Role of Non-Formal Education in Achieving Education for All

The theme for this issue is "Role of Non-Formal Education in Achieving Education For All". Member Institutions were requested to contribute articles on the theme based on the experiences of their respective countries. The response was positive and prompt. We are happy to inform that Agha Khan University-Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED), Pakistan, has joined the ANTRIEP family. We welcome the new member institution. In this issue, we have included articles

In this Issue....

from Balitbang Dikbud Centre for Policy Research (Indonesia), AKU-IED (Pakistan), KEDI (Korea), NIEPA (India) and Institute Aminuddin Baki (Malaysia).

The article from Balitbng Dikbud Centre for Policy Research (Indonesia) elucidates the policy context of education for all in Indonesia as universalization of '9-basic education'. The '9-basic education' consists of six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education. In order to achieve the goal of universalisation of basic education, government of Indonesia has developed two streams, i.e. school stream and out-of-school stream (non-formal education). The non-formal education comprises *of Kejar Packages A* and *B,* which equal to primary and junior secondary levels of formal schooling respectively. The packages are targeted to enroll 3.5 million out-of-school children in the country. The paper focuses on the content and methodology of non-formal education. It also discusses some of the issues and problems related to quality of non-formal education and its role in achieving universalisation of basic education.

The paper from KEDI, Korea highlights the recent innovative approach called the Credit Bank System to provide opportunity for continuing education. As

universal school education has been nearly achieved in Korea, there has been high demand for higher education. On the basis of recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Education Reform (1995), the government has introduced the Credit Bank System adopting accreditation system and standardised curriculum. The article explains in detail the different aspects of the Credit Bank system and some of its challenges.

The article on non-formal education in Pakistan by the AKU-IED describes the alternative system that has been evolved in Pakistan to achieve universalisation of primary education. Non-formal education is provided as an alternative to increase access to education in areas where there are no formal schools. This article raises important issues related to quality of non-formal education and management problems. The article discusses the delivery mechanism of the non-formal education, including partnership with NGOs.

The paper from NIEPA (India) expounds the genesis of non-formal education as an alternative to formal education to bring the out-of-school children into the fold of education in order to achieve universalisation of elementary education. The article discusses briefly the policy perspectives in alternate schooling. It describes the concept and nature of non-formal education in India. It also presents the evolution of the concept from the conventional non-formal education to more functional alternative schooling in recent years. The focus of the article is on the changing role of alternative schooling in providing basic education for all. It also raises some of the important issues related to quality and management of non-formal education in India.

The paper from Institute Aminuddin Baki (Malaysia) elucidates the history of non-formal education in Malaysia, which initially provided education and skills for adults. Later on, it extended learning opportunities to disadvantaged population. The present form of continuing education extends opportunity to lifelong learning and improving skills.

The concept of non-formal education varies between the countries in the region. In case of Indonesia, India and Pakistan, the non-formal education focuses on school age population and functions as an alternative route for achieving universalization of primary education. Since, Korea and Malaysia have universalized school education to a large extent, non-formal education serves more as an alternative system to provide higher and continuing education. In Korea, non-formal education has evolved into a more structured form, which is called the Credit Banking System. However, there are some common issues and concerns related to quality of non-formal education in all the countries in the region, when it is adopted as an alternative to formal education, particularly at the basic education level.

We continue to receive encouraging responses to the newsletter from various individuals and institutions. We express our gratitude to all the contributors in this issue of the newsletter and also to all the readers for their encouragement.

Editor

Education for All in Indonesia: Role of Non-Formal Education

Introduction

The policy context of 'education for all' in Indonesia is universalization of '9-basic education'. The term '9-basic education' consists of six years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. The indicator of success of this policy is high net participation rates, which is estimated by taking into consideration the number of children in the age group 7-15 enrolled in basic education. In order to achieve the goal of universalization of 9-basic education, the government has developed two streams, i.e. school stream and out-of-school stream (non-formal education). School stream consists of primary schools (SD) and junior secondary schools (SLTP), while non-formal education stream consists of *Kejar Package-A*, which equals to SD and *Kejar Package-B*, which equals to SLTP.

Although there are no reliable data available, Packages A and B are targeted to enroll some 3.5 million children who are out-of-school. These programmes are typically located in poor rural areas. Each package enrolls between 25 – 30 students. Learning resources in these programmes include modules and tutors. The modules are designed to reflect curriculum from school stream (formal school), while tutors are typically recruited from local community. This is intended to minimize cost. As an alternative of basic education, package programme suffers from inadequacy of education resources. Although modules are the main learning resources, in many cases, these are not provided adequately. Many students of these programmes rarely have complete modules for all subject matters. Similarly, since tutors tend to be recruited from local community, they either have low

educational status or are without teaching experiences. In addition, they are also under-paid. As a consequence, it is difficult to sustain their commitment, since they have to work for their living.

Development of Package Programmes

Given the fact that the sustainability of the package programmes is still dependent on the availability of education resources, inferences from a case study conducted by the Centre for Policy Research (1997) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) in four areas in East Java reveals three stages of development of package programmes: the initial stage; the developmental stage; and the established stage. The characteristics of these stages are as follows.

Initial Stage

(i) The activities include recruiting tutors as well as motivating children to attend the package programme. Parents are also motivated in this stage to let their children attend the package programme;

(ii) The educational facilities and equipments are not adequately available. Teaching activities may take place even outside the building. In the classes, learners may sit on the floor;

(iii) Evaluation of the academic progress of learners takes place using oral test rather than written test. Consequently, no written report can be obtained;

(iv) Budget is mainly absorbed for administrative cost. Even if some of the budgets are allocated for tutors' honorarium, they might not be paid for their time allocated to teaching, rather to motivating learners to regularly attend the class

activities; and

(v) Indicator of success is not the academic achievements of students but the rates of attendance.

Developmental Stage

(i) Educational facilities and equipments are adequate enough to support the class activities. However, not every student has modules. As a result, learners cannot study independently at home;

(ii) Teacher may begin to concentrate on teaching rather than on motivating students. This does not mean that all students are present in the class. Some students may not attend the class, but the attendance rate is relatively high, i.e. about 60 per cent;

(iii) Class activities tend to take place inside the building, and the learners are no longer required to sit on the floors. They now sit on chairs;

(iv) Evaluation of the learners' academic progress may be made on the basis of a written test, but the test itself is not yet subjected to validity and reliability test. The result of the test, however, is good enough to be used as a measure of the progress;

(v) There is shifting of the budget allocation pattern. The budget is allocated more towards provision of modules and educational equipments. The administrative cost may decrease but the budget for the tutors stays the same; and

(vi) The indicator of progress is still the rate of attendance, and often, the level of academic achievements is also used as one of the indicators of success.

Established Stage

(i) It is the ultimate stage of development of the package programme. In this stage, there should not be many differences between the package programme and the formal education in terms of its educational facilities and equipments as well as the quality of the tutors, except the teaching methods;

(ii) Educational facilities and equipments of the package programme are as good as of the formal education system at large;

(iii) Tutors of the package programme are well qualified. The tutors become full time employees;

(iv) Budget allocation for the package programme increases progressively with the increase in academic qualification of tutors and maintenance costs; and

(v) Evaluation of the progress of the package programme is done on the basis of academic achievements of learners, since the attendance rates are high (above 90 per cent) at this stage. Tutors also start considering validity and reliability aspects in designing tests to evaluate the academic achievements of learners.

Each of these stages requires different strategies to ensure attendance of children and effective teaching-learning. Each stage requires different sets of teaching-learning materials. Also, there are different sets of objectives to be realised at each stage. Accordingly, the level of budget allocation varies between stages of development of the package programmes .

Conclusion

Both *Kejar Packages A and B* have been in existence since the early 1970s. They were originally designed to provide non-formal education programmes, which were oriented towards development of vocational skills and specifically meant for poor adults and children. The government implemented the universalization of 9-year basic education in 1994. Since then these programmes are being used as alternatives for enrolling children in basic education. As a consequence, these programmes are no longer designed exclusively for adults, and these are reoriented more towards

academic rather than vocational skills, although some vocational skills are still taught. The academic subject matters are more emphasized since students of these programmes are required to take equivalency examination. This is the case since graduates of these programmes are designed to have opportunities to enter the formal school stream. In reality, this policy is difficult to implement for two reasons. First, the graduates of the non-formal stream tend to have low academic achievements. Secondly, they are from poor family backgrounds. Thus, their chance to enter formal school stream is rather remote.

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Non-Formal Education in Pakistan

Introduction

Despite several governmental and non-governmental initiatives, literacy rate in Pakistan is significantly low at 49 per cent (61.3 per cent for males and 36.8 per cent for females). In terms of absolute numbers, there are 54 million illiterates in Pakistan (Economic Survey, 2000-2001). Although, at the primary level of education, gross enrolment ratio has increased significantly over the years, dropout rate still remains very high. More than 60 per cent of children who enroll in primary classes drop out before completing the primary cycle (SPDC, 2000). Reasons for dropout or non-participation in primary education include, but are not limited to, economic role of children (who contribute in agriculture, or work in factories or shops, or stay at home for sibling care), inflexible school calendar, prevalence of corporal punishment, unaffordable school fees and cost of uniforms, cultural restrictions for females, etc.

Certain characteristics of Non-Formal Education (NFE) make it an advisable option for Pakistan. It reduces economic burden on poor families because there is either no fee, or low fee; books are often provided free of cost by the government or NGOs, and uniform is not required. School calendar and timing are sensitive to economic factors as these allow students to contribute to family income. These schools/centres could be established at relatively lower cost in areas where there are no government schools. This approach reduces the fear attached to girls' mobility by allowing girls to attend classes possibly in the neighbourhood.

Educational policies and plans of the national government have always acknowledged the relevance and importance of NFE for improving literacy in Pakistan. For example, Education Policy of 1970 made recommendations, emphasising the importance of adult literacy. Similarly, Education Policy of 1992 underlined the need for removing the "existing backlog of 50 million [illiterate] people" in order to achieve universal primary education. Policy statements also acknowledged that non-formal education should not be restricted to illiterate adults; it should also include the children who have dropped out of schools (GOP, 1959, 1969, 1992).

Despite the commitments made in various educational policies, no strategic and sustained efforts have been made for their implementation. Education Policy of 1979 acknowledged that "since the independence, no serious attempt seems to have

been made to launch a viable programme." Nai Roshni School Project (1987-89) could be termed as an exception, however, with a caveat that it fell short of achieving its target. This project aimed to make 15 million people (6 million males and 9 million females) in the age group of 10-24 literates. Only about 0.8 million people were made literates at the cost of Rupees 834 million. In practice, overall strategy during the last fifty years "has remained as one of expansion of the existing system and efforts have been directed solely to the establishment of existing types of formal institutions," (GOP, 1998).

Non-Formal Education Programmes

Frequent changes in government policies have affected the organisational structure for NFE, without significantly changing the status of education or literacy in the country. Recurrent changes in policies have also changed aims and target groups of NFE programmes. For many years, the core objective of such programmes was to provide basic literacy to adults and school dropouts. The National Council of Adult Education formed under the National Education Policy, 1979 first attempted at institutionalising NFE and focused mainly on adult education. This Council was renamed in 1987 as Literacy and Mass Education Commission (LAMEC). With *Nai Roshni Schools* (1987-89), a LAMEC initiative, the objective changed to providing primary education to out-of-school children and young adults. There were subsequent changes in the structure of LAMEC with its reconstitution as the National Education and Training Commission (NETCOM) focusing on functional literacy, and then into Prime Minister's Literacy Commission (PMLC) in the early 1990s. The PMLC mainly aimed to promote primary education and general literacy, especially among females. This was done through condensing primary curriculum into 3 years and establishing women literacy centres in rural areas.

In the year 2000, Chief Executive Literacy Commission was formed. Recently, it has been transformed to District Literacy Commission to reflect the devolution process on the political front. The current programmes for NFE emphasise on the provision of fast track primary education for children, especially girls in 5-12 age group, covering the formal five-year primary curriculum in three and half years in non-formal schools. Recently, the government has announced that 1,80,000 girls would be imparted basic education by the end of 2002 in eight tehsils of Punjab under the Literacy and Primary Education Project. These frequent changes in the organisational structure and objectives have limited the impact of many NFE initiatives, thus contributing largely to the insignificant changes in the overall status of education or literacy in Pakistan.

Agencies Providing NFE

Non-formal education initiatives in Pakistan have remained largely the domain of the NGOs. The nature of support and contributions from NGOs ranges from mobilising communities to providing teacher training, and establishing and monitoring literacy centres in rural and semi-urban areas. Over the years, a number of NGOs such as BUSTI, Karachi East (Sindh); Asthana Latif NFPE (Sindh), Society for Advancement of Education, Centres/ Schools of Bunyad Literacy Community Council Punjab, Basic Education for Afghan Refugees (Peshawar), etc have worked for improving literacy and NFE in the country. It is significant to note that the impact has mainly remained localised and restricted to areas where these NGOs function, and the number of beneficiaries (literates) in these areas does not exceed a few thousands (EFA 2000 Assessment). Furthermore, initiatives of NGOs for NFE are sporadic in the absence of active, regular and effective support from the government and dependence mainly on donors for funds.

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Schools of Bunyad Literacy Community Council Punjab, Basic Education for Afghan Refugees (Peshawar), etc have worked for improving literacy and NFE in the country. It is significant to note that the impact has mainly remained localised and restricted to areas where these NGOs function, and the number of beneficiaries (literates) in these areas does not exceed a few thousands (EFA 2000 Assessment). Furthermore, initiatives of NGOs for NFE are sporadic in the absence of active, regular and effective support from the government and dependence mainly on donors for funds.

After the growing thrust on building partnerships for achieving EFA in other parts of the world, there have been some instances of collaboration between government and NGOs in the implementation of NFE programmes in Pakistan. For example, government in collaboration with National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) opened 10 Non-Formal Primary Education Schools in those villages of Islamabad, where no formal primary schools were available. The changed role of the government as sole policy-maker and implementer to a collaborator since 1990s has understandably been influenced by the international trends. The provincial governments have also realised and acknowledged NGOs' expertise and outreach, especially in working with the communities. Partnership with NGOs is also a strategy to share the burden of providing education for all, as the governments have neither the resources nor the finances to meet the challenge.

The scope and coverage of non-formal education programmes based on government-NGO partnership have remained somehow very limited. For instance, in Sindh, the government in collaboration with small NGOs opened 1600 non-formal schools for children in the age group 5-9. Only 7500 children have completed primary education in a span of five years. Such figures are not sufficient enough to respond to EFA needs of Pakistan having 54 million illiterates.

Norms and Processes

The process, nature and set-up of more recent NFE schools are essentially the same irrespective of their association with the government or NGOs. In areas where there is no government school, the community is asked to provide space for running one-teacher non-formal school/centre. While in other areas, classes are held in the existing government school buildings.

In non-formal schools/centres run by the government, a teacher is paid Rupees 1000/- and the government provides other stationary items and books. In case of collaboration with NGOs, a minimal amount is paid to NGOs for monitoring each school/centre. Variations are seen across projects and areas depending on the initiatives of NGOs, size of the project, availability of funds and the target area. Teachers are preferably females belonging to the same community, where these schools/centres are located. In the context of Pakistan, experience suggests that non-local teachers are not motivated. Parents are reluctant to send their daughters to schools with male teachers and women make better primary school teachers with whom children can relate more easily. Therefore, females with suitable qualifications, i.e. ten years of education, are appointed for these schools. They receive short training (mostly fifteen days) after which they are eligible to teach in these schools. In case of non-availability of qualified females, even females with eight years of formal education are appointed as teachers.

Content of NFE

Five-year cycle of primary education is completed in 3 and half years with no annual vacations and approximately four-five hours of teaching per day. Multi-grade teaching is done in schools with students having different levels of IQ studying in the same class. Teachers conduct lower primary grades examinations, while public examination is conducted at the end of the primary cycle. After taking these

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Issues

Implications of quality and equity also become a major issue in the implementation of NFE programmes. Studies conducted on teacher quality in primary schools in Pakistan show that a majority of teachers, who have completed ten years of schooling, are unable to answer 30 per cent of questions based on grade IV textbooks (HDC, 1998; Warwick and Reimers, 1994). In case of non-formal schools located in rural areas, with teachers receiving short training and limited support from government and/or NGOs, one can expect the

quality of teaching-learning to further deteriorate. Other aspects of quality such as enrolment and dropout rates, teacher and student attendance, school supplies, and physical infrastructure are not given considerable attention, which affects the regular functioning of the schools. Teachers' salaries are low, and in many cases, remain unpaid for six months.

It appears that the objective of non-formal education in Pakistan is to provide access rather than quality education, which could adversely affect students' learning and their development. Students completing primary education from the non-formal system are relatively disadvantaged compared to those studying in the formal system. First, the mainstream institutions show reluctance in admitting them. Second, those who manage to get admission find it difficult to bridge the gap resulting from the difference in quality between the two systems, with possible repercussions on their socio-economic attainments.

Conclusion

In order to make NFE initiatives a success, government policies should be consistent and should not be influenced by political changes. New initiatives must try to build on past experiences and lessons learned from previous initiatives, instead of launching disparate projects, as is the case now. It is important that NFE should be complimentary, not an alternative, to the formal system of education in order to remove the backlog of illiterates. However, in doing so, it must not compromise on the quality of education.

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Credit Bank System: An Innovative Approach to Adult Lifelong Learning in Korea

Background

There is a high demand for formal education in Korea. In the past, students undertaking non-formal modes of higher education were not given formal recognition or credit. Education was considered as the sole domain of the formal school system. Such a belief on the one hand increased the demand for universities and colleges to provide places, which created excessive competition among students for these limited places. On the other hand, non-formal education was greatly undervalued, even though it provided people with useful practical knowledge and skills that they were willing to pay for. In 1995, the Presidential Commission on Education Reform (PCER), established in 1994 as a policy advisory body to the President, presented an innovative vision of a new education system to promote the development of a society of open and lifelong learning. The purpose of this new education system was to give people better opportunities to enhance their individual capabilities. The introduction of the Credit Bank System (CBS) was proposed as an innovative strategy to realize this vision. On the basis of this proposal, the CBS gained government endorsement through a law, passed on 13th January 1997. Following this, the accreditation system and standardized curriculum were developed and applications for accreditation from educational institutions evaluated. In March 1998, the first stage of implementation began.

The CBS aims to provide all citizens with greater access to various educational opportunities and to foster lifelong learning. The CBS seeks to provide further educational opportunities for students who are studying at post-secondary institutions and for adults who are seeking additional education and training. In the long term, the CBS will raise the overall standards and status of the non-formal education sector as a vital means for promoting educational self-achievement and guaranteeing the global competitiveness of the Korean population.

Clientele Groups

Anyone can benefit from the CBS, especially the following:

(i) High school graduates who were previously unable to attend post-secondary institutions;

(ii) College or university dropouts;

(iii) Workers who have professional certificates but do not acquire a university degree;

(iv) College or university graduates who wish to commence studies in a different field;

(v) Individuals who wish to acquire formal credits for knowledge and skills gained through self-instruction and workplace training and experience; and

(vi) Individuals who have studied at private institutions or junior colleges and wish to transfer into the university system.

Administrative Organization and Management

The Lifelong Learning Policy Division of the Ministry of Education (MOE) formulates all policies related to the CBS, approves the educational programmes offered by education and training institutions, finalizes the standardized curriculum, and awards degrees. The MOE delegates much of the developmental and administrative work to the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI). The KEDI is responsible for registration of students, credit approval, review and approval of degree requirements, accreditation, re-evaluation of

education programmes, and management of the Credit Bank Information Service System.

The KEDI operates a committee for credit approval. The committee is composed of leaders from diverse social groups who screen the credits that students earn and who observe the students' learning experiences and activities. Moreover, the KEDI provides a consulting system, an on-line service, and other resources and information for learners and educational institutions.

Credit Approval and Certification

The CBS guarantees each student's right to access to learning any time and any place through a variety of ways. Students get credits by completing programmes at educational and vocational training institutions, enrolling as part-time students in colleges or universities, acquiring various national certificates, and gaining qualifications through examinations.

After completing the necessary credit requirements (140 credits for a bachelor's degree, 80 credits for a two-year associate degree, and 120 credits for a three-year associate degree), candidates may submit a Degree Application form to the KEDI. The Screening Committee for Academic Credit Accreditation at the KEDI reviews the applications. Then the applications are forwarded to the MOE for final approval. Candidates may obtain a degree from the MOE or they may receive a degree directly from a university or a college. In the latter case, candidates must meet the specific degree requirements set out by the awarding institution (e.g. over 85 course credits for universities and over 50 course credits for colleges).

Standardized Curriculum and Syllabus

A standardized curriculum refers to a comprehensive learning plan customized for each subject area. It provides instructors with specific guidelines for curriculum preparation and students with a detailed description of possible ways to learn and meet educational goals. The KEDI develops the standardized curriculum in co-operation with the MOE and through the consultation of relevant professionals. The curriculum is revised bi-annually according to social changes, academic and technological development, and requests from teachers and students.

The standardized curriculum directly addresses educational objectives, courses and electives, major areas, graduation requirements for a bachelor's degree, and evaluation and quality control. A standardized syllabus describes the contents which should be taught in a given subject area. The CBS requires students to accomplish at least 70 per cent of courses planned for the standardized syllabus.

Accreditation of Educational Programmes

Accreditation is a formal evaluation of non-formal educational institutions and their subjects to determine whether their quality of programs and courses can be counted as university or college equivalent credits. Some of the accreditation criteria are as follows:

(i) Instructors must possess at least the same qualifications as a full-time professor at a junior college. There must be a sufficient number of instructors and the total teaching hours per instructor should not exceed 18 hours a week;

(ii) Classrooms should be larger than 1.0 square metre per student and additional facilities should include a laboratory, administrative office, counselling office, and library. Other provisions may apply, as dictated by the MOE; and

(iii) Offered programmes must comply with the standardized curriculum and syllabus for each subject.

Student Support System

The CBS does not have a mentor. Instead, it has an information centre and on-line information service that provides the necessary information for institutions and students. Students can easily access the on-line comprehensive information system,

which provides information on academic planning, methods of credit counting, the accredited institutions, the various subjects, mentors and teachers, standardized curriculum and syllabus, and degrees obtained.

Impact

As of August 2001, 3,513 students have been awarded degrees through the CBS. The CBS encourages people to participate in lifelong education programmes by granting credits for various out-of-school learning experiences. It provides different ways in which adults can gain qualifications. In Korea, the implementation of the CBS is a turning point in transforming a closed education system to an open one. The system is promoting flexible and opening learning.

Major Challenges

Managerial aspects of the system need to be improved at the institutional level and at the central level of the MOE. There should be more effective means of managing and reducing administrative workloads of educational institutions.

Ways of obtaining credits need to be more diversified in the future. The CBS needs to be more aware of each individual's diverse prior learning, which includes other modes such as online learning.

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Role of Non-Formal Education in Achieving the Goal of Education for All in India

Introduction

Education for all is a Constitutional commitment in India. The Constitution of India envisages free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14. The recent 93rd Constitutional Amendment, which is in fact underway, would make elementary education (i.e. eight years of schooling) a fundamental right of the child. This also demonstrates the strong political will in the country to provide education for all. Over the last five decades, India has made tremendous progress towards universalization of elementary education. There has been many-fold increase in institutions, enrolment and teachers, both at primary and upper primary levels of education. The number of primary schools in the country has more than tripled from 0.21 million in 1950-51 to 0.642 million in 1999-2000. Similarly, the number of upper primary level institutions has increased by more than fourteen times from 0.014 million in 1950-51 to 0.198 million in 1999-2000. During this period, total enrolment at primary level has increased by around six times and that of girls by more than nine times. At the upper primary level, the increase in total enrolment during this period is more than thirteen times and that of girls about thirty-three times. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at elementary level of education has increased from 32.1 per cent in 1950-51 to 81.32 percent in 1999-2000. In 1999-2000, it was 94.9 per cent at primary level. Total number of teachers at primary level has increased by more than five times and that at upper primary level more than fifteen times during the period 1950-2000.

The quantitative expansion of the formal education system during the last five decades, however, has not helped the country much to move towards the goal of education for all. Till the early 1990s, the focus of interventions in the elementary education sector in India was relatively more on expansion than on strengthening classroom processes and improvement of the internal efficiency of the system. As a result, not only poor quality of education but also low internal efficiency of the formal school system have now become major concerns in the

way of achieving the goal of 'Education For All' (EFA) in the country. Currently, nearly half of the children enrolled in formal schools drop out before completing elementary level of education. In 1999-2000, the dropout rate was 40.25 per cent at primary level and 54.53 per cent at elementary level. The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at primary level was 71 per cent in 1997-98, suggesting that 29 per cent of children in the age group 6-10 were out of school. In terms of coverage of school age children, the formal school system has almost reached the threshold level, i.e. currently most of the out-of-school children are beyond the reach of the formal education system. Moreover, during the 1990s, implementation of externally funded basic education development projects in the educationally backward states and, backward districts within the educationally advanced states, has further created access to formal schooling facilities. In such a context, retention of children who are in the system, rather than coverage of school age children, is the critical issue in the formal school sector, and raising the level of learner achievement is of course the other major concern.

Learning from the past experiences and keeping in view the long cherished goal of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE), India launched the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (i.e. Education for All Movement) in 2001. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is an effort to improve the performance of the school system and provide community owned quality elementary education in the mission mode. It envisages bridging gender and social disparities at elementary level of education, and therefore, focuses on educational needs of girls, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and children in difficult circumstances. By the end of the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-1998 to 2001-2002), the SSA will cover all the districts of the country. The specific objectives of the SSA are: (i) to enroll all children in formal schools, Education Guarantee Schools/ Centres, Alternate Schools, 'Back-to-School Camps', etc. by the year 2003; (ii) to retain all

children in the age group 6-14 in the formal schools or their alternatives by 2010; (iii) to ensure that all children in the age group 6-11 complete five years of primary schooling by 2007 and all children in the age group 6-14 complete eight years of elementary education of satisfactory quality by 2010; and (iv) to bridge gender and social disparities at primary level by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010. In the SSA, non-formal education (i.e. alternate schooling) has been recognized as a critical component for achieving UEE. That segment of school age children, who do not have access to formal schooling or who are not retained in the formal school system, will be covered by the alternate school sector. The important strategy under the SSA is that, unlike the earlier Non-Formal Education Scheme, the alternate school sector will focus relatively more on 'mainstreaming out-of-school children' than on providing equivalent level of education as that of formal schools. Given the brief introduction to the current status of the elementary education, this article makes a modest attempt to review the role and contributions of non-formal education programmes towards achieving the goal of EFA in India.

Non-Formal Education in India

Conceptually, 'Non-Formal Education' (NFE) is about acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training that takes place outside recognized formal institutions. In the policy debates in the early 1970s, most of the countries, including India, were realizing the inability of the formal education system to take care of the schooling requirements of all categories of children and adults. The reason was that, from the point of view of supply of provisions at compulsory level of education, these countries were finding it very difficult politically as well as economically to pay for the expansion of formal education. The other reason was that formal education system in many developing countries, like India, was not capable of retaining fairly a large number of children from socio-economically

disadvantaged communities. It was from this point onwards, policy-makers and planners began to recognize the role of non-formal education as an effective intervention not only for creating equal educational opportunities but also for mainstreaming out-of-school children. This was the period when India debated on the effectiveness of NFE as an alternative mode for providing basic education for all, particularly for children from disadvantaged communities and children in difficult circumstances.

In India, 'formal education' refers to a hierarchically structured education system running from the kindergarten through the university, including institutions of technical and professional education and training. 'Informal education', also often termed as 'incidental education', refers to unorganized education acquired during the entire life span of an individual through interaction with other members of the society. Hence, informal education is in fact a life long process through which every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge, to a large extent conditioned by his/her environment. 'Non-formal education' is an organized educational activity, which takes place outside the traditional framework of formal education system in India. Formal education is highly structured and rigid. It is characterized by uniformity to a large extent. The major characteristic feature of NFE in India is its flexibility in terms of organization, timing and duration of teaching and learning, clientele groups, age group of learners, contents, methodology of instruction and evaluation procedure. It is this characteristic feature of NFE, which has made it a critical mode for reaching out the hardest-to-reach group of children, both in rural and urban India, in order to achieve the much desired goal of education for all.

Policy Perspective

In 1977-78, the centrally sponsored scheme of NFE was introduced on a pilot basis with a view to support the formal system in providing education for all in India. In 1986, the National Policy on Education (NPE) emphasized the fact that formal education system would not be able to reach out all children in the age group 6-14 having diverse socio-economic backgrounds. It further mentioned that a systematic programme of NFE would be required to provide equal access to elementary education in small habitations, which were not eligible for opening of new formal schools and to cover school dropouts, working children and other categories of out-of-school children, particularly girls, who were not attending schools for various reasons including poverty. The basic objective of NFE was to mainstream these children. In fact, the NPE (1986) recognized NFE as an important component of the overall strategy for achieving UEE in India.

The state governments ran a major portion of the NFE scheme through establishment of NFE centres. However, one component of the scheme provided grants to Voluntary Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) directly from the central government for running NFE centres and for implementing experimental and innovative projects on alternative education. Initially, the scheme covered 10 educationally backward states namely, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The NFE scheme was revised in 1987-88. In the revised scheme, the focus continued to be on the 10 educationally backward states. It however, also included urban slums, hilly, tribal and desert areas and projects for working children in other states and union territories. In 1992, the Programme of Action (POA) outlined certain strategies to further strengthen the scheme. These included: (i) micro planning for opening NFE centres; (ii) community involvement in identification and supervision of NFE centres; (iii) different models of NFE for different categories of out-of-school children; (iv) capacity building of NFE instructors; (v) linkages with the formal school sector to facilitate lateral entry for mainstreaming the graduates of NFE sector; (vi)

adoption of learner-centered approach; and (vii) ensuring the same level of learners' achievement as that of formal school sector.

The NFE scheme was later extended to 25 states and union territories. The scheme was implemented through states/union territories with a funding pattern of 60:40 (i.e. 60 per cent funding support from the central government and 40 per cent funding support from state governments) for co-education centres and 90:10 for centres for girls. In case of NGOs, 100 per cent funding assistance was provided for opening NFE centres. Under the scheme, NFE centres were running for two hours daily at a time suitable to the learners. Most of these centres ran at night to cater to the needs of the working children. Usually, the community used to provide infrastructure including the place for running the NFE centre. They also used to help identify the instructors of the NFE centres. The NFE scheme did advocate flexibility in various aspects of running of the centres. However, while implementing the scheme, uniform and rigid organizational procedure was followed across almost all states and union territories. A large number of NFE centres were set up in habitations having formal schools, and as a result, the earlier target for covering small and scattered habitations having relatively large number of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe households and where formal schooling facilities were not available did not receive high priority. Besides, evaluation of the NFE programme revealed that the involvement of the community and the *panchayati raj* institutions in running the centres was much below the expected level. The linkage between the formal schools and the NFE centres was very weak and it was not facilitating lateral entry to formal schools. The quality of teaching-learning process was poor in the NFE centres and the graduates of these centres were considered as second grade. The scheme had a low coverage of out-of-school children in the age group 6-14, as it covered less than 10 per cent of

these children. The transition rate from NFE centres to formal schools was very low. However, with all these limitations, the NFE scheme was implemented up to the financial year 1999-2000 and was again revised in the year 2000. Currently, the revised non-formal education programme has been renamed as Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS & AIE).

Current Status

One of the major problems of assessing the contribution of NFE towards realization of the goal of EFA in India is the lack of comprehensive database. The scope of the database on NFE is limited to the centres and innovative projects funded under the centrally sponsored scheme. Comprehensive time series data on coverage of the NFE sector are not available. Besides, contributions of the non-formal education institutions in the private sector, including schools and centres run by religious groups, certain communities (i.e. self-help groups), voluntary agencies (i.e. schools/centres not funded by public authorities), etc. are not included in the official statistics. Even non-formal schools/centres run by other public departments and agencies, such as the Ministry/Department of Labour, the Ministry/ Department of Tribal Welfare, and urban development authorities, are often not reported in the official statistics. In such a situation, it is difficult to assess the exact contribution of the NFE sector in providing education for all in India. In fact, given the data limitations, the contribution of the NFE sector towards achieving education for all is usually under-reported in the EFA assessment exercises.

Even with all the limitations, the NFE sector has been largely instrumental in reaching the hardest-to-reach category of children in the age group 6-14 during the last two decades. In 1999-2000, more than 3,03,800 NFE centres were being run by 25 states/union territories and 826 Voluntary Agencies/ Non-Governmental Organizations. Out of 0.3038 million NFE centres in the country in 1999-2000, 7,800 were upper primary level NFE centres, which

were being run by the state governments and NGOs, and 58,000 were primary level NFE centres being run by NGOs alone. Total enrolment in these centres was 7.4 million in 1999-2000. Besides, 41 experimental and innovative projects were being implemented by the voluntary agencies in 1999-2000. In the Ninth Five-Year Plan period (i.e. 1997-98 to 2001-2002), budget allocation for NFE scheme was Rs. 18654.2 million, amounting to 11.4 percent of the total budget allocation for centrally sponsored schemes in the elementary education sector.

According to the Sixth All-India Educational Survey, the latest educational survey, in 1993, around 0.18 million habitations in the country did not have primary schooling facility within a distance of one kilometer. Access to elementary schooling facilities has been created in some of these habitations during the last 7 years. However, in order to provide universal access to elementary education, schooling provisions need to be created in the remaining habitations. Currently, around 0.1 million habitations in the country still do not have primary schooling facilities as per the prescribed norms (Report of the Working Group on Child Development, 2001). Most of these habitations are not eligible for establishment of formal schools as per the state norms. Besides, an estimated 56 million children in the age group 6-14 were out of school in the country in 2000. The out-of-school children are heterogeneous in terms of socio-economic backgrounds. These children require a highly flexible alternative system of schooling that can support diversified strategies to ensure their participation and retention till they complete 8 years of formal schooling or its equivalent. These out-of-school children are generally found in remote schoolless habitations. Many of them are working children, street children, children in urban slums, bonded labourers, children of sex workers, girls from minority communities, children of migrant construction workers, etc. The extent of coverage and retention of these children largely determines the possibility of achieving EFA in the country.

Drawing from the experiences of the earlier NFE scheme and other externally funded basic education programmes in the country, and with the above objectives (i.e. creation of equal access to elementary schooling facilities and coverage and mainstreaming of out-of-school children), the EGS and AIE scheme has been introduced from the year 2000. The EGS and AIE scheme is different from the earlier NFE scheme in terms of its emphasis on flexible strategies for specific groups of children, involvement of the community, empowerment of instructors, improvement in classroom processes, regular academic support, increase in instructional time, highly decentralized management structure and strengthening of regular schools for mainstreaming graduates of EGS centres and AIE schools/centres. However, the new scheme still retains three components of the earlier NFE scheme, i.e. (i) state-run EGS centres/schools or various other types of alternate schools and back-to-school camps; (ii) learning centres or alternative schools run by voluntary agencies, including NGOs; and (iii) experimental projects for innovative pedagogical strategies implemented by the voluntary agencies.

The EGS and AIE scheme supports diversified strategies for mainstreaming out-of-school children, which include bridge courses, back-to-school camps, seasonal hostels, residential camps, sugar schools (i.e. for children of migrant workers), summer camps, vacation courses, multi-grade learning centres, contract schools, drop-in centres (i.e. for children in difficult circumstances), night schools, mobile schools/teachers, support to *Maktabs/ Madrasas,* half-way homes and remedial coaching. It is also envisaged in the scheme that the quality of non-formal education would be raised to a level matching the formal education system; the community would play the central role in the implementation of the scheme; instructors/teachers would be paid enhanced honorarium; creation of

non-formal educational facilities would be done on the basis of elaborate school mapping and micro planning; and the scheme would be an important component of the larger convergent and community based programme for universalization of elementary education, i.e. the SSA.

Education volunteers, teachers and instructors under EGS and AIE scheme are drawn from the community. They are selected and appointed by the village community or the Village Education Committee or the *Village Panchayat*. Women and youth from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes communities are given preference as education volunteers. The required minimum educational qualification of the education volunteers for primary level alternative schools/centres is ten years of schooling (i.e. grade X graduates) and 15 years of schooling (i.e. university graduates) for upper primary level schools/centres. However, the required educational qualification of education volunteers is relaxed in case of non-availability of suitable candidates, usually in the remote and backward areas. In the scheme, relatively more emphasis is on capacity building and empowerment of education volunteers, teachers, instructors through provision of induction and annual training. The classroom processes in the EGS/AIE schools and centres are child-centered and activity based, where the teacher acts as a facilitator in the multi-level teaching-learning process. Since the basic thrust of the scheme is to facilitate mainstreaming of out-of-school children into the formal schools, the state governments do testing and certification. Generally, education volunteers, headmasters of local formal schools, sub-inspectors of schools are involved in a simple assessment procedure to ensure transition of children from alternative schools/ centres to appropriate grades in formal schools at any time during a given academic year.

Currently, the scheme is being implemented in all the states and union territories, though its focus is still on the educationally backward states and also backward districts within the educationally advanced states. The scheme will form part of the SSA from the beginning of the Tenth Five-Year Plan, i.e. 2002-2003. The funding for the EGS and AIE scheme is shared on a 75:25 basis between the central and state governments for all the state run EGS centres/ schools, AIE centres and other interventions for alternative schooling. However, the scheme provides 100 per cent funding to voluntary agencies/ NGOs for running alternative education centres/ schools and for implementing experimental and innovative projects. To facilitate effective implementation of the scheme, the investment cost per child per annum has been raised from Rs. 375 to Rs. 845 at the primary level and from Rs. 580 to Rs. 1,200 at the upper primary level.

Conclusion

At the current level of development of basic education and given the objectives of the SSA, non-formal education plays a critical role in achieving EFA in India. In terms of designing the alternate schooling programme (viz. EGS & AIE), the focus is more on detailing out the implementation of these programmes. For the first time, it has been recognized that the success of non-formal education programmes, among others, depends, to a large extent, on an efficient formal school system. It is only then that children who transit from alternate school sector would be retained in the formal schools. Raising the level of learners' achievement in alternate schools/centres is another focus area in the SSA.

There are still a few concerns about the effectiveness of the non-formal education programme (i.e. EGS & AIE) as complementing the efforts in the formal education sector to achieve EFA in the country. Designing appropriate curriculum and teaching-learning materials for children of varying needs and circumstances is a major challenge in the alternate school sector. The average educational status of teachers in the non-formal education sector is low compared to that of

the teachers in the formal school sector. The salary/honorarium paid to alternate school/centre teachers is comparatively very low. How to empower and motivate these teachers? Is it possible to raise the level of learners' achievement matching that of formal schools with relatively less competent and low paid teachers? Several innovations and experimentations have been done in the alternate school sector. How to have these innovations and experiments institutionalized to facilitate mainstreaming of certain categories of out-of-school children? It is envisaged that the planning and management of NFE would be decentralized, where community would be in the centre stage. Presently, in the absence of capacity building in planning and management of basic education at the grassroots level, ensuring community participation and effective implementation of NFE, and effectively mainstreaming relatively older children who have never been to school, are among some of the concerns in the NFE sector, which need to be further reflected on. Nevertheless, non-formal education continues to play a critical role in complementing the formal school sector for achieving EFA in India.

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Non-Formal Education in Malaysia: Trends and Challenges

Introduction

Non-formal education in Malaysia started as early as the 13th century. In the Malay villages, *'silat'* or the local martial art was taught non-formally under a *'guru'* or the teacher. Later, when the Arab and Indian traders introduced Islam to this country, Islam was first taught in homes. Gradually, as more people became Muslims, Islam was informally taught in classes held at the community mosque. One can say that the first non-formal education was started by the Arabs in the form of religious *'sekolah pondok'* or 'hut schools', especially in the states of Perlis, Kedah, Melaka, Terengganu and Kelantan (all northern states of Peninsular Malaysia).

Besides, women were also informally taught lessons on handicrafts. Before the Second World War, evening classes were conducted in Malaysia to help illiterate adults to learn how to read and write. Such classes were more organized and formal. During the Japanese occupation in the Second World War, classes on 'Nippon-Go' or the Japanese language were conducted to facilitate communication between the local people and the Japanese 'masters'. After the war, literacy and vocational classes were resumed. After independence, the government stepped up its efforts quickly in educating the adult citizens through 'night literacy classes' and religious classes. Its main purpose was to eradicate illiteracy and poverty. When the New Economic Policy was introduced to further eradicate poverty and to enhance national integration, more non-formal education programmes were introduced both by the government and non-government agencies. Historically, there has been a progression from informal to non-formal education, with formal education as its latest addition.

Non-Formal Education

In Malaysia, the term 'non-formal' education refers to learning opportunities outside the formal educational settings that complement the needs of adults. In Malaysia, the formal established education system runs from the primary school through the secondary school. For some, it is until the universities or colleges or institutions with specialized programmes for full-time professional and technical training. In short, non-formal educational programme is any organized, systematic educational activity which serves specific sub-groups in the population and has selective learning objectives, carried out either separately or as part of a bigger scope of formal system. Nevertheless, in practice, it is very difficult to differentiate between formal, non-formal and informal education, as many of the programmes and activities organized appear to share aspects of two or even all of them.

The Providers

Non-formal education providers in Malaysia refer to institutions that offer educational programmes to the 18 years old and above who seek education outside the formal schooling system. To date, there are many institutions that sponsor non-formal education.

Public providers include ministries, departments, universities, agencies, and so on. Other ministries who play an important role as providers of non-formal education include the Ministry of Human Resource, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. It is also found that these agencies offer a wide range of programmes including quality in community-based programs. Most programmes are for rural development, including literacy, while others focus on the vocational training of youth for employment.

Local universities too have opened their doors and adopted non-formal and unconventional methods to serve over-age participants who desire to continue learning. Private sector agencies include industries, private colleges, business and so on. NGOs, such as the Malaysian Care, Jemaah Islam Malaysia, and foundations like Kuok Foundation and Lee Foundation, and UNESCO also contribute to non-formal education programmes.

These providers were found to have adequate physical facilities and competent trainers to support their training delivery systems. With modernization and also through the commitment of the Malaysian government, many providers have begun to use information technology to plan, develop and disseminate their programmes through the internet and e-learning. The most innovative of these programmes have broken away from the classroom setting and are making extensive use of distance learning and new self-directed learning texts. The use of such unconventional methods in localized programmes has increased dramatically in recent years and is expected to keep rising in future.

Purpose of NFE Programmes

Early initiatives like the 'evening classes' were associated with raising the literacy rate of adults. To date, about 90 per cent of the population in Malaysia is literate. The great emphasis on meeting the basic needs of literacy of the disadvantaged groups, especially in rural areas in the 1970s, has led to an explosive increase in many types of non-formal educational programmes. Malaysia allocates about 20 per cent of its total annual expenditure for education. Parallel to this concern, non-formal education programmes are also aimed at improving local employment opportunities, income, family health, nutrition, political, cultural, and status of young children, women and the elderly. With the expansion and branching out into new territory, these can serve a much wider range of adult learning needs.

With the rapid change in the environment, globalisation and technology, the learning programmes have become functional in catering to those who would like to gain more knowledge and marketable job skills for employment. They aim at enhancing industrial productivity and information technology advancement. Such programmes are continuously developed and conducted to modernize the skills of farmers. Although such provisions tend to be government's efforts, however there is also vigorous non-governmental intervention. Other programmes seek to develop and improve the life of the community. Yet others are concerned with social inequity and seek to raise the consciousness of people towards social action and reforms.

Furthermore, it is observed that non-formal education is contributing a great deal to the human resource development efforts in Malaysia leading to the government setting up a human resource development fund. Non-formal education has come a long way in helping the nation solve its social and economic development problems. Previously people tended to turn only to compulsory formal education, with its high-cost and not necessarily effective means of learning. Now, non-formal education acts as an alternative or complementary to formal education in meeting the diverse needs of a developing nation. Moreover, it is cheaper and offers a second chance to those who have 'missed the boat' in achieving their educational aspirations.

From the political perspective, non-formal education covers a wide range of programs. Those offering the advanced programmes would also include foreign, economic and political policies and how they affect the layman in the country. Non-formal education programmes also help people exercise their democratic rights effectively. Programmes on foreign, political and economic policies, aim to increase the awareness of the people especially businessmen to maintain their businesses' market stability or competitive advantage.

To achieve the objectives of the above programs, a more community-based approach has been adopted. Mostly such programmes are supported in one way

or another by trained doctors, nurses, managers, technical specialists and other high-level personnel who are directly involved in planning and implementation. With the involvement of specialists, non-formal education has become an important part of multi-purpose community-based development effort. People not only become learners but also participate and take initiatives to be trainers as well. These programmes are less formal and bureaucratic, more flexible, and easily modifiable to meet needs of specific groups. Since age is not the criterion for joining non-formal education, the adults and young school leavers can participate.

The Learners

Generally, men and women have equal opportunities to non-formal education. The policies of Malaysian 8th Plan and the 3rd Overall Perspective Plan (OPP3), have been given serious attention and focus on women's economical and social status. With the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) advancement, women who are homemakers are encouraged to learn at home.

Mostly, learners tend to enroll in programmes which are job-related and which cater to their personal interesst. Most of the learners in the age group 18 – 40 take up programmes to help promote their career, to obtain better employment, to meet certain job requirements or standards, and professional advancements.

Adults at the age of 40 and above tend to take up particular programmes due to personal interest since most of them already have a 'stable' career and perhaps income too. These programmes can be classified into atleast four categories: social, religious, cultural and community welfare programmes. For instance, Muslim adults often attend Arabic language classes, tajwid class to improve reading ability in *Quranic* verses and so on.

The Challenges

Non-formal education settings have both benefits and challenges. Some problems are unique to particular programmes and their contexts. Others seem to be common to non-formal education programmes. For instance, most of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) programmes are conducted and concentrated in the west coast of the Peninsular Malaysia. Due to its geographical location, the rest of the population in Malaysia hardly has access to such training programmes. Most of the non-formal education programmes being implemented in Malaysia have low participation rate, even though some of the programmes are being sponsored by the government agencies. This is because most of them could ill-afford the time since they are involved in more immediately urgent economic needs. The situation is further aggravated with the increasing digital divide, the social distance felt by the target groups relative to those who have more exposure to computer skills.

The programmes themselves are frequently not attractive to the rural poor in the sense that they require fees or equipment which they cannot afford. Moreover, the language used most commonly in ICT work is English, which many of them cannot understand, although courses are conducted in Bahasa Malaysia, the national language. With the rapid changes in ICT technology, whatever basic computer skills they receive in non-formal education programmes would also be obsolete in a short span of mere two years.

There is no officially sanctioned system of non-formal education in Malaysia. Consequently, there is a lack of adequate need assessment in various areas, where non-formal education programmes are offered. Although experience indicates the need for greater cooperation and integration of agencies offering non-formal education with other institutions at the national level, there is a lot of difficulty in winning the support of both the government and the more vigorous community-based providers. This

is particularly true in a multi-cultural society where different cultures require very different interventions. Consequently, most of the programmes offered often lack systematic planning, implementation and evaluation. The curriculum is planned *ad-hoc* style and too 'liberal' for any lasting effect. In the absence of proper evaluation of the programmes, it is difficult to have follow-up action.

Furthermore, the teachers lack training, monitoring, feedback and other types of support from a committed central administration. Sometimes, the leadership of the various associations and programmes also lack the commitment needed to pursue programmes especially among those who do it on a voluntary basis due to lack of time, resources and money. Most critical of all the challenges is that there is a lot of duplication of programmes offered by various government agencies as well as the private sector in the same geographical areas. As a result, utilization of resources cannot be maximized resulting in many programmes being under-financed for the area they intend to cover. The impact of the programmes is diluted because resources are spread too thinly. Nevertheless, there is a need to strengthen collaboration and coordination among the providers so as to reduce the competition for participants and teachers and maximize the available resources.

Conclusion

Non-formal education in Malaysia before 1990 was very much influenced by the economic, social and political developments. Beginning with the increase of needs, such as basic education, community and self-development, non-formal education was expanded to cater to the manpower requirements and shortages due to the industrialization and modernization of Malaysian society. However, there is no concrete empirical evidence to support the relevance and impact of non-formal education in a developing nation like Malaysia. Although the Malaysian government recognizes the relevance of non-formal education, there remains a lot to be done in effective coordination and collaboration between programmes designed and implemented by the government, the private sector and the non-governmental agencies. Therefore, non-formal education cannot be viewed yet as the cornerstone for those problems that formal schooling has failed to solve. At best, it is only an alternative tool in a myriad of tools for national development.

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News from Member Institutions

Korean Educational Development Institute Seoul, Korea

- KEDI and UNESCO Bangkok jointly organised a seminar from November 19-24, 2001. Scholars from China, the Philippines, Thailand, Hong Kong, Korea, UNESCO and ADB attended the Seminar.

- Organised an International Seminar on Human Resource Development during December 13-14, 2001. Experts from the OECD, the World Bank, National Central University in Taiwan, Dortmund University in Germany and Korean experts participated in the seminar.

- Conducted a study on "Comprehensive Strategies for Developing Lifelong Education Support System." The major objective of the study is to make a qualitative assessment of the reality of today's schooling in the context of 'school collapse' discourse. The study focusses on the reasons as to why the discourse received the spotlight and makes an assessment whether schooling is indeed entering a radically new phase. The findings of the study show that the existing schools will be forced to adapt to new forms of existence rather than to simply disappear. The study proposed several measures for solving the problem like change of the concept of the school and schooling. Considering cyber space, there is a need to break, at least conceptually, the formalised frame of the present schooling, to loosen the monopoly of the school over education in the long run and to gradually restructure the present schooling system.

Center for Multi-Disciplinary Development Research
Dharwad, India

- Completed an integrated major study, "Cost of Financing of Elementary Education in Eight States," sponsored by the UNICEF.

National Council of Educational Research and Training
New Delhi, India

- Organised a professional development programme for

Senior Teacher Educators from Sri Lanka from September 24 to December 23, 2001. Twenty-five teacher educators attended the programme.

SEAMEO INNOTECH
Manila, The Philippines

- Organised a training programme on Structural Management of Educational Institutions for 12 education officers from Bangladesh from July 16-22, 2001.

- Conducted a programme on Project Implementation Management during July 24-31, 2001. Six Education Officers from Pakistan participated in the programme.

- Organised a training programme on Technology Application in Education in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency from October 1 to 26, 2001. Twenty educators from 11 Asian countries attended the programme.

Academy of Educational Planning and Management
Islamabad, Pakistan

- Conducted a training programme on "Re-Engineering Educational Statistics" in line with the devaluation of power during June 30 – July 7, 2001 for Provincial EMIS Coordinators.

- Organised a refresher course on "Good Governance in Educational Management" from July 9-12, 2001.

Institute Aminuddin Baki
Pahang, Malaysia

- Organised a Regional Workshop for the Benefit of Computing Specialists with the cooperation of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) from July 3-6, 2001. Eight participants from ISESCO countries attended the workshop.

The Aga Khan University - Institute for Educational Development
Karachi, Pakistan

- Organised two one-day workshops on "School Improvement Initiatives: Four Cases of Leading

Schools" on 15 September and 10 November, 2001. The objective of the workshops was to share real life experiences on initiatives taken by the head teachers.

· Undertaken a project on "Documentation of Best Practices and Lessons Learned in the Community Managed and Financed Education Initiative for Programme and Policy Advocacy 1999-2000." This study is aimed to document the NGO initiated best practices in community based primary and pre-primary schools in Sindh and the North. The indicators for best practices include community participation in management and finance of schools, sustainability, female participation, and quality of education. Some of the findings from the initial analysis of cases in the North are: The level of community participation in management of schools varies. The community is better able to perform management functions when supported by existing community structures and where community has decision-making power. Strategies such as subsidies and endowment could sustain schools only when the demand is increased and communities' capacity to pay increases. Communities will not be able to pay higher salaries to teachers. Clustering schools for technical support could help sustain 'quality'. The various initiatives provided access to girls and in the sample schools, the enrolment of girls has risen slowly. Wherever the school is thought to offer quality education, boys are also enrolled in girls' schools.

Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
Kathmandu, Nepal

· Undertaken a study on "Joyful Learning under Whole School Approach to Teacher Training (WSA)." The objectives of the study are: to evaluate resource centre based teacher training activities and their implication on teaching learning in Dang district; to find out the factors for success of WSA; and to identify the factors for improving the WSA training.

State Institute of Educational Management and Training
Allahabad, India

· Organised a Workshop on Development of Training Module on Leadership for Training of Headmasters from September 14-17, 2001.

· Conducted a "Sample Study on Dropouts under the District Primary Education Programme." The study aimed to examine class-wise dropout and repetition rates in primary schools and to examine the pass percentage at the end of Grade V. The findings show the dropout rate has declined and the gender and social gaps narrowed. The gross enrolment and the net enrolment ratios have increased from the base-line situation.

National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
New Delhi, India

· Organised a 3-week Training Programme on Management and Supervision of Schools for Education Officers and Principals of Senior Secondary Schools of Sri Lanka from September 10-28, 2001. Twenty-five Education Officers and Principals of Schools from Sri Lanka participated in the programme.

· The XVIII International Diploma Programme in Educational Planning and Administration will commence from February 1, 2002 at NIEPA, New Delhi, About 24 trainees from Asian, African, East European and Latin American countries are likely to take part in this programme.

· The European Commission, New Delhi, as part of its support to capacity building programme, organised a study visit to Sri Lanka for an Indian team comprising of national level and state level members. The visit was coordinated by the Focal Point, ANTRIEP. National Institute of Education (NIE), Colombo, Sri Lanka, facilitated the visit. The visit to took place between 27th August and 6th September, 2001. The focus of the visit was on primary education, especially on quality-improvement programmes. The study visit covered various activities, such as discussion and interaction with national and provincial level education officials; visit to National Institute of Education, Colombo, and interaction with the faculty; visit to teacher training colleges and schools; observation of classroom activities and functioning of the schools; interaction and discussions with principals, teachers, Parent-Teacher Association, Old Pupils Association and community members.