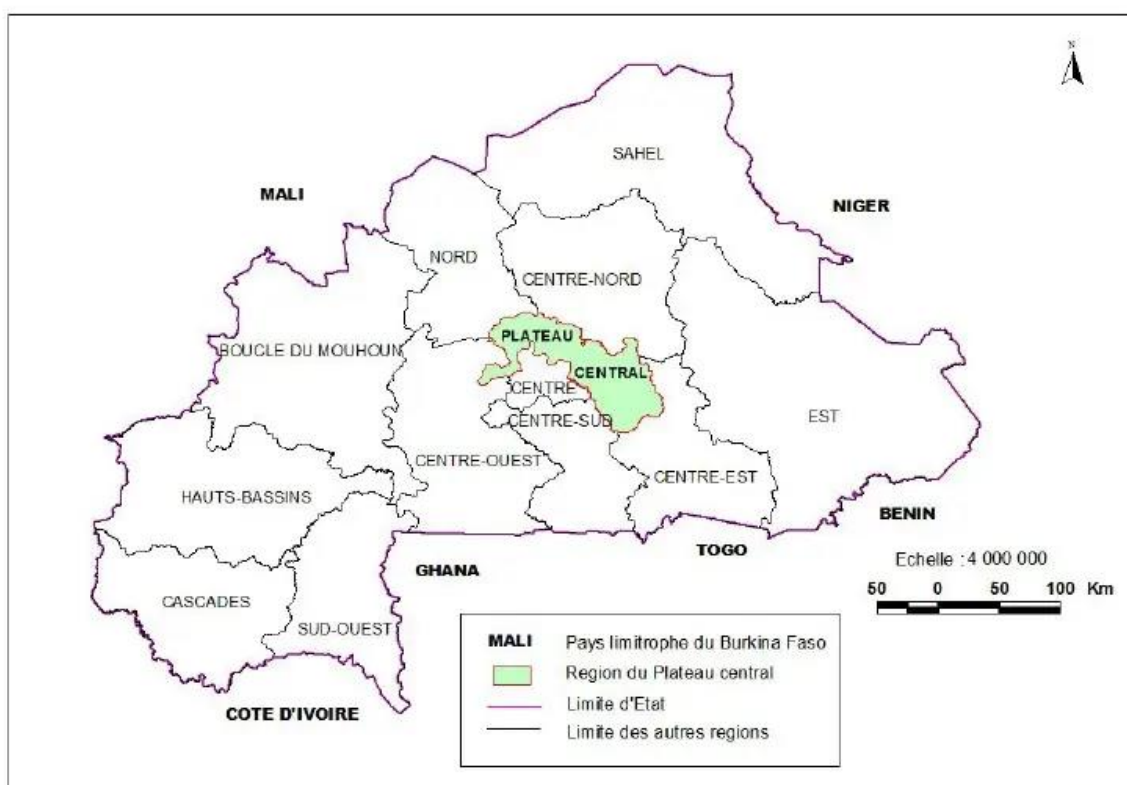
Source: MATD (2010)

Map of Burkina Faso with the Plateau Central region in green. The map also shows the 12 other regions and the bordering countries of Burkina Faso.

III.2: Research approach

The research approach adopted is the qualitative approach. Qualitative research is more concerned with meanings and aims to generate information about social phenomena by looking into men and women's experiences, perceptions, and thoughts (Laws et al., 2013). Regarding the nature and the focus of the research to be conducted, the qualitative approach therefore appeared to be the most relevant. Indeed, there are statistics that are regularly generated on the number of trainees in NFE programmes in Burkina Faso and the completion rates but there is a lack of evidence about the actual contribution of these programmes towards social inclusion of the target groups. The phenomenon of social inclusion can hardly be translated in numeric data, but is rather the manifestation of practices, and experiences, which the research intended to focus on.

The research was also a case study and programme-focused, since it focused on a particular group, rural illiterate young people and built on a programme that was implemented, with the purpose of providing insights that would inform interventions for better sustaining social inclusion through NFE.

III.3: Data sources and data collection

The research principally built on primary data directly collected by the researcher himself on the field, with the support of a research assistant chosen among the staff members of Kabeela, and also the support of local community members. Yet, the research was also based on secondary data, as prior to the field work, a desk study was conducted to gather information from relevant literature, used in the research proposal for the background of the research and literature review. The literature review then serves for the discussion section of this research report to compare findings with existing literature on the different themes explored.

Picture 1: Researcher and research assistant in a village

Source: The author

The primary data were collected with different categories of people and data collection tools, relevant for getting the necessary information to answer the sub-questions. First of all, 25 respondents were interviewed, as the main target group. Those 25 respondents were indeed the rural young illiterate

adults aged above 15 years (as per the laws which define the age categories of NFE learners). The researcher targeted young men and women aged 15-35 (official definition of youth) though they remained flexible as in rural areas, some people don't have birth certificates and it is common to see people unable to give their exact age but rather an age range. The research initially sought 30 respondents based on the number of trainees selected per cohort of trainings run by the commissioner and other organisations providing NFE trainings. Indeed, the trainings target groups of 30 people which was taken as a reference for this research, but due to lack of availability of male respondents, 25 were finally reached. This number objectively reflected the time constraints and rainy season constraints that the researcher was aware of for data collection on the field. Two cohorts were selected with respectively 15 respondents (women) and 10 respondents (men). The data collection tool used was the semi-structured interview as this is an appropriate tool for knowing about men and women's personal experiences, feelings and views in depth (Laws et al., 2013). This method therefore served to gather information from the respondents on all the sub-questions: their experiences and factors associated to social exclusion, how the NFE programme meet their needs, ensure their participation, and their perceptions or expectations of social inclusion through the programme.

Picture 2: SSI with a respondent

Source: The author

Secondly, key informants were interviewed also through semi-structured interviews to get their views and make a triangulation with those from the respondents. The researcher interviewed six key informants: two teachers (trainers), two community representatives who make the selection of participants in NFE in their villages; and finally two NFE participants who dropped out of the programme. Since they had sound experience about the programme and interacted on a regular basis with the trainees, the teachers point of views were useful for gaining insights specifically on the training and skills development needs of trainees and their participation; and the interviews with community representatives focus on the factors of exclusion, the selection criteria, training needs, perceptions and expectations of social inclusion. The NFE dropouts gave the reasons or motivations of their decision, their appreciation of the programme and possible expectations.

Source: The author

Finally, two focus groups were conducted with groups comprised of six people (three men and three women) with the purpose to get more information about group perceptions on the subject. One group targeted NFE participants to gain a group perspective on the sub-questions; and the second group dealt with non-NFE participants meaning rural young adults who didn't participate in a NFE programme.

III.4: Sampling strategy

The research was based on a purposive sampling approach since the researcher aimed at understanding the experiences and views of a particular population. For the semi-structured interviews with the 25 respondents, a quota sampling allowed to finally reached 15 female participants and 10 male participants (as explained above) will the initial intention of having a gender-balanced number; and therefore equally value the perceptions of men and women involved in the programme.

Regarding the key informants, a purposive sampling was also used as it was purposely expected to have experienced people who were well connected with the programme. Therefore, the teachers, NFE dropouts, and community representatives were chosen in the same location the respondents of the research lived in. Besides, the focus groups were also conducted through a purposive sampling. To involve community members, the groups were formed by them (through community representatives) making sure they were quite representative.

Finally, the selection of the villages for interviews was also done purposively, in accordance with the recommendations of Kabeela, to select areas which were accessible and relevant, as the field work was carried out during the rainy season.

III.5: Data processing and analysis

Data management and data use began right in the field through respondent validation, to ensure the accuracy of the information provided by them in line with the notes and summary the researcher presented after each interview.

Three important aspects were considered: transcription of interviews, data categorisation and storage, and data analysis. The researcher transcribed some interviews that were recorded as soon as possible after the interview, to facilitate the diligent use of collected information. Also, data were organised into categories taking into account themes related to the sub-questions, the type of source, the location and date; and data could then we stored under an electronic format to facilitate processing and recovery in case of data loss. Finally, data were analysed by pointing out main findings according to the thematic categories, and these findings were translated into results, also organised under specific themes.

III.6: Ethical considerations

The researcher acknowledged since the beginning that the topic could be sensitive to some regards and also that though the research report was going to be written is English, it was obvious that English could not serve as a means of communication, as Burkina Faso is a French-speaking country. This suggested some critical ethical considerations:

Translation of information and communication in relevant language: The researcher ensured that relevant and required information was translated or directly elaborated in French for the relevant stakeholders including the commissioner. Therefore, the interviews guide were for example directly elaborated in French to associate the research assistant. Also, since the research targeted rural illiterate young adults, the interviews were conducted in Mooré, the local language spoken in the study area. Similarly, a summary communication about the conclusions of the report should be submitted in French to the commissioner who should also ensure communication with participants.

Informed consent: The researcher ensured that the objectives and implications of the research were duly communicated to respondents, and requested their consent before proceeding. Besides, permission was asked for recording interviews and taking pictures which allowed to get some recordings and pictures of the fieldwork.

Confidentiality and anonymity: The research process was handled with protection of personal data collected from respondents, whose identity and contact details were not and will not be divulgated.

Accountability: The researcher recognised that is common in Burkina Faso with regards to societal norms that relevant local authorities should be informed in advance prior to activity in villages. This was done through Kabeela staff and community representatives in the villages.

III.7: Research period

The time scope of the fieldwork ran from June to September 2022 as outlined in the workplan attached in Annex (Table 2: Research schedule):

Chapter IV: Findings and results

IV.1: Profile of respondents

The research gathered participants all living rural areas in the Plateau Central region of Burkina Faso.

Primary respondents

Semi structured interviews were conducted with 25 men and women who attended the NFE programme among which 15 were women and 10 men with some similarities but also differences in educational background and socio-professional status (See Table 3 in annex: Profile of primary respondents). They all shared common characteristics regardless of their gender: they are doing agriculture as a main activity for subsistence though task may vary among men and women as women not only provided support to their husbands of family farm they also dealt which with small farming plots near houses. Among the women, five had some prior education level as 3 attended primary school but dropped out before graduating and two also went to junior secondary school but also dropped out before getting a certificate. Also, four women were still living in parental house and 11 were living in their own household with their husbands. On the other hand, all the men were living independently (own house) and 6 were married. All men were doing agriculture but also had other activities as alternate means of subsistence particularly during off season. They all performed gardening during off season and three were also traders. Two out of the 10 interviewed men attended primary school without graduating.

Key informants

Six key informants were approached for the purpose of the study: 2 community representative (one in each of the villages concerned by the research), two NFE trainers and two NFE dropouts.

- Community representatives:

The community representative were the resource persons to access the villages and mobilise other participants in the research, particularly the main respondents, as they were the ones who made the selection of people to participate in the NFE trainings.

One community representative was the pastor of his village and as such, possessed a church that he made available to us for meeting each respondent and conducting the interviews. The pastor also stated being a farmer apart from his religious service.

The second community representative was a CVD (Village Development Counsellor). The CVD is a village authority recognised as such by the government. The CVDs are usually elected by their fellow community members within the village and serve as contact persons and intermediaries between the state administrative authorities and the local communities. The CVD has basic reading and writing skills and he is also a farmer.

- NFE trainers:

The two NFE trainers were recruited by Kabeela for the purpose of its NFE programme. They were not natives of the villages they served in, but had to go and stay there for the entire duration of the training. There accommodation was guaranteed by the community members themselves as part of their responsibility in the programme. The trainers had secondary education level with full fluency in Moore, the local language the training is delivered in. They are also from the same ethnic group as the primary respondents.

Prior to their deployment in the field, the trainers went through a training organised the FONAENF and the Provincial direction in charge of NFE. The trainers basically carried out themselves the literacy and numeracy part of the training but were not the ones to deliver the FTS trainings though they had attend and facilitate the delivery of these courses, translation and comprehension of the participants when necessary. They were giving a programme to follow but had flexibility and freedom on taking initiatives and responsibilities to provide updated information on courses they deliver and relevant societal issues for discussion and advice within the classes.

Picture 4: A NFE trainer in her teaching area

Source: The author

- NFE dropped-out participants:

The researcher also interviewed one young man and one young woman who were initially attending NFE programme later decided to leave and therefore didn't complete the training. The male NFE dropout was aged 24, single and lived from farming. The female NFE was aged 30 and married.

IV.1: Lived experience of social exclusion by rural illiterate young adults

The participants of the research related social exclusion to personal experiences they are living and which constitute constraints for them to live a life in good conditions, as other citizens or members of their community. The findings of the interviews allowed to classify the manifestation of social exclusion into four categories according to respondents' experiences: dependency and lack of self-esteem, inaccessibility to services and opportunities, lack of participation in socio-economic life and forced mobility.

IV.1.1: Dependency and lack of self-esteem

Both male and female respondents (12) mentioned during the interviews that rural illiterate young men and women felt social exclusion because of depending on other people to live, and correlatively, they had the feeling of not being equally valued as others.

"I have a phone but before if wanted to check for example for a name in my contact list I had to go and ask someone" (Respondent 6)

I see many illiterate people, they wait for children to around to tell them go give the phone to this one so that he find the contact of this person in my phone and if there is no one is a real struggle for these (Respondent 6)

"With lack of education, there are lot of things someone cannot do. Basic things like reading a phone number is even not possible. There can hardly be a conversation between someone who attended school and someone who didn't because the last one will never be able to understand what the literate is giving as opinion." (Respondent 18)

The findings revealed that the feeling of dependency and lack of self-esteem was mainly related to the following aspects:

- Inability to perform basic tasks
- Self-consideration as a burden
- Lack of confidence
- Constant reliability on other community members

Indeed, all female and male respondents associated (though in different terms) exclusion to their incapacity of doing certain activities by themselves or having to rely on other people, particularly because of their illiteracy. The incapacity of using their telephones was systematically one of the examples given by NFE participants who never attended school as this is now an important means for communication and socialising. Also, 6 women and 7 men referred to social exclusion when they feel being a burden to other people because of needing assistance or not being able to contribute to their family responsibilities as they should do. Finally, lack of confidence was also established as a sign of social exclusion because of differences in consideration given to them: *"There is no comparison possible between someone who attended school and illiterate people…They know things we don't know so of course they cannot say we are the same…"* (Respondent 4)

The findings from the FGD with non-NFE participants and key informants also align with the main dimensions of social experience mentioned by the primary respondents. Participants in the FGD with non-NFE participants compared for example rural illiterate young people with literate ones in the following terms:

"The advantage with those who went to school, is that they always knowledge with them. And illiterate people don't have a good memory, when they learn something, they can easily forget and there is no way to go back and read about it for example. So you see, how can a literate person and an illiterate young be the same?... The literate one is intelligent and independent and yet the non-literate can easily be a burden to others" (FGD, Non-NFE participant).

"I got the opportunity to do the six years in primary school, so I have basic skills in French. And I was telling myself that I cannot come and merge myself with NFE trainees because I know more than them and I have bigger ambitions. I was telling myself that at least me I

nourish the ambition of being a civil servant so we cannot be the same" *(FGD, Non-NFE participant)*.

Non-NFE participants also agreed that exclusion of a rural illiterate man or woman is linked with less value within the society and those non-NFE participants who attended school couldn't expressively accept an equal status between them and illiterate ones as they believed that they have more importance than illiterate people.

Besides, a community representative addressed illiterate adults in these terms: *"they ignore many things, some have a dark mind [lack of knowledge] and in this case they know they cannot do the same things as some of their peers"* (CR1). For him, because of a certain lack of knowledge, illiterate young men and women would not feel that they have the same capacity to carry out some activities.

IV.1.2: Inaccessibility to services and opportunities

The inability or restricted ability to access services or to be considered for jobs opportunities was established as one aspect of social exclusion experienced by rural illiterate young men and women. All except two female respondents expressed their frustration of not being able to access jobs that are only intended for people having writing and reading skills. This is illustrated by the following words from a female respondents:

"Being illiterate restrict you from lot of opportunities. For example we see in villages that they always choose some ladies to be community-based health officers. It's not because they have a high education level it's just because they know how to read and write. And that help them having their own good income" (Respondent 7).

This respondent regretted opportunities she would like to have but feel she is not considered because of her illiteracy. Some respondents related the feeling of exclusion when they move to town and are confronted to traffic rules they are not able to understand and follow:

"For example we are here living in our village and we didn't care and didn't know anything about the news in Burkina Faso… About the traffic lights for example in town, when I sometimes went from the village to town I could get disturbed by the traffic lights" (Respondent 7).

The analysis of the findings allowed to make a categorisation of the inaccessibility to resources and opportunities into three main dimensions based the responses provided by participants:

- Inability to have jobs opportunities
- Inability to understand or access public services and infrastructures
- Inequality/Injustice in redistribution or access to resources

Though almost all respondents agreed on the restrictions to opportunities and services, six women stressed on a difference between men and women with regards to their inability to carry out some activities or access to resources:

"There are some activities men do women cannot. For when we talk about breeding, I don't want to say women don't do it at all but of course in a very limited way. Even in agriculture, women do farm but not at the same extent as men and you see that growing vegetables is a more a men activity because here those who do it it's just home gardens" (R6).

However, two female respondents, all having a prior education level refused to talk about any exclusion young women and men face in access to opportunities or ability to perform specific activities: The lady below shares her opinion:

Picture 5: SSI with a respondent

Source: The author

"I don't think there is something a young cannot do no matter of the sex of that person. You first have to try and if you are not able or someone else restricts you, then you can complain. But most of the time I see people complaining for no reason, without experiencing things or just because they heard others complaining" *(Respondent 15).*

The FGD with non-NFE participants also showed that they also agree with the fact that social exclusion is associated with the lack of resources or lack of access to resources and services: Participants in the FGDs indeed argued that:

"There of activities someone who knows how to write can do and you can't. We can have something and they want someone with writing skills and for us who don't know how to even hold a pen, that is complicated to be considered. What can you go and do there and why would you even bother yourself going there. So that is already one advantage for them. If don't know how to read and write, what can you say in this situation. It is normal" (FGD, Non NFE participants).

"Nowadays is a world for literate people. When you don't know how to read and write, it's very hard for you. I can even go somewhere, get lost and still continue my way because I don't know. I can find

myself in complicated situation and get problems because I don't know. You can go somewhere and there is a notice of danger or being cautious but you ignore it because you don't know" (FGD, NFE participants).

The participants of FGD therefore outlined the impossibility to access jobs opportunities reserved for literate persons and also agreed on the fact that public infrastructures are sometimes excluding them because they are designed in a way that is not understandable to them, or in a way that they cannot properly use them.

Interview with NFE dropouts also showed the feeling of injustice rural young adults had with regards to redistribution of resources:

"Also sometimes we can receive donations but you cannot be chosen to manage these donations. The donations will either remain with a literate person or a leader in this village. And now for us they just pick what they want to give you and you take because you don't have any information, you are not associated in any way , so you accept what you get and that's all" *(KI 5).*

This also aligns with general opinion expressed by the primary respondents on the difficulty to have equal access to resources.

IV.1.3: Lack of participation

The interviews with participants pointed out the lack of participation as another dimension of social exclusion. The lack of participation was addressed in two different levels: lack of participation at household level, and lack of participation in socio-economic life at community level.

The lack of participation at household mainly concerned the limited capacity of raising voice or taking part in decision-making:

"A part from the decision to send children at school I don't know what else I can talk about. You know if Zaksoba [Chief of family] says there is no enough financial means to send children at school what can you say?" *(Respondent 10).*

"I'm living at home so even if there are things I don't appreciate, you have to follow what your father decides for you. Sometimes you even know that he is wrong but you avoid to contest…So yes I think this is because of my age and maybe also because I did not go far [in school]" *(Respondent 11).*

"Oh that is complicated…I don't see something I can say I'm restricted within my house. Well you know even if you're the head of family there also things you have to accept these as women stuffs and I won't bother yourself to argue with your wife. So just observe and let her do how she wants" *(Respondent 25).*

It was concluded based on the inputs from respondents that the lack of participation at household level concerned their limited involvement in decision-making with regards to child care, or the management of the households. Men hardly admitted a lack of participation within their own household due a particular restriction, but rather associated it with willingness not to interfere with women tasks or responsibilities. On the other hand, seven women for instance explicitly talked about the power of their husband to make certain decisions, for example to send children at school. Also, one young woman still living with her parent also referred to the power of parents to make decisions. Thus, the lack of participation at household level was induced by a combination of age factor, gender

and illiteracy which made them feel not able to raise their voice and think that their opinion would have no sense.

At community level, the respondents also mentioned limited participation in community activities or restricted consideration for some community roles. This is illustrated by the following quotes:

"Also when you look at all the cooperatives you notice that it's those who have been a bit in school that are leading and the rest are just following. Also, when talking about voting, you know every village elect community representatives [Village Development Counsellor] and it's those who have basic literacy skills that benefit from these positions and those who are illiterate cannot be interested by such opportunities" (Respondent 7).

"In any assembly the way of expression of a literate person and an illiterate cannot be the same" (Respondent 16).

"Sometimes there are meetings in the village to discuss different issues like the water, how to look for support, how to support each other in village. We can all go to participate but of courses some people voices have more value than others. I used to go but don't talk" (Respondent 5).

The findings revealed that the lack of participation at community level is related to two main aspects:

- Lack of consideration for community or leadership roles
- Lack of freedom of expression

Though it was established that participants associated their lack of participation at community level to the fact of being young but also illiterate, four women also stated that this difference in treatment also lies in the fact of being woman on top of being illiterate:

"As an illiterate person during decision making meetings, you can go but you're afraid to raise your voice particularly as a women because you think you don't have some important to say" (Respondent 4).

"Before when I was going to meetings, there were issues I even didn't dare opening my mouth to say any word. Sometimes there are even things that hurt me but I would not say anything. It's when I reach home that I start complaining" (Respondent 6).

This also shows that if the lack of participation is usually considered as normal situation, it is also sometimes characterised as a painful situation for those who experienced it.

Though the majority of respondents admitted a lack of participation that affects illiterate young women and men, two female respondents rejected such an opinion:

"Here I don't see any restrictions to young people with regards to community participation. I can say that things are changing. When there are meetings, most of the time everyone can attend even if you are illiterate. The situation is just that in this case there will be some points you know your job is just to listen. Also even when we talk about associations or cooperatives we see that now they pick representatives among men and representatives among the women to be the leaders" (Respondent 8).

The two female rather talked about positive changes and the personal responsibility of an illiterate person to know when they can express their point of views.

The interviews with NFE dropouts showed that they shared the general opinion expressed by primary respondents about their lack of participation:

"…because you don't have any information, you are not associated in any way , so you accept what you get and that's all. It's true we don't know anything about literacy, it's them who know things, our task is to listen and follow. They own every talk, the word is in their hands, for us we are blind!" (KI 6).

"…And if I was living in good conditions, in case of any problem in the village I could even take the responsibility to give money to solve that problem for example. But it's a pity I cannot, what can I do?" (KI 5).

The Key informants not only stressed on the inability to raise voices (female NFE dropout) but also their the incapacity to contribute in the economic life of their community (male NFE dropout).

Similarly the focus group discussion held with Non-NFE participants allowed participants to also express the idea that illiterate young people are experiencing difficulties to take part in the socio-economic life of their community.

"It's difficult. When if there is a support [finances and materials], you can stay, you can work, you can contribute in something, you can help your village develop" (FGD, Non NFE participants).

Based on the responses provided by key informants and FGD participants, it appears that on top of the lack of consideration for community or leadership roles and the lack of freedom of expression experienced by illiterate rural young adults, the feeling of absence of contribution to community development is also another aspect of lack of community participation.

IV.1.4: Forced mobility due to poverty

The participants mentioned another dimension of social exclusion that is correlative to the lack of community participation that we framed under the expression "forced mobility". Indeed, as a consequence of lack of opportunities or willingness to contribute to the development of their community, some participants expressed that they were obliged to migrate or move away from their village during some specific periods to earn money.

"you see when we finish the farming season, young people run away to find a place to do gardening" (Respondent 25).

"You even know that apart from cultivating there is nothing else here to do for us. So if you want to make it throughout the year you know that you have to go struggle somewhere else to get something for your family" (Respondent 19).

The aspect of forced mobility out of their village was only reported by male participants as 5 of them referred to the fact that they are obliged to leave their after agricultural season to do gardening or artisanal mining in other places.

However, four women also talked of mobility but in a completely opposite way. One of them said this:

Here as women we have lots of problems. Our movements are limited. We cannot even freely go to Zitenga to also try make some money. It always bring lot of quarrels when we want to go there. Men want us to limit our movements within the village (Respondent 6).

It appears that while men feel the necessity of leaving their village to strive for better conditions, women on the other hand regret the absence of such a freedom as their mobility is restricted to the village.

The FGDs also confirmed the forced mobility of men as some were justifying their non-enrolment in the programme:

"Poverty is not a game, when you face it then you cannot say you have choices to make. It is poverty that can make us not have the time to enrol in NFE. Otherwise for me even if you're educated, NFE is still good because they are high educated people who can't write in their language" (FGD, Non NFE participants).

It's difficult. When if there is a support, you can stay, you can work, you can contribute in something, you can help your village develop" (FGD, NFE participants).

The opinions of the FGD participants show that they feel the pressure of poverty and lack of support which oblige them to move away.

An interview with a young man who dropped out from the NFE programme also brought out the feeling of forced mobility:

"It's as I said, just poverty, only poverty. How can you come and register and yet you know you have to look for something to put in your stomach…But I know if I am well trained in breeding, I will be moving less, I can stay in my village and develop my activity…" (KI 5).

Both FGD with non-NFE participants and key informant interview with male NFE dropout, showed that men also expressed that they felt obliged to leave their village during off-season to look for other opportunities because of poverty, which also aligns with the point of view expressed by male primary respondents.

IV.2: Training and skill acquisition needs of rural illiterate young adults

IV.2.1: A blended theoretical and practical teaching

The NFE programme implementation follows a blended theoretical and practical teaching approach. The theoretical part of the training for the participants consisted in a 3-months teaching in literacy and numeracy followed by a two-weeks practical training called FTS (Training in specific technique) aimed at giving or improving the participant technical skills for productive activities, either in agriculture, breeding or other business activities.

The analysis of the findings allowed to draw three important conclusions: Gaining more knowledge was the primary reason for enrolling in NFE, there is a contrast interest or involvement between men and women in the learning content, and there is a lack of self-appropriation about training needs. This is explained below.

- **Gaining knowledge as a shared motivation for men and women**

The desire to get knowledge was mentioned by all the respondents as the main reason for attending the programme:

"I took the decision to enrol because myself if there is such a programme I probably ignore lot of things and if I register I will learn more, know the outs and ins of the programme and develop my knowledge" (Respondent 1).

Indeed, the participants mostly used the terms "bangré", or "yaam" which could be translated by "knowledge", "intelligence", "skilfulness" or "know-how", to justify their participation in the programme.

- **Contrast interest between men and women in learning content**

One remark which regularly appeared throughout the discussions was related to the difference in attendance between men and women. It was noticed indeed that women are relatively more interested, or at least more consistent in teaching attendance than men:

"Men did not attend equally as we the women because they say they have to go look for money and yet for me it would be good to get knowledge before looking for money, because knowledge will help you for that" (Respondent 1).

"I think in terms of attendance women are more present than men because they tend to think they are not immediately gaining from it and tend to like more training in cattle breeding rather than others" (Respondent 3).

"In my opinion women have more time than men for following such programmes because when the woman wake up in the morning she goes to fetch water and after comes to prepare, so that by midday she is free. But men when the rainy season passes and they are no longer in their farms, some will go in the shallows to do gardening or when they are back they go in town centre for other activities" (Respondent 5).

In the light of these opinions it appeared that the time budget and reproductive activities of women is underestimated as none of the women gave a reason other than justifying the responsibility of men for looking for other activities and that they have more time for courses (opinion shared by men). Also it appeared that men were more interested in FTS training rather than the literacy classes.

- **Lack of self-appropriation on their training needs**

All of respondents did refer to the willingness or expanding or gaining new knowledge, but were not all able to spontaneously share their opinions of the training needs that would have been useful to them apart from what they were taught. This is illustrated as follows:

"To say the truth, only the program leaders can think about what is good for us" (Respondent 14).

"If you don't know something and they bring it to you, then you cannot say that it is not helpful. So the NFE was useful to me" (Respondent 8).

"Whatever they deem good will be most welcome here because any training they think about is good" (Respondent 4).

Despite shared motivation of getting more knowledge, the respondents do not all have, nor feel a need of self-appropriation of their trainings needs. Indeed, among the respondent, nine replied at first that they trusted the programme for identifying what's suitable for improving their life situation and among.

The interviews with community representatives, and the FGD also partly aligned with the main conclusions got from the opinions shared by primary respondents about their motivation, interest and training needs. The community representatives said this:

"I think that most of the young people here are truly interested in the programme because most of them didn't get the chance to go to school. But now you also see the village, and you see that they are doing gardening at the time the programme starts. So when the programme was starting many went away for doing they gardening activities… that's why many young men didn't also get the opportunity to come and enrol though I know they want the NFE" (CR1).

"I mentioned that men are really interested but when the programme starts some have already moved near the dams or rivers to carry out gardening activities like growing tomatoes. So some even start the programme but don't have the assiduity as women because they will end up going for growing their vegetables which places are far. But the women are around and it is easier for them to follow classes on a regular basis than men" (CR2).

The community representatives therefore also agreed on the relative lack of time of men compared to women, or their responsibility to me more active, though unlike female respondents, they recognised an equal interest. The same idea was also agreed upon in the FGD with non-NFE participants when some men justified their absence (as above-mentioned).

IV.2.2: Soft skills acquisition

The acquisition of soft skills was described as one of the contribution NFE has towards social inclusion of illiterate rural young men and women. Respondents used a variety of terms while sharing stories about the changes that happened in their lives in terms of new skills; which allowed to categorised them under the expression "soft skills".

"…Well in terms of changes I should say before everything else that I got a new mindset… In terms of expression the one who doesn't know don't care about what he is saying but you who gained your knowledge you will mind your words when you speak" (Respondent 4).

"The programme change our minds… Now the advantage of the programme is that we get lot of discussions and advice within the classes which also give more wisdom and intelligence to deal with different issues" (Respondent 18).

"Also, for example during classes we discuss issues like social cohesion, or polygamy and with all the advice we got I can say that the way I behave now changed a bit because I'm more sensitive to these issues" (Respondent 25).

"…But also with what we learnt, you no longer keep quiet, you can respond to what you know at least" (Respondent 7).

Based on their responses, it was appeared that respondents acknowledged an improvement or a perceived improvement related to their soft skills abilities. The skills that were frequently reported were:

- **New mindset**: Participants talked about changes because they got a new mindset (or mind) though they could hardly define what they meant by a new mindset and how this mindset was different with others. However, some of the examples were related to new way of thinking, more awareness or sensitiveness to social issues like social cohesion.
- **Increase of self-confidence and self-esteem**: This was related to one of their motivation for enrolling in the NFE programme to gain more knowledge as some said for example that before they had a "dark mind" or were living in "darkness". Then through the NFE they were able to get more light, believe in their abilities or their knowledge.
- **Better communication skills**: Public speaking abilities and conflict management skills were also reported by participants, which of course correlated with the increase level in self-confidence.

The interviews with key informants also allowed them to agree on behavioural changes they noticed in NFE participants. One of the teachers stressed on their new communication skills:

"If you were here to see how some women here were shy to even say a word in public and that you observe that they can take the floor and present their ideas, you will say this is unbelievable!" (KI3).

A community representative also agreed with the teacher's point of view on the improved communication skills he noticed. But he further elaborated on another soft skill related to a dimension of power: the collaboration skills they got that could help them join together to better address their issues.

"They also got a new way of thinking and if they apply that they learn about the advantages of joining together to improve their conditions. So hopefully they can make groups or cooperatives…" (CR1)

Besides, during the focus group discussion with non-NFE participants, it appeared that participants could refuse to join NFE because of prior level of education and didn't want to merge with people not at the same level of thinking with them; though they later change their mind:

"…That is what I was thinking but I discussed with my friend who showed me what they were doing and I now understand that the content is good and the knowledge they get is also good" (FGD, Non NFE participants). This opinion was however a conflicting opinion as not all men and women supported such a view.

IV.2.3: Hard skills acquisition

The basic literacy and numeracy skills in local language (Mooré) were seen as an important and obvious added value for the respondents. This was indeed a core aspect of the theoretical teaching during the first 3 months of the programme. All the participants systematically said that they got literacy skills and some shared stories of change in their life:

"Now even if it is reading the time or reading contacts in our phone we do it" (Respondent 10).

"I also learnt about finances management" (Respondent 18)

"Also before I couldn't read the Bible but thanks to the NFE I can now do it. Also because of my small reading skills, I can see some people coming to me to ask small services and if I can help them I do it" (Respondent 4).

"Previously someone could easily fool me and get my money but know this not possible. For example one day someone asked my phone to look for a contact and removed my credit because I didn't know how to track it. But now if I put 200 XOF I know very well how many messages it can do so no one can fool me for that" (Respondent 24).

Source: The author

All the participants said that they got new literacy skills and also mentioned on top of that the other aspect of the training which related to FTS:

"Regarding the FTS we got I can say that it was really good. Though I didn't started producing on my own soaps because of the agricultural season we are in right now but with some of the ladies we decided after the harvesting we will start making soaps" (Respondent 1).

The common opinion shared by respondents therefore allowed to draw two important conclusions regarding the acquisition of hard skills:

- **Improved literacy and numeracy skills**: That was a consensus among all respondents to agree that they now know how to read and write. But while stressing on full fluency in writing and reading, only 6 respondents stayed on their initial position while the others admitted they are more confident in reading but still struggle with writing.
- **Contribution of FTS to productive activities**: All participants also reported that the FTS training is improving their activities or can develop their activities even if they didn't have the resources to put in practices the skills got through the FTS.

The FGD discussion and the interviews with key informants showed that they also valued the NFE in terms of hard skills: A community representative shared this story:

"If I take the example of my wife for instance, if know you look the way she can write you will think that she did NFE before and yet no. So there was a plus for these people throughout the programme. Now to be honest I cannot say that they have the same skills at end because they don't all have the same abilities. There are some that are really young and some that are older so at the end some have got more skills than others but to my opinion the ones who progressed and got more skills make the majority" (CR1).

Alike what was expressed by the community representative, participants in the FGD with non-NFE participants also acknowledged the benefits of the NFE but were more stressing on the advantages of the FTS training:

"Also for someone who did the NFE, you benefit in a double way. It can help you do your farming and breeding for example but you can also be recruited a NFE teacher somewhere else. So you combine many things at the same time and you gain from it" (FGD, Non NFE participants).

Though FGD participants as well as key informants all praised the contribution of FTS towards the improvement of participants' life and activities with the newly acquired skills, some of them also insisted that participants cannot benefit at the same level from the taught skills. For them, some of the participants are unable to take advantage compare to others, because they didn't attend the programme with same level of knowledge or same abilities.

IV.3: Participation of rural illiterate young adults

Participation at community and household was agreed among participants as an outcome of the NFE programme. They gave examples of the changes that occurred within their life with regards to their interaction within their community. Based on their responses which are explained below, it was perceived that changes occurred both at household level and community level.

IV.3.1: Participation at household level

The perceived difference participants could refer to was dealing with their interaction or collaboration with their partner regarding the management of the household.

"With the NFE I can say that there is more discussion with my husband and I am more involved in our activities for example in terms of breeding of child care because I got advice on it" (Respondent 8).

"At household for instance there many advantages. Regarding childcare for example, now there is more willingness to follow-up their studies though I don't what they are learning. Also in terms of school fees even if the head of the household says he does not have money to send them to school, we discuss and try to also contribute for that" (Respondent 4).

The findings allowed to underline the following points:

- **An increased involvement in decision-making related to household care and productive activities**: This was more emphasised by women while men rather stressed on changes in attitudes for childcare, or household hygiene though many also agreed that they discussed more on these points with their partner.
- **An increase initiative taking**: As a correlation to the decision-making, some respondents also pointed out that they have more spontaneity or freedom on taking initiatives for the sake of their family and expressed confidence that this could be understood by their partner.

Despite a commonly agreed opinion on more involvement in decision-making and household activities, one female participant regretted the fact she felt an opposition from co-wives. Indeed she rather expressed her disappointment that she was blamed for not being active within the house by her peers and rather spoil time for unproductive classes. This contrasted with the general opinion on better contribution at household level.

IV.3.2: Participation at community level

The participation in the socio-economic life of the community was seen as an indicator of social inclusion (or exclusion). To this regards, the respondents argued that they also notice changes within their community. The following quotes illustrate this:

"So now that I also have some literacy skills in Mooré [the local language], if they say that there is something they need someone who can write I know that I can approach and listen because I have my chances. Even if it's a cleaning job where they need someone with writing skills I will go" (Respondent 7).

"As an illiterate person, during decision making meetings, you can go but you're afraid to raise your voice particularly as a women because you think you don't have something important to say. But now you can tell yourself that your point of view also matters" (Respondent 4).

"when you go back, there are moments you also raise your voice and people will be surprised and say well, you know what, what this person is saying is really true and you feel happy for that. Those who are fully illiterate when they listen to you they also tell themselves that you are ahead" (Respondent 6).

The answers and opinions provided by participants denoted a mixed picture of the changes at community level: there was signs of improvements but the greatest change was more related to a self-perception of confidence on their ability to generate changes or benefit from changes. Three conclusions are drawn:

- An increase ability of self-expression: Most of the examples related to the respondents to better or more frequently raise their voice in their communities and take part in decision-making processes.

- **A moderate access to community roles**: None of the respondents was able to tell a new formal leadership role that was conferred to them by community members. They however gave examples of groups that they are setting among participants to improve their activities or start a business or cooperative. They also referred to more solicitation on incidental situations for which their presumed new literacy skills for example were valued.

- **A limited capacity on productive activities to contribute to community development:** Participants valued the FTS trainings that are important for them to improve their socio-economic conditions and therefore also contribute to the socio-economic life of their society. However most of them regretted a lack of resources to see tangible results.

The other participants in the research also expressed varied opinions on the contribution of NFE to better participation of rural illiterate young men and women in community life. The community representatives particularly stressed on changes at household level, but taking examples on women with regards to better hygiene and management of the house and hardly on balanced decision-making. The exchanges with participants in FGD and NFE dropouts also revealed that they would have liked the FTS training participants went through and had a better respect for their intellectual abilities.

Also, one key conclusion that appeared throughout the discussion with participants, was the participatory practices in the NFE programme itself which was a basic aspect that gave confidence to NFE participants for accessing a better participation at household and community level.

IV.4: Perceptions and expectations of social inclusion through NFE

The respondents generally expressed their satisfaction about the NFE programme, though two female respondents didn't allow themselves to give an evaluative overall perception of the programme.

"It is difficult for me to assess the contribution of the NFE. On one hand it was useful but on the other it has had some disadvantages for me. I'm saying that because if you want to gain more and skills, you have to sacrifice want you are doing to attend classes and the at the end if you don't see immediate improvements in your life then you have mixed feelings. I can say that I learned a lot but I was also obliged to leave some activities for that" (Respondent 9).

"While I was attending the training, some are doing there activity to earn something and they say that I'm not productive though I don't care so much about what people can think... But I'm sure that it is important to me" (Respondent 6).

A part from the two respondents, all the rest mainly had overall positive opinion of the NFE programme which, according to them, is improving their life in their community. But they shared ideas on points to be improved and actual needs, which allowed to have a view of their expectations and the areas of improvement for NFE to sustain social inclusion based on the lived realities in rural areas.

IV.4.1: FTS expectations

All the respondents showed a particular interest to the FTS, as these trainings was perceived as a tool towards improving their economic condition. None of the respondents deemed that the training they received was not adequate or welcome. They all at least expressed a gratitude for the training which is helping or will help them. Besides, on their expectations of trainings that could change their current situation, a training on breeding was at least mentioned by all the participants who shared their opinions, as showed in the table 4 on FTS expectations per participant (in Annex). While men mostly proposed only two types of trainings either in breeding or agriculture, women had more options, the main ones being knitting or shea butter production.

Source: The author

Community representatives, as well as key informants interviews and FGD participants also shared their interest in the FTS.

"In my opinion, the kind of FTS training that can really help us is breeding" (FGD non participants).

As the quote illustrate, other participants also expressed their training expectation in breeding as the most relevant to improve their conditions, though 10 respondents couldn't specify what type of breeding, while others either talked about poultry, or cattle breeding, or both. All men shared a common interest in breeding trainings while women expressed more types of trainings like shea butter production, body cream, soap, or knitting.

IV.4.2: Access to opportunities and productive resources

The participants of the NFE programme consider that it can help them access more opportunities. One the female participants shared that she was expecting to be recruited as NFE trainer. Despite overall appreciation on the literacy and FTS part of the programme, most of them regretted the lack of resources at the end to develop their activities or get jobs. One of the respondents expected a consistent follow-up and support for the programme alumni*:*

"People want to see results before trusting in the value of something. So the programme have to support the alumni to make a living in order to inspire their communities" (Respondent 7).

The FGD with non-NFE participants also showed that they would appreciate the programme and getting resources after is a crucial consideration for them:

"In any case, if you have the skill and you don't have something to start it's like your skill is useless. It's difficult. When if there is a support, you can stay, you can work, you can contribute in something" (FGD non participants).

Unlike the participants and non-participants, the community representatives were rather moderate on resources expectations as for them the most important were the skills and knowledge transferred to participants who had then the responsibility to use it. Still, it emerged from the different points of view that the participants lack resources in their village, like lack of access to water, finances, materials, or other facilities in their village to allow them effectively use the skills acquired through NFE.

Picture 8: Overview of a village surroundings

Source: The author

IV.4.3: Scope of the training programme

The training content, period and duration was discussed with participants. With regards to the period of training, all the respondents agreed that this partly constituted a handicap for them as it overlapped with agricultural season and preferred a training period that could start in cold season (November-December) and finish before they start dealing with farm work (May-June). Yet, on the duration, ideas diverged as some wanted a two-year programme while others were satisfied with a one-year programme. On the content, it was rather a contentment with the teaching approach for dealing with different subjects relevant to their life issues and activities.

The community representatives ideas largely aligned with the ideas from respondents on the period and content of training. Yet, unlike respondents who were divided of the duration, both community representatives expressed the will to see a two-year programme and a repetitious programme within

their village to produce tangible effects. That was also a wish expressed by FGD participants though for the content, they had a different view as participants regretted that the training does not take into account age differences and initial capacities of participants to better address their needs.

IV.4.4: Awareness on NFE and NFE for social cohesion

One aspect was pointed out during discussions in regards to a social outcome of the NFE programme: harmony living in community.

"But now with the training there is more respect and they taught us about cohesion and mutual understanding" (Respondent 16).

Seven participants referred to the fact that NFE brought more respect not only among participants but also in their interactions with others. Others insisted on the conflict management aspect as they were more sensitive to certain issues and knew how to handle conflicts at household and community level, which was the essence of social cohesion.

However, none of the community representatives did mention an observation and expectation related to social cohesion. That was yet mentioned in different words by participants in a FDG:

"Also, with regards to life in household and life in community, the one who studied NFE will get other skills. They taught them how to handle issues at household, how to live in community but for me I can behave as I want without knowing certain things" (FGD, Non NFE participants).

Besides, there was a consensus among respondents and other participants that the programme should communicate more with communities on its purpose and outcomes, and a connection and support should be maintained with former participants which would definitely change the way people look at them.

Chapter V: Discussion

This chapters provides an interpretation of the main findings and results presented in the previous chapter. Also, the results are discussed in comparison with the literature review related to the themes addressed. Finally, in this chapter, the researcher attempts to provide a reflection on the research process and the implications of the results.

V.1: Statement of main findings

Based on the interviews and discussions with the participants in the research, it was established that the lived experiences of social exclusion were characterized by dependency and lack of self-esteem, inaccessibility to service and opportunities, lack of participation and forced mobility. It also appeared that NFE had a proven positive effect towards social inclusion by giving a range of soft skills and hard skills to participation, as well as enhancing their socio-economic participation in their community. Men and women shared common characteristics but differences could also be noticed, and expectations of inclusion also included skills acquisition, access to productive resources, self-realisation, or social cohesion.

The research was based on two conceptual models, the conceptual model of social exclusion developed by O'Donnell et al. (2021), and the Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion (GYSI) analysis framework developed by EngenderHealth (2021); which indeed appeared to be relevant for the research. Still, in the light of the findings, the researcher has adapted dimensions of the models used and developed a new conceptual model for social inclusion through NFE as illustrated below:

Figure 3: Conceptual model of social inclusion through NFE
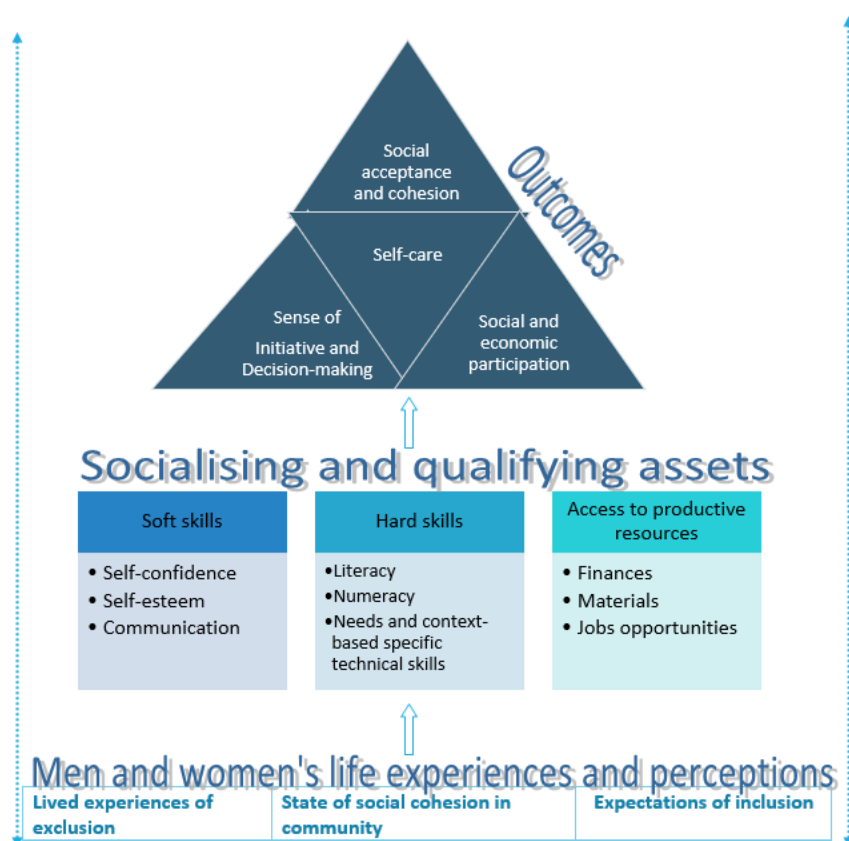
Source: The author

At the Bottom of the pyramid stand the life experiences and perceptions of men and women which are influencing factors of social inclusion (or exclusion). Indeed, it is assumed that men and women have different ways of experiencing social exclusion, have a different level of self-confidence or self-esteem, experience differently social cohesion within their community and have different expectations towards social inclusion. All these elements could positively or negatively influence men and women's agency and ability to take advantage of available assets or opportunities to reach the expected socio-economic outcomes of social inclusion.

At the middle then, stand the opportunities aimed at providing a range of skills and access to productive resources with a socializing and qualifying function, to enable the individuals play an active role in their society.

Therefore, as expected outcomes, an increased level of social acceptance and social cohesion (mutual understanding and conflicts prevention) is noticed, as well as decision making and initiatives taking at household and community level. Also, the individuals are able to have a socio-economic participation in community by holding for example community roles, generating sufficient income, contributing in the socio-economic development of their community; and being able to sustain their self-care by ensuring their basic needs.

V.2: Discussion of findings in relation to the literature review

V.2.1: Lived experience of social exclusion by rural illiterate young adults

The lived experiences of male and female respondents allowed to identify different manifestations of the complex notion of social exclusion. The respondents expressed various situations that characterised social exclusion which resulted in lack of self-esteem and inability to perform basic tasks, lack of participation either in decision-making or community roles, lack of access to opportunities and self-perceived constraint to move out of their village for earning money. These experiences align with O'Donnell et al. (2021) definition of social exclusion as the lived experiences of men and women in relation to lack of opportunity, and their incapacity to take advantage of opportunities, which prevents their full participation in society. The authors presented the opportunities as the fundamental needs required to be met by individuals: finance, education, housing, employment and healthcare. Yet it should be noticed that the participants of this research mainly insisted on finance, education and employment. This may be due to the fact that life in rural areas in Burkina Faso, is rarely characterised by homelessness and people tend to rely on traditional medicines apart from emergency cases; thus, do not experience a lack of healthcare and housing.

Besides it was observed by the respondents that the situation of exclusion or vulnerability was in itself induced by factors related to age (young people), gender (as women felt that they had less access to opportunities), their illiteracy status and even the fact of living in a rural area. This also confirms the different intersectional factors that characterized vulnerability and exclusion as presented by Pérez-Escolar & Canet (2022) who pointed out gender, geographical location, education, age, or poverty as factors of poverty. This research presented in addition a particular aspect of exclusion that we characterised as forced mobility due to poverty and differently perceived by women and men: men had the feeling that they were obliged to move away from their village to make a living while women regretted having a mobility restricted in village boundaries. And for the male respondents NFE was perceived as a way to address this forced mobility by helping them remain in their village. This finding conflicts which the scheme of NFE in the European context where NFE is perceive as a way to increase youth mobility (Norqvist & Leffler, 2017).

V.2.2: Training and skill acquisition needs of rural illiterate young adults

The participants in the research manifested their contentment for the new skills their acquired. They agreed that the training allowed rural illiterate young men and women to get a new attitude in their interactions, their productive and reproductive roles, an increased confidence and communication skills. They also recognised that they developed their literacy and numeracy skill and improved technical skills for productive activities. This allowed the researcher to categorised the acquired into soft skills and hard skills. This finding on the NFE contribution matches with the "socialising" and "qualifying" important aspects of NFE programmes' function in West-Africa countries as established by Adjimon & Rakotondrazafy (2016). The authors claimed that the socialising and qualifying functions aimed at addressing social issues face by excluded such as poverty, or isolation. It appeared indeed that the soft skills were important for the respondents to socialise, while the hard skills qualified them to be able to access job opportunities, community roles, improve their productive activities, or start a new business. The findings of the research also confirms studies done by researchers on NFE programmes in Africa, showing that these programmes aimed at building a multiple skills ranging from life or civic skills to employment skills (Latchem, 2018).

Besides, NFE in the context of Burkina Faso is delivered in the local language spoken by participants and these participants, regardless of their age, already have work experience as they all do farming as main occupation. With regards to this aspect of language of instruction and experience background of the participants, NFE context in Burkina Faso differs from NFE targeting youth in Europe as described by Norqvist & Leffler (2017). The authors remarked indeed that NFE for youth in Europe was seen as tool for giving experience to young people and allowing them to learn a new language (as a useful skill for youth towards mobility and employment). This is quite different from NFE is Burkina Faso where the programme is taught is the native language of participants, and participants mostly have experience (at least with regards to their farming activity). The reason for that may be related to the fact that teaching participants in their local language allows them to quicky get the literacy skills as the programme runs for a short period, and also the programme aims at enabling participants to contribute in the development of their community and improve their personal lives by using their existing experience.

V.2.3: Participation of rural illiterate young adults

The findings of the research revealed that the NFE programme was valued by participants for both its actual and potential contribution to an increased participation of rural illiterate young adults at household and community level. At community level, the research addressed the socio-economic participation and respondents shared their perceived changes. They thought that they had more respect within their community, were able to take part in decision-making processes and raise their voice, and were able to be considered for community roles. This confirms the social outcomes of social inclusion as presented by O'Donnell et al. (2021) which are social acceptance and social participation. In their study on NFE for youth in Europe, Devlin et al. (2017), also established that NFE was contributing to young people self-realisation, acceptance and participation in their community. A similar conclusion was also drawn in a study conducted by Olojede (2013) in Nigeria on the impact of rural literacy for socio-economic development. Yet, while the author presented an increased community participation and increased confidence of NFE participants, the findings of this research suggests a contrasting picture. Indeed, while the participants expressed a better participation through an increased self-confidence, some respondents said at the same time that due to their increased skills within the programme, they think that other illiterate persons couldn't compare themselves to them. This unfortunately shows that there is a risk of NFE participants to be responsible of the exclusion of some of their fellows as they now think that they have a better value than those people.

Also, the responses provided by participants allowed to make another conclusion with regard to participation: NFE not only contributes to an increased participation of rural illiterate young adults, but inclusive practices within the programme itself was also important. For example, respect for participants opinions and abilities, their involvement in activities, were significant factors enabling them to later feel confident to participate in the socio-economic life of their community or decision-making at household level. Indeed, most of the respondents appreciated the attitude of their trainers who took into account their needs, and ensure their participation in the NFE on an equal basis with their fellows which helped developing their confidence and self-esteem. This dimension confirms the results of a study conducted by Benkova et al. (2020) on non-formal educational practices as a tool for achieving social inclusion, in which the authors argued that inclusive practices in the implementation of NFE was also a key element for achieving social inclusion.

V.2.4: Perceptions and expectations of social inclusion through NFE

The respondents of the research mainly perceived NFE as a programme which brought light to them, enabling them change their life in their society. They shared their expectations towards the NFE programme for contributing to, and sustaining the social inclusion of rural illiterate young men and women. In this sense, the expectations were resumed in access to resources and job opportunities which could help them realise themselves and live a better life, and participate in the socio-economic life of their community. This matches with the social outcomes of social inclusion as described by O'Donnell et al. (2021): self-care, acceptance and social participation. In different terms, Olojede (2013) described the expectation towards NFE as a tool for ensuring a sense of freedom, responsibility and participation for the targeted people. The findings of this research align with the conclusions of these authors, and also go beyond. First of all, many perceived NFE as a tool for sustaining social cohesion which was very important. This is understandable in two respects: social cohesion indeed can prevent social exclusion as it calls for harmony living, mutual acceptance and understanding. Also this is a recurrent topic in Burkina Faso with regards to the current security crisis (as mentioned in Introduction), and voices call upon communities to prevent marginalisation and conflicts. Besides, some expressed a feeling of pride through NFE which connected them more to their local language by helping them know how to read and write in it. Finally, NFE was perceived by participants as way for gaining opportunities and resources to contribute in the development of their community and thereby gain a recognition from their fellows.

V.3: Strengths and limitations of the research

V.3.1: Strengths and quality of the research

This research was led by a researcher who was familiar with the study area as well as the organisation which was the commissioner of the research for being an project manager in that organisation. In this sense, the researcher was aware of the customs and traditions in the Plateau-Central region of Burkina Faso, as well as the main occupations of the communities. Besides, the researcher was supported by a research assistant who Kabeela who used to be a supervisor within the NFE programme for many years. Her knowledge of the programme and communities, ethnic background (she is native of the region were the study was conducted) and her connection with community members was a positive aspect in the research as it facilitated their interest and selfless involvement within the research. Besides, the research included a diverse range of participants from NFE participants to key informants so that relevant and extensive information could be gathered for a better analysis of the issue at stake.

The quality of the research was a guiding principle as we sought to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings by using a respondent validation during the interviews and also ensuring a verification of transcriptions made by the research assistant as a native speaker of the Mooré language. Also, the

results are herein presented by supporting statements with relevant quotes, and also by using wherever applicable a triangulation approach to give the reader a comparative perspective on the different points of view expressed by the research participants.

V.3.2: Limitations of the research

One challenge of the research was related to the period of data collection in the field. The researcher anticipated on this challenge but the period couldn't be change. Doing a research in rural areas during the rainy season means a lack of control on participants availability and time as they had to deal with their farming activities. In that case, we could notice that some participants were willing for short interviews for them to continue their activities which put a pressure on us at times to manage to end quickly some interviews and value their time. Yet, the research assistant always managed to reassure participants that we consider their occupations and the community representatives also got involved to motivate participants yet asking those who are not free not to sacrifice themselves. This limitation correlated with the fact that the initial participant sample was not met as we intended to get the same number of men and women respondents. But the researcher considered that the gap was minor and rather focused on the meaningfulness of the experiences got from participants, which for us was more important for such a qualitative research we carried out.

Also, the research initially targets rural illiterate young adults aged 15-35 but it appeared the interviews process that 6 respondents were not able to give us their age or date of birth but rather an approximation. Though this was anticipated by the researcher, it was actually a new insight appreciated by the commissioner as participants in NFE are not required to bring an ID document to be able to participate in the programme.

Another limitation of the study could be related to the position of the researcher and the assistant researcher. Indeed, the researcher worked for the Kabeela, and the assistant researcher was also known by the community representatives as she used to be a NFE supervisor. This may have led the participants expressed less openly, and to limit this and ensure quality of data, the researcher insisted on anonymity and the purpose of the study. To this regards, it was noted that participants expressed areas of improvement for the programme.

V.4: Methodological considerations

The researcher opted since the beginning for a qualitative research which remained the most relevant approach for assessing for the contribution of NFE to social inclusion of rural illiterate young adults by gathering the experiences and perceptions of the concerned people. With regards to the data collection, the researcher opted to be flexible and make necessary adjustments when needed for the purpose of collecting quality data and adapting to the local context and challenges on the field. In this sense, a FGD with NFE dropouts was replaced with an interview of two of them (man and woman) as key informant due to lack of participants. Besides, a participatory approach was adopted by involving community members which led to give responsibility to community representatives and leaders the task of passing the information in their village about the research and mobilise the research respondents and participants of the FGD.

V.5: Contribution and implications of the research

The research contributed in a better understanding of the social outcomes of the NFE programme implemented by Kabeela. As it was also the first qualitative research to evaluate the contribution of NFE programme to social inclusion, the research would definitely help the organisation better align or design new interventions. The research also contributed to raising communities voices and giving them the space and power to critically assess the effect of NFE; and it also raised their awareness on the necessity to take ownership of their trainings and skills development needs. The research also contributed in bringing new insights to extend conclusions drawn in previous studies by different authors about the contribution of NFE to social inclusion. Indeed, this research highlighted the difference of men and women interest with regard to learning content of the NFE programme, the aspect of forced mobility differently experienced by men and women, the perceived cultural pride experienced by respondents through NFE, or the particular expectation towards NFE for contributing to social cohesion.

Also, a new conceptual model of social inclusion has been developed in this research by the researcher based on the findings which support a better understanding of the conception of social inclusion and pathways to contribute to it through NFE.

The findings of the research and its contribution thereby lead to some consideration or implications. It calls upon researcher to further investigate on the gender differences in participants involvement in the programme and the impact of gender diversity in NFE; or the contribution of NFE towards conflicts prevention. Besides, another implication of the research is related the role and responsibilities of the local NGO at the forefront of NFE implementation in rural areas. This research has shown how important participation and accountability towards beneficiaries is the necessity for organisations to maintain a connection with former participants and promote a wide consideration by communities to the programme. The selection of trainers was also a key aspect as they should have a wide knowledge to different social issues and possess strong interpersonal skills.

Chapter VI: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapters gives and overview of the main findings and the conclusions drawn from the research in relation to the main research questions and correlative sub-questions. In the light of the conclusions, some recommendations are formulated to the attention of the commissioner.

VI.1: Conclusion

The research first established that social exclusion was considered as the experience of lack of opportunities or the inability to take advantage of available opportunities, preventing full participation in society (O'Donnell et al., 2021). The respondents were given a voice to translate in their own words the lived experiences of social inclusion which allowed to categorized the manifestations of social exclusions (dimensions of social exclusion). Indeed social exclusion appeared to be characterized by low self-esteem, lack of participation in decision-making at household level and community, lack of access to opportunities and public services; and low participation in the socio-economic life of the community. Social inclusion was then defined as the process of providing opportunities and resources to people at risk of poverty and social exclusion in order for them to achieve their participation in socio-economic life of the society (Benkova & Mareva, 2019).

In the light of rural young adults experiences of social exclusion and their perceptions of the contribution of NFE programme, it was concluded that NFE has an actual contribution towards social inclusion of the vulnerable groups. This contribution appeared to be multidimensional as the concept of social inclusion and social exclusion are also complex and multidimensional. NFE ultimately enabled or empowered participants in a way that they could noticed changes within their life and better community participation. This contribution could be noticed on a general level but also was differently experienced by participants though common patterns in the changes were perceived.

With regards to both definitions of social inclusion and exclusion and the experiences reported by participants in the research, the contribution of NFE towards social inclusion of rural young illiterate adult was characterised according to different aspects. On the level of skills development, the research recognised that the transfer of both soft skills and hard skills were a key input of the programme. This allowed participants to gain skills ranging from communication, or self-confidence, to literacy, numeracy, or technical skills. This allowed to confirm the socialising and qualifying dimensions of NFE. Besides, NFE also contributed to an increased level of participation either at household level (decision-making and initiatives taking) or socio-economic life of community (decision-making, community roles, consideration). Those benefits interrelated and also correlated with an increased or potential access to opportunities expressed by participants (jobs, development of productive activities).

A general consensus occurred among participants views on the positive contribution of NFE towards social. Participants showed that they were receptive to such a programme which shows that the acknowledgment of the general opinion that any input was still considered as a plus for them. Despite general positive perception of the programme, the researcher noted that gender differences existed in the involvement of participants in the training content and its outcomes, that the contribution could depend on prior skills and abilities of participants and the NFE required participants to make sacrifices in their usual activities for the hope of gaining better living conditions through the programme. That was certainly one the reasons very few respondents expressed a contrasting or moderate point of view on the contribution of NFE to a change in their lives as they still expected a return on the investment they made. In any case, NFE has proven to be a NFE welcomed by rural communities and vulnerable groups for supporting towards social inclusion.

VI.2: Applied recommendations

With regards to the research objective, and based on the findings and conclusions that were presented, a set of recommendations are hereafter suggested to the commissioner.

First of all, on the basis of the fact that a different interest was expressed by men and women in the learning content, it is recommended that the programme management staff of NFE programme revise the learning content by assessing gender differences in training needs, availability, and abilities, to integrate them in the design and implementation of the programme. This could correlatively help revise the training period and programme duration as some participants gave a preference for a two-year programme.

Also, it appeared that participants were not always able to identify trainings needs or propose FTS trainings that were the most relevant for improving their conditions and relied on the sole decision of project leaders. In that sense, it is recommended that a needs assessment is thoroughly conducted and which ensures a good participatory approach, and enables not only communities to identify their own needs, but also gives more responsibility to them and beneficiary accountability. This is a key aspect to generate long lasting positive change based on accurate and context-based realities.

In addition, one of the findings showed that participants lacked resources to implement the skills they got through FTS and participate in the socio-economic life of their community. It is therefore advised that the management board of Kabeela build relevant partnerships with donors and policy-makers in order to mobilise substantial resources for supporting participants set new businesses or develop their existing productive activities.

Besides, participants suggested that social cohesion was an esteemed aspect of the programme and also an expectation. It therefore suggested that the programme managers develop specific module contents on conflicts prevention and mutual understanding to be addressed during NFE training not only for participants but also the entire community (through awareness raising campaigns). In the current socio-politic context of Burkina Faso, this is indeed an important dimension for peace in communities and social inclusion of marginalised groups.

Finally, the finding revealed that participants of the NFE wanted to maintain a connection with the programme and be supported to actually be seen as examples of change. Considering that, it is advised that a monitoring and follow-up plan is established in order to maintain an active network of alumni which could also serve for advocating about the positive impact of the programme.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Research schedule

Table 2: Research schedule

Main activities	Period			
	June	July	August	September
Desk study	🟩			
Proposal writing submission	🟩			
Field work: Interviews Focus groups		🟩	🟩	
Data analysis		🟩	🟩	
Report writing			🟩	🟩
Report submission and presentation				🟩

Annex 2: Profile of primary respondents

Table 3: Profile of primary respondents

Respondents	Sex	Age-Age Range	Prior education level
R1	F	31	Illiterate
R2	F	18	Illiterate
R3	F	21	Junior secondary school
R4	F	35	Illiterate
R5	F	35-40	Illiterate
R6	F	40-45	Illiterate
R7	F	30	Primary school
R8	F	34	Primary school
R9	F	35-40	Illiterate
R10	F	40-45	Illiterate
R11	F	16	Primary school
R12	F	23	Illiterate
R13	F	40-45	Illiterate
R14	F	40-45	Illiterate
R15	F	18	Junior secondary school
R16	M	24	Primary school
R17	M	32	Illiterate
R18	M	36	Illiterate
R19	M	25	Illiterate
R20	M	35	Illiterate
R21	M	34	Illiterate
R22	M	25	Primary school

R23	M	21	Illiterate
R24	M	34	Illiterate
R25	M	35	Illiterate

Annex 3: FTS training expectations

Table 4: FTS training expectations

Respondents	Sex	"FTS" training needs
R1	F	Poultry and cattle breeding
R2	F	Peanut butter Local beer production Breeding
R3	F	Knitting Breeding
R4	F	Breeding
R5	F	"Soumbala" production Shea butter Breeding
R6	F	Chicken and cattle breeding
R7	F	Breeding Weaving and knitting
R8	F	Rice farming Breeding
R9	F	Breeding
R10	F	New agriculture technique Breeding
R11	F	Breeding
R12	M	Chicken and cattle breeding
R13	M	Body soap Weaving Chicken breeding
R14	M	Breeding
R15	M	Shea butter Body cream Chicken and cattle breeding
R16	M	Cattle breeding Gardening Carpentry
R17	M	Cattle breeding
R18	M	Cattle breeding Improved Farming techniques
R19	M	Cattle breeding Agriculture
R20	M	Cattle breeding
R21	M	Cattle breeding

R22	M	Cattle	breeding
		Gardening	
R23	M	Cattle	breeding
		Training in craftmanship	
R24	M	Cattle	breeding
		Carpentry	
		Local resources transformation	
R25	M	Cattle breeding	

Annex 2: Semi structured interview guide

Semi-structured interview guide

Introduction and consent

My name is Patrick Dombwa; I am a Master student in Management of Development, completing studies with a specialization in social inclusion, gender and youth, at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, in The Netherlands. I'm here with my colleague Sylvie from Kabeela, and we would like to discuss with you regarding the NFE programme implemented in your village.

The purpose of the research is to get knowledge from you about the contribution of NFE programme on social inclusion of rural illiterate young adults, in order to formulate recommendations improving such interventions. This is independent research I'm conducting. You have selected to participate in this research as you took part in the NFE programme. Your opinion is therefore very important and you asked to freely expressed yourself and give honest feedback based on your experience and observations. We will keep the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants with regards to the information you provide.

The interview will last for approximately 45 minutes. You are free to participate in the interview and you are free at any time to stop the interview, or to respond to questions. We might also ask for recording the interview or a picture.

Do you agree to participate in the research? Do you agree for recording? Do you agree for picture?

Icebreakers:

Discuss rainy season and agriculture. Ask about family, their activities.

Name :
Age :

Q1 : Life experiences of social exclusion,

- What do you understand by social exclusion?

- Do rural illiterate young men and women feel excluded?

- What factors lead rural illiterate young adult to be excluded?

- From what do they feel excluded?

- What types of services or opportunities do rural youth fail to access? Are they differences among men and women?

- How does exclusion affect the activities of young people and women?

- How does exclusion of non-literate young women and adults affect participation in decision-making? Social life? Economic life?

S2 : Trainings and Skills needs

- What kind of training did you receive through the NFE?

- How did the selection for the FTS training go?

- What were your expectations from the training?

- How did the training improve your skills? What changes have you noticed in your skills?

- How does it contribute to your activities? To your self-care?

- What opportunities do you access with your new skills?

S3 : Participation at household and community level

- What changes have you noticed in your interactions with others since you participated in NFE?

- What are the changes in your participation for decision-making in your family? In your community?

- Has NFE improved your role in your community? What roles have you accessed?

- What changes have you noticed in your involvement in the social life in your community?

- What changes can you share related to your involvement in the economic life of your community?

S4 : Expectations of social inclusion through NFE

- From your experience what are the successes and the major contribution of non-formal education in your life?

- What aspects didn't you appreciate in the programme? What needs to be improved?

- What kind of training would better fit your needs?

- What do you expect of NFE for improving your involvement in decision-making in your household? in your community?

- What do you expect of NFE for improving your involvement in the social life in your community? Economic life?

- What others particular expectations do you have towards NFE to support your inclusion?

- Do you have any other recommendations?

- Any questions?

Thank you for your participation.

Closing

Provide a summary of discussions. Ask for clarification and particular request regarding the use of information. Provide explanations and how the information will be used and future steps for the researcher