Education for All:
An Expanded Vision

Roundtable Themes II

World Conference on Education for All
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World Conference on Education for All

Monograph II

Education for All: An Expanded Vision

Prepared by Paul Fordham

U N E S C O

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Preface

The three monographs in this set are based on materials available from the roundtables organized during the World Conference on Education for All - Meeting Basic Learning Needs, held at Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990. It was convened and sponsored by the executive heads of UNESCO, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme, and the World Bank, and was organized by an Inter-Agency Commission established by them. The Royal Government of Thailand hosted the Conference, and eighteen other governments and organizations co-sponsored it. The Conference brought together some 1500 participants from 155 countries, 160 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the media.

Unlike the proceedings of an academic conference, the monographs provide syntheses of the papers, oral presentations, videotapes, films and publications presented during the roundtables. To the extent possible, account has also been taken of the written summary records and audiotapes of the roundtable discussions.

Under the supervision of an editorial board composed of one member from each of the four agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank) that sponsored the World Conference, a three-member editorial team was commissioned to prepare syntheses of selected topics relating to the three sections of the *World Declaration on Education for All*, adopted by the Conference. The team drew mainly on material from the twenty-four "thematic" roundtables, with occasional use made also of material from some of the twenty-four "illustrative" roundtables.

Individual chapters do not always correspond to particular roundtables. Many chapters draw on material from more than one roundtable, and conversely, material from some roundtables was used in two or more chapters, even in different monographs. Specific contributions used by the editorial team are acknowledged in each chapter. Because of unfortunate omissions or biases in the basic material available for these syntheses, the monographs cannot pretend to develop every topic in a comprehensive or balanced manner. The editors have attempted to point out the more serious imbalances.

In preparing the syntheses, the editors sought first of all to present the main issues, ideas and experiences that informed the World Conference initiative, in keeping with the content and spirit of the *World Declaration* and its companion text, the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*. Second, they sought to reflect the substance and tone of the roundtables, and third, the views of individual authors, presenters and discussants. Thus, the monographs do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editorial team or the editorial board.

The monographs are published by UNESCO on behalf of the four agencies that sponsored the World Conference on Education for All. The contents of the monographs were neither endorsed by the World Conference nor cleared by the sponsoring agencies. Therefore, they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Conference delegations nor represent the policies of the sponsoring agencies.

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Basic education should be pursued not merely as a sectoral target, but as an integral part of a human development plan.

William H. Draper III, Administrator, UNDP

Our common objective is to mobilize societies as a whole for the cause of education, to re-affirm flagging commitments... to co-operate and learn from each other, and before this century ends, to make the right to education a daily reality for all.

Federico Mayor, Director-General, UNESCO

If empowerment of people through knowledge is an important goal of basic education, then there is a strong case for "affirmative action" in support of expanding basic education for girls and women, the victims of age-old discrimination in most societies. This is an article of faith for UNICEF, because we know from our own experience that all the gains that have been made in the past decade in saving the lives of millions of children and improving the health and well-being of children and mothers cannot be sustained and cannot be advanced further without primary education, literacy and basic knowledge for better living for girls and women.

James P. Grant, Executive Director, UNICEF

Education produces substantial value for money. This is reflected both in national accounts and in individual earnings. As people are educated, earnings grow, so do savings, so does investment, and, in turn, so does the well-being of society overall... Our goal will be to help countries put in place the educational policy framework and investment programmes necessary to move towards education for all.

Barber Conable, President, World Bank

Statements at Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990

Foreword

"Everyone has the right to education" states the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), but today, over four decades after this historic text was adopted, the right to education remains an empty promise for millions of children, women and men. According to UNESCO, nearly one thousand million adults, two-thirds of them women, are unable to read or write. Some 130 million school-age children have no access to primary schooling. Each year several million more children drop out of school without the knowledge and skills they need for a healthy and productive life.

Ironically, at the same time, the economic and social development of countries around the world is hampered by shortages of skilled men and women and is confounded by widespread ignorance and indifference. Consequently, the long underestimated human dimension is finally being recognized as the end and means of true development. If the capacity of people to shape and improve their own lives is the measure of development, then basic education for all is surely a necessary condition – as well as a human right.

During the 1980s, education in virtually all countries stagnated or deteriorated. Industrialized countries became alarmed at the perceived decline in quality and relevance. The developing countries, deeply affected by economic recession and growing debt burdens, were generally unable to maintain the pace of educational expansion achieved during the 1960s and early 1970s. In the face of rapid population growth, school enrolments actually declined in some countries. Teachers' salaries were often paid months late, and thousands of schools around the world lacked text books and other bare essentials.

In response to this sorry state of affairs, the executive heads of UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank convened the World Conference on Education for All – Meeting Basic Learning Needs (Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990) to draw attention to the importance and impact of basic education, and to forge a global consensus and commitment to provide basic education for all.

After five days of intense discussion, the 1500 participants adopted two texts by acclamation : the *World Declaration on Education for All* and the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs.*[1] These texts confirm a renewed commitment by the international community, evident in these words of the Declaration:

> There has never been a more propitious time to commit ourselves to providing basic learning opportunities for all the people of the world. [...] We commit ourselves to act cooperatively through our own spheres of responsibility, taking all necessary steps to achieve the goals of education for all.

The Conference also served as a forum for sharing experiences and research findings. Forty-eight

1. The *Declaration* and the *Framework for Action* are reproduced in the Appendices (the *Framework* in Monograph II). A booklet containing both texts was published by the WCEFA Inter-Agency Commission (New York, 1990) in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. See also footnote 2.

roundtables provided opportunities to discuss specific aspects and issues of basic education. Half of these roundtables were "thematic" while the other half were "illustrative", based on the particular experiences of countries or organizations.

These three monographs are based on the papers, statements and audio-visual materials presented during the thematic roundtables, as well as on the ensuing discussions. (See the Preface.) They are intended to complement the *Final Report* of the conference and the background document, *Meeting Basic Learning Needs: a Vision for the 1990s* [2]. The central theme of each monograph corresponds to the three sections of the *World Declaration*: Education for All: the Purpose; Education for All: the Expanded Vision; and Education for All: the Requirements.

Thus, the first monograph deals with the *purpose and context* of basic education, starting with the basic learning needs which education must meet. These include the essential learning tools, such as literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills, as well as the knowledge, attitudes and values needed by human beings to survive and to function effectively in their societies. As individuals grow older and as societies evolve, these learning needs change, so Education for All must be viewed in the context of lifelong learning and human development.

The first monograph also explores the interplay between the education process and culture, including the complex issues associated with language. It considers the implications of new and broader concepts of literacy in designing strategies to reach adult learners. The impact of scientific discovery and technological change on learning needs and on the content and processes of basic education to meet those needs are examined, fol-

WCEFA ROUNDTABLES			
Thematic Roundtables		Illustrative Roundtables	
The purpose			
T1 Technology & Education	T2 Education & Development	I1 North America	I2 Thailand
T3 Environmental Education	T4 Population Education	I3 South Asia	I4 Iraq
T5 Health Education	T6 Culture	I5 Europe	I6 Korea
Expanded Vision			
T7 Early Childhood	T8 Language Policy	I7 Mali	I8 Sahel
T9 Nutrition & Health	T10 Girls' Education	I9 Latin America	I10 Ecuador
T11 Primary Education	T12 Distance Education	I11 USSR	I12 Caribbean
T13 Participation	T14 Research Networks	I13 Nepal/ Afghanistan	I14 Kenya
The Requirements			
T15 Educational Materials	T16 Community-Based	I15 Caribbean	I16 China
T17 The Teacher	T18 Assessment	I17 Colombia	I18 Zimbabwe
T19 Mobilization	T20 NGOs & Literacy	I19 USA	I20 Japan
T21 Capacity Building	T22/T24 Finance	I21 Morocco	I22 Philippines
T23 Adult Literacy	Finance (cont.)	I23 Nigeria	I24 Jordan

2. Both documents were published by the WCEFA Inter-Agency Commission (New York, 1990). The Final Report was published in English and French; the background document was published in Arabic, English French and Spanish. Limited supplies of these documents, as well as the booklet containing the World Declaration and the Framework for Action (see footnote 1), can be ordered from WCEFA Liaison, UNESCO, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France.

lowed by a closer look at the relationship between education and the "world of work". Finally, the monograph focusses on three major educational components that can affect the quality of life and that deserve space in basic education programmes: environmental education, population education, and health education.

The second monograph elaborates the five components of the expanded vision of basic education by discussing the key problems that need to be addressed and providing selected examples of possible solutions and approaches. It begins by examining the equity issues relating to the education of girls and women, the most urgent priority expressed in the *World Declaration*. It then deals with two interrelated aspects of enhancing the environment for learning: early childhood care and education, and health and nutrition. The focus on learning, a key component of the expanded vision, is dealt with specifically in relation to improving the quality of primary education; relevant research findings and good practice are reviewed. Distance education and nonformal programmes for youth and adults are discussed in connection with broadening the means and scope of basic education. Strengthening partnerships, the fifth component of the expanded vision, is examined from several angles, with an emphasis on the need to encourage and facilitate the participation of families, communities and other actors in the provision of basic education.

The third monograph deals with *the requirements* to provide Education for All – how to turn the expanded vision and the renewed commitment at Jomtien into an effective reality. Four interrelated themes are examined: developing a supporting policy context; mobilizing resources; building national technical capacity; and strengthening international solidarity. The monograph considers how a broad range of personnel, especially those at grassroots level, can be empowered to provide basic education. Particular attention is given to the role and responsibilities of the teacher, together with the conditions of service and work that can enhance the teacher's effectiveness. The involvement of parents, communities and non-governmental organizations in designing, providing and supporting basic education is discussed. It stresses the importance of instructional materials, and reviews various issues relating to their availability, cost and relevance. It also looks at ways to use technology and assessment capacities to make learning opportunities more available and effective. Finally, it reviews the implications of these several requirements on the more global issue of financing, including opportunities for reducing costs and finding alternative sources of funding.

We sincerely hope that these monographs will provide useful insights and ideas to the reader, will stimulate discussion and reflection, and, above all, will encourage *action* to make basic education more effective and more available to more people.

We wish to thank the roundtable organizers, presenters, and authors who so willingly co-operated in providing the materials needed for the syntheses contained in these monographs. Specific contributions drawn on by the editorial team are acknowledged at the head of each chapter, although the editors are responsible for the syntheses.

We also wish to express our deep appreciation to the three editors who prepared the syntheses:

Paul Fordham, director of the International Centre for Education in Development, and honorary professor, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Sheila Haggis, former senior staff member of the Education Sector, UNESCO, Paris, France

Douglas Windham, distinguished service professor, University at Albany, State University of New York, USA.

We also wish to record our gratitude to the technical services at UNESCO that supported this project, co-ordinated by Michael Lakin, Division of Basic Education.

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1. An Overview of the Expanded Vision

To serve the basic learning needs of all requires more than a recommitment to basic education as it now exists. What is needed is an 'expanded vision' that surpasses present resource levels, institutional structures, curricula, and conventional delivery systems while building on the best in current practices.

World Declaration, Article 2

Basic learning begins within the family and the local community: children learn from their parents and peers, as well as through traditional learning systems, such as apprenticeship, initiation rites and religious instruction. The modern state seeks to provide primary schooling for all children and further education for some, generally at great public expense. Various government services, social institutions, the media and private initiatives also provide a range of other learning opportunities for children, youth and adults. Nevertheless, the basic learning needs of millions of children and adults still are not being met fully or sufficiently, with sad consequences for individual lives, for communities and for whole countries.

The problem is threefold: lack of provision and access; lack of relevance and effectiveness; and lack of incentives and motivation. Communities without schools are still plentiful in many countries, and there is a general dearth of educational programmes addressing the learning needs of youth and adults. Where schools and programmes do exist, they may offer learning content that is ill-suited to the needs of the learners, and the quality of instruction may be so poor that little or no true learning takes place. Even relatively sound educational programmes sometimes fail to attract or retain learners because of social or economic disincentives and low motivation to learn. Furthermore, there is generally little or no coherence between programmes and services that provide basic learning opportunities.

Mere tinkering with existing school systems, or even massive investment in them, cannot resolve all aspects of the problem. Consequently, the World Conference proposed an 'expanded vision' of basic education with five components:

- Universalizing access and promoting equity;
- Focusing on learning;
- Broadening the means and scope of basic education;
- Enhancing the environment for learning;
- Strengthening partnerships.

This monograph presents material from the roundtables that dealt with certain aspects of these five components; it does not purport to treat each component comprehensively, nor in the above order.

Access and equity are long-standing concerns of educational policy. As access to schooling and other forms of basic education is extended to ever greater portions of the population, equity issues become more urgent. Who is still left out and why? What needs to be done to reach the very poor, the minority groups, the disabled? Chapter 2 focuses on the gender dimension, the 'most urgent priority' recognized in the *World Declaration*. In most parts of the world, the female half of the population

does not benefit so much from basic education as does the other half. Yet, there are compelling social and economic reasons – in addition to the right to education – why girls and women should have at least as much basic education as boys and men.

The environment for learning refers to a complex of factors within the home and community that affects the individual's capacity to learn. Chapter 3 deals with two important and interrelated means of enhancing this environment. Early childhood care and education is both a form of basic education in itself and a preparation for later learning. If the family and local community participate actively in early childhood programmes, a sound environment for learning is likely to develop quite naturally. Nutrition and health are also part of that environment. Interventions to improve them can have significant effects on learning achievement, as well as other benefits for the individual and society.

Outside the family, primary schooling is the main vehicle for meeting the basic learning needs of children. Beyond the issue of providing school places for all children, many countries report general dissatisfaction with the results of primary schooling: low completion rates and low achievement. Schooling without effective learning is useless, wasteful and even harmful. Chapter 4 presents a number of strategies and measures that can improve the quality of primary education and thereby enhance the actual learning achievement of pupils. Of course, the pedagogical process is central to learning, so the preparation of teachers, the instructional methods used, and provision of appropriate learning materials are keys to educational quality. In addition, there are several ways in which school management practices can help promote effective learning.

Even in the best cases, primary schooling cannot meet all the basic learning needs of all children – nor the needs of youth and adults. Clearly, other basic education 'delivery systems' are needed. Early childhood care and education, discussed in Chapter 3, can be considered one such delivery system aimed at a particular age group. Chapter 5 presents two other delivery systems. Non-formal education comprises a range of out-of-school programmes and activities that provide diverse learning opportunities for children, youth and adults. Often non-formal learning activities are part of other development interventions dealing, for example, with rural or community development, public health, and agricultural extension work.

Distance education, the second delivery system discussed, comprises several kinds of educational activities using technologies such as radio, television, video, newspapers, and/or postal correspondence. Distance education has been successfully used to meet the learning needs of individuals who are difficult to reach through formal schooling and non-formal group programmes. In certain situations it is used to supplement and enhance classroom instruction, and it is also an effective support for in-service teacher training. Actual experiences in non-formal education and distance education, together with early childhood care and education, show that the scope and means of basic education are already much broader than generally recognized. Basic education can no longer simply be equated with primary schooling. All available delivery systems need to be developed and utilized.

'Strengthening partnerships' is the fifth component of the expanded vision. By its very nature and scope, basic education is a pluri-sectoral field of action that cuts across the competencies of several government departments. Non-governmental institutions and associations, universities and research institutes, religious bodies, employers, as well as local communities, play – or should play – an important role, along with parents, teachers and other professionals. These various "actors" need to become "partners" together, of course, with the learners. Multilateral and bilateral development agencies can also be useful partners in promoting basic education. The practice of partnerships has many aspects that need to be explored. Chapter 6 focuses on participation and communication at grassroots level, as well as the potential role of educational research. Improvements in these three aspects can facilitate the creation and maintenance of effective partnerships at all levels.

The final chapter summarizes the main points

discussed in the other chapters. It should be noted that several points raised during the roundtables were subject to vigorous debate, so the pages that follow do not in any way present a consensus view. In order to gain a better understanding of the 'expanded vision' and its implications, the reader would be well advised to turn to the Appendix, which contains the full text of the *World Declaration on Education for All* and of the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, which were respectively adopted by acclamation and endorsed at the final session of the World Conference.

2. Gender Issues in Access, Equity and Learning Outcomes

The most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated.

World Declaration, Article 3.3

This chapter is mainly about the education of women and girls, the most significant category throughout the world that is underserved by education of all kinds. If present gender disparities continue, then basic education for all can never become a reality. Where girls and women belong to groups who suffer physical, social or economic disadvantage (the poor, the disabled, street children, migrant workers, social or linguistic minorities, refugees and others), their learning difficulties are multiplied. Inequities linked to gender are some of the most challenging problems for decision makers everywhere. The education of girls and women merits the special attention of all those who care about basic education for all.

As with so many other issues addressed in these monographs, the general statements which follow may well mask significant regional, national or cultural differences. However, there is still debate about whether or not these other differences are more important than those of gender. A strongly held view is that the marginalization of women in society forms a common feature cutting across all other groups. This view asserts that the gender question transcends race and class distinctions, too, thus involuntarily uniting all women despite their heterogeneity. Yet, others place less stress on the total dominance of the gender question and suggest that cultural differences may sometimes be more important than gender. This issue will be returned to later.

School enrolment figures reveal significant disparities between countries and regions. In low income countries, girls' enrolment in the primary school generally lags behind that of boys by around 20 per cent. However, there is less of an enrolment problem for girls in Latin America than in Africa or Asia. This is not to say there is no gender problem, rather it is a different one. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the concern is not so much a matter of disparities between girls and boys in quantitative terms, for the enrolment data indicate parity of access and no significant differences in drop-out and repetition rates. Rather, the problem lies more with the low quality of education and a curriculum that discourages girls' progress in subjects like science, which may be offered with more enthusiasm to boys.

Too much emphasis on one or two simple indicators should be avoided, however important they are: equal enrolment rates for girls and boys are not a sufficient measure of equity. Equal access does not ensure equal outcomes, and it is the quality and outcome of learning which are of prime importance. Do girls and women have the same opportunity as boys and men to achieve and to maintain learning levels, to progress to whatever levels their talents will take them, to use their education to enhance the quality of life both for themselves and their children?

This chapter is based mainly on material presented or available at the roundtable on *Girls' education: problems and solutions* (T10), organized by the WCEFA Secretariat, with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNESCO and the World Bank. It was chaired by Torild Skard, Director General, Multilateral Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, and the presenters were:

Elizabeth King (Moderator)
Economist, The World Bank
Shahnaz W. Ali
Minister of State for Education, Pakistan
Fay Chung
Minister of Education and Culture, Zimbabwe
Haja Aicha Bah Diallo
State Secretary, Primary and Secondary Education, People's Republic of Guinea
Carmen Garcia Guadilla
Regional Adviser, UNESCO Regional Centre for Higher Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (CRESALC), Venezuela

The chapter draws also on some material from the roundtable on *The role of NGOs in Literacy* (T20). See also Monograph III, Chapter 4.

Papers/presentations used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included the following:

Girls' education: problems and solutions by Elizabeth King
Improving girls' school attendance and achievement in developing countries, a guide to research tools by Karin Hyde
The education of girls: the Zimbabwe case by Fay Chung
Education of the girl child by Kiran Dhingra
Girls' education in Latin America and the Caribbean by Carmen Garcia Guadilla
Gender issues and literacy - an analysis by Lalita Ramdas
Women and Literacy by Anita Dighe

The rest of this chapter looks at four areas concerning the education of women and girls: a review of some of the advantages of ensuring that women and girls do receive their fair share of education; the gender gap and the reasons why it exists; gender, literacy and cultural differences; and efforts which are and should be made to overcome the problems.

Why educate girls and women?

The simple and just demand for equal treatment, access and outcome in girls' and women's education is backed up by hard evidence of the general benefits which result, both for women and for men. An extensive World Bank study shows that where there has been heavy investment in female primary education, benefits for all occur through higher productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, longer life expectancy for both men and women, and lower fertility rates.

While some still argue that education of girls is less important because schooling prepares them for work outside the home and not for their domestic role, research shows the argument to be invalid. Education has a positive effect on women's domestic lives. Families, especially the children, benefit from having a mother with formal schooling. In a number of studies, the survival, health and school performance of children have been shown to be clearly linked to the mother's educational attainment. Research from Nigeria and Mexico indicates that one of the strongest predictors of a child's survival beyond its first year is the mother's level of education. A study of parental influences on reading achievement in Morocco found that mothers' literacy was one of the strongest predictors of children's reading achievement.

The benefits are, however, more wide ranging and more subtle than reference simply to general economic improvement or the quality of domestic life would suggest. Whether one looks at the purely instrumental (economic) benefit or at the more personal benefits to children and the family and to the women themselves, there is no doubt that women's literacy merits priority attention. There

Box 2.1 Women's literacy and productivity in Zaire

The Elimu (learning) organization in Kivu developed literacy classes for women in which the curriculum was designed to encourage women to take more control over production and distribution. As a result, four women's organisations were formed. A member of one group told the story of how they struggled to develop new economic activity.

'First we started learning how to read and write in 1986. We realised that we women could bring about progress here in Kalimabenge. We wondered what to do. We decided to club together with 20 Zaires each per month. We were able then to buy a piece of land to grow vegetables which we could then sell. The spot was exposed to too much sun and we lost.

'We acquired another piece of land in a better place, but our efforts didn't lead to anything, because we didn't know how to store our produce properly. We gathered again and decided to club together with more money. We could reach a total of 11,250 Zaires. We then decided to start our grocery business. That was in 1988. When we did the latest stock-taking in April 1990, our profits were 500,000 Zaires. Our first two shop assistants, who were both men, stole 38,200 Zaires, but we sacked them. No one can cheat us any more...'

Source: Bown, L. 1990 *Preparing the Future*

are at least five areas in which benefits are likely to accrue: the economy, size of family, family welfare, the education of children, and women's autonomy.

The economy. Women as producers of wealth have frequently been ignored or undervalued[1]. For a variety of reasons many women are obliged at some point in their lives to support themselves and their children. Food production and food processing are two areas in which women have traditionally earned an income. Although little recognition is given to women's role in agriculture, it has been calculated that women constitute over 46 per cent of the agricultural labour force in sub-Saharan Africa. The link between farmer education and farmer efficiency suggests that more education for women could be expected to bring improved agricultural yields. In sub-Saharan Africa, where women's educational levels are particularly low, food shortages continue. There may well be a link between the low educational status of African women and the failure of food production in the region to keep up with population growth.

Many studies show a clear correlation between increased basic education levels and increased farmer productivity; this is often more marked amongst women than amongst men. One World Bank study in Peru found that basic education programmes raised productivity by between 25 and 33 per cent. Another study in Nigeria, in an area where women formed between 60 and 80 per cent of the labour force in agriculture, showed that losses due to faulty cultivation and conservation techniques could be substantially reduced if women were given sufficient basic education.

Improvements in productivity are not the only favourable outcomes of women's education. It has also been found that if agricultural improvements are combined with community development, then women's and girls' education is even more effective. The whole quality of village life is improved, and people are thus persuaded to stay rather than join the drift to the urban areas.

In general terms, a country with a large gender gap, measured as the difference between male and female enrolment ratios, will have lower economic production than another country with a similar capital stock and labour force but a smaller gender gap in education. Between two countries with similar per capita income and patterns of expenditures in the social sectors like health and education, the country with the larger gender gap will have worse indicators of social welfare. An implication of these research findings is that a country with a wide

1. See also Monograph 1, Chapter 5.

gender gap will have to raise per capita income more than will a country with a small gap in order to achieve similar levels of social well-being. More benefits from less economic effort will result from improved education for women.

Size of family. There is usually an inverse correlation between female education and family size. This in turn often leads to better nutrition and child care and to reduced child mortality. However, reduced family size *per se* is not a priority for every country, and the number of children born is dependent on a whole complex of social, economic and political factors. Whereas all countries can benefit by supporting more and better education for women, they will wish to do so for a variety of reasons, only one of which may be to reduce family size.

Indeed, comparative figures from Arab countries show that girls' education does not necessarily affect family size very directly. In Jordan, for example, where the educational level of girls is higher than in Morocco, family size is larger. Also in Tunisia, an illiterate woman is likely to have fewer children than a woman in Jordan who has had some primary education. Clearly other factors are at work here. However, it remains true that as educational levels increase, especially beyond the basic level, family size is likely to fall. For example, there is evidence from Nigeria that increased women's schooling in the late 1970s and early 1980s had three times the impact on family size as did that of men. In a study from Malaysia in the same period, family planning was reported to be practised by 40 per cent of the women with primary schooling as compared with 22 per cent of women with none. The effects of adult literacy programmes for women are less easy to measure, but in Nepal, for example, after the completion of an adult literacy programme, there was increased awareness and understanding about control of family size and the problems caused by early child marriage.

Family welfare. Education for women and girls has positive and sometimes dramatic effects on family welfare. It is usually women who take the lead in matters of nutrition, in making the world intelligible to the child, and in socializing children into the family and community. Improving early childhood care (considered more fully in chapter 3) is partly dependent on the better education of women and girls.

An educated mother learns to protect children from exposure to health risks, thus increasing chances of child survival, and is better able to ensure a diet which supports sound physical and mental development. One study in Sri Lanka showed that in comparison with their more educated sisters, illiterate women rarely visited health centres, sought less often to have children vaccinated and had more frequent still births, a higher infant mortality rate and a greater frequency of ill-nourished children. A similar study in the Philippines concluded that the education of the mother was crucial in ensuring proper attendance at health centres.

Education of children. The influence of women's education on the intellectual development of children and on their attendance and success in school is even more striking. Intelligence needs early stimulation if full development is to be achieved. A study among the Gusii in Kenya showed that in families with the same income level and way of life, there were striking differences in the development of children of mothers with seven years of schooling and those with none. The educated mothers provided the stimulus of home reading (newspapers), family photographs, a calendar on the wall, etc. The illiterate mothers provided a less stimulating environment, and their children had a less than equal start at school in comparison with the others.

The influence of women's education extends beyond the pre-school into the school itself. Many studies show the beneficial influence of educated mothers in reducing grade repetition and drop-out rates at the early stages and in improving motivation for staying on to higher levels of education.

Women's autonomy. The quality of women's participation in development will not improve while they remain dependent on others who have some education or exclusively on male leadership. For example, women's income generating projects need access to banks and to credit and find this difficult if not impossible without literate women members to keep records and to negotiate with financial

institutions. As more members become literate, more projects can be member-controlled and not left in the hands of a literate minority, whether men or women.

Moreover, there is evidence from many countries that an increasing number of women can depend neither on a husband nor on an extended family for their income. Some must find work because the family cannot survive solely on the income of the husband. Others are female heads of households without men. In some parts of Latin America, more than half of the families have female heads of households. In the Caribbean, 50 per cent of women heads of households have never had husbands.

In these circumstances it is vital to ensure adequate educational opportunities for women and girls. If women have both domestic and wider economic responsibilities, then their education becomes even more important than that of men. Presently it lags far behind. Education empowers women to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of their society, and enables them to make more informed choices. The right to vote is meaningless if women cannot inform themselves on political issues. The right to use credit or own land is diminished if they cannot read, understand contracts or do simple arithmetic.

The gender gap in education

Low adult literacy rates prevail throughout the developing world. In fourteen developing countries where literacy data are available, only one in five adult women can read, whereas the literacy rates for men are as low in only five of these countries. Recent estimates suggest that only one out of two women in Asia is literate, and only one out of three in sub-Saharan Africa.

School enrolment rates have been rising for both girls and boys at all levels in the past two decades. Primary school enrolment, in particular, has outpaced the growth of the youth population, although a few low income countries – especially in sub-Saharan Africa – experienced a decline in primary enrolments in the 1980s.

Despite this overall progress, the gender gap in education has not narrowed greatly (See Figure 2.1). In the lowest income countries, the primary school enrolment rate of boys was 20 percentage

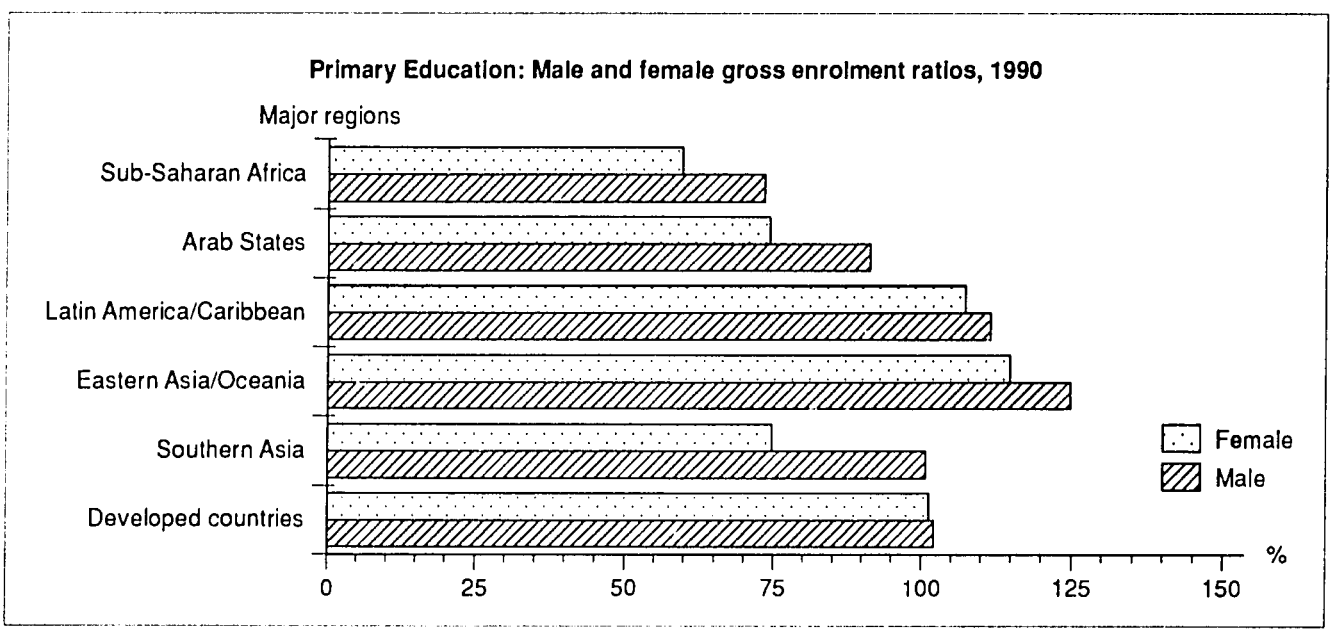

Figure 2.1
The Gender Gap in Primary Schools (Source: Division of statistics, UNESCO)

points higher, on average, than that of girls throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In 1985, girls made up 41 per cent of total primary school enrolment in the lowest income countries, while in Afghanistan, Benin, Guinea, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen girls accounted for only one-third or less of total enrolment. Not only is the school entry rate for girls lower, their drop-out rate is slightly higher than for boys.

As seen earlier, the gender gap varies among countries and regions. Many countries have achieved near universal primary education for males and females. But girls' enrolment continues to lag behind in many others, most dramatically in south Asia, west Asia, north Africa, and sub-saharan Africa. With the exception of Sri Lanka, all south Asian countries have much lower gross enrolment ratios for girls than for boys. In Bhutan, girls' enrolment in 1985 was 19 per cent compared to 34 per cent for boys; in Nepal, 49 per cent for girls compared with 110 per cent for boys[2]; in Pakistan, 38 per cent versus 73 per cent; in Bangladesh, 50 per cent versus 70 per cent; and in India, 79 per cent versus 110 per cent. Whereas in Latin America and nearly all east Asian countries, such large male-female differences had disappeared by 1985.

At post primary levels, the gender gap widens in some countries, but narrows in others. The UNDP reported in 1990 the following *average* enrolment ratios for countries categorized as having 'low human development'.

Table 2.1

Gross enrolment ratios	Male	Female
Primary	92	67
Secondary	37	20
Tertiary	9.3	3.8

Source: Human Development Report, 1990, UNDP

Why does the gender gap exist? The supply of schools has expanded greatly in the past twenty-five years, leading to and accommodating the increase in primary school enrolment over that period. Moreover, there are few restrictions to the admission of girls at the primary school level. To understand why, despite this expansion, a larger proportion of school-age girls than boys do not enter school or drop out early in many developing countries, one needs to consider the many factors that affect the education of girls and boys differently.

For many families the deferred possible benefits (e.g. of paid employment for school leavers) do not seem large enough to offset immediate costs like school fees or the loss of child labour. Parents do not often consider the less obvious benefits that education generates (like improved productivity) when deciding whether to send children to school. In some societies, parents tend to favour sons, partly because they are the ones expected to go out and earn more family income, so this may be the cost efficient response by parents to the constraints of family resources.

One lesson from experience is that expanding access simply by building more schools, relaxing admission policies or instituting quotas for girls may lead to higher levels of female enrolment at the margin, but these measures are not enough where popular demand for girls' education is low. In Egypt, for example, 400 primary schools were built between 1981 and 1987. Girls' enrolment rose from 56 per cent to 74 per cent, but more than a quarter of the school-age girls were still out of school. For schools to be fully utilized, the demand for education has to come from families. To be effective, gender equity policies must include measures that lower costs and raise benefits for families as a whole.

Distortions in the labour market due to discriminatory employment practices against women reduce their earnings and the benefits that women can expect to gain from education even when jobs are available. Examples are restrictions against the hiring of married women in wage-paying jobs in

2. Gross primary enrolment ratios (total number of pupils as per cent of official school-age population) can exceed 100 per cent because they include under- and over-age pupils.

the manufacturing or service sectors. Explicit or implicit entry barriers against women in certain occupations serve as obstacles to education. Some of these barriers begin at the primary school level, with teachers and textbooks projecting attitudes that discourage school attendance and performance of girls. Stereotypes may persist of girls not being as good as boys in technical subjects or mathematics[3]. Even obstacles which begin at the post-primary level can nevertheless inhibit girls' school attendance and motivation at the primary stage. In the Dominican Republic, three of the most important schools for middle level technology training bar women even though they have stipends from the national government. In Pakistan, women are not allowed to enrol in seventy-two of the secondary vocational institutions because of strict sex segregation.

In some societies, custom dictates that sons take responsibility for their parents, whilst girls marry out of their own families at an early age and into their husband's families. The earlier the marriage age, the less parents enjoy the benefits of their daughters' education. In Bangladesh, 75 per cent of married women living in rural areas were married by the age of seventeen. In India, 75 per cent of this group were married by age nineteen and in Pakistan by age twenty-two. Some evidence suggests that when girls do not marry so early, but spend some time working in the labour force, parents are more willing to educate their daughters. In Hong Kong, women who tend to marry at later ages and help their parents in the interim appear to reach higher educational levels than others. In parts of southern India, because the more educated women are recognized as having a higher potential for earning, some grooms' parents are willing to accept pre-payment of dowries in the form of higher level schooling of prospective daughters-in-law.

Parents also may have a poor knowledge of the benefits of education to the family's current health and welfare and the prosperity of their grandchildren. They may not be aware that the benefits of education are inter-generational and accumulate over time. Or families may not appreciate the benefits of girls' education in countries where the 'suitableness' of educated women to be good wives is held in doubt. Anthropological and sociological studies have shown that in traditional Muslim societies, education beyond puberty is inhibited by the social pressure for women to become wives and mothers as soon as puberty is reached. Highly educated women's possibilities for marriage become limited. Parents find it harder to understand the benefits of education when curricula are irrelevant to this mother-wife role or contradict the values they want to teach their children. These cultural considerations vary widely among and within countries, but need to be taken into account in designing educational policies and delivery strategies. A balance must be struck between providing courses that help women fulfil traditional roles, but at the same time not allowing curricula to lock women out of wider educational opportunities. Education itself, along with economic change, can and should be a powerful force in modifying traditional viewpoints on girls' schooling.

Even if they are aware of the potential long-range benefits of education, parents may be unable to afford the tuition, material, transportation, boarding fees and other costs of sending girls to school. Location, distance and even clothing requirements can make the effective cost of school attendance higher for girls than boys. Gender differences enter in when, for instance, parents are more reluctant to send girls to school without proper clothing. Or parents' concern for the physical and moral safety of young daughters in some cultures deters them from allowing girls to attend distant schools requiring long travel daily or residence away from home.

In countries where religion requires seclusion of women, parents allow girls to attend only single-sex schools with female teachers, or they withdraw girls at the onset of puberty. Thus, the availability of schools with female teachers may be of decisive importance. In low-income countries, only one-third of primary, less than one-fourth of secondary, and just over one-tenth of tertiary education teachers are women. The shortage largely reflects

3. See also Monograph I, Chapter 4.

the limited pool of potential women teachers, a result of low schooling levels of girls, and the reluctance of young women teachers to work in rural areas. This is because cultural attitudes discourage young, single women from moving far from home and living alone. The short supply of safe dormitories for women even in teacher-training institutions exacerbates the situation. Also, women from rural areas usually do not qualify to enrol in teacher training schools in the cities, and there are few programmes in rural areas to identify, recruit and train girls to become teachers.

Finally, parents may not feel able to afford to send girls to school if it means their labour cannot be used in traditional ways. Although in some countries boys perform a large share of family labour such as livestock herding, with few exceptions girls do more work than boys in the home and in the market place. In Nepal and Java (Indonesia), most young girls spend at least a third more hours per day working at home and in the market than boys of the same age – in some age groups as much as 85 per cent more hours. In Malaysian households, girls aged five to six who do home or market chores work as much as 75 per cent more hours per week than boys of that age. In Chinese and Indian households in Malaysia, girls aged seven to nine work as much as 120-150 per cent more hours than boys. Clearly, girls who work more than their brothers will be less likely to attend school, or they will be more overworked if they do, causing them to perform less well. In addition to lost labour, parents in many countries feel that girls will lose important training at home in child care, household and crafts if they go to school.

Gender, literacy and cultural differences

One area of apparent controversy concerns the extent to which the obstacles to girls' and women's education are similar across cultures. One view is that in all cultures, although in varying degree, male/female relationships place obstacles in the way of girls' and women's full participation in education. Patriarchy is manifested in two ways: the sexual division of labour, and control over women's sexuality. Both these factors so condition a woman's world-view that marriage, husband, family become the be-all and end-all of her existence. They also limit a woman's mental horizons and push education from her attention. As girls grow up, they are socialized into their future roles as wives and mothers and into acceptance of the sexual division of labour. The second component, control over women's sexuality, ensures that women maintain their roles as wives and mothers and is the cause of women's inability to control their fertility and its associated consequences, including unwanted pregnancies, the practice of early marriage, restricted physical mobility for women, and domestic violence.

Who benefits from all this? Whose interests are served by these existing conditions? In feminist theory, it is undoubtedly men who benefit. Does this mean that feminists are setting women against men and men against women? The answer is no. Most feminists seem to be seeking a more egalitarian society in which women are treated as equals with men. According to feminist theory, the problem of women's illiteracy will not be solved merely through ingenious programme design because the underlying problem is not technical. For change to occur, individual men in a male-dominated state will have to re-examine and modify their own values and attitudes.

An alternative view is that cultural differences between countries are more important than some feminists would accept. For example, successful literacy ventures in Pakistan are often community based; the important thing is to change total attitudes. In peri-urban Karachi this has been done successfully using flexible working hours, both formal and non-formal teaching methods, and educating both parents and children. Adults are motivated to learn via primary economic interests (functional literacy) which has become the subject of the basic education curriculum. Residential facilities for teachers based in the community have led to greater school/community interaction and helped facilitate more opportunities for girls and for women. The whole programme has helped produce a positive, confident self concept of women.

However, cultural constraints are undeniably powerful. For example, the word 'child', which is gender neutral in the English language, has a masculine connotation in south Asia. Here the stark reality is that, by and large, girls are denied that joyful, carefree period of growing and learning that is called childhood. Very little value is attached to the girl. She is caught in a web of cultural practices and social prejudices from the moment of her birth. Altough she works twice as hard as her brother, and her labour contributes to the survival of the family, the girl child lives and grows on indifference, neglect and malnutrition, treated as a lesser human being and brought up to believe that she does not count. Therefore, in any society that aims at social justice, in any policy that seeks to move towards equality of educational opportunity, attention has to be focused on providing schooling to girls even if this is contrary to entrenched cultural values. Changes in education that do not enhance the status of women are not likely either to be generally acceptable or to reduce women's present state of under- development.

A better future for girls and women

Already in 1975, the United Nations proclaimed International Women's Year. The goal was to promote equality between women and men, to ensure the full integration of women in development, and to increase women's contribution to the strengthening of world peace. Later, the United Nations Decade for Women culminated in a World Conference, held in Nairobi to review and appraise the achievements of the Decade. It was attended by representatives from 157 countries, who adopted a whole range of strategies for the advancement of women, a programme later endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly (United Nations, 1985). Future action will have to be determined locally and in the light of prevailing circumstances, but the matter is one of urgency and continues to call for change in traditional attitudes.

An example from Zimbabwe suggests that a comprehensive strategy to improve the status of women can result from a situation which 'cuts away from the past'. Under customary law a woman was a perpetual minor under the permanent tutelage of her father, her husband or other male relatives. She had no property rights other than her personal clothing and kitchen utensils. She could not make any legally binding contracts in her own right. Arranged marriages were contracted on her behalf through payment by the husband's family of a bride price known as 'lobola'. Lobola transferred power over the woman's reproductive and productive capacities to her husband.

However, in the liberation struggle (1965 - 1980) force of circumstances made it essential to utilize women as transporters of food and war materials, as teachers, medical workers and political mobilizers. This was because the colonial regime allowed freer movement of women than of men, and initially it was not suspicious of women in the war zone. Thus thousands of illiterate and semi-literate peasant women and girls, as well as secondary school girl students, were drawn into the war effort. Pragmatism dictated that these women received military training and that they be selected as commanders, frequently over men. This entailed a complete overturning of the traditional women's roles. In the war situation this radical change was accepted both within the liberation forces and amongst the largely peasant population, and has had a far reaching effect on the position of women in post-independence Zimbabwe. Even without a liberation war, it is possible to make similar changes, albeit more slowly. Legal ownership of property by women or the ability to sign contracts are important both in themselves and as symbols. 'Small things can change situations'.

On other continents, 'small things' are beginning to make big things happen. For example, plans are already in hand through a UNESCO initiative in Latin America to ensure high quality education for poor girls. The initiative aims to improve the self concept of girls and women, improve health and nutrition, and orient curricula to improve the quality of life via the communities' own goals and priorities. Bangladesh, Bhutan and Liberia have experimented with low-cost ways of bringing schools within walking distance of villages. 'Feeder' or 'satellite' schools offer the first two to

three years of primary education and are located in remote rural areas some distance from the regular, complete primary schools. Preliminary data from these schools show higher enrolment and retention of girls. A remaining problem is how to induce feeder school pupils to continue in the regular schools that serve several villages but may be farther away. Bhutan is dealing with this problem by providing dormitories at central primary schools for pupils promoted from the feeder schools.

Another set of innovations, to ease parents' fears about their daughters' physical and moral safety, involves building boundary walls around schools and providing closed latrines for girls, establishing single-sex schools, and actively recruiting and training female teachers for such schools. Anecdotal evidence suggests that such culturally appropriate and safe facilities and the presence of female teachers remove disincentives for parents to enrol daughters.

Since mosque schools are more attractive than regular primary schools to some parents, Bangladesh, Kenya, Mali, and Pakistan have supported their accreditation by introducing primary school curricula and trained teachers to supplement religious education. Girls' enrolment in such schools, especially in Mali, has grown quickly.

As already noted, the absence of female teachers in rural schools can be a barrier to girls' enrolment. One successful strategy has been to place teacher training institutes in rural areas, actively recruit young women teachers from there and, after training, place them in schools near home. Often girls cannot satisfy the entry requirements for teacher training, so they are provided first with training to satisfy entry requirements. This strategy has proved successful in boosting the female teacher supply in parts of Pakistan and Nepal.

Despite free or partially subsidized tuition, textbooks and other school-related expenses can be prohibitive to poor parents. Scholarship programmes providing direct assistance to parents have proved to be a strong incentive to educate daughters, Guatemala piloted a scholarship programme in one indian village. Because of its success, it was expanded to twelve villages, where only about half of school-aged girls attended school and only 17 per cent completed the cycle. The same programme was also used to discourage early marriage and teenage pregnancy. By 1988, the families of 600 girls between the ages of seven and fifteen, mostly enrolled in grades three to five, had received payment of US$4 per month for each daughter who did not become pregnant and who attended school at least 75 per cent of the time. Over 90 per cent of the scholarship girls completed the year.

Countries have had success with a variety of approaches to cut the costs of educating girls who otherwise would be caring for siblings, preparing meals, carrying water and firewood, and earning income from outside jobs. In Colombia, a community day care programme has freed some 200,000 girls and an equal number of women to attend school or work. The programme will cover 1.5 million children by 1992. Some thirty schools in Ghansu province in China allow girls to bring their siblings. Labour-saving technologies also help free time for girls to attend school. In Nepal, where females used to carry an average of 7,000 pounds of firewood per year, fuel-efficient stoves shrank the amount of wood that needed to be carried by up to 40 per cent.

Flexible school schedules also minimize the costs to parents of losing the labour of their children. Colombia and El Salvador have divided their primary school curricula into small units so that students can learn at their own pace, taking time out of school to work in the fields, for instance, without losing their school standing. Classes offered in the evenings provide a learning opportunity for those unable to attend day school. In the Pune district of Maharashtra (India), classes were offered to girls and boys nine-to-fourteen years old for two hours in the evening. Girls flocked to the classes, comprising 1,040 of the 1,431 enrolled pupils.

However, if small things are to change situations enough to make large differences, then an expanded vision is needed of what could be achieved by women's education. Issues relating to women's productivity, family welfare and health, women's employment, and their achievement of autonomy depend on what can be done in the

sphere of basic education. Yet, women themselves often have no time or space in their lives, nor energy, for education. Steeped as they are in their own subjugation and self-deprecatory image, caught in the unrelenting grind for fuel, fodder, water, food and child care, from morning to night, they see no relevance nor benefit from education in their daily business of survival.

Educational measures can have a positive impact on girls' education only if they break this vicious circle. They must seek to ignite and fuel an interest among women in gaining an access to knowledge and information, so that the demand for education comes from them, and they are motivated to make space and time in their lives for this one intervention which can enable them to break out of their trap of passivity and social isolation. To do this, policy measures must squarely address the parameters that will enable women's empowerment:

– building a positive self-image and self-confidence;

– developing the ability to think critically;

– building group cohesion and fostering decision making;

– ensuring equal participation in the process of bringing about social change;

– encouraging group action in order to bring about change in society;

– providing the wherewithal for economic independence.

This demands a redefinition of education. Henceforth it must be understood not as a system of classroom teaching, but as a process which enables each individual to question, conceptualise, seek information, find answers, act, reflect on his or her actions and raise new questions. Such an education process must provide information and knowledge relevant to the environment, community and conditions of each learner.

Seen thus, it is easy to see the shortcomings in the present incentive-based approaches to girls' education. What is required instead is a comprehensive strategy that recognizes the importance of giving priority to women's education and that aims to make education an instrument for basic change in the status of women. Leadership at the highest level must be determined to give the education of women and girls the priority accorded it in the *World Declaration*. This leadership must come from both women and men. For at the heart of ensuring equity and full educational opportunity for women is the commitment to change the attitudes of both men and women towards their mutual relationships. For this to happen, two parallel lines of action are necessary. First, women must be mobilized as actors, as facilitators of change. They must be creative, both to teach and to innovate. Second, men must be recruited as allies in the struggle for women's equality and improvement.

In this task of changing attitudes, more knowledge is needed about the mechanisms that keep girls out of school and the relative importance of different factors in the underlying processes of educational disadvantage. At the school level, research suggests that there are three major groups of variables that affect whether or not a girl is enrolled. First, do parents believe school will be useful and beneficial to their child? Do they feel their daughter will be safe? Second, school availability concerns such variables as the size of the school and its proximity to pupils' homes. What kind of school is it and of what quality? Third, the direct costs of schooling (e.g. fees, books, uniforms, and transportation) can be substantial. Finally, the indirect costs to the family (needed services and foregone earnings that the child in school could no longer provide) may be too great.

When a girl is enrolled in school, a number of other factors come into play that will determine whether she stays in school and how she performs there. The teachers, other pupils, and the organization of the school may all influence the pupil's progress and performance. As she grows older, factors outside the school, such as opportunities for jobs or social demands (e.g. that she marry at puberty), can affect how long she stays in school. Her parents' attitudes and economic and social conditions continue to have an impact throughout her school life.

Of course much is already known about the importance of women's and girls' education, about gender disparities, and about cultural and other impediments to the progress and eventual equal treatment of all people – in relation to both access

and outcomes in basic education. There is also much yet to be found out and tried out, whether through formal research or the intelligent transfer and application of existing successful practice. All countries need to consider how best to change the attitudes of both women and men so that agreed equity goals are achieved as rapidly as possible.

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3. Enhancing the Environment of Learning: Early Childhood Education, Health and Nutrition

The provision of more education may result simply in increased enrolments, without an increase in equity or sustainable learning outcomes. As discussed in the previous chapter, the education of girls and women in many parts of the world lags far behind that of boys and men, so there is need for special efforts in favour of the former if true equity is to be achieved. Similarly, children and adults who come from disadvantaged environments are unlikely to achieve satisfactory learning outcomes unless these environments improve. This chapter focuses on two aspects of the learning environment: early childhood care and education, which forms the basis of subsequent learning, and health and nutrition, which are key factors affecting the physical and psychological development of humans, including their capacity to learn.

The environment of learning includes far more than the school and the school system. For children, the home is very important; children learn extensively in their interactions with parents, siblings, and age mates. For adults, the learning environment extends beyond the home to their workplace and to the community. Their knowledge-from-life experience is an important asset that needs to be recognized by their instructors. For both children and adults, their learning can be enhanced through support from the home and from the local community, as well as from the school.

Early childhood care and education

The early years of life are of crucial importance for the physical, intellectual and emotional development of the child. The young child's development proceeds rapidly in the early years: the basis of language is laid at this time; attitudes and social relationships are shaped; and the mind is at its most receptive. The case for early childhood care and education is well documented – indeed it should be self-evident. Therefore, early childhood care and education must be included in the scope of basic education, both for its immediate formative value and for its influence on later learning. The goal of education for all can better be achieved if the basis for it is laid early enough.

The effects on school performance

Can early childhood education really affect subsequent school performance? There is some encouraging evidence that it can, and in doing so, it improves the returns on national investments in later schooling.

Longitudinal studies, such as those of the Perry pre-school programme in the United States (Berrueta-Clement 1984) where children were followed into their teens, and the Osborn study in the United Kingdom (Osborn and Millbank 1987) where 9,000 children were followed until the end of primary school, both offer strong evidence that pre-schooling positively affects subsequent school performance and attitudes to learning.

Recent results from two studies carried out in connection with the Integrated child development services programme (ICDS) in India conclude that simple pre-school services targeted at children and mothers in urban slum, rural and tribal areas have

This chapter is based on material presented or available at two roundtables: *The challenge of early childhood care and education* (T7), organized by the Bernard van Leer Foundation, and *School performance, nutrition and health* (T9), organized by UNESCO and the World Food Programme.

Roundtable T7 was chaired by Rien van Gendt, Executive Director of the Bernard van Leer Foundation. The presenters were:

A.W. Wood (Moderator)
Deputy Executive Director, Bernard van Leer Foundation
Gerard Pantin
Executive Director, Service Volunteered for All (SERVOL), Trinidad and Tobago
Khoo Kim Choo
Rector, Regional Training and Resource Centre for Early Childhood Care and Education, National Trades Union Congress Child Care Services, Singapore
Lea Kipkorir
Director, Institute of Education, Kenya

Roundtable T9 was chaired by George Eshiwani, of Kenya's Ministry of Education. The presenters were:

Susan Van der Vynckt (Moderator)
Programme specialist, nutrition and health, Division of Primary Education and Literacy, UNESCO
Cecilia A Florencio
Department of Nutrition, University of the Philippines, Philippines
John Nkinyangi
Graduate School of Education and African Studies Centre, Division of Social Sciences and Comparative Education, University of California, U.S.A.
Judith Katona-Apte
Senior Programme Adviser (Human Resources), Evaluation and Policy Division, World Food Programme

Papers/presentations used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included the following:

Food aid for education, past experience and future directions by World Food Programme
Building futures: health in schools (video script) by UNESCO
Child health, nutrition and school participation (mimeo) by UNESCO
The challenge of early childhood care and education: an agenda for action by Bernard van Leer Foundation.

had measurable impact on school attendance, staying longer at school and academic attainment: programme children are attending school more regularly, doing better and dropping out less – notably the poorer children. Evidence from a recent study in Choco, Colombia, goes even further. It found that by working with and through parents to enrich the home environment, the subsequent school performance of the children can be significantly enhanced. (Nimnicht 1986). (See Box 3.1)

What is clear from these different sources is that, in education as in other fields, good beginnings can minimise the need for subsequent remedial work, and reduce negative outcomes. It is sometimes claimed that the pay-off goes on long after formal schooling has ended, with benefits to the whole society in terms of lower juvenile delinquency, better health and so on. Moreover, successful youngsters go on to become better parents.

The role of parents

The role of parents in a child's early years is crucial. In the world's most deprived communities, parents have to take on the entire responsibility for rearing their young children. They do so because they recognise their children's needs and the importance of meeting those needs. This parent involvement has two benefits. People with scant resources are making heroic contributions to their children's well-being and learning; and because they are themselves involved, they too are changing. Success is infectious. People begin to learn that they are not hapless victims of circumstances. They can effect change. As they do, they grow in confidence and determination, taking on progressively bigger tasks. Early childhood education can become not simply a service for children, but a vehicle for building awareness of parents and

Box 3.1 The benefits of early childhood care and education in Colombia

For more than 10 years, the Centro Internacional de Desarrollo Humano (CINDE) operated the 'Promesa' programme in the Choco region on the Pacific coast of Colombia. Choco is remote, inaccessible, with few roads, few services and major problems relating to children's survival and development. The objective was the healthy development of young children. There were few schools and there was little point in trying to mobilise scarce resources to create them. Instead, Promesa sought to work through families, first to enable them to understand more about the development of young children, that is, that children do not merely develop by accident; and second, that there were concrete ways in which, even in such an arduous environment, families could influence this development process for the better.

The involvement of the community enabled families to take on new educational responsibilities through parents' improved understanding of child development and what they could do to influence it through locally-made learning materials. Parents also developed a wider understanding of the other factors in children's development, particularly in the areas of health and hygiene, and how these could be changed beneficially. Recent evaluation results have shown that children who have had early exposure to developmental stimuli, like proper materials to play with, and delivered by parents alone, perform equally well as a matched group of children in regular day care in a neighbouring region.

changing attitudes throughout the community – a significant contribution to the development process.

This is a complex business, but at its very heart lies the recognition that the parent is the child's prime educator. Once this is recognized, the key to a new approach is to develop the link between parents and their young children, building on the desire of parents to do the best for their children. Thus, early childhood care offers a unique opportunity for parents to work and be with their children.

Unfortunately, the importance of this parent-child interaction is still not recognized everywhere. One example is that of a caring Irish mother who stated, sadly:

> I thought that my baby should be kept quiet and warm and in a room – my bedroom – all the time. She was very, very good and never cried. I used to feed her and put her into bed and leave her there. People used to call and they'd say 'where's the baby?' But I'd rather not disturb her. I preferred her to stay in the bedroom.

This mother was trying to do her best to care for the child – but had not yet realized the importance of early stimulation to ensure intellectual growth and development. For her, as for other parents, the realization came through a home visiting programme. (See Box 3.2.)

The examples from the United Kingdom and Ireland illustrate the key arguments for parent involvement: first that it capitalises on the mother/child relationship as a key factor in determining the future development of the child; and secondly, that mothers who become involved see themselves as capable of making a difference to other people's lives.

A rich variety of good quality early child care and education experiences has emerged in many countries in which parents are involved. Informal approaches demonstrate that the foundations of basic education can be laid in the home, the family and the community in a low-cost, yet effective manner, respecting peoples' different cultures and lifestyles.

These approaches recognise that parents have a special role as the child's first educators. Educating children means also educating adults. By becoming involved, parents learn that they matter and that they can change their lives and those of their children.

In Singapore, parents are involved in day care centres and community outreach programmes in

Box 3.2 British and Irish mothers make a difference

The Bristol child development project operates in twenty four health districts in England and Wales, and a variation of its work has been adapted for use by the Eastern Health Board in the Irish Republic. The original work in Bristol was launched experimentally in 1980 as a training programme to enable health visitors – highly trained community nurses – to acquire an insight into their work which went beyond the essential health steps that the new mother should take in her own interests and in the interests of her child. Particular attention was paid to health visitors dealing with first-time mothers. The health visitor and the mother worked very closely during monthly visits on a set of carefully determined tasks related to many aspects of the child's development. After each visit, a 'contract' was established between mother and visitor over what should occur in the interval between visits.

A detailed study shows that target families record major changes in their home environments, compared with control groups, and changes are being perceived as well in the developmental levels of the children whose mothers are involved in the programme. 'Project' children are enjoying healthier diets; they suffer less from health problems and have fewer visits to the doctor; and they enjoy a better relationship with their parents.

Even so, the United Kingdom programme depends upon the key intervening role of the professional. In other situations such professionals, exclusively concerned with community health and with infancy, simply do not exist. In Ireland, for example, the Eastern Health Board decided to try out a modified version of the programme, using the same materials but calling upon 'community mothers' – women from the communities themselves – to take on the home visiting role. Indications are that there is no major difference in the quality of the programme as it affects children.

the neighbourhood. (See Box 3.3.) Two other approaches merit attention. First is the Big Brothers Big Sisters scheme, where secondary school student volunteers are trained to work with day care children. These students, boys and girls, devote two or three hours a week to this work which also earns them credits for school. They tell stories, read to the children, bathe them and play with them. As a result of the volunteers' involvement, the centre benefits, the child benefits, and above

Box 3.3 Day care centres in Singapore

Here, parents are regarded as partners in the care and education of young children. They work closely with the day care staff on common objectives. They try to strengthen the link between the home and the day care centre, seeking to develop a better understanding and skills in working with their children. They also seek to provide a network of support for parents with common concerns such as child management, family relationships and pressures of work on the child and the parents. Parents organise themselves in various sub-committees to achieve these objectives. These activities range from organising parent education workshops to sharing experiences with new and anxious parents to conducting dance and art classes. Parents are not mere recipients: they are active participants.

When the parents are involved and empowered in this way, two major outcomes become apparent: first, they acquire greater knowledge and skills to support the children's development. Secondly, the recognition of parents as partners in the care and education process builds up their self-esteem, competence and confidence, not only as a parent, but also as a developing individual in his or her own right. By being involved, leadership qualities emerge that parents themselves do not initially suspect they possess. This new perception of self, of who they are, and what they do, is crucial for community development.

all, future parents are trained in this child-to-child approach.

The second alternative Singapore scheme is intended for families who are difficult to reach and who, for a variety of reasons, stay away from day care centres. Many are low-income families or belong to ethnic minorities. The response to their needs is an informal outreach programme that is non-threatening and easily accessible: the Toy and Book Library, set up on the ground floor of high rise flats which has been left vacant for social purposes. Its informality and high visibility attract local children and parents in the neighbourhood who drop in and make use of the educational toys and books. The accompanying parents and grandparents are encouraged to play with the children and to participate in the informal workshop activities. Through discussion, observation and demonstration, both parents and grandparents gradually come to understand that toys can be useful as educational tools and that no matter what their educational background and age, they can learn to be more supportive of their children's development.

In sum, parental involvement is a key strategy for ensuring a good home environment to support the learning of young children. A stimulating home environment helps a child's development. At the same time, the parental factor in formal day care can diversify and enrich what centre-based services offer. Therefore, the earlier parents are involved, the better it will be for the children, their parents, and for others who will be responsible for their care and education later on in life.

However, two challenges can be made to the assumptions about parental involvement:

First, time constraints. Day care is meant to release parents for other tasks, yet if participation in it is too onerous for them in terms of time, then parental involvement can have the opposite effect. Moveover, there are many other programmes making claims on parental involvement, including primary health care and political mobilisation. Approaches to parents (e.g. by teachers) should stress that the time commitment will not necessarily be large.

Second, the role of fathers. So many cultures place emphasis on the mother, rather than on both parents. Is the key the empowerment of women or the empowerment of parents? In fact, the child needs the care and attention of both the father and the mother. One strategy that has been found effective in Kenya was to involve boys in activities previously intended for girls only, as in home science. In this way there might be hope for a 'new generation' of men who would not shy away from child care activities.

Another kind of day care centre is represented by the 'Centros de Desarrollo Infantil' in Mexico, where whole families are given orientation on various development issues. Two programmes exist: one for government workers, where no charge is made, and one comprising private sector centres, which charge one per cent of workers' salaries.

Community involvement

Where communities have begun to develop even the most basic child care or pre-school activities, as in Peru, the barrier between school and community is broken down, the transition of children into primary school is eased, and children do better when they get there. All communities can offer some help for care of children. Even in refugee camps in Thailand, carpenters help to make toys for the children. The children can see the toys being made; the carpenters see how the toys are used and can adapt the designs.

Through involvement in early childhood care and education, people are motivated to tackle their own problems. And they produce effective solutions. Solutions that:

are rooted in the local community;
make use of local resources;
come under their own control;
are affordable; and
can be sustained.

Early childhood programmes can become a powerful focus for community mobilization and self-help. In Kenya, for example, a national preschool programme relies heavily on the participation of communities, and everyone benefits, not only the children. (See Box 3.4)

Box 3.4 Pre-schools in Kenya

In Kenya today, there are over 12,000 pre-schools with nearly 750,000 children aged between three and six years. Over 70 per cent of these pre-schools were established and are being managed by local communities on the 'harambee'[1] or self help basis. When a need for a pre-school arises, the parents call a meeting to plan how to get resources for building a pre-school. They appoint a committee to manage the project, and this committee gets the whole community involved. Members of the community contribute land, funds, building materials and labour for constructing the required facilities. Later, the parents appoint a teacher, and the committee assists the teacher in the running of the school. The community's participation continues as it assumes the responsibility of maintaining the facilities, paying the teacher's salary and, in some cases, providing feeding programmes for the children.

The national training programme for pre-school teachers, organized by the Ministry of Education in partnership with local and international agencies, has utilised the community participation approach to improve the quality of pre-school education, health and care. The trainers draw heavily on the community's wealth of ideas, experiences, energies and such inputs as cultural resources and locally available materials in the development of relevant curricula. Through awareness meetings, communities have been able to raise the standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning in the pre-schools. The amount and quality of services depend on the ability of each community, but they generally include action in 4 areas:

- providing better buildings and improved facilities, with the trainers providing the specifications and local artisans showing the parents how to make the furniture;
- collecting and making play and learning materials: older children drawing and painting, women sewing dolls' clothes, and men installing outdoor play equipment;
- older people teaching songs, drama, dances and stories, which are then compiled into children's books;
- organizing feeding programmes where parents provide food, water, firewood and take turns in cooking and feeding the children with balanced diets.

While the children have benefited by learning in better and richer environments, the parents and whole communities have also benefited because they have gained knowledge and skills on how to provide more adequately for the total growth and development of the young child. These knowledge and skills remain with them and will continue to sustain the early childhood programmes and other community programmes.

1. Harambee is a Kiswahili word which means 'pulling or working together'.

Partnerships and a new way of working

Developing strong partnerships with parents and communities means a new way of working for governments, for service agencies and for educators. Above all, it means *listening* to the needs of the local communities and addressing their local agendas. It means becoming familiar with the people and their religious beliefs, their customs and even their food taboos. Then, it is possible to see how best to build on what they know.

Listening to people:

- means recognizing the diversity of cultures, languages, customs and resources which make up societies, rather than seeking uniformity;
- means training – for teachers, administrators, specialists – to sensitize them to the needs of the communities and to ways in which they can involve parents in the education of their children;
- means recognizing that education as well as child care begin in the home and within the community, so they must be nurtured there.

To begin any kind of economic or educational development without consulting the people for whom it is intended risks being resented as an expression of cultural arrogance, which assumes that simple people are too ignorant to know what is good for them. Therefore, a good starting point is to spend time listening to people talking about their problems, their hopes, their dreams, their ideas. Only after a process of attentive listening can one hope to contribute usefully to the lives of others.

The essential messages for early childhood care and education can be summed up in five points:

- The early years are most important. Initiatives to provide early childhood care and education do pay off – immediately in the physical, intellectual and emotional development of the child, and later through a positive effect on formal education. Investment in human resources should focus on the young child because the early years are the most formative years; much that is done afterwards can only partly make up for missed opportunities.
- Low-cost solutions do not necessarily mean low-quality solutions for early childhood care and development.
- A holistic approach is needed for the integral development of the child, embracing education, health and nutrition and the interfaces between them.
- Parental involvement is crucial, both for the benefit of their children and for parents to see that they can influence their environment.
- Involving the entire community and using its untapped material and human potential can enrich and sustain early childhood programmes and also spur other development activities.

Health and nutrition in education

This section is not about health education or nutrition education *per se*[2]. Rather, it is about improving health and nutrition so that children can learn better.

Over the past few years, there has been an accumulation of research findings from several countries documenting associations between health, nutrition and school participation. The effects of nutrition and health during the early years of life may have long-term consequences that can seriously affect performance in school. Children's readiness for school is determined, in part, by their physical development, aptitudes, and motivation to learn; such characteristics are also conditioned by the effects of malnutrition and infection during the pre-school years. Poor nutrition and health conditions during the school period add to the developmental consequences of earlier malnutrition.

Hunger interferes with a child's concentration and problem solving abilities. In Jamaica, under-nourished children who come to school hungry were found more likely to be detrimentally affected in cognitive function than those who were adequately nourished. Other studies conducted in classroom settings have suggested that immediate improvements may occur in children's behaviour following the provision of food or drink. A school breakfast programme in Jamaica that targeted under-nourished school children with low levels of school attendance and achievement had a significantly positive effect on arithmetic scores and attendance. (Pollitt, 1990.)

The welfare of school age children and, more particularly, the intertwined basic needs of education and health are the focus of several studies. UNESCO is working with ministries of education, of health and of other concerned sectors, on the analysis of health and nutrition problems among school age children living in disadvantaged communities and the extent to which these problems may influence access to and participation in primary education. Part of the work investigates the processes and the circumstances in which poor households make 'decisions to educate' (e.g., the decision to send, or not to send, children to school) and the policy implications of such decisions along gender, ethnic, regional and social lines. The work also examines how the health and nutrition of children in poor households may be affecting their general welfare and school attendance patterns, as well as their overall participation and performance in primary school.

Central to the objectives of the analytical and descriptive studies being carried out is the identification and mounting of school and community interventions which address specific health and nutrition problems. These interventions seek to demonstrate associations between improvements in health and nutrition status (i.e., reduction in the prevalence of specific health problems and nutritional deficiencies, and changes in nutrition and health promoting behaviour) and improved school participation.

2. Considered in Monograph 1, Chapter 8.

In one study (Florencio, 1987), school principals, pupils and teachers were asked about the most common reasons for absenteeism; parents were asked what improvements were necessary for better scholastic performance. Poor health was the second and third reason cited for absenteeism by all groups, while one in two parents identified improved health as necessary for better scholastic performance.

A number of detailed studies on specific dietary deficiencies such as iron, leading to anaemia, all point in the same direction. At the same levels of pupil ability, socio-economic status, school quality and teacher ability, the under-sized and under-nourished children performed less well than their peers. Sometimes quite simple remedies such as inexpensive food supplements (e.g. for iodine deficiency) could be given, or de-worming for intestinal parasites.

School health programmes

While each country will have some specific needs, research points to a number of common elements for a school health programme. A programme of regular school-based immunization makes it easier to document and track each pupil's health history and prevent the epidemic spread of childhood diseases. Other measures include: school feeding programmes for those at greatest nutritional risk; the incorporation of nutrition into curricula, stressing the importance of a well-balanced diet and what constitutes such a diet; in-service training of teachers on how to screen for at-risk students in their classrooms, how to make remedial adjustments for those with minor physical disabilities, and when to refer others for special treatment; special health services to treat children who are at high risk of chronic conditions such as anaemia, diarrhoea and respiratory infection; and environmental services to address the problems of overcrowding in the classroom, inadequate lighting and ventilation, and poor hygiene.

Although each of these measures can be important on its own in fostering health among school children, their effectiveness is likely to be multiplied when applied together[3].

Food aid to education

Food aid to education generally has three objectives:

- to strengthen children's learning capacity;
- to decrease drop-out and to make school attendance more regular; and
- to improve the general quality of the school environment.

Nutrition and learning capacity. Nutritional support to improve learning capacity has traditionally been the first and most obvious purpose of school feeding projects; this is likely to remain so. Experience indicates that lasting effects of nutritional improvement, i.e., gains in height or weight, cannot as a rule be achieved with school meals alone. Once-a-day school rations by themselves do not normally make a significant difference, particularly under conditions of severe food shortage, because some food is taken home to be shared with other members of the family.

However, school feeding can have a noticeable effect on another, related problem: *short-term hunger.* Large numbers of school children in developing countries come to school without having eaten but after having completed chores and walked long distances, often for an hour or more. There is now strong evidence that by the middle of the school day, short-term hunger leads to a measurable reduction in alertness, attention span and hence learning outcomes. It is here that a school meal or snack can make an important difference.

The distinction between malnutrition and short-term hunger is not a theoretical one. While most school-feeding projects that aim at improved nutrition also alleviate short-term hunger, the distinction may in some cases lead to important practical modifications in project design and management, including the timing and size of school meals, and whether or not other related aid is provided.

Nutrition and access. Food aid to schools has generally aimed at providing an incentive for parents to enrol their children in school, encourage their regular attendance and reduce drop-out. Recent

3. There is further information on this topic in Monograph I, Chapter 8.

research indicates that school meals can indeed have this effect, but that their potential contribution needs to be assessed in each local circumstance. For example, if schools are over-crowded, then priority may have to be given to the provision of more classrooms and teachers rather than to school meals. Moreover, the motivation of parents to send their children to school and keep them there grows out of a complex set of factors and circumstances, among which their economic and social aspirations are probably the most decisive. Probably in all situations there will be some families for which the assurance that their children will receive a regular school meal will help motivate them to enrol their children. However, if these families are scattered throughout the population, their number may not be large enough in specific areas, in the absence of other reasons, to make general school feeding a cost-effective proposition.

Experience bears this out. Good results have been achieved where a school food-aid project was located in a country or region with a relatively high concentration of low income groups, such as nomads, or of children from particularly poor families. Projects of this kind have to be based on detailed knowledge of the needs and motivations of the target groups. Moreover, in some cases they may require higher levels of food (including take-home rations) than usual. Increasing enrolment and regular attendance remains a valid objective of food aid in specific areas, provided the targeting is carefully planned.

Improving school effectiveness through food aid. Many developing countries have a number of boarding schools and training institutions, mostly at secondary level but in some instances even at primary level. Food accounts for a significant cost element in the operation of boarding schools, so food aid can either supplement the school budget or release budgetary resources for other investment. Even day schools often serve students from distant areas who have to stay near the school, so school meals or take-home rations help reduce the cost to them. Particularly in the poorest countries, schools often cannot function without providing meals in one form or another: for these countries, food aid is an important direct contribution to education.

Food aid also can be an effective means to support a variety of other educational investments. School construction or repairs, or the installation of drinking water or sanitation facilities, can be carried out under food-for-work or community self-help schemes. Food can also serve as an incentive for participation in literacy campaigns or training schemes.

Making food aid more effective

Distribution of food in schools is a broad "shotgun" approach to needs which can vary significantly within a group of school children: some may indeed require regular snacks or meals, others may not need free food at all. Differentiation according to need is, however, a difficult task, politically and organizationally. Primary schools, in particular, are sensitive to any form of socio-economic discrimination: school meals cannot easily be offered to some, but withheld from others, quite apart from the organizational problems and costs that this would pose. School feeding programmes have, therefore, an in-built tendency towards complete coverage.

Where administrative capacity for more selective food aid exists, this should be exploited. In the poorest countries, a large and generally poor rural population does not allow for a narrower and more targeted approach. The selection of participating schools may be limited to certain regions, if at all. However, even in the poorest countries, the mode of food distribution (full meals, mid-morning snacks, take-home rations) can vary with local conditions, and seasonal factors may need to be considered. Communities or parent-teacher associations may, over time, be able to take on a share of the cost. In middle-income countries, and in urban areas where children have only short walks to school, it may be possible to limit school meals to certain schools, or to those children who do not go home for a mid-day meal. Some schools may be able to operate canteens, perhaps with the participation of local food processing industries. The government may be able to charge modest canteen fees or introduce matching grants or other practical approaches to steer the canteen pro-

gramme over time in the direction of greater self-sustainability.

Furthermore, some food aid projects may be made more effective if they include partial support of educational and related costs. For example, the link to health and hygiene is obvious: poor standards of school and family hygiene, chronic parasitic infection, or unhygienic eating habits, can reduce the effect of school meals directly. Investment in clean water supply, latrines, regular medical inspections, specific health education programmes or campaigns can be linked to and financed through a well designed school feeding project.

Poor nutrition and hunger are, of course, related to poverty, and the hungry child is generally poor, badly dressed and inadequately housed as well.

Nutrition and health in the context of poverty

The current social and economic crisis profoundly affects education in many countries, so it is necessary to locate nutrition and health issues within this wider framework. It is largely the present economic crisis in sub-Saharan African education that has led to a decline or stagnation in primary enrolments. There are fifteen countries with stagnating primary enrolments (i.e. the numbers enrolled remaining unchanged despite an increase in the size of the six-to-eleven year-old population) and twelve with declining enrolments. Stagnating enrolments are beginning to be a problem also in Latin America and south Asia.

Limited access and poor performance are related to socio-economic background – the 'hidden injuries of class'. Problems of poverty are the key to poor participation and poor performance in schools. A child in school with no breakfast has a more limited attention span, but many others are not even in school because they cannot afford the fees, or because their parents need their labour, or because their parents do not see the value of schooling.

In many societies, the lower income groups are under-represented in schools while the middle and upper income groups are relatively over-represented. There has even been a reversal of previous progress, especially in the education of girls. The social and political implications of this reversal can be very serious because of expectations raised when economic circumstances were better. The factors at play need to be better understood because of their effect on decision making under the pressure of economic difficulties. These are largely socio-economic factors, not educational ones.

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4. Improving Primary Education

Children and learning are the key to a better future. Primary education can have direct and positive effects on earnings, farm productivity and human fertility; it also has inter-generational effects on child health, nutrition and education. The effects of primary education on national development are largely a result of the cognitive skills it imparts: literacy (reading and writing), numeracy and problem-solving skills. However, while school-age populations are growing, budgets are shrinking relative to financial need, and the proportion of unqualified teachers is growing. At the same time, community support is in danger of eroding because of a general perception in many countries that instructional quality and learning achievement have declined.

Since 1950 a massive increase has occurred worldwide in access to education. However, many pupils are not well served by their schools, while more than 100 million children still remain outside formal schooling, and even more youths and adults remain without the basic skills of literacy and numeracy required for effective lives. Thus the potential development effects of education are being threatened by the growing ineffectiveness of primary education in many countries.

Poor primary schools often compromise the entire system for human capital development. Their products are poorly prepared for secondary and tertiary education, and ill-equipped for lifelong learning. One consequence is an insufficient number of well educated managers, workers and parents who can make an effective contribution to development. The most visible consequences of poor quality education are *low primary completion rates and low student achievement.*

In low-income countries fewer than two-thirds of those who enrol in primary school complete the entire cycle, and this proportion has been declining in recent years. The principal school-related determinants of drop-out are poor learning and repetition. On average, repetition rates in low and lower middle-income countries are two to five times higher than those in upper middle and higher-income countries, with the highest repetition rates found in the lowest-income countries. For these countries the problems are compounded because the most disadvantaged populations do not yet have access to schooling.

Even children who complete primary school often have not learned the core skills commonly specified in the national curriculum. Pupils in low-income countries perform poorly against both national and international measures of performance in mathematics, science and reading comprehension. Performance is poorest on tasks that require pupils to apply knowledge to new problems. Nobody doubts the size of the problem: the question is, what can be done about it?

Improving educational effectiveness

The school environment

Limited educational effectiveness in developing countries is a direct result of failure, either at the level of policy or of its implementation, to provide the necessary minimum supply of those inputs

necessary for learning. As a result, schooling takes place under conditions that are significantly less favourable than those in more developed countries. At the primary level, pupils in high-income countries are likely to go to school in modern, well-equipped buildings, have 900 hours of learning time per year, $52 of non-capital material inputs, a curriculum that is carefully planned, a teacher with sixteen years of education, and a pupil-teacher ratio of 20:1. By comparison, pupils in many low-income countries are likely to go to a shelterless school or attend class in a poorly constructed and ill-equipped building, have only 500 hours of actual learning time annually, $1.70 of material inputs, a poorly-designed curriculum, and a teacher with less than ten years of education; this resource-poor learning environment is shared with more than fifty other children, many of whom are chronically undernourished, parasite-ridden, and hungry.

Given both the impoverished conditions and the severe resource constraints facing poor countries, it is critical to concentrate resources on interventions that improve learning, are cost-effective in comparison with other inputs, and can be widely implemented. Theory, research evidence and practice suggest investing in *five principal inputs for improving learning: the curriculum; learning materials; instructional time; classroom teaching, and pupils' learning capacity.*

Improving the effectiveness of education with respect to learning requires reallocations of resources to ensure that levels are adequate for all five principal inputs. Investment in teachers and in buildings is also necessary but research evidence shows that many countries have invested primarily in these latter two inputs but have not provided minimum levels of the first five inputs listed above. The consequence is that children enrolled in school learn very little, and many do not complete the primary cycle. Only when learning is increased, and progress and retention in school are not inhibited by such factors as restrictive promotion policies or the family's demand for a child's labour, will children move through the system more rapidly and remain in school for more of the primary years, with a higher proportion of pupils actually completing the primary cycle. The end result will be more and better-educated primary school completers.

The first neglected input is the *curriculum.* In very general outline, 'official' primary school curricula have many similarities world wide. They contain the same subjects and seem to accord them the same relative importance. On average, approximately 35 per cent of available instructional time is devoted to the acquisition of language skills and 18 per cent of time to mathematics. Science, social studies, and aesthetics are given approximately equal weight, about half that of mathematics and one-fourth that of language.

However, despite commonalities in official curricula, there are great disparities in the curricula that are actually taught. For example, a UNESCO survey revealed that in the Africa and the Asia and Pacific regions, there are wide divergences between one country and another in the allocation of time to primary school science (often by as much as a factor of four)[1]. Moreover, the actual curriculum in many developing countries is poor in terms of both scope and sequence of subject matter. A recent study of the reading and mathematics curricula in fifteen developing countries found that expectations for pupil achievement in the earliest grades were inappropriately high and that steps from one concept to the next were very large, with few intermediate steps. Textbooks, which are a major source, if not definition, of the curriculum in most developing countries, often suffer from factual inaccuracies, inappropriate illustrations, and poor choice of text, language and script. Also, they lack the material to teach the development of higher-order thinking skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and reasoning.

Some curriculum reforms have concentrated on re-defining the courses to be taught and the number of hours officially allocated to each of them; such reforms have been ineffective. Successful curriculum reform efforts have to tackle the more difficult issue of preparing a coherent, appropriately paced and sequenced teaching pro-

1. The Place of Science and Technology in School Curricula: a Global Survey. 1986. Paris,UNESCO.

Much of this chapter is based on material presented or available at the roundtable on *Improving primary education in developing countries: a review of policy options* (T11), organized by the World Bank and chaired by Barber B. Conable, President of the World Bank. The presenters were:

Marlaine Lockheed (Moderator)
Senior Education Sociologist, Population and Human Resources Department, the World Bank
Faisal Abed
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Bangladesh
Vicky Colbert de Arboleda
UNICEF, Bogota, Colombia (for Escuela Nueva)

It also draws on material presented or available at the roundtable on on *Creating capacity for educational progress: empowering the educational manager* (T21), organized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The chair was taken by Antonio Gayoso, Director, Human Resources, Bureau for Science and Technology, USAID. The presenters were:

Kurt Moses (Moderator)
Director, Computer and Systems Services, Academy for Educational Development, U.S.A.
Robert Morgan
Director, Learning Systems Institute, Florida State University, U.S.A.
Carleton Corrales
General Manager, Association for Socio-Economic Advancement and Development, Honduras
Chinnapat Bhumirat
Education Specialist, Office of National Education Commission, Office of the Prime Minister, Thailand

The basic document used for roundtable T11 was *Improving primary education in developing countries,* by Marlaine E. Lockheed, Adriaan Verspoor and others. A further version has subsequently been accepted by Oxford University Press for publication in 1991.

The first part of this chapter is based on a paper specially prepared and written for this Monograph by Marlaine Lockheed and Adriaan Verspoor. (The sections on finance from this paper appear in Monograph III.) The section on educational management is based partly on the Lockheed/Verspoor paper, but also on material presented or available at the roundtable T21. Other materials/presentations used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included the following:
Creating Capacity for Educational Progress by the Academy for Educational Development, U.S.A.
A statement by Anil Bordia, Secretary of Education, India

gramme, and of developing teaching materials that support it.

Learning materials are key ingredients for learning. They should organise the presentation of information, provide children with opportunities to use what they have learned, and - in the case of tests and quizzes - help teachers assess pupils' learning. Learning materials that are known to enhance pupil achievement significantly are textbooks and teachers' guides.

Over the past decade, researchers have documented the consistently positive effect of the availability of books on pupil achievement. For example, in Nicaragua, pupils who were given textbooks scored about one-third of a standard deviation higher on tests of mathematics achievement than pupils without textbooks. Similarly, in Brazil, second and fourth grade pupils who received textbooks scored significantly higher on tests of mathematics and Portuguese than pupils in schools without textbooks. Likewise, in Fiji, provision of classroom libraries led to improved pupil test scores.

However, in many developing countries, primary school pupils either lack books altogether or are required to share books with other pupils. In the Philippines, prior to a massive investment in textbooks, the pupil-to-textbook ratio was 10:1. In the Dominican Republic, fewer than 20 per cent of eighth-grade pupils in public schools have mathematics textbooks, and in the Central African Republic, there is one French textbook for every ten to twenty pupils.

Teachers' guides that are well integrated with the textbook or other instructional materials can have a positive impact on pupil achievement. Particularly effective are guides that include information both on what to teach and how to teach it, diagnostic tests to assist teachers in monitoring children's learning and in modifying the lessons based on test results, suggestions on classroom management practices, and activities for classroom use.

There is less evidence of the impact on learning of other instructional materials (such as chalk and blackboard), although it is obvious that their availability is important. Properly implemented computer-based learning programmes can be effective. However, their present costs do not make widespread introduction feasible for most education systems in developing countries, particularly in rural areas where there is no reliable supply of electricity. In general, countries should focus on providing good (pedagogically sound, culturally relevant, and physically durable) curriculum guides for teachers and textbooks for all children.

Research from a number of countries has shown that the amount of *instructional time* available for scholastic subjects is consistently related to how much children learn in school. In general, the more time teachers spend actually teaching, the more pupils will learn. While learning time is valuable for all pupils, it is especially important for poor pupils, whose out-of-school time and opportunities for learning are limited.

The annual number of hours children are meant to study any subject in school is determined by three factors: the length of the official school year in hours, the proportion of those hours assigned to the subject, and the actual length of the school year in hours. World-wide, the official academic year for primary grades one to six averages 880 instructional hours, or 180 days, with slightly fewer hours in lower-income countries than in higher-income countries. In some developing countries the academic year is substantially shorter than average (610 hours in Ghana); while in others it is longer (1070 hours in Morocco).

However, time loss for unscheduled school closures, teachers' absences, various disruptions, and inclement weather, is much greater in developing countries. For example, in Haiti, the official school year in 1984 had 162 days, eighteen short of the international average, but it was made significantly shorter by unofficial closures and delayed openings. The school day often began late, teachers frequently were absent on Tuesday and Friday market days, and forty-eight holidays were celebrated, instead of the twenty-eight holidays built into the school calendar. Teacher absences due to poor administrative procedures are also common in developing countries. Many teachers need to travel considerable distances to be paid; they may also find themselves assigned to teach at long distances from their homes; both these factors contribute to teacher absence and reduced instructional time.

A potentially costly strategy to increase effective learning time is to reduce class size. Small classes are often considered indicators of educational quality, but the main effect of small classes is to increase the pupil-teacher contact time. This happens only in very small classes. Teachers' classroom interaction with individual children is fairly minimal unless classes are quite small. While reducing class size to twenty or fewer pupils could boost achievement, in most countries this kind of reduction is prohibitively expensive. A more promising and more effective strategy for increasing learning time is to set and maintain standards for instructional time. This can be done in two ways: increasing the amount of official time allocated to learning, and/or increasing the amount of actual time spent on learning.

In countries where the school year is shorter than the international average, it could be lengthened. In many cases, this is an attractive alternative, as it would permit full coverage of the conventional primary curriculum. Where double shifts necessitate a school year of fewer than 880 hours or where the introduction of a second language limits curriculum options, maintenance of an acceptable minimum instructional time (about twenty hours weekly) in core subjects, especially language, literacy and mathematics, may need to take priority over covering a wider range of subjects.

Maintaining standards of instructional time requires administrative measures and/or parental

interventions to ensure that schools are open during official hours and that teachers are present and teaching during the official instructional periods. Temporary distractions must be avoided, and appropriate arrangements must be made for continuing instruction during normal weather conditions (e.g. during the rainy season) which have been made the occasion for past absenteeism.

The *quality of teaching* plays a critical role in children's achievement. Effective teaching strategies may differ by subject and by age; that is, strategies that are appropriate for children in pre-school and the early elementary grades may not work for children in upper elementary grades, and vice-versa. Effective teaching involves, at a minimum:

- presenting material in a rational and orderly fashion, at a pace appropriate to the pupils'level, and taking into account individual differences amongst them;
- letting pupils know what is expected of them;
- providing pupils with opportunities to practice and apply what they have learned, particularly in relation to their own experience; small group instruction can be effective in developing children's problem-solving skills;
- monitoring and evaluating pupil performance in such a way that pupils can learn from their own mistakes.

Much teaching in developing countries is characterized by practices that are not conducive to learning, such as heavy reliance on teacher lectures with few opportunities for pupil questions and participation. There is often too much dependence on learning by rote, rather than the intelligent application and use of materials. Generally there is little ongoing monitoring and assessment of learning through homework and classroom tests. There are at least three ways to improve classroom teaching: in-service training to improve teachers' pedagogical methods; interactive radio instruction; and programmed learning materials.

Most *in-service teacher training* programmes emphasize pedagogical practices. The most effective forms of in-service training are those that employ recurrent efforts rather than 'one-shot' courses. In Bangladesh, for example, recurrent in-service teacher training at school level concentrated on topics such as practical methods of teaching major subjects, ways to adapt the curriculum to the social and physical environment of the child, understanding how children develop and learn, methods of evaluating teaching and learning, management of classrooms, and parent-teacher and community relations. In-service training programmes in Thailand, India, and Nigeria have provided incumbent teachers with a new repertoire of pedagogical skills that focus on participatory teaching methods.

In-service training can be carried out through distance education programmes (correspondence, often supported by radio). This form of training is particularly useful for improving teachers' subject-matter knowledge and has proved to be cost-effective. In Latin America, two-thirds of all post-secondary distance education institutions provide teacher training; in Africa, teacher education has been found to be the most successful use of distance education. One study found that distance teacher training in the United Republic of Tanzania was more effective than an equivalent conventional residential programme and four times cheaper per trainee. Similarly, a distance teacher training programme in Brazil was found to be six times more cost-effective than traditional, residential teacher training methods.

When teachers lack sufficient subject matter knowledge to teach pupils adequately in a particular subject area, *inter active radio* can be an effective supplemental teaching tool giving careful attention to the correct order and pacing of instruction. Evaluations of interactive radio instruction in five countries consistently showed that participants performed significantly better than pupils in conventional classrooms. Radio is also one of the most cost-effective educational interventions. Once lessons have been developed, the cost per pupil per year is very low because the same lessons can be transmitted to thousands of new pupils at minimal cost. Further consideration is given to the use of interactive radio in Chapter 5.

A third way to improve the quality of teaching through in-service training is to use *programmed materials*. Like inter-active radio, programmed materials demonstrate a high degree of attention to

the systematic application of various principles of instructional development and design. They provide step-by-step scripts for teachers and instructional materials for children to use individually or in groups. They have been used successfully in primary schools in Liberia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

Children's capacity for learning is partly determined by their health and nutritional status and by their prior learning. As discussed in Chapter 3 there is ample evidence to show that pre-school nutritional and stimulus deprivations are associated with deficits in cognitive development. In-school feeding and health programmes can lead to improved cognitive performance, and pre-school educational programmes can compensate for learning deprivations in the home environment. Although the results of studies of the effects of school feeding programmes on enrolment and achievement are encouraging, they do not identify a clear relationship between school lunch programmes and educational results. School breakfasts or snacks may be more cost-effective alternatives to alleviating short-term hunger and its adverse impact on learning. Visual and auditory screening to detect children with certain disabilities can be conducted with the use of simple eye charts and 'whisper' tests at negligible cost.

As already discussed in Chapter 3, research on early childhood educational experience in both developed and developing countries demonstrates that the effects are positive and often sustained for several years. Pre-school programmes aimed specifically at families with low incomes, have been particularly effective. Publicly financed pre-school experiences for all children are not feasible for most developing countries, but private and community-supported pre-schools – including those supported largely by NGOs - should be encouraged.

Improving the preparation and motivation of teachers

Three critical determinants of effective teaching are: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, and teacher motivation. All available evidence indicates teacher inadequacies in these areas.

A first determinant of teaching effectiveness is the *general academic preparation* of the teacher, which can take place either before or during teacher training. In most developing countries, prospective teachers have only about nine years of general education. In countries with high rates of population growth, rapid expansion of the primary education system has led to a reduction in the amount of general education needed for entry into teacher training programmes. Lowered entry requirements have resulted in trainees who lack the intellectual and academic preparation to acquire adequate teaching skills. Therefore, teacher training programmes have been obliged to devote valuable time to academic remediation. As much as 80 per cent of class time in teacher training colleges may be spent learning general secondary school subjects like history or geography at the expense of pedagogy.

Providing general secondary education in teacher training colleges is quite expensive, averaging seven times the annual per-student cost of conventional secondary schools. The higher direct costs reflect the tendency of teacher training programmes to be residential, requiring stipends for food and lodging, as well as the salaries sometimes paid to teacher trainees while in training. Significant savings can be obtained by requiring prospective teachers to obtain their general secondary education in general secondary schools where this is feasible.

Pedagogical proficiency is a second key determinant of effective teaching. Yet, because of time allocated for general secondary education, relatively little time and attention in teacher training is devoted to development of critically important teaching skills. Moreover, the pedagogical course work often focuses on broad theoretical issues rather than on specific teaching strategies. A shorter teacher training programme, focused on the development of pedagogical skills, would probably be more cost-effective than present programmes. A shorter programme that assumes that prospective teachers have already completed secondary education could provide them with opportunities for school practice teaching under the supervision of a qualified teacher trainer. Such practice helps

prospective teachers learn pedagogical skills and prepares them to cope with unexpected events in the classroom.

Teacher motivation is critical for effective teaching. Low teacher morale leads to high rates of teacher absenteeism and loss of teachers to other jobs. Teacher absenteeism reduces pupil learning time, while teacher loss to other jobs increases the costs of teacher training. Low morale is often linked with a lack of commitment to, and real interest in teaching as a profession. It is frequently a function of low salaries, poor working conditions, insufficient career advancement opportunities, and/or weak support services. As a consequence, even the most conscientious and capable teachers may lose their enthusiasm for teaching.

Salaries and benefits are important motivating factors in any profession. In developing countries, teacher salaries and other emoluments account for as much as 95 per cent of government primary school recurrent expenditures. In some countries teacher's salaries are high in relation to wages in manufacturing, but often they are lower. In many developing countries, average teachers' salaries have been eroded significantly in real terms over the past two decades. When salaries are very low, teachers are likely to supplement their incomes by other pursuits, which increases teacher absenteeism. Surveys in Liberia, Indonesia, and Somalia all show substantial proportions of primary teachers holding second, and sometimes third, wage-earning jobs[2].

Classroom conditions in developing countries are generally poor; instructional materials are in short supply; and facilities are inadequate and poorly maintained. Many countries have a perennial shortage of classrooms, and in urban areas, often more than fifty-five pupils are crammed into rooms built for half that number. Such conditions are demoralizing for teachers and discourage professional commitment.

In most developing countries, teachers' career and salary advancement is seldom related to responsibility or performance. Salary increases tend to be tied to civil service pay scales, with increments awarded on the basis of certificates and length of service. Thus, there are few incentives for teachers to perform well. Career ladders linked to re-designed salary scales can have a positive impact on teacher motivation. They can offer teachers the opportunity to develop new skills and accept new challenges; they can provide good role models by placing experienced teachers in positions to influence younger teachers; and they can facilitate teacher involvement and responsibility at the school level. All this can motivate teacher performance.

The lack of supervisory and support services for teachers also adversely affects teacher motivation. For example, late payment of salaries was found to be a major disincentive in Liberia, Yemen Arab Republic, and Haiti. Moreover, teachers absent themselves from school to travel to the administrative offices to collect their salaries. Similarly, the lack of regular supervision encourages absenteeism and does not encourage the adoption of improved teaching practices.

Strategies for strengthening teacher motivation will thus need to be comprehensive and pay attention both to salary and to non-salary benefits. Salary scales will need to be established at competitive levels and provide opportunities for advancement and incentives for performance, for example, by providing grants for innovative teaching projects. An adequate salary structure will only be effective, however, in conjunction with working conditions and professional support at the school level that allow teachers to adopt demonstrably effective instructional strategies.

Non-salary benefits that should be considered include resource centres, the creation (or perhaps re-vitalization) of professional associations, and a commitment by government to the provision of lifelong learning opportunities for all teachers.

Strengthening educational management

Effective schools require effective management at the school level by principals, headteachers and administrators, plus well-developed national and intermediate organizational structures to provide the necessary leadership and resources. The most

2. These questions are considered in more detail in Monograph III, Chapter 3.

successful reform efforts have focused attention on the school as a whole, rather than individually on the pupils, the teachers, the curriculum, or the administrators. Governments must create a context that promotes competence at the school level.

While each country will need to develop its own strategy, strengthening the management of the education system may require central policy decisions and action to ensure: organizational restructuring; strengthening information systems; and developing managerial capacity.

Organizational restructuring aims to improve the context within which management at school or intermediate levels takes place. Structure imparts authority, responsibility, and control, and has implications for the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the system. Some systems are highly centralized: financing and authority are concentrated at the national or, in large countries, the state level, with local districts and individual schools carrying out a centrally mandated and financed programme of schooling. Other systems are relatively decentralized, with authority to mobilize and use resources at the district, municipal or state levels. Whether a system is centralized or decentralized, it should be organized in such a way that decision-making authority and resources are properly matched to support the development and operation of effective schools.

Administrative weaknesses at the central level generally arise when managers' time is consumed with operational tasks at the expense of strategic matters. The proper functions of central-level administration include broad policy planning, developing new curricula and materials, designing policy implementation strategies, designing and monitoring standards of performance, providing financial resources and technical expertise, and obtaining and distributing educational materials. However, central-level managers are often hampered in the execution of their tasks by cumbersome or outdated procedures, weak interministerial coordination, vaguely-defined responsibilities, and haphazard policy formulation processes.

At intermediate levels, education offices tend to be poorly financed and inadequately staffed. Their principal responsibility is to provide professional support and technical assistance to individual schools. However, these functions tend to be poorly executed due to inadequate resources. Inspection and supervision of schools require regular school visits, which in turn require sufficient staff and vehicles.

At the school level, the management effectiveness of principals is often jeopardized by limitations on their authority that prevent them from taking responsibility for the delivery of instruction in the school. Yet, virtually every line of inquiry about school improvement identifies the principal as a critical factor. For example, a recent study of primary school effectiveness in Burundi showed a strong positive relationship between the frequency of the school principal's classroom visits and pupils' test scores. One goal of decentralization should be to give school managers the authority and training necessary to manage and improve the process of instruction and to mobilize local resources.

An appropriately structured educational system gives managers at all levels appropriate authority and concomitant resources to do their jobs effectively. Educational administration in many countries will need to be restructured, realigning authority and functions between central ministries, intermediary bodies, and schools. This will imply limiting the functions of central-level agencies to strategic planning, standard setting and performance monitoring; providing effective intermediate-level supervisory and support services; and encouraging local school improvement initiatives, stimulating community involvement and delegating responsibility for instructional improvement to local educational managers.

Management information systems enable managers at all levels to monitor how resources are used and to have ready access to vital information such as pupil characteristics and achievement, teachers and their qualifications, material facilities and resources. Such systems can be manual, but the use of up-to-date information technology does allow for both greater data storage and easier analysis of relations among data sets. An educational management information system can allow for multiple levels of data aggregation and analysis: the individual pupil,

the classroom, the grade level, the school, the district, the region, and the state and/or country. Other analyses can be developed using rural/urban location, gender of pupil, community socioeconomic status, or any other descriptive variable for which data exists. The data in an information system can be from annual censuses or special data collection exercises and can be supplemented by the results of either quantitative or qualitative research projects.

Good management depends upon the systematic collection and use of this kind of detailed information. Efforts to improve schools can then be well informed, rather than based on inaccurate or incomplete data. Accurate information must be available in a usable form to decision-makers at all levels. Whatever the available technology, few countries have yet developed information systems adapted to the needs of educational policy making. Information systems need to be strengthened in three areas: testing, monitoring, and research.

A capacity for assessing pupil achievement is essential for improving the quality of education. Assessment of learning is more effective when conducted separately from the examinations that provide criteria for selection of children for higher levels of education. A national programme for the regular assessment of student learning is needed to evaluate the impact of policies and programmes and to permit reliable reporting of learning. This will enable central staff to monitor performance over time, both as a means of quality control and of identifying education districts, states, provinces, etc., that may need additional help.

A central testing agency, adequately staffed to provide extension services to schools and districts, can provide important support for school improvement programmes. By developing a variety of tests based on the national curriculum, and providing technical support and training to local levels, the testing agency can strengthen the ability of local educators to assess learning and evaluate the effects of school-improvement initiatives.

A national testing programme should always include basic literacy and numeracy skills but may also cover knowledge of particular subjects or higher order reasoning skills. A common criticism is that such tests rarely incorporate assessments of attitude or personal/social relationships[3].

Monitoring systems are needed to capture basic statistical information on teacher qualifications and deployment, pupil characteristics, school attendance, drop-out, repetition, and costs. Where data can be developed and reported from the school and aggregated at the intermediate level, it becomes possible to interpret differential levels of achievement across regions of the country enabling the education authorities to monitor indicators of school quality. To be useful, these data must be assembled regularly and reported accurately. Much of the information originates at the school level, but the results of data collection and analysis are rarely seen at that level. If they were, there would probably be more effective data collection and more use made of it in developing local managerial capacity. The school principal should be involved in the effective use of data analysis as well as in the routine tasks of its collection.

Economic and educational research will be needed to complement routine information gathered through testing and monitoring systems. Among the issues that need to be addressed are the effectiveness of learning materials, the impact of training on the performance of teachers and administrators, the educational outcomes and equity effects of school improvement strategies, the effectiveness of supervision, the cost-effectiveness of various interventions, and the impact of alternative instructional practices. It is also important to identify and disseminate examples of good practice among schools, and it is here above all that teacher participation in research is not merely useful but absolutely essential.

Teacher participation and locally based research also help guard against the risks of using the results of developed country research in developing country contexts. Because these risks are now well documented, there is an increasing emphasis on country-specific research efforts, with the main research personnel coming from within the country concerned. As school-based research initiatives succeed, the dissemination of results not only pro-

3. See also Monograph III, Chapter 6.

vides models of locally-developed innovations for consideration in other schools, but also reinforces and rewards local accomplishment.

Embodying the testing, monitoring, and research functions in a strong information system depends upon comprehensive and long-term institutional development strategies. Experience suggests that these functions are probably best located in specialized institutions such as the Education Development Institute in the Republic of Korea, the National Examinations Council in Kenya, and the National Examinations Board in Malawi.

Developing managerial capacity is an essential and continual task. Weaknesses in managerial and administrative capacity have been identified in almost all developing countries as rapid expansion of education systems has increased the need for managers and administrators. At higher levels, key positions are frequently filled with people who have little experience in educational policy formulation and planning, often because they are rapidly promoted or appointed to fill vacancies created by frequent turnover and expansion. The few institutes that train educational administrators are generally handicapped by shortages of staff, teaching materials, and funds. Consequently, education ministries are often staffed with underqualified and inexperienced individuals who are unable to carry out their managerial responsibilities adequately.

The absence of effective managers is also evident at intermediate and school levels. Intermediate staff may be appointed on the basis of seniority or political relations, despite their lack of up-to-date expertise in curriculum development and pedagogical methods. At the school level, principals are usually selected from the ranks of teachers on the basis of seniority and receive little, if any, training for their administrative duties.

It is above all at the level of the school where managerial capacity must be strengthened. At present, school principals spend much of their time on matters related to facilities, finance or the satisfaction of administrative requirements imposed on them by higher authorities - including providing data for analysis and use elsewhere. They are seldom trained for any of these tasks and thus may not perform them well. There is need to strengthen local managerial capacity in three crucial areas: first, within the school itself to ensure that teachers devote more of their time to essential teaching and learning; second, to establish and maintain a relationship with the local community and to ensure increased parental support for schooling; and third, to establish a more positive relationship with higher level authorities in order to gain the support and resources necessary to carry out school-level reforms.

School principals need to spend more time on *in-school supervision of teachers,* talking with teachers about learning opportunities and the importance of pupil achievement. This calls for a personnel management strategy that encourages and helps teachers to work more effectively; it should include some element of in-service training, because it is often the lack of proper training, rather than teachers' attitudes or industriousness, that limits school effectiveness. School managers themselves require training in how to supervise teaching, motivate teachers, and better understand the proper role of the manager in providing instructional guidance to the teachers. Also, managers need to talk more with parents about how the family can encourage improved learning at home and in the school.

Improving school relations with the local community is another important function of good educational management. In areas of economic and social disadvantage, the school inputs that the educational manager controls may not be sufficient to result in an acceptable level of learning achievement. Moreover, the links to the community need not be to the sole benefit of the school. If administrators and teachers are involved in a range of community support and development activities, then this is likely to be reciprocated by greater support for the school and a more positive attitude toward the school by parents and community leaders. Some school officials take responsibility for recruiting out-of-school children to attend school and for assisting in the provision of non-formal education for youth and adults. There is a strong case to be made for inter-sectoral approaches and co-operation with NGOs in this regard.

Box 4.1 Key influences on primary school quality in Thailand

Research in Thailand has looked at six areas of school-level management: curricula and teaching; clerical operations; personnel; buildings and grounds; pupils' activities; and community relations. Results confirmed the Thai saying that one 'will never find a good school with a bad principal or a good principal in a bad school'.

The research looked at four major areas of achievement ranging from the Thai language and mathematics to life- and work-skills. In the analysis of teaching and learning, two areas were shown as the most important: pupil-centred learning and achievement monitoring. The research also indicated how school principals can encourage effective teaching and learning by placing greater emphasis on academic work and on inter-action with both teachers and pupils.

The Thai experience indicates that effective managers involve parents in the school (especially concerning resource issues) and are themselves involved in the community. School principals need to recognize the appropriate role of the community in education about values, in general decision making, in assuring a relevant curriculum, in providing resource support in cash and in kind, and in raising the expectations for school accomplishments. The potential role of communities varies according to the local economy, parental educational levels, and the availability of other educational resources. While communities are easiest to mobilize in advantaged areas, their relative importance to the school may be even greater in disadvantaged areas.

The research suggests that school effectiveness can be identified in terms of six questions about school behavior:

- Is there regular classroom supervision?
- How active are teachers in the development and revision of instructional materials?
- How much teacher collaboration occurs in the areas of subject matter and pedagogy?
- How much teacher participation is there in school decision making?
- How effective are administrators and teachers in time management?
- What type of relationship exists between the school and community and is it supportive of the school's instructional tasks?

Source: Basic Research in Developing Educational Systems (BRIDGES) Project, USAID.

Changes in the way schools are administered, especially if they make clear efforts to relate to the local community, can change perceptions about the school's interaction between the school and the community. A surprising result is that the positive ideology that is engendered is more important to educational success than the economic resources provided to the school by the community. This new ideology rejects the exclusive dependence of the school on government and promotes the idea that the school and community should take greater responsibility for the school's achievements. For a change in ideology of this kind to be effective, however, government must be willing to decentralize its administrative structure and devolve part of its administrative authority to the school level.

Strengthening managerial capacity at all levels will require substantial resources and a long-term perspective. The dual problems of lack of skilled managers and of low morale need to be tackled by providing systematic staff development programmes, increasing professional opportunities and incentives, defining clear career paths, and establishing systems for assessing performance. Training needs to be linked to clear long-term strategies for organizational development.

The responsibility of the school managers should be matched by their authority; it is not fair to hold them accountable for learning outcomes if they do not have administrative control over the determinants of learning. The success or failure of school managers needs to be assessed in terms of the particular school context, which may vary dramatically according to the local environment and the national structure. Techniques and behavior by educational managers that are appropriate in one setting will by no means be appropriate in all others.

Box 4.2 Involving the community in educational management. Pingdu County, China

Through restructuring the management system of the educational sector, the Chinese government has mobilized the initiative of units at various levels to improve the conditions for operating schools. In 1980, more than half of the primary and high school (secondary) classrooms were made of mud and did not have adequate lighting. Many of them were on the verge of crumbling and did not have even the basic facilities. Therefore, to develop the education sector, it was first necessary to ensure that 'there is not a single hazardous classroom in the school, every class has a classroom and every pupil has a desk and a chair.' But how to achieve that?

Leaders of the Pingdu County government went to villages, towns and townships to conduct investigations. They found that the people eagerly wanted to improve the basic facilities of schools, but due to the constraint of the management system, their enthusiasm was suppressed. Many local people and cadres said: 'Though we feel uneasy that our children are studying in those crumbling classrooms, it is beyond our capacity to change this situation. If the schools are entrusted to us, we will build decent schools no matter how difficult it might be'.

Spurred by these words, the county government began to restructure the educational management system with determination. They instituted a management system under which schools are run at three levels (village, township and county). The responsibility for operating schools at each level is clearly defined: villages are responsible for running primary schools, townships are responsible for running junior high schools, and the county is responsible for running senior high schools.

The reform of the management system brought into full play the initiative of the people and the cadres. Liyuan Township, for example, a newly established township with poor economic conditions, had difficulty in funding the construction of the central school of the township. But when asked, local people indicated that although they did not have money, they would contribute what they could, such as building materials and manpower to build the school. In several days, more than 500 cubic metres of stone and 50,000 kilos of lime were pooled. Altogether the bricklayers of the township contributed labour amounting to two months of work. Finally a decent school with thirty-six rooms, a granite plaster gate and a 500-metre courtryard wall was completed.

By 1983, Pingdu County had achieved the goal set by the central government. The county also fulfilled the call of the provincial government for each school to have a complete set of facilities: classrooms, desks and chairs, a courtyard wall, a gate, a playground and toilets. Many schools had been built with four distinct quarters for learning, living, sports, and production experiments. As a result, the county was named a model for rural school construction by the Shandong Provincial Government. After that, the towns and townships of the county made further efforts to improve the conditions for schooling. Since 1983, fifty-four primary and high school buildings with a floor space of more than 2,500 square metres have been built in the whole county. After the reform of the educational management system in the county, with operation of schools at three levels, more than 100 million yuan (US$37 million) have been invested in school construction.

Other management issues

Management priorities differ among countries. While the provision of textbooks is of the utmost urgency in some countries, in other countries there may be greater need to upgrade their physical plant or to improve school management. Each country will have to analyze its own situation, define its own priorities, and prepare its own plan to develop basic education. Donors will need to be flexible in their support of educational development programmes.

Two other factors are also very important, namely *the cultural milieu* and the problem of *financing education in difficult economic circumstances.* In India, attempts are being made to move away from a 'total pre-occupation' with professional teachers and to recognise that local communities have the capacity to identify people who can both teach and enhance knowledge. Professional teachers usually

Box 4.3 The "Escuela Nueva" in Colombia

The Government of Colombia has committed itself to guarantee complete primary education to all school-age children in the rural areas where low coverage and inefficiency has characterized the school system over the decades. The Government selected the "Escuela Nueva" (New School Programme) as the strategy to universalize primary education and improve its quality in all of the 27,000 schools in the rural areas. The New School Programme was designed and tested during a fourteen year period and is currently being implemented in 17,000 schools reaching more than 900,000 children. The Government provided the necessary political conditions, and the funding came from government resources, a loan from the World Bank and UNICEF's co-operation to support the New School Programme in its process of going to scale.

The New School Programme responds to the needs of rural primary education in Colombia because:

- It reaches children, teachers, administrators and communities through its four inter-related components: curricula, training, administration and community processes.
- Children are trained to be active, creative, participative and responsible.
- Children learn through an active methodology that facilitates learning by doing and playing to solve problems of their daily life and to apply in their communities what they learn.
- The Programme includes 'school governments' through which children are initiated in civic and democratic attitudes, and in habits of co-operation, comradeship, solidarity and participation.
- Children work in small groups using self-instruction workbooks furnished free by the Government. The workbooks are designed to take into consideration the learning pace of each child and contain objectives and themes that deal directly with the life-style of children and their communities.
- The children develop an essential set of basic learning tools, skills, attitudes, values and knowledge. In health and nutrition, child survival topics are part of the school objectives and activities. The New School offers a potential for the mass dissemination of health and nutrition education.
- Each classroom has a library and 'interest areas' or 'work corners' to support the learning activities.
- The grade promotion policy is progressive and flexible. Children can stay in school and continue helping their parents at home. Learning achievement is not measured simply by years of schooling; rather, achievement is recognized as the basis for applying within the community what children learn, thus strengthening the link between basic education and individual and societal development.
- The school operates as an information centre and an integrating force for the community. Parents participate in school activities and the school promotes actions that benefit the community.
- Teachers are facilitators: they guide, orient and evaluate learning. They are trained in workshops that follow methodologies similar to those they will later apply to their pupils.
- The training of teachers is decentralized and replicable. The follow-up to the training takes place through rural micro-centers in which groups of teachers interact and exchange their teaching experiences.

Recent research by a Colombian institute, indicates that 89.3 per cent of teacners believe that the New School is superior to other rural schools. In tests given in socio-civic behavior, self-esteem, mathematics for third grade, and Spanish for third and fifth grades, children in the New School Programme obtain considerably higher marks than those in the traditional rural schools.

come from urban areas but rural communities are encouraged to recruit and train their own teaching cadres, this could help to improve the cost effectiveness and relevance of local schooling.

Another issue is the tendency to view access only in relation to schooling, which is equated with primary education. But there may be a place for alternative delivery systems that take account of certain economic and social realities such as child labour. In India there are 110 million children in the six-to-ten age group, and one-third of them are working regularly. These children

must be catered for with curricula that are relevant to their lives.

In regard to difficult economic circumstances, the debt crisis in many countries poses enormous problems for improving the quality of education. In Benin, children are not in school because the government has no money to pay the teachers. Benin's structural adjustment policy allowed no expansion of the teaching force, and the foreign debt burden has reduced government budgetary resources even to maintain existing services, including education. Although the debt crisis is real, each country must face up to the shape of its own domestic budget, which may give undue priority, for example, to military expenditure, but not enough to basic education. The big question is what these priorities should be within the over-all development programme.

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5. Alternative Delivery Systems: Non-formal and Distance Education

There is always a close inter-action between the quality of learning in the family and community and the support that they can give to improve the learning of children. But the basic learning needs of families and communities are diverse and changing over time; their learning needs as parents, workers, and active participants in social, cultural and political life can only be met by a variety of delivery systems. Moreover, not all children are in school, and even those who are do not always learn all that they need or wish. The aim should be to ensure that alternative structured learning opportunities are available for all children, youth and adults. This can be achieved by non-formal education programmes and by the imaginative use of the communication media for distance education.

Non-formal education for youth and adults

Adult education is often equated with literacy, and during International Literacy Year (1990) there was a focus on this component of out-of-school basic education. Moreover, literacy is an essential prerequisite for other learning that is necessary for the full participation of individuals and groups in development. For example, reference has been made in Chapter 2 to the dramatic impact that women's literacy can have on the way women perceive themselves and on the way they conduct their lives.

However, the focus on literacy should not be allowed to obscure the fact that basic education for youth and adults has many other components besides literacy. In the 1970s the concept of non-formal education gained currency, embracing a vast range of educational activities such as health and family planning, agricultural extension, post-primary skill training, youth clubs and women's groups. In Coombs' famous definition, non-formal education is 'any organised activity outside the structure of the formal educational system that is consciously aimed at meeting specific learning needs of particular sub-groups in the community – be they children, youth or adults.' This concept is distinct from 'informal' education, arising from daily (unorganised) exposure to the environment, family and friends, and from 'formal' education, 'the highly institutionalised, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured "education system", spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university'.

In the 1970s many educators hoped that the promotion of non-formal education (including literacy) would result in more coherent planning across all government ministries for the whole of education. Except in a small number of countries, this did not happen. However, the new concept did dramatically extend the horizons of many educators and policy makers beyond the school, so that significant policy attention was given to the neglected area of adult and community education.

Within the perspective of Jomtien, the importance of non-formal education for youth and adults lies in its contribution (in co-operation with schools) to meeting the basic learning needs of target communities, and its integration as an edu-

cational component (skill training, attitude change, literacy) into development projects of other sectors, particularly in the informal economy, health and agriculture. Programmes are highly heterogeneous, and the terminology used is often confusing. Moreover, there is a lack of information and statistics on non-formal and informal education. Projects are often small in scale, and their results are often not evaluated at all or are reported in other sectors such as health or agriculture.

This section reports on some examples of youth and adult non-formal education, including skill training. Other examples of non-formal education appear elsewhere in this monograph: for example, educational radio in Latin America in the next section of this chapter; women's literacy and income generation in Chapter 2; and participation and communication in Chapter 6, which presents a particular view of non-formal education in development.

Table 5.1 proposes a classification of the diverse field of non-formal education into four main types: paraformal, popular, personal improvement, and professional/vocational.

Paraformal refers to programmes (e.g. evening classes) that provide a substitute for formal schooling; they offer a 'second chance' to those who cannot attend regular schooling. *Popular* education is explicitly targeted to serve marginal groups; it is the least institutionalized component, and includes adult literacy, co-operative training, political mobilization, and community development. Education for *personal improvement* (music, languages, sports, etc.) is provided by clubs, cultural institutions, and associations, and in most cases is paid for by the learner. *Non-formal professional and vocational training* may be provided by firms, trade unions, private agencies, as well as schools.

Paraformal and popular non-formal education are often targeted at unemployed school leavers, with the aim to prepare them for self employment. This is because most school leavers are prepared, if at all, only for wage or salary employment, which is often difficult for them to find. Such non-formal programmes can be only a palliative, because youth unemployment is usually part of a much wider structural problem. Nevertheless, they have helped many young people to earn a living.

One example of this type of programme is provided by the 'Youth Polytechnics' in Kenya. Started as 'village polytechnics' in the late 1960s, these multi-purpose, low-cost training centres were designed not merely to give useful skills to school leavers but also to motivate them to create employment opportunities for themselves by providing goods and services needed in their immediate neighbourhoods. In 1990 there were reported to be 575 Youth Polytechnics with over 31,000 students attending artisan courses for self employment. The

Table 5.1 Organizing agencies and types of non-formal education

	Organizing agent:					
	Public	Private				
Types of NFE		Firms	Churches	Trade unions	Volunteers	Profit organizations
Paraformal	• • •		•	•		•
Popular	•		• • •	• • •	• • •	
Personal improvement	• •	•		•	• •	• •
Professional/vocational	• • •	• • •		• •		• • •

• • • important • • secondary • marginal

Source: IIEP, *The diversification of the educational field*, Paris, IIEP, 1989, (Mimeo).

This chapter is based mainly on material presented or available at the roundtable on: *Greater access to better quality: distance education for primary school improvement* (T12), organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was chaired by James Maraj, President, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada, and the presenters were:

H. Dean Nielson (Moderator)
Principal Research Scientist, Institute for International Research

Peter Kinyanjui
Senior Programme Officer, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada

Napa Bhongbhibat
Deputy Director, Non-formal Education Department, Ministry of Education, Thailand

Clifford Block
Office of Education, Bureau for Science and Technology, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Papers/presentations used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included the following:

Greater Access to Better Quality by H. Dean Nielson (major sections of this paper also feature in Monograph III)

courses offer skills training in tailoring, carpentry, home economics and metalwork. Some of the Youth Polytechnics have succeeded in generating rural self-employment, while others have enabled primary school leavers to enter the 'informal' economy or to find other skilled employment.

A similar approach is used by the National Directorate of Employment in Nigeria for the 'Youth Employment and National Skills Development Programme' and the 'National Open Apprenticeship Scheme' (NOAS). The major objective of the NOAS is to equip youth with skills that will enable them to be self-employed. On recruitment, the apprentices are attached to trainer organizations, which may be private or government enterprises, or to local craftsmen. Apprentices who have relevant qualifications are admitted into vocational training institutions or centres to learn trades like typewriting and shorthand, auxiliary nursing, computer operation and accountancy/bookkeeping. The duration of the apprenticeship is usually one to three years depending on the chosen trade and the experience of the apprentice. Often the government pays a fee to the trainer and a monthly stipend to the apprentice.The programme is based on 80 per cent practical on-the-job training and 20 per cent theory: apprentices work in the areas of primary assignment from Monday to Friday and then attend a three-hour 'Saturday theory class'.

Other examples of post-primary skills training can be found in many countries. In some, no distinction is made between children, youth and adults, with a range of age groups learning together, or at least in the same building. For example, Indonesian programmes for fishing families recognise that children traditionally help their parents in tasks related to fishing, so they are allowed to follow the same occupational courses.

Distance education: improving quality in school and extending opportunities out of school

Distance education is used essentially for two purposes: to improve the quality of instruction and to provide access to more learners. Improving quality is especially important in primary schools when well trained teachers are in short supply (e.g. in rural areas). Access to education can be increased through non-formal distance education programmes for adults, such as Acción Cultural Popular in Colombia.

What is distance education?

Distance education is defined by Perraton as 'an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in place and time from the learner.' It is

not a way of replacing teachers in schools, but rather a means to support them with high quality materials. It is also a means to support adult groups in a whole range of non-formal learning activities and to train the animators of such groups (e.g. community development workers).

There is a need to 'de-mythologize' distance education: a number of widespread beliefs need to be challenged before there can be full acceptance of distance education as cost-effective, affordable and sustainable. First, if it is cheaper, can it also be better? The answer is clearly 'yes' if the circumstances are right.

Second, is distance education just another phrase for 'school broadcasts'? The answer to the question, 'What is more boring than a boring lecture?', used to be 'when the same lecture is read over the radio.' This is certainly not the case with modern distance education. The keys to success are teacher acceptance and high quality programmes. The former can be ensured if programmes are designed and perceived to help teachers, rather than threaten them with unfamiliar material for which they have not been prepared.

Third, is distance education both technologically feasible and easily accessible? Distance education involves a mix of modern and conventional technologies (e.g. video or radio, plus chalk and talk). As the next chapter will show, modern technology can be highly accessible: even illiterate women can make their own video programmes.

Finally, how can it respond to individual learning needs? Distance education is not necessarily impersonal: for instance, radio can be interactive. With proper training, teachers can use well presented, high quality material to provide personalized support for children.

Using distance education

Distance education has demonstrated its usefulness in three main areas:

- interactive radio, used in school by trained teachers to improve the quality of instruction;
- radio and printed materials, used to reach out-of-school groups and individual learners who cannot attend school or for whom schooling would be inappropriate; and
- radio and television, used for the in-service training of teachers/animators, sometimes in the use of new instructional materials and/or technology.

In-school interactive radio generally involves daily radio lessons of 20-30 minutes duration, followed by a 15-30 minute teacher-led activity. The radio programme is interactive in that it prompts a student response every few seconds to answer questions, perform spoken or written exercises, and use simple materials. Supplementary activities for the student to complete in school or at home are often provided in the form of printed student worksheets. Typically, a school using interactive radio is provided with one battery-operated radio, which is moved from classroom to classroom. Teacher preparation associated with the use of interactive radio involves training sessions that may last from a few hours to one or two days.

Nicaragua used interactive radio in the 1970s for teaching primary school mathematics. At least twelve other countries have since adopted this form of distance education, e.g. for English (Honduras, Kenya and Lesotho), science (Papua New Guinea), mathematics (Thailand, Honduras and Costa Rica) and health (Bolivia). Nepal, Belize and Ecuador are conducting pilot studies. The big step is moving from this pilot stage to a programme with national coverage. The national programmes in Honduras and Lesotho have shown the way, and they have more than 200,000 children learning English as a second language. The credibility barrier has been breached. The radio programme is carefully structured and sequenced on well established principles of how children learn. Lesson segments are systematically tested and revised until they are effective in the local circumstances. Each lesson calls for frequent and active student responses.

Teachers and administrators in Honduras had to be convinced that distance education could help them, rather than threaten to undermine their authority or their jobs. There were also lingering fears among school professionals that radio instruction might introduce alien cultural assump-

tions and values into the schools. However, a successful social marketing strategy was implemented to gain acceptance for interactive radio. Academic results of the radio programme revealed an 18 per cent measured improvement in learning achievement. The coverage and success of the programme was extended through private sector involvement in the financing of books, instructional kits, and broadcast time.

Applications of interactive radio in schools have been carefully evaluated. In most cases pupil achievement is higher than in conventional classes, sometimes dramatically so. Work done by the USAID Radio Learning Project showed encouraging results, particularly in mathematics, and particularly for children in rural schools, although all pupils scored consistently and significantly higher than those in more conventional classes. With interactive radio, it is possible to share some of the capital costs (e.g. of materials production) between countries. The Recurrent costs of delivery may be as low as US 50 cents per pupil per subject per annum. Six issues are important in school based distance education:

First, acceptability depends on the involvement and participation of relevant local institutions and individuals in the design, development, implementation and monitoring processes. In the case of Kenya, the support and contributions by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the Kenya Institute of Education (in curriculum planning and development) were indispensable ingredients for the success of the project.

Second, the classroom teachers have to be well prepared and trained to make good use of the radio broadcasts. They must understand their roles and responsibilities before, during and after the broadcasts; and they need to be supported by relevant print materials and teachers' guides.

The third issue concerns the systematic training of teachers in the application of technology. They should come to understand and accept these technologies as additional tools which can enhance their teaching and creativity. One way of preparing teachers to use radio in the classroom is to apply the same medium in the course of their training. Teachers who have undergone in-service training through distance education methods, including regular radio broadcasts, are more inclined to use radio in their teaching than those who have not had this experience.

Fourth, there is need to provide professional support to the teachers on a continuing basis. This presupposes that those who provide the support are themselves conversant with the use of radio and other technologies in the classroom. In addition to the headteachers, support personnel may include school supervisors and local educational administrators. Their continuing professional support helps to sustain the motivation and commitment of the teachers in the performance of their expanded tasks.

Fifth, when a pilot project has been completed, it is important to examine the effects that the features of the project might have on the schedules of the entire education and broadcasting systems if full-scale national coverage were effected. Any additional costs should be specified, along with the funding sources to meet them. Furthermore, the implementing ministries and departments should feel that they 'own' the technology and that they are able to integrate it within the established national structures and programmes.

Sixth, it is essential that the whole effort should have strong political support and commitment, including the backing of the teachers.

Radio for out-of-school learners is used to reach adults as well as children in non-conventional or non-formal 'schools'. Thus, there are radio programmes that deliver a primary school curriculum (mainly for children) and others that provide instruction in literacy and numeracy combined with life skills, practical skills geared to production, and socio/political consciousness raising and mobilization. A survey by the Organization of American States in the early 1980s identified fifteen radio education projects oriented towards the formal primary curriculum and thirty-two for adult non-formal education.

An example of primary education for out-of-school children is provided by RADECO in the Dominican Republic. RADECO was begun in 1981 in a poor region where children were often pre-

vented from attending regular schools because their labour was needed in the fields. It combines outreach activities with interactive radio. Instruction is offered to children at the levels of the first four primary grades. Each day there is one hour for each grade level, with about thirty minutes on mathematics and thirty minutes on reading and writing; the latter includes social, leisure and natural science topics. Community-built shelters are used as learning centres, and community members who can read and write are selected and trained as monitors.

An evaluation of RADECO shows that children do better in mathematics than children in the regular schools and almost as well in reading – and this with only one hour per day of instruction at a much lower cost per pupil If expanded to national coverage, the over-all cost would be about half that of the regular schools. RADECO presently covers eighty two communities in five provinces.

Details of non-formal education for adults are less well documented. Of those for which full information is available, one example is Acción Cultural Popular (ACPO) of Colombia. Founded by a Catholic priest in one village in 1947, it now extends to all parts of the country. The object is to organise programmes that are designed to improve the quality of rural life. The curriculum includes hygiene, nutrition, child care, family planning, agriculture and literacy. Virtually all Latin American countries now have similar programmes, most of which are linked to the church in some way; at least twenty of them are explicitly modelled on APCO.

In APCO-style programmes, the 'classes' are held in rural homes under the guidance of a monitor (often a former student). Radio programmes are supplemented by textbooks, as well as other books and a rural newspaper; the latter is a particularly important support and encouragement for neo-literates. Evaluations show this approach to be an effective non-traditional route to basic education that succeeds in improving the quality of life for rural people.

By the mid-1980s, distance teacher education projects had been established in more than forty developing countries: 18 in Africa, 11 in Latin America, eight in Asia, two in the Arab States, and two regional projects (Caribbean and South Pacific). Some are, or have been, operated by conventional universities (e.g. the Institute of Adult Studies, University of Nairobi), some by 'open universities' (e.g. Allama Iqbal Open University of Pakistan), some by special government centres or agencies (e.g. the Centro de Educaçao Tecnica of Brazil), and some by private organizations. In many countries, unqualified teachers are often scarcely more qualified than the pupils they teach, and one way of improving on this situation is to provide in-service training and up-grading programmes for teachers using radio, correspondence study and some face-to-face instruction. Such a programme in Kenya showed that links can be made between distance teacher education and interactive radio for pupils.

Five conditions for success of distance education have been identified: planning and goal setting must be clear; benefits and demand should be well identified; instructional materials need to be carefully designed and refined through user feedback; quality depends on effective formative evaluation; and there should be strong local participation.

Distance education projects need careful planning and realistic goals. A decision to mount a distance education project should be based on a determination that it is the best approach to attaining certain educational objectives, not simply an opportunity to use an interesting new technology. Such a decision must also be based on a careful examination of technical and organizational feasibility. Some early distance education projects, notably those using educational television, failed because of an over-estimation of the number of receivers that could be acquired and maintained, the degree to which signals could reach all parts of the country, and of access to prime broadcast times. Other projects have failed when their target groups disappeared, as in the case of one project focused on upgrading a category of untrained teachers that eventually ceased to exist.

With regard to benefits and demand, research on interactive radio indicates that after careful teacher preparation, the in-school programmes are popular among teachers and help them increase students' motivation to learn. Distance teacher

education has shown less clear-cut evidence of teacher support; as noted previously, this must be secured before a project can succeed. The least popular and least effective programmes seem to be those that attempt to improve teacher competence without responding to their needs for advanced credentials, professional recognition and growth (promotion), and increased salaries. Without such incentives, some programmes have failed to attract enough participants to be cost-effective and have experienced high drop-out rates. Providing adequate financial incentives may be difficult when teachers' salaries already absorb nearly all of the education budget. However, other kinds of incentives could be used, such as granting tenure, official awards, and opportunity to form social and professional groups.

One strength of interactive radio, which sets it apart from earlier educational radio programmes, is that the materials and pedagogical approaches used are based on solid principles of instructional design, geared towards holding student attention and engagement. Especially critical is the 'segmented' lesson structure and the frequent pauses for students' responses. Scripts are carefully written, field-tested and revised. Successful programmes in non-formal education have often involved the learners themselves in the development of both programmes and materials. However, in teacher education, the self-instructional systems have generally been modelled on those used in the United Kingdom or North America, which may not be appropriate in other settings.

Early approaches to educational radio programmes placed too much emphasis on what happens on the air and too little on what happens on the ground. Since much of what happens in distance education is in fact remote from the producers/managers, knowing how well the programmes are serving the users is crucial. Formative evaluation of the programmes has been a strong feature of many of the interactive radio programmes and some of the teacher education programmes (e.g. Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University of Thailand).

Participation of local groups and individuals in implementation includes, *inter alia*: involvement of classroom teachers in the interactive radio lessons, organization of local study groups, learner involvement in programme development, and teacher choice on which instructional modules to take up. Research in Indonesia showed that participation in tutorials structured by the centre declined over time, but that participation in local study groups formed by students increased. In Brazil, teachers appreciated the flexibility to choose from among alternative courses and to move at their own pace. The high level of autonomy given to community organizers and groups was also a factor in the success of this and other projects.

Problems, constraints and conclusions

Distance education has been criticized for de-emphasizing the human inter-action and socialization aspects of education. Distance educators have acknowledged these limitations and have responded by building in important 'face-to-face' discussion sessions; also, they have not tried to cover all subjects through this method. For teacher training programmes, there are still problems in developing effective ways of socializing participants to the values of the profession.

Much of distance education, especially that involving self-instruction, assumes an individualistic value system that gives worth to the printed word. However, many cultures emphasize communalism and the spoken word. This mis-match makes it difficult for some learners to progress on their own or to understand written explanations. Matters are further complicated when participants' mother tongue differs from the language of the programme. The deployment of 'three-way' learning systems, involving a combination of radio, face-to-face discussion, and the use of printed or self-instructional materials, helps to bridge this language. Many programmes still leave the learner in virtual isolation. New approaches to group learning in distance education – for example, those which involve school-based learning groups – is one way to deal with this problem.

Distance education may be impeded by the perception that it is not as high in status as conventional education. If people see that advantaged

groups are given access to conventional and relatively expensive in-school education whereas the disadvantaged get 'second rate' distance education, then there would be an immediate social status problem. To deal with this criticism, distance educators have been careful to cover the same curricula as those used in schools or colleges and have developed quality control mechanisms, such as using the country's best professionals to prepare materials and requiring distance education graduates to pass standardized tests. Tracer studies and market surveys are also now being used to document the market value of distance education certificates. Some countries have developed 'sandwiching' arrangements so that everyone receives some school or college experience and some distance education experience. However, even if out-of-school distance education never attains the status of schooling, it may be the only option available to some learners, especially in remote areas.

Clear and consistent broadcast reception, the maintenance of equipment, and the cost of batteries are technical problems in many countries. There are also problems in securing access to appropriate air-time for broadcasts (during the day for pupils, during the evening for teachers and other adults). Some technical difficulties are being overcome through the use of new satellite communication systems and durable, solar-powered radios. Access problems are increasingly being dealt with through the use of audio-tapes instead of broadcasts. Distance teacher training programmes that develop strong group learning processes may find that they do not need to use radio.

As noted earlier, teachers and administrators may be hesitant to endorse distance education for fear that they will be displaced by technology. Although there may have been some basis for such fears during the early days of educational television, most distance education programmes are designed to support and enhance the role of classroom teachers or community learning centre facilitators. In fact, the greatest supporters of interactive radio now appear to be the teachers themselves, once they have had experience with it. As far as distance teacher education is concerned, the perceived threat to conventional teacher training colleges could be defused by giving them greater research and professional support roles.

Some programmes have had difficulty enrolling enough participants to be considered cost-effective. Economies of scale seem to accrue only when participants number in the thousands rather than hundreds. Development costs, which are generally relatively high in distance education programmes, have been reduced considerably when countries can adapt programmes that have been developed by other countries. However, such adaptations need to be done with care. Even mathematics lessons, which often have been transferred, have culturally bound elements in them that need to be modified.

Distance education programmes are generally developed outside of the mainstream educational management network. Problems arise in trying to institutionalize distance education within the existing bureaucracy and in providing regular financial support. Institutionalization implies developing routine systems of professional support for teachers who are either working with interactive radio or are going through distance training.

Institutionalization requires that the educational leadership of a country be firmly committed to, and involved in, the 'ownership' of the programme. Support at the school and district level has been created when supervisors and headmasters have been trained and given meaningful roles for implementation of the programme. Some progress has been made also in integrating distance education options. For example, programmes of interactive radio and distance teachers education have usually been developed separately – often considered as competing options, even though they are both geared towards improving classroom instruction. New approaches are now being tried to use distance education to train teachers and administrators in how to use interactive radio programmes and other educational technologies in their classrooms.

An advantage of distance education is that teachers and other adult learners need not forego income during training. However, they must study in their 'spare time'. For married men and women with children at home, this is time that they would otherwise spend on household duties, leisure, or extra jobs. The resulting stress may cause partici-

pants to abandon distance programmes. To remedy this, some programmes have provided teachers with time off for training activities (e.g., in Sri Lanka, every Friday). Others have scheduled activities during holidays or tried to organize support systems and courses on time management.

All countries face problems of access and quality, and it simply is not possible to rely solely on conventional methods if the goal of basic education for all is to be realized. Distance education should be regarded as a whole range of alternative and complementary delivery systems. Although distance education is not a panacea, it may be the only option for many. It has proved useful, for example, in the empowerment of women and in reaching learners in rural areas where good teachers are scarce. Planners should face up to the challenges – and the opportunities – offered by distance education.

Finally, it should be recognized that it is not the technology itself that is the key factor, but rather the way in which it is selected and used. Equally important is how educators take technology to the market place so that it benefits all who are in need of education and training. That is the true challenge.

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6. Participation, Communication and Research

The first step consists in identifying, preferably through an active participatory process involving groups and the community, the traditional learning systems which exist in the society, and the actual demand for basic education services, whether expressed in terms of formal schooling or non-formal education programmes.

Framework for Action (para. 10)

Learning through participation in development

Many development programmes take little account of the importance of education; in programme planning and implementation, learning for individual development and social mobilization is largely ignored.

Development interventions take many forms. They may be small or large engineering projects that concentrate on the improvement of infrastructure (e.g. roads, water supplies); they may be concerned with farmer productivity (e.g. agricultural extension); they may impact social organization (e.g. community development); or they may have or include some overt educational aim (e.g. literacy courses, health education). Whatever the type of intervention, nearly every development programme or project could provide opportunities for adult learning that stress capacities of analysis, evaluation, interpretation, problem solving and decision making. To be fully effective, such learning opportunities need to make use of, and become part of, the traditional learning systems in the society. This approach to development interventions implies a shift in the way in which national and outside development agencies view the role of basic education and its place in development planning as a whole.

Learning can be defined as 'the innately human capacity to interact with one's social and physical environment in such a way as to derive logical meaning, guiding principles and consistent perspective. Learning involves the acquisition of information and of intellectual and mechanical skills as well as the expression of new attitudes'. (Bernard, 1950.)

Central to the learning process is the ability to predict consequences, weigh alternatives, perceive comparative advantage and distinguish salient characteristics of a situation. It enhances the individual's awareness of self and community as active agents with both the capacity and the right to influence life conditions. Learning develops capacities of analysis, synthesis and evaluative judgement; these abilities in turn enable one to search out, exchange and interpret information, and then to solve problems and make decisions.

The full potential of development intervention projects is seldom realised: the very poor rarely benefit. The problem is not one of intent or technical capacity, nor is it the poor themselves. Projects often fail because they do not take account of the importance of learning, nor recognize that the poor have their non-traditional learning systems.

If there is to be any hope of sustainable development, then every person affected by a particular programme must be enabled to take informed decisions as individuals and as members of family

This chapter is based mainly on material presented or available at the roundtable on *Information, learning and grassroots participation: the necessary conditions for development* (T13), organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It was chaired by Graça Machel, former Minister of Education, Mozambique, and the presenters were:

Sheldon Shaeffer (Moderator)
Associate Director, Social Sciences Division, IDRC, Canada
Sheldon Annis
Overseas Development Council, U.S.A.
Anne K. Bernard
A.B. Associates, Canada
Pilar Riano
Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular, (CINEP), Colombia

The section dealing with educational research draws on material used in the roundtable entitled *From research to action in basic education: the potential of south – south and north – south networking* (T14), which was chaired by Pierre Beemans, Director-General, Social and Human Resources Division, Canadian International Development Agency. The presenters were:

Kenneth King (Moderator)
NORRAG Co-ordinator, United Kingdom
Arfah Aziz
SEARRAG Co-ordinator, Malaysia
Zainal Ghani
SEARRAG Co-ordinator, Malaysia
Donatus Komba
ERNESA Co-ordinator, Kenya
Patricio Cariola
REDUC Co-ordinator, Chile
Lucho Brahm
REDUC Co-ordinator, Chile

Papers/presentations used in the preparation of this chapter included the following:

An information revolution at the grassroots: what it means for the poor by Sheldon Annis
Learning and intervention: the informal transmission of the knowledge and skills of development by Anne K. Bernard
Empowering through communication: the role of participatory communication in development programs with women by Pilar Riano
Participation, communication and research: the role of the RRAG networks (prepared after the Conference on behalf of the RRAG networks) by Kenneth King

and community. Personal and collective decisions can make or break a programme. Such decisions may concern seemingly simple matters such as whether or not to adopt new, more nutritious food preparation and eating habits; to follow a literacy course; to boil water for drinking; or to follow more educative child-rearing practices. It is the people who currently bear the burden of poverty who, within the context of their own priorities, must decide to act upon that situation to change it.

This is just not happening at present. For the situation to improve, there must be a general recognition that learning is a fundamental pre-requisite for development to be coherent, equitable and sustainable. Learning is critical as both catalyst and medium for change at all levels. It is the core element underlying the concepts of participation, empowerment and sustainability that are currently popular, but rarely defined and even more rarely applied.

Just as the concept of illiteracy as a disease to be eradicated seems now to be outdated, so too must the concept of development that views the poor as undifferentiated people who, lacking both history and ambition, need external motivation in order to accept obviously useful changes in their ideas and behaviour. But the poor contend with an everyday reality of economic subsistence, political powerlessness and physical vulnerability, a reality that even well-meaning development interventions do not necessarily change.

The way to overcome powerlessness and vulnerability is through learning. Education enables people and societies to adapt to changing circumstances and act on new knowledge. Learning enables action based on an understanding of the how

and why of events and their relationship to particular local circumstances. For example, water and sanitation systems are used and maintained because people learn to use them and learn their usefulness. Such learning happens only when a community is provided sufficient, and sufficiently interactive, opportunities to learn about hygiene and its relation to health; how to design and maintain water monitoring systems; skills in using local resources for repairs; and, most important, the conviction that the system is theirs to be used for their own good as they see it.

Learning works in such cases because it both enables and requires genuine participation. It promotes empowerment as people realize they can produce and direct change, and it promotes a sense of ownership. As a result, it engenders sustainable change because the satisfaction of achievement and control are self-motivating. Learning is at the heart of the currently more popular terminology of 'participation,' 'empowerment,' 'ownership' and 'sustainability'. The capacity to engage in critical analysis of an agricultural or health problem is a matter of learning and is a pre-requisite to achieving and maintaining a solution i.e. sustainability.

Well planned development interventions reach poor populations with the information, access to skills and the resources necessary for their immediate development. Free from the restrictions of the formal school, interventions can be flexible, spontaneous and responsive; they can begin from and build on the aspirations, needs and priorities expressed by the clients. Concerned with such critical issues as health, family planning, nutrition, water management and work, such intervention programmes have a sufficiently comprehensive content coverage to ensure genuine participation. They can thus become powerful, enduring and significant opportunities for learning, and thus of sustainable development.

Moreover, unlike learning in the classroom, learning that is part of development intervention is not required to be congruent with a wider curriculum. Projects may be educational, but they are seldom seen as 'education', because they do not have well defined curricula, explicit teaching strategies or structured instructional settings. They are often a variant of 'non-formal' education.

However, in avoiding the problem of congruence with formal education, there is still the problem of congruence with the culture, aspirations and traditional learning systems of the people for whom an intervention is designed. Development agencies that promote non-formal programmes according to their own criteria of internal efficiency and professional credibility may produce projects sensitive to the demands of a particular discipline or sector (health, agriculture, etc.), rather than projects sensitive also to the cultural characteristics or priorities of the recipient community. This may well engender a distant relationship recorded in programme evaluations as 'problems of non-participation, drop-out and lack of commitment'.

An inherent problem for most development agencies is that they use the project format, which leads them to work in a self-contained way, although their aims require them to be open. Projects often make organizational sense: they are tidy, confined, funded up-front, clear as to inputs, outputs and procedures, and their outcomes are more-or-less predictable. But, the life of the poor is not so neat; to reduce its complexity, complications and unpredictability to fit the project format often condemns the latter to irrelevance or to failure.

Traditional learning systems

How then to extend respect for the poor so that projects have positive outcomes, rather than the more common negative effects on their indigenous cultural life and personal/social or economic growth? One example of the latter: in Bali, a religious-cum-planting cycle representing '800 years of juggling' with planting, fallowing and irrigation, was overturned in the 1970s by well meaning developers seeking to ensure three rather than two crops per annum. The result was an increase in rats, disease and environmental pollution by pesticides, but not the increase in productivity sought by the developers.

If the poor are to become truly part of development interventions, then developers must find ways to build on traditional learning systems. Evidence

from development literature, anthropology and from practitioners in the field is unambiguous in confirming that the marginal poor, on the whole, constitute intact, functional and adaptive communities. They have developed systems of food production and social maintenance that work. They have preserved not simply the physical existence of their communities but also the integrity of their socio-cultural organization. Much of this strength expresses itself through the natural inclination and ability of individuals, and of the group as a whole, to learn in traditional ways.

Traditional learning systems are essentially social in their orientation. There is usually an underlying consensus as to the content, methods of transmission, facilitators and sites of learning, which constitute the community's means of maintaining its cultural identity and social continuity. Traditional learning systems are a natural part of community life. As such, they present to an intervention programme both negative and positive potentials, either as a confounder of its aims or as a critical channel through which those aims can be realized. The essential point for development agencies and educators to note is that poor communities are not simply empty vessels waiting to be filled by development messages. All learners bring with them an extensive resource base of cognitive skills, knowledge, experience and values. These are resources any interventions must utilize in order to succeed in promoting further learning. The prior learning adults bring to the learning event is a particularly rich base of knowledge and intellectual skills, as well as a strong motivation to learn.

While poor communities and their traditional learning systems differ widely – there are nevertheless common features to be taken into account.

Poor communities are often marginal and risk being overwhelmed by a too instrusive intervention from outside. Whereas a farmer in North America may be willing to try a risky innovation, knowing the soil is still resilient, the bank credit sound and the reserve stocks ample, a subsistence farm family in Africa, contending with poor soil, an undersized field, unpredictable markets and no credit, may not be willing to experiment. Such a negative decision would be soundly based on reflected experience and would be both prudent and wise.

Necessary changes in life-style must build on the local culture. For example, successful health promotion and disease control programmes rely for success not so much on the technical, or chemical remedies a doctor can apply, but on the changes in life-style that the patients themselves can make. According to this perspective, interventions are occasions for learning. The patient (programme recipient) is not a passive responder to an input from the environment, but an active agent in the analysis and evaluation of that input. The medical practitioner (technical expert) is no purveyor of solutions, but a collaborative facilitator who helps discover and design solutions. For example, in working against the spread of AIDS, it is not enough to warn of the dangers. Health educators and doctors must learn from the public and from patients what will work or not work within their specific cultural circumstances.

Improved communication between different cultures is at the heart of reconciling traditional learning systems with outside interventions. Improved communication may sometimes be mediated by individuals or groups who have participated in each culture. Community associations, local NGOs, village health workers, monks, priests and returning migrant workers often perform a mediating role and interpret one culture to another. Being from the community, they have a direct understanding of its knowledge processing systems.

The work of such cultural mediators can be facilitated through workshops and other learning activities. The development of village health committees for community-based primary health care programmes has served effectively to maintain a balance between traditional social arrangements and modern administration. In the United Republic of Tanzania, such committees have become very interested in learning about health issues and have facilitated a wider demand for health education and the integration of health measures into village organization in general.

Dissemination of information

While development agencies working in health, agriculture and education struggle to determine how and in what form to make information available to the poor, the disparities in access to information continue to reinforce the knowledge gap between urban and rural areas and the modern and traditional sectors. In development interventions, information is used as a stimulus and guide to change behaviour, but the same information may have a different meaning in different contexts. For example, AIDS education research has concluded that how the message is crafted and conveyed is just as important as what is being said. In fact, the medium may be even more important since it determines if the message is, in a functional sense, heard at all. The message 'to reduce partners' was often lost on people wanting 'to eliminate risk'.

With respect to information dissemination, there are certain questions to be answered: will the information be received, understood, and applied? Will the information benefit only those who already have access to knowledge or will it reach the information-poor? Information itself is only a resource. It is of little value if receivers do not know how to access, assess and use it on their own terms. All educational work within intervention programmes should facilitate such learning.

The sustainability of development projects depends on local people with sufficient capabilities in reading, writing and numeracy; in basic home, family and work-related problem solving skills; in record-keeping and budgeting; in seeking and assessing information; and in weighing alternatives and setting priorities. Development action also involves capacities in planning, monitoring and management; in analysis, synthesis and evaluation; in interpersonal negotiation, exchange and mobilization; in tolerating ambiguity; and in achieving a reasonable level of self-sufficiency and self-confidence. These are abilities that most people can develop to a greater or lesser extent, depending on opportunities to learn and to practice. They constitute the capacities underlying the broad concepts of empowerment and participation; and enable people to comprehend and make use of the technical information and behavioural messages of development interventions. These abilities are thus at the core of individual, family, community and societal development.

Such learning may be planned or not and may be intended or not; but unless people have the opportunity to learn specific skills, attitudes or knowledge, it cannot be assumed that learning will occur. While much learning will be unplanned, it remains true that people will not learn what they do not experience in some way. For example, women in income generating projects may learn to make handicrafts, but they will rarely learn to conceptualize or manage the overall programme or to assess the marketability of their products. If the clients of intervention programmes are actually to be empowered as decision-makers, they need to be allowed the occasion to develop and practice the attendant skills and attitudes in the kind of reflective learning setting an intervention programme should be able to provide.

Thus, it can be seen that movement towards humane, sustainable development characterized by empowerment, equity and participation, necessarily involves learning. But learning is not, by itself, enough. It must take place within a supportive socio-political and economic context that makes it possible for the poor to engage actively in the process of learning and that provides them access to the human and material resources required to implement solutions they identify to improve their situation. This supportive context should be continuous, consistent and respectful of the perspective and potential of the poor.

Human development interventions

If intervention programmes are to promote genuinely sustainable development, it is crucial that they promote their own internal learning. Project designers and other staff have to apply a more interactive, flexible and collaborative working style if interventions are to achieve their aims.

The quality of any intervention will depend on the last links in the chain, the implementing officers who must come to see themselves as facilitators

of change, not as its managers. Even the innovative participatory programme design will be of little use if its participatory spirit is not interpreted into the working patterns of those actually in touch with the community.

In essence, there is a common failure of development agencies to take seriously their own human development responsibilities, i.e. to ensure the continuing relevance and validity of their work by promoting the evolution of their own organizations as open systems responsive to, and learning from, the communities with which they work. Thus, just as farmers, mothers and community leaders are expected to learn to solve problems, gather and analyse data, make and evaluate decisions, so too must those who expect to facilitate that process. Intervenors cannot promote or demonstrate what they have not themselves learned to do or continue to practice.

Communication and learning

Development interventions drawing on knowledge and messages from outside the community can be seen not just as learning events, but also as an occasion for the active involvement of community (or target) groups to produce their own messages and to make their own informed decisions.

What, then, is the relationship between communication and education? Can participatory communication activities in development programmes be used as non-formal education processes? Also, does the gender variable affect communication among groups of people?

Empowering women through communication media

One characteristic of women in disadvantaged social and economic conditions is their lack of access to communication media. Strategies for development often fail to deal with this lack of access and the more general difficulty women have in gaining access to the benefits of development. Furthermore, development strategies tend to disregard both women's knowledge and indigenous communication capacities.

Poor women, and even some middle-class women, generally face social and cultural constraints that restrain them from public speaking (understood as a male activity), thus reinforcing the belief that women are unable to express their opinions in front of men or large groups. Even when there is a genuine interest in the involvement of women in development processes, their ability to participate is often limited by family duties and communal tasks. The experiences described in this section show that women, supported by appropriate organizational structures, can become main actors in development activities.

Specific communication processes and outcomes can be reinforced by the medium used. Print materials, for example, enhance women's analytical thinking and foster literacy skills, whereas theatre reinforces emotive responses and develops women's special dramatic abilities and creative skills. The characteristics presented here refer to the common ways of using media in a participatory framework. The conventional view of communication technologies is that they are inaccessible, expensive, and so complex that they require professional expertise and male technological abilities. Participatory communication experiences with women challenge this view by promoting the participants' own use of the technology. In theatre, for example, the 'star' aura of the theatre crew is de-mystified. Video or radio training stresses the easy manipulation of the equipment and the importance of creative skills that do not require literacy.

Many successful experiences have put women in total control over the process in terms of decision making, access to resources, and production. In theatre, radio, and video, participants decide the issue to be represented, the script, and the thematic and artistic treatment. They participate in the dramatic representation and in the use of equipment, broadcasting, interactive viewing, and promotion.

It is important that the communication experience should reach beyond entertainment or the transmission of information to become an integral element of women's education. The process generally begins with a training programme in which

Box 6.1 Women as skilled communicators: examples from Peru and India

Pamplona Alta in Peru. In the 'pueblos jovenes' of Lima, many vegetable and fruit vendors concentrate in public markets. They are members of the association of public markets, 'Pamplona Alta.' Most of the market vendors are women; nevertheless, until 1985, the association's governing board consisted almost entirely of men. A member of the board concerned with the weak interaction and diffusion of communication among association members invited women of the market to use the loudspeakers. A group of women, assisted by a local institution of communication, decided to use the market's loudspeakers to communicate problems, such as tax payments, selling permits, and legalization of land. Through popular radio dramas completely created and narrated by the women, personal stories were re-created: stories about migration to the cities, the barrio's lack of urban facilities, work conditions, and the association's internal conflicts. Access to loudspeakers, and later to a weekly radio programme, was crucial in creating a new dynamism in 'Pamplona Alta.'

The popular weekly programmes began reaching many other barrios of Lima. Women became vehicles of community communication and disseminators of socially relevant information. Their programmes provided community services (social and local news) and support to organizational activities. Women assumed a leadership role in their communities and thus, in 1985, the elected governing board of the association consisted entirely of women. Weekly radio dramas were broadcast through two local radio stations. Today, the women are producing video dramas and training other poor women and men in radio and video techniques.

The *Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)* in Ahmedabad, India, involves 30,000 poor women. The association consists of home-based workers, vendors, and providers of labour and services. The Association assists its members with skills training, social services, cooperative mechanisms, and advocacy of their rights. SEWA received training in video production and formed a cooperative, 'Video SEWA', that produces videos to support the organization's activities. SEWA uses video as a tool in negotiating with municipal authorities and as a record of activities and community events. Videos produced by the women of SEWA treat themes such as child labour, the struggle for better working conditions, and the demands of weaving and block printing. Women screen their productions in many other villages, using the videos to elicit solutions to these problems. The Association travels from village to village producing videos, involving each community in recording the programmes. They also use video to influence policy decisions, such as getting licences for vegetable vendors. SEWA is part of the large 'Village Video Network' that promotes video as a tool for development. The Network provides support to video groups in different parts of the Third World and promotes video exchange and the creation of new groups.

the group identifies issues, learns to manipulate the means of communication, decides what to say, engages in production (shooting, acting, editing, recording, etc.), and presents the final product.

Modern media can also help women recover indigenous knowledge and cultural traditions. For example, video and radio have been used to recover women's tradition of story-telling, and theatre can be used to recover performing traditions of narrative, music, and folk drama.

Outcomes of participatory media use

According to reports on experiences in Peru and India, participation in media production became, for every woman, the means of acknowledging her hidden communication skills. Once the women de-mystified the technology and language of the communication means, they became aware of their potential as communicators. In learning to produce video, theatre, or radio, the women gained access to communication resources and learned ways of decision-making and negotiation enabling them to affirm their accumulated knowledge and experiences. Participatory communication proved to be an effective means of promoting self-reliance.

Because participatory communication deals with participants' social and material reality, it stimulates critical and analytical skills. Individuals and groups are able to express their needs, interests,

and perceptions of reality. In India, for example, the experience of the Centre for Development of Instructional Technology (CENDIT) shows that the use of audio-visual media by the people develops skills in identifying what they want to say and how they want to represent it visually. Video is particularly suitable in this respect. Its immediacy and flexibility allow the active involvement of the audience. By 'seeing themselves', or 'seeing others like them', subjects develop the ability to look critically at themselves and others. The experience of 'doing for themselves' and 'seeing themselves' in video created a collective sense of confidence among the members of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India (see Box 6.1). These women, with a very low level of education, gained confidence in their potential to produce a collective message.

The de-mystification of technology is one of the most important outcomes for women, because technology is identified as a male domain. By manipulating the technology, women realize how simple it is to use and gain confidence in their work, knowledge, and effort.

In video production for groups like SEWA in India, the indigenous knowledge and skills people use in their daily survival can be reinforced by participatory communication experiences; these skills include seeking and sharing information (e.g. gossiping), managing and resolving conflict, and dealing with uncertainty. All these experiences reinforce group identity. African experiences with theatre and Latin American experiences with video and popular radio dramas suggest that story-telling or dramatization can reinforce an individual's sense of membership in a community.

Poverty and the information revolution

So far, this chapter has been concerned with participation and communication in relation to development interventions and the ways in which communication media may be used by women to raise their own confidence and take charge of their own development activities. Another aspect that merits attention is the changing way communication and information technology impinge upon the poor.

Poor communities are more and more subjected to penetration by the mass media. This, together with the spread of modern communication technology, means that the poor now have access to more information and the means to make greater use of it. For example, telephones, radio, television, computers, and satellite dishes have reached into every corner of Latin America. Even though the hardware reaches rich corners more quickly and pervasively than poor corners, it is stretching towards the poor – not so much to individuals, but to the many inter-connected social, political, and organizational networks. As a result, the poor are increasingly connected by a common information flow – shared language, news, knowledge, ideas, ideology, imagery, and symbols.

This transformation is underpinned by the declining cost of hardware – radios, televisions, computers, fax machines – and easier access because of increased miniaturization, portability, electronic storage capacity, and 'user friendliness', so even illiterates can now quickly master the use of video cameras.

Experience in Latin America suggests that a 'pro-poor information agenda' for planners and funding agencies might build on the following elements:

- Ultimately, the information revolution is education, and more fundamentally, literacy. The poor need to be literate.
- Provision of communications technology for the poor could supplement programmes in education or agriculture, for example. This would entail expanding the use of computers, fax machines, video, and telecommunications amongst the poor and their organizations.
- Consumer information, like education, is a public service and should be more accessible. State social services can assist poor consumers to know their rights and understand the merits of various choices. Poor people need information about many things such as rental markets, housing construction materials, the effectiveness of pharmaceuticals, the quality of schools, the health risks of smoking.

Box 6.2 Political symbolism, computers and the urban popular movement in Mexico

Formed in the aftermath of the 1985 earthquake, an association of poor people created a popular media hero – 'Superbarrio'.

Superbarrio was not an identifiable individual, but a masked 'lucha libre' wrestler, a good guy sworn to oppose the bureaucracy, the greedy landlord, the party political hacks. Dressed in his yellow tights, red cape, and SB-emblazoned wrestler mask, Superbarrio led tens of thousands of people in street protests over renters' rights, housing codes, credit for housing construction, and the pace and scale of the government's low-cost housing programme. Superbarrio loses his superstrength when his mask is removed or when he is removed from the sight of the people. So he forced embarrassed public officials to negotiate in front of television reporters or on the street in front of cheering crowds.

By creating a good-natured media hero who symbolized the popular struggle and who could not be bribed (and was therefore trusted by the people), the behind-the-scenes barrio associations managed to create considerable excitement, a shared pool of knowledge, and a formidable political force. But Superbarrio was more than street theatre. He reflected the popular movement's growing capacity to put information, not just symbolism, to use.

Within a few weeks of intense negotiation, the barrio groups were backed with an up-to-date independent data base that listed the names of about 20,000 unserved earthquake victims and homeless families. They then matched this against a second data base of properties which were in violation of city codes, health standards, and paid no property taxes, and thus were eligible for expropriation under Mexican law. Armed with both information and the means to convey it publicly, the barrio associations were then in a position to argue that such non-taxpaying, semi-abandoned, unsanitary properties in the city centre were being held solely for speculation, were not in the 'social interest', and therefore should be expropriated by the state to provide building sites for the National Reconstruction Programme's second phase.

- Poverty alleviation projects can be designed so that they produce information that is useful to the poor and their organizations. Generally, the project generated information that reaches the poor is not well understood, and information is rarely a criterion in project design. There is need to ask what are the best ways of conveying information to the poor?
- In the coming information era, the poor will increasingly be able to engage in both direct and indirect policy dialogue with development agencies. Inevitably, organizations representing the poor will express opinions on policy issues about which they might previously have had little information, like land reform, military expenditures, or trade and industrial policy. Development agencies must become more open with their own information and more ready to engage in open dialogue with the poor participants in development programmes.

Communicating the results of research

One important specialized area of information is research on the role of education in development and research on the quality and effectiveness of basic education. The place of research in improving basic education in the developing countries is crucial, but problematic. Much current educational research cannot be readily utilized by policy makers, let alone poor communities, because it is not accessible or 'user friendly'. Research results are often published in small circulation journals or simply reproduced in very limited numbers by the institution responsible. The 'user friendly' difficulty is generally due to the academic language and presentation intended for a limited audience composed mainly of other researchers. Researchers have to avoid talking exclusively to themselves. In the field of education, good research is both inter-sectoral and multi-dimensional; results should be widely available and understandable to a range of actors on the education scene.

There is more research being done on basic education in the South than is generally realized. The crucial issue is whether this research improves practice and whether more could be done to ensure that it does. There are many instances that illustrate that policy makers can make better informed decisions when they have access to relevant research findings. Research findings must be made available in a format suitable to the interests and needs of particular groups of policy makers. However, for this to happen, researchers must learn to communicate with clarity to policy makers, but also with direction and understanding amongst themselves. Unless there is effective communication amongst groups of researchers, they are unlikely to achieve the wider goal of communicating research results to practitioners. (See Box 6.3 on educational research networks in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America.)

There is no single, best method of organizing a network for the exchange of research knowledge. In some disciplines, professional associations and meetings seem sufficient to cover a great deal of the essential interchange. On closer inspection, some of these disciplines have 'informal colleges' in which small groups meet and correspond around particular themes. Even in the industrialized world, where electronic communication is widespread, there still is a need for periodic face-to-face meetings and specialized working groups which meet in between the major events.

Experience shows that networking does not work well simply by correspondence, fax and phone. Human networks require humans to meet. For example, in all the RRAG networks (Box 6.3) there are regular annual meetings and more frequent sub-group meetings.

One positive outcome of the Jomtien Conference was an agreement that the four RRAG networks would seek to do follow-up work around questions asked at the conference:

- Is there research about basic education in the South?
- Can this research about basic education be accessed and used through data-bases, inventories and state-of-the-art reviews?
- Can this research on basic education improve policy and practice?
- Is Southern or Northern research sufficient on its own, or does each need to be brought into relation with the other?

To all these questions the answer must be yes. This common focus of efforts will afford a new and compelling reason for the networks to explore new forms of South-South and North-South partnership.

Further perspectives on communication and participation

Some of the ideas outlined above are controversial and leave room for scepticism about what can be done in practice. For example, some observers feel that participation that leads to empowerment needs more time than donor agencies are usually willing to allow. They have tight schedules and disbursement targets that often preclude the slow business of talking with the poor and gradually building their self-confidence. Another view is that 'people need more than a video': community participation must include preparation, design, implementation and evaluation of the intervention. If the community is to benefit from the results, then there must be a general sharing of the goals.

Yet another concern is about timing. 'We are excited about video, but at what stage do you bring it in?' Participants need to be both aware and ready. If introduced at too early a stage, video could easily be appropriated by a small unrepresentative group. Who decides when to intervene with video and at what stage?

Perhaps the most important thing is to ensure that 'planning and programming' give pride of place to the client, the grassroots ahead of field staff, community leaders and overseas consultants. As noted earlier, development interventions become effective learning experiences when the primary focus is on the poor and the marginalized for whom the interventions are designed. Their indigenous learning systems must be used as the starting point for educational action within a development project.

Box 6.3 Research networks in education

The idea of establishing an educational research network between policymakers, researchers and practitioners began at the international level several years ago. In the last decade the idea of networking was regionalized, with four active regional networks presently in operation: Educational Research Network for Eastern and Southern Africa (ERNESA), Northern and European Research Review and Advisory Group (NORRAG), Latin American Research Review and Advisory Group (REDUC), and Southern Asian Research Review and Advisory Group (SEARRAG).

Research networks need to fulfil two conditions if they are to be successful. They must exemplify a process of interaction that is understood and appreciated amongst the network members, and they must have a particular purpose or message around which the network is organised. The research review and advisory group (RRAG) networks that came together in Jomtien illustrated some of the potential of networking. They argued that, as a group of networks spanning both North and South, they constituted a form of North-South partnership that should be part of the 'expanded vision' of the WCEFA.

REDUC, the oldest of the four networks, is based on the assumption that the educational research production of Latin America needs a way of being easily accessed. It maintains a data base of many thousands of articles, reports, and books, all held in the form of short, informative abstracts, as well as in their complete form as microfiches. The South East Asian Research Review and Advisory Group (SEARRAG) is also involved in providing an educational database, the South East Asian Bibliographic and Abstracting Service (SEABAS). This, too, will eventually be a clearing house for all educational research materials from the countries of south east Asia.

The Northern Research Review and Advisory Group (NORRAG) was begun on a somewhat different premise about access and the availability of research information. There seemed to be sufficient data bases on education in the northern, industrialised countries not to have to follow the same path as SEARRAG and REDUC. Rather, it seemed more relevant to research and policy analysis in both North and South to synthesize information available from the donor agencies. Although these agencies are responsible for many of the appraisals, evaluations, and policy papers concerning aid to education and training in the developing world, there was no systematic coverage of their production or influence. Therefore, NORRAG deals mainly with the large and extremely varied output of the donor community.

The Education Research Network for Eastern and Southern Africa (ERNESA) is concerned with the research production of the ten countries in this region. At the national level the intention has been to synthesize and make available through bibliographies some of the material that is often scattered in ministries and universities. The hope is that the materials available in any one country can be increasingly accessed in other countries in the region.

The viewpoint of the several RRAG networks differs according to their location and their membership, but they share a common view about the importance of symmetrical relations between North and South. Information is not charity, but it is a form of power, so it matters how access is organized.

7. From Expanded Vision to Expanded Action

This concluding chapter is addressed in particular to policy makers, planners and managers interested in promoting basic education. It reviews some of the major issues that need careful consideration when designing country level action plans for basic education in line with the World Declaration and the Framework for Action[1].

Gender issues in access, equity and learning outcomes

Achieving equity in access and learning outcomes is central to the 'expanded vision' of basic education. However, problems of equity are difficult to resolve in practice because they are usually entwined in broader social issues. How far do these broader issues need to be addressed before equity in education can be achieved? Conversely, how far can and should education policy help address such social issues affecting equity? In this connection, it is important to determine what equity goals are realistic in a given national context, and also which indicators to use to measure progress. In many countries, for example, there is still much room for improving primary school enrolment and completion ratios, but as the experience of Latin America and the Caribbean makes clear, these indicators tell little or nothing about the quality of instruction or the relevance of the curriculum.

The 'gender gap' in education exists in all countries in one form or another. Strategies and measures to reduce and ultimately to eliminate this gap are essential for improving equity in education. These may need to be tailored to the culture-specific obstacles to the education of girls and women. In trying to move toward more egalitarian and enlightened attitudes, how far should education 'cut away' from tradition or use a gradualist approach? Where is the local starting point, 'where people are', for learning to build on the positive aspects of local culture? What innovations to improve access, equitable treatment and learning outcomes have proved successful in the country? Can these be applied country-wide?

Some of the main points discussed in chapter 2 concerning gender issues are summarized below:

- The World Declaration attributes the 'most urgent priority' to improving the education of girls and women. In deciding how to implement this priority, countries have to consider the causes of the 'gender gap' in education across a broad range of social policy issues.
- Reasons for the continuance of gender inequalities in education are found in employment practices that discriminate against women, early marriage, family reliance on female labour, and entrenched cultural values that accord lower social status to girls than to boys.
- Better basic education of girls and women produces general benefits for men as well as women, notably in respect to family size and welfare, participation in communal tasks and decision-making, and economic productivity.

1. Further discussion of planning and management issues can be found in monograph III, Education for All: the Requirements.

- Experience shows that expanding access to education (e.g. by building more classrooms) does not in itself reduce inequalities. The 'gender gap' in education has continued in most countries in spite of improved provision and enrolments: men and boys continue to benefit more than women and girls.
- Monitoring progress on equity issues requires attention to measures of achievement and outcomes in addition to enrolment ratios.
- Efforts to reduce gender inequalities must be locally determined and take account of local circumstances. There are many practical measures, such as ensuring the physical and moral safety of girls attending school and providing more female teachers, especially in rural areas, that can make the schooling of girls more attractive to parents.
- However, an approach based solely on incentives for parents is not enough: a comprehensive strategy to give priority to girls' and women's education is needed, a strategy that will encourage positive changes in attitudes among both men and women.

Enhancing the environment of learning: early childhood education, health and nutrition

Chapter 3 discussed the ways in which early childhood care and education, together with improved nutrition and health, can enhance the environment for learning, both during the early years and during subsequent schooling. Of course there are many other factors, especially in the immediate (classroom) environment, that are important for learning, such as the availability of books and other instructional materials.

The beneficial effects of early childhood care and stimulation, particularly when the parents and the community are involved, are now well documented[2]. Improvements in nutrition and health are also more easily achieved through the active involvement of the home and community, as well as the school. The following summary covers some of the main points in Chapter 3:

- Education for all presupposes a sound foundation for learning established during early childhood. This foundation can be assured for children in any family and any community, no matter how poor.
- Proper early childhood care and education can improve the equity and effectiveness of subsequent schooling by reducing dropout and enhancing learning achievement.
- Parental involvement means first consulting parents about what child care facilities are needed. It should also include education directed toward parents-to-be.
- Effective parental involvement in providing early childhood care can have positive effects on the attitudes of adults to other development goals.
- Hungry children do not learn well. Hungry and unhealthy children are more likely to drop out of school and other children.
- Food aid to education can contribute to more effective learning, reduced dropout from school, and a better school environment.
- School meals strengthen the motivation of parents to send their children to school; this applies particularly to the poor and to families who live far from school.
- Food aid should address the problem of short-term hunger as well as the more general problem of malnutrition.
- A school health programme generally should include: regular immunization; regular school feeding; nutrition education as part of the curriculum; in-service training of all teachers in health and nutrition; a school health service that also takes care of health aspects of the school environment.
- Poor health and nutrition are closely correlated with poverty; solutions to the former must be set in the context of poverty alleviation.

Improving primary education

Many school systems are characterized by low enrolment ratios, low completion rates, and low achievement. While each country has to decide

2. See also monograph III, Chapter 4.

how to improve its existing system, a number of generally applicable strategies and measures were discussed in Chapter 4. They concern: the school environment; the preparation and motivation of teachers; and the management of schools and the school system. Some of the main points are the following:

- Ineffective primary schools undermine the potential positive effect of education on socio-economic development.
- The effectiveness of primary schools can be improved through more attention to the curriculum, learning materials, instructional time, and classroom teaching.
- Instructional time is often severely reduced by unscheduled school closures, teacher absences, and poor adherence to time schedules. The situation is made worse in developing countries that have exceptionally short school years.
- The quality of teaching can be improved through stricter scholastic requirements for entry into the profession, better pre- and in-service teacher training, and the judicious use of interactive radio instruction and programmed learning materials.
- Teacher training can be improved through more emphasis on developing subject matter knowledge, on practical training in pedagogical skills, and on motivating teachers.
- In many countries, management at all levels of the school system needs to be improved. This may entail some redistribution of responsibilities and authority among the several levels of administration, a large-scale training effort to develop the capacities of managers, and the introduction or strengthening of a management information system to monitor the performance of the system and individual schools.
- Good management at school level is vital. Managers need notably to ensure the effective use of teacher time and to maintain good relations with the community and with the education authorities.
- The local community can be a source of strength for the school and can help it be responsive to the local social and cultural milieu. Building good community relations, especially in deprived areas, may entail efforts to enrol out-of-school children and to provide non-formal educational opportunities for youth and adults.

Alternative delivery systems: non-formal and distance education

Schooling alone cannot meet the basic learning needs of all children or most adults, so any strategy or plan for basic education for all must provide for alternative delivery systems. Chapter 5 discussed two such 'systems' or approaches: non-formal (out-of-school) education for youth and adults, and distance education, which can be used both to enhance classroom instruction and to reach learners outside schools. Neither approach is 'alternative' in the sense of replacing the school; rather they can help provide supplementary learning opportunities to people, including pupils enrolled in school. Several of the main points covered in chapter 5 are summarized below:

- Non-formal education for youth and adults should provide opportunities to learn various life skills and job skills, as well as basic literacy and numeracy.
- Distance education can be used to improve the quality of primary school instruction, both as a support to classroom activities and as a means of providing in-service training for teachers.
- Using interactive radio broadcasts together with the corresponding print materials can enhance pupils' learning achievement.
- Distance education requires careful planning to attain realistic goals. Where possible, learners should participate in designing the programme. Audio-visual and print materials need to be well prepared.
- Distance education faces several constraints and problems: clarity of broadcast signals; teachers' fears of being displaced; cost effectiveness dependent on reaching a critical mass of learners; sensitivity to local cultural factors; lack of face-to-face contact with learners; perceived as being of lesser value than school instruction.

Participation, communication and research

The 'expanded vision' and 'renewed commitment' called for at Jomtien require a change of attitudes on the part of all concerned with basic education, from policy makers to learners. The latter must learn to communicate their needs and concerns, and learn to participate in meeting them. Policy makers, educators and administrators must learn to *listen* to their clients, including the very poor, and help them develop their capacity to express themselves and take responsibility for their lives. Development interventions (projects and programmes) of all kinds offer opportunities to promote this kind of mutual learning experience. Some of the main points discussed in Chapter 6 are summarized below:

- Development interventions generally ignore or fail to utilize possibilities to promote individual learning and social mobilization.
- With more imaginative planning, development interventions could provide significant learning opportunities, which in turn could enhance their own effectiveness and promote genuine participation and empowerment of the communities concerned.
- The process of designing learning opportunities within a development project should be interactive, with local groups and agency staff learning from each other. Traditional ways of learning and other cultural factors should be taken into account.
- Projects designed to benefit the poor need to recognize that they live precarious lives with no margin for unnecessary risk. Changes in lifestyle should build on the local culture. Successful development interventions depend on effective communication between modern and traditional cultures.
- Modern information and communication technologies can be powerful tools for the poor to improve their situation. In this connection, video has been successfully used to help women with little or no formal education to express themselves and develop social awareness.
- Participation in using modern communication media can help demystify technology, develop confidence and analytic abilities, and encourage marginal groups to participate in development.
- A 'pro-poor information agenda' would begin with ensuring literacy, the skill needed to access most information. It would include providing access to communication media and consumer information. Development projects would be designed to produce information useful to the poor, and funding agencies would engage in open dialogue and information sharing with the participants in development interventions.

The 'expanded vision' called for in the World Declaration is only beginning to take shape and will probably continue to evolve for many years to come. Schooling has been and will continue to be an essential 'delivery system' for basic education, but many other factors are now seen to be part of the equation. This monograph purports to present only some of these factors, enough perhaps to stimulate the reader's imagination and curiosity to explore the vision further, together with a renewed commitment to the goal of Education for All.

Appendix 1

World Declaration on Education for All
Meeting Basic Learning Needs

PREAMBLE

More than 40 years ago, the nations of the world, speaking through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, asserted that "everyone has a right to education". Despite notable efforts by countries around the globe to ensure the right to education for all, the following realities persist:

- More than 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, have no access to primary schooling;
- More than 960 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, are illiterate, and functional illiteracy is a significant problem in all countries, industrialized and developing;
- More than one-third of the world's adults have no access to the printed knowledge, new skills and technologies that could improve the quality of their lives and help them shape, and adapt to, social and cultural change; and
- More than 100 million children and countless adults fail to complete basic education programmes; millions more satisfy the attendance requirements but do not acquire essential knowledge and skills;

At the same time, the world faces daunting problems, notably: mounting debt burdens, the threat of economic stagnation and decline, rapid population growth, widening economic disparities among and within nations, war, occupation, civil strife, violent crime, the prevent-

able deaths of millions of children and widespread environmental degradation. These problems constrain efforts to meet basic learning needs, while the lack of basic education among a significant proportion of the population prevents societies from addressing such problems with strength and purpose.

These problems have led to major setbacks in basic education in the 1980s in many of the least developed countries. In some other countries, economic growth has been available to finance education expansion, but even so, many millions remain in poverty and unschooled or illiterate. In certain industrialized countries, too, cutbacks in government expenditure over the 1980s have led to the deterioration of education.

Yet the world is also at the threshold of a new century, with all its promise and possibilities. Today, there is genuine progress toward peaceful detente and greater cooperation among nations. Today, the essential rights and capacities of women are being realized. Today, there are many useful scientific and cultural developments. Today, the sheer quantity of information available in the world – much of it relevant to survival and basic well-being – is exponentially greater than that available only a few years ago, and the rate of its growth is accelerating. This includes information about obtaining more life-enhancing knowledge – or learning how to learn. A synergistic effect occurs when important information is coupled with another modern advance – our new capacity to communicate.

These new forces, when combined with the cumulative experience of reform, innovation, research and the remarkable educational progress of many countries, make the goal of basic education for all – for the first time in history – an attainable goal.

Therefore, we participants in the World Conference on Education for All, assembled in Jomtien, Thailand, from 5 to 9 March, 1990:

Recalling that education is a fundamental right for all people, women and men, of all ages, throughout our world;

Understanding that education can help ensure a safer, healthier, more prosperous and environmentally sound world, while simultaneously contributing to social, economic, and cultural progress, tolerance, and international cooperation;

Knowing that education is an indispensable key to, though not a sufficient condition for, personal and social improvement;

Recognizing that traditional knowledge and indigenous cultural heritage have a value and validity in their own right and a capacity to both define and promote development;

Acknowledging that, overall, the current provision of education is

seriously deficient and that it must be made more relevant and qualitatively improved, and made universally available;
Recognizing that sound basic education is fundamental to the strengthening of higher levels of education and of scientific and technological literacy and capacity and thus to self-reliant development; and
Recognizing the necessity to give to present and coming generations an expanded vision of, and a renewed commitment to, basic education to address the scale and complexity of the challenge;

proclaim the following

World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs

EDUCATION FOR ALL: THE PURPOSE

Article 1 • Meeting basic learning needs

1. Every person – child, youth and adult – shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning. The scope of basic learning needs and how they should be met varies with individual countries and cultures, and inevitably, changes with the passage of time.

2. The satisfaction of these needs empowers individuals in any society and confers upon them a responsibility to respect and build upon their collective cultural, linguistic and spiritual heritage, to promote the education of others, to further the cause of social justice, to achieve environmental protection, to be tolerant towards social, political and religious systems which differ from their own, ensuring that commonly accepted humanistic values and human rights are upheld, and to work for international peace and solidarity in an interdependent world.

3. Another and no less fundamental aim of educational development is the transmission and enrichment of common cultural and moral

values. It is in these values that the individual and society find their identity and worth.

4. Basic education is more than an end in itself. It is the foundation for lifelong learning and human development on which countries may build, systematically, further levels and types of education and training.

EDUCATION FOR ALL: AN EXPANDED VISION AND A RENEWED COMMITMENT

ARTICLE 2 • SHAPING THE VISION

1. **To serve the basic learning needs of all requires more than a recommitment to basic education as it now exists. What is needed is an "expanded vision" that surpasses present resource levels, institutional structures, curricula, and conventional delivery systems while building on the best in current practices.** New possibilities exist today which result from the convergence of the increase in information and the unprecedented capacity to communicate. We must seize them with creativity and a determination for increased effectiveness.

2. As elaborated in Articles 3-7, the expanded vision encompasses:
   - Universalizing access and promoting equity;
   - Focussing on learning;
   - Broadening the means and scope of basic education;
   - Enhancing the environment for learning;
   - Strengthening partnerships.

3. The realization of an enormous potential for human progress and empowerment is contingent upon whether people can be enabled to acquire the education and the start needed to tap into the ever-expanding pool of relevant knowledge and the new means for sharing this knowledge.

ARTICLE 3 • UNIVERSALIZING ACCESS AND PROMOTING EQUITY

1. **Basic education should be provided to all children, youth and adults.** To this end, basic education services of quality should be expanded and consistent measures must be taken to reduce disparities.

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2. For basic education to be equitable, all children, youth and adults must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.

3. The most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated.

4. An active commitment must be made to removing educational disparities. Underserved groups: the poor; street and working children; rural and remote populations; nomads and migrant workers; indigenous peoples; ethnic, racial, and linguistic minorities; refugees; those displaced by war; and people under occupation, should not suffer any discrimination in access to learning opportunities.

5. The learning needs of the disabled demand special attention. Steps need to be taken to provide equal access to education to every category of disabled persons as an integral part of the education system.

Article 4 • Focussing on learning

Whether or not expanded educational opportunities will translate into meaningful development – for an individual or for society – depends ultimately on whether people actually learn as a result of those opportunities, i.e., whether they incorporate useful knowledge, reasoning ability, skills, and values. The focus of basic education must, therefore, be on actual learning acquisition and outcome, rather than exclusively upon enrolment, continued participation in organized programmes and completion of certification requirements. Active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in assuring learning acquisition and allowing learners to reach their fullest potential. It is, therefore, necessary to define acceptable levels of learning acquisition for educational programmes and to improve and apply systems of assessing learning achievement.

Article 5 • Broadening the means and scope of basic education

The diversity, complexity, and changing nature of basic learning needs of children, youth and adults necessitates broadening and constantly

redefining the scope of basic education to include the following components:

- *Learning begins at birth.* This calls for early childhood care and initial education . These can be provided through arrangements involving families, communities, or institutional programmes, as appropriate.
- *The main delivery system for the basic education of children outside the family is primary schooling.* Primary education must be universal, ensure that the basic learning needs of all children are satisfied, and take into account the culture, needs, and opportunities of the community. Supplementary alternative programmes can help meet the basic learning needs of children with limited or no access to formal schooling, provided that they share the same standards of learning applied to schools, and are adequately supported.
- *The basic learning needs of youth and adults are diverse and should be met through a variety of delivery systems.* Literacy programmes are indispensable because literacy is a necessary skill in itself and the foundation of other life skills. Literacy in the mother-tongue strengthens cultural identity and heritage. Other needs can be served by: skills training, apprenticeships, and formal and non-formal education programmes in health, nutrition, population, agricultural techniques, the environment, science, technology, family life, including fertility awareness, and other societal issues.
- *All available instruments and channels of information, communications, and social action could be used to help convey essential knowledge and inform and educate people on social issues.* In addition to the traditional means, libraries, television, radio and other media can be mobilized to realize their potential towards meeting basic education needs of all.

These components should constitute an integrated system – complementary, mutually reinforcing, and of comparable standards, and they should contribute to creating and developing possibilities for lifelong learning.

Article 6 • Enhancing the environment for learning

Learning does not take place in isolation. Societies, therefore, must ensure that all learners receive the nutrition, health care, and general physical and emotional support they need in order to participate actively in and benefit from their education. Knowledge and skills that will enhance the learning environment of children should be integrated

into community learning programmes for adults. The education of children and their parents or other caretakers is mutually supportive and this interaction should be used to create, for all, a learning environment of vibrancy and warmth.

Article 7 • Strengthening partnerships

National, regional, and local educational authorities have a unique obligation to provide basic education for all, but they cannot be expected to supply every human, financial or organizational requirement for this task. New and revitalized partnerships at all levels will be necessary: partnerships among all sub-sectors and forms of education, recognizing the special role of teachers and that of administrators and other educational personnel; partnerships between education and other government departments, including planning, finance, labour, communications, and other social sectors; partnerships between government and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, local communities, religious groups, and families. The recognition of the vital role of both families and teachers is particularly important. In this context, the terms and conditions of service of teachers and their status, which constitute a determining factor in the implementation of education for all, must be urgently improved in all countries in line with the joint ILO/ UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966). Genuine partnerships contribute to the planning, implementing, managing and evaluating of basic education programmes. When we speak of "an expanded vision and a renewed commitment", partnerships are at the heart of it.

EDUCATION FOR ALL: THE REQUIREMENTS

Article 8 • Developing a supportive policy context

1. **Supportive policies in the social, cultural, and economic sectors are required in order to realize the full provision and utitlization of basic education for individual and societal improvement.** The provision of basic education for all depends on political commitment and political will backed by appropriate fiscal measures and reinforced by educational policy reforms and institutional strengthening. Suitable economic, trade, labour, employment and health policies will enhance learners' incentives and contributions to societal development.

2. Societies should also insure a strong intellectual and scientific environment for basic education. This implies improving higher education and developing scientific research. Close contact with contemporary technological and scientific knowledge should be possible at every level of education.

Article 9 • Mobilizing resources

1. **If the basic learning needs of all are to be met through a much broader scope of action than in the past, it will be essential to mobilize existing and new financial and human resources, public, private and voluntary.** All of society has a contribution to make, recognizing that time, energy and funding directed to basic education are perhaps the most profound investment in people and in the future of a country which can be made.

2. Enlarged public-sector support means drawing on the resources of all the government agencies responsible for human development, through increased absolute and proportional allocations to basic education services with the clear recognition of competing claims on national resources of which education is an important one, but not the only one. Serious attention to improving the efficiency of existing educational resources and programmes will not only produce more, it can also be expected to attract new resources. The urgent task of meeting basic learning needs may require a reallocation between sectors, as, for example, a transfer from military to educational expenditure. Above all, special protection for basic education will be required in countries undergoing structural adjustment and facing severe external debt burdens. Today, more than ever, education must be seen as a fundamental dimension of any social, cultural, and economic design.

Article 10 • Strengthening international solidarity

1. **Meeting basic learning needs constitutes a common and universal human responsibility. It requires international solidarity and equitable and fair economic relations in order to redress existing economic disparities.** All nations have valuable knowledge and experiences to share for designing effective educational policies and programmes.

2. Substantial and long-term increases in resources for basic education will be needed. The world community, including intergovernmental

agencies and institutions, has an urgent responsibility to alleviate the constraints that prevent some countries from achieving the goal of education for all. It will mean the adoption of measures that augment the national budgets of the poorest countries or serve to relieve heavy debt burdens. Creditors and debtors must seek innovative and equitable formulae to resolve these burdens, since the capacity of many developing countries to respond effectively to education and other basic needs will be greatly helped by finding solutions to the debt problem.

3. Basic learning needs of adults and children must be addressed wherever they exist. Least developed and low-income countries have special needs which require priority in international support for basic education in the 1990s.

4. All nations must also work together to resolve conflicts and strife, to end military occupations, and to settle displaced populations, or to facilitate their return to their countries of origin, and ensure that their basic learning needs are met. Only a stable and peaceful environment can create the conditions in which every human being, child and adult alike, may benefit from the goals of this Declaration.

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We, the participants in the World Conference on Education for All, reaffirm the right of all people to education. This is the foundation of our determination, singly and together, to ensure education for all.

We commit ourselves to act cooperatively through our own spheres of responsibility, taking all necessary steps to achieve the goals of education for all. Together we call on governments, concerned organizations and individuals to join in this urgent undertaking.

The basic learning needs of all can and must be met. There can be no more meaningful way to begin the International Literacy Year, to move forward the goals of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-92), the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-97), the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (1991-2000), of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and of the Convention on

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the Rights of the Child. There has never been a more propitious time to commit ourselves to providing basic learning opportunities for all the people of the world.

We adopt, therefore, this *World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs* and agree on the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, to achieve the goals set forth in this Declaration.

Appendix 2

Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs

Guidelines for implementing the World Declaration on Education for All

INTRODUCTION

1. This *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs* derives from the *World Declaration on Education for All,* adopted by the World Conference on Education for All, which brought together representatives of governments, international and bilateral development agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Based on the best collective knowledge and the commitment of these partners, the *Framework* is intended as a reference and guide for national governments, international organizations, bilateral aid agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and all those committed to the goal of Education for All in formulating their own plans of action for implementing the *World Declaration.* It describes three broad levels of concerted action: (i) direct action within individual countries, (ii) co-operation among groups of countries sharing certain characteristics and concerns, and (iii) multilateral and bilateral co-operation in the world community.

2. Individual countries and groups of countries, as well as international, regional and national organizations, may use the *Framework* to develop their own specific plans of action and programmes in line with their particular objectives, mandates and constituencies. This indeed has been the case in the ten-year experience of the UNESCO Major Project on Education for Latin America and the Caribbean. Further examples of such related initiatives are the UNESCO Plan of Action for the Eradication of Illiteracy by the Year 2000, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 25th session (1989); the ISESCO Special Programme (1990-2000); the current review by the World Bank of its policy for primary education; and USAID's programme for Advancing Basic Education and Literacy. Insofar as such plans of action policies and programmes are consistent with this Framework, efforts throughout the world to meet basic learning needs will converge and facilitate co-operation.

3. While countries have many common concerns in meeting the basic learning needs of their populations, these concerns do, of course, vary in nature and intensity from country to country depending on the actual status of basic education as well as the cultural and socio-economic context. Globally by the year 2000, if enrolment rates remain at current levels, there will be more than 160 million children without access to primary schooling simply because of population growth. In much of sub-Saharan Africa and in many low income countries elsewhere, the provision of universal primary

education for rapidly growing numbers of children remains a long-term challenge. Despite progress in promoting adult literacy, most of these same countries still have high illiteracy rates, while the numbers of functionally illiterate adults continue to grow and constitute a major social problem in much of Asia and the Arab States, as well as in Europe and North America. Many people are denied equal access on grounds of race, gender, language, disability, ethnic origin, or political convictions. In addition, high drop-out rates and poor learning achievement are commonly recognized problems throughout the world. These very general characterizations illustrate the need for decisive action on a large scale, with clear goals and targets.

GOALS AND TARGETS

4. The **ultimate goal** affirmed by the *World Declaration on Education for All* is to meet the basic learning needs of all children, youth, and adults. The long-term effort to attain that goal can be maintained more effectively if **intermediate goals** are established and progress toward these goals is measured. Appropriate authorities at the national and subnational levels may establish such intermediate goals, taking into account the objectives of the *Declaration* as well as overall national development goals and priorities.

5. Intermediate goals can usefully be formulated as specific targets within national and subnational plans for educational development. Such targets usually (i) specify expected attainments and outcomes in reference to terminal performance specifications within an appropriate time-frame, (ii) specify priority categories (e. g. the poor, the disabled), and (iii) are formulated in terms such that progress toward them can be observed and measured. These targets represent a "floor" (but not a "ceiling") for the continued development of education programmes and services.

6. Time-bound targets convey a sense of urgency and serve as a reference against which indices of implementation and accomplishment can be compared. As societal conditions change, plans and targets can be reviewed and updated. Where basic education efforts must be focussed to meet the needs of specific social groups or population categories, linking targets to such priority categories of learners can help to maintain the attention of planners, practitioners and evaluators on meeting the needs of these learners. Observable and measurable targets assist in the objective evaluation of progress.

7. Targets need not be based solely on current trends and resources. Initial targets can reflect a realistic appraisal of the possibilities presented by the *Declaration* to mobilize additional human, organizational, and financial capacities within a co-operative commitment to human development. Countries with low literacy and school enrolment rates, and very limited national resources, will need to make hard choices in establishing national targets within a realistic timeframe.

8. Countries may wish to set their own targets for the 1990s in terms of the following proposed dimensions:

1. Expansion of early childhood care and developmental activities, including family and community interventions, **especially** for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children;
2. Universal access to, and completion of, primary education (or whatever higher level of education is considered as "basic") by the year 2000;
3. Improvement in learning achievement such that an agreed percentage of an appropriate age cohort (e. g. 80% of 14 year-olds) attains or surpasses a defined level of necessary learning achievement;
4. Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to, say, one-half its 1990 level by the year 2000, with sufficient emphasis on female literacy to significantly reduce the current disparity between male and female illiteracy rates;
5. Expansion of provisions of basic education and training in other essential skills required by youth and adults, with programme effec-

tiveness assessed in terms of behavioural changes and impacts on health, employment and productivity;

6. Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living and sound and sustainable development, made available through all education channels including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication, and social action, with effectiveness assessed in terms of behavioural change.

9. Levels of performance in the above should be established, when possible. These should be consistent with the focus of basic education both on universalization of access and on learning acquisition, as joint and inseparable concerns. In all cases, the performance targets should include equity by gender. However, setting levels of performance and of the proportions of participants who are expected to reach these levels in specific basic education programmes must be an autonomous task of individual countries.

PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

10. The first step consists in identifying, preferably through an active participatory process involving groups and the community, the traditional learning systems which exist in the society, and the actual demand for basic education services, whether expressed in terms of formal schooling or non-formal education programmes. Addressing the basic learning needs of all means: early childhood care and development opportunities; relevant, quality primary schooling or equivalent out-of-school education for children; and literacy, basic knowledge and life skills training for youth and adults. It also means capitalizing on the use of traditional and modern information media and technologies to educate the public on matters of social concern and to support basic education activities. These complementary components of basic education need to be designed to ensure equitable access, sustained participation, and effective learning achievement. Meeting basic learning needs also involves action to enhance the family and community environments for learning and to correlate basic education and the larger socio-economic context. The complementarity and synergistic effects of related human resources investments in population, health and nutrition should be recognized.

11. Because basic learning needs are complex and diverse, meeting them requires multisectoral strategies and action which are integral to overall development efforts. Many partners must join with the education authorities, teachers, and other educational personnel in developing basic education if it is to be seen, once again, as the responsibility of the entire society. This implies the active involvement of a wide range of partners– families, teachers, communities, private enterprises (including those involved in information and communication), government and non-governmental organizations, institutions, etc. – in planning, managing and evaluating the many forms of basic education.

12. Current practices and institutional arrangements for delivering basic education, and the existing mechanisms for co-operation in this regard, should be carefully evaluated before new institutions or mechanisms are created. Rehabilitating dilapidated schools and improving the training and working conditions of teachers and literacy workers, building on existing learning schemes, are likely to bring greater and more immediate returns on investment than attempts to start afresh.

13. Great potential lies in possible joint actions with non-governmental organizations on all levels. These autonomous bodies, while advocating independent and critical public views, might play roles in monitoring, research, training and material production for the sake of non-formal and lifelong educational processes.

14. The primary purpose of bilateral and multilateral co-operation should appear in a true spirit of partnership– it should not be to transplant familiar models, but to help develop the endogenous ca-

pacities of national authorities and their in-country partners to meet basic learning needs effectively. Action and resources should be used to strengthen essential features of basic education services, focussing on managerial and analytical capacities, which can stimulate further developments. International co-operation and funding can be particularly valuable in supporting major reforms or sectoral adjustments, and in helping to develop and test innovative approaches to teaching and management, where new approaches need to be tried and/or extraordinary levels of expenditure are involved and where knowledge of relevant experiences elsewhere can often be useful.

15. International co-operation should give priority to the countries currently least able to meet the basic learning needs of their populations. It should also help countries redress their internal disparities in educational opportunity. Because two-thirds of illiterate adults and out-of-school children are female, wherever such inequities exist, a most urgent priority is to improve access to education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation.

1. PRIORITY ACTION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

16. Progress in meeting the basic learning needs of all will depend ultimately on the actions taken within individual countries. While regional and international co-operation and financial assistance can support and facilitate such actions, government authorities, communities and their several in-country partners are the key agents for improvement, and national governments have the main responsibility for coordinating the effective use of internal and external resources. Given the diversity of countries' situations, capacities and development plans and goals, this *Framework* can only suggest certain areas that merit priority attention. Each country will determine for itself what specific actions beyond current efforts may be necessary in each of the following areas.

1.1 Assessing Needs and Planning Action

17. To achieve the targets set for itself, each country is encouraged to develop or update comprehensive and long-term plans of action (from local to national levels) to meet the learning needs it has defined as "basic". Within the context of existing education-sector and general development plans and strategies, a plan of action for basic education for all will necessarily be multisectoral, to guide activities in the sectors involved (e. g. education, information, communications/ media, labour, agriculture, health). Models of strategic planning, by definition, vary. However, most of them involve constant adjustments among objectives, resources, actions, and constraints. At the national level, objectives are normally couched in broad terms and central government resources are also determined, while actions are taken at the local level. Thus, local plans in the same national setting will naturally differ not only in scope but in content. National and subnational frameworks and local plans should allow for varying conditions and circumstances. These might, therefore, specify:

- studies for the evaluation of existing systems (analysis of problems, failures and successes):
- the basic learning needs to be met, including cognitive skills, values, attitudes, as well as subject knowledge;
- the languages to be used in education
- means to promote the demand for, and broadscale participation in, basic education;
- modalities to mobilize family and local community support;
- targets and specific objectives;
- the required capital and recurrent resources, duly costed, as well as possible measures for cost effectiveness;
- indicators and procedures to be used to monitor progress in reaching the targets;
- priorities for using resources and for developing services and programmes over time;
- the priority groups that require special measures;

- the kinds of expertise required to implement the plan;
- institutional and administrative arrangements needed;
- modalities for ensuring information sharing among formal and other basic education programmes; and
- an implementation strategy and timetable.

1.2 *Developing a Supportive Policy Environment*

18. A multisectoral plan of action implies adjustments to sectoral policies so that sectors interact in a mutually supportive and beneficial manner in line with the country's overall development goals. Action to meet basic learning needs should be an integral part of a country's national and subnational development strategies, which should reflect the priority given to human development. Legislative and other measures may be needed to promote and facilitate co-operation among the various partners involved. Advocacy and public information about basic education are important in creating a supportive policy environment at national, subnational and local levels.

19. Four specific steps that merit attention are: (i) initiation of national and subnational level activities to create a broad, public recommitment to the goal of education for all; (ii) reduction of inefficiency in the public sector and exploitative practices in the private sector; (iii) provision of improved training for public administrators and of incentives to retain qualified women and men in public service; and (iv) provision of measures to encourage wider participation in the design and implementation of basic education programmes.

1.3 *Designing Policies to Improve Basic Education*

20. The preconditions for educational quality, equity and efficiency, are set in the early childhood years, making attention to early childhood care and development essential to the achievement of basic education goals. Basic education must correspond to actual needs, interests, and problems of the participants in the learning process. The relevance of curricula could be enhanced by linking literacy and numeracy skills and scientific concepts with learners' concerns and earlier experiences, for example, nutrition, health, and work. While many needs vary considerably within and among countries, and therefore much of a curriculum should be sensitive to local conditions, there are also many universal needs and shared concerns which should be addressed in education curricula and in educational messages. Issues such as protecting the environment, achieving a balance between population and resources, slowing the spread of AIDS, and preventing drug abuse are everyone's issues.

21. Specific strategies addressed to improve the conditions of schooling may focus on: learners and the learning process, personnel (teachers, administrators, others), curriculum and learning assessment, materials and physical facilities. Such strategies should be conducted in an integrated manner; their design, management, and evaluation should take into account the acquisition of knowledge and problem-solving skills as well as the social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of human development. Depending on the outcomes desired, teachers have to be trained accordingly, whilst benefiting from in-service programmes as well as other incentives of opportunity which put a premium on the achievement of these outcomes; curriculum and assessment must reflect a variety of criteria while materials– and conceivably buildings and facilities as well– must be adapted along the same lines. In some countries, the strategy may include ways to improve conditions for teaching and learning such that absenteeism is reduced and learning time increased. In order to meet the educational needs of groups not covered by formal schooling, appropriate strategies are needed for non-formal education. These include but go far beyond the aspects described above, but may also give special attention to the need for coordination with other forms of education, to the support of all interested partners, to sustained financial resources and to full community participation. An example

for such an approach applied to literacy can be found in UNESCO's Plan of Action for the Eradication of Illiteracy by the Year 2000. Other strategies still may rely on the media to meet the broader education needs of the entire community. Such strategies need to be linked to formal education, non-formal education or a combination of both. The use of the communications media holds a tremendous potential to educate the public and to share important information among those who need to know.

22. Expanding access to basic education of satisfactory quality is an effective way to improve equity. Ensuring that girls and women stay involved in basic education activities until they have attained at least the agreed necessary level of learning, can be encouraged through special measures designed, wherever possible, in consultation with them. Similar approaches are necessary to expand learning opportunities for various disadvantaged groups.

23. Efficiency in basic education does not mean providing education at the lowest cost, but rather the most effective use of all resources (human, organizational, and financial) to produce the desired levels of access and of necessary learning achievement. The foregoing considerations of relevance, quality, and equity are not alternatives to efficiency but represent the specific conditions within which efficiency should be attained. For some programmes, efficiency will require more, not fewer, resources. However, if existing resources can be used by more learners or if the same learning targets can be reached at a lower cost per learner, then the capacity of basic education to meet the targets of access and achievement for presently underserved groups can be increased.

1.4 Improving Managerial, Analytical and Technological Capacities

24. Many kinds of expertise and skills will be needed to carry out these initiatives. Managerial and supervisory personnel, as well as planners, school architects, teacher educators, curriculum developers, researchers, analysts, etc., are important for any strategy to improve basic education, but many countries do not provide specialized training to prepare them for their responsibilities; this is especially true in literacy and other out-of-school basic education activities. A broadening of outlook toward basic education will be a crucial prerequisite to the effective co-ordination of efforts among these many participants, and strengthening and developing capacities for planning and management at regional and local levels with a greater sharing of responsibilities will be necessary in many countries. Pre- and in-service training programmes for key personnel should be initiated, or strengthened where they do exist. Such training can be particularly useful in introducing administrative reforms and innovative management and supervisory techniques.

25. The technical services and mechanisms to collect, process and analyze data pertaining to basic education can be improved in all countries. This is an urgent task in many countries that have little reliable information and/or research on the basic learning needs of their people and on existing basic education activities. A country's information and knowledge base is vital in preparing and implementing a plan of action. One major implication of the focus on learning acquisition is that systems have to be developed and improved to assess the performance of individual learners and delivery mechanisms. Process and outcome assessment data should serve as the core of a management information system for basic education.

26. The quality and delivery of basic education can be enhanced through the judicious use of instructional technologies. Where such technologies are not now widely used, their introduction will require the selection and/or development of suitable technologies, acquisition of the necessary equipment and operating systems, and the recruitment or training of teachers and other educational personnel to work with them. The definition of a suitable technology varies by societal characteristics and will change rapidly over time as new technologies (educational radio and television, computers, and various audio-visual instructional

devices) become less expensive and more adaptable to a range of environments. The use of modern technology can also improve the management of basic education. Each country may reexamine periodically its present and potential technological capacity in relation to its basic educational needs and resources.

1.5 Mobilizing Information and Communication Channels

27. New possibilities are emerging which already show a powerful impact on meeting basic learning needs, and it is clear that the educational potential of these new possibilities has barely been tapped. These new possibilities exist largely as a result of two converging forces, both recent by-products of the general development process. First, the quantity of information available in the world – much of it relevant to survival and basic well-being – is exponentially greater than that available only a few years ago, and the rate of its growth is accelerating. A synergistic effect occurs when important information is coupled with a second modern advance – the new capacity to communicate among the people of the world. The opportunity exists to harness this force and use it positively, consciously, and with design, in order to contribute to meeting defined learning needs.

1.6 Building Partnerships and Mobilizing Resources

28. In designing the plan of action and creating a supportive policy environment for promoting basic education, maximum use of opportunities should be considered to expand existing collaborations and to bring together new partners: e. g. , family and community organizations, non-governmental and other voluntary associations, teachers' unions, other professional groups, employers, the media, political parties, co-operatives, universities, research institutions, religious bodies, as well as education authorities and other government departments and services (labour, agriculture, health, information, commerce, industry, defence, etc.). The human and organizational resources these domestic partners represent need to be effectively mobilized to play their parts in implementing the plan of action. Partnerships at the community level and at the intermediate and national levels should be encouraged; they can help harmonize activities, utilize resources more effectively, and mobilize additional financial and human resources where necessary.

29. Governments and their partners can analyze the current allocation and use of financial and other resources for education and training in different sectors to determine if additional support for basic education can be obtained by (i) improving efficiency, (ii) mobilizing additional sources of funding within and outside the government budget, and (iii) allocating funds within existing education and training budgets, taking into account efficiency and equity concerns. Countries where the total fiscal support for education is low need to explore the possibility of reallocating some public funds used for other purposes to basic education.

30. Assessing the resources actually or potentially available for basic education and comparing them to the budget estimates underlying the plan of action, can help identify possible inadequacies of resources that may affect the scheduling of planned activities over time or may require choices to be made. Countries that require external assistance to meet the basic learning needs of their people can use the resource assessment and plan of action as a basis for discussions with their international partners and for coordinating external funding.

31. The individual learners themselves constitute a vital human resource that needs to be mobilized. The demand for, and participation in, learning opportunities cannot simply be assumed, but must be actively encouraged. Potential learners need to see that the benefits of basic education activities exceed the costs the participants must bear, such as earnings foregone and reduced time available for community and household activities and for leisure. Women and girls, especially, may be deterred from taking full advantage of basic education opportunities because of reasons specific to indi-

vidual cultures. Such barriers to participation may be overcome through the use of incentives and by programmes adapted to the local context and seen by the learners, their families and communities to be "productive activities". Also, learners tend to benefit more from education when they are partners in the instructional process, rather than treated simply as "inputs" or "beneficiaries". Attention to the issues of demand and participation will help assure that the learners' personal capacities are mobilized for education.

32. Family resources, including time and mutual support, are vital for the success of basic education activities. Families can be offered incentives and assistance to ensure that their resources are invested to enable all family members to benefit as fully and equitably as possible from basic education opportunities.

33. The preeminent role of teachers as well as of other educational personnel in providing quality basic education needs to be recognized and developed to optimize their contribution. This must entail measures to respect teachers' trade union rights and professional freedoms, and to improve their working conditions and status, notably in respect to their recruitment, initial and in-service training, remuneration and career development possibilities, as well as to allow teachers to fulfill their aspirations, social obligations, and ethical responsibilities.

34. In partnerships with school and community workers, libraries need to become a vital link in providing educational resources for all learners – pre-school through adulthood – in school and non-school settings. There is therefore a need to recognize libraries as invaluable information resources.

35. Community associations, co-operatives, religious bodies, and other non-governmental organizations also play important roles in supporting and in providing basic education. Their experience, expertise, energy and direct relationships with various constituencies are valuable resources for identifying and meeting basic learning needs. Their active involvement in partnerships for basic education should be promoted through policies and mechanisms that strengthen their capacities and recognize their autonomy.

2. PRIORITY ACTION AT REGIONAL LEVEL

36. Basic learning needs must be met through collaborative action within each country, but there are many forms of co-operation between countries with similar conditions and concerns that could, and do, assist in this endeavour. Regions have already developed plans, such as the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources, adopted by ESCAP in 1988. By exchanging information and experience, pooling expertise, sharing facilities, and undertaking joint activities, several countries, working together, can increase their resource base and lower costs to their mutual benefit. Such arrangements are often set up among neighboring countries (sub-regional), among all countries in a major geo-cultural region, or among countries sharing a common language or having cultural and commercial relations. Regional and international organizations often play an important role in facilitating such co-operation between countries. In the following discussion, all such arrangements are included in the term "regional". In general, existing regional partnerships will need to be strengthened and provided with the resources necessary for their effective functioning in helping countries meet the basic learning needs of their populations.

2.1 *Exchanging Information, Experience and Expertise*

37. Various regional mechanisms, both intergovernmental and nongovernmental, promote co-operation in education and training, health, agricultural development, research and information, communications, and in other fields relevant to meeting basic learning needs. Such mechanisms can be further developed in response to the evolving needs of their constituents. Among several

possible examples are the four regional programmes established through UNESCO in the 1980s to support national efforts to achieve universal primary education and eliminate adult illiteracy:

- Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- Regional Programme for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Africa;
- Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL);
- Regional Programme for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education and the Eradication of Illiteracy in the Arab States by the Year 2000 (ARABUPEAL).

38. In addition to the technical and policy consultations organized in connection with these programmes, other existing mechanisms can be used for consulting on policy issues in basic education. The conferences of ministers of education organized by UNESCO and by several regional organizations, the regular sessions of the regional commissions of the United Nations, and certain trans-regional conferences organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat, CONFEMEN (standing conference of ministers of education of francophone countries), the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), could be used for this purpose as needs arise. In addition, numerous conferences and meetings organized by non-governmental bodies provide opportunities for professionals to share information and views on technical and policy issues. The conveners of these various conferences and meetings may consider ways of extending participation, where appropriate, to include representatives of other constituencies engaged in meeting basic learning needs.

39. Full advantage should be taken of opportunities to share media messages or programmes that can be exchanged among countries or collaboratively developed, especially where language and cultural similarities extend beyond political boundaries.

2.2 *Undertaking Joint Activities*

40. There are many possible joint activities among countries in support of national efforts to implement action plans for basic education. Joint activities should be designed to exploit economies of scale and the comparative advantages of participating countries. Six areas where this form of regional collaboration seems particularly appropriate are: (i) training of key personnel, such as planners, managers, teacher educators, researchers, etc. ; (ii) efforts to improve information collection and analysis; (iii) research; (iv) production of educational materials; (v) use of communication media to meet basic learning needs; and (vi) management and use of distance education services. Here, too, there are several existing mechanisms that could be utilized to foster such activities, including UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning and its networks of trainees and research as well as IBE's information network and the Unesco Institute for Education, the five networks for educational innovation operating under UNESCO's auspices, the research and review advisory groups (RRAGs) associated with the International Development Research Centre, the Commonwealth of Learning, the Asian Cultural Center for UNESCO, the participatory network established by the International Council for Adult Education, and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, which links major national research institutions in some 35 countries. Certain multilateral and bilateral development agencies that have accumulated valuable experience in one or more of these areas might be interested in participating in joint activities. The five United Nations regional commissions could provide further support to such regional collaboration, especially by mobilizing policymakers to take appropriate action.

3. PRIORITY ACTION AT WORLD LEVEL

41. The world community has a well-established record of co-operation in education and development. However, international funding for educa-

tion stagnated during the early 1980s; at the same time, many countries have been handicapped by growing debt burdens and economic relationships that channel their financial and human resources to wealthier countries. Because concern about the issues in basic education is shared by industrialized and developing countries alike, international co-operation can provide valuable support for national efforts and regional actions to implement the expanded vision of basic Education for All. Time, energy, and funding directed to basic education are perhaps the most profound investment in people and in the future of a country which can be made; there is a clear need and strong moral and economic argument for international solidarity to provide technical co-operation and financial assistance to countries that lack the resources to meet the basic learning needs of their populations.

3.1 *Cooperation within the International Context*

42. Meeting basic learning needs constitutes a common and universal human responsibility. The prospects for meeting basic learning needs around the world are determined in part by the dynamics of international relations and trade. With the current relaxation of tensions and the decreasing number of armed conflicts, there are now real possibilities to reduce the tremendous waste of military spending and shift those resources into socially useful areas, including basic education. The urgent task of meeting basic learning needs may require such a reallocation between sectors, and the world community and individual governments need to plan this conversion of resources for peaceful uses with courage and vision, and in a thoughtful and careful manner. Similarly, international measures to reduce or eliminate current imbalances in trade relations and to reduce debt burdens must be taken to enable many low-income countries to rebuild their own economies, releasing and retaining human and financial resources needed for development and for providing basic education to their populations. Structural adjustment policies should protect appropriate funding levels for education.

3.2 *Enhancing National Capacities*

43. International support should be provided, on request, to countries seeking to develop the national capacities needed for planning and managing basic education programmes and services (see section I.4). Ultimate responsibility rests within each nation to design and manage its own programmes to meet the learning needs of all its population. International support could include training and institutional development in data collection, analysis and research, technological innovation, and educational methodologies. Management information systems and other modern management methods could also be introduced, with an emphasis on low and middle level managers. These capabilities will be even more in demand to support quality improvements in primary education and to introduce innovative out-of-school programmes. In addition to direct support to countries and institutions, international assistance can also be usefully channelled to support the activities of international, regional and other inter-country structures that organize joint research, training and information exchanges. The latter should be based on, and supported by, existing institutions and programmes, if need be improved and strengthened, rather than on the establishment of new structures. Support will be especially valuable for technical cooperation among developing countries, among whom both circumstances and resources available to respond to circumstances are often similar.

3.3 *Providing Sustained Long-term Support for National and Regional Actions*

44. Meeting the basic learning needs of all people in all countries is obviously a long-term undertaking. This *Framework* provides guidelines for preparing national and subnational plans of action for the development of basic education through a long-term commitment of governments and their national partners to work together to reach the targets and achieve the objectives they set for themselves. International agencies and institutions,

many of which are sponsors, co-sponsors, and associate sponsors of the World Conference on Education for All, should actively seek to plan together and sustain their long-term support for the kinds of national and regional actions outlined in the preceding sections. In particular, the core sponsors of the Education for All initiative (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank) affirm their commitments to supporting the priority areas for international action presented below and to making appropriate arrangements for meeting the objectives of Education for All, each acting within its mandate, special responsibilities, and decisions of its governing bodies. Given that UNESCO is the UN agency with a particular responsibility for education, it will give priority to implementing the *Framework for Action* and to facilitating provision of services needed for reinforced international co-ordination and co-operation.

45. Increased international funding is needed to help the less developed countries implement their own autonomous plans of action in line with the expanded vision of basic Education for All. Genuine partnerships characterized by co-operation and joint long-term commitments will accomplish more and provide the basis for a substantial increase in overall funding for this important sub-sector of education. Upon governments' request, multilateral and bilateral agencies should focus on supporting priority actions, particularly at the country level (see section I), in areas such as the following:

a. *The design or updating of national and subnational multisectoral plans of action* (see section I. 1), which will need to be elaborated very early in the 1990s. Both financial and technical assistance are needed by many developing countries, particularly in collecting and analyzing data, as well as in organizing domestic consultations.

b. *National efforts and related inter-country co-operation to attain a satisfactory level of quality and relevance in primary education* (cf. sections I. 3 and 2 above). Experiences involving the participation of families, local communities, and non-governmental organizations in increasing the relevance and improving the quality of education could profitably be shared among countries.

c. *The provision of universal primary education in the economically poorer countries.* International funding agencies should consider negotiating arrangements to provide long-term support, on a case-by-case basis, to help countries move toward universal primary education according to their timetable. The external agencies should examine current assistance practices in order to find ways of effectively assisting basic education programmes which do not require capital- and technology- intensive assistance, but often need longer-term budgetary support. In this context, greater attention should be given to criteria for development co-operation in education to include more than mere economic considerations.

d. *Programmes designed to meet the basic learning needs of disadvantaged groups, out-of-school youth, and adults with little or no access to basic learning opportunities.* All partners can share their experience and expertise in designing and implementing innovative measures and activities, and focus their funding for basic education on specific categories and groups (e. g. , women, the rural poor, the disabled) to improve significantly the learning opportunities and conditions available for them.

e. *Education programmes for women and girls.* These programmes should be designed to eliminate the social and cultural barriers which have discouraged or even excluded women and girls from benefits of regular education programmes, as well as to promote equal opportunities in all aspects of their lives.

f. *Education programmes for refugees.* The programmes run by such organizations as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine (UNRWA) need more substantial and reliable long-term financial support for this recognized international responsibility. Where countries of refuge need international financial and technical assistance to cope with the

basic needs of refugees, including their learning needs, the international community can help to share this burden through increased cooperation. The world community will also endeavour to ensure that people under occupation or displaced by war and other calamities continue to have access to basic education programmes that preserve their cultural identity.

g. *Basic education programmes of all kinds in countries with high rates of illiteracy (as in sub-Saharan Africa) and with large illiterate populations (as in South Asia).* Substantial assistance will be needed to reduce significantly the world's large number of illiterate adults.

h. *Capacity building for research and planning and the experimentation of small-scale innovations.* The success of Education for All actions will ultimately be determined by the capacity of each country to design and implement programs that reflect national conditions. A strengthened knowledge base nourished by research findings and the lessons of experiments and innovations as well as the availablity of competent educational planners will be essential in this respect.

46. The coordination of external funding for education is an area of shared responsibility at country level, in which host governments need to take the lead to ensure the efficient use of resources in accordance with their priorities. Development funding agencies should explore innovative and more flexible modalities of co-operation in consultation with the governments and institutions with which they work and co-operate in regional initiatives, such as the Task Force of Donors to African Education. Other forums need to be developed in which funding agencies and developing countries can collaborate in the design of inter-country projects and discuss general issues relating to financial assistance.

3.4 Consultations on Policy Issues

47. Existing channels of communication and forums for consultation among the many partners involved in meeting basic learning needs should be fully utilized in the 1990s to maintain and extend the international consensus underlying this *Framework for Action.* Some channels and forums, such as the biannual International Conference on Education, operate globally, while others focus on particular regions or groups of countries or categories of partners. Insofar as possible, organizers should seek to coordinate these consultations and share results.

48. Moreover, in order to maintain and expand the Education for All initiative, the international community will need to make appropriate arrangements, which will ensure co-operation among the interested agencies using the existing mechanisms insofar as possible: (i) to continue advocacy of basic Education for All, building on the momentum generated by the World Conference; (ii) to facilitate sharing information on the progress made in achieving basic education targets set by countries for themselves and on the resources and organizational requirements for successful initiatives; (iii) to encourage new partners to join this global endeavor; and (iv) to ensure that all partners are fully aware of the importance of maintaining strong support for basic education.

INDICATIVE PHASING OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE 1990S

49. Each country, in determining its own intermediate goals and targets and in designing its plan of action for achieving them, will, in the process, establish a timetable to harmonize and schedule specific activities. Similarly, regional and international action will need to be scheduled to help countries meet their targets on time. The following general schedule suggests an indicative phasing during the 1990s; of course, certain phases may need to overlap and the dates indicated will need to be adapted to individual country and organizational contexts.

1. Governments and organizations set specific targets and complete or update their plans

of action to meet basic learning needs (cf. section 1.1); take measures to create a supportive policy environment (1.2); devise policies to improve the relevance, quality, equity and efficiency of basic education services and programmes (1.3); design the means to adapt information and communication media to meet basic learning needs (1.5) and mobilize resources and establish operational partnerships (1.6). International partners assist countries, through direct support and through regional co-operation, to complete this preparatory stage. (1990-1991)

2. Development agencies establish policies and plans for the 1990s, in line with their commitments to sustained, long-term support for national and regional actions and increase their financial and technical assistance to basic education accordingly (3.3). All partners strengthen and use relevant existing mechanisms for consultation and co-operation and establish procedures for monitoring progress at regional and international levels. (1990-1993)
3. First stage of implementation of plans of action: national coordinating bodies monitor implementation and propose appropriate adjustments to plans. Regional and international supporting actions are carried out. (1990-1995)
4. Governments and organizations undertake mid-term evaluation of the implementation of their respective plans and adjust them as needed. Governments, organizations and development agencies undertake comprehensive policy reviews at regional and global levels. (1995-1996)
5. Second stage of implementation of plans of action and of supporting action at regional and international levels. Development agencies adjust their plans as necessary and increase their assistance to basic education accordingly. (1996-2000)
6. Governments, organizations and development agencies evaluate achievements and undertake comprehensive policy review at regional and global levels. (2000-2001)

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50. There will never be a better time to renew commitment to the inevitable and long-term effort to meet the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults. This effort will require a much greater and wiser investment of resources in basic education and training than ever before, but benefits will begin accruing immediately and will extend well into the future – where the global challenges of today will be met, in good measure, by the world community's commitment and perseverance in attaining its goal of education for all.

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