



**National Adult Literacy Database Inc.
2007 - 2008 Annual Report**

Foreword

Since its beginnings, the National Adult Literacy Database has offered its services to support the building of more literate Canadians, increased participation in adult learning and a strengthened Canadian culture.

This year Canada's ministers of education declared that every Canadian must have the opportunity to acquire the highest quality literacy skills to sustain them throughout life.

It's a lofty goal and one NALD fully supports through its many and varied initiatives and in partnership with national, provincial and territorial literacy organizations across the country.

After a comprehensive consultation process involving stakeholders in cities across Canada, NALD launched NALD@Work, an online repository devoted to enhancing literacy and essential skills in the workplace. Helping to meet a need in Canada, the site provides resources for employers and labour unions, employees and workplace educators/ instructors, policy-makers, academics and researchers – everyone with an interest in workplace literacy, learning and essential skills.

This report is dedicated to the members of the NALD@Work Advisory Committee whose expertise, advice and support have been crucial to the development of NALD@Work over the past year. (See Page 12 for list of members.)

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Letter from the Chair

The year 2007-08 has been another productive, successful year for NALD. We have been kept busy providing our website services to the literacy community and stakeholders, continuing to develop and add to our website resources, and providing support to our more than 180 hosted literacy organization websites.



Much of our effort has been directed to the continuing development of our NALD@Work services. With the support of our Advisory Committee and the assiduous efforts of our NALD team, NALD@Work is fast becoming a significant resource to a growing workplace audience.

NALD has again this year been active across the country in supporting the work of many literacy events, coalitions and agencies, national organizations and related workplace initiatives. For example, we were pleased to take part in the successful CMEC Pan-Canadian Interactive Literacy Forum which brought together many stakeholders in the field. The whole literacy community looks forward to the implementation of the call to action supported so strongly at this event.

I would like to recognize and thank the board members of NALD who are deeply committed to our mission and who so willingly continue to contribute their time and talent to the organization. I would also like to give particular thanks to our honorary chair, Roch Carrier. His support and recognition of the mandate and value of NALD is a great encouragement and inspiration to the board members and the staff.

On behalf of the board members, I also wish to thank and recognize the hard work and dedication of our CEO, Katherine d'Entremont, and the entire NALD team.

As we celebrate our national mandate and virtual presence and involvement across the country, we also wish to recognize the federal government and the province of New Brunswick. Both continue to be key supporters of NALD in many ways. It is a privilege to have our headquarters in a province that so strongly recognizes the economic and social benefit of supporting literacy and essential skills across the lifespan.

We look forward to another year of continuing to serve learners and the literacy community through supporting and enabling the work of our many partners and stakeholders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anna Kae McIvor-Todd'.

Anna Kae McIvor-Todd
Chair, NALD Board

Letter from the CEO

It has certainly been a very productive and busy year at NALD. Over the years, NALD has firmly established itself as a key resource to Canada's literacy community. This past year, NALD extended its reach to the workplace learning community with the introduction of our exciting new service – NALD@Work.

As Canadians seek to improve their levels of literacy in order to participate fully in the workplace and in society, the expansion of NALD's services to the workplace community fills a vital need. We are grateful for the dedication and commitment of the members of the NALD@Work Advisory Committee, whose insight and experience in the field of workplace literacy and essential skills have been instrumental in shaping the NALD@Work initiative. We will continue to work with committee members and others as we further enhance and promote our NALD@Work services.



Having had the opportunity to meet so many people working in the literacy field over the past year, a recurring theme emerges with respect to their appreciation of NALD's services. They so often praise the staff at NALD, mentioning that although in many cases, they have never met the people they have been dealing with "virtually" over the past several years, they feel as if they know them. It is a pleasure to work with such a dedicated staff – people who are committed to providing the best possible service to those working in the field of literacy and essential skills in Canada.

NALD values the very collaborative environment that exists among the various literacy organizations across Canada – the other national literacy organizations, the provincial and territorial organizations and their members, as well as organizations such as the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). It is by continuing to work closely with our partner organizations that NALD will be able to provide the resources most needed by those working in the field. This will improve our literacy outcomes, and in turn enhance our social and economic well-being.

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to work with the very dedicated and experienced members of the NALD Board of Directors. I look forward to the coming year as we strive to work together in support of improved literacy outcomes for all Canadians.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine d'Entremont". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katherine d'Entremont
Chief Executive Officer
National Adult Literacy Database Inc. (NALD)

Board of Directors

Roch Carrier

Honorary Chair
National Adult Literacy Database Inc.

Anna Kae McIvor-Todd *

Vice-President, Learning
Bow Valley College, Calgary, AB
NALD Chair

Katherine d'Entremont *

Chief Executive Officer
National Adult Literacy Database Inc.
Fredericton, NB

Michelle Brown

Team Leader
Random North Development Association
Clareville, NL

Roger Doiron

Chair
Fédération d'alphabétisation du
Nouveau-Brunswick
Richibouctou, NB

Sue Emson

Librarian
Saskatoon Public Library
Saskatoon, SK

W. David Ferguson *

Deputy Minister
Clerk of the Executive Council and
Secretary to the Cabinet
Executive Council Office
Government of New Brunswick
Fredericton, NB
NALD Vice-Chair

Nora Kelly

Deputy Minister
Post-Secondary Education, Training
and Labour
Government of New Brunswick
Fredericton, NB

Margaret Lipp

Commissioner
Saskatchewan Literacy Commission
Regina, SK

Scott Murray

President
DataAngel Policy Research Inc.
Kanata, ON

Linda Shohet

Director
The Centre for Literacy
Montreal, QC

Sylvia Sioufi

Literacy Project Coordinator
Canadian Union of Public Employees
Ottawa, ON

Bill Stirling *

Vice-President
Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters
St. John's, NL

Yvette Barriault

Secretary to the Board
National Adult Literacy Database Inc.
Fredericton, NB

** Member of NALD Board Executive Committee*

The NALD Story

Founded in 1989, the National Adult Literacy Database Inc. (NALD) is a Canadian non-profit registered charity whose mission is to provide information and resources to the adult literacy community in Canada in both official languages.

Relocated to Fredericton in 1995, NALD became a web-based information and resource distribution system. By providing free and universal online access to literacy information and training materials, NALD facilitates the inclusion of every Canadian in the increasingly knowledge-based society.

In July 2006 NALD launched two separate website portals with different domain names (www.nald.ca and www.bdaa.ca) to accommodate the anglophone and francophone literacy communities. These two independent sites feature a user-friendly layout and provide easy navigation to resources, events and other literacy-related information.

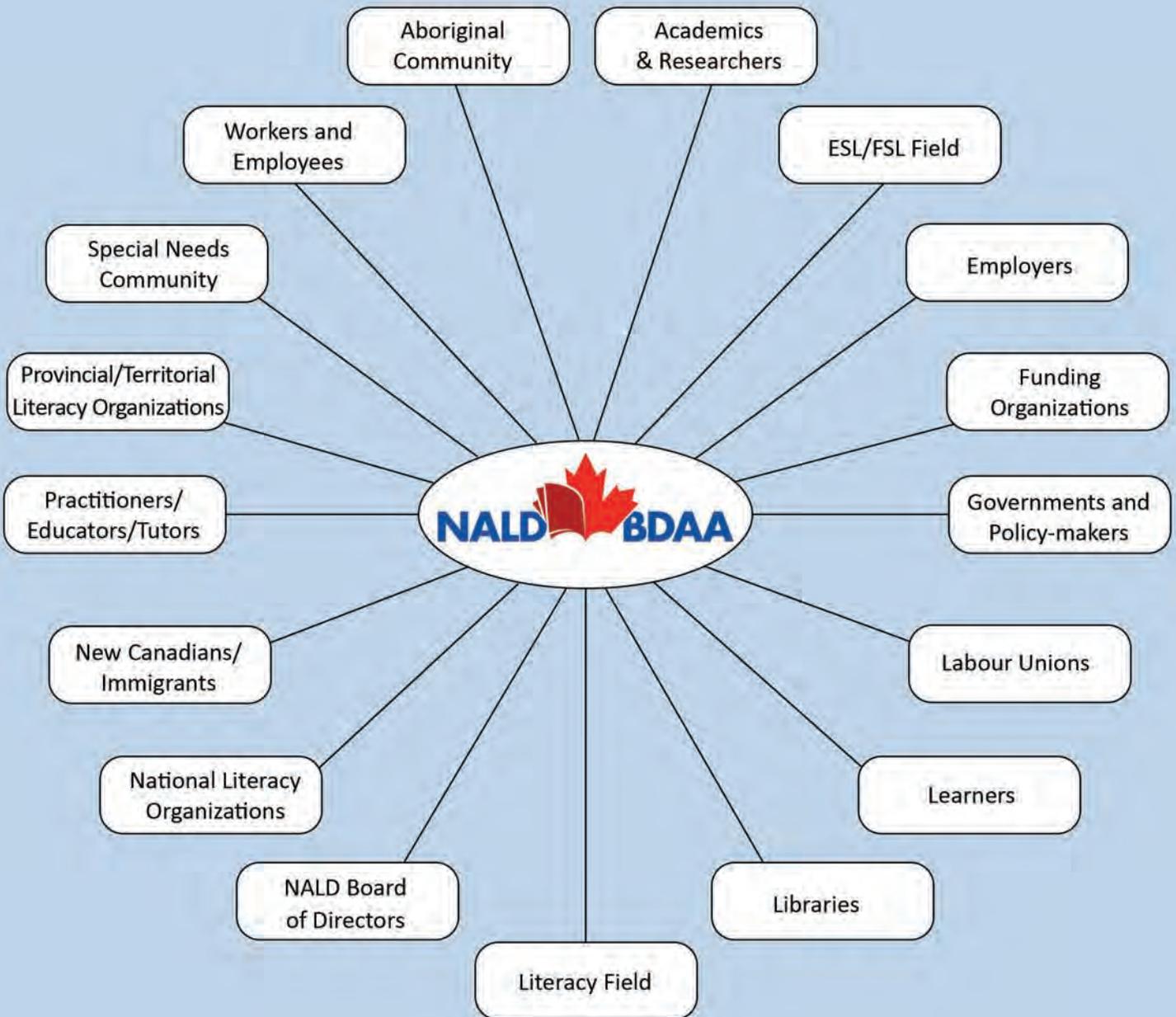
During the past year, NALD was busy preparing for the launch of two new websites: NALD@Work and BDAA@uTravail. Launched on November 30, 2007, the two workplace-related websites provide a forum for stakeholders to share information and successful practices, learn of news and events going on in the workplace literacy and essential skills field and optimize their use of the Internet.

For the time period April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2008, NALD's website services were accessed by approximately 5 million users. They viewed more than 13 million pages of information and downloaded more than 6 million full-text PDF documents.

There is little doubt that NALD is having a significant impact on the literacy landscape within Canada and outside its borders. While the most recent IALSS* study determined that in recent years there had been only a slight improvement in literacy levels of Canadians, the growth in use of NALD resources indicates that a significant level of measurable success in the literacy effort is within reach.

** International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (2003)*

Key Stakeholders of NALD



Guiding Principles

Knowing where you are going is as important as the work it takes to get there. With a solid mandate, NALD understands that success is a product of a clear sense of mission, a compelling vision and deeply rooted values. They are summarized as follows:

Mission

NALD is a Canadian non-profit registered charity. NALD's mission is to provide Internet-based literacy and essential skills information and resources in both of Canada's official languages.

Vision

NALD's vision is to be a world-class provider of access to information and educational resources, serving the literacy community in Canada through the Internet.

Core values

The following core values are essential to the fulfilling of the NALD mandate and serve as a guide to the Board and staff as they realize the vision and perform the mission.

- Quality and Equality
- Empowerment
- Innovation
- Alliances

Key Areas of Activity

Building community

NALD builds, hosts and maintains websites for non-profit literacy and literacy-related organizations in Canada at the national, provincial/ territorial and local levels. The number of organizations served by NALD has grown to over 180, with 5-6 new websites under development at any given time. There has been a noticeable increase in partnering and collaboration among members of the literacy community since they have become visible to each other on the Internet.

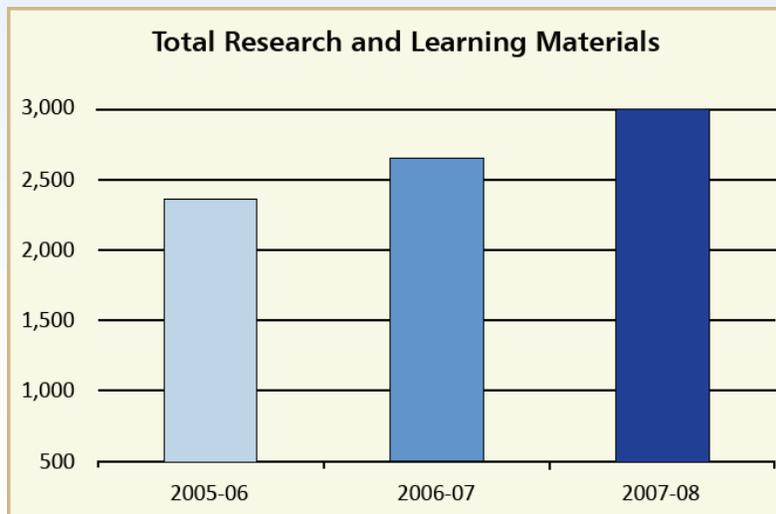
Providing information and resources

NALD provides a service whereby people can send in a request for information by e-mail or use the toll-free phone number, and NALD thoroughly investigates their requests for information.

NALD has created a library of resources by digitizing and making available on the Internet many of the excellent resources that have been created by Canadians for the literacy community. The library contains research materials, such as reports, articles and directories, and learning materials including manuals and guides to be used in the classroom or at home. (See graph: Total Research and Learning Materials)

Most of these resources have been created with public funds provided to a large degree by the Federal Government through the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) and by provincial and territorial governments. These resources, many of which have not been available or have been available only through the libraries of large universities, are now available to anyone with access to the Internet.

NALD distributes documents and other resources through the World Wide Web in both HTML and PDF formats and in both official languages. In recognition of the requirements of people with special needs, NALD also prepares these Web-accessible resources according to the standards required by the World Wide Web Consortium. Using these standards, NALD converts different types of publications including reports, newsletters, learning materials and research materials. Some of the files created by users are also being made available in audio or video format.



Organizing resources from the Internet

NALD organizes and posts many of the educational resources on the Internet for the purpose of making them available to busy practitioners who may not have the time to perform often demanding searches for useful resources. NALD encourages users to submit their suggestions for resources that should be on its websites.

Providing technical support

NALD provides the technology for many literacy projects so often there is no need for project leaders to buy the hardware and software that would be required if they were not turning to NALD. By using NALD services, project leaders also avoid the learning curve that often comes with becoming adept at using new computer software.

NALD provides support for electronic discussions, hosting e-mail listservs for individual literacy organizations. It also provides numerous clients with interactive forums, extra e-mail accounts for those who already have an Internet provider, and Web analysis software to analyze user statistics on clients' websites.

Launching NALD@Work

NALD expanded its services on November 30, 2007, with the launch of NALD@Work, a bilingual website designed to benefit the workplace literacy and essential skills community in Canada.

NALD@Work is an Internet database of information and resources – a one-stop shopping site for program models and approaches, learning and research materials, news, events, contacts, websites, tools and support – all available in one central location. The NALD@Work Library contains important full-text documents and resources, many of which are not available electronically anywhere else.



Roch Carrier, Honorary Chair of NALD and Anna Kae McIvor-Todd, Chair, NALD Board, at the launch of the NALD@Work website

When the new website was launched, NALD's Chief Executive Officer Katherine d'Entremont noted that individuals need a firm foundation of literacy and essential skills to participate fully in the workforce.

"As the workforce becomes more knowledge-based, people need higher literacy levels," she said. "If people don't continue to learn, read or study, their literacy levels won't remain constant; they are going to decline. At the same time, the workplace requires higher literacy levels, so the gap is widening."

Patricia Nutter, project director with the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators and a friend of NALD, credited NALD@Work for making available the many successful interventions and resources that have been created in the field of workplace literacy and essential skills.

"Thanks to this initiative, stakeholders in the remotest parts of Canada have access to the same resources and knowledge as those in Canada's largest cities. It means that all stakeholders with access to the Internet can use up-to-date research and materials to help raise the skill levels of current and future workers in Canada."

A Special Thank You Extended

The NALD Board of Directors is grateful for the valuable input provided by members of the NALD@Work Advisory Committee and also from key stakeholders from across the country who took part in consultations as the new website was being developed.

Members of the NALD@Work Advisory Committee:

Debbie Burns, Chairperson, Fredericton, NB
Denis Bédard, Sherbrooke, QC
Denis Bélanger, Sherbrooke, QC
Michel Boulanger, St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, QC
Marjorie Davison, Halifax, NS
Margan Dawson, Hammonds Plains, NS
Tracy Defoe, Vancouver, BC
Sue Folinsbee, Toronto, ON
Brigid Hayes, Ottawa, ON
Sandi Howell, Winnipeg, MB
Nancy Jackson, Toronto, ON
Karen Kennedy, Edmonton, AB
Tamara Levine, Ottawa, ON
Jim Pollock, Toronto, ON
Tina Pomroy, St. John's, NL

Major Initiatives

Over the years, Canadian stakeholders expressed the need for a central clearinghouse of adult literacy resources in English and French. The NALD website fills that void and now its new sister website NALD@Work, launched in late 2007, is serving the workplace literacy and essential skills community in Canada.

As part of a comprehensive information network serving both linguistic communities, NALD and NALD@Work foster a sense of community among literacy organizations and the individuals who require their services and the services provided by NALD.

NALD

NALD is an award-winning service that:



- Provides complete, full-text documents and books as well as a list of commercially available resources
- Designs and hosts websites for literacy organizations
- Researches and organizes educational material found elsewhere on the Web
- Connects partners with experts in the field
- Publicizes literacy-related activities and events
- Strives to reduce barriers to accessibility to the NALD website particularly for those with disabilities and those who use assistive software such as screen readers

NALD provides information free of charge, leveling the playing field for learners and practitioners. Since its beginnings, it has changed the way resources are accessed and broadened the numbers of people who access them.

NALD@Work



Individuals require a firm foundation of literacy and essential skills to participate fully in the workplace. With that in mind, NALD expanded its focus beyond adult, family and community literacy to encompass the world of work. NALD@Work is a key building block that can be used to create that foundation and a one-stop resource centre that can be used to develop workplace education programs.

An increasing number of stakeholders are initiating programs to enhance workplace skills for their members, employees and clients. Many more would like to do so but may lack the experience or resources to get started.

Through its vast online library, NALD@Work makes available the many successful interventions and resources that have been created in the field of workplace literacy and essential skills. Special NALD@Work features include program models, learning and research material, news about what is happening in the workforce, an events calendar, helpful websites, learning tools and workforce preparation links.

Additional Initiatives

Clear Language Interpretation Project (CLIP) – Adult Learning Knowledge Centre, an initiative of the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and NALD – This pilot project was designed to assist literacy researchers, practitioners and partners in understanding the focus, content and conclusions of various literacy-related research papers published by Statistics Canada and located in the NALD library. The clear language summaries enable people to determine the usefulness and relevancy of a document quickly and efficiently.

Connecting the Dots: Improving Accountability in the Adult Literacy Field in Canada – NALD is providing assistance and consultation for the project and hosting the website. The project, undertaken by The Centre for Literacy, Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL) and Research in Practice for Literacy BC (RiPAL-BC), is helping to develop a common language between literacy practitioners and funders to support dialogue and decisions involving accountability.

Consulting Services for the Advancing Learning Technology Project – NALD provided consulting services relating to the development and maintenance of all communication tools for this Literacy Nova Scotia project which was launched on the NALD website. The project provides electronic connectivity for all literacy coordinators, practitioners and learners in community-based programs in Nova Scotia. Literacy Nova Scotia is now able to further develop their technology use by sharing information online for available courses and support materials for technology integration and project newsletters. The organization is also able to host discussion forums.

Consulting Services for English Second Language Learning Objects for Mobile Devices – Athabasca University and partners – NALD provided consulting services on literacy and dissemination issues for this project. The project developed and tested innovative approaches to ESL learning, using mobile devices in a variety of learning contexts.

Dissemination of Program Resources and Information – Centre AlphaPlus Library Collection – NALD has used its expertise and experience in document conversion to prepare documents and post them in the NALD online library.

Independent Living Impact Project – Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) – NALD developed a credible, sustainable, pan-Canadian framework for analysis, information gathering, storytelling and measuring the participation in Independent Living-related activities, services and supports, enabling CAILC to document success stories and provide a historical account on the impact of the Independent Living (IL) movement in Canada.

Literacy Basics Plus – Literacy Basics is a free, self-directed online training website for Ontario literacy practitioners. This innovative website was researched, written and designed by Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO). CLO has developed four new components of the Literacy Basics website: Marketing, Strategic Planning, Management System, and Essential Skills. NALD has added these components and now maintains the site.

Online Resource Centre – NALD has worked with CCL staff establishing, populating and maintaining an Online Resource Centre to enable stakeholders of the CCL across the country to have ready access to a one-stop collection of learning materials. The centre is accessible through the CCL website and websites of CCL's five Knowledge Centres.

Professional Development Website Project – NALD has developed a portal for the collection and sharing of curriculum resources by Adult Literacy Practitioners (ALP) for the Skills and Learning Branch of Nova Scotia's Department of Education. NALD provided technical support as required and will maintain the site.

Resource Database – Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) – The CMEC website will be provided with a ready-made collection of resources and the NALD library application giving users quick, accurate and highly functional access to the contents of the library. The CMEC resource manager will enable members of the organization to build a CMEC-specific collection of resources.

Weaving a Knowledge Web – NALD has created and is maintaining a website, under the direction of Dr. Jenny Horsman, as a place to examine the impact of violence on learning, to find ways to support learning in the aftermath of violence, and to find out who is doing research or creating innovative practice to understand and address the issue of violence. An extension of this project, Strengthening a Knowledge Web to Improve Literacy Learning Outcomes, has been approved. Its intent is to draw in marginalized voices to increase access and deepen understanding about learning and violence.

Website for the Centre de ressources en alphabétisation familiale – Through this project, Centre FORA has established and is managing a national francophone resource centre specializing in family literacy. NALD designed and is maintaining the website, providing access to information on existing minority-language, family literacy projects and programs in French, and quality materials intended for parents and children.

Website Maintenance – Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) – NALD continues to provide maintenance support and monthly website activity reports to assist CLEO in its role of providing low-income and disadvantaged people in Ontario with the legal information they need to understand and exercise their legal rights.

Website Maintenance – Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) – NALD continues to provide updates to some of the CPHA-related websites. NALD is proud of its working relationship with CPHA and to be involved in the distribution of well informed and resourceful, health-related information.

Work-in-Progress Consortium website – NALD has implemented a ready-to-use Web Content Management System package in the development of this bilingual website, as per instructions from the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre (AdLKC), an initiative of the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL). The website provides AdLKC with an internal system for communication, updating information and distribution.

Finances

NALD continues to evolve to meet the needs of the literacy and workplace essential skills community in all regions of Canada while continuing to be an important player in the economy and labour market of New Brunswick.

Eighteen people are currently employed at NALD's Fredericton location with an additional two working on a contract basis from their homes in the Fredericton area and two more in Moncton. NALD employees contribute their knowledge and skills in the areas of Research and Communications, Web Development, Systems Administration, Web Applications Development, Document Conversion, Accounting and Administration.

NALD bases its services for the most part on the needs of literacy and literacy-related organizations across Canada. Through these services, NALD has built valuable partnerships and working relationships that have provided NALD the opportunity to expand its main activities and develop additional project activities.

NALD continues in its role as a key organization in Canada's literacy community. The sound financial management and practices utilized at NALD are evident and essential for NALD's continued growth in service and impact over the years.

NALD is grateful to its principal funder, the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, and also for the support and contribution it has received from the Government of New Brunswick.

**An Audited Financial Statement for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008, is available upon request from the office of the National Adult Literacy Database Inc. (NALD).*