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# Education for All: The Requirements



## Roundtable Themes III

World Conference on Education for All  
Jomtien, Thailand



PJ-ABT-391

World Conference on Education for All III

**World Conference on Education for All monographs**

- I** *Education for All: purpose and context*
- II** *Education for All: an expanded vision*
- III** *Education for All: the requirements*

PN-ABT-391

World Conference on Education for All

Monograph III

# Education for All: the requirements

Prepared by Douglas M. Windham

U N E S C O

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# Preface

The three monographs in this set are based on materials available from the round tables 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 1,500 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 round tables. To the fullest extent possible, account has also been taken of the written summary records and audiotapes of the round-table 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' round tables, with occasional use made also of material from some of the twenty-four 'illustrative' round tables.

Individual chapters do not always correspond to particular round tables. Many chapters draw on material from more than one round table, and conversely, material from some round tables 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 round tables, 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 reaffirm 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

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# 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 textbooks 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 1,500 participants adopted two texts by acclamation: the *World Declaration on Education for All* and the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*.<sup>1</sup> 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 co-operatively 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 round tables provided opportunities to discuss spe-

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

cific aspects and issues of basic education. Half of these round tables 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 round tables, 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*.<sup>2</sup> The central theme of each monograph corresponds to the three sections of the *World Declaration*: Education for All: purpose and context; Education for All: an 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-

2. Both documents were published by the Inter-Agency Commission for the World Conference on Education for All (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, 75352 Paris 07 SP (France).

WCEFA ROUND TABLES			
Thematic round tables <i>Purpose and context</i>		Illustrative round tables	
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
<i>An expanded vision</i>			
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
<i>The requirements</i>			
T13 Participation	T14 Research Networks	I13 Nepal/ Afghanistan	I14 Kenya
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

lowed by a closer look at the relationship between education and the 'world of work'. Finally, the monograph focuses 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 non-formal 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, provid-

ing 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 for 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 round-table 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. The requirements concept

The previous two monographs in this series have dealt with the purpose of the Education for All initiative and with a detailed elaboration of the expanded vision and the renewed international commitment to basic education for all. This monograph will consider some of the major requirements for transforming the expanded vision and the renewed commitment into an effective reality. Three major sets of these requirements were identified in the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) documents: developing a supportive policy context; mobilizing resources; and strengthening international solidarity.

The discussions held at the Jomtien Conference suggested that a fourth requirement – building national technical capacity – should be added. Originally, this had been seen as part of the mobilization of resources requirement, but participants at the Conference convincingly asserted that *development*, not just *mobilization*, of existing technical capacity is a critical need in many countries, whether ‘developed’ or ‘developing’ in their economic or educational status.

## Developing a supportive policy context

*Supportive policies in the social, cultural, and economic sectors are required in order to realize the full provision and utilization of basic education for individual and societal improvement.*

*World Declaration on Education for All, Art. 8*

The provision of basic education to individuals can help meet certain intrinsic needs of learners but,

in isolation from other societal efforts, it cannot ensure that individuals will have the necessary ability to meet all basic human needs (for example, health, nutrition or shelter) or to contribute significantly to social and economic development. Knowledge in the absence of the resources, the means and the freedom to exercise it is only a potential, not an effective tool. Education must have value not just as an end in itself, but as a facilitating force for the empowerment of individuals and the development of societies. How well education facilitates the achievement of these goals is determined in large part by the policy context in which it is provided and in which its benefits are used.

However, the policy context for education must not focus exclusively on the employment outcome for learners. Appropriate laws, regulations and incentives to encourage broader demand for labour and its more efficient utilization are needed. Even so, the focus of the planning and implementation of education programmes must incorporate the widest range of learning opportunities (as identified in the broadened scope of basic education) and link them to the diverse individual and group activities to which education may be applied.

Infrastructure development, political participation, entrepreneurial regulation, agricultural pricing and cultural traditions are all examples of influences that establish the context for education and its utilization. Too often in the past, educational planning failed to take into account the multiple determinants of learning and the diverse realities within which learning must take place.

Similarly, economic and social policies frequently emphasized certification rather than learning as the major output of educational activities. The complexity of the provision and use of education must be recognized, and steps must be taken to ensure broad societal planning of basic education within its cultural, social, political and economic contexts.

Attaining basic education for all will depend on political commitment being manifested in the development of appropriate individual and institutional capacity, in the design and implementation of reforms in education policy and practice, and in the operation of suitable fiscal, trade, labour, employment, health and population policies. This commitment will need to consider the equity and growth dimensions of development, and recognize that growth without equity is ultimately a self-defeating development strategy.

Basic education does not exist in isolation from other educational and societal efforts. Its development depends on improvements in early childhood care, pre-school programmes, teacher training and tertiary education to determine the preparedness of its pupils and the quality of its instructors and administrators. Furthermore, the effectiveness of secondary and vocational education will greatly enhance the attractiveness of basic education for pupils, which can lead to lower attrition and repetition rates within basic education. Finally, the development of scientific knowledge and technology holds out hope for an improved ability to meet the needs of certain learners – the poor, the rural and those with special needs – who at present are not reached or satisfactorily served by traditional classroom approaches.

At Jomtien, the round tables on mobilization for empowerment, capacity development, teachers, education managers and non-governmental organizations, and on government and private financing, helped to identify and clarify some of the policy contexts for educational development. Nevertheless, this issue was not considered in the detail desired by some participants. The two round tables on financing, for example, discussed the need to protect the social sectors from economic adjustment programmes, but did not deal in equal detail

with the reciprocal issue of protecting economic development policies from excessive burdens of inefficiency and waste that may occur in the human development sectors. Even with respect to existing debt burdens and their inevitable constraining effects on education budgets, no unanimity was attained. However, a major achievement was to develop a consensus, reflected in the *World Declaration*, to call attention to the undue burdens that structural adjustment policies may impose on the ability of countries to finance Education for All.

The lack of detailed attention to the supportive policy environment is understandable given the diverse professional backgrounds of the Conference participants. However, the long-term credibility of the Conference will be determined, in part, by the ability of education professionals to recognize and articulate the understanding that society's support for basic education is largely dependent on its ability to facilitate change in the lives of individuals and that this ability is itself facilitated or limited by the policy environment in which basic education takes place.

## **Mobilizing resources**

*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.*

*World Declaration on Education for All, Art. 9*

The current levels and types of resources available to meet basic learning needs are simply not sufficient. New resources can be sought from three major sources: a broader government base of support; an increased financial effort due to expanded participation by non-governmental organizations, communities, families and individuals; and increased – and more effective – support from external funding agencies. In most countries, all three sources already contribute to the financing of basic education; the challenge is to raise the level of support and, through co-operative partnerships, make this support more effective at increasing access to education and learning achievement.

The broadened base of government support can be achieved by increasing the proportion of the government budget allocated for education and, within the education budget, increasing the proportion dedicated to basic education. In addition, many government departments other than the education ministry spend funds on basic education and skill development activities. Government departments responsible for agriculture, health, community or regional development, labour, defence, industry and other development activities need to co-ordinate their programmes with those of the formal and non-formal education providers. Larger allocations should be urged for basic education within the budgets of these other departments. Basic education should be viewed as part of a broadly defined human development strategy, not solely as a subsector of the formal education system. Governments should also explore the appropriateness of new taxes earmarked for basic education, especially taxes to finance the development of skills required by the emerging private sector in many countries.

Government will continue as the major guarantor of educational access and equity; while fulfilment of this responsibility does not require government management and operation of schools, this is likely to continue as the modal form of government participation. Government financing alone is unlikely to be a sufficient source of funds for basic education, however. Education is rarely truly 'free' to the family whose children participate; sacrifices in the form of cash and in-kind contributions, and of forgoing the child's assistance in the home or at work, are common ways in which families 'pay' for the education of their children. In addition, 'free' education provided by government alone is often of an insufficient quality to benefit the individual child, the community or the country.

The choice is not between free and private education, but between education financed via a government monopoly and education financed by government in partnership with communities, parents, non-governmental organizations and employers. Greater participation by the non-government members of this partnership can increase the level

of resources available, and increase the relevance and effectiveness of the learning process. Whether through new organizational structures or through reorienting existing structures to include a basic education component, local and national partnerships can help provide materials, facilities and personnel to meet the basic education challenge. A special benefit of this broadening of participation is to focus greater public attention on educational issues and to establish a stronger societal commitment to the principles of the *World Declaration*.

Even with expanded government support and new collaborative partnerships, some countries will still have inadequate resources to meet the basic learning needs of their populations. The least developed countries will simply not have the necessary human and financial resources to meet the quantitative demand and to enhance the quality of their basic education systems. Substantial external assistance, sustained over time, will be required. Consideration should also be given to increasing the proportion of grant aid and to moving toward host-government managed programmes rather than project assistance, with a view to making external assistance complementary to internal national priorities. The return on this support will be greater self-sufficiency in both management and financing capacity among these currently economically disadvantaged countries.

Because of the importance of the resource mobilization issue, a double-session round table was held at Jomtien on the cost and financing of basic education. Participants discussed means of reducing unit (per pupil) costs, the need to restructure school systems notably in respect to teacher- and time-utilization, redistributing resources to basic education from other sectors, and alternative means (e.g. user fees) to increase the level of resources available for basic education without creating new inequities in access or learning achievement.

The round table on financing discussed several country case-studies including those from Colombia, Ghana, the Philippines, Senegal and Sri Lanka. Estimates of the additional cost of providing schooling for all between 1985 and the year 2000 were reported for all low- and lower-middle-income countries: an increase of \$58 billion if with-

out other reform and \$43 billion if accomplished as part of a reform package including cost-saving, revenue-enhancement and quality-improvement proposals. It was noted that approximately one-third of this additional cost would occur in sub-Saharan Africa, a region where the need for external assistance is already substantial.

In the area of resource mobilization two key distinctions were made. First, increased efficiency is not always concomitant with lower costs. Cost-cutting is appropriate where waste exists, but providing good-quality basic education in most countries will cost more than at present. Even where unit costs can be reduced, increased quality is likely to bring more individuals into the education system and keep them there longer. Thus, increased efficiency and lower unit costs may still lead to an increased *total* budget for basic education. A second distinction concerns the costs faced by the family and the pupil; the critical issue is often not the actual delivery cost of education but how much *users* must pay (relative to the value of the education) and the *form* in which they must pay. The neediest pupils will not be able to adjust to user-fee financing schemes with the same ease as middle- and upper-income pupils. The mode of financing must consider cost levels, resource mobilization and the equity effects of cost-sharing.

The discussion on mobilization of resources was also concerned with the possibility of a misallocation of the anticipated 'peace dividend' and of competition between education and other social sectors such as health and nutrition. Concern was expressed that the political and economic changes in Eastern Europe might draw funds away from the developing countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia. If a 'peace dividend' should emerge, participants felt basic education should be seen as complementing, not competing with, other social-sector initiatives.

A final point concerning efficiency was made both in the background document, *Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, and in the *Final Report* of the Conference. Increased efficiency in the expenditure of basic education funds is one of the strongest arguments basic education advocates can make for increased allocations. Both government and taxpayers

have a right to expect fiscal propriety and accountability. Waste and poor quality in basic education will lead to reduced support from the agencies that finance education and to reduced participation by the individuals who need educational services. A priority use of newly mobilized resources must be to improve the efficiency of the education process and to promote accountability to pupils, parents, communities and government.

### **Building national technical capacity**

*The primary purpose of bilateral and multilateral co-operation should appear in a true spirit of partnership . . . to help develop the endogenous capacities of national authorities and their in-country partners to meet basic learning needs effectively.*

*Framework for Action, Art. 14*

To realize Education for All will require a range of analytical and managerial capabilities, from policy analysis and planning through administration and financial management. The provision of development assistance without local capacity development would breed continued dependence, which is antithetical to the spirit of the *World Declaration*. Only through the provision of technical assistance, training and financial support can the technical and managerial potential of developing countries be enhanced and utilized. External assistance should promote technical as well as financial independence and a more equal partnership among the developed and developing economies.

A first priority is to establish or reinforce the technical services and mechanisms for collecting and analysing data on basic education, basic learning needs and the context within which these two interact. Operational definitions of learning needs and agreement on the indicators by which learning needs and their satisfaction are monitored are important first steps. Depending on the existing condition of statistical services and management information services within a given country, a programme should be designed to expand and enhance information services. This programme should focus not just on issues of hardware or software, but also give appropriate attention to the

human resource implications of increased reliance on data-based decision making.

Information systems must be made cost-effective and responsive to the political realities of each context. The accuracy, relevance, timeliness and cost of information must be considered. The content of education censuses and special data collection or research exercises should be reviewed carefully to ensure that the investment of time and financial expenses is justified. Personnel in bureaucratic and political structures need to be trained in the appropriate uses (and warned of the inappropriate uses) to which data may be applied. The experience and understanding of education practitioners must be accorded an appropriate place in the information process, as should those qualitative characteristics of schooling that are difficult or even impossible to quantify.

The monitoring of basic learning activities must include input, process and output characteristics. Values, attitudes, psycho-motor skills and learning achievement are the ultimate outputs of the learning process. However, educational management usually controls only inputs and processes. More research on the linkages of input and process factors to learning outputs is needed; greater participation by local experts and increased attention to the specific contexts of individual countries are other means for improving the management value of data.

The operation of education institutions, programmes and systems requires special skills that are best developed through a combination of formal training and experience. While the greatest administrative shortcomings often appear at the middle-management level, weak administration at many levels is a criticism directed towards the education sector in both developed and developing countries. Many education organizations select administrators from among the instructional staff, while others depend on 'professional' administrators. The first alternative assumes that the personal skills that lead to effective teaching are directly transferable to management activities and the second operates on the premise that an instructional experience is not required for successful management. Both assumptions are wrong.

Management in education must incorporate an understanding of the instructional enterprise, training in planning and decision-making, and a system of professional development that allows administrators to gain experience before assuming full management responsibility. While an ideal system of management development is not realistic for many countries, an improved system is necessary and feasible. The necessity for better management of education is not solely – or even primarily – concerned with the financial resources that can be wasted; it is the waste of human lives and productivity that lends immediate importance to this issue.

If multilateral and bilateral partnerships are to be on an equitable basis, the technical skills of data collection and analysis, policy design and planning, must be developed within all countries. These skills have never been a monopoly of the developed countries or of the staffs of national or international development assistance agencies, but they have often been sufficiently out of balance to bias the negotiation of assistance arrangements away from the interests of a developing country. If a true dialogue between development partners is to emerge, it must be on a basis of technical parity and reciprocal respect. This cannot be achieved by individuals simply acquiring the technical rhetoric of development; they must possess real competence in the skills of analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation. Success or failure of development activities can be measured by the indicators of monitoring and evaluation. These indicators must not be identified solely by external specialists whose goals or emphases may not be congruent with those of the host country.

A major constraint on effective management of education is the structure of administrative incentives that exists in many countries. Often, initiative is discouraged by highly bureaucratic arrangements and individual managers are rewarded for behaviour that is counter-productive to the needs for educational innovation, expansion and enhancement. Systems of patronage, nepotism and simple corruption can divert resources from the learning needs of children and adults. It is important to recognize that bureaucracies are only as effective

as the management system allows them to be. Neither public nor private management of education guarantees that the interests of the learner will be paramount. Administrative structures must be seen as devices to facilitate the meeting of educational needs in an efficient manner and should be evaluated on that basis. When this goal is not being achieved, a change in administrative structure should be one of the policy alternatives that is examined.

Conference round tables dealt with the capacity development needs related to teachers, education managers, research and assessment activities, and educational technology. The round table on the role of the teacher discussed the terms of service under which teachers are employed and the constraining effect these often have on teachers. The round table on improving primary education discussed the full range of educational inputs, stressing the central roles played by teachers and instructional materials. The education managers' multiple functions as administrators, monitors and instruction support personnel were contrasted with the paucity of training and inadequacy of resources with which they must often deal. Illustrative round tables on the Caribbean, Colombia, Jordan and the Philippines provided practical examples of the challenges faced by teachers and education managers as well as the opportunities that may be available to enhance educational effectiveness.

Drawing on experiences from such countries as Ireland, the Philippines, Kenya and the Republic of Korea, the thematic round table on assessment focused on teaching and learning processes. A round table on the United States considered the appropriateness and value of national and international comparisons of innovation, reform and performance. Both the thematic and illustrative round tables considered the technical capacity needs for such assessments.

The thematic round tables on empowerment and on assessment directed attention to the issues of information and participation in decision-making about education. It was asserted that decision-making structures should make use of the knowledge of participants and that research should be designed and conducted so as to provide necessary

information for expanding access and enhancing learning achievement. The special role of national, regional and international research networks was stressed as a major facilitation device to maximize research effectiveness. Suggestions were presented on how to translate research findings into a format understandable to policy-makers, planners and administrators. It was recognized that the capacities for research and decision-making reform were greatly improved but that all countries, developed and developing, still had much to do in terms of generating new capacities to meet the emerging needs of their societies.

The round table on instructional materials considered the issue of how to provide learners with the most effective and reasonably priced materials. Such topics as quality control, life-in-use of materials and the role of the private sector were reviewed. Special focus was placed on the controversial issue of use of local rather than international publishers. Other issues of instructional technology were raised in the round tables dealing with improving primary education and distance education, as well as in several illustrative round tables.

## **Strengthening international solidarity**

*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.*

*World Declaration on Education for All, Art. 10*

The goal of Education for All is not one that individual countries should pursue alone. All countries have valuable insights and experiences to share. Intercountry consultation and co-operation need to be intensified; this can be done both through existing international organizations and structures and, where justified, through the development of new ones.

Just as the planning and implementation of Education for All within a single country must consider the context of political, economic and social policies and practices, the international effort will also be influenced by the nature of the

relationships that exist among countries. Peace and stability promote both educational and economic development. The resolution of armed conflict between countries has the potential to free substantial funds for a wide variety of social endeavours, including meeting basic learning needs. Expenditure on military occupation and caring for refugee populations can be better invested in human development rather than social maintenance and control. The international community has a unique responsibility and capacity to resolve disputes, repatriate populations and assist both countries and individuals to realize their educational potential.

The social benefits of education are not limited by national frontiers. The effects of education on health, nutrition, child care, political participation, employment and general social and economic development redound to the advantage of the world community. Over time, broadened educational opportunity is potentially one of the most effective means to reduce the misunderstanding, intolerance and lack of respect that is the core of most disputes between communities, groups and countries.

The international support for Education for All will be of limited impact if it is not matched with support for more equitable trade relationships. Developing countries need to be assured of the opportunity to compete in those economic areas where long-term comparative advantages exist for them. Increased foreign assistance in developing international parity rather than narrowly defined self-sufficiency should be the standard for aid to the currently disadvantaged economies. Without a stronger and stable domestic economy to employ school leavers and other learners, the long-term benefits of Education for All will be severely constrained. Concerns with terms of trade, joint-venture arrangements, access to capital markets and availability of technology are all examples of concerns expressed by developing countries that can be considered within the context of international solidarity.

Measures to reduce current debt burdens (through debt-swaps, refinancing or other means) could enable many low-income countries to retain

more of their own social capital to invest in Education for All. Rebuilding weakened economies and increasing the ability of disadvantaged countries to retain needed human and financial resources are prerequisites for any successful Education for All strategy in the developing world. As was noted earlier, substantial and sustained foreign assistance for education will continue to be required for many countries. This assistance can be provided as an investment, not as a gift; the benefits of this investment will be improved lives for millions of people, increased international stability and an enhanced global market for raw materials, services and processed goods. Multilateral and bilateral arrangements can be promoted to increase the efficiency of educational investments in currently disadvantaged countries. For example, the concept of multiple-country support for regional education institutions has been slow to be implemented, primarily because of political barriers; but the concept remains deserving of consideration in many parts of the developing world.

The round tables on adult literacy, on resource mobilization and on finance all stressed the importance of political will and social commitment to meet the goals of the *World Declaration*. The illustrative round table on the Sahel presented encouraging examples of how countries with similar problems and conditions can work co-operatively to share resources and insights. Conference participants recognized that goals as substantial as those articulated in the *World Declaration* will require regional and international collaboration among governments, non-governmental organizations and assistance agencies. Developing the structures for such co-operation (for example, the International Task Force for Literacy that helped promote International Literacy Year 1990) will be a critical intermediate goal of the Education for All initiative.

## Structure of presentation

The four themes around the 'requirements' concept – developing a supportive policy context, mobilization of resources, building national technical capacity and strengthening international solidarity

– were not restricted to a specific subset of round tables. The conceptual structure of Education for All is closely interconnected and this introduction has indicated the difficulty of establishing clear distinctions even between the four aspects of the requirements concept.

The following chapters attempt to present as completely as possible the richness of the individual thematic round tables that dealt with the requirements to realize Education for All. The formal presentations and discussions of the round tables have been synthesized and supplemented by information from the written support materials provided at many of the round tables. Where appropriate, relevant material from other thematic or illustrative round tables has been added.

It is a challenge to present a coherent treatment of the requirements concept while remaining faithful to the individual round table's presentations, discussions, and support materials. Because the round tables varied considerably, even in the nature of their physical record (tapes, videos, draft papers, published books, monographs and articles, and presentation outlines), a certain variation in their representation here is unavoidable. However, the relevance and quality of the thematic round tables are such that the effort to disseminate their insights seems justified.

The presentation in this monograph details the specification of selected individual requirements and deals, in turn, with mobilization for empowerment; the status and roles of teachers; participation of non-governmental organizations, communities, parents and pupils; textbooks and other instructional materials; and the utilization of assessment procedures. The role of the education manager, certainly a key part of the requirements for Education for All, was discussed in Mono-

graph II. Some additional points about the contributions of education managers are mentioned here in the discussions on mobilization and assessment. Chapter 7 considers the implications of individual requirements on the more global issue of financing Education for All. This chapter addresses the possibilities for cost reduction and for expanding government, private and community sources and means of financing Education for All. The final chapter summarizes the key issues presented here and discusses the prospects for the Education for All initiative.

Every effort has been made to present, as fairly and completely as possible, the round-table presentations and debates, as well as to provide the broadest conceptual support to the issues raised. The ultimate responsibility, of course, is to assure faithfulness to the larger issues inherent in the *World Declaration on Education for All* and the *Framework for Action*.

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## 2. Mobilization for empowerment

Education for All will require more than simply an increase in the financial allocations for schooling. It will require a broad mobilization of social institutions, communication media and family resources. Both the economic and the intrinsic benefits of meeting basic learning needs will have to be identified and estimated, and this information will need to receive the widest possible dissemination. Individual and political will to support Education for All will be the ultimate determinant of the success of this initiative.

The goal of this mobilization must include the empowerment of both individuals and communities. 'Grassroots' support for meeting basic learning needs, together with the resources of national and international non-governmental organizations, will have to be exploited to the fullest. However, individuals, communities and non-governmental organizations are not merely resources to be tapped; they must be beneficiaries of Education for All activities as well.

### **The nature of the problem**

Since the 1940s education has been established as a high-priority item among the alternative means to promote societal development. Logical and statistical argument has been presented to support the powerful intuitive linkage between improved human resources and national economic and social development. Some concerns have been expressed about the tendency in the last two decades to attempt to quantify the benefits of education,

especially if done solely in financial terms. In the minds of many advocates, the assertion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (proclaimed by the United Nations on 10 December 1948) that 'everyone has the right to education' (Art. 26) precluded the need for further documentation of educational effects.

Nevertheless, in recent years there has been an increased need for persuasive documentation of education's effectiveness. The reduced economic prosperity of many countries, the competing demands from other sectors (both economic and social), the increased recognition that 'education' describes a multitude of activities that vary dramatically in both equity and effectiveness, and the heightened accountability under which all organizations – government, private and non-profit – must operate, have combined to create a public policy context in which the 'right' to education, while not disputed, has become conditional rather than absolute. Fortunately, it has become easier to document the benefits of education in a variety of ways. Effects on employment and earnings have been supplemented by evidence of education's effects on health, nutrition, early childhood care, family planning, and a variety of attitudes and behaviours that are relevant to concerns with societal development.

The Education for All initiative has focused on meeting basic learning needs because it is in this connection that the issues of equity and social effectiveness of education are most critical. This focus does not ignore the need to develop other levels and types of education, but it does stress the

This chapter is based on material presented or available at the round table entitled 'Mobilizing for Empowerment Through Education: A New Battle Plan' (T19). The round table was organized by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It was chaired by Joseph Wheeler, then chairman of the Development Assistance Committee, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the presenters were:

Meechai Viravaidya (Moderator)  
Secretary-General of the Population and Community Development Association, Thailand.

James P. Grant

Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund.

Faisal Abed

Director, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Bangladesh.

Sonia Perez

Executive Director, Panama and Venezuela, Inter-American Development Bank.

Graça Machel

Former Minister of Education, Mozambique.

unique priority deserved by basic education. No other type of education touches so many lives or has such potential for social and economic transformation of individuals and their communities.

Even with this focus, the problem of resource mobilization becomes immediately apparent. The usual governmental means of financing education used in the vast majority of countries simply will not be adequate to meet the challenge of Education for All. The new means of mobilizing resources discussed here will require new and stronger efforts on the part of many individuals and organizations. However, development should start 'with the people', so the people themselves, rather than government, should be the starting-point from which educational priorities are established and community resources identified.

It is important that the broadened mobilization of resources should not be seen primarily as a burden. It is an opportunity to change education from a hierarchical bureaucracy provided by government to a communal activity in which all participate as both teachers and learners. If the new 'mobilization for empowerment' strategy succeeds, the additional financial resources generated will be much less important than the energy and broadened participation that the process of this mobilization can engender. Properly managed by a social partnership of individuals (including but not limited to educational administrators and leaders), communities, non-governmental organizations and government, resource mobilization can be transformed

from a problem to be overcome to a means for an improved structure and context for learning activities.

### **Political will, ideas and communication**

Development efforts are constrained by belief in the myth that education is delivered only through schools and teachers, health through hospitals and doctors, water through pipes and engineers, and so on. The major lesson learned in development in the last two decades is that these are often necessary but rarely sufficient means for achievement of development goals. Technology and trained personnel must be supplemented by energizing political will and mobilizing users and participants. Development activities have focused excessively on the dissemination of things and have underemphasized the role of ideas. It is ideas – and the individuals committed to them – that helped extinguish slavery, brought an end to colonial empires, and continue to promote racial equality and an improved environment; the dramatic political changes seen in eastern Europe and within the developing world may be traced to the power of such concepts as freedom, liberty and human dignity.

Today, communication technology offers extraordinary speed in the transmission of images and messages at costs dramatically lower than were available only a decade ago. The unresolved question is how the power of the communication me-

**Box 2.1** *Enhancing social awareness about illiteracy: Anxi County, Gansu Province, China*

When a literacy campaign was launched in China in 1984, some leaders held that it did not have much to do with economic development and failed to give it much attention. Some ordinary administrators felt that it was too difficult a task, so they were reluctant to carry it out; some farmers thought that it was a waste of time, as being literate made no difference in farming. In view of these misconceptions, a two-pronged approach was adopted. First, facts were used to educate administrators and the general public. Investigation showed that among farming households in Anxi County with an annual per capita income of over 3,000 yuan, 94 per cent of heads of household had completed at least primary education, while in poor households the majority were illiterate. A sample survey of 100 farming house-

holds showed that the average per capita income of those with educated members was usually about 150 yuan higher than that of others.

Anxi County conducted a full-scale campaign to publicize these facts through broadcasting, wall papers and slide shows, explaining the importance of eradicating illiteracy, and acquiring knowledge and technical skills for the development of production and improvement of people's livelihood. This stirred the initiatives of administrators, teachers and the general public to run schools, to teach or to participate in literacy courses. Farmers said with deep feeling, 'If you want to get rich, seek knowledge and learn technical skills.' Consequently, the number of people who took part in the literacy programme increased from 848 in early 1984 to 2,523 in 1985.

dia can be captured to strengthen political will and to mobilize society to support and participate in meeting the basic learning need<sup>1</sup> of all.<sup>1</sup>

Political commitment to Education for All must transcend official rhetoric and political pronouncements. Political will can be measured only by the actual substance of education and the related policies, management priorities and resource allocations. To be effective, the political commitment within government must be founded on a broad social commitment among the population. Communication systems, both formal and informal, will play a major part in establishing this commitment, and in nurturing and sustaining it. Documenting educational benefits and making positive informal references to the advantages of education in entertainment and literature are two diverse examples of the contribution communication media can make in reinforcing social and political will.

### **International commitments**

While it has become generally accepted that illiteracy is a barrier to societal improvement and that basic education is a necessary foundation for most development activities, there remains a need to energize the participants in the change process.

This must take place with the support of local communities and organizations, but it can be enhanced by external influences, such as the international funding agencies.

The great potential of regional and international banks to mobilize resources for basic education is contingent upon individual governments articulating their own priorities. There is a need for qualitative changes in management and administrative approaches (for example, more effective complementary relationships with non-governmental organizations), and innovation in financial strategies.

In many countries there is a serious imbalance between funding for higher education and funding for basic education. While it may not be practical or appropriate to consider restructuring existing budgets in favour of basic education, any new funds for education generated in the future should be focused more on basic education. Development agencies can facilitate such financing reforms by providing technical and financial assistance.

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1. The empowerment of individuals and groups through use of modern communication media is discussed in Monograph II, Chapter 6.

Generally, the multilateral organizations have worked to protect social sector investments and to encourage increases in the social sector's share of total national budgets. These organizations have encouraged the use of assessment methods to promote equity and sustainability in new social investment initiatives, and to protect basic education programmes within the process of structural adjustment.

Regional, multilateral and international banks have a variety of roles to play. They can promote policy debate and dialogue; they can participate as a re-financing partner in general development efforts that have a basic education component or requirement; they can encourage the establishment of funds to allow for the transformation of foreign debt obligations into social investment; and they can directly support basic education projects.

A special effect of the international commitment to Education for All is the encouragement of reflection, creativity and innovation. The reconsideration of education policies and instructional practices can often best take place outside a specific country's bureaucratic structures. Individuals can be more imaginative in considering and discussing alternatives when they are not limited by their own country's specific economic, political, historical and cultural structures. Obviously, these contexts must be considered before policies and practices can change. However, at the stage of reflection, there are substantial benefits in being exposed to the broadest range of ideas and alternatives.

Of course international partners must respect the autonomy of national governments. Effective international co-operation will require a change of attitude on the part of both development agencies and individual countries. Developing countries that first do as much as they can by their own means are then better able to make efficient use of external assistance. To the extent that national priorities reflect what the people themselves believe, there is less chance of a discontinuity between the goals of the external agencies, the government and the people.

The goodwill of international agencies is not the issue here. Too often, however, there has been

an assumption that a single plan or approach will be effective in all situations. The nature of true alliances and partnerships is that each country must have the freedom to learn from others, but to adapt these lessons for its own needs. The international agencies need to work *with* countries in the identification of problems and solutions. The international commitment to social mobilization and to a stronger political will in favour of Education for All, as affirmed in the *World Declaration*, will be realized in forms that differ from country to country. Education for All must involve all participants as equals, but the nature of participation will not be the same in all contexts. This international variety should be seen as a strength of the Education for All initiative.

### **Communities, social institutions and individuals**

At the other end of the spectrum are individual communities, organizations and people who commit their efforts to meeting basic learning needs. This important set of participants is a target for much of the mobilization efforts by the communication media discussed above, but once mobilized, it becomes part of the resources to be used to broaden social commitment and to strengthen political will.

Schools are also an important conduit of information to families and communities. In isolated rural areas the local teacher and school manager may be the primary links the community has with the larger society. Because of this key role of the school, nothing is so damaging to the social commitment to basic education as the existence of poor-quality schools. In those countries at present suffering apparent declines in school attendance, the problem is not necessarily reduced demand for education *per se*, but a recognition by pupils and parents that the school in their community is not providing real education. When the schooling or other learning opportunities available in the community reach a standard of quality and effectiveness sufficient to justify the time and effort of pupils, educational participation will again increase

rapidly, and teachers and school managers will again be effective agents for social mobilization. Social support for education is directly related to the quality and relevance of the educational services provided.

Other social institutions that have a mobilization responsibility at the community level are non-governmental organizations, religious institutions, civic bodies and professional organizations. The role of non-governmental organizations was an area of special interest at Jomtien. A range of relationships has existed between governments and non-governmental organizations. Too often, government does little more than ignore or tolerate the activities of non-governmental organizations in education, and when government does become involved with non-governmental organizations the purpose is often to control their actions and to impose compliance with government priorities. Non-governmental organizations can be effective on their own, but their effectiveness can be enhanced when they operate in harmony with government. A goal of the new social mobilization to support Education for All should be to restructure the relationship between governments and non-governmental organizations in order to create a true co-operative partnership.

The experience of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) provides examples of the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations in health and education. By serving as a co-ordinated alternative to direct government activities, BRAC has had great success at involving local communities in the formation and conduct of programmes to reduce infant mortality and to provide education in disadvantaged areas, and especially to women and girls.

Non-governmental organizations often have a greater freedom to experiment and to innovate than is possible for government. Government support of non-governmental organizations allows it to take credit for successes without making it responsible for activities that do not fulfil its objectives. Also, non-governmental organizations can mobilize a range of non-financial resources that are often not available to government administrators. Labour, materials and land that might be

provided only on a fee basis to government is often contributed by individuals, organizations and communities to support non-governmental organization activities.

## Lessons in mobilization

Past experiences in mobilization of social commitment and political will include the Health for All movement, various national literacy campaigns and family planning programmes, the 'green revolution' in agriculture, and the preparation and conduct of support for military efforts. These experiences contain both positive and negative lessons that can be applied to Education for All. The campaign-style approaches have made effective use of social media for heightening public awareness and promoting broad participation. Better targeted approaches have been more effective at delivering services and promoting permanent changes in personal behaviour. Information, combined with the means for change and the motivation to participate, remains the key ingredient of all mobilization activities. The Education for All strategy involves a critical set of messages for governments and individuals; the infrastructure for delivery of these messages may require development or reinforcement.

The United Republic of Tanzania was able to reduce its illiteracy rate from an estimated 70 per cent to 30 per cent during the 1970s. In the same period, the number of children in school increased from 1 to 4 million. These gains were achieved in a resource-poor country through the combined use of radio, increased utilization of school and community facilities, and a revolutionary teacher-training system. Teachers were recruited for brief pre-service training sessions and updated in annual training programmes. The teacher-training programmes utilized the distance-education techniques of correspondence and radio courses to further strengthen teacher preparation. However, the ultimate source of the initial success can be traced directly to the commitment to this effort from the President to the individual teachers and parents. While recent political and economic con-

*Box 2.2 Zimbabwe: political mobilization for basic education in a newly independent nation*

Zimbabwe has a population of 8.6 million (1987 estimate) and a fairly well-developed agricultural, mining and manufacturing economy. At independence in April 1980, the country inherited an education system riddled with enormous problems. Successive colonial administrations established and maintained a racially based dual system of education. While education was free and compulsory for the white community, access to education for the black majority was highly constricted and punctuated with frequent bottlenecks. More than 25 per cent of black children were unable to gain entry into primary schools and 2.5 million adults (50 per cent of the adult population) were either illiterate or semi-literate. School curricula were irrelevant to the socio-economic needs of the country and were designed to produce an administrative and clerical body to meet the needs of the colonial administration. Africans were systematically denied meaningful skills that would set them in competition with the white settler community in the labour market.

Faced with this situation, the new Zimbabwe Government implemented a number of far-reaching measures. A massive programme of reconstructing and building schools was put into play, involving an injection of a large proportion of the national budget into education and the participation of local communities in cash and kind.

Non-governmental organizations filled the remaining gaps with much-needed financial support. Almost overnight new educational facilities mushroomed

throughout the country, catering to primary, secondary and tertiary levels. As a result, primary-school enrolment rose from 0.8 million in 1979 to 2.3 million in 1989, while secondary-school enrolment rose tenfold from 66,215 in 1979 to 695,882 in 1989. In teacher education, a combination of expansion of facilities and employment of distance-education techniques led to a fourfold increase in the output of trained teachers (3,082 in 1979 and 12,029 in 1986).

Equally dramatic changes were effected in the curriculum. The primary-school programmes were made the vehicles for imparting those skills which children need to survive in their socio-economic environment. Health messages, environmental issues and positive attitudes to work were given priority. At the secondary-school level, the introduction of kits for science and technical subjects freed the teaching of these subjects from a dependence on the availability of laboratories. This enabled the system to raise the status of these subjects and democratize their teaching.

In spite of these developments, the formal school system still caters to only 87 per cent of the school-age population. To reach the remaining 13 per cent and the 2.5 million illiterate and semi-literate adults, Zimbabwe has elaborated a comprehensive non-formal education strategy involving study groups, afternoon/evening classes, and adult literacy and mass education programmes organized around functional skills and income-generating projects.

ditions have not sustained this success, the initial achievements still justify this mobilization effort as a model worthy of study.

In Colombia in the 1980s, mobilization to immunize children indicates the importance of broad commitment and participation. The whole country was involved in a massive information and mobilization campaign, supported by a well-planned delivery of immunization services, that led to a doubling of immunization levels in only a few months. Parish priests included information and support for the effort as part of their homilies; teachers helped construct a census of children; and television and community organizations were used to ensure that all parents were informed of

where and when immunization would be available.

Mozambique had an illiteracy rate of 93 per cent at the time of independence, and the new national government had limited financial resources and trained manpower with which to meet the educational demands of the people. By mobilizing at community level, the government was able to assist and stimulate the development of an education system based on individuals' skills and needs rather than on bureaucracies and formal certification. The illiteracy rate was reduced to 21 per cent by 1980. This was possible within a multicultural society only by mobilizing and using the experience, knowledge and planning skills of the people.

The immunization campaign in Turkey indicates how mobilization can greatly increase the efficiency of a social investment programme. In 1985, 4 million children were immunized at an estimated cost of \$28 million. However, the actual cost to the government was only \$3.5 million (of which \$2 million were provided from international support). The remaining \$24.5 million represented the value of the donated time of approximately 200,000 teachers, 50,000 *imams*, 48 governors, the central government personnel, plus \$8 million of donated radio and television time. By using the full range of available societal resources rather than depending solely on government expenditure, the country was able to expand its delivery of immunization services more than sevenfold. Educational mobilization, of course, does demand a more continuous effort than most immunization campaigns have required; however, much can be learned from the experiences of these other programmes of social mobilization.

In Thailand, non-governmental organizations provided the initial steps towards family planning education through the school system. Over 300,000 teachers were provided with training and instructional materials related to population, health and family responsibilities. This village-based system for information delivery was eventually integrated into the national population programme. It was the non-governmental organizations, however, which provided the stimulus, experimentation and innovation necessary to overcome the initial social and political barriers to such an educational effort.

In Bangladesh, the BRAC programme mentioned earlier introduced a major innovation by requiring community participation in the construction of 'school sheds'. Parents also played a role in determining school hours so as to reduce the number of children who would be kept out of school because it conflicted with their home du-

ties. A supervisory committee for each school was established, consisting of parents, community leaders, teachers and BRAC representatives. The BRAC schools have achieved a high rate of success. Attendance is estimated at 95 per cent, attrition at only 2 per cent, and 90 per cent of the pupils qualify for transition to regular schools at the end of the four-year BRAC school cycle. The 30:1 pupil/teacher ratio, the monthly training days and annual refresher courses for teachers, the use of modular instructional materials and detailed teacher notes, and a clear and relevant curriculum, are all important factors in this success. The single most important factor, however, is the commitment of the local people to 'their' school.

Many other examples of successful mobilization exist, of course. The use of television to encourage breast-feeding in Brazil, the supplemental school-feeding programmes used in Jamaica and other countries, and the use of social marketing techniques to involve teachers on a voluntary and fee-paying basis in mathematics education improvement in Honduras, are some that were mentioned at the Conference. The lessons for Education for All are many. Among the most important are that it is necessary to have a clear message and a specified goal, to utilize all communication media, to build change based upon the experience and understanding of the people, and to involve all sectors of society, both public and private. The ultimate power for change, however, rests in the minds of people – the foundation upon which any Education for All mobilization strategy must be based.

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### 3. The status and roles of teachers

*The teacher is the primary source of instruction in most societies and has been recognized as such by most curricula and forms of classroom organization.*

*Meeting Basic Learning Needs, 1990, p. 49*

The central role of teachers in the delivery of learning opportunities implies that they must be key actors in the Education For All initiative. For many countries, greater equity and enhanced learning achievement will require an increase in the number and professional capacities of teachers, and the upgrading of their performance through effective pre-service and in-service training and through improved classroom and school management.

A major purpose of this discussion is to stress that the conditions of teachers and the effectiveness of teaching are closely related to one another. It has been asserted that *quality* Education for All cannot be realized without proper emphasis on the need for well-trained teachers who are motivated by appropriate conditions of service and social status

For the future of human society it is crucial to break the continuing cycle of neglect and ignorance, and to educate future generations of adults to become more active and responsible citizens, competent workers and effective individuals. Within the broad network of human resource development, the school remains the foundation for providing an education that will allow individuals to meet life's challenges for their own well-being and that of society. Within the school, the teacher bears

the major responsibility for assuring that the proper type and quality of education are provided.

Innovation and quality in education require growth, improvement and mobilization of all human resources. The knowledge, efficiency and initiative of teachers are increasingly scarce resources at a time when the expectations and tasks of education are increasingly complex. Successful Education for All programmes will involve the participation not only of *more* learners but also of an *increased proportion* of learners who suffer from economic, social, physical and even mental disadvantages. It would be a serious error to believe that quality education for such a heterogeneous population can be achieved without a concomitant improvement in the teaching force. A basic requirement for Education for All, besides quality, is to recognize the need for teachers to be highly qualified and well-trained intellectual workers deserving the fair living conditions, social rights and academic freedoms listed in the Joint International Labour Organisation (ILO)/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966).

#### **The status and role of teachers in Education for All**

Four major considerations should guide any discussion of the status of teachers and how it influences the role they can play in achieving the goal of Education for All.

*First, there is general agreement concerning the deterioration so evident in many countries in the conditions of*

This chapter is based on material presented or available at the round table entitled 'The Teacher: The Decisive Actor in Providing Education for All' (T17). The round table was organized by the International Federation of Free Teachers' Unions (IFFTU), the World Federation of Teachers' Unions (FISE), the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) and the World Confederation of Teachers (WCT). It was chaired by Carlyle Dunkley, Minister of Education, Jamaica, and the presenters were:

Daniel Montoux (Moderator)  
Permanent Representative to UNESCO, World Federation of Teachers' Unions.  
Albani Kumar Boral  
Vice-President, World Federation of Teachers' Unions.

Fred Van Leuwen  
Secretary-General, International Federation of Free Teachers' Unions.  
Louis Van Beneden  
President, World Confederation of Teachers.

Materials used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included:

*Quality Education for All: A Challenge for Every Teacher*, by WCOTP, WCT, FISE and IFFTU.  
*The Teacher: Decisive Actor for Quality Education for All*, by WCOTP, WCT, FISE and IFFTU.  
*Active Learning and Professional Support: Changing Primary Schools Through Support for the Teachers*, by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesia.

*teaching over the last decade*. Even stagnation of conditions reduces effectiveness, but deterioration to the extent seen in the least-developed countries severely limits the ability of teachers to fulfil their responsibilities. A special irony exists in that so little is being provided for them in terms of pay and pensions, training or instructional support.

This decline in working conditions has been paralleled by a decline in the respect accorded to teachers. The successful school is one based on interaction between pupils and teachers; to be effective, that interaction must be based on reciprocal respect. The ability of teachers' unions to protect the interests of their members has been weakened by deteriorating economic conditions and harassment by some government authorities. The need to provide education in poor countries and poor neighbourhoods simply has not received the attention it deserves.

*Second, the requirements for an educated population in the twenty-first century place a high priority on schooling at the very time when budget allocations to schools are being allowed to deteriorate*. Each society chooses among educational investment options and the outcome of the present choices will have repercussions well into the next century. Teachers alone do not determine educational performance, but alongside media, communities and families, the role

played by teachers is a central one for which no effective substitute exists. To play this role, teachers must receive improved training and status; to accomplish this, the teaching profession must be renewed and reinvigorated.

*Third, the task of Education for All cannot be achieved if the financial, educational and political prerequisites of the task are disregarded*. The last two decades have seen a number of 'false solutions' to the problem of human resource development. One example is the view that education has received excessive resources. The question is whether the effectiveness of education can be maintained if the number, prerequisite qualifications, training and salaries of teachers are cut. Will this less expensive education really be efficient, or will the immediate financial savings soon be offset by wasted lives, reduced productivity and increased social dependence?

Another false solution is the assumption that reducing teacher freedoms and union rights will somehow reduce the cost of education. The negative effect on the quality of teaching is likely to be far greater than any positive impact on budgets. The lowered morale and frustration of teachers will increase the attrition of the best, reduce the motivation of those who remain and curtail the education system's ability to recruit qualified applicants for new positions. Pupils and the local

community will be the ones who 'pay' for these budget savings in the form of lower learning achievement and reduced social productivity.

It has become popular to suggest quick and incomplete pre-service training as a way to accelerate the production of new teachers. For example, the recent need to increase the aggregate number of teachers in India (precipitated by a policy requiring one teacher per classroom) resulted in a massive recruitment effort involving sacrifices in prerequisite qualifications and training experience. Those who make decisions to engage in such rapid increases in the teaching cadre should consider the implications for instructional effectiveness. Uneducated and poorly trained teachers cannot be expected to satisfy the social demand for education. Rather, they discourage it at the very time governments are hoping to mobilize greater family and community involvement in education. While the goal of certain teachers' organizations to have initial teacher training leading to a post-secondary certificate is unrealistic for many countries, it remains valid as a long-term goal and as an indicator that teaching is a profession requiring a high level of training. When untrained teachers must be employed to fill vacancies, a professional development and upgrading programme should be instituted to extend their subject knowledge and improve their pedagogical competence.

Of special concern to teachers and their representatives are proposals suggesting that individual teacher quality can be *replaced* by the application of specially designed learning materials and instructional technology. Such items are seen by teachers as complements, not substitutes, for their professional abilities. Unqualified teachers can benefit from these instructional aids, but their provision should not replace professional development activities.<sup>1</sup>

Yet another 'false solution', that of reducing instructional content to fit the unqualified teacher's competence, is a particularly dangerous alternative. The curricula should be based on societal needs and appropriate pedagogical expectations of teachers and pupils. To lower the anticipated outcomes of schooling for those schools with unqualified teachers would promote further waste of

financial and human resources, and widen the inequities that already exist in society. Equity in school effectiveness requires compensatory resources for the disadvantaged school, not lowered expectations.

*Fourth, a new role for teachers needs to be defined.* Teachers are not simply a means of transmitting information; neither should they be expected to perform only as classroom supervisors of rote-learning activities. Teachers must be highly qualified professionals. Initial training must be continually reinforced, and the material conditions and morale of teachers must be enhanced to encourage future generations to join the profession. At a time when higher skills are being required of farmers and workers of all types, teachers themselves must be provided with the improved abilities necessary to develop such skills in their pupils.

The new role of the teacher will require that greater attention be paid to the full range of intellectual, ethical and technical needs of society. Fulfilment of that role will require that teachers and the teaching profession receive greater respect. Situations in which salaries are inadequate, delayed and often not paid at all, in which teaching is not seen as an activity meriting esteem and in which the representatives of teachers are attacked by government, indicate that this respect does not exist.

The basis of engendering the proper conditions and respect for teachers already exists. The Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers reported in 1988:

*We believe it to be true that the status of teachers and the status of education are so intertwined that whatever produces changes in the one will normally produce changes in the same direction in the other.*

. . .

*In these conditions, teachers must more than ever see themselves as educators since they cannot be satisfied merely with delivering a given body of knowledge; they must continue learning to learn, to teach pupils to situate*

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1. See also Monograph II, Chapter 5.

### *Box 3.1 New roles for teachers*

As a means of improving quality in primary schools, the Ministry of Education of Indonesia, in co-operation with the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom, the British Council and the University of London Institute of Education, developed the Cianjur Project, also known as Active Learning and Professional Support (ALPS). This project encompasses curriculum revision and development; strategically located practice centres; new classroom practices; a revised interpretation of supervision involving dedicated co-operation of the teacher, head-teacher and supervisor; an emphasis on active learning and greater communication of ideas among teachers. ALPS, begun in the town of Cianjur in 1980, was widely disseminated throughout Indonesia in the 1980s in both public and private schools. It is expected to expand gradually so that 70 per cent of Indonesian primary-school children will be participating in an improved activity-based education programme by the mid-1990s.

Primary schools participating in ALPS must provide children with appropriate activities to assist their learning. New attention has been given to selecting activities and tasks which require children to think carefully, to use the available classroom resources and to learn to solve problems. Children are being encouraged to be active participants in the learning process.

Teachers play a central innovative role in the ALPS programme. They assist learning by providing opportunities for problem solving based on real observation. Teachers are encouraged to be imaginative in providing the children with applicable problem-solving opportunities rather than relying on the once pervasive rote-memorization classroom method.

Teachers are also encouraged to use the environment as a resource for learning. Visual stimulation for the children is promoted through the use of wall decorations and table displays using articles from the local

environment such as plants, flowers, stones and other found objects. Visits to ponds and rivers to study ecology and visits to historical sites to learn about the past, as well as exposure to community activities, are encouraged.

Teachers are taught to work co-operatively with the community in providing relevant activity-based educational experiences for the children. As an extension of the concept of using the environment as an educational resource, teachers are encouraged to invite community leaders, local shopkeepers, craftsmen, etc. to visit the classroom, and share their experiences and expertise with the children.

Training seminars and workshops are being provided for teachers, head-teachers and supervisors to promote new ideas and to give direct experience in planning and conducting lessons based on the active learning concept.

To promote the desired sharing of ideas among teachers, five to eight schools are grouped together forming a 'club' which then meets on a regular basis. These clubs create new teaching programmes, discuss classroom problems, present innovative ideas for teaching and exchange teaching experiences.

Help and guidance for teachers are provided through Teachers' Centres, where teachers, head-teachers and supervisors hold meetings and participate in courses. Teachers' ideas and work are displayed and discussed, and materials are made available for teacher use in developing learning aids.

The ALPS programme also provides the infrastructure to give help and guidance to local authorities in planning for Indonesian primary schools through observation, monitoring and analysis of the project. Herein lies the basis for further development and refinement of the Indonesian primary-school system, based upon a strengthened innovative role for teachers within a supportive community context.

*themselves globally in the reality of their countries and the world.*

...

*If education does not command the respect and support of the entire community, teachers will not command that respect and support.*

...

*The converse is also evident; as teachers are regarded so*

*are education and the schools. Respect for teachers engenders respect for the function they perform.*

...

*... the Joint Recommendation ... concerns not only the status of teachers; it concerns the status and performance of education. It defines goals, progress toward which will yield benefits in the status of teachers as a profession. But its purposes are not corporative; they are to yield benefits to*

*the society through setting in motion a cycle whose result is to be measured in the improved performance of the educational system.*

Joint ILO/UNESCO Recommendation . . . ,  
1988, pp. 7–8

In essence, what the Recommendation requires is a policy which sets out relevant and sufficient criteria, and processes which assume their equitable application, in fact and in appearance.

### **The challenge to teachers**

It should be recognized that the teaching profession already has extensive practical experience with broadening access and improving quality in basic education. The propagation of national literacy programmes, the restructuring of primary education and the need to recruit large numbers of new teachers are all activities in which teachers' organizations have played leading roles. No matter what is done in terms of assigning policy priorities, mobilizing resources or streamlining administrative structures, it will still be the individual teachers who are left to face the enormous task of achieving quality education for all. Removing ignorance and eradicating illiteracy will be primarily the responsibility of teachers, many of whom have not been provided with the training or working conditions conducive to fulfilling this responsibility.

In too many classrooms, teachers must contend with poor facilities and scarce materials and equipment; receive salaries inadequate to support their families; and face large numbers of pupils of different ages, even in the same grade. Such is the convergence of disadvantage in the schools that the least-qualified teachers working in the poorest conditions face the children with the most profound educational disadvantages.

Often pupils are inadequately fed; health problems abound; parents commonly have little if any educational experiences of their own and frequently are illiterate; and families expect their children to help with household chores and even earn wages. The teachers, who have little status because of their insufficient training and their modest

salaries, can do little to inspire pupils in such an environment.

Improved facilities, more appropriate materials and enhanced motivation of parents and communities are certainly needed. But until due attention is accorded to the working conditions of teachers, other changes will have little effect on the quality of education.

Educational quality is especially compromised when bulk recruitment of teachers occurs with the sudden expansion of schooling. Efforts of this type in some countries have led to a substantial increase in the number of less-qualified teachers employed, frequently at salaries of as little as \$20 per month. The goal of bringing education to areas not reached before is a noble one, but does the provision of an inexperienced, untrained and ill-paid teacher satisfy this goal? Expansion of teacher training should precede the expansion of schooling; where it does not, a specific programme of instructional support for the inadequately prepared teachers needs to be instituted until the professional quality of teachers reaches an acceptable level.

The tension between quantitative expansion and quality is a real one. If a country cannot afford to train teachers or to pay them appropriately if they are trained, expanding the school system does not represent progress towards Education for All. It is the learning needs of the people that must be met. If not, then this illusory expansion of 'education' is both a cruel and wasteful means of defrauding children, parents, taxpayers and all of society. The claim that such expansion is necessary to meet social demand assumes that pupils and their parents are not able to recognize this fraud. The evidence of the last decade of increasing absenteeism and attrition in poor-quality schools suggests otherwise. Poor-quality education, without hope of improvement, can be as much a destabilizing social force as the total absence of schools. What is needed is the assurance that education, when it is provided, will be of a quality sufficient to enhance the lives of the learners.

Given the above, a focus on teacher quality – its production, maintenance and enhancement – must be part of any strategy for Education for All. It must be accepted that the teacher is the key actor

**Box 3.2** *Quality Education for All: a challenge for every teacher*

Any project which does not give full consideration to the upgrading of teacher status is bound to fail. Of course this [implies] that teachers be given decent working and salary conditions. But there is far more to it than that.

There is an urgent need to rehabilitate the teaching profession and to reinstate educators as *professionals* at all levels in the school system:

- by restoring the social prestige and recognition attached to the profession;
- by offering individuals attracted to the teaching profession a level of training allowing them to work in an independent manner, assess their own performance (self-evaluation), and attend to their further training and reappraisal of their own development;
- by recognizing the right of teachers freely to form associations or trade unions and to define within that context a code of ethics and practice for the profession; and
- by recognizing the right of teachers and their associations to be consulted and to participate in the framing of education policies, particularly regarding the preparation, implementation and evaluation of innovation.

Another prerequisite is that intergovernmental organizations, whose role in the area of education planning is becoming increasingly important, also recognize the paramount and necessary role of organizations of the teaching profession as full partners. Many clashes could be avoided if institutions such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to consult with and listen to representatives of the teaching profession. These groups are also capable of making suggestions, even where they involve certain sacrifices, provided they are recognized as full-time and full-fledged negotiating partners.

As regards the training of education personnel, deep distrust exists of the proposals according to which education could make do with teachers receiving exclusively in-service or on-the-job training. The fact that the current forms of initial teacher training are not adequate is no reason to deny the contribution of educational science and to fall back exclusively on in-service training. It would be far more worthwhile to reassess the basics of initial training and the relevance of current methods and objectives to the actual needs of the school system.

Teacher-training institutions should be brought closer to the field. The interaction between theory and practice should be implemented through practical work ranging from information visits to live teaching situations.

Initial and ongoing training, far from being mutually exclusive, should dovetail harmoniously within a single and consistent training programme.

Most importantly, training institutions should be able to offer to future teachers a genuine teaching/learning model where they can find, right from the start:

- a chance to work as a team;
- a chance to take on responsibilities;
- opportunities for self-assessment;
- an involvement in institutional management; and
- a hands-on experience of teaching media and educational technology.

With this type of background, teachers would be in a position to play their full role as performers in the education system.

From an address presented to the Plenary Commission of the World Conference on Education for All on behalf of the four organizations of the teaching profession (WCO'P, WCT, FISE and IFFTU)

in education and that if he or she does not have proper status and support, there is little hope that quality Education for All will be realized.

### **Other dimensions of the role of teachers**

Discussion of the status of teachers and their educational role needs to be expanded to incorporate additional dimensions. For example, there needs

to be a greater emphasis on the ethical dimension of the teaching profession. Teachers might be expected, it has been suggested, to take an oath comparable to that used in other professions. Such an oath might have the effect of establishing or increasing the dignity of the teaching profession.

It should also be recognized that self-respect must precede the respect of others. But how can self-respect be established when teachers must beg

### *Box 3.3 Pupil learning and teacher qualifications*

It is a widely held view that the teacher constitutes the cornerstone of teaching quality. Beyond this obvious fact, the important issue in education policy is how the general and professional training of teachers should be defined, given that a teacher's pedagogical effectiveness does not depend only on training but also on personal qualities (motivation, energy and charisma).

Considering, first, the level of general training a teacher should have before entering professional training, the decision must be based on facts that provide insight into the trade-off between the effect of this training on pupils' learning and the impact of the training on teachers' average salary level. Factual information on these important issues is scarce in the African context but more readily available in other parts of the world. A study conducted in Togo sheds useful light on the matter from an African perspective, and its results agree with those of studies conducted elsewhere.

The average impact of the general training of the teacher on the amount learned by pupils tends to rise, but the differences are not considerable. In addition, there is a threshold beyond which the duration of the teacher's general academic training has no effect on the pupils' learning.

With respect to the initial professional training of primary-school teachers, training at teachers' colleges, which is the most usual kind, is not necessarily an effective approach. The example of Togo, which is not an isolated one, shows that there is no difference in pedagogical proficiency between teachers of comparable length of academic training based on whether or not they graduated from teachers' colleges organized as they are at present in Togo.

These findings on the impact of teacher training on pupil learning must be completed by cost data. The use of teacher-training graduates was found on average to be appreciably more costly than that of academic graduates, both in terms of actual training and salary compensation while employed. In that connection, the observations made on a sample of French-speaking Sahel countries show that the difference in compensation between these two categories of teacher is of the order of 30 per cent (with not inconsiderable differences between countries).

Adapted from  
*Toward a Plan of Action for the Sahel Countries,*  
WCEFA

for the salaries they have already earned? Many governments show a lack of respect for teachers by staff reduction measures that actually encourage the best teachers to leave government service. As these individuals leave, either they are not replaced or they are replaced by new teachers with less training, skills and experience. Reductions in the number of teachers, especially among the best-qualified teachers, may result in lower budgets accompanied by a loss of efficiency. The use of credentials as a prerequisite for teaching was designed, in part, to reduce the problems of nepotism, tribalism and corruption that have hurt the teaching profession in the past. Objective criteria for the selection of teachers are an absolute necessity.

Some people question the level of formal academic credentials that should be required to teach (see Box 3.3). Both in terms of available human resources and fiscal capacity of governments, the limits are obvious for many developing countries.

The present teacher certification model derives from the industrialized countries and does not necessarily fit the needs or the realities of the developing world. An unresolved issue, of course, is the appropriate *content* for pre-service teacher training and in-service courses. Ultimately, content and the teacher trainees' mastery of it will determine the skills with which the next generation of teachers will meet the demands of the classroom.

In addition, teachers should do more than transmit knowledge. They should facilitate new ways of thinking about such topics as human rights, international understanding and the environment. The teacher should be a living example for pupils and the community. However, it will be easier for teachers to do this when they have appropriate working conditions. Teachers who are expected to work at or beyond the limits of their knowledge and training will not be able to serve this role model.

Job satisfaction requires more than a decent salary. Greater recognition of teachers and of excellence in teaching is one means frequently suggested for raising the perceived status of teachers. Because recruitment of better-quality teachers is important, better means for attracting good candidates and measuring teacher aptitudes are required. The lack of literature on teaching as a profession and the omission of teaching as a career option presented at many school 'career days' can be remedied.

A strong criticism sometimes directed at teachers' organizations is that they are excessively focused on salaries and conditions of service. The profession needs to promote public confidence by exerting better self-discipline of its own members. When teachers' organizations appear to protect members at the expense of pupils or the interests of the school, this weakens the public support for teachers. Debating issues in the press before meeting with education authorities and using rotating strikes and 'sick-outs' can be cited as counter-productive actions.

Such comments often elicit sharp replies. The question may be posed as to the relative importance of a few bad teachers – and within such a large professional group that is often poorly treated, it would be surprising if there were no examples of poor behaviour. But what of the millions of teachers whose dedication has overcome countless obstacles to deliver instruction to children and adults? Why are greater recognition and respect not given to their accomplishments? As the job opportunities improve for teachers outside their present profession, there will be greater loss of the better teaching personnel and greater difficulty in recruiting qualified replacements if teachers' salaries and working conditions do not improve. Finally, teacher organizations can improve their own public relations by informing more people of the good things they and their members do.

If the economic context is limiting educational effectiveness and the attractiveness of the teaching

profession, what policies can hope to work? There is a need to know whether there is a problem of countries' ability or willingness to pay for improvements in education, including the conditions and status of teachers. As structural adjustment policies have reduced national budgetary autonomy, teachers have been one of the first groups to be threatened. Because teachers are numerous and often politically unorganized, they have frequently been the ones to lose benefits or even their jobs as governments struggle to balance expenditure with receipts.

The teaching profession is often the major stepping-stone for the educated poor into the modern employment sector. Thus the teaching profession must be viewed in terms of its role as an instrument for social mobility for marginalized population groups. For this reason, along with the many others stated here, the profession deserves special attention and protection.

It is necessary to enlist many different forces to provide Education for All. While it is possible to specify ideal standards and qualifications for teachers, the immediate task for planners and policy-makers is to define teaching and other educational resources in terms of present availability and need. Teachers are the key actors in Education for All, but not the only ones. They can succeed in their critical task only if their partners – administrators, communities, parents, non-governmental organizations, governments and international assistance agencies – fulfil their responsibilities to education and to teachers themselves.

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## 4. Participation of non-governmental organizations, communities, parents and learners

The Conference made an important innovative contribution when it broadened the definition of resources for education to include a variety of private and voluntary institutions, local communities, and the parents and learners themselves. The Conference placed special emphasis on the unique and critical contributions they can and often do make.

During the past decade there has been a growing recognition of the contributions made by non-governmental organizations in both developed and developing countries. These private and independent organizations vary in size and in the nature of their activities. The results of their efforts in providing basic education and in meeting other basic human needs include both dramatic successes and some disappointments. An undeniable point, however, is that no discussion of local, national or international strategies for developing basic education can now be considered complete without attention to the current and potential role of the non-governmental organizations.

Since the 1970s, there has been a dramatic growth of national non-governmental organizations in the developing world. These range from small centres serving a single village to large non-governmental organizations serving entire countries. Some have budgets that far exceed many official literacy departments; BRAC in Bangladesh and Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka are examples. These newer service non-governmental organizations have established admirable records of being able to reach people in direct and effective ways.

Some of the interest in non-governmental organizations that is being shown by the large fund-

ing agencies is frankly economic. Non-governmental organizations have small administrative staffs and often pay salaries considerably below government rates. This has made them a financially attractive alternative to more costly bureaucratic channels. However, while many non-governmental organizations are proud of their ability to operate effectively with limited funds, they are increasingly sensitive to this being the main reason for agencies or governments wishing to work with them. They do not see their role in development as simple delivery systems or cheap sources of labour for other agencies, nor are they interested in being a means by which the state begins to abandon its own social responsibilities.

Nevertheless, it is a common – but outdated – view that non-governmental organizations are instruments by which governments and United Nations specialized agencies can deliver their information strategies or even their service programmes. Very few non-governmental organizations are willing to play the totally passive role of merely disseminating information or providing services for other institutions. The most successful government and non-governmental organization partnerships have been those that recognize and respect the needs, constituencies and special advantages of both partners.

Non-governmental organizations have their own agendas. In Latin America, for example, they often promote a new vision of education and social development, and they view themselves as the inventors of alternative structures of society. In some countries they claim to represent broader social

support than the state institutions responsible for literacy or adult education. Non-governmental organizations in many societies have designed creative and innovative social programmes, and have often sought support for services to meet the educational needs of their constituencies.

Non-governmental organizations are frequently linked to the larger social movements of their countries: for human rights, democracy, women's liberation, peace, indigenous peoples' struggles for land, etc. These links provide both motivation and capacity to mobilize, and help explain why the agendas of non-governmental organizations have been so strongly pursued.

The important role of non-governmental organizations, communities, parents and learners is now more evident because of the Conference's broad redefinition of basic education, which incorporates child development activities that have too often have been ignored or underemphasized. Basic education must be planned in terms of the concurrent conditions that determine the child's learning capacity and effectiveness. Health, nutrition, and physical and intellectual stimulation condition the child's capacity to benefit from learning opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

Once children are in school, these same conditioning factors continue to exert strong influences on pupil participation and achievement. Primary schooling cannot meet basic learning needs if children are allowed to remain undernourished and in poor health, and left to stagnate in environments that discourage curiosity and inquiry. If basic education programmes are to be successful, parents and communities must be actively involved. A school's social, cultural and economic environment determines the capacity of the pupils, their parents and the community to provide and participate in learning experiences sufficient to meet the basic learning needs of the pupils.

The adults of the community must appreciate the value of education for themselves and their children. They must be convinced of their own ability to affect their children's intellectual and social development. Community improvement programmes need to inform people about child development concerns and how to deal with them. The

education of parents and other caretakers of children will have an immediate and a long-term effect on the educational environment of the community.

The learners themselves are an educational resource that must be respected and effectively utilized. It should not be assumed that all learners feel the need for education. The benefits of learning and of encouraging the conditions for learning must be made explicit, and participants and supporters need to be convinced that the benefits will exceed the costs. Women and girls, especially, may be hindered from full participation in educational programmes if a clear understanding of the amount and certainty of the benefits is not established. Learners are better motivated and learn more when they participate actively in the design and conduct of the educational process. Learners are more than 'inputs' or 'beneficiaries'; they deserve a full role as participants in the effort to meet basic learning needs.

Family resources include time and the financial, intellectual and emotional support of family members. Incentives and assistance should be provided to families so that they will view education as a productive activity for the family group and not just for an individual member. All family members deserve the opportunity to benefit from education and all share the responsibility to support the education of their relatives and their neighbours.

People in the community, even those without young children, must be made aware of the social benefits of education and the cost of its neglect. The community must learn to see education as a *right* that is also an *investment* in the future, not a luxury that only advantaged families can enjoy. Social mobilization depends on a sound understanding of the educational process, its costs and its benefits.

The provision of poor-quality schooling has the effect of undermining community support for education. In the end, the community itself must be a major participant in meeting the basic learning needs of its members. This participation should include a role in planning, decision-making and

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1. See Monograph II, Chapter 3.

This chapter is based on material presented or available at the round tables entitled 'The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Literacy' (T20) and 'Participatory, Community-Based Innovations in Early Childhood Care and Primary Education' (T16). The first round table was organized by the Conference Secretariat and the International Task Force on Literacy (ITFL).

It was chaired by:  
Giacomo I. Biaggini, Ambassador of Italy to Thailand.

The presenters were:  
Alfonso Lizarzaburu (Moderator)  
Consultant, International Council for Adult Education.  
Lalita Ramdas  
Founder of Ankur and Co-ordinator, International Task Force on Literacy for South Asia, India.

Paul Wangoola  
Secretary-General, African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE), Kenya.

Jeannine Thomas-Fontaine  
Co-President, Collective Consultation on Literacy for UNESCO.

The second round table was organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) with the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development.

It was chaired by:  
Fay Chung, Minister of Education, Zimbabwe.

The presenters were:  
Zainal Ghani (Moderator)  
Co-ordinator, Unit for Research in Basic Education, Universiti Sains, Malaysia.

Katherine Namuddu  
Principal Researcher, MINDSACROSS Project, Uganda.

Robert G. Myers  
Co-ordinator, Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, United States.

Nittaya Kotchabhakdi  
Director, Child Development Unit, Ramathibodi Hospital, Thailand.

Materials used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included:

*Approaches that Work in Rural Development: Emerging Trends, Participatory Methods, and Local Initiatives*, John Burbridge (ed.).

*Participatory, Community-based Innovation in Early Childhood Development and Primary Education*, by Nittaya Kotchabhakdi and Robert G. Myers.

*Early Child Development: Summary Report*, by Cassie Landers.  
*The Use of Participatory, School-Based, and Community-Supported Innovations in Formal Basic Education*, by Zainal Ghani.

*Gender Issues and Literacy – An Analysis*, by Lalita Ramdas.

evaluation, as well as in providing resources for child development and school activities conducted by others. The quality and sustainability of Education for All will depend considerably on the successful mobilization of the community and the effective utilization of its resources.

The discussion that follows is based on the analysis of selected, innovative, cross-national experiences in developing *participatory approaches* to early childhood, primary-school and literacy interventions. The discussion of child development from birth to initial schooling focuses on a needed shift from formal, institution-based services to family, theme-based services. The latter concentrate on the important linkages between parents (and other

caregivers) and the nutrition, health and education of the child.

At the primary-school level, participation is seen more as the involvement of parents and the community in the management and control of the school. The discussion emphasizes the effects of early child care and parent/community participation upon such indicators of educational effectiveness as access to schooling, wastage (repetition and drop-out) and learning achievement.

Finally, successful literacy programmes may be the most broadly participative of all learning activities. The special political context of literacy training and the emerging role of the non-governmental organizations will be emphasized.

## Participation in early childhood care

Three conditions must be met before early childhood care can become an effective part of the Education for All initiative. First, investments in early childhood care and development must be understood to be feasible, affordable and cost-effective. Basic learning needs must be defined to include those that occur between birth and the beginning of schooling. Second, a role for parents and the community in early childhood care is necessary for establishing and sustaining such programmes, and for making them successful. Third, the artificial distinction between the early childhood learning activities and schooling should be removed. Pre-school and school activities should be seen to constitute a single, continuing process of development.

Learning begins at birth. It is well-established scientifically that the early years, from birth to 6 years of age, are critical in the formation of intelligence, personality and social behaviour. Before reaching school age, a child learns a great deal about the surrounding world, about what is needed to survive, cope and create, and about how to learn. During this period, children develop their ability to move, co-ordinate their movements, communicate, generalize, differentiate, make associations, interpret symbols, manage the sounds and basic principles of a language, and act according to certain social norms and moral principles. Because learning (or failure to learn) in the early years will serve (or handicap) a child throughout life, any programme that takes seriously the goal of meeting basic learning needs must include support for this most basic learning of all.

During a child's early years, innate abilities can be recognized and improved with use, fostering learning and giving the child a sound start towards a productive life. Alternatively, the child's abilities can be ignored and left to deteriorate, thus bypassing learning opportunities, creating barriers to further learning, pointing the child towards an unproductive and dependent existence, and violating the child's right to develop and learn to the fullest extent his or her abilities allow. The effects of early neglect are cumulative; recovering from missed

opportunities may be possible in later years, but at an additional and sometimes prohibitive cost.

A child's basic learning during the early years occurs as part of an integral process of early childhood development. Because needs for food, affection and knowledge cannot be separated, and because physical development affects intellectual and social development (and vice versa), programmes to foster early learning must include attention to nutrition and health together with attention to intellectual, social and emotional development. If such development is not attended to in the earliest years, inequities owing to differences in social class or ethnic origin will be introduced well before schooling begins. If a goal of society, and hence of education, is to improve the quality of life by fostering peaceful and tolerant relationships and social participation, then a high priority must be given to the social aspects of learning during the earliest years.

Learning occurs in interaction with the people, objects and physical conditions that make up the learning environment. Because children develop in significantly different cultural, social, economic, political and physical environments, the goals of learning and the particular ways of achieving them will differ from place to place. A decentralized approach to meeting learning needs is therefore called for, keeping in mind that there are certain basic needs that are common to all.

Basic learning needs can be met, between birth and 6 years of age, through programmes that assist parents and other caregivers to do a better job of helping children to learn. Caregivers who support the child in the early months and years have the first responsibility for helping a child to learn. They can do so by providing the food and health care necessary for learning; by responding to, encouraging and stimulating the child; by serving as examples to be imitated; and by arranging the environment in stimulating ways. They can help a child to learn by providing consistency and predictability as well as diversity. They can offer the love and emotional support a child must have to develop the self-confidence needed for exploration and experimentation. They can set limits and protect the child.

*Box 4.1 Integrated Child Development Services in India*

Beginning in 1975 with thirty-three experimental projects, the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) expanded to almost 2,000 projects in 1989, reaching 11.2 million children under 6 years of age. The overall goals of the programme are: to provide a comprehensive range of basic services to children, to expectant and nursing mothers, and to other women aged 15–45; to create a mechanism at the village level through which the services can be delivered; and to give priority to India's low-income groups, including the under-privileged tribes and scheduled castes. The specific objectives of the ICDS programme are to: lay the foundations for the psychological, physical and social development of the child; improve the nutritional and health status of children, birth to age 6; reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school drop-out; enhance the capability of mothers to look after the needs of the child; and achieve effective co-ordination among agencies and departments involved in child development.

The integrated package of ICDS services works through a network of *Anganwadi* (literally, courtyard) centres, each run by an *Anganwadi* worker (AW) and helper, usually selected from the local village. The AW undergoes a three-month training programme in one of over 300 training centres run by voluntary and government agencies.

Responsibilities of the AW include: non-formal pre-school education, supplementary feeding, health and nutrition education, parenting education through home visiting, community support and participation, and primary maternal and child health care referrals. Support is provided to the AW by a supervisor (one per twenty AWs) and a child development programme officer (one per five supervisors) who is directly responsi-

ble for the implementation and management of each ICDS project.

The ICDS programme uses existing services of diverse government departments and of voluntary agencies. Overall administration lies with the Department of Women and Child Development within the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The annual unit cost per child per year is estimated at 151 rupees.

Although the programme often operates at a minimum level of quality, it has nevertheless had important effects on the under-6 population. For example, a review of nearly thirty studies of the nutritional impact reveals nearly unanimous results documenting a positive outcome. A 1984–86 comparative study done in a number of locations showed ICDS/non-ICDS infant mortality rates of 67 *v.* 86 in rural areas and 80 *v.* 87 in urban areas. In a comparative study of effects on schooling, one researcher found that those with ICDS backgrounds had a higher primary-school enrolment rate, were more regular in primary-school attendance, had better academic performance and scored significantly higher on a psychological test (Raven Colour Matrices) than did non-ICDS children. Furthermore, the difference in enrolment rates was primarily accounted for by differences among girls. In another study, it was found that primary-school drop-out rates were significantly lower for ICDS *v.* non-ICDS children from lower- and middle-caste groups (19 *v.* 35 per cent for lower castes and 5 *v.* 25 per cent for middle castes).

ICDS, the largest programme of its kind, illustrates the power of political commitment to achieve significant rates of coverage in integrated programmes of attention to children, from birth to 6 years of age, with important effects on health and education, and at a reasonable cost per child.

Many of these ways to assist early learning are already found in traditional practices of child-rearing. Positive practices should be reinforced, particularly in situations where they are disappearing. But where traditional child-rearing practices do not fit present conditions or do not incorporate new knowledge, caregivers can be provided with new information that will benefit early development and learning. This approach utilizes both popular and scientific sources of knowledge.

Education of caregivers that combines information about mental and social development with information about health and nutrition can be organized in many ways and carried out at a very low marginal cost by integrating it with ongoing programmes. Examples include: home visits by health workers, home economists or village promoters to provide information about the learning needs, health or nutrition of children; adult literacy and other adult education programmes incorporating

information about helping children to learn; child-to-child programmes in the upper grades of primary and in secondary schools reaching children who take care of younger siblings, who transmit information to their parents, and who will soon be parents themselves; programmes involving check-ups and care of pregnant and lactating women, and nutrition supplementation providing the opportunity for caregiver education; and radio and other mass media used to provide basic information to the public and to community groups.

Programmes providing education and support to caregivers are potentially powerful instruments for meeting basic learning needs of children from birth to age 6 for many reasons. Family responsibility for care and learning is reinforced, and existing service programmes are better utilized. The probability that improvements will be sustained over the long term is increased and broad coverage can be achieved at relatively low cost.

The basic learning needs of young children can also be met through programmes and services providing integrated attention to their needs. Such services complement programmes of caregiver education. They support (but are no substitute for) the family's primary responsibility to help a child grow, develop and learn. It is clear that there are many occasions in which organized programmes outside the home are necessary, due to the competing demands of work and child-rearing on family members. Also, grouping children together can provide additional and more varied opportunities for individual and social learning than can be provided within most families, while facilitating special attention to health and nutritional and educational needs.

During the past twenty years, a wealth of experience has accumulated about how to organize effective programmes of early childhood care and development. Programme options include the following:

- Home day care*, in which women selected by the community take several children of neighbours into their homes during the day, providing them with protection, food, and learning through play.
- Co-operative day care*, in which working parents alternate caring for their children.

*Community-run pre-schools*, where the facilities are provided by the community, a community member is chosen and trained to run the pre-school, a midday meal is prepared by parents, and a parents' committee supervises the pre-school.

*Integrated child-development services*, in which a local para-professional and an assistant bring village children together for approximately three hours each weekday for supplementary feeding, distribution of vitamins and pre-school educational activities, and in which attention is also given to pregnant and lactating mothers in the participating communities.

*Combined nutrition and pre-school programmes*, which bring children together each weekday morning for supervised learning activities, food and nutritional supplementation, and periodic health check-ups, run by a trained pre-school teacher, assisted by volunteer mothers (or other family members), on a rotating basis.

There is increasing evidence that early interventions can have a significant influence on children's readiness, enrolment, progress and learning in primary schools. For example, a study of the effects of the Programa de Alimentação de Pre-escolar (PROAPE) in Brazil concluded that the cost per pupil of combined pre-school and primary-school education for PROAPE children was 17 per cent lower than the cost per pupil of primary-school education alone for children who did not participate in PROAPE. The PROAPE children were also much less likely to repeat grades, thus further reducing costs.

There is also strong evidence that the effects of programmes that improve early learning are stronger for those who are most disadvantaged because of economic circumstances or discrimination and are even greater if parents are involved in the programmes. Such programmes can also help to moderate gender differences in enrolment and progress through primary schools.

Seven major conclusions emerge from the discussion so far.

- Programmes to meet basic learning needs must include early childhood care.
- Child-care activities should focus on the capacity of children to gather and process informa-

*Box 4.2 A non-formal programme of 'initial education' in Peru*

In 1967, a nutrition education project for mothers (PRONOEI) was begun in several villages in highland Peru in the Department of Puno where the infant mortality rate was extremely high 150 and malnutrition was widespread. The project, initiated by volunteers from a regional university, evolved into a community programme that included daily cooking of mid-morning snacks for children aged 3 to 5, gathered together for several hours each weekday morning. From this cooking programme, a non-formal pre-school also emerged that was intended to help the children who were brought along to develop mentally and socially, and to prepare them for schools.

Five years later, as part of a major educational reform, the government extended this small-scale community-based model, launching a major child-care and development initiative in the Department of Puno. Since then, the community-based non-formal model has spread widely throughout Peru, offering an alternative to the formal pre-school centres.

Community participation takes several forms: provision of a site (and often construction of a building) for the 'Children's House', selection of an 'animator' who is paid a gratuity but is essentially serving the communi-

ty as a volunteer, and management of the centres through a parent committee. In some cases, income-generating projects have been created as part of the programme, and in most, the food supplied from government programmes is supplemented by local contributions.

An in-depth evaluation of PRONOEI in 1985 showed that PRONOEI children were socially and intellectually more prepared for primary school than a comparison group of similar children who had not participated in PRONOEI. The difference appeared despite the minimum quality of many PRONOEI. Unfortunately, this difference did not seem to be retained as children moved through the primary school, presumably because of the low quality of the primary schools.

The per-pupil cost of programmes (using enrolment figures and not counting the contributions of the local community in terms of labour and materials) amounted to about \$28 per year, or less than half the cost of the alternative formal pre-school programmes. The experience suggests that effectiveness at low cost can be achieved over time in a relatively large-scale non-formal pre-school programme but that there is a need to consider the pre-school and primary-school programmes together in order to maximize the effectiveness of both.

tion, increase their desire to learn and enhance their ability to relate to others.

- All children need stimulation, the freedom to explore, the experience of success and caring responses from those around them.
- Early childhood education should be part of a holistic approach, including nutrition and health.
- Assisting parents and other caregivers to help the child learn is a necessary step.
- Cultural diversity requires a decentralized approach to community-based programmes.
- Programmes for early childhood care must adapt to reflect social changes that occur over time.

At a more global level, eight arguments can be presented in favour of investment in early childhood education. The *human rights argument* simply asserts that children have a right to live and to develop to their full potential. The *scientific argu-*

*ment* is that research has repeatedly demonstrated that the early years are critical in the development of intelligence, personality and social behaviour. These are long-term effects that have been shown to be associated with a variety of early childhood intervention programmes.

The *moral and social values argument* recognizes that humanity transmits its values through children, beginning with infants. To preserve moral and social values – or to improve them – society must look to its young children. Values such as living together or appreciating and protecting the environment must be initiated in the pre-school years. The *economic argument* asserts that society benefits economically from investing in child development. These benefits include increased productivity and reduced social costs in areas such as school repetition and attrition, delinquency and crime, and dependence on illegal drugs.

The *social equity argument* affirms that early childhood care provides a more equitable start for children of different backgrounds. Early childhood development programmes can help reduce existing socio-economic, ethnic and gender inequities. Because of early bias in social role identification, girls can be particularly important beneficiaries of well-designed programmes. A related point is made by the *social mobilization argument* that children provide a rallying point for a wide set of social and political actions that can help to build consensus and organizational structures to work for the common good of society.

There is also a *programme efficacy argument* that the effectiveness of social programmes such as health, nutrition, primary schooling and women's development can be enhanced by incorporating an element of early childhood care that focuses on healthy mental and social development. A final argument deals with *changing social and demographic circumstances*. The increasing survival of vulnerable children, changing family structures, rural-urban migration patterns and the increasing participation of women in the formal labour market affect the need and demand for child care. More and better ways to care for and ensure the well-being of children must be found.

These arguments vary in their relative weight in any particular situation, but all have some relevance in every situation. Together, they provide a compelling case for greatly increased investment in programmes to improve child care and to enhance child development in the early years. Knowledge and experience exist to guide the mobilization of parents and communities, and to initiate and sustain these activities. The remaining step is for enlightened leaders to make the political and fiscal commitments that are needed for action.

Five complementary programme approaches contribute to early childhood care.

*Attending to children* is a direct, centre-based approach that enhances child development by attending to the immediate needs of children; the centres are organized outside the home and serve as alternative environments for the children.

*Supporting and educating caregivers* is an approach

designed to educate parents and other family members in ways to improve their care for and interaction with children.

*Promoting community development* is an approach that works to change community conditions that may adversely affect child development; it stresses community initiative, organization and participation in a set of interrelated activities directed towards improving the physical environment, the community organizational structure, and the knowledge and practices of community members.

*Strengthening institutional resources and practices* is an approach that helps the institutions involved in early childhood care to obtain adequate financial, material and human resources to allow them to fulfil their responsibilities; programmes within this approach involve institution building, training, materials provision and improving the available technology through experimentation with innovative techniques and models.

*Developing awareness and demand* is an approach that concentrates on the production and distribution of knowledge in order to create awareness of needs and demands for assistance; it encourages social participation and may function at the level of policy or be directed at the broad cultural ethos that conditions the provision of early childhood care.

Examples of child-centred approaches exist in Colombia ('Homes for Well-Being'), Nepal (Project Entry Point), Peru (PRONOEI) and Brazil (PROAPE). Parent-centred programmes include the PANDAI and BKG projects in Indonesia, 'parent schools' in China, Child-to-Child programmes in Jamaica, the Integrated Nutrition and Community Development Project in Thailand, and the Parents and Children Programme in Chile. From programmes such as these, a rich research literature has begun to emerge on early childhood care.

The following preliminary conclusions have emerged from a review of seventeen studies from ten developing countries. The studies trace children who have been involved in an early intervention activity and compare their performance in primary school with a control group. The following five paragraphs describe the conclusions.

### Box 4.3 The Parents and Children Programme in Chile

The general and interrelated objectives of the Parents and Children Programme (PPH) are: (a) enhanced child development; (b) personal growth of adults; and (c) community organization. To achieve these goals, weekly meetings are organized in participating rural communities in the Osorno area of southern Chile (originally 50 communities, now approximately 200). The meetings are timed to coincide with a radio broadcast over a local radio station which uses drama and other devices to pose a problem and to stimulate discussion.

Discussions at the meetings centred originally around different aspects of the rearing of children. Topics included how to help children learn to talk, to read and to count; human relations in the family; nutrition and how to make the best use of food supplies; food preservation; and alcohol abuse. These topics have broadened to include questions related directly to earning a livelihood. Materials related to each theme supplement the radio presentation of the problem. The discussions, which are led by a local *promoter* chosen by the community, lead to suggestions and plans for community action in the various areas.

Within the project, the child-development goal is also promoted through pre-school exercises for children in the form of worksheets. These worksheets are designed to enhance perception, thinking skills, use of symbols, creativity, curiosity and the motivation to learn. Parents go over the materials in their meeting, then take them

home for the children who (sometimes with the help of the adults) complete the worksheets to be taken back to the next weekly meeting.

Assisting the development and implementation of PPH are staff members from a non-governmental organization, the Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Educación (CIDE) which works closely with the local radio station.

An evaluation of the programme has shown positive effects on the children, on their parents and on the community at large. Children participating in PPH score better on readiness tests and do better in school than those who have not participated. The evaluation identified changes in adult attitudes and perceptions, evident from their descriptions of the project itself, the way they spoke about changes, the ease with which they reached agreements and their ability to act on conclusions. The basic changes identified ranged from 'empathy' to participation in constructive activities as a sense of self-worth was strengthened.

The cost per child of the programme was calculated as \$6.38 per month. A high-quality kindergarten costs six times this amount and the cost of a low-quality day-care centre is double. A minimum wage was five times the monthly cost. If the calculation is made on a per-person basis (rather than per child), the cost amounted to \$1.62 per month. These costs do not count time donated by the community. In brief, community participation brought both benefits and lowered costs.

- Programmes designed to improve health, nutrition and the psycho-social condition of children in their pre-school years can affect school readiness significantly. Moreover, better-prepared children will be more likely to attend school and to perform at a higher level than less well-prepared children. Better-prepared children will be less likely to repeat grades and to drop out.
- The mechanisms producing improved enrolment, progress and performance appear to reflect some combination of earlier age of enrolment (which regularizes progress through the system) and improved school readiness related to improved health and nutritional conditions, to improved cognitive skills and to changes in

parental expectations regarding the ability of their children and/or the importance of schooling.

- Programmes can have a positive effect on school efficiency and costs by reducing repetition.
- Early childhood programmes can particularly help children who are disadvantaged because of economic circumstances, gender or social background.
- Structural conditions and the quality of primary schooling can moderate the potential effects of improved school readiness on school progress and performance.

In the 1960s in the United States, a series of small-scale experimental programmes and the na-

tional 'Headstart' programme developed the use of early intervention approaches. Initial evaluations of these concluded that the positive effects on the intelligence quotient (IQ) of participating children disappeared by the time they reached the second or third grade of primary school. This conclusion has not held up over time as children were followed further in their lives and as the outcome criteria were broadened beyond effects on IQ. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a set of evaluations looked at children in early or late adolescence and showed that participation in well-implemented early childhood education programmes can have significant long-term effects on progress through the school as measured by promotion, need (or not) for special education and high-school completion. Interpretations of these outcomes have focused on the importance of parental involvement, on the quality of the programmes provided and on the role of the child, the parents and the primary-school teachers.

Encouraging as these results have been, their applicability to developing countries can be seriously questioned. However, similar positive evidence is beginning to accumulate from studies carried out in Latin America, Asia and Africa. This evidence results from studies both within the nutrition and health community, and studies by educators and social scientists.

This type of research and evaluation work provides little insight into whether schools are 'ready' for children or not, in terms of their availability, their quality and their adjustment to the condition of the child at entrance. Only in cases where there did not seem to be a continuing effect of an early childhood programme was the school looked at as a possible explanation.

In summary, the personal and social costs of a poor transition from home to school are such that improving the transition should be a high priority. Programmes must be established that work simultaneously on improving the child's readiness for school and the school's readiness for children. This means crossing the traditional bureaucratic line that usually separates 'pre-school' from 'primary school'.

## Participation in primary schooling

The effects of early childhood programmes may be attenuated if programmes to meet basic learning needs for children of primary-school age are not available, are of poor quality or fail to adjust themselves to the children and communities they serve. Learning is a continuous process and if early achievements are not reinforced, the effects can disappear. Programmes to meet early learning needs should therefore be considered in relation to the possibilities for continued basic learning, including the articulation between programmes to meet learning needs from birth to school age and programmes during the primary-school years. Early learning at home or in organized programmes may not be in line with what is needed (or demanded) for later learning in schools. Pre-school and primary-school programmes should not be looked at separately or viewed as competitors; rather they should be considered as a joint investment designed to make both programmes more efficient and effective.

In the attempt to improve education services, there is a trend in developing countries to move away from centrally mandated educational reforms to more decentralized school-based innovations. These innovations often emphasize the active participation of all concerned with education – teachers, supervisors, pupils, parents and the local community.<sup>2</sup> However, current research and evaluation evidence shows consistently that such participatory activities are sustained and replicated only with difficulty. It is therefore timely and pertinent to examine the state of the art of these activities at the primary-school level in developing countries.

The impetus for this trend towards decentralization may be attributed to four general concerns: democratization of education policy decision-making is seen as a way of providing a means of *empowering ordinary people* and as a way of maintaining the social codes or values of the local community;

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2. The management implications of participatory and community-based approaches are considered in Monograph II, Chapter 4.

#### Box 4.4 *Child-to-Child programmes in Jamaica*

Child-to-Child programmes are designed for children who are usually between the ages of 8 and 15 and often, at one and the same time, caretakers of younger siblings, future parents, communicators of information to their parents and other caretakers, and community members, capable of improving conditions affecting health and development. The Jamaican Child-to-Child programme is directed specifically at improving the knowledge and caretaking practices of primary-school children aged 9 to 12, and through them the knowledge of parents or guardians.

Begun in 1979 on an experimental basis in only one school by the Tropical Metabolism Research Unit (University of the West Indies), the programme was extended to fourteen schools where an evaluation showed it to be well-received; it is now being incorporated into the regular primary-school curriculum for the entire country.

The curriculum provides information about health, nutrition, psycho-social development and dental care. Children are taught how to make toys from scrap materials and how to play with the toys so as to encourage a younger child's development. Immunization lessons deal with the purpose of immunization, the diseases that can be prevented and the times when immunization should be done. The action-oriented curriculum includes role play, group discussions, demonstrations, toy-making,

drama and song. Most of what is imparted in a Child-to-Child programme is already contained in the curriculum of the primary school. Adding some emphasis, relating the knowledge to activities and presenting materials in a new, interesting and participatory way, however, can bring major benefits.

An evaluation of the pilot programme showed that children improved significantly in their knowledge of all areas. In addition, the knowledge of parents and guardians improved as did their encouragement and support of play with younger children. Teachers also improved their knowledge of health and development, and were introduced to new forms of teaching.

When all costs of the project directed to children in the fourteen schools were estimated (teachers' salaries for the partial time devoted to Child-to-Child, training costs, supervision, materials, curriculum development and production of a curriculum package, and evaluation), the cost per child per year was approximately \$15. As the initial development costs are spread out over many more children with expansion of the programme, the per child cost will be reduced somewhat. The 'per child' costing does not take into account the fact that parents and teachers also benefit. If that were done, the resulting 'per person' cost would be lower.

decentralization may help enhance *political stability*, particularly in countries that have several ethnic and/or religious groups; with rapid increases in population and ever-rising inflation, a large number of developing countries are finding problems in financing their education systems (community support is one way of *alleviating financial difficulties*); and there is growing concern to *improve the quality of education* due to factors such as the lack of material resources, poorly paid and demoralized teachers and irrelevant curricula.

Participatory, school-based activities can be categorized according to five interrelated aspects.

*Education.* School-based activities to improve the quality of education can be initiated and organized by four groups of people most closely related to the school – teachers, parents, the community and pupils. The general aim is to raise the academ-

ic achievement of children and/or to develop attitudes, values and skills relating to their personal and social development. This may include innovations in which teachers are prepared for more effective teaching through school-based training and research; parents are actively involved in helping their children with their studies and/or teaching them at home or in the classroom; the pupils themselves are involved in the teaching/learning process through activities such as peer-teaching; the community is involved in the teaching/learning process either collectively or as individuals; members of the community are involved in preparing teaching resources; and the community assists in the achievement of non-academic educational objectives, such as physical education.

*Curriculum.* This aspect includes the identification and development of what is to be taught in the

*Box 4.5 The MINDSACROSS Project in Uganda*

The MINDSACROSS Project in Uganda is an example of local participation that promotes the sharing of ideas among pupils, and between them and their teachers, parents and the community; schooling is thus a means of learning communication skills and sharing information. Over 6,500 children participate, many of them in classrooms with over 100 pupils.

The total school environment is used to develop the literacy skills of pupils. Pupil self-confidence is nurtured and their willingness to innovate is encouraged. Pupils are given emotional and intellectual support to become communicators of ideas. The ultimate purpose of the project is to 'demystify the writing process'.

The children are encouraged to prepare poetry or prose on topics they select. All work of the pupils is displayed. Pupils are required to read, judge and criticize all of the displayed work. The best pieces from each class are selected to be displayed at the school level. A school-wide forum is held where pupils read their contributions. Some of these works are then selected for inclusion in the MINDSACROSS booklets. The booklets, averaging thirty-three pages, are produced using

desktop publishing. By 1990, some 109 titles in the series had been prepared and made available in the schools as a reading resource.

The emphasis on displaying the pupils' original work is important. Children gain an appreciation of self and of their literacy skills. A second important aspect of the project is the requirement that pupils evaluate the work of others. This develops judgemental skills and exposes the children to a variety of reading experiences. Those whose work is selected for school-level display gain individual esteem, while all pupils increase their knowledge and their oral and written fluency. Children develop a desire to write (many declare the goal of becoming authors) and to teach others.

Teachers are trained to support these activities and to integrate the pupils' writing into the more general curriculum. One technique used is to have a new group write on a topic already covered or to ask the original group to update their work on a topic. Both pupils and teachers participate in selecting the topics for writing exercises. Parents and the community become involved by visiting the school to see the children's work.

school, specifically the knowledge, attitudes and skills that are relevant to local needs and to survival. Participatory activities may include the involvement of the community in determining curriculum content together with teachers through committees or working groups; the involvement of individuals with relevant local knowledge and skills in the curriculum development process; and the involvement of the community, including pupils, in the preparation of books and other learning materials.

*Resources.* This aspect focuses on the use of local resources (human, financial and material) to assist in the construction of school buildings and other facilities (playing fields, gardens, prayer rooms); repair and maintain the school buildings and other facilities; and provide various services at school, such as lunches, snacks and medical check-ups.

*Policy.* This aspect deals with participation in decision-making regarding school policy and management to improve the quality of education. This may include the involvement of teachers in the

policy and management process of the school; pupils in some aspects of the process; and the community in the decision-making process through structures such as parent-teacher associations, school management committees, etc.

*Service.* This aspect deals with the school's service and contribution to the community; it focuses on those activities that highlight the interdependence between the school and community. Innovations may include the involvement of schools in self-help programmes, in non-formal education, and in resolving local issues and problems.

Research findings suggest seven requirements for participatory, school-based innovations: clearly define the role of the school manager, and provide necessary training and incentives to promote innovation; vertical support (from bureaucratic superiors) and horizontal support (from colleagues) must be forthcoming; multiple interventions may be necessary, including the involvement of teachers, parents, pupils and the community; all participants must have a clear concept of their rights, duties

and responsibilities; all participants must perceive the innovation as feasible; all participants must feel 'ownership' of the innovation; and financial and non-financial incentives must be explored to promote sustainability.

There are numerous innovations in the area of participatory, community-based pre-school and primary education, but most have not been thoroughly evaluated, even in respect of achievement of the desired outcomes. While there is some evidence that such innovations can help schools respond to differences in local needs and contexts, motivate and mobilize those who are most directly responsible for encouraging learning, foster social organization and co-operation, and spread costs, there is much less evidence concerning their long-term outcomes, both intended and unintended, particularly in regard to sustainability and replicability. To be fair, the quantitative or qualitative measurement of the effects of participatory activities on raising the quality of education is not an easy task. Nevertheless, it is necessary to know much more concerning what these innovations are best able – and unable – to achieve, what aspects are most enduring and what circumstances make both their immediate and their ultimate impacts more significant.

Most of the literature that looks objectively at the implementation of these participatory activities has presented a rather mixed picture, showing a wide range of possible consequences. The positive ones include a decrease in isolation of the school from the community, a sense of ownership inculcated in the community, an understanding cultivated between parents and teachers, and a sharing of common goals. Negative consequences include a conflict of expectations between the school and the community, uneven involvement among community members and an unequal distribution of benefits in favour of children of better-educated families. One reason for these varying outcomes is that participation implies interaction. When people begin to interact in contexts where traditional roles and responsibilities no longer apply, the consequences of this interaction can be very complex.

It is only through careful examination and analysis of the processes and outcomes of these innova-

tions that their most useful, feasible, sustainable and replicable features can be identified and reinforced. Therefore, research and experimentation with participatory approaches deserve a high priority from governments, non-governmental organizations and funding agencies alike.

### **Participation in literacy programmes**

The demand for literacy must ultimately include a political component. The same can be said of the demand for basic education generally. These demands require more than technological or bureaucratic responses; often they can be achieved only through political action and means. Literacy should not be seen as the beginning for societal development; in fact, literacy may be neither a necessary nor a sufficient prerequisite for general societal development. History indicates many examples of tremendous social achievements taking place in the absence of majority, let alone universal, literacy.

However, the demand for literacy signals a new stage in the process of societal development. It occurs when the production processes become sufficiently complex to require literate workers and when enough of a production surplus is created to allow the release of a large number of individuals from directly productive activities. With the differentiation of social classes and the increased complexity of economic production (and the concomitant need for detailed record-keeping), literacy becomes a generalized social demand.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe first put universal literacy on the political agenda. Literacy was not a precondition of the Industrial Revolution but a result of it. The transformations of the Industrial Revolution were ushered into a largely illiterate European society. Initially, literacy was not introduced to free or empower workers, but to allow them to better serve the evolving needs of an industrialized society. As the processes of production became more complex and technologically based, the need for literacy and the resources available to finance it increased together.

As the middle class increased in size, more and more people required and wanted literacy skills.

*Box 4.6 The non-governmental organization Collective Consultation on Literacy*

Many non-governmental organizations developed a close relationship through the Collective Consultation on Literacy sponsored by UNESCO. The Consultation has served as a forum for the exchange of ideas, debates and sharing of experiences, and as a basis for action. It allowed for meetings among non-governmental organizations and between non-governmental organizations and UNESCO, the intergovernmental organization with primary responsibility for basic education, including literacy and adult education.

When the Collective Consultation was initiated in 1984, the organizers were surprised by the participation of so many non-governmental organizations which were not directly identified with education and literacy. But these organizations, which work in such areas as agricul-

ture, community development, health, nutrition and family planning, had discovered that literacy and other forms of basic education were an essential stage in the achievement of their own development objectives. This diverse group of non-governmental organizations, by consulting in an open forum, received five general benefits:

- they became better acquainted with one another;
- they exchanged information;
- they reviewed and reflected on their practices and situations;
- they learned from each other's experiences; and
- they learned to co-operate and to work in mutually supportive ways.

For many workers, literacy was acquired on the production line; for others, instruction took place in the emerging state-school system. Growth in the demand for literacy can only be adequately understood within the political context of the system of production and of economic distribution.

It is noteworthy that of the 950 million illiterate adults in the world today, the vast majority are in developing countries and two-thirds are women. The economic domination of the developing world and the social domination of women are facilitated by these conditions. Subsistence farmers and urban cheap labourers do not need literacy skills in order to serve the needs of the élite. The safety of workers and the political participation of the poor frequently are not important goals of the privileged countries or classes.

The role of non-governmental organizations within this political context is to struggle for literacy as a means of individual and collective development. Literacy may thus be seen as a movement linked to needed political and social reforms. Within this perspective, many non-governmental organizations work with popular organizations to create new partnerships and solidarity based on people's needs. Individual sovereignty is seen by them as more important than national sovereignty because, too often, arguments for national integri-

ty and national interests are used to suppress the sovereignty of the individual.

Non-governmental organizations have helped to bring the problem of illiteracy to public awareness. In 1979, in response to a survey by the Commission of the European Communities, France, Luxembourg and the Federal Republic of Germany reported no illiteracy within their borders. During the next decade, work encouraged and, in some cases, conducted by non-governmental organizations in Europe revealed that the problem of illiteracy was more widespread throughout Europe than previously realized. Because non-governmental organizations work at the grassroots level with communities, local groups and individuals, their knowledge of the nature, extent and sources of unmet learning needs is unique. The personnel of non-governmental organizations live day by day with marginalized groups in developed and developing countries. Their efforts have encouraged public recognition of illiteracy and other basic education problems and of the need to solve them.

The work of non-governmental organizations in literacy has been enriched by the close links they maintain with the local environment. Non-governmental organization experiences have served to inform government and private-sector programmes that deal with the same or similar populations.

Three criteria guide non-governmental organization work in literacy: literacy work is most effective when based on concrete concerns such as health, nutrition or income generation; since effective programmes are linked to the realities of their environment, it is necessary to understand a locality and its people, and to build partnerships with local and national authorities rather than imposing models from the outside; and non-governmental organizations should learn from one another's experiences and should see themselves as complementary agents, not competitors.

Government and private-sector organizations often do not have the experience or the administrative adaptability to do what non-governmental organizations can do. While non-governmental organizations continue to grow in experience and in their capacity to promote change, they usually require some funding from other agencies. Non-governmental organizations can offer experienced and qualified personnel, and effective approaches. Also, non-governmental organizations often provide continuity in contexts of government change or instability. However, without financial resources, even the non-governmental organizations cannot function.

Among the many possible examples of non-governmental organization involvement in literacy and basic education are street library projects in Latin America, functional literacy programmes in Guinea, Indonesian and Sri Lankan literacy projects tied to environment and health education, adult education in Hong Kong, village libraries in Burkina Faso, bilingual training in Ecuador, training of literacy trainers in Senegal, and regional literacy workers' centres in France. In many examples like these, individual non-governmental organizations work together or with government or community agencies and groups. The result is responsiveness to local needs through a maximum mobilization of available resources.

## Summary discussion

Providing basic Education for All is a challenge for individual countries and for the world community. The international non-governmental organizations

should play a significant role in the emerging global partnership, providing both financial and technical resources that reflect special interests and areas of expertise. A particular case can be made for greater attention by non-governmental organizations (and governments) to the learning needs of the physically disadvantaged.

The activities of non-governmental organizations in the field of disability, specifically blindness, illustrate how they can develop programmes in response to definite needs. For example, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) successfully campaigned for an international programme on the prevention of blindness, which was established by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1978. Since then, IAPB and the WHO programme have worked in close collaboration, resulting in major developments in the field through the co-operative efforts of several non-governmental organizations.

The Preamble of the *World Declaration on Education for All* opens with a set of appalling figures that illustrate the realities of the current status of basic education. The figures that relate to disability are no less daunting. More than 500 million people in the world are disabled as a consequence of mental, physical or sensory impairment. WHO estimates that institution-based services cater for only 1 to 2 per cent of rehabilitation needs in developing countries. Population projections indicate that there will be at least 190 million disabled children in the world by the year 2000, some 80 per cent of whom will be in developing countries.

Services for blind persons have often been developed before those for other disabled groups and are consequently the most advanced, yet less than 5 per cent of blind children in developing countries are enrolled in educational programmes today.

The convergence of disadvantage, a concept discussed in *Meeting Basic Learning Needs: A Vision for the 1990s*, is particularly applicable in the context of disability and education. The indisputable link between poverty and childhood disability is starkly tragic, and the consequences of disablement are particularly serious for girls and women in developing countries because it multiplies their disadvantages.

In the light of the above, it is imperative that no efforts be spared to prevent disability and that the basic learning needs of disabled persons be made a priority item on every agenda related to Education for All. This priority must be translated into specific action plans within the overall Education for All programme. Education of a disabled child should be part of the general system, but the principle of Education for All demands that there be provisions within that system to meet the special needs of each child; child-centred education should be the very foundation of educational theory and practice.

Non-governmental organizations can take the lead in drawing the attention of governments and international agencies to the problem of adult illiteracy. Without universal literacy, increased basic education *for some* can increase social inequities. It is important for non-governmental organizations to continue to stress the unique and important role that they can and must play in the achievement of Education for All. Non-governmental organizations can help to see that literacy activities, schools and other programmes prepare learners for a world of work characterized by rapid technological changes and persistent unemployment; develop democratic values, political tolerance, anti-racism, education for peace and the promotion of human rights; and allow citizens to take their place in a multicultural society founded on a spirit of openness, mutual understanding and an appreciation of the benefits of diversity.

Education for All – accessible, efficient and of good quality – is not yet the norm in many areas of the developed and developing worlds. Population increases, reductions in recurrent and development budgets, and greater scepticism as to the effectiveness of educational reforms and innovations, make it difficult to be optimistic about the ability of governments, donor agencies and professional educators to develop, support and sustain the educational processes needed to bring the world successfully into – and through – the twenty-first century.

The irony is that at a time when there is more certainty about the conditions and processes that can make learning effective and education systems successful, there are fewer resources to provide the

necessary conditions and support the proven processes. One presumed ‘truth’ is that programmes to promote early learning and primary-school education are facilitated by participatory and community-based practices. At their best, such programmes can respond to differences in local needs and contexts, facilitate articulation between basic learning in the early years and in primary school, encourage innovation, motivate and mobilize those who are most directly responsible for encouraging learning, foster social organization and collaboration, improve community conditions affecting learning and spread costs. But participatory processes can also have negative consequences and can prove very difficult to sustain and replicate. The need, therefore, is to analyse and experiment further with ways in which participatory, community- and school-based programmes can become more effective both in providing better education and in encouraging greater social participation in development.

Some observers may question whether the learning innovations discussed in this chapter are transferrable to low-resource situations. Innovations such as the MINDSACROSS project (see Box 4.5) are adaptable to various resource conditions. Desktop publishing of pupil booklets was probably the least essential component of the intervention strategy. The display of pupil work had no cost other than the availability of writing paper. Also, innovations involving participation often increase the resources available to schools; for example, through cash contributions or through locally developed instructional materials.

The MINDSACROSS project is noteworthy because it allows pupils to participate effectively, even in crowded classrooms. Also, the written work of the pupils is an excellent source of feedback information for teachers and parents. The project is based on a psychologically valid technique and builds pupils’ self-esteem and inner confidence. It should be noted that community participation in schooling helps support adult education programmes. It also helps change parents’ valuation of children, especially of girls.

There are five remaining challenges to be met. First, can the projects reviewed be expected to ‘go

*Box 4.7 Statement of Principles on the Involvement of NGOs in WCEFA Follow-up Activities with Non-NGO Bodies*

NGO Jomtien Committee  
9 March 1990

1. NGOs shall be part of all formal structures for the implementation of EFA at all levels: local, national, regional and international, from the outset, particularly in the development and implementation of national plans, which NGOs feel to be of paramount importance. In all cases the autonomy of NGOs shall be respected.
2. NGO members of such structures shall be in the same proportion as other sectoral representatives.
3. Explicit policies designed to provide political space for NGOs and concrete actions should be adopted by both governments and agencies.
4. NGOs shall choose their own representatives through a consultative and democratic process as appropriate.
5. NGOs will follow the guidelines listed below when selecting their representatives.
  - (a) NGO representatives shall be chosen on the basis of involvement in and commitment to Education for All.
  - (b) Due consideration will be given to ethnic, geographic and sectoral representativity.
  - (c) Consideration will be given to established UN mechanisms relative to NGO relations, but NGO selection will not be limited by any specialized agency's procedures established by non-NGO bodies.
  - (d) Special preference shall be given to the involvement of indigenous NGOs from countries and regions where the challenges of basic education are most serious.
6. As a much-needed example, the NGOs will make every effort to ensure balanced gender representation among NGO representatives at all levels, most especially at the international level.
7. Subsequent major international meetings and conferences relative to the Education for All movement shall include NGOs as full delegates. The World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs established a welcome precedent by granting delegate status to NGO representatives.

Source: World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (Jomtien, 1990), *Final Report*, p. 66, New York, Inter-Agency Commission for the World Conference on Education for All, 1990, reprinted 1991.

to scale' and retain their effectiveness? Second, will the early childhood component of Education for All be retained? Will the organizational structures evolve to keep it as a viable part of the larger initiative? Third, will the artificial bureaucratic split between primary schooling and early childhood development be eliminated? Fourth, can new para-professionals be trained to deal with the multiple demands of the holistic, participatory approach to meeting basic learning needs? And, fifth, how can the benefits of participatory innovations be directed more to the needs of the most disadvantaged members of society?

At a time when developing countries face critical budget limitations and the level of funds for education is stable or declining, non-governmental organizations can make a critical contribution by promoting the mobilization of resources for literacy and basic education and for the lifelong

education of all adults. In a world characterized by rapid and continuing change, it is no longer possible to go to school and then, after receiving a diploma, expect to work for thirty or forty years without further education. Adult education can help develop the full potential of individuals throughout their life. The right to education begins with basic education but necessarily extends to lifelong education.

Non-governmental organizations, because of their closeness to communities and individuals, can often promote literacy and education initiatives more effectively than public or private agencies. Non-governmental organizations' knowledge of the local milieu, their success in experimentation, their flexibility and their adaptive administrative structures all lead to a significant advantage in educational development, implementation and evaluation. Non-governmental organizations are

small in terms of staff and budget, but not in terms of the number of lives they touch and the profound changes they can make in those lives. Non-governmental organizations cannot work miracles – they do require financial assistance – but the effectiveness with which they can use the available funds to make real social improvement can be miraculous in its own right.

The outcome of the discussion on participation can be summarized in four general messages.

- It is possible and cost-effective to invest in integrated, culturally appropriate, community-based and low-cost programmes designed to meet basic learning needs of children during the period from birth to school age.
  - There is a need to articulate early childhood development and primary-school programmes as part of a continuous learning process in order to maximize the potential effects of both.
  - Parental, community and non-governmental organization involvement is central to implementing successful, sustainable programmes of early childhood care and development and literacy programmes.
- The role of non-governmental organizations as partners with governments and with communities, parents and learners offers a significant new opportunity for meeting the challenges of Education for All.

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## 5. Textbooks and other instructional materials

The availability of textbooks and other instructional materials has been shown to be one of the most positive and consistent determinants of variations in pupil learning achievement. Where the quality and availability of teaching personnel are less than adequate, the impact of educational materials is even greater. Furthermore, inequality in the availability and use of textbooks and instructional materials appears to be a major source of rural/urban and regional inequalities in learning achievement in many countries.

It has been asserted that educational materials, including textbooks, workbooks, teacher guides, and remediation and enrichment items, have the capacity to help offset inadequately trained and inexperienced teachers. Programmed teaching and learning materials, and the application of system design principles to instructional materials development, have been used in such diverse locations as the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Liberia and Botswana to enhance pupil learning in disadvantaged schools. Such materials have been found to help complement the efforts of both unqualified and qualified teachers working in environments not normally conducive to pupil learning.

The analysis of materials must include such concerns as their relevance to the existing curriculum, their costs (in development and in use), their dissemination and their utilization. Cultural and historical differences, and language barriers, often restrict the direct transfer of educational materials between education systems. However, where local materials do not exist, adoption and adaptation of external materials may be a necessary step prior to

the longer-term process of localizing content and the style of presentation.

Cost issues concern the development of the curricular content and the transformation of this content into a textbook or other form. The initial production cost of educational materials must be weighed against the actual cost-in-use (total cost divided by years of usable life). A higher initial cost may be justified if it promotes a longer usable life. A textbook costing \$1 that must be replaced each year is not a bargain compared to a \$2.50 version that will last three years or more.

The frequency of curriculum and textbook revisions has also become an important issue. The marginal cost of textbooks (the cost of one more copy after initial development and set-up for printing or copying) is often quite low. The larger the quantity that can be printed at one time, the greater the budget savings. Printers often prefer a four-to five-year use of the same textbook because of the low marginal costs; in contrast, curriculum specialists and authors often prefer more frequent revisions. The efficiency issue here is whether the effect of more frequent revision on improving instructional effectiveness justifies the additional production and dissemination costs.

Inadequate attention has been given to dissemination issues until recent years. It has been common for the urban and otherwise advantaged schools to enjoy greater access to educational materials. This has contributed to the convergence of disadvantage under which many rural and poor schools have operated. Unless the textbooks and instructional materials are actually used by teach-

ers and pupils, the investment in them will be wasted. As the Conference's background document notes:

*Unless the instructional materials reach the classrooms they cannot be effective, and unless they reach all classrooms they cannot promote equitable learning opportunities.*

*Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, 1990, p. 51

In the discussion that follows, the focus is on textbooks, which is consistent with the Conference presentations. However, it should be recognized that most of the topics covered are equally applicable to other forms of instructional materials. For example, all instructional materials must be evaluated in terms of production cost versus annual cost in use, the role of private-sector publishers and the interactive roles of the various participants in the materials production process. Thus, the relevance of the following discussion is even broader than the range of examples used might suggest.

### **The economics of textbooks**

During the past few decades there has been a massive expansion of formal schooling in developing countries. Universal primary-school enrolment has been achieved in thirty-five of the richer developing countries, including Argentina, Gabon, Trinidad and Tobago, and Malaysia. In the thirty-six poorest countries in the world, primary-school enrolments, as a percentage of the school-age population, grew from 80 per cent in 1965 to 91 per cent in 1983, and the corresponding secondary-school enrolments grew from 23 per cent to 31 per cent. In most of these countries education accounts for 15 to 30 per cent of public recurrent expenditures. There are twice as many elementary-school teachers in developing countries now as there were in 1960, two and a half times as many secondary teachers, and almost four and a half times as many tertiary-level teachers. A corresponding increase has been required in school furniture, equipment and reading materials. However, this impressive expansion is now threatened as a result of the worldwide economic crisis.

Due to economic problems, both the proportion of gross national product (GNP) allocated to education and the share of education spending in government budgets have often declined, even though enrolments have continued to increase. Furthermore, the gap in educational spending between the world's richest and poorest countries has been steadily widening. Salaries of teachers and other education personnel, while not lavish, are often the only part of the education budget being maintained. Educational expenditure reductions have fallen most heavily on non-salary items such as chalk, maps, furniture, laboratory equipment and textbooks.

This fiscal pressure is particularly important because textbook availability has been shown to be one of the most important predictors of educational achievement among pupils in developing countries. The book/pupil ratio in some developing countries can be as low as one textbook per classroom; in others, the ratio improves to one per pupil, but even this figure is low when compared to the wealthiest countries where individual pupils can have access to approximately forty book titles. The level of available reading materials is an important determinant of the kind of educational experience a country is able to provide for its children and youth.

Developing countries that are unable to avoid or to stem the decline in available textbook resources are likely to suffer a further decline in the already low levels of educational achievement. Countries that are unable to finance an increase in the provision of textbooks are likely to be foregoing a critical opportunity to increase levels of learning in their schools.

In an era of stagnant or declining government revenues, the likelihood of significant increases in overall education budgets is small in most developing countries. To halt or avoid the decline in educational quality, additional resources from within the education sector itself will have to be identified. In textbook production and distribution there will be new and complex challenges. To produce more materials for the same or less cost may mean using private, and sometimes even international, suppliers rather than depending solely on local

This chapter is based on material presented or available at the round table entitled 'Economic and Pedagogical Decisions in the Production of Educational Materials. How to Assure the Highest Quality to the Greatest Number at an Affordable Cost' (T15). The round table was organized by the Conference Secretariat and Finland. It was chaired by Erkki Aho, General Director, National Board of Education, Finland, and the presenters were:

Stephen P. Heyneman (Moderator)

Chief, Human Resources Division, Economic Development Institute, World Bank.

Victor U. Nwankwo

President, Nigerian Publishers Association, Nigeria.

Alfonso de Guzman II

Textbook specialist, Honduras.

Materials used in the preparation of this chapter and available at the Conference included:

*Economic and Pedagogical Decisions in the Production of Educational Materials*, by Stephen P. Heyneman.

*Solving the Book Need in Developing Countries: The Role of Nigerian Private Publishers*, by Victor U. Nwankwo.

*Textbooks in the Philippines: Evaluation of the Pedagogical Impact of a Nationwide Investment*, by Stephen P. Heyneman, Dean T. Nielsen and Xenia Montenegro.

*Textbooks in the Developing World: Economic and Educational Choices*, by Joseph P. Farrell and Stephen P. Heyneman.

*Publishing for Schools: Textbooks and the Less Developed Countries*, by Peter H. Neumann.

*Investing in Education: The Economics of Education*, by Education and Training Design Division, Economic Development Institute, World Bank.

*Textbooks and Achievement: What We Know*, by Stephen P. Heyneman, Joseph P. Farrell and Manuella A. Sepulveda-Stuardo.

public monopolies. Narrowing the range of subject-matter, finding new ways of financing the production of reading materials or altering the 'quality' standard for texts (for example, use of colour, thickness of page, number of illustrations) are other alternatives. A complete reorganization of the way textbooks are published and manufactured in developing countries may be a necessary part of the Education for All initiative.

It has become evident that mounting a large-scale textbook provision programme in a developing country is an extremely complicated and risk-prone venture, with implications well beyond the education sector itself. Creating, producing and distributing textbooks involves many parts of a country's infrastructure, frequently including the local publishing industry, the educational establishment, writers, government departments, international organizations and multinational publishing corporations. National and international copyright laws – seldom well understood and not consistently obeyed – further complicate matters. In addition, the production of textbooks requires substantial amounts of imported paper and the use of technologically advanced printing facilities. It also requires planning, developing, funding, testing and

distributing, as well as co-ordinating educational, governmental, publishing and printing resources.

Given this complexity, it is not surprising that major problems have been encountered in many textbook provision programmes, such as: (i) underestimation of the size and complexity of the task; (ii) lack of adequate advice on publishing; (iii) lack of understanding of the difficulties and time required to produce educationally satisfactory manuscripts related to prescribed curricula; (iv) confusing the functions of printers with those of publishers; (v) providing support for book purchases or printing without concomitant support to ensure suitable educational content, adequate teacher training or effective distribution; (vi) inadequate attention to the financial feasibility of the book provision systems; (vii) failure to establish appropriate institutional arrangements for managing the full book system; and (viii) failure to consider textbook publishing as an integral and basic part of a total national book-publishing industry.

One central lesson that can be derived from all the experience to date is that providing books for schools where at present there is little or nothing to read may seem like a simple undertaking, but it

is not. Every developing country – from China to Guinea – wants to design, manufacture and distribute its own textbooks. But this desire needs to be analysed carefully. Instead of producing books locally, some countries may find it less expensive to import technical experience, equipment and raw materials (especially paper). The publication process demands substantial experience in editing, production, printing, testing and distribution. Six to ten years is normally required to develop a new generation of textbooks for primary-school grades one to six.

Given the necessary skills, initial local production may be economical for books on national history, civics and literature; in mathematics and the sciences it may still be more economical to adapt materials published elsewhere. Furthermore, it is often more appropriate for countries to publish their own textbooks than to print them. Printing in large quantities requires specialized and expensive machinery, a constant supply of raw materials and a variety of maintenance skills. Publishing requires editorial and design skills, but the hardware required for production need not be local.

A fundamental condition that constrains almost all other choices is the size of the prospective readership for a given textbook. Readership size is influenced by a number of distinct factors. The first is the total school-age population of the country, and the second is the enrolment ratio at any given grade level. Even in developing countries which enrol almost all eligible children in grade one, there is typically a high drop-out rate during primary schooling. Thus, the readership size for a grade six or seven text will be less than that for a grade one text and the readership for secondary-school texts may be very small. Another factor is the degree of specialization of a text. In most countries, the curriculum is common throughout primary schooling and often at least part of secondary schooling. In such cases, the readership for a given textbook is the total enrolment at the particular grade level. But at some point the curriculum becomes diversified – pupils study different subjects – so the readership for a given book becomes a fraction of the total grade-level enrolment.

Yet another factor affecting readership size is the language of instruction. The greater the number of languages in which books must be produced, the smaller the readership for any given language version and the greater the cost per book. Small multilingual countries face very difficult choices from the early primary level on. But even large multilingual countries frequently find that at the secondary level, where enrolment ratios are low and the curriculum diversified, a switch to single-language publishing is the only economically viable option.

Generally, for large and/or more affluent countries the constraints imposed by readership size are less difficult. However, as the following three examples show, in some cases even very small and very poor countries have found imaginative ways to work within these constraints, such as pooling resources across national boundaries and adapting foreign texts.

Three small West African states (Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo) share textbook publishing and printing costs. Their *Noouvelles Editions Africaines* are used in all three countries.

Several Commonwealth countries have negotiated with an international publisher to provide history texts. The books for all of the countries contain a standard set of chapters dealing with international history, combined with chapters that deal with each country's particular history. The resulting books are both locally relevant and less expensive, even for the smaller national markets.

The small island states of the English-speaking Caribbean have combined local development and production of general primary texts with adaptation of foreign texts for more specialized, small-readership subjects at higher schooling levels.

Another determinant of the economics of textbooks is the role of government. Even in the most market-oriented economies, such as the United States and the countries of Western Europe, government and government agencies at the central, state/provincial or local level attempt to regulate and control textbook provision. There is no such thing, empirically, as a wholly free market for textbooks. Countries differ in the degree and locus of state intervention (centralization *v.* decentraliza-

*Box 5.1 Textbook policies to improve internal efficiency in the Philippines*

Although the universal provision of elementary education was realized in the Philippines in the early 1960s, continuing concern has been expressed over the quality of education provided. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the central government began to introduce policies designed to improve the standard of education and increase pupil learning. The economic constraints of the early 1980s meant that the government faced particular difficulties in continuing these programmes. However, a series of integrated policies ensured that small but significant improvements were made in participation rates and survival rates, in spite of budgetary constraints.

The need to improve the quality of elementary education provision was made evident in a major study of achievement first conducted in 1976 – the Survey of the Outcomes of Elementary Education (SOUTELE). This study revealed that, on average, the country's sixth-grade pupils achieved less than 50 per cent mastery in all subjects. The lowest scores were recorded for mathematics and English. The Household and School Matching Surveys Project reported similar findings in 1982/83.

The Textbook Improvement Project was among the first programmes introduced in the effort to increase school learning. The first phase of this project (1978–81) was co-financed with the World Bank and aimed at improving the pupil/textbook ratio, particularly in science and mathematics. The specific objective of the project was to reduce the pupil/textbook ratio from 8:1 to 2:1 through the distribution of free textbooks to public schools. The attainment of this objective was facilitated by the establishment of a Textbook Board (established to manage all phases of the manufacturing and distribution of books) and Curriculum Development Centers (CECs), which worked in conjunction with the University of the Philippine's Institute for Science and Math Education Development (ISMED). The Institute assumed responsibility for the development of science and mathematics texts. By 1983 the pupil/book

ratio was reduced to 1.4:1 for elementary science and 1.6:1 for elementary maths. In the second phase of the project (1982–85) further emphasis was placed on curriculum improvements and on the introduction of improved teaching methods. Short-term in-service training in the use of the new materials was provided to teachers to encourage the adoption of the new texts.

The Educational Development Project Implementation Task Force (EDPITAF) represented another thrust in the effort to improve school quality. To support the Textbook Project and the New Elementary School Curriculum (introduced in 1983/84), EDPITAF distributed science equipment to selected schools in poorer regions. The distribution effort received support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). EDPITAF does not, however, appear to have been entirely successful, because it was unable to meet the elementary schools' requirements for science equipment.

Efforts have also been made to improve internal efficiency by addressing the need for improved school management. For example, the Philippines has attempted to improve the administrative training provided to school principals and administrative staff. Although there are continuing difficulties about what the curriculum and training should cover, efforts are being made.

The effectiveness of these measures in bringing about an improvement in pupil learning cannot be fully assessed. Many of the programmes have only recently been introduced and evaluations have not been undertaken. The best measure of progress in pupil learning available is obtained from a replication of SOUTELE, conducted in 1987. This showed that, although mastery levels were still low, slight improvements in achievement are being realized.

From C. Colclough and K. Lewin,  
*Educating All the Children: The Economic Challenge  
for the 1990s*

tion), and the extent to which the state formally owns (directly or through government-sponsored enterprises) the various agencies of textbook production and distribution. The range of choices available to a country regarding private- and public-sector participation activity is very wide. The

diversity of patterns in which textbook provision alternatives can be combined indicates that there are few predetermined choices between the private- and public-sector roles.

Public policy must determine the appropriate degree, location and mechanisms for state control

or regulation in a given set of national circumstances. Thus understood, the question of the appropriate balance between the state and private sectors in textbook provision is vital. One must judge in terms of the real alternatives available at a given time and place. In short, pedagogical and economic pragmatism should be the guide rather than any rigid ideological predisposition towards either the private or the public sector.

All countries insist on state influence over school curricula and consequently over textbook content. A natural extension of this normal public prerogative is often to assume that textbook design and manufacturing should be carried out by local firms. The line of reasoning is similar to that for any other enterprise in which there is a perceived national interest – namely, that local jobs are at stake, that a local enterprise has an existing or potential comparative advantage, that local capacity (not currently extant) requires experience and therefore ‘protection’ in its infant stages, and that foreign contracts consume scarce foreign exchange. Such arguments are put forward in many domains of manufacturing and commerce, often with great passion. Political rhetoric asserts that the country’s future ‘depends’ on having these products manufactured locally, its culture and its pride are at stake, and so on.

Local control is distinguishable from local ownership. Many countries have opted on economic grounds for offshore publishing or printing of textbooks (in fact, much of the manufacturing of both textbooks and general books for developed countries is done in developing countries), while maintaining a satisfactory degree of control over textbook content and design. Given such experience, the choice between local or international publishing and/or printing should be based upon economic analysis. In some cases, full development or adaptation by an international firm is the most sensible alternative. In others, the use of local publishers and/or printers may be economically the more sensible approach, or the only available alternative, especially where the language of instruction is unique to a country. If the decision is taken to use local industry, the question of whether to ‘protect’ that industry inevitably arises.

If protection is required, it implies that local sources are not currently competitive with international sources. Whatever form protection may take and however good the reasons for it, protection has a monetary cost. There are three relevant questions. How much is that cost? Who will pay it? Is the justification for the additional cost acceptable? One other principle needs to be mentioned. There is never enough money in an economy to accept all claims for protection simultaneously – those from manufacturing, agriculture, services, etc. If all claims for protection were to be accepted, they would bankrupt any economy.

A related question is that of ‘cultural control’: the assumption that to control content, the product must originate locally. It goes beyond the quality or appropriateness of the product itself in that international firms, whether in other developing countries or in industrialized countries, can be responsive to culture-specific demands by curricular authorities. However, an external product may be declared implicitly unacceptable for political reasons. The question then becomes one of expediency – when the education budget is fixed or in decline, how much of a sacrifice is justified in order to have locally produced materials?

The transferability of materials between countries is controlled by copyright law. National and international copyright provisions are an essential incentive to the production and dissemination of knowledge. Even so, they are viewed by many people in developing countries as symbols of existing international inequalities and as impediments to their acquisition of knowledge. It has been observed that national attitudes towards copyright change over time: as countries develop their own publishing industry, they tend to view copyright provisions more favourably. Empirically, the number of countries which do not belong to an international copyright convention is decreasing, but at the same time ‘piracy’ of books and software is increasing. Fewer countries may engage in piracy but those that do so are engaging in it on a greater scale. International copyright law is extremely complex. In any international negotiations about textbook provision, developing countries will need to acquire specialized legal advice.

One constraint many developing countries share is access to paper stocks. Contrary to what was believed a few years ago, there is no worldwide shortage of paper, nor does it appear likely that one will develop. Compared to prices for other products, book-quality paper prices over the past several years have tended to remain stable or decrease slightly. None the less, developing countries frequently pay more for paper than is charged to customers in developed countries, even after differences in shipping costs are taken into account. Furthermore, there are times when certain types of paper are very difficult to find on the international market. Careful planning of paper acquisition could result in significant cost savings and so help to reduce book prices. It is particularly important to buy paper in large lots. Multinational experiments are underway with 'paper buyer clubs' to realize the savings that arise from bulk buying. However, savings from such buying can sometimes be squandered by increased warehousing costs or by losses due to improper warehousing. In some countries, local paper production has proved to be an economically viable alternative, but in a few cases it has resulted in prices higher than those on the international market. Developed countries may be able to play a useful role in assisting with paper acquisition by jointly establishing some form of 'paper bank', perhaps along the lines of the Paper Supply Project financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Finally, in most developed and many developing countries, it is assumed without question that textbooks should be provided free to pupils. However, in other countries pupils or their parents are expected to pay for textbooks and, in some cases, even very poor parents are willing to pay at least a small sum for textbooks. Indeed, in some countries a revolving fund or book fee is the only possible way to finance a sustainable textbook provision system. Experience with revolving funds has been mixed: some appear to be working well, others have failed. Investigation of the conditions necessary for success is warranted. However, the question of equity remains. What does one do about children whose families are so desperately poor that they cannot afford even a very modest book

fee? Partial subsidization may be appropriate. Some countries successfully operate combined systems, selling or renting books in wealthier areas and providing them free in poorer regions.

### **The politics of textbook content and production**

Educators tend to regard their work as apolitical. This is far from the truth. Decisions about curricular content, and therefore textbook content, frequently reflect deep-rooted political conflicts within a country. In relatively open political systems, textbook content often represents delicate compromises between groups with different ideological positions, variant religious beliefs and practices, or distinct ethnic and tribal backgrounds. Inappropriate or insensitive decisions can provoke political conflict or lead to rejection of textbooks by some groups. In one-party states, textbook content is usually carefully shaped to reflect the prevailing ideology. In such cases, sudden political shifts or changes of regime can render obsolete a large part of a country's stock of textbooks, requiring massive and expensive rewriting and production.

While curriculum development and textbook publishing are distinct enterprises, there is a general need for closer collaboration between them. Those responsible for curriculum development often have little idea of the cost implications of the specifications that they develop for textbooks and other teaching materials. Instances can be found where the formal specifications for types and quantities of texts, exercise books, etc. are far beyond what the country could possibly afford. Frequently, specifications are laid down for book length, paper quality, book size, and type and quantity of illustrations that greatly magnify the cost of producing the textbooks, or that require technology unavailable locally. Early and continuous collaboration between curriculum developers and textbook publishers is required to produce books that are pedagogically sound, economically affordable and politically acceptable.

Although an adequate supply of textbooks is essential for effective learning, simply placing books

*Box 5.2 The Community Publishing Programme in Zimbabwe*

Zimbabwe's Community Publishing Programme Network has grown from about 300 participants in 1986 to 1,000 in 1990. Sponsored by the Ministry of Community and Co-operative Development, this programme aims to promote development through books, other media and workshops which will build up the practical and analytical skills, confidence and creativity of development workers at all levels.

More specifically, its target readership includes village community workers, local leaders, project members and learning groups, extension workers at other levels, trainers and others who support rural development.

The books are produced collectively and democratically through the following process. The book team

(made up of four full-time media and development workers) travels around Zimbabwe listening to what people want in a book. They meet a variety of people at province, district, ward and village level, and get ideas and information from them on the book themes. The visits are followed up through correspondence. The book team then puts together a first draft, based on research journeys and documentary research. The draft is widely tested and workshops are held to get a national consensus on the final form of the book. Finally, the books are translated, printed and distributed at workshops where participants learn how to use them effectively and to create their own media on local themes not covered in the books.

in schools will have little effect if teachers have not been trained in how to use them and if there is a shortage of other ancillary learning materials (workbooks, exercise books, pencils and chalk, for example). An effective textbook provision system must take into account all elements of a total instruction package. Beyond this, it is clear that if children learn to read effectively in school but have nothing to read when they leave school, literacy will soon decline. Consequently, the political investment in textbooks and indeed much of the total national investment in education will be lost. Textbook provision programmes should be conceived as part of an overall 'reading materials development strategy'. In the words of a speaker from one of the countries which has successfully pursued such an overall strategy: 'We have created a country of readers.' Those responsible for textbook provision systems should never lose sight of the fact that 'a country of readers' is the ultimate political goal.

The next point to be considered is what roles local and foreign-based publishers should play in the supply of books to developing countries and whether these roles are mutually exclusive. The major charge against multinational publishers is that they operate a market policy, originating and producing their books outside the national economy, and therefore contribute very little to the development of a publishing infrastructure within

the country. However, with the introduction of a national indigenization policy, ownership of a proportion of the equity share-holding in publishing firms may be transferred to local directors.

The potential strength of the private sector is indicated by the Nigerian experience. The Nigerian Publishers Association has over 54 registered book publishers. According to a 1982 estimate (excluding various government printers), there are 93 private commercial publishers, 18 institutional publishers, 110 periodical and magazine publishers, 29 newspaper publishers and 72 printers. A recent study asserts that there are over 1,000 'publishers of sorts' in Nigeria. There is little doubt that Nigeria has the largest publishing industry in Africa. Most of the major publishers have thirty to forty years' experience in commercial textbook publishing in Africa. Tight economic conditions have forced most publishers to supply the commercial book trade on a cash basis and to develop an extensive van-delivery system which calls regularly on the bookshops during the main buying seasons to ensure the availability of constant stock.

Even with this local participation, it is estimated that 70 per cent of books available in Nigeria are published abroad and that 80 per cent are printed by foreign printing presses. The local publishing companies import 99 per cent of the raw materials and 100 per cent of the equipment and spare parts

they need. Recently, publishers have used increasing proportions of the local newsprint for book production. This should reduce the raw material import levels for future years. Nevertheless, many secondary-school books are still imported, and high prices and low availability are both considerable issues. The development of new locally published course materials for junior secondary schools and the gradual progression of locally published materials into senior secondary schools will help this situation to a large extent if prices can be kept low enough for parents. But factors in the printing and paper supply sectors may well militate against this projection.

The Nigerian publishing industry is a national asset. Nigerian commercial publishing enterprises are equipped with a full range of skills, and they work closely with state and federal curriculum development agencies to design and produce various course materials and textbooks that reflect Nigerian curriculum development activity. While individual states also develop specialist course materials to suit their own needs, the commercial publishing industry in Nigeria has demonstrated a national capacity to work with individual states in a mutually beneficial manner.

As seen earlier, local production is not necessarily cheaper production, especially if most of the material inputs are obtained from foreign sources. Multinational firms have an obvious advantage, since they can operate from environments with healthier economies and stronger currencies. This should not, however, preclude a constructive arrangement which stimulates the development and growth of the local publishing industry. In the context of an externally assisted development programme, co-operation should affect the structure of the local industry so that it will be self-sustaining when the programme comes to an end. Participation of multinationals should be subject to a minimum level of local participation in the programme or to a certain initial 'local industry' advantage allotted to bids for contracts from local publishers.

Leaving the provision of textbooks to both the local publishing industry and international publishers appears to be a promising option in solving the book needs of Nigeria, in particular, and the

African continent, in general. No government, especially of a developing country, is equipped with adequate funds, management and infrastructure to handle this specialized task.

In summary, the experience in Nigeria suggests that of the major operations of book availability (curriculum development, origination, production and distribution), government can achieve whatever national objectives exist by controlling curriculum development alone. Government can participate with the private sector in the origination of the text manuscripts but should play no role in production and distribution activities. Co-operation between local and foreign publishers may enhance education, promote understanding between countries, reduce developing country dependence and avoid international tension resulting from policies based solely on confrontational comparative advantage or narrow protectionism.

### **Participants in the textbook process**

Many people do many things in the process of developing a textbook. The key actors are the educators (curriculum designers and content specialists), the publishers, the writers and the editors. The specific roles of each are described as follows.

The *educators* must analyse the curriculum and prepare a list of basic or minimum concepts and competencies required for each subject at each grade level. They determine what content is appropriate for the textbooks and what should be reserved for teachers' guides and workbooks or for other educational activities such as teacher training. The educators must identify how much real time is available for pupils. Because of holidays and absenteeism, the time actually available for learning is less than the formal school year would suggest. Educators must also recognize that government priorities and policies require that more time in the curriculum should be devoted to certain subjects and topics.

Curriculum developers must prepare detailed content outlines for each textbook. Micro-design requires a sequence chart of units and lessons for each textbook, while macro-design involves a

scope-and-sequence chart for an entire series of texts in the same subject area. Instructional design techniques require that learning objectives be established for each instructional topic and that evaluation items be provided for the monitoring of learning achievement.

Draft textbooks need to be field-tested in actual classroom situations. The interest in and readability of the content can be assessed from pupil and teacher responses. Field-testing also permits revisions based upon greater insight into the time demands related to specific instructional topics. Educators also can use the field-testing as a basis for designing teacher orientation and training programmes. These activities can help the teacher make better use of the textbooks, anticipate certain instructional problems and be prepared to deal with topics not presented in the textbooks or the support materials.

Once textbooks are distributed and in use, the educators' role shifts to evaluation. The evaluation work should consider learning achievement, of course, but should also pay attention to such concerns as specific chapters, topics, or even words or pictures that teachers or pupils find difficult. The purpose of the evaluation is not simply to judge success or failure, but to serve as a basis for quality improvements.

A second set of major actors in the textbook process are the *publishers*. They are concerned with the cost-effectiveness of textbooks, that is, whether production costs for a given quality of content and presentation will be sufficiently low to allow the book to be marketed to the ultimate purchasers – whether they are government officials, school administrators or parents. The publishers are concerned that the books have sufficient but not excess content, that there be an optimum use of paper with no excess trims or blank pages and that the textbook be appropriate for the classroom situation (multigrade classes or shared desks, for example) in which it will actually be used.

The issue of life-in-use is an important cost and marketing concern for publishers. How frequently new copies will be required and the cycle of revision are issues that the publisher must also consider. The criterion of cost-effectiveness will be rele-

vant whether the publisher is a government agency operating on a constrained fiscal budget or a private firm attempting to obtain a fair return on its capital investment.

The *writers* of textbooks must operate within the conceptual and content structure set by the educational professionals, and the economic and technical realities faced by the publishers. The writers must be prepared to present the textual information in a manner that is basic, correct, complete and appropriate to the age-group and reading level of the pupils for whom the volume is designed. At the same time, the writers will be trying to make the content and presentation interesting and understandable to the children. Frequent testing of draft material with pupils is essential for ensuring a final text appropriate to the target audience.

The writers can develop their material in such a way as to inculcate those values desired by society. Respect for parents, the rewards of hard work, the importance of obedience to laws and peaceful resolutions of conflicts, and the need for conservation of the environment, are examples of values writers might be asked to encourage.

Finally, the writers can design their textbooks to increase their readers' appreciation of the country's leaders, authors, and major historical figures and events. Great works of literature and science, local or global, can be included in whole or in adapted forms.

The *editors'* role in textbook production is often controversial and poorly understood. While writers often see editors as their opponents, the actual functions of the two should be collaborative and mutually supportive. It is the editors' responsibility to assess manuscripts for completeness, correctness and compliance with curricular requirements; they must also evaluate the suitability of the content and approach to the target audiences' age-group or reading level.

Among the detailed functions of editors are specifying type size (often larger for lower-grade levels), maintaining a balance between textual and illustrative content, seeing that vocabulary is controlled and carefully developed, and that readability formulae (words per sentence, sentences per paragraph, etc.) are reasonably applied. The edi-

tors and writers should co-operate in designing and implementing the revision of the manuscript.

It is the editors who must promote consistency of style and presentation, and ensure that the support materials, such as the teachers' guides, correspond to the textbook presentation.

Finally, the editors maintain overall responsibility for the physical production of the textbook. They work closely with book designers, printers, millers, binders, freight forwarders, and book distributors and sellers to assure the best book for the price is made available to the individual pupil.

### **Instructional materials and Education for All**

This section considers the relevance of the economic, political and technical aspects of textbook production to the Education for All initiative. In a time of scarce resources, a critical issue is how more textbooks can be provided to pupils, both those at present in school and the increasing numbers who will be there in the future.

The shortage of able writers, editors and book designers exists as a barrier to effective textbook production in some developing countries. One may question the rationale of governments in investing substantial funds in textbook production in the absence of qualified personnel; the result is likely to be a very uneconomic effort and the waste of scarce financial resources. As an example of such waste, one can look at the consequences of printing 250,000 copies of a 100-page textbook with several blank pages; better planning could enable another 2,500 copies to be printed for about the same cost. The competence of governments even as buyers of teaching materials has also to be improved.

Some observers criticize the tendency of many governments to spend large amounts on teachers and facilities while curtailing investments in educational materials. The resulting variation in the supply of textbooks and support materials is one origin of educational inequality. Data from the early 1980s showed per-pupil expenditures on learning materials varied from \$0.80 in Bolivia to over \$300 in the Scandinavian countries.

The role of the private sector in publishing and the policy of protecting local publishing industries are controversial issues. In India, where the nationalization and centralization of textbook production is a situation that is not likely to change in the foreseeable future, there is still an opportunity for a private role in distribution. In addition, many local private-sector publishers look forward to healthy international competition. Protection, in the short term, can have the effect of providing time to foster local technical and financial support, and to ensure more equitable competition. In contrast, prolonged protection can reduce incentives for efficiency and cause a lack of international competitiveness when the protective barriers are removed.

In conclusion, textbooks, as a principal support for instruction, will continue to play a leading role in the efforts to meet the basic learning needs in all countries. The number of pupils in school in developing countries will certainly increase because of growth in the school-age population and improvements in participation rates. Therefore, attention to finding solutions to the current crisis in educational quality and availability of learning materials must consider issues of textbook design, production and distribution. A prerequisite of Education for All is that all pupils in developed and developing countries, rural and urban, rich and poor, must have access to effective learning materials at an affordable cost.

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## 6. Utilizing assessment capacities to improve learning

The problems that face education managers in both developed and developing countries are diverse and severe. In general terms, school populations are burgeoning, budgets are shrinking relative to financial need (and often in terms of absolute purchasing power), the proportion of unqualified teachers is growing and community support is in danger of eroding because of a perception in many countries that instructional quality and learning achievement have declined. Since 1950 a massive increase has occurred worldwide in school enrolment. However, many pupils are not well-served by their schools, more than 100 million children remain outside formal schooling, and even more youths and adults are not equipped with the basic skills of literacy and numeracy required for effective lives.

The evidence of declining achievement is especially worrying. The 25 to 33 per cent achievement gap that is said to exist between developed and developing countries in the scores of primary-school pupils for reading, mathematics and science is a very substantial problem, given that the absolute levels of achievement in many developed countries do not even meet the societal requirements for effective development. Also, these differences in averages disguise large intra-country variations that correlate with the location, socio-economic status, and racial, ethnic and tribal origins of pupils.

Research evidence over the last two decades suggests that both the average and distributional problems of learning achievement can be addressed and that education managers are a necessary and important component in any strategy to affect learn-

ing achievement. A greater management focus must be placed on achievement outcomes, and new management tools must be adopted and adapted to allow managers of schools and non-formal learning programmes to fulfil their new role. By monitoring such educational indicators as pupil achievement, the number and proportion of pupils moving between grades and levels of the education system, and school-leaver employment and performance in the workplace, education managers can improve the basis for their decision-making about such issues as curriculum implementation, teacher assignments and resource allocation.

Better information, broader networking and an improved capacity for assessment and analysis will help empower education managers as they endeavour to upgrade primary-school systems and non-formal education programmes. Better information requires that the data collected on learning activities be accurate, relevant, timely, understandable and affordable. Broader networking implies that communication be horizontal (for example, among school principals and among district officials) as well as vertical (among education managers at different levels of the system). An improved capacity for assessment and analysis involves not only enhanced quantitative skills by education managers but an increased ability to understand the qualitative dimensions of learning and the social, cultural and economic contexts within which any reform of the learning process must take place.

The preceding chapters have discussed the requirements of Education for All in terms of em-

powerment of individuals; the status and roles of teachers; the participation of non-governmental organizations, the community, the parents and the learners; and the critical importance of instructional materials. This chapter shifts attention to the specific capacities necessary for the assessment of learning achievement that must be improved in order to realize the Conference's goals. The discussion of management in Monograph II illustrated the need to develop a broad range of analytical capacities to parallel the evolving information base and technology changes occurring in education management around the world. The challenges to be faced in improving learning for all will only be met if broader and more appropriate use is made of the resources available for basic education and if the means and content of assessment activities are refined to promote learning and not just the evaluation or selection of pupils.

The use of assessment techniques and processes poses instructional risks but it offers substantial benefits as well. Those who desire to implement Education for All will have to direct their energies to designing the *proper* use of assessment. There is little question that management capacities in this area will have to be developed, improved and utilized properly to encourage better learning.

## The role of assessment

*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.*

*World Declaration on Education for All, Art. 4*

Pupil attendance in school without learning makes no social, economic or pedagogical sense. Achievement, as defined by each country to fit its own priorities, can be monitored by assessment procedures. However, the key policy question is how to gain the positive benefits of assessment without incurring the all-too-common disadvantages of an examination-driven system.

It is important to recognize that assessment is not limited to attempts to measure, *after the fact*, how much learning has taken place. To be fully effective, assessment must be interactive with the teaching/learning process. There must be a feedback mechanism to tell the pupil, teacher, school and parents what has and has not been learned and *why*. Also, the best feedback systems include suggestions for remedial and enrichment activities.

Even summative (after the fact) assessments can assist the learning achievement of future pupils. This can be done by identifying weaknesses in the curriculum, teaching, materials, motivation or organization of the school. Summative assessment can have profound effects, especially when the assessment results are tied to the pupils' opportunity to advance to further education or training. The challenge to education managers is to ensure that these 'profound' effects are also positive ones.

Assessment takes place in all learning activities. It may be as informal as a teacher looking over a pupil's shoulder or as formal as an international programme to identify comparative achievement levels. The criticisms addressed to assessment activities are not of the process *per se*, but of the particular forms it takes and the uses to which it is put.

Three general models of assessment exist: classroom-based, school-based and external. The three models are not mutually exclusive; in fact, classroom assessment is assumed to be a universal activity, and school-based and external assessment systems often operate simultaneously.

*Classroom-based assessment* is used by teachers to see if pupils have understood their studies. It includes informal observation and monitoring, as well as more formal evaluations of individual and group assignments, and written and oral examinations. Assessment begins on the first day in class and continues until schooling is completed. Whether this classroom-based assessment is considered continuous or recurrent, the use of assessment information is more important than the frequency of its collection. The individual pupils should be informed of their progress, their strengths and weaknesses, and how they can improve. This feedback should be individual and not comparative; contrasting one pupil's performance with that of

This chapter is based on material presented or available at the round table entitled 'Using Assessment to Improve Learning'. The round table was organized by the Conference Secretariat. It was chaired by Aklilu Habte, Special Advisor, Human Resource Department, Africa Region, World Bank, and the presenters were:

Paul Murphy (Moderator)  
General Secretary, Higher Education for Development Cooperation (HEDCO), Ireland.

Thomas Kellaghan  
Education Research Centre, St. Patrick's College,  
Ireland.

Se-ho Shin  
Korean Education Development Institute (KEDI),  
Republic of Korea.

Ahamed Yussufu  
Kenya National Examinations Council, Kenya.

others may affect the motivation of some individuals, but it also can discourage further effort, and engender values and attitudes counterproductive to future learning.

It is important that assessment results be used by teachers to modify their own efforts. By identifying areas of weakness in pupil performance, assessments can help teachers restructure their own classroom behaviour. Classroom-based assessments are most effective when teachers have a high degree of professional competency. Since the teachers must often design, administer and interpret the evaluations themselves, the use of classroom assessment can be problematic for untrained or inadequately prepared teachers. The demands by teaching professionals for a greater control over classroom management are also reflected in a preference for a greater dependence on classroom-based assessment.

The reporting of assessment results is always a source of debate. In classroom-level evaluations, the results are normally shared only with the pupils and, less frequently, with their families. In addition, teachers may be required periodically to submit a summary 'grade' for each pupil to the school records system. Since it is impossible for any set of scores to do more than approximate the complexity of the actual learning progress of a child, these summary reports engender much controversy. It should be understood that such reporting has more to do with accountability to parents, the community and government than with the promotion of learning achievement. However, the motivational aspect of such external reporting does exist; the question again is whether this benefit justifies the

negative effect on pupil-to-pupil and pupil-to-teacher relationships.

At the end of an academic year the classroom-based assessment serves as a primary basis for deciding if pupils may proceed to the next grade or must repeat the present one. Automatic promotion rules in some countries and school systems have removed this use of assessment, although the assessment results may still be used for 'tracking' pupils based on perceived ability. Other teachers, the principal and even the parents will often be asked to participate in decision-making about promotion/retention where no obvious solution presents itself.

In some countries *school-based examinations* are used for assessment purposes. Often, individual teachers are allowed to submit items for the examinations, but the final form of the examination is decided on collectively. Supplementing classroom-based assessment with school-based assessment broadens the assessment base. A single teacher may fail either to teach or test pupils on a given topic within the curriculum. This failure, which cannot be revealed by normal classroom-based assessment procedures, can be exposed in school examinations constructed by a group of teachers.

In the Philippines, 'Minimum Learning Competencies' have been identified as a common learning base for all classrooms. The defined competencies are considered to be relevant to all school contexts regardless of location, level of community development or ethnic background of pupils. These same competencies have been used by curriculum designers in the Philippines in the development of school textbooks. The specification of such com-

petencies allows school-based assessment to take place without the introduction of a local or regional bias. The common learning base also allows district and regional officials to use the assessment results as a means of comparing schools and areas. In this respect, the actual difference between these school-based and other external assessments is a small one.

The Philippine examinations focus on three domains: cognitive, psycho-motor and affective. The cognitive domain is assessed primarily through written examinations. Psycho-motor skills are evaluated for such activities as music, dance and physical education. Teachers rank the performance of pupils based on guidelines provided by the national authorities. The measurement of affective achievement emphasizes both feelings and behaviour. Honesty, co-operation and other values and behaviours are evaluated and scored. The reports on pupils that are sent to parents include results in all three learning domains.

Kenya is an example of a country that makes extensive use of an *external examination system*. The Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam is taken by approximately 350,000 candidates each year. It has two purposes: to certify certain skills for those who enter the labour market immediately following the end of the primary-school cycle and to provide the basis for selecting pupils for the limited opportunities in secondary education.

Some of the negative effects of the external examination process are tendencies for teachers to narrow the curriculum by teaching only to the examination content; to de-emphasize general writing skills; for knowledge of facts to take precedence over higher-order skills; and for non-cognitive results to be undervalued. Attempts to enter more practical skills into the assessment process in Kenya have helped balance the emphasis between the certification and selection functions of the examinations. However, KCPE still does not serve the needs of children who leave the system prior to the end of the primary cycle when the examination is administered.

A major salutary aspect of the Kenyan assessment process is the feedback system introduced by

the Kenya National Examinations Council. A feedback document is produced each year to report the analysis of the examination results, to identify areas of weakness and to provide suggestions to teachers to help their pupils do better. Teachers have found this document valuable in reforming their own instructional behaviour.

In summary, the locus of assessment appears to be a less critical issue than the coverage of the assessment, its form and frequency and the use to which the results are put. An effective assessment will attempt to include all major learning domains to the extent that present skills and techniques allow (assessment of affective achievement is an especially controversial area). The form and frequency of the assessment should be equitable for all pupils (avoiding bias by social class or location) and the skills used in the assessment process should be those the system or school wishes to encourage. For example, if rote memorization is rewarded, that is the skill pupils will develop. Assessments should be sufficiently frequent to provide for learning adjustments but not so common as to interfere with adequate time for normal teaching/learning activities. Finally, the use of assessment results in many cases will be the deciding factor in terms of the influence of the assessments on the curriculum and the behaviour of pupils and teachers (and possibly of education administrators, parents and the community).

### **Promoting effective assessment**

There are six basic premises upon which assessment activities should be based. They should result in increased pupil motivation; focus on the most important topics of learning; be relatively frequent; be appropriate to the level of difficulty of the curriculum and to the reality of the classroom; test both knowledge and thinking; and provide prompt, relevant and useful feedback.

One question frequently raised about assessment is why co-operation and teamwork are not examined even though most curricula mention them as valuable skills the school should endeavour to develop. In fact, most examinations reward individual success and competition. Classroom as-

### Box 6.1 Focusing on educational outcomes

Educational results, or outcomes, are the key to education's contribution to economic development. Unfortunately, few managers can attend to educational results or outcomes because of the political, social or resource environment in which they work.

The outcomes of basic education, reduced to their simplest terms, are quite straightforward: people who can read and write; people who can do arithmetic; and people who can apply what they have learned to solve new problems.

While managers focus on teachers, funds, supplies and buildings, too little is known about what pupils really learn. They have no real idea of the ability of their pupils to read, write, do arithmetic or think creatively.

Successful education managers recognize that they must emphasize educational outcomes. They must ensure that the system in which they operate focuses on the results achieved with available resources.

Monitoring needs to be promoted and carried out by education managers at several levels if an educational outcomes approach is to be effective.

- *At the school level*, education managers can monitor pupil progress through test results and through supervision of classroom teachers.
- *At the district, provincial and national levels*, education managers can encourage performance monitoring by focusing responsibility for pupil improvement at the school level through accountability measures, promotion policies and awards.
- *At the national level*, education managers can monitor the overall performance of the schools through a

Management Information System and specific sector assessments.

The desired educational outcomes guide the allocation of resources, which in turn are reviewed in the light of actual educational performance. Each education manager, whether at the ministry, the region, the district or the school, is part of this process. This happens, to varying degrees, in countries as diverse as Colombia, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Thailand and Zimbabwe.

With an outcomes orientation, there is more understanding of the education system and its activities because the beneficiaries – the pupils, the parents, the employers and the national leadership – have alternative ways of judging the results.

While an outcomes orientation can provide the information needed to improve the quality of schooling, it can lead to unintended consequences. For example, over-reliance on testing can lead teachers to 'teach to the test' – emphasizing memorization of facts and rote learning. Programmes using test results to stimulate competition among classes, schools and districts can frustrate those who continually find themselves at the bottom because of factors beyond their control.

An outcomes orientation, in short, cannot be pursued in a single-minded fashion; rather, it needs to be accompanied by an equally aggressive programme to stimulate the capacity of schools, education managers and classroom teachers to improve. Pursuing both policies may create the best conditions for pupils to generate their own knowledge after they graduate.

Adapted from *Creating Capacity for Educational Progress*,  
Academy for Educational Development

assessment is sometimes based on group projects; however, it must be acknowledged that examinations rarely pay adequate attention to collective or interactive behaviour or performance by pupils.

Much of the discussion of assessment centres on the uses of assessment results. It should not be only the pupils who fail or pass assessments, but the whole school environment. Assessment should not be limited to examinations. Assessment should reveal the factors that promoted or constrained learning, including parental and community support, the curriculum, instructional materials, teachers

and school managers. The end product of an assessment should be more information about why the results occurred, not just dissemination of the results themselves.

Education managers, constrained by resources, have attempted to use assessment as a means of selecting pupils with a good probability of success at higher levels of education. An unresolved question is whether assessment procedures that measure past achievement are an acceptable basis for equitably forecasting future performance. Empirical evidence on this topic, like that on the effect of

assessments in increasing pupil learning, is not conclusive.

Finally, there is a paucity of knowledge about the use of formative and summative assessments in basic education programmes for out-of-school youths and adults. To be declared 'literate' or 'skilled' is not a uniform certification of achievement even within a given country; the variation internationally can be quite wide. Furthermore, the general use of assessments to improve out-of-school instruction appears even less developed than in school.

In summary, the improvement of methods of assessment (both in-school and public examinations) is proposed as a way of enhancing pupil learning in basic education. Guidelines for improving in-school assessment include the frequent questioning or testing of pupils, asking questions at the appropriate level of difficulty, asking questions that require the pupil to think and apply principles, providing feedback information soon after a task is completed to focus pupils' attention on their progress and, perhaps most important of all, finding out why pupils make errors and devising ways of helping them avoid similar errors in the future.

Guidelines for improving public examinations include ensuring that important curricular topics are covered, using a variety of modes of assessment, paying adequate attention to the measure-

ment of higher-order skills, testing pupils' ability to apply their knowledge and skills in situations outside as well as within the school, supplying detailed information to schools and teachers on pupils' examination performance, and providing interpretation of pupil difficulties and guidance on remedial action. Examinations that follow these guidelines should not only be useful as selection instruments but also serve the needs of the pupils who are not selected for further education.

The conditions required for good-quality examinations concern characteristics of the examining body (which should be adequately financed and staffed, and independent in the exercise of its functions) and relationships between the examining body, teachers, and agencies and individuals with responsibility for curricula.

The improvement of assessment methods in schools should lead to greater internal efficiency in education systems by reducing grade repetition and early drop-out. The resulting savings in the per capita costs of educating pupils could be used to improve the assessment function (for instance, strengthening professional skills in examination bodies, providing pre-service and in-service courses for teachers, and improving channels of communication among the significant actors in the education and assessment processes). Such savings will be particularly valuable in moving towards Education for All in resource-scarce environments.

# 7. Financing Education for All

Regardless of the success in meeting the individual requirements for Education for All, there remains the issue of the overall ability to finance education programmes offering access to learning opportunities at a level of quality sufficient to satisfy the goals of the Conference. This chapter deals with issues of cost (how much funding will be required) and financing (who will pay and in what form). Emphasis is on the international context, the dimensions of the cost and financing challenge, and policy initiatives that can be taken to reduce the cost burden.

The focus of this chapter is the provision of *formal primary schooling*, not the full spectrum of learning opportunities included in the Conference's broadened concept of basic education. This distinction will be emphasized throughout by reference to *Schooling for All*. Obviously, *Schooling for All* is a major component of *Education for All*, but the emphasis here on *Schooling for All* should not be interpreted as indicating a priority concern for formal schooling. Since the research presented at Jomtien represents an initial attempt to deal with the broad cost and financing issues, it was simpler to concentrate on the aspect of *Education for All* for which relatively complete data exist. The lessons learned from this exercise are directly applicable to many of the cost and financing issues that will arise in other aspects of *Education for All* outside formal primary schooling.

## The international context

The 1980s were characterized by profoundly different rates of economic progress among the coun-

tries of the world. For the industrialized countries, the sharp recession at the outset of the decade gave way to seven years of uninterrupted growth. Throughout the decade, the industrializing countries of east Asia continued to grow rapidly and south Asian countries maintained modest but steady growth in per capita incomes. But elsewhere it has been a very different story. In Africa and in Latin America hundreds of millions of people have experienced a pronounced decline in their real incomes and in the services available to them. In many countries, per capita incomes in 1990 were lower than they were ten or fifteen years ago.

This sharply different record, which led to a substantial widening of the gulf that separates the rich and poor, is also reflected in the changing pattern of access to education. Government spending has been tightly controlled in response to increases in debt service payments, declines in concessional finance and the fiscal conditions imposed upon borrowing countries by their international creditors. Expenditure restraint has hit the provision of schooling particularly hard. In more than half of the seventy-six developing countries for which data are available, spending on education fell as a proportion of total public spending over the 1980s. In almost two-thirds of them, expenditure per pupil and per teacher at the primary level fell. In one-fifth of these developing countries, total enrolments in primary school have fallen since 1980 and new entrants to grade one have declined in a similar proportion of cases. These trends must be viewed with extreme concern because this group of countries, which includes three-quarters of the world's population, has a median rate of popula-

tion growth in excess of 2 per cent per annum, so a similar rate of expansion of school enrolments would be required simply to prevent a deterioration in present enrolment ratios.

Set against this bleak international context, one can properly examine the challenge of providing primary schooling for all children by the year 2000. The criteria used to define the achievement of Schooling for All have two major dimensions. First, the provision of a primary-school place for each eligible child is required. Second – and equally important – the quality of the education provided must be such as to facilitate effective learning. In many countries the quantitative goal is close to being met, yet there is still far to go in achieving adequately supported primary schooling. As will be shown, the group of countries for which the relative dimensions of this task are greatest mainly comprises the poorest and/or most indebted countries of the world.

The round table examined the main policy instruments that can be used to expand access to schooling even in the context of fiscal restraint, drawing lessons from country case-studies of promising reforms and from the wider research literature. A set of policies that could lead to substantial savings was identified. However, the need to protect or improve the *quality* of schooling – via teacher upgrading and materials support – could, and probably should, absorb a large part of the available resources in many countries as they move towards Schooling for All.

### Dimensions of the challenge

The capacity to provide school places for pupils is indicated by a country's primary gross enrolment ratio (GER): when this reaches 100 per cent, the number of children (of all ages) attending primary school is equal to the size of the eligible age-group. Of ninety-five developing countries having comparable data in 1985, primary-school enrolment in thirty-five amounted to less than 90 per cent of the 6–11 age-group.

The range of GERs was wide, varying from around 20 per cent in Somalia and Mali to over 80 per cent in Egypt, Morocco and Mozambique, with

the median GER being 60 per cent. Thus, for more than half of the countries with GERs below 90 per cent, and allowing for population growth, the total number of primary-school places available in 1985 would need to be doubled in order to accommodate by the year 2000 all children of primary-school age. This acute enrolment challenge is predominantly a low-income phenomenon: twenty-seven of the thirty-five countries have low-income economies, with per capita incomes less than the equivalent of \$500 in 1987. They constitute 54 per cent of all low-income economies and, excluding India and China, they account for 48 per cent of the population of this group of countries. It is significant that the remaining eight middle-income countries in this category are highly indebted countries, each with debt service ratios in excess of 20 per cent of export revenues.

The enrolment challenge is concentrated among the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Twenty-two of the low GER countries are from that region, all except two of them being classified as low-income, and they include more than half of its population. It is startling to note that *in twelve of the countries the gross enrolment ratio actually declined between 1980 and 1985*, which strongly implies that access to schooling deteriorated over the past decade. Of course the gross enrolment ratio can decline as over-age enrolment is reduced, but this is unlikely to be the explanation in countries that are far from providing universal access to schooling. Ten of the twelve countries with declining enrolment ratios have low-income economies; eight are in sub-Saharan Africa.

However, the proportion of the government budget spent on education in these twelve countries was estimated to be, on average, 17 per cent – considerably higher than the 10.4 per cent reported for all low- and middle-income economies for 1987. Thus, declining enrolment at primary level in these countries is not linked to a low relative priority attached to spending on education – although spending priorities within education may be part of the problem.

It is worth noting, furthermore, that in almost half the countries where relevant data are available, the proportion of total public spending allo-

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The presenters in Part A were:

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Project Leader, Institute of Development Studies,  
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Romeo Reyes

Deputy Director, National Economic Development  
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Chairman, Development Assistance Committee,  
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opment (OECD).

Richard Jolly, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF.

Materials used in the preparation of this chapter and  
available at the Conference included:

*Educating All the Children: The Economic Challenge for the  
1990s*, by Christopher Colclough and Keith Lewin.

cated to education fell over the previous five years. Not unexpectedly, this drop in funding seems to have been associated with cases where gross enrolment ratios also fell over the same period: reductions in the proportion of public spending allocated to education occurred in five out of seven countries where enrolment ratios fell and where data on both of these variables are available.

In about two-thirds of these countries, expenditure per teacher and per pupil declined over the early 1980s. These trends are not unambiguous, since they could indicate either decline in the quality of schooling available (arising from smaller resource inputs), or improvement in efficiency (or both). However, the former is the most likely – reflecting the increased economic stringency that governments and school systems were facing in the early 1980s.

Taking account of both the changes in enrolment ratios and the availability of resources per capita, none of these countries seems likely to be able to provide a reasonable quality of Schooling for All by the century's end. A critically important question, therefore, is whether – and to what extent – these circumstances can be influenced by practical changes in domestic policy. What are the policy alternatives for such countries?

## Reducing the unit costs of education

Although the proportion of public expenditure devoted to education varies widely between countries, those that are at present most educationally disadvantaged spend, on average, proportionately *more* on education than do other countries. Although there are important exceptions – particularly in the small number of countries where education accounts for only 10 per cent or less of public expenditure – in general, the most educationally disadvantaged countries are already spending as much as can be afforded from public revenues, even though enrolment ratios at primary level remain low.

The high costs of providing secondary and tertiary education relative to primary schooling – particularly in Africa – are evident. These cost differentials imply that, in Africa, one-fifth of public spending on education provides higher education for only 2 per cent of the eligible age-group. Primary schooling accounts for less than half of all education expenditure even though it is the only form of education – particularly in low-income countries – in which most people have a chance of participating.

A critical question, therefore, concerns whether

these unit costs can be reduced in order to facilitate expansion of primary schooling in the context of the given financial and human resources. Two items dominate the determination of the unit costs of education: the salaries of teachers and the teacher/pupil ratio. Since salary costs typically account for around 90 per cent of recurrent expenditures, most discussions of unit costs in education begin with teachers' salaries.

### *The average earnings of teachers*

It has frequently been stated in the literature that teachers' salaries in developing countries are too high and should be reduced as part of a strategy to reduce unit costs (see the discussion in Chapter 3 of this volume). It is true that, in the first ten to fifteen years of independence, teachers' earnings increased considerably faster than those of other groups in many developing countries. This was partly a result of the power of the large and rapidly growing teaching profession. But it was more a result of an upgrading of the qualifications of the profession – to which levels of remuneration were often explicitly linked – and of a rapid expansion of secondary and tertiary education, wherein the most highly paid teachers were concentrated. The budgetary implications of these changes are regrettable, but they do not, *per se*, provide a convincing case for salary reductions.

A number of commentators point out that the ratio of teachers' average salaries to per capita income is often very high in the poorest countries. This, too, is a misleading indicator: it is as likely to reflect the different proportions of the population dependent upon agricultural self-employment – and, thus, structural differences between countries – as the absolute or relative wage differentials between them. A more useful comparison is between teachers' salaries, per capita agricultural product and the wages earned by 'similar' workers in other sectors of the economy – since teachers' salary scales in most countries are determined in the context of established differentials with other professions. Although there may be some flexibility for raising or lowering salaries earned by one group, the extent to which this can be achieved without

generating equal or compensatory pressures from or for other groups is usually fairly limited. Thus the issue of teachers' salaries cannot usually be addressed separately from that of the level of wages and salaries more generally.

The argument that teachers' salaries are too high is beginning to seem absurd in the light of recent changes in many low-income countries. In fact, real wages outside agriculture began falling in much of Latin America and in sub-Saharan Africa from the mid-1970s onwards. In Latin America, although Brazil, Argentina and Colombia registered significant gains in real wages over 1971–84, they fell sharply in Bolivia, Paraguay and Venezuela, among other countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, wages have fallen in almost every country for which data are available, and in some cases (Ghana, the United Republic of Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Zambia) dramatically so: real wages were typically halved between 1970 and 1985.

Teachers have been able to mount little defence against these trends. Indeed, in so far as public servants have often taken the brunt of salary declines, the loss of earnings for teachers tends to have been greater than the average figures indicated above would suggest. The impact of the decline in the real earnings of teachers has been particularly strong in sub-Saharan Africa: unit teacher costs declined in twelve out of fourteen countries having comparable data for the early 1980s, often by considerable proportions. These changes, of course, also reflect changes in the cost of materials and other supports, but they mainly reflect a decline in real salaries. In current circumstances, many countries have experienced such a sharp reduction in teacher morale and efficiency that the major operational question is not whether, but how, to increase the real value of wages and salaries – even at the cost of having to reduce the numbers of those currently employed.

At secondary and tertiary levels, particularly outside sub-Saharan Africa, there may still be some scope for achieving cost-savings by compressing salary scales for teachers at different levels of the system. It must be noted, however, that the long-established trend of reducing earning differentials between jobs at the top and bottom of the formal

sector has, if anything, accelerated during recent years. While further compression may be possible via declines in the real earnings of the more senior grades, many (though not all) countries have already moved as far in this direction as is, for the present, compatible with minimal standards of teacher efficiency, retention and morale.

Salary decline is not the only means of reducing the amount that the average teacher is paid. Another means is to change the structure of the profession towards a more intensive use of lower-cost personnel. There are various ways of achieving this. In countries where salaries are tied to education or training qualifications, it may be possible to reduce the level of qualifications and/or the mix of personnel without significantly affecting teacher quality or performance.

For example, the Government of Senegal has progressively increased the proportion of 'assistant teachers' over the last few years. This is reported to have contributed to a reduction in unit costs with no noticeable negative impact on teacher quality. Colombia was able to reduce teacher costs in similar ways, by increasing the roles of 'teacher helpers' in the *Escuela Nueva* programme. Not all countries are in a position to introduce such reforms; they would be inappropriate for countries in which the proportion of untrained or insufficiently educated teachers is already large. Elsewhere, however, there may be potential savings to be made.

### *Use of teachers*

The second major way of reducing the unit cost of schooling is by using teachers more intensively. About half of the sub-Saharan African countries for which data are available had pupil/teacher ratios of thirty-seven or less at primary level and twenty-three or less at secondary level in the early 1980s. Where salaries are a high proportion of recurrent costs, an increase of approximately 20 per cent in this ratio – from thirty-five to forty-two at primary, and from twenty-three to twenty-eight at secondary, for example – brings an almost proportional budgetary saving. Here, then, there appears to be significant scope for reductions in unit costs.

One way of making more intensive use of teach-

ers is to introduce some form of *multiple-shift schooling*. Under such arrangements, two or more entirely separate groups of pupils can use the same facilities during the same term, week or day. The most common double-shift system involves one group of pupils attending in the mornings and a second group using the same facilities in the afternoons, but there are many other variants.

Whether teachers' salary costs are reduced depends upon the particular system used. If each shift requires a different set of teachers (as in Singapore), there would be no salary savings. Alternatively, if teachers are paid for the extra work they do, pro rata salary costs would be unaffected, although the number of teachers required – and thus housing and teacher-training costs – would be much reduced in comparison with single-session arrangements. Again, if teachers are paid more for two sessions than for one, but at a lower hourly rate, savings in both the number of teachers and in the salary bill can be achieved. In Senegal, for example, those teaching the second shift receive a 25 per cent supplement to their basic salary for a 48 per cent increase in hours worked, while in Ghana a 60 per cent allowance for double-shift teaching is paid.

As regards recurrent costs more generally, double-shift schooling usually involves economies in the employment of clerks, cleaners, and maintenance and security workers. Although the unit recurrent costs are not halved by double-shift arrangements, because the more heavy use of plant involves higher maintenance expenditures over time, the economies can be significant.

The most substantial cost-savings from multiple-shift teaching are in the area of capital costs. Major savings in land, equipment, libraries, laboratories and classrooms can be made. Zambia's extensive use of double and triple shifts allowed its unit capital costs at primary level to be cut almost in half. This is exceptional since there are many reasons why moving to a double-shift system would not reduce unit costs by half. In Jamaica and Malaysia, the extra maintenance costs together with lower average enrolment in the afternoons resulted in unit capital cost-savings of 32 and 25 per cent, respectively.

Although the balance of the above observations is positive, there is, of course, a range of 'economic costs' that attend the introduction of multiple-shift schooling. Parents have to look after their children during the shifts they do not attend and the costs of this may be substantial. Tutors are sometimes retained privately in order to compensate for the shorter school day for the pupil. Finally, there are also risks for the quality of schooling. The school is usually more tense and hurried; the time for preparation, teaching, breaks and homework is reduced; and teachers, particularly those who have already taught a morning session, may be tired and therefore offer less effective instruction. Furthermore, management costs increase when the conditions become more difficult. Perhaps most significantly for Schooling for All policies, younger children tend to be shifted to afternoon sessions, which are generally less attractive to teachers.

Nevertheless, these problems are not decisive. There is, in fact, little evidence to suggest what impacts multiple shifts (and their associated loss in time-on-task) have upon the cognitive achievements of children. Early studies in Malaysia and Chile found no significant association between the level of academic performance and the number of shifts in a school day, except where the physical facilities were not adequately designed to accommodate multiple-shift teaching.

Reducing the attendance obligations of pupils appears to provide a further way of increasing pupil/teacher ratios. Shortening the number of weeks in the school year, however, is probably associated with declining quality, except where gross inefficiencies or teacher absenteeism are already prevalent. However, evidence from Venezuela suggests that reducing the number of hours per day is probably not so clearly associated with declining quality (at least down to about six hours per day). Part-day attendance, as in double-shift schooling, tends to reduce the opportunity costs of schooling for poorer households, which often depend partially on child labour. For all these reasons a move to multiple-shift teaching presents one of the most promising means of reducing pupil/teacher ratios in many countries.

Another means of using teachers more inten-

sively is to *increase class size*. Research in some developed countries shows that variations in class size from twenty-five to forty pupils have no effect on the performance of children in achievement tests. At the primary level, classes of up to forty-five children are judged to be tolerable, though undesirable. Whatever the reported average figure for class size at the national level, however, there is always a wide dispersion around the mean. Attempts to raise class size should obviously focus upon those schools with small numbers of children per class, while reducing, wherever possible, the number of overcrowded classes.

Often, of course, the low population density in rural areas makes it difficult to increase class size, whereas overcrowding is a common problem in urban centres. Carefully monitoring school data and rationalizing facilities (school mapping, for instance) can help deal with this. But in some countries the geographical distribution of the school-age population presents an important constraint on the effectiveness of such measures.

### *Improving internal efficiency*

The counterpart of using teachers more intensively is achieving a more effective use of pupil time. The *unit cost per graduate* from each level of the school system is the relation to the average time it takes for a child to graduate. Reducing the average time-span by reducing attrition (drop-out) and grade repetition necessarily reduces unit costs.

Children who leave school before the end of defined cycles are often described as drop-outs. Whether dropping out is indeed more 'wasteful' than leaving at an established exit point is debatable. Drop-out is wasteful only if the benefits of schooling are disproportionately bunched at the end of each particular cycle (for example, because of degree certification). Drop-out is not wasteful if the benefits of schooling accrue on a pro rata basis (assuming a threshold to maintain them is reached). This may be plausible for some subjects and skills, but not for skills such as literacy and numeracy that take several years to acquire. At later points in the primary cycle when basic skills have been acquired, early departure may affect

### *Box 7.1 Learning and class size*

Current opinions on the effect of class size on pupil learning are contradictory. Some educators endorse the idea that it is perfectly feasible to get good results with large classes, while others disagree, especially when the class size exceeds 100 pupils. Factual data are very sparse, especially for Africa. The results of recent evaluations of the education systems of Togo and Niger show that while learning diminishes as class size increases, the decrease is relatively moderate and learning remains significant even in very large classes. Relative to a class of 30 pupils with an achievement level of 100, the achievement level of comparable pupils in a class of 120 is 92.1.

These studies further show that multi-grading makes

it possible to increase class size in sparsely populated areas and to achieve better learning levels than in traditionally structured classes (through more independent work by pupils, better opportunities for managing differences, etc.).

One way of increasing the pupil/teacher ratio in urban areas, as an alternative to increasing class size in the traditional system, is to introduce double-shifting. The studies show that learning in double-shift classes compares reasonably with learning in a traditional setting, and that achievement can easily be kept at the level attained in single-shift classes through the provision of more favourable pedagogic conditions.

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primarily the social benefits of Schooling for All rather than economic efficiency.

According to recent data from twenty-five low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa, 13 per cent of primary-school pupils and 10 per cent of secondary-school pupils repeat grades. Repetition rates vary widely across countries: from one-third of primary-school pupils in Mali, Togo and the Central African Republic; over one-fifth in Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Mozambique; to nearly zero in the United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Zambia, where policies of automatic promotion prevail. This range demonstrates an opportunity: primary-school capacity could be increased by over 20 per cent in seven of the low-income African countries simply by abolishing repetition. This reform alone could push enrolment ratios up from their present 65 per cent to 75 per cent without any increase in education costs.

The impact of abolishing grade repetition on learning achievement remains controversial. Clearly, some small level of repetition allows slow learners with special problems to be diagnosed and helped. But the standards adopted for promotion within the school system should not be set at a level that is inappropriate for a significant proportion of pupils in each grade. There is no doubt that repetition rates should be reduced in most of those countries that currently have low enrolment ratios. In such

countries, savings of at least 5 per cent of recurrent spending on education would result, without incurring substantial costs to the quality of schooling.

### *Capital costs*

Capital expenditure on education in low-income countries and others implementing structural adjustment policies fell during the 1980s, much more sharply than did recurrent expenditure on education in real terms. This was primarily due to budgetary constraints and only rarely to savings in capital costs.

Comparative data on construction costs in education are scanty and unreliable. However, the experience of a number of countries demonstrates that, by using local rather than imported materials and by using low-cost, low-maintenance construction technology, considerable savings can be made. By using this approach and increasing the involvement of local communities in construction work, Senegal, for example, has reduced capital costs by 40 per cent (albeit from a very high cost base) since 1985.

### *Boarding versus day schools*

Both capital and recurrent costs can also be affected by reducing the use of boarding schools where

**Box 7.2** *Reducing a necessary cost: self-supporting boarding schools*

The higher costs of boarding schools have always been obvious to education planners in developing countries. What has been less obvious to the critics of such institutions is the lack of feasible alternatives to such programmes in sparsely settled rural areas. If education is to be offered at all to pupils in these areas, some form of boarding facility must be provided. A compensating factor is that the boarding school often provides better nutritional support and an enhanced environment for learning than would be available in many of the pupils' homes.

Where it is decided that boarding facilities are necessary, means to lower their inevitably higher costs should be pursued. In Thailand, the Maehongsorn Provincial Primary Education Office started a 'Self-Supporting Boarding School' as a pilot project. The school was intended for school-age children from scattered hill-tribe households. Children are boarded in a cluster of houses, ten to twelve pupils in each house with a teacher acting as a foster parent.

The school is operated as a co-operative; household

duties are shared, and farming and gardening are used to earn money. Work-based education is fully practised in a natural, real-life setting. The general curriculum subjects are taught in classrooms and all requirements are met. The usual government support is provided.

Another boarding alternative is provided in Wat Sakaew School in a Buddhist temple in Wat Sakaew. Traditionally, the monks in the temple accept orphans who are provided with board and taught at the school. Increasingly, pupils from broken or economically disadvantaged homes have come to the temple. Through a combination of self-help measures and assistance from non-governmental organizations and individuals, over 2,000 children have been accommodated at the school at one time.

These two examples indicate that there are alternatives to expensive, solely government-supported boarding programmes. If Education for All, rather than education for the least expensive pupils, is to be attained, such alternative programmes will have to be instituted more widely.

they are not socially or pedagogically essential. Recent evidence from Malawi shows that the annualized capital and recurrent costs per pupil of boarding schools are more than twice as high as those of day schools. For Somalia the differential appears to be as great as 250 per cent. Ironically, boarding schools are particularly prevalent in the countries that can afford them least. If boarding schools are necessary, they require careful planning to minimize costs; where they are not necessary, they represent a poor use of scarce resources. The main reason for boarding programmes is that a fairly small proportion of primary leavers continues to secondary school, so it may not be possible to provide cost-effective day schools in all rural areas. Boarding facilities are therefore necessary if children from rural households are to gain access to secondary school.

To some extent, then, the higher unit costs of secondary schooling in poorer countries are an inevitable consequence of their lower secondary-enrolment ratios. While this situation cannot be changed overnight, care is needed to reduce de-

pendence on boarding schools as secondary education expands and as day-provision becomes increasingly viable. Eligibility for boarding status should be sharply restricted to those from isolated communities; children from urban households should not, under normal circumstances, be allowed to board.

Many of the ideas presented here have, of course, been tried in the past and failed, while others remain politically or managerially impractical in certain contexts. Double shifts and large class-size have been used for a long time and often with unfortunate educational results. It may also be noted that while such ideas from the North carry great political weight, research on practical alternative means of financing education in the South is likely to receive much less attention.

### **Restructuring education systems**

Changes in the structure of the education system could release some resources for progress towards Schooling for All. Certain reforms can expand

access to primary schooling and enhance achievement at realistic levels of cost. The structural changes considered here can be broadly classified as follows: changes in the length of different education cycles; changes in the age of entry to formal schooling; organizational and pedagogical reforms; and developing links between education and productive work.

First, however, it is worth noting seven structural features, common to many education systems, that provide a framework for the subsequent analysis.

1. There is a wide variation among countries in the length of different education cycles. The longer these cycles are, especially at the higher levels, the greater the resources required for their support. Longer cycles tend to have lower successful completion rates than shorter ones.
2. The majority of countries enrol pupils for the first time between the ages of 5 and 7. Many of the poorest countries have significant proportions of over-age pupils enrolled at any given grade level. Lower ages of first entry imply longer periods of schooling before pupils reach employable age.
3. Enrolments are concentrated in the first cycle where unit costs are lowest. Typically these unit costs are between 2 and 10 per cent of those at tertiary levels. Technical and vocational education tends to be more expensive in unit-cost terms than general schooling. The benefits arising from these additional costs are often not clearly justified by increased benefits in the labour market.
4. The organization of teaching and learning varies widely. In many systems physical resources are not fully utilized throughout the working day or year.
5. Pedagogical methods appear capable of producing pupil achievement in line with curricular goals, as evidenced by the performance of successful individuals and institutions. However, they frequently fail to produce learning outcomes that indicate most pupils are achieving well; this is evidenced by high failure, repetition and drop-out rates.
6. Opportunities to mix periods of study with productive work are a feature of some systems at

levels beyond the first cycle and these can make useful contributions to cost reduction.

7. Non-traditional education delivery systems are widely used (distance education, non-formal programmes, etc.) but are rarely if ever the main source of provision for primary-school-age children. In most countries expenditure on non-formal education accounts for a small percentage of that for the formal system.

The critical policy question that arises is: which structural reforms offer savings and increased efficiency without compromising the quality of education?

*The length of school cycles* varies considerably among countries. Primary schooling most commonly takes six years (over half of all countries), but there is an extreme range of three to nine years. Secondary schooling varies from two to nine years, although six or seven years are most common. Higher education ranges from two to six or more years.

These general patterns conceal wide variations. For example, it is quite common for parallel systems to exist at secondary level with different curricular bases (technical, vocational and general) and lengths. A number of systems have variable-length first cycles, for example, to cater for the need to transfer to a different medium of instruction. The length of cycles obviously has implications for the resources needed to achieve *Schooling for All*.

The most problematic cases are where long primary cycles are coupled with long secondary and tertiary cycles. In the context of highly constrained public budgets, there is a trade-off between the provision of places at different levels of the system.

The greater the length of the primary cycle, the greater will be the costs of providing places throughout the cycle for an age cohort. A reasonable assumption is that these costs increase proportionally for each additional year. Excessively long cycles are likely to have lower internal efficiency because the possibilities for repetition will be greater and drop-out is more likely before the end of the cycle. Where this is true, the number of pupil places that have to be provided per successful completer will be increased.

UNESCO statistics indicate that the average length of time for a pupil to complete a five-year

primary cycle varies from 5.0 to 7.7 years. Of twenty-five African countries, only three have averages below 5.5 years and thirteen have over 6.0 years. Less than 75 per cent of an age cohort survive to grade five in twenty-eight of the fifty-seven countries in the sample, including fifteen of the twenty-five African countries. An important corollary is that these ratios have been deteriorating in twenty-two countries since 1980 (more strongly so in the Arab world than elsewhere), thus increasing the cost of achieving Schooling for All.

The most relevant structural question concerns the length of post-primary cycles. This, together with the progression rate from primary to secondary schools, has substantial implications for resource allocation. If post-primary education is operated in a costly manner (residential schools, technical and vocational schools, and high proportions of expatriate teachers), it will absorb a disproportionate amount of resources.

Although there are many factors at work, reforming the structure of post-primary education could release resources to improve both the quantity and quality of primary schooling. Some countries (Ghana, for example) have already taken such initiatives.

There appears to be a growing international consensus that six years of schooling constitute a basic minimum primary cycle needed to gain the range of benefits associated with successful completion of primary school. Six years has become the most common length of the primary cycle in both developed and developing countries, reflecting this emerging consensus.

Initiatives in countries that already have high gross enrolment ratios reflect an increasing commitment to an eight- or nine-year open-access primary cycle. This raises the important issue of the relative benefits of expanding primary schools or locating grades seven to nine in junior secondary schools. The latter generally have higher unit costs, and a change of school is associated in most systems with increased drop-out at the transition level. Curricular and teaching concerns are relevant to the choice of strategy. At present, curricular differences between primary and junior secondary schools tend to be much less marked in developing than in some developed countries.

These observations favour the argument for the lower-cost strategy of extending the length of primary schooling. Although there are legitimate needs for some specialization and special facilities (as in science) at the level of grades seven to nine, these needs are not necessarily best met in conventional secondary schools where such resources are generally more accessible to older pupils rather than to those completing their basic education.

The most common *age of entry to the primary school* in all regions is 6 years. Latin America and Oceania are the only regions where a substantial number of countries have an entry age of 5. Africa has the highest proportion of systems with an entry age of 7. In most cases these are minimum ages for entry, with over-age entry being frequent. The policy issue here is whether age of entry should be changed and, if so, what are the educational and cost implications.

The average age of entry to schooling is falling in many countries primarily because of a reduction in over-age entry as systems develop. In addition, many countries have established pre-school facilities that help prepare children to enter school at the minimum allowable age.

The significance of entry age for achievement depends partly on the quality of the educational environment outside the school. This comprises many aspects, including the effects of child-rearing practices, the support for educational activity in the home, the existence of informal groups to support the educational development of pre-school-age children and the richness of learning opportunities outside the home. Many studies of cognitive development indicate the importance of early learning experiences for subsequent development and provide a compelling case for early entry to school. Providing equitable and early access to primary schooling is likely to lessen the cumulative differences that would otherwise emerge in learning achievement associated with out-of-school influences.<sup>1</sup>

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1. See Monograph II, Chapter 3, for a more detailed discussion of early childhood education and the general environment for learning.

Where an increase in entry age has been tried, it has generally proved unpopular with parents. In Sri Lanka, the age of entry was raised in 1972 from 5 to 6 years and the open-access cycle was shortened at the same time from ten to nine years. This lasted until 1977 when a new government reduced the entry age back to 5 years, in the face of widespread dissatisfaction.

Pedagogical arguments favour lower rather than higher ages of entry to schooling. Current trends are in fact towards reductions in the school entry age and there is convergence around 6 years. Reductions below this are premature unless all school-age children are enrolled. The challenge is how to make earlier entry ages available in ways that make more use of community resources (for example, through structured play groups and informally organized kindergartens) which can be supported at much lower costs than formal schooling.

Ways of *organizing and providing instruction* vary widely, related to the different ways in which physical facilities and human resources are used. The key question for Schooling for All policy is which organizational and pedagogical reforms offer the most cost-effective ways of improving internal efficiency. Three preliminary observations give insight into this.

First, the teaching loads of teachers vary widely from system to system. In some countries these may approach forty hours in double-shift schools, the majority of this time being spent in contact with children. In other countries teaching loads of three or four periods a day are common, amounting to about fifteen hours of teaching a week. Teacher/class ratios range from less than one to more than two teachers per class in some favoured institutions. The number of non-teaching staff on school payrolls also varies from none to parity with the teaching staff. These variations suggest that resources already available could be mobilized in some cases to increase both the number of school places and the quality of instruction at very low additional cost.

Second, pedagogical practices typically involve pupils remaining in whole class groups during all teaching hours. Time spent by pupils working without direct supervision during school hours is usual-

ly small. Yet much useful learning does not depend on the continuous presence of a teacher. Opportunities to use peer group learning, to involve older children in collaborative learning with younger children and to mobilize community members to supervise and assist with structured learning tasks are seldom exploited.

Curriculum design reflects the presumed needs of the more able learners more often than those of average or below-average achievers. Frequently, too, the infrastructure for successful implementation in average and below-average schools is assumed rather than planned. Continuous and linear learning sequences are more common than modularized learning units that can be deployed flexibly to cater for widely varying needs and readiness to learn, and irregular attendance. Inordinate amounts of instructional time are used to practise for public examinations, which may have backwash effects that extend through the curriculum over several grades. Many of the attributes that limit learners' access to the curriculum could be changed for costs that are small compared to the recurrent budget. Some curricular reforms offer scope for savings that could be used to increase the number of classroom places available.

Third, school years average about 180 days world-wide. On the basis of a 5.5 hour work-day, this results in 990 hours available for instruction. But this belies the fact that in many systems far fewer days are actually available for teaching. Experience from several countries indicates that the real number of teaching days in rural primary schools may be anywhere between 10 and 30 per cent less than the official number. The reasons commonly include: loss of days at the beginning of each school term for registration of new and returning pupils, school refurbishment/cleaning, etc.; a week or more per term used for examinations, when normal teaching is disrupted; a week or more used for reviewing examinations; special school events – sports days, school exhibitions, visits by dignitaries, etc.; public holidays falling during the school year; and unplanned occasional leave and teacher absenteeism.

*Pedagogical reform* has been high on the agenda of a number of countries. Many of the innovations

### *Box 7.3 Education reforms in Ghana*

The World Bank supported the introduction of the Ghanaian Government's education reforms through an education sector adjustment credit in 1987. The comprehensive nature of the reform has attracted financing from other international donors, including grants from UNDP, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Canada, as well as concessional lending from the OPEC Fund. Until recently, international assistance had all but disappeared in Ghana.

One of the ultimate goals of the reform is to better prepare Ghanaian youth for employment in agriculture and the non-formal sector. Whether it realizes this objective will not be known for several years. However, it can safely be said that the government has been successful in (i) increasing access to primary education while (ii) maintaining education's share of the budget (through decreasing unit costs).

*Improving pedagogical efficiency.* The new Junior Secondary School (JSS) curriculum has been introduced into schools, and teachers' guides for science instruction and for practice in the use of handtools have been developed. Almost all new JSS schools have the new texts, science kits, science tools and stationery. (In fact, educational expenditure on non-salary items increased from 2.8 per cent in 1986 to 3.1 per cent in 1987; the planned expenditure for 1988 increased to 8.5 per cent.)

A National Planning and Implementation Committee was set up for the training of JSS teachers and for the implementation of the JSS programme. A modular teach-

er-training programme for upgrading untrained teachers has been adapted to cater to O-level certificate holders. In addition, since the government has decreed that all untrained teachers must have received upgrading training by 1995 or face dismissal, the Ghana Organization of Teachers is setting up night classes to assist in skills upgrading. In order to attract good candidates into the teaching profession, stipends have been introduced for teachers in training. Since many JSS teachers will be teaching double shifts, a double-shift allowance of 60 per cent of base pay is foreseen.

Implementation of the vocational curriculum has proved to be somewhat problematic. First of all, there exists a considerable degree of misunderstanding regarding the whole concept of vocational skills and how they should be taught. Second, in the short amount of time since the reform has been under way, there have not been enough technical teachers trained to teach these courses.

*Budgeting, cost savings and cost recovery.* The reform programme is reported to be successful in that enrolment (intake) increased by 11.8 per cent in 1989 (above the original plan of 5 per cent) while the education budget still accounts for only 3 per cent of GDP, as it did prior to the reform. Overall, unit costs at the primary level have decreased from an already low figure of \$25 in 1984 to \$21.60 in 1988. They have increased slightly for secondary schooling, from \$119 in 1984 to \$129.60 in 1988. These figures are quite impressive, given that

that have been introduced seek to increase the amount of self-instruction time, make extensive use of written and audio-visual material, and use strategies where pupils teach each other. Project Impact is one of the best-known attempts to do all this. Its original goals included increasing pupil/teacher ratios to 150:1 or more, thus making considerable savings on the largest single cost, teachers' salaries. From its origins in the Philippines and Indonesia, derivatives have spread to Malaysia, Jamaica, Liberia and Bangladesh.

Though it is clear that Project Impact has had many positive outcomes, large cost savings have not been clearly demonstrated. In the Philippines, changes in the arrangements for financing schools

to encourage them to hire fewer teachers and invest in more self-instruction materials did not take place as anticipated. The 40 per cent cost savings that had been projected did not materialize. The savings that were made produced no financial benefits for the schools that made them and there was consequently little incentive to sustain the innovations. In Liberia, the average school size did not reach that necessary to realize significant economies of scale and the cost evidence suggested that the unit costs for project schools were likely to exceed those for ordinary schools. In Indonesia, the cost savings were also less than had been hoped. The per pupil cost of materials was 25 per cent higher than in ordinary schools, though

teacher salaries were raised in 1986, just prior to the reform. Cost savings were realized in several areas by eliminating unnecessary staff, introducing user fees for textbooks and eliminating the food subsidy at the secondary and tertiary levels.

A 1986 census of 211 pupils and staff in second-cycle institutions uncovered many irregularities, including a number of non-teaching staff over and above the number of established posts. In response, a reduction of 8,500 non-teaching staff at the secondary level has been achieved. There is also a freeze on the number of teachers' posts, effected by reducing the output from teachers' colleges. This ensures that the number of new entrants does not exceed the number leaving the service through retirement or natural attrition; it also serves to control the employment of untrained teachers.

The Ministry of Education has introduced a textbook-user fee from primary class 3 upwards. Pupils are also responsible for all stationery items and exercise books sold through the schools. A revolving fund has been opened solely for the future provision of textbooks and stationery to first-cycle schools.

At the secondary and tertiary levels, there has been a substantial decrease in government subsidy. Secondary and tertiary pupils pay the full cost of textbooks (for secondary pupils, this is about \$10.80 per pupil) and exercise books. The food subsidy for secondary and tertiary pupils has been totally eliminated (this is a saving of \$0.36 per pupil per day for the former and a

saving of \$0.72 per pupil per day for the latter). Although the government has not made much progress in eliminating the boarding subsidy, it has decreed that no new boarding schools shall be constructed and has converted some boarding facilities to day schools.

*Community involvement.* Before the reform, many communities had lost interest in assisting education. The reform has served to infuse new energy into these communities, particularly in the southern half of the country where parents have historically been more attuned to the need for education. This is partly attributable to the fact that the reform has been widely publicized and promoted at the very top.

At the primary level, communities are responsible for school construction. The new modular roofing scheme (wherein the government provides pre-fabricated roofs and the community builds the school walls) has made it easier for communities to provide schools. At the junior secondary level, communities have willingly met their obligation to provide workshops. On the other hand, schools and their communities have not been too successful in developing income-generating schemes. This is due in part to the fact that teachers are not prepared for their roles as entrepreneurs in this context.

Adapted from C. Colclough and K. Lewin,  
*Educating All the Children: The Economic Challenge  
for the 1990s*

this was offset by lower staff costs to result in overall savings in the unit recurrent costs of between 2 and 12 per cent in the project schools.

Project Impact indicates that learning achievement does not necessarily suffer if reductions in the time pupils spend with teachers are accompanied by support for productive learning. However, where such approaches are in competition with a conventional pedagogy of whole-class teaching throughout the school day, the experience suggests that self-instruction approaches will be less attractive.

Another pedagogical innovation that is capable of producing cost savings is distance education. This is more widely employed at levels above primary where its attractions seem greatest. However,

the costs of distance education are not necessarily lower than those of traditional delivery systems and a mixed picture emerges if costs per successful graduate are computed.

A final pedagogical innovation worth comment relates to curricular goals and achievement. Many mass-education systems are based on the assumption of a basically linear progress through successive levels, where what is taught and learned at one level is extended and deepened at the next. In principle this cumulative model of learning ought to result in higher and higher levels of achievement through the school system. The evidence from achievement studies and from the raw score test performance of pupils in many systems is dis-

quieting. Failure to master large proportions of the curriculum at a given level is widespread; significant numbers of pupils score at chance-guessing levels on multiple-choice tests after several years of instruction.

If curricula in successive grades assume mastery of earlier curricula and many pupils have, at best, a poor grasp of previously presented material, problems of enhancing achievement will be compounded. The cumulative model of learning may in practice be more cumulative confusion, where smaller and smaller proportions of what is supposed to be learned are actually mastered at each level. The solution is to construct curricular goals that are within the reach of the majority of children, to emphasize those learning outcomes thought to be essential to all or most of the school population and to concentrate resources on their achievement. The objection that lowering present achievement goals would damage the achievement levels of the more able pupils could be countered through the introduction of express promotion streams enabling them to progress more rapidly through the primary cycle. This reform would incidentally result in a release of school places that could be made available to those not currently enrolled. Curricular reforms of the kinds suggested are a pre-condition for the successful implementation of automatic promotion policies that can enhance progress towards Schooling for All.

Individually, none of the organizational and pedagogical innovations discussed here is likely to transform the prospects of achieving Schooling for All. However, they facilitate more efficient use of existing resources and, in combination, offer prospects of significant increases in the provision of school places while maintaining quality without escalating costs.

*Socially productive work as part of education* can release resources for Schooling for All. It can do so by reducing the time pupils spend in school while shifting responsibility for their supervision and training to other organizations that benefit from their work. The economic attractiveness of these schemes lies in the budgetary savings that they generate. Such savings occur if necessary tasks within the public sector are performed at costs less

than the market wage. Educational benefits may also accrue for less than the cost of full-time schooling. Some recurrent costs (school meals and maintenance, for example) can be subsidized by the labour of pupils. Work experience is generally thought to contribute to character building and national unity as well as to transmit useful skills and to assist community development.

Community-service schemes that provide opportunities for older pupils to work as unqualified teachers or as teacher's assistants in primary schools have the potential to make a real contribution to Schooling for All where shortages of teachers are acute. Though older pupils may not be as effective as trained teachers, there are many support roles that they can play. This can release trained teachers for important pedagogical tasks for which training and experience are needed. Opportunities of this kind may also eventually attract more pupils into the teaching profession, and give them a head start in developing teaching skills and adjusting to the world of work. In so far as they are seen to assist rather than replace full-time teachers, their roles need not necessarily be seen as a threat to teachers' pay and conditions of service.

However, innovations that link education and productive labour have several limitations.

- Pupils and parents may react adversely to increasing amounts of time allocated to production if this is seen to reduce performance in competitive examinations that give access to modern-sector jobs.
- The physical environment of the school may preclude some kinds of activities (for example, agricultural production depends on the availability of suitable land; production of artefacts for sale depends on materials, tools and an accessible market).
- Education institutions may compete with local producers and undermine their livelihoods if they produce surpluses for sale.
- Production linked to schooling is likely to be less efficient than commercial production; it therefore may have to be subsidized or protected.
- Scarce production skills have an economic value and skilled practitioners may be unwilling to share these with pupils.

- Too much emphasis on production (in order to compensate for declining school revenues) may lead to the subordination of learning to repetitive manufacturing tasks that provide little coherent skill acquisition.

In many of the least-developed countries, schooling is seen as a conduit through which scarce opportunities for modern-sector employment are regulated. The excessive emphasis on certification that accompanies excess demand for access to schooling is not easily neutralized by appeals to eschew academic education in favour of acquiring vocational skills for which the financial and status rewards are less attractive.

For most of the primary cycle, substantial allocation of time to work experience seems of marginal value. Its benefits have to be set against the success of pupils in reaching basic learning goals, which most systems value highly but which many pupils fail to reach satisfactorily. The more time allocated to work experience, the less time will be available for basic learning.

Of course, older pupils can make useful contributions to school income and the balance of advantage for learning tasks related to production, as opposed to basic skills, may look different as entry into the labour market approaches. Successful schemes can generate contributions to food consumed by pupils, cash income from the sale of artefacts and worthwhile inputs into the maintenance of school facilities. These are likely to be a small, but useful, proportion of total recurrent finance.

## Redistributing expenditure

Where resources are severely constrained, as they are in the poorest and most heavily indebted countries, progress towards Schooling for All requires policy measures that redirect expenditure to the primary cycle. Five types of redistribution need consideration: (i) between sectors; (ii) between delivery systems; (iii) between higher and lower education levels; (iv) between types of institution; and (v) between types of expenditure. The overriding policy question here is which kinds of redis-

tribution are a priority in pursuing Schooling for All and how these can best be encouraged by national and international initiatives.

*Redistribution between sectors* occurs for both intended and unintended reasons. The first issue is the relative share of education compared to other sectors within the national budget. The evidence suggests that for a substantial group of countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, but also in other regions, educational expenditure as a percentage of the national budget has declined more often than it has increased over the last decade. Data from World Bank development reports suggest that, over the period 1972–86, more than twice as many low- and middle-income countries reduced the proportion of government expenditure on education than increased it. Moreover, this redistribution was stronger in relation to the education sector than any other. It appears that military expenditure has not suffered in the same way, the more so since it is generally thought to be under-reported in national accounts. Even where proportional budget allocations for education have remained unchanged, low or even negative growth in the budget as a whole in those countries seriously affected by recession has reduced the real value of expenditure on education.

The direct and indirect costs of civil disorder and war are difficult to estimate. In those countries most severely affected, such costs have a substantial negative impact on growth in gross domestic product (GDP) and on the level of non-defence-related public-sector spending. A recent study argues that twenty-one out of fifty-three African states have experienced war as a major factor in suppressing economic growth, comparable only to the effects of decline in their terms of trade. This has resulted in a decline in GDP growth regionally from a probable 5 to 6 per cent to the actual 2 to 3 per cent (that is to say, below the average rate of population growth, meaning reduction in GDP per capita in many cases).

Examples from Asia and Latin America suggest similar trends. In Sri Lanka, government spending on development projects has been truncated while civil disorder persists, drawing attention to other deleterious effects of violent strife. These include

dislocation of development plans (such that earlier gains may be negated), destruction of infrastructure and physical facilities, reallocation of skilled and trained staff away from the social sectors, and neglect of medium-term planning and policy review. All these circumstances inevitably contribute to undermining the morale and professional commitment of teaching staff, one of the most fragile and critical commodities of all.

In numerous countries, the squeeze on education spending, both absolute and as a proportion of the national budget, has been a consequence of the rapid escalation of debt service payments, reducing the public expenditure base available for social sector spending. World Bank development reports indicate increased allocations given to 'other expenditure' in national budgets and this reflects the increased burden of debt servicing. Indeed, debt servicing as a percentage of export earnings has grown sharply since 1980 in the majority of developing countries.

The signals indicate that some redistribution has taken place between sectors, but in a direction that is unfavourable to education. To the extent that this has happened, it reflects a diminution in either ability or willingness to maintain education resource levels, or both. It is, of course, important to ascertain which of these is the dominant factor. There appears to be no simple relationship between GDP growth and education expenditure as a proportion of the national budget. Where reductions in effort have occurred these may be the result of a rise in debt service or other exogenous items; however, it may be that internal allocation decisions have favoured other sectors independently of the effects of recession. In the least-developed countries and the heavily indebted countries, it is more likely to have been a problem of ability rather than willingness.

*Redistribution within the education sector between different delivery systems* is another policy option. Though much has been written about the prospects for enrolling more pupils outside the conventional primary school, there is little reliable evidence on such experiences. Non-formal and out-of-school programmes are notoriously difficult to evaluate in terms of cost. Their forms are varied;

sources of support may be extremely diverse and include non-monetary contributions of uncertain value; successful completion rates and achievement data are often unavailable; the programmes themselves are often transient with costing looking very different at different stages in their life-cycles; and target groups are often not clearly defined. Studies that have tried to compare the cost-effectiveness of adult education delivery strategies have often run into irresolvable problems arising from these factors.

There is some evidence on cost-effectiveness related to systems that have adopted various forms of distance learning. These most commonly include multimedia, open university systems, correspondence colleges and radio learning. In most cases these have not supplanted the formal systems; rather they are complementary, satisfying demand that cannot be met through existing institutions.

Studies of out-of-school learning indicate a wide range of methods through which young learners can acquire valuable knowledge. There are many ad hoc arrangements, such as informal apprenticeships, and many countries have institutionalized shadows of the formal system in community-support centres. Because they have less political visibility, these are rarely given high priority by governments coping with severe under-funding of the formal school system. Employers may also be wary of supporting such schemes unless they have some guarantee that those they train will use their skills within the company that sponsors them.

Substantial growth in government resources for non-formal education and non-traditional delivery systems is unlikely in most of the least-developed countries. This does not preclude growth in non-government support for these programmes, though this requires mobilization on a fairly large scale in order to make a major contribution. Even where there are substantial cost advantages in adopting new delivery methods, these may be politically unattractive in the short term if they appear to offer educational opportunities that are seen as second best by their potential clients.

*Redistribution of resources from higher to lower levels* has an obvious multiplier effect built in since unit

costs rise in all systems towards the higher levels. Thus, limiting places at higher levels, or reducing the rate at which the state subsidizes them, holds out the promise of providing proportionately more places at the lower levels roughly in the ratio of unit costs. The unit cost differences between primary and tertiary levels vary among countries from less than tenfold to more than fiftyfold. These conditions are often a historical product of inherited salary structures that separated national primary-school teachers from expatriates working at post-primary levels of the education system.

There is no clear picture concerning changes that have been taking place in the distribution of expenditure between levels. In those countries approaching universalization of primary schooling, the percentage of the budget allocated to higher levels will probably grow as they expand to accommodate more primary-school graduates. Most countries, even those with low gross enrolment ratios, have historically experienced higher growth rates at secondary and tertiary levels than at primary. This necessarily results in shifts in resources towards the higher levels. Exceptions are countries such as Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania that have deliberately limited the supply of post-primary places and have resisted the pressures of excess demand (at least in so far as the publicly financed elements of the education system are concerned).

In sub-Saharan Africa, unit recurrent costs have been falling at all levels except in higher education. Median values in constant 1983 dollars (controlling for subsequent price-level changes) have fallen from \$67 to \$48 at primary level, and from \$362 to \$223 at secondary; they rose from \$2,462 to \$2,710 at tertiary level over the period 1970–83. These aggregate figures require cautious interpretation since the countries for which data are available are not constant over time. Nevertheless the trends they illustrate can be observed in many countries.

Researchers have made attempts to assess the impact on the provision of primary schooling of resources that could be released by reducing or eliminating subsidies at higher levels. Their findings indicate that the scope for this tends to be

greater in French-speaking sub-Saharan African countries, where unit costs at higher levels tend to increase more steeply than in other parts of Africa. It is only when large reductions in subsidy and high levels of recovery of operating costs are introduced that substantial gains in primary enrolment become possible. However, even removal of all subsidies at higher and secondary level coupled with 100 per cent cost recovery in higher education would fail to release enough resources to universalize primary education in most countries.

Worthwhile transfers are possible, however. In a system that spends 20 per cent of its finance on 1 per cent of the age cohort at tertiary level, a reduction in the length of higher education from four to three years (and/or by combining some income-earning work experience with study to achieve the same effect) could release about 4 per cent of the total education budget. This could finance as much as a 10 per cent increase in primary enrolments and expenditure.

An under-reported aspect of distribution between levels of great relevance to policy for Schooling fo: All concerns resource allocations within schools. Where schools include both primary and secondary grades, it is not uncommon to find a disproportionate amount of resources allocated to the teaching of the higher grades. This may not be captured in data on whole-school allocations, where the assumption is that resources are distributed according to set staffing ratios, etc. In practice, higher-grade classes tend to be smaller (and therefore benefit from lower pupil/teacher ratios) and have more highly qualified teachers.

*Redistribution within levels between different types of institution* is a policy option that concerns the mix of types of institution at the same level and the mechanisms for their financing. The possibilities embrace public and private institutions, residential and day schools, fee-paying and free-admission institutions, community-supported schools, technical and vocational as opposed to general schools, and many others. Clearly some types of institution have higher costs than others and the question is whether changing the mix can lower average unit costs and therefore provide more places for the same money.

*Box 7.4 Policy responses to sectoral problems and economic constraints in Senegal*

Educational reform in Senegal was set against the backdrop of macro-economic reform. The government initiated a programme of structural adjustment in 1980 in response to the economic crisis. The primary goal of the programme was to improve management of public resources through sectoral adjustment operations designed to ensure more efficient allocation and use of resources. The World Bank reviewed current budgetary expenditure in Senegal in 1980 and concluded that 'A more efficient allocation of current expenditures would . . . free more resources for maintaining and operating existing assets. [Further,] there are important potential gains in the areas of improved procurement policies and practices, improved matching of staff with the tasks at hand, additional incentives for budgetary savings, design of less-costly-to-operate investments, and cost-recovery schemes.'

Within this framework, the education sector launched a reform effort, the *École Nouvelle* (New School). The reform aims to create an education system that is equitable, efficient and responsive to national development needs. The main objectives are to: (a) assign top priority to expanding primary education with the eventual goal of universal primary education (ages 7–12) by the year 2000 and an intermediate target of 60 per cent by the end of the Seventh Plan period in 1989; (b) utilize existing physical and human resources more efficiently; and (c) develop the institutional structure to improve the quality and relevance of education.

The reform also advocates curricular changes intended to adapt educational content to reflect more closely the culture, heritage and realities of the country. These changes include: (a) the introduction of national lan-

guages into education; (b) the introduction of a polytechnic orientation to the curriculum through the integration of productive work in educational establishments; and (c) the introduction of moral and religious education in the curriculum. Under this new system, education has the following structure: three years of pre-school (ages 3–6), a 'polyvalent' cycle (ages 7–16) and a secondary or professional cycle of three years. Polyvalent education is sub-divided into four stages (ages 6–9, 9–12, 12–14 and 14–16).

The most immediate objective of the reform is to increase primary-school enrolments through restructuring the financing of education by: lowering unit costs in education through making more efficient use of teachers and facilities; reducing primary-school construction costs; containing education expenditure at post-primary levels – funds made available from these savings would then be reallocated to primary education. The government's goal was to maintain the share of the sector within its recurrent budget at the 1985/86 level and limit the growth rate for recurrent expenditure.

The particular means of achieving these reforms were articulated in a World Bank Sectoral Loan and included four elements.

1. Lower average unit costs per pupil by 7 per cent through the following:

- (a) Recruiting candidates into teacher-training programmes at a ratio of four junior teachers (*instituteur adjoint*) to one senior teacher (*instituteur*) from the 1986/87 school year onward. The ratio at the time of implementation in 1985 was less than one to one. This was expected to lead to a 7 per cent reduction in the average cost per pupil.

The distribution of unit costs between similar institutions, some of which are relatively favoured in the allocation of teachers and resources, is often a serious problem. It is not uncommon to find, within the same area, schools with a surplus of teachers and other schools with only half the teachers which they need on the basis of their pupil numbers. This can occur where, for example, well-established urban schools are attractive teaching locations and where many teachers are spouses of government workers located in the towns. Where salaries are paid from a central budget, over-estab-

lished schools suffer no penalty for excess teachers. In contrast, under-established rural schools with less attractive working conditions suffer the double penalty of higher teaching loads and class sizes, but receive no benefit from the 'savings' that are made on salaries as a result of their under-establishment.

The final and perhaps most critical redistributive issue for Schooling for All arises from trends in the *distribution of expenditure between different categories*: capital, salary recurrent and non-salary recurrent expenditures. The evidence suggests that there

At the same time, the content and duration of pre-service training would be revised and more frequent teacher-upgrading programmes would be introduced, in order to ensure the quality of primary education.

- (b) Redeploying 400 administrators at inspectorates and secondary schools into primary teaching.
  - (c) Introducing double shifts in urban primary schools and multigrade classes in rural areas. Overcrowded classrooms for grades one to four would be broken up into two shifts each of twenty hours per week in place of the previous twenty-seven hours per week. The school year would be extended to compensate and specialized curricula would be developed. This was expected to reduce the cost per new pupil by 50 per cent.
  - (d) Increasing student/teacher ratios in teacher-training colleges from 7:1 to about 15:1 by consolidating two colleges prior to 1987/88 and two more colleges prior to 1988/89. The redundant staff and facilities could be used for other purposes. This was expected to reduce the total primary-teacher training budget for 1988/89 by 15 per cent.
  - (e) Increasing pupil/teacher ratios and reducing operating costs of specialized civil-service training schools.
2. *Reduce primary-school construction costs.* The government planned to employ an intermediate technology of fired brick and/or ram-pressed cement-earth brick construction as an alternative to conventional construction methods. This intermediate technology is preferable because it: (a) is more suited to the cli-

mate; (b) would reduce high unit costs associated with imported materials and with repair and maintenance of existing schools; (c) would reduce capital costs because it is labour-intensive; (d) would develop construction technology and services at the regional level; and (e) would expand community participation in construction programmes. The government would facilitate construction of these classrooms mainly in outlying rural areas. Under this programme, communities would provide the local materials and contribute 50 per cent of the unskilled labour. It was estimated that this would reduce the cost per pupil place by almost one-third.

3. *Contain expenditure at the post-primary level by:*
- (a) Reducing the fellowship budget in real terms from its 1985/86 level by 8 per cent in 1987/88 and 3 per cent per annum from 1988/89 through 1994/95. This reduction would take place mainly in overseas fellowships.
  - (b) Establishing a cost-recovery system in higher education. This was to be introduced only after small-scale experimentation.
  - (c) Reducing subsidies to the campus services budget by 50 per cent by 1994, to be compensated by cost-recovery methods and privatization of certain services.
4. *Limit recurrent expenditures.* Establish ceilings on budgetary growth rates for recurrent expenditures of central administration, secondary and higher education. These would be limited to between 1.0 and 1.5 per cent per annum.

Adapted from C. Colclough and K. Lewin, *Educating All the Children: The Economic Challenge for the 1990s*

has been a shift towards an increase in the proportion allocated to salary expenditure. This trend was strongest in the early 1980s and diminished over the most recent period for which figures are available. The slackening may well reflect the high levels reached: in many countries salaries now account for more than 90 per cent of the recurrent budget at the primary level. This shift towards predominantly recurrent spending on salaries does not, however, indicate that salaries have been increasing in real terms. In fact, as indicated earlier, the opposite has often been the case. In the United

Republic of Tanzania, for example, the real value of teachers' salaries at the top of the scale in 1987 was similar to that of starting teachers in 1977.

Interpreting fluctuations in capital spending on education is always difficult because of their variable incidence. However, in the most heavily indebted countries it has become common to find little or no development expenditure available except that which is externally financed. Cancellation of new projects and investment programmes is usually one of the first responses to austerity.

Recurrent expenditure on materials and other

non-salary items has fallen, sometimes nearly to zero. This is a fairly universal feature of countries suffering from recession. UNESCO data suggest that in all regions the proportion of education budgets allocated to teaching materials has been diminishing; this phenomenon has been particularly marked in sub-Saharan Africa. It is safe to assume that this expenditure is effectively zero for a good proportion of the school population. This has occurred despite well-known studies that indicate the strong relationship that exists between availability of textbooks and school achievement. Some countries have taken steps to improve the supply of materials and increase their durability: the Philippines and Ghana are undertaking this in the context of structural adjustment, while Sri Lanka has had an effective free textbook scheme since the early 1980s.

The problems of planned or unplanned drift in the distribution of expenditure by type have several dimensions: the drift towards salaries and away from non-salary support; the depletion of professional support for teachers (in-service courses, advisory and inspection services, learning materials); and increased reliance on non-governmental support. The first two result in the risk that the investment made in salaries is compromised by the deterioration in conditions to an extent where effective teaching becomes difficult or impossible. If there is no classroom furniture, little written material and no easily available pedagogic advice, teaching quality will be difficult to maintain. School inspectors with no resources to travel will be unable to advise schools effectively. The third dimension may seem an attractive proposition and may result in significant community support, but it is likely to be very unevenly distributed, depending on the wealth and generosity of the communities that schools serve. The generation of resources from school communities may increase rather than diminish differences in resource availability between schools.

To conclude, the various types of redistribution identified offer the promise of real benefits for Schooling for All in so far as they redistribute resources towards the primary cycle. Where recent developments have been driven more by short-term expediency in response to crisis than by

medium-term policy priorities, a reappraisal is urgently needed. If Schooling for All is to be adequately financed, economies must be made that will enable more primary-level places to be provided without diminishing quality. Redistribution must favour lower rather than higher grades of schooling if the available resources preclude growth at all levels. Commitment to Schooling for All is inconsistent with any further erosion of the overall sectoral allocation and in most cases will require transfers towards the education budget from other sources.

### **Raising additional financial resources**

Opportunities for reducing the unit costs of education and for providing efficiency savings by restructuring school systems are significant, but they can provide only part of the 'solution' to the problem of universalizing access to primary schooling. The main difficulty faced by low-income countries is insufficient financial resources to support appropriate levels of spending across the whole range of public-sector activities. Education has been squeezed by the need to cap public spending and to finance rising debt-service obligations, but so too has expenditure in other social sectors.

A critical question, therefore, is whether additional financial resources for education can be raised and, if so, how this could best be done. A number of advocates of education policy reform, including some aid agencies and international financial institutions, have in recent years concluded that additional resources for education will have to come from private rather than public sources in the developing world.

*User charges* and *private provision* are two possible options. There are three major arguments for the public provision of schooling. First, the benefits of education accrue not only to the individual, but also to society at large. Without public provision, some under-investment in schooling would be likely, even among those who can afford to pay for it. Second, excluding those who are too poor to pay school fees would involve efficiency losses arising from their unexploited human potential. Third, private schooling would strengthen existing ine-

qualities by giving privileged access to education and higher future incomes to those who are already among the better-off. These dangers weigh heavily against proposals to finance schooling privately.

Such considerations have led, in the majority of countries, to a gradual shift away from dependence upon philanthropic and private funding sources towards public provision. The fact is, however, that in a great many countries a mixture of public and private funding of schooling exists. Private schools and colleges are common, both in the form of rich, élite institutions and of second-chance establishments for those who fail to gain or maintain a place in the public schools. The equity implications of these parallel systems are usually negative: if private schools are of higher quality relative to public schools, they tend to foster easy access to élite status; if they are of lower quality, they tend not to offer social mobility for those who utilize them.

Public schools sometimes charge fees, albeit seldom sufficient to fully cover costs. Fees often decline as a proportion of unit costs at higher levels of schooling, which tends to have perverse equity and efficiency consequences in view of the small proportions and higher income characteristics of the population enrolled at upper secondary and tertiary levels.

The introduction of cost-recovery measures at higher levels of education, particularly if combined with fee reductions at primary-school level, could have positive equity and efficiency consequences. Additional resources for the expansion of primary schooling could be generated and the public subsidies to higher education, which at present benefit mainly the richer groups, would thereby be reduced. It would, of course, be necessary to ensure that the introduction of such fees does not reduce private benefits to levels that lead to a decline in absolute tertiary enrolments. This would be a danger in some sub-Saharan countries at the present time. Equally, such fees would be regressive to the extent that they prevent bright children from low-income households from continuing their studies.

This problem is accepted by most advocates of user charges, who seek mitigation of these costs by

the introduction of *loans and/or scholarships* in order to remove the potential bias against the poor. In principle, at least, loan schemes tackle very subtly both the problems of equity and of resource generation. By shifting the costs of tertiary education to the direct beneficiaries and by financing them out of future rather than present income, a desirable wedge is opened up between eligibility to attend and present ability to pay. Loan schemes reduce the future net benefits of tertiary education and, by providing a means for poor bright children to meet the present direct financial costs, promote both static and intergenerational equity.

Student loan schemes are widely used in Latin America and the Caribbean, but they are not common elsewhere. Ghana, the United Republic of Tanzania and Nigeria have experimented with loans to finance university students, and a new loan scheme was introduced in Zambia early in 1989. These countries remain exceptions outside Latin America.

Experience suggests that loan schemes confront a range of practical difficulties. They tend not to become self-financing, owing to high default rates on repayment, unemployment or abstention from the labour market, and high administrative costs. Also, they do not provide a quick source of additional public revenue owing to the length of time needed for repayments to build up.

Moreover, although loan schemes provide equity benefits in comparison with the net effects of user charges, there are, of course, net costs in comparison with the typical present structure of subsidies. Since the poor are under-represented even in fee-free higher education, student loans, which increase the cost of attendance, would cause the inequities of access to increase further. The only escape from this consequence would be to provide scholarships based on financial need to promote access for the poor to higher levels of education; however, this would obviously undermine the revenue-raising purpose of user fees.

A more comprehensive option is, of course, offered by *broadening the base of the general tax system*. Unfortunately, it is widely believed that many low-income countries are approaching the limits of their taxable capacity. Incentives within the formal

economy have been heavily undermined by the reduction of personal incomes associated with devaluation and other structural adjustment measures. The critical issue in many sectors is how to raise disposable income so as to improve motivation and productivity at work, rather than to contribute to further decline via increasing marginal rates of taxation. Also, the need to restore output levels cannot be addressed without restoring profitability. Measures to increase company taxation are, therefore, inauspicious in the present environment, but all countries are by no means equally affected. In some there remains scope for increases in taxation (probably in the context of wider fiscal reforms) and such opportunities need to be investigated on a country-by-country basis.

A second argument frequently cited against further dependence on general taxation is that tax systems are typically regressive. Yet this implies the need for differential rather than equal changes in marginal rates. Finally, the argument that additional public revenues from general taxation would be used either to reduce public deficits or to expand non-educational services is not decisive: it seems equally likely that, in response to higher revenues accruing from user fees, public expenditure on education would be reduced. The political likelihood of either of these two sets of outcomes may not be significantly different in many low-income countries. The total resources required to provide Education for All in these countries are large. Increases in the tax base and in the progressivity of the tax system will have to play a vital part in raising these resources in many countries.

The design of *new fiscal instruments* to raise additional education finance has been largely ignored in the relevant literature. In this context a promising alternative to user fees and pupil loan schemes would be a payroll tax, levied on employers, related to their employment of (or wage payments to) graduates from designated educational programmes. Payroll taxes have in fact been used in a number of countries as a means of financing vocational training. These have been broadly of two types. First, levy-grant schemes have been established in, for example, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Fiji, Singapore and Tunisia. Typically, the schemes tax

employers in the private sector at rates varying between 1 and 2 per cent of their wage/salary bill. Rebates and grants can be claimed by firms undertaking 'approved' training of their own employees.

Of more interest for present purposes are schemes where tax revenues are earmarked to finance training provided by the state. Such a scheme was first introduced in Brazil in the early 1940s and similar schemes are found mainly in Latin America, where fourteen countries have introduced them. In sub-Saharan Africa, Zimbabwe has a well-established scheme. These tax schemes have raised substantial revenues which have been used to build up national training systems, often providing a wide range of pre-employment training courses.

Arrangements such as these have not yet been used to finance educational (as opposed to training) programmes. Yet there are no decisive reasons why a payroll tax for education would be inappropriate. A recent analysis of a payroll tax levied on the wage bill for university graduate employees suggests that it would be superior to a pupil loan scheme as a means of raising additional education finance in a number of important ways. The incidence of the tax initially is entirely on private employers, but the long-term result is downward pressure upon graduate wages over the medium term. This effect, together with associated employment effects, would be useful in countries where university graduates remain in short supply. More significantly, there would be none of the equity costs associated with user fees or pupil loan schemes. Although graduates may pay part of the cost of the tax via lower wages and employment, the disincentive effects of fees and loans for pupils from poorer households are avoided.

Finally, the revenue-generating potential of a payroll tax is greater than that of a pupil loan scheme. Its financial impact is not substantially delayed and it would usually prove to be a superior instrument on financial grounds. More work on this proposal is needed in a range of countries. However, initial calculations from Botswana and Zambia suggest that the net additional revenues that could be generated by a modest payroll tax (of the order of 10 per cent) would be equivalent to between 5 and 10 per cent of the recurrent costs of

primary schooling. This, then, represents a useful potential source of financing for primary-school expansion.

*Community financing* is another option. A large number of countries have experimented with ways of passing some schooling costs to local communities. Rooted in traditions of self-help, such initiatives can often mobilize resources that otherwise would remain underutilized and they can engender the further commitment of parents (in terms of both time and interest) to the schooling of their children. The most common form of such community financing is the provision of labour and local materials to reduce the capital costs of school construction or expansion. There are examples, however, of teachers' salaries being paid partially or entirely by the community, and of school books and equipment being similarly financed.

Although appealing from the perspective of central government, such schemes have a number of problems. First, the full costs of community financing are rarely acknowledged or measured. There is a tendency to believe that labour provided by villagers has little or no associated opportunity cost. Yet, unless great care is taken in the mobilization of such labour (including the timing *vis-à-vis* other demands), there will almost certainly be a cost in lost agricultural or other output. Second, passing schooling costs to the community is only slightly less inequitable than passing them to the individual household via user fees. It can result in a highly differentiated pattern of schools, closely reflecting the relative prosperity of different communities and geographical areas.

Nevertheless, the devolution of responsibility for some aspects of schooling provision is less damaging than others. In general, devolving responsibility for those aspects of infrastructure that are not likely to be causally associated with cognitive outcomes is less risky and inequitable than devolving responsibility for those items (such as teachers' salaries, school textbooks and other learning materials) that do affect cognitive outcomes.

Thus, provided such approaches are used with care, some subsidy to the education budget can be provided by local communities without surrendering too much equity in the process. The costs

should nevertheless be recognized. Although such services may be considered 'free' by a ministry of education, they are not free from the perspective of a ministry of finance and still less so from that of society as a whole.

### Financing Schooling for All

The estimates for financing Schooling for All can be examined in the context of the Philippines' experience. The Philippines has a population of 60 million, an annual population growth rate of 2.4 per cent and 60 per cent of the population is under 25. Unemployment is estimated at 9 per cent and 45 per cent of the population is dependent on agriculture. The per capita income is \$700 per year.

The Philippines operates under a heavy debt burden. Debt service amounts to \$2.8 billion per year; this represents 40 per cent of export receipts and 25 per cent of all current external sources of revenue. The net international resource flow is negative because of the debt burden and 45.5 per cent of the government budget is dedicated to debt-service expenses. Despite these conditions, the country has achieved almost universal primary education, with the gross enrolment ratio slightly over 100. This has been accomplished because of the high value the people place on education. The National Constitution calls for free and compulsory primary education, and for the highest budgetary priority for education. Educational expenditure accounts for 13 per cent of the government budget, second only to debt service. Military spending is at 11 per cent.

While the economic crisis of 1983–85 and the change of government in 1986 disrupted government support, present expenditure levels for education are proportionally the same as in 1982. There is continuing concern about the progression rates (86 per cent from grades one and two) and the overall survival rate (67 per cent from grade one to end of grade six). Cognitive achievement also needs to be improved, and inequities in educational provision for poor families and disadvantaged areas need to be remedied.

The Philippines' 'Plan of Action' to achieve Education for All has goals of 100 per cent participation in primary education, 98 per cent literacy rate, 80 per cent primary-cycle survival rate and 75 per cent achievement level by the year 2000. Attaining these targets will require external assistance. The Philippines is one of the first recipients of a World Bank loan after that institution's pledge to the Conference to increase allocations for basic education. While accepting such loan support indicates the strong national commitment, it will also worsen the serious short-term debt problem. The Philippines requires greater grant assistance, but bilateral and other grant funds for education remain scarce. Debt-relief measures (such as the UNICEF scheme to support child survival) would also help support national Education for All efforts. Cost saving and internal reallocations will not complete the whole task for countries already allocating huge sums to debt service.

What is the probability that Schooling for All can be attained in such conditions? The Nigerian experience in universalizing primary education is indicative of some of the problems that will be encountered by a Schooling for All effort. After initiating the universalization efforts in 1976, Nigeria saw primary-education enrolments increase from 5 to 8 million in the first year; by 1982 enrolments reached 15 million but then declined to a total of approximately 14 million in 1990. If universalization had been fully successful, enrolments for that year would have been 20 million. One problem arose from the federal government's decision to assume part of the direct financial responsibility for primary schools to ensure higher and more consistent school quality. However, by 1988 the system was facing serious problems, not the least of which were lengthy delays in the payment of teachers' salaries.

A proposal was made to have the federal government pay teachers' salaries directly from federal funds earmarked for state and local governments. Instead, a system was introduced where the central government paid 65 per cent of salaries while the states paid 20 per cent and localities paid 15 per cent. A National Primary Education Commission was established to help ensure teacher payments

and to monitor quality based upon established minimum learning standards for all pupils. The Commission also has the responsibility for research on education with an emphasis on identifying cost-saving measures.

A major innovation has been the creation of a four-tier monitoring and management system below central government level; 21 primary school education boards (plus 1 for the new capital district), 450 local government education authorities, 2,600 district education committees and 7,215 village education committees were established. This system is expected to increase instructional effectiveness through reducing teacher absenteeism and by building community links with the schools. The village committees have played an important monitoring role because the national inspectorate simply does not have sufficient resources for effective oversight at the individual school level. To assist the committees, the central government has translated the education regulations and decrees into the local languages. The new system is just now becoming operational.

Some lessons to be learned from the initial universalization effort are that system management is a serious constraint on reform and that defining minimum learning standards involves both political and methodological problems. Also, if schooling of a poor quality is provided, even without fees, parents and pupils will not take advantage of it. The expense of books, the lack of employment opportunities and the feeling that the curriculum is irrelevant to community needs are other problems that have interfered with the achievement of universal primary schooling.

Some observers doubt whether the expense of Schooling for All will be as 'affordable' as some estimates suggest. The calculations assume the cost savings will come prior to the need for financing the enhancement of educational quality. Experience suggests, however, that quality improvements will be necessary before any substantial savings can be realized.

More generally, it should be understood that not all cost reforms will save money. In some countries being more efficient will cost more per pupil and require a greater expenditure. Also, serious

reservations can be raised about increasing class size and using double shifts: since Schooling for All entails reaching the marginalized populations, these reforms may be counter to the special learning conditions that will be necessary to achieve successful social inclusion of these populations in schooling. Furthermore, the learning of values and affective education generally may not be handled well in large classes or double-shift schools. The need is not for general rules but for country-by-country assessments. For example, double shifting will often work only in urban areas, where many countries are already close to universalization.

Both political and psychological barriers to Schooling for All efforts need to be taken into account. Some cost-saving activities may be real but not practical if political opposition to them exists. Changing the salaries or time utilization of teachers, for example, may run into such barriers. Many parents object to the child-care problems posed by double shifts. Similarly, teachers may oppose larger pupil/teacher ratios. Even if the research shows that class size does not affect pupil achievement, it does impact on the teacher's workload. A more acceptable alternative might be to assign many of the routine tasks that teachers are asked to do to less trained and less expensive personnel, thus freeing teachers to use their skills to promote learning.

Is it possible that the interactive nature of cost-saving efforts could actually reduce the total cost of Schooling for All? The proposed increased financing of instructional materials, for example, may reduce the cost of grade repetition. However, such 'savings' may be offset by the increased costs of pupils remaining longer in the school system. Cost effects can be cumulative as well as offsetting and it is difficult to predict which result will occur.

Education authorities should consider ways to lower fees and other direct costs in order to encourage parental commitment to the educational 'investment' in their children. Reduced costs might be achieved by limiting the number of textbooks required. Nigeria, for example, hopes to reduce the number of required books from twelve to five. Such savings could have a positive effect on school participation rates, especially for families having

more than one child in school.

In considering alternatives for financing education, one should not take for granted the continuance of the Western model of schooling. Some people feel that no meaningful changes can take place until the whole neo-colonialist education system is reformed. Another view asserts that because the present international economic order drains resources from the developing countries, changing this situation should be the policy focus for the Education for All initiative.

UNDP's *Human Development Report 1990* recommends a broad, multisector human development strategy to meet the goals of initiatives such as Education for All, as well as concerns for health, employment, political freedom, human rights and self-respect for all individuals. All human development sectors, including education, need to consider improved efficiency and rationalization of their operations.

In education the most visible inefficiencies are those related to drop-out rates, the inverted education expenditure pyramid (with higher per pupil amounts at the higher levels) and the imbalance between general education versus technical education relative to the labour market's demand for skilled personnel. A more general problem is the mis-targeting of social expenditures on activities that benefit few people and/or primarily those who are already socially advantaged. All systems contain waste and inefficiency; while some may be inevitable, part of the wasted resources could be reallocated to meet real human needs.

On the global level, the resources needed for Education for All are definitely available. One indication: if the annual increase in military expenditure could be cut in half, approximately \$10 billion could be freed for other purposes.

### **Mobilizing international resources**

The donor community needs to assign a higher priority to sustaining education and training efforts. Education will need to compete with other development priorities for a pool of development assistance that may increase in real terms by only about 2 per cent per year. The announcements at

the Conference by the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF that they will place a higher priority on basic education in their funding activities is encouraging. However, the role of bilateral donors will be crucial since a large share of their assistance is in the form of grants or concessionary loans.

Recipient governments must show that they give a clear priority to Education for All and that this is a priority for the prime minister and the minister of finance, not just the minister of education. The priority accorded to Education for All can be made evident in action plans of the type adopted by the Philippines. These plans should be comprehensive and include output targets for the year 2000. The specific interventions to be pursued should be made clear, along with proposed cost-saving, cost-recovery and budget-reallocation measures. Once these are defined, the residual requirement for external assistance can be specified in terms of how much is needed, for what purpose and in what forms. Such planning will enable donors to be brought into the development assistance dialogue earlier and the recipient country to be an equal partner in determining financial assistance. This approach also makes it easier for governments to co-ordinate assistance among donors.

On their part, donors need to have education specialists on their staff and encourage field offices to propose education projects and activities. Both debt-relief and sector-support programmes should be among the alternatives considered to assist education. It has been asserted that the ability of countries to redirect the effects of foreign assistance makes the stated purpose unimportant. However, many observers feel that if foreign assistance funds are not earmarked for education, they will be used for other national priorities. Foreign donor emphasis on social investment can often influence these priorities. Donor support for non-governmental organizations is especially important in seeing that this resource is used effectively.

The discussion of external assistance should be considered in the context of Article 10 of the *World Declaration*, which states *inter alia*:

*Creditors and debtors must seek innovative and equitable formulae to resolve these [debt] burdens, since the capaci-*

*ty of many developing countries to respond effectively to education and other basic needs will be greatly helped by finding solutions to the debt problem.*

The debt problem has three distinct components: (i) the loss of foreign exchange that occurs as a result of the debt-service burden; (ii) the proportion of government expenditure that must be allocated to the debt servicing; and (iii) the structural adjustment policies that are implemented by countries because of an inability to meet these obligations.

The use of debt-relief measures to resolve these problems can be successful, but so far such efforts have been costly in time and effort, and have not involved substantial amounts of debt reduction. UNICEF is working with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to launch a debt-relief scheme for social investment in Latin America (the scheme is similar to one used by the Spanish Government to encourage cultural restoration activities). Funds would go to governments through IDB and would be used to buy back government debt at discounted rates. In this way \$100 million can be used to retire debt of \$200 million or more, depending on the market value of the debt. The support by IDB would be linked to the government's agreement to release proportional amounts of local currency for increased investments in the social sector.

The UNICEF-IDB proposal is not yet funded. Even if it were, debt relief is only one factor, although a potentially useful one, in helping to free funds for Education for All. True debt relief will require long-term changes in the international economic system.

While debt relief or debt swaps are one way to free funding for education, much of the foreign assistance provided at present does not serve to reduce the existing funding gap. The current support for expensive overseas training, high-priced technical assistance or for commodities produced by the donor country often does little to help meet the financing needs cited in this chapter. Recurrent costs are the greatest financing burden, and they are usually the item the multilateral and bilateral agencies are least willing to support. However, the move to sector funding and non-project

**Box 7.5 International aid: getting priorities right**

Some \$2.5 billion is given each year in aid to developing countries for education. The figure sounds impressive but, in fact, represents a little less than \$4 for each of the 700 million pupils in these countries. It also represents only 5 per cent of the total flow of international aid, according to OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). However, the sum involved is perhaps less important than how it is spent and recent studies in this area indicate that much of the money is used inefficiently.

This disturbing picture has been unveiled by IREDU (Institute for Research into the Economics of Education, University of Bourgogne-CNRS) in France, which looked at who gives aid; who receives it and how much they get; which level of education benefits most; and what the money is used for.

*The smaller the country, the more it gets!*

One of the study's first findings was the great variability in the amount of aid. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa there is a ratio of 1:200 in the amount of aid per inhabitant between the country receiving the least aid and the country receiving the most. If we compare the aid allotted to each pupil in primary education to that given to students in higher education, the ratio is 1:500. There is also little connection between the amount of aid provided and the indicators for evaluating the urgency of the needs, such as the level of poverty in the countries being assisted or the extent of illiteracy. The only variable which is linked in a statistically significant way with the volume of aid received by a country is the size of that country. The smaller the country, the more aid per inhabitant is received!

The study covers the years 1981-86, during which the amount of aid remained more or less stable when expressed in dollars. This probably means that in the later years the purchasing power of aid to education dropped along with the exchange rate of the dollar.

Most worrying, though, is the low priority given to primary education, which receives about \$180 million dollars a year from external sources. This is about 33 cents for each of the developing world's 500 million primary-age students - a meagre sum indeed compared to the \$100 billion spent by developing countries themselves on education. In fact, aid to education as a whole represents only 2.5 per cent of the national budgets of these countries. This situation can be explained. Just as donors give more generously to small countries, so they are more inclined to assist those levels of education

where the pupils are few. The aid is more visible, and the impact of the contribution easier to evaluate. External aid also has more obvious comparative advantages where technical and higher education are concerned, and these are precisely the two levels which receive the most help. They call for facilities and human skills that are relatively abundant in donor countries but scarce in assisted nations. It would surely be absurd to send primary-school teachers who cost ten to thirty times more than local teachers, when there are now enough teachers at this level in most developing countries.

*Is aid relevant?*

Nevertheless, to explain is not necessarily to justify. Basics such as classrooms, furniture and textbooks are rare in primary schools in many countries and international aid could do more in this area. External support is also needed to promote and develop national capabilities for analysis and planning, to improve management of limited resources. International donors are also reluctant to finance running costs, particularly teachers' salaries, but it is precisely in this area that the poorest countries are facing serious difficulties. For example, the annual salary bill for the 51,000 primary-school teachers in the nine countries of the Sahel is about \$130 million. This sum represents a little over half the aid given by France alone to sub-Saharan Africa for education, and is much lower than the cost of French technical assistants working in the post-primary levels there.

There are clearly grounds for questioning the relevance and effectiveness of some of the present forms of aid, such as the provision of facilities or buildings with high running costs, technical assistance for training that is already widely available, or grants which create tomorrow's immigrants and which are awarded for special fields in which there are no real opportunities in the receiving country. Numerous possibilities exist for the effective, appropriate and equitable reallocation of external aid to education, and primary education should be the main beneficiary of it.

Many donors are aware that aid to education functions badly. However, the inertia of habit, institutional inflexibility, the low level of co-ordination among donors and differing views about priorities mean that despite some good intentions, there are no real signs of improvement yet.

François Orivel and Fabrice Sergent,  
*UNESCO SOURCES*, No. 12, 1990, p. 11.

assistance by some donors is a positive step towards reshaping the mode of financing to meet the real needs.

Funding agencies need to be convinced that debt relief now will not lead countries to fall into the same debt problems in the future. While generalizations are useful for aggregate estimates, each country has its particular situation and potential. Some debtor countries have no large defence budget to reallocate; some already depend on substantial domestic taxes and community participation. Finally, investments in education must be tied to investments in national development; otherwise unemployed graduates may offset the desired outcomes from Education for All. In short, education must be an investment, not a consumption activity.

In terms of structural adjustment effects, both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have repeatedly stated their support for the protection of social investment and of groups at risk within adjustment programmes. However, such conditions must be initiated and supported by the national government. As noted earlier, the entire government, not just the ministers of education or health, has to assign a priority to social-sector activities. Parents, communities, non-governmental organizations and other supporters of Education for All must make their opinions heard. If this is done, public policy and plans will be sensitive to the Conference's goals, and these can be incorporated into structural adjustment agreements.

At a time when donors are under pressure to do more to protect the environment, advocates of Education for All need to mobilize similar support.

Education for All will not be funded unless politically significant groups support it.

In this connection, non-governmental organizations can be particularly effective advocates of Education for All. They have a special ability to affect government attitudes by persuasion and lobbying. They can also play a key role in directing public opinion. Their role should not be an inherently adversarial one with government. Government and non-governmental organizations should work together to define a policy framework for financing and delivering services within which an effective role for the latter can be sustained. Non-governmental organizations are inherently pro-people, not anti-government.

Finally, the idea of education as a component of all development activities is an especially valuable concept. A new paper mill might reduce the cost of textbooks, for example. Unless the educational effects are recognized, an insufficient priority might be assigned to general development projects. Within donor agencies, officials concerned with education need to interact more with those in other areas of development support. Both countries and international assistance agencies need to change. Achieving Education for All is a difficult task requiring tough choices, but Education for All appears both affordable and manageable.

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## 8. Education for All beyond the Jomtien Conference

A signal contribution of the World Conference on Education for All was the development of an 'expanded vision' of basic education for all people. This vision includes five components: universalizing access and promoting equity; focusing on learning; broadening the means and scope of basic education; enhancing the environment for learning; and strengthening partnerships. This monograph has attempted to draw together the content of the materials and presentations from the Conference on the issue of the 'requirements' for implementing this expanded vision.

These requirements have been defined in terms of the basic learning needs of youths and adults – not the needs of bureaucratic structures, of promoters of specific techniques or technologies, or even of the teachers and other educators who undeniably have key roles in meeting basic learning needs. The Conference advocated a shift to priorities favouring human development; a shift in human development priorities towards a greater focus on basic education; and a shift within basic education priorities to an increased emphasis on the needs of individuals if they are to become complete and effective participants in the life of their community.

This final chapter will present a brief summary of the key points of the 'requirements'. It will also give attention to the prospects for further progress in attaining Education for All.

### Summary of issues

*There has clearly been an interest in concrete achievement of goals in the face of the apparent temptation to merely*

*state the obvious, or to shrink from the sheer size of the task, [an interest in] making the task do-able by the application of creativity and innovation.*

Mrs Esi Sutherland-Addy, Co-Rapporteur-General

The 'sheer size of the task' of meeting the requirements for Education for All is intimidating. In the preceding chapters and in Monographs I and II, specific insights and suggestions have been presented that will help promote the application of creative and innovative solutions, as well as proven solutions that, while no longer new, have not been broadly assimilated into basic education strategies. The summary list that follows is unavoidably arbitrary and selective, but it does serve to indicate the breadth of perspectives that emerged during the Conference's deliberations on the requirements issue.

### *Mobilization for empowerment*

- Achieving Education for All will require more than increased finances – it will require the effective mobilization and empowerment of individuals, communities and non-governmental organizations.
- Mobilization is not a problem to be overcome but an opportunity for an improved structure and context for learning activities.
- Mobilization must stress the role of ideas over the means and systems of dissemination.
- Political commitment must be founded on a broad popular commitment and can be measured only by the substance and effects of educational activities.

- Support for education is directly related to the quality and relevance of the education provided.
- Non-governmental organizations have a unique mobilization role because of their knowledge of individual and local needs, and their credibility at the community level.
- The most effective mobilization activities will involve a broad range of actors, from government officials and technical specialists to pupils and members of the local community.
- Education managers should be a key target of initial mobilization efforts because of their ability to become agents for mobilizing others.
- A clear message, a specific goal and effective use of the media are all appropriate criteria by which mobilization efforts may be evaluated.

#### *The status and roles of teachers*

- The conditions of teachers and the effectiveness of teaching are closely related.
- It is necessary to recognize teachers as intellectual workers deserving fair living conditions, social rights and academic freedom.
- Much of the developing world is characterized by a decline in the working conditions of teachers.
- 'False solutions' to the problem of human resource development must be avoided and a teacher-centred strategy should be pursued that assures children a competent and motivated instructor in an appropriate learning environment.
- The role of teachers is evolving; in addition to transmitting information and ideas, they need to become qualified professionals closely linked to the communities in which they work.
- Only qualified teachers can help attain the quantitative Education for All goals at acceptable levels of learning achievement.
- Effective teachers should perform as partners with pupils, parents, administrators and the community.
- Improvement in the condition of teaching will occur only with more general improvements in societal conditions.

- Teachers' organizations must represent the interests of pupils, communities and society rather than only the interests of their members.

#### *Participation of non-governmental organizations, communities, parents and learners*

- The Conference's broadened definition of learning resources includes the non-governmental organizations, the communities, the parents and the learners themselves.
- Participation by pupils, parents and communities should become a standard rather than exceptional characteristic in efforts to provide Education for All.
- The emergence of the non-governmental organizations has been one of the most significant developments in basic education and social action in the past decade.
- Non-governmental organizations have been effective in promoting basic education within a general human development approach.
- Non-governmental organizations are not simply sources of inexpensive labour for government projects or solely available for delivery or dissemination functions.
- Knowledge of the local milieu, success in experimentation and flexible and adaptive structures provide non-governmental organizations with a significant advantage in design, implementation and evaluation activities.
- Non-governmental organizations gain effectiveness through coalitions at the local, national and international level.
- Basic education is a political issue and the role of non-governmental organizations has an inherently political dimension.
- Basic learning needs of children cannot be met if they remain undernourished, in poor health and in environments that discourage curiosity and inquiry.
- The adults of the community must be educated about the value of learning for themselves and their children.
- Programmes to educate caregivers have great benefits for meeting the basic learning needs of children.

- Basic learning needs must be defined to include those that occur between birth and the beginning of schooling.
- Investments in early childhood care are necessary, feasible and cost-effective.
- Experience with early childhood programmes worldwide supports their value and provides useful lessons for the Education for All initiative.
- Early intervention programmes influence pupil readiness, enrolment, progress and learning.
- Primary-schooling programmes should build on and reinforce early intervention activities.
- Participatory, school-based programmes can motivate pupils and provide them with skills they cannot acquire in more passive learning activities.
- The Education for All initiative requires a revolutionary and transformational definition of literacy rather than a technocratic one.
- Co-operation and competition between local and international publishers can both be effective if conducted within the proper policy framework.
- Given population increases and higher participation rates in education, the challenge of supplying instructional materials to all will continue to require attention in the coming years.

#### *Utilizing assessment capacities to improve learning*

- Education managers will need more training, better information, an improved capacity for assessment and analysis, and broader professional contacts to fulfil their Education for All responsibilities.
- Assessment of learning achievement includes both formative and summative activities, and should always incorporate a feedback mechanism to promote proper use of the assessment results by teachers and education managers.
- The three general models of assessment are classroom-based, school-based and external; an assessment 'system' may incorporate all three.
- The locus of an assessment is of less critical importance than its coverage, form, frequency and the use to which its results are put.
- Assessment needs to incorporate, where feasible, psycho-motor and affective results as well as cognitive outcomes.
- Assessments have long-term value only to the extent that they lead to more equitable and effective instruction and learning.

#### *Textbooks and other instructional materials*

- The availability of learning materials is one of the most positive and consistent determinants of pupil learning achievement.
- Effective use of instructional materials requires the proper prerequisite training of teachers.
- In periods of economic hardship, expenditure on instructional materials is often a target for reductions.
- The challenge for education planners is to examine all administrative and technological alternatives to produce more materials at the same or lower cost
- Readership size is a key conditioning factor in determining the cost of developing and disseminating instructional materials.
- A systematic approach to develop learning materials must consider the individual roles of all the major actors in the process, from educators to distributors.
- A greater role for private participation (within each country's defined form of government responsibility) in the provision of instructional materials is one alternative that should be examined.

#### *Cost-reduction opportunities in primary schooling*

- The international economic decline and past policy decisions by governments have resulted in a greater financial challenge to Education for All now than existed a decade ago.
- Low-income countries face the greatest difficulties in financing Schooling for All.
- The enrolment deficit is concentrated among the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.
- The overall success of the Education for All

initiative will depend on finding new sources of funds and making more efficient use of all available resources.

- A significant share of Schooling for All costs will need to be financed by reallocations within countries (for example, from defence) and by increased levels of international support.
- Achievement of Education for All will require redirecting greater expenditure towards basic education. This involves redistribution within education sectors, between different delivery systems, between levels of education and between types of institutions and types of expenditure.
- New educational resources may be raised by increased user charges and private provision, use of loans and scholarships, expanding tax coverage, introducing new fiscal instruments and utilizing community financing.
- Reductions in unit costs will depend on policies affecting the average earnings of teachers, pupil/teacher ratios, the internal efficiency of schools, capital costs and boarding programmes.
- Efficiency may be improved through restructuring the school system by changes in the length of education cycles, changes in initial age of pupil entry, organizational and teaching reforms and developing links between education and work.
- No fixed general rules for financing Schooling for All will be appropriate; each country will need to develop its own specific strategy.
- Greater domestic support for basic education is a prerequisite for effective acquisition and use of international assistance funds.
- Effective country-specific plans for Education for All are one means to promote efficient use of domestic and international funds.
- One major form of international support could be debt reduction and more equitable trade relationships.

This lengthy summary of issues is certainly not exhaustive. Some topics not dealt with in detail at the Conference include the content of teacher training, the structure and content of the curriculum, non-teacher-based systems of instruction, incentives for reform, the need for greater balance

between formal and non-formal approaches to basic education and ways to meet the needs of marginalized population groups. The fact that such important topics were not really dealt with simply indicates the vast scope of the Education for All challenge – and the limited time available at the Conference.

### **Implications for future efforts**

One disturbing element in the presentations dealing with the requirements was a tendency for individuals to take a competitive advocacy stance: the most important requirement for Education for All was variously claimed to be the pupil, the teacher, the community, the non-governmental organizations, the instructional materials, technology, assessment techniques, etc. Such narrow positions are clearly out of tune with the Conference's emphasis on partnership and collaboration. Education for All needs the proper mix of these requirements; no single requirement can operate effectively in the absence of the others and often will work most efficiently only when operating in concert with these others. A major task for the immediate future is to undertake research and experimentation that will identify the proper mix for different contexts and goals. No one mix is likely to be correct in all situations.

The round-table presentations generally recognized that basic education is only as effective as its environment – political, social, cultural and economic – permits it to be. However, the existence of an unsupportive environment cannot be allowed to become an excuse for inactivity. Education for All is as much a process as a goal; even if full realization is not immediately – or even foreseeably – attainable, that should not prevent every effort being made to improve the lives of as many children and adults as possible.

A broader definition of requirements is necessary to meet the challenge of the broader vision of basic education. Bureaucratic and individual differences must be put aside so that all available resources can be used effectively. The focus on individuals and their learning needs is one of the Conference's most valuable contributions.

The structure of follow-up will appropriately emphasize country-level activities. All bilateral and multilateral support should be considered in terms of the effect it has at the country level. Existing mechanisms, facilitated by UNESCO within the cooperative inter-agency arrangements that served the Conference so well, should continue as the major vehicles for improving basic education opportunities. Ultimately, the Conference's success will be judged not in terms of new organizations, new personnel, new initiatives or new funding levels. The criteria of success will be the improvement in people's lives – especially of those children, young people and adults who are currently most in need.

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