NONFORMAL AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO PROVIDE PRIMARY LEVEL EDUCATION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Synopsis on significant experiences and innovative approaches and synthesis of six case studies with a selective bibliography
INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ITS DEMOCRATIZATION
A SYNOPSIS

by

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INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ITS DEMOCRATIZATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to present a synopsis of significant experiences of innovative approaches towards achieving universal primary education (UPE) and its democratization prepared from a study of the available published materials pertaining to this field. The synopsis is based on the study of about 200 publications including books; reports of conferences, seminars and workshops; reviews; national case studies and country reports; research papers and journal articles related to UPE. Of these, a selected bibliography of about 80 publications has been compiled and is attached to this paper as an appendix.

2. THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

2.1 Primary Education as a Right of the Child

There is an urgent need to provide Basic Education to all children during the 1990's so that they can meet the challenges of the 21st century. Universal Primary Education (UPE) is indispensable for the eradication of illiteracy and the attainment of this basic level of education, which is in turn the foundation for further learning throughout life. The availability and quality of primary education are therefore of major significance for the success of each person's inescapable process of lifelong education.

A century ago UPE was still a utopian ideal, even in many of the richer, industrially developed countries where it has now become the norm. UPE is spreading, both as a worldwide goal of national education policies and as a reality, and children's right to education has been acknowledged in internationally accepted principles. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of
Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education, and that elementary education shall be free. In 1959 the United Nations General Assembly adopted in addition the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, according to which:

"The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture, and enable him on a basis of equal opportunity to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society." (Principle 7)

The importance of free and compulsory primary education for all children is further emphasized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the UN in 1989 (Article 28 (a)).

Eradication of illiteracy and provision of a basic level of education for all has been a major concern of Unesco as reflected in the Second Medium Term Plan (1984-1989) and through its Major Programme II, Education for All, attempts were made on a global scale to promote general access to education to eradicate illiteracy and to provide a satisfactory level of initial education to all. This attempt is being continued and further stressed in the Third Medium Term Plan (1990-1995) in Programme 1.1: Towards Basic Education for All.

2.2 The Role of Primary Education in Literacy

The key role played by primary level (or initial or basic level) of education in the struggle to eradicate adult illiteracy is quite clear. All those children who have not had the opportunity of acquiring a minimum level of literacy and numeracy skills during the early stages of their life enter the adult world as illiterates to increase the adult illiteracy population. And the number in this category is quite large:

"One out of two children in the developing countries to-day does not enjoy the benefit of a full cycle of primary education ... If the present trends are allowed to continue, by the year 2000 the number of illiterates aged 15 years and over is estimated to exceed 800 million" (Unicef-Unesco Joint Working Group, 1984, p. 7).
"The alarming prospects are that millions of children of primary school age will have no opportunity to attend school and consequently will join the ranks of the adult illiterate population of whom over 60 per cent will be women" (ibid, p. 5).

Hence the Universalization of Primary Education (UPE) and the completion of the primary cycle by all the children are deemed to be essential prerequisites for the successful eradication of adult illiteracy.

While on the one hand, failure to achieve UPE leads to an increase in adult illiteracy, the existence of adult illiteracy, on the other hand, may be considered as one of the obstacles to the achievement of UPE. Such a conclusion is based on the observation that illiterate parents are lacking in a sense of deep commitment and motivation to enrol their children in school and ensure that they remain there to complete at least the elementary stage. It is believed that a high adult literacy rate of about 70 per cent is the critical threshold for achieving UPE in developing countries. The link between illiteracy and failure to achieve UPE, therefore, is such that they thrive on each other constituting a vicious circle. Hence the importance of considering adult literacy and primary education as two aspects of the same problem cannot be over-emphasized.

2.3 Universalization of Primary Education (UPE)

Since universal primary education means different things to different people, Hawes (1983) discusses the difficulty in attempting to formulate a generally acceptable single definition of UPE. The various interpretations of the term UPE range from a functional concept adopted by the Unesco meeting of the Member States of Asia in Karachi in 1959 which refers to the "first stage seeking to achieve compulsory schooling for at least five years with a view to ensuring permanent functional literacy" (APEID Regional Meeting on Universalization of Primary Education, 1983, p. 43) to something wider but vague as the definition used by the Commonwealth Secretariat:
"that stage of educational practice where, by conscious effort, communities attempt to make opportunities for learning and self-improvement available to all their people" (Hawes, 1983, p. 125).

He points out that the various definitions cover a number of alternatives such as:

- universal attendance
- universal capacity
- universal accessibility

and asserts that criteria of universality will vary and are dependent on historical, economic and political factors (ibid, p. 127).

The criteria of universality have both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. It should be noted in this regard that compulsory primary education and UPE in a numerical sense do not guarantee a high rate of literacy because there is evidence that "some countries with relatively high enrolment ratios are still to be found in the group of illiterate countries" (Fi cher, 1982, p. 157). Ahmed refers to the "naive confidence" that existed in the 1960's regarding UPE:

The question of the universalization of primary education and the elimination of illiteracy in Africa, Asia and Latin America, of course, had been raised in the 1960's and with naive confidence it was believed that the problem would be solved by the 1980's. By the end of the 1980's, the realisation had already dawned that it was not just a numbers game, that the individual and social purpose of education were not automatically served by the linear expansion of the existing system, and that the numerical targets could not be attained globally without rethinking the nature and functions of the educational programmes. Although the tyranny of numbers could not be escaped, the original goal of quantitative expansion was broadened to include the reexamination of the premises regarding the structures, content, process and goals of education (Ahmed, 1982, p. 134).

A deeper analysis of the concept of UPE which, therefore, becomes necessary in the context of literacy and lifelong education suggests that the emphasis should not be limited to the arithmetic of enrolment and the number of years in a given institution but should be extended to cover the quality - the
aims, content and level of achievement - deemed adequate to provide the minimum knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by an individual to initiate a lifelong learning process and enhance his or her educability as envisaged, for example, as 'basic education' in the Faure Report (Faure, et.al., p. 184) and the Kirpal Committee Report (Meeting of Experts on the Basic Cycle of Study, 1974, p. 4). In order to achieve this aim, it becomes necessary to review the conventional structures of primary education, the content and the delivery systems; and to investigate the possibility of introducing innovative approaches to overcome various obstacles to UPE and the deficiencies of the existing system. The problem to be overcome is two-fold: providing access to and effective participation in primary or equivalent educational opportunities for all children; and literacy and numeracy courses leading to primary education equivalence for youth seeking a second chance to further their education.

2.4 The Present Status - Reality and Prospects

In their efforts to achieve the goals of UPE many countries in the 60's and 70's focused their attention on the expansion and strengthening of the formal school system. However, an analysis made on the basis of the latest statistics leads to the conclusion that in spite of these efforts "in many Developing Countries, the two major goals in education - the provision of basic education for all and the eradication of illiteracy by the year 2000 - still remain distant targets looming far away on the horizon" (Unesco, 1989, p. i).

Enrolment in primary education

The following are some of the disquieting features observed in the 1980's concerning Developing Countries in this Unesco survey:
- Enrolment rates at the primary education level have risen in the 80's but even in 1990, there are 33 countries in which the enrolment rates for the 6-11 age group is less than 60% (27 in Africa, 4 in Asia, 2 in Latin America and the Caribbean).

- The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for primary level education has declined or fluctuated in 35 out of 105 Developing Countries, 20 of these being in Africa and 10 in Asia. These countries have only managed to enrol a small portion of their primary school-age population.

- Despite unparalleled growth in enrolment, assuming that the ratios of 95 per cent or more is the criterion for distinguishing countries which have either reached or practically attained UPE, only 57 out of 105 countries accounting for three quarters of the primary school age population in the Developing Countries may be said to have attained this objective. In other words, one out of four children lived in countries where UPE had not been achieved (about 4 out of every five in Africa).

- The enrolment projections for the first level for the year 2000 suggest that UPE may be considered as not having been achieved in 36 countries (26 in Africa, 7 in Asia, 3 in Latin America and the Caribbean).

- As regards age-groups 12-17 years, the numbers out-of-school in the year 2000 would be: Asia - 191 million; Africa - 54 million.

- Another established target, parity of enrolment between the sexes still remains to be achieved. In fact, this is one of the major obstacles to the achievement of UPE.

- In the year 2025, Africa would have almost 47 million children aged 6-11 years not enrolled in schools.

**Gender disparities**

The difference between male and female gross enrolment ratios (percentage points) at the first level for Developed and Developing Countries are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>2000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and the</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arab States</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Unesco, 1989)
This disparity in enrolment between the sexes and the low participation of females is considered to be a major obstacle to achieving UPE.

### Out-of-School Youth. Both Sexes (Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Age-Group 6-11</th>
<th>Age-Group 12-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>133.7</td>
<td>117.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of which:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Unesco, 1989)

The survey concludes that the enrolment projections provide a disquieting view as regards the attainment of UPE by the end of this century or even by the year 2025 and serve to reinforce the concerns with respect to the eradication of illiteracy.

Why has one of the major goals in education in Developing Countries, the attainment of UPE, not yet been realized in spite of the concerted efforts and resources invested on it? Is the shortage of schools and classroom places the cause for it? Unesco's statistical analysis provides the answer that "for Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, it may be said that at the regional level there are enough school places to enrol all children of primary school age" (Unesco, 1989, p. 12). What then are the main causes for this phenomenon?

**Causes of non-attendance**

In spite of the availability of schools and classroom places a substantial proportion of children continued to remain outside school for various reasons. Several causes have been traced; some of which are easily defined such as inaccessibility of schools or mobility of parents, but all are interconnected in a complex nexus of economic and social factors:
Inaccessibility

In some areas schools were not found within easy access due to difficult geographical conditions (e.g., isolated small islands, mountainous regions, sparsely populated isolated village settlements, etc.).

Mobility of Parents

Even in those countries where school education is still inadequate, the enrolment and literacy rates among the nomads are frequently lower than those observed for the sedentary population as a whole. The Gypsies in the twelve Member States of the European Economic Community offer a typical example: between 30 and 40 per cent of their children attend school more or less regularly while the illiteracy rate among adults often exceeds 50 per cent (Pauvert, 1989).

Poverty

Parents living under conditions of extreme poverty with resources which are barely sufficient for their survival are unable to send their children to school because even when tuition is free, there are marginal expenses of education to cover costs of books, clothes and materials. Furthermore, conditions of extreme poverty contribute to malnutrition, ill-health and culturally impoverished home environments which seriously affect schooling.

Child Labour

Closely linked to parental poverty is the problem of child labour. Some children have no choice but to work, to help to support their families or to support themselves, so that they cannot attend full-time school. Those children engaged in seasonal undertakings, as in agriculture, may have at least part of their school year disrupted, and in subsistence economies the loss of a child’s labour is a significant cost to the family. Moreover, employers who engage and exploit children have an interest in continuing the arrangement because child labour is cheap.
Gender Discrimination

As shown earlier, girls are markedly under-represented in school enrolment and attendance in some countries. The great disparity between countries in respect to female enrolment reflects varied economic and social perceptions and realities. The most significant are that girls are held to be a greater economic asset in domestic pursuits than boys, and from a younger age and that expenditure on girls' education has no visible return in the context of their future occupations as women. In some countries there are social taboos against girls attending mixed classes, and being taught by male teachers.

Sociopolitical Disadvantage

Members of indigenous or migrant minorities, defined by ethnicity, class, caste, language or some other indicator, may not be provided with suitable schooling, or may reject the formal system of the majority as alien.

Negative Perceptions of the Uses of Literacy

Parental literacy and children's completion of primary education show a close correlation, and a high adult literacy rate of some 70% is the threshold for achieving UPE by conventional means. Illiterate parents may not appreciate the value of education and hence lack the motivation to enrol their children in school. Hence, illiteracy and failure of UPE thrive on each other and constitute a vicious circle.

The problem of drop-outs and erratic attendance

Even in countries where there is an apparently high enrolment rate, a large proportion of children drop out before reaching a basic level of education. In India, for example, enrolment in grades I-V (ages 6-11) is already 94%, but drops to 50% for grades VI-VIII (ages 11-14), UNICEF lists 33 countries where fewer than 50% of those enrolled in Grade 1 finish primary education, so that in extreme cases a low initial enrolment rate is more than
halved again by drop-outs (e.g., Chad, 38% enrolment, of which 29% completion; Bhutan, 25% enrolment, 25% completion), (UNICEF, 1988, pp. 70-71).

3. NONFORMAL APPROACHES AS AN ALTERNATIVE

3.1 The Need

The present status of UPE as discussed above indicates that attempts made so far to fulfill the basic task of achieving the target of UPE and completion of primary education by all through the expansion and strengthening of the formal school system have not brought effective returns in many developing countries. Such efforts have been limited mainly to the increase in the geographical coverage of territory to improve the accessibility of schools while maintaining the standard conventional practices pertaining to the content and methodology. While presenting the United Nations 1978 Assessment (The Expanding World of Learners: 1950-2000) of the demographic aspect of the growth of learning needs in the world, Coombs states that:

"As important as formal education is, it must be recognized that a large portion of the burgeoning learning needs in both developing and developed countries lie beyond its reach and competence ..." (Coombs, 1982, pp. 146-148).

Attempts to universalize primary education on a full-time basis through the formal system has been described as a 'Sisyphean policy' that is not viable in most developing countries (Kurrien, 1983, p. 181). The problem of developing countries not having succeeded in their efforts to find a place in school for every child of the school-going age, and keep him there long enough to acquire permanent literacy while substantially larger allocations for the purpose are now available than at any earlier period has received much attention. The failure is attributed to many reasons among which the more significant ones are: poverty, social and cultural deprivations and the rigidity of the formal school including the irrelevance of its curriculum.
In spite of the fact that considerable budgetary allocations are being made for primary education in the formal system, it is estimated that there are over 100 million school-aged children who are unenrolled in schools in the world. Even in the case of those who are enrolled, there still exists the phenomenon of early drop-outs who do not acquire even the minimum literacy skills needed to lead a fruitful life. There is also a problem of insufficient achievement of those who pass through the system. In this context suitable measures should be taken to ensure that drop-outs from the formal school need not necessarily be drop-outs from a learning system that should be in existence in all societies.

The existence of sizeable numbers of children who are unable to participate in the formal system in many countries, therefore, creates a real and urgent demand to search for nonformal and alternative approaches, structures and pertinent curricula to supplement and complement the efforts made through the formal school system to provide primary level education for all. It may be noted that in addition to the nonformal alternatives "priority actions directed at strengthening informal learning opportunities by enriching the rural environment are also suggested" (Coombs, Prosser, Ahmed, 1973, p. 93).

3.2 The Target Group

Nonformal and alternative approaches for education at the primary level are directed mainly towards the following categories of learners:

- unenrolled children
- school drop-outs
- special population groups in terms of their particular situation and environment (e.g., girls, disadvantaged groups, nomads)
- adults who have been deprived of primary education.

In a discussion on "the arithmetic of achieving universal primary education" Frederiksen refers to the effect of high population growth, high levels of repetition and drop-outs on the struggle to reach UPE (Frederiksen, 1983,
p. 141). The problem involved in enrolling the "ultimate or last 10%" and catering to their needs has received special attention (Williams, 1983, p. 159). School failure is considered to be one of the most serious and widespread problems confronting primary education today. The thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education, October 1984 has reviewed this problem at an international level (Garcia Garrido, 1986, p. 229). Much attention has been drawn in the literature to social as well as educational factors responsible for drop-outs as well as "push-outs" (see for example, Fordham, 1980, p. 41).

Lower participation rates for girls in primary education is seen to be one of the main obstacles in achieving full UPE in many countries (see for example, Unesco Principal Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, 1987).

"The core of the solution to the problem of universalization of primary education, therefore, lies in taking education to girls in the rural areas" (Natk, 1986, p. 3).

Even in countries which have already achieved considerable progress in UPE, there exists a problem with minorities and marginal or disadvantaged groups. The most frequently mentioned groups belong to the following categories (Garcia Garrido, 1986, p. 220):

- rural marginalization
- socio-economic marginalization
- ethnic and linguistic minorities
- immigrant workers.

3.3 Non-conventional Structures, Institutions and Programmes

Many countries have made attempts to set up alternative non-conventional education structures to cater to the educational needs of non-school goers and early school leavers which were designed to supplement and complement the conventional formal system. They had certain unique features attributed to them
in being flexible and adaptable, able to produce quick results, need-based, innovative and economical. Different dimensions of such alternative delivery systems provide an insight into the potentialities of these approaches (Unesco Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 1989, pp. 9-18).

Examples of non-conventional and nonformal approaches to primary level education cover a wide range of structures and practices from large scale nationally implemented state-controlled or supported projects to small scale community projects initiated by volunteers and non-governmental organizations. Countries such as China, India and Indonesia which have NFE structures within their national educational systems have developed extensive nonformal programmes as alternatives to the formal system (see, for example, APEID Technical Working Group Meeting on Alternative Structures Linking Formal and Nonformal Education with Special Emphasis on Universalization of Education, 1978; and Ranaweera, 1989). Examples of projects for special categories such as girls (Naik, 1986); children of nomads in Algeria (Bensalah, 1987); "Parking Boys" of Nairobi (Gichuru, 1984); Street Boys of Bogotá (Armengol, et al., 1989); the Mobile Tent School of the Philippines for mobile ethnic tribes (Lasam, in Ranaweera, 1989); the "Cheli Betl" programme in Nepal for peasant women and their daughters (Chlebowska, 1987); the Mobile School Network for children of itinerant families (e.g., gypsies) in the suburbs of Paris (A.S.E.T. 1989) and the L'Ecole Nomade of Mali illustrate the wide range and variety of innovative arrangements that are already in existence.

There are several examples of primary level programmes for children organized as an extension of mass literacy campaigns for adults. The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign, for example, is targetted to include children from age 8 upwards. Several other countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and Zambia have also concentrated more on mass literacy programmes as their main alternative strategies to cope with the needs of illiterate children and young adults (Ranaweera, 1989).
The literature contains references to national and sub-national programmes that had been initiated in several countries which are imaginative and innovative to varying degrees, to explore the feasibility of various alternative methods of providing learning opportunities for the deprived children in rural areas. Some of them were "comprehensive" projects which were designed as substitutes for the formal school and others were "limited aspect" projects meant to supplement existing programmes and to remedy some of their defects. A brief description of selected examples of such innovations from different parts of the world is given below (Unesco, 1985).

**The Gandhian Basic Education Project (Wardha Scheme)**

This project took its special character from the life experiences and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. It was essentially a process by which all people, even the most deprived were expected to learn to lead productive lives in which mental and manual skills were used together by individuals to create and maintain self-sufficiency as members of their community. Gandhi's twin concerns were to bring elementary education to all the villages, and to avoid the unfortunate situation where educated youth came to despise manual work and were sometimes physically ill-prepared for it. Craft-based education was expected to solve both these problems: craft work could render the schools financially self-sufficient and thus overcome the chief obstacle to universal primary education which was the lack of finance; craft work if studied scientifically, would engender an interest in manual work and thus dissipate the prevailing attitude of contempt. The concept was based on the principle that the disciplined practice of a craft to a high standard, and the experience of contributing to the costs of schooling through craft work was a means of achieving the principal objective of education - "the development of character".
Gandhi believed that the generalized objective of covering the existing school curriculum could be accomplished (with some reservations) simultaneously with the craft training objective. Later, Gandhi's concept was expanded to include also the study of the social and natural environment, and the idea of correlating the various studies to craft work was extended to include correlation with the natural and social environment. In the 7 year Basic Education Programme, pupils were expected to spend 60 percent of their time engaged in craft work and also gain command of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy (Sinclair, 1976; Veda Prakash, 1984).

The Nuclear System

Three Andean States, Peru, Bolivia and Equador devised the so-called Nuclear System to find a solution to problems in their countries posed by the existence of marginal social groups and topographical conditions which made communication exceptionally difficult over considerable areas. Within these areas schools were under-equipped and were isolated from each other and the communities which they served. The Nuclear System was devised to alleviate this situation by extending the limited and scarce resources, lessening their paralyzing isolation and enabling the schools to interpenetrate and interrelate with the community. The basic plan consisted of establishing links between existing schools within a homogeneous district and selecting one school to serve both as a model and as a co-ordinating centre for the exchange of experiences and facilities. The system gradually expanded from the initial notion of a network radiating from a central school to a larger complex with provision for stimulating community participation. Thus, the central school of the nucleus was equipped to offer, in addition to its existing programme, a literacy programme with a strong practical orientation including such options as health, agriculture and animal husbandry.
In this scheme, the school which still remains as a key element in the educational pattern, is seen not as a symbol of detached academic speculation but as one of the elements of an integrated system whose structures, methods, curricula, etc. are moulded so as to tie the school directly to the social environment. Nuclearization is ultimately aimed at completely merging the school with the entire social fabric. The nuclear schools, in addition to imparting education, were also designed to serve a useful function in rural development.

Integrated Community Education Project (Comilla) in Bangladesh

The educational programme of the Comilla Project was conceived as an integral part of the comprehensive rural development programmes, the most important principle underlying it being the creation of an intellectual mechanism for generating relevant knowledge, self-development skills and commitment. Educational programmes developed with a special emphasis on the primary school have the following innovative features. The students are organized under a programme called "Sabuj Sangha" which encourages them to carry out projects both in school and out of school (at home or in the community). Various types of projects - cultural, agricultural, arts and crafts - graded according to the ages of the children are organized and appropriate training is given in the school. The parents, members of the community and the community organizations are all involved in these projects. Students, teachers and community members work together in school works programmes for effecting repairs and improving physical facilities of schools. In addition to the economic gains, this has a considerable educational value in that it helps to develop employable skills and inculcates good attitudes and values in the minds of the children. Also, the work experience helps the children to use their book knowledge in real life situations. Apart from the activities of the students, some other structural changes such as in-service practical
training programmes in agriculture, animal husbandry, family planning, etc. for teachers, system of "feeder schools" in village mosques to relieve excessive overcrowding in schools were also introduced. The school extended its effective teaching staff by employing, on a part-time basis, model farmers and getting assistance from technical personnel in the fields of agriculture, animal husbandry, health and sanitation, etc. to train students in various project activities.

**Kwamsisi Community Education Centre, Tanzania**

A curriculum which fosters the integration of the school with the village and responds to the needs of the local community has been developed at the Kwamsisi Community Education Centre in Tanzania. It is a pilot project through which are being explored ways and means of linking education to the life of rural communities and of developing a more relevant and meaningful school curriculum. The experiment is based on the Tanzanian African socialist philosophy and the concept of Ujamaa villages. The project was planned jointly by government officials and members of the local community, taking into consideration the opinions, needs and aspirations of the local people. The curriculum for the upper grades of the primary school was defined in four areas: literacy and numeracy, citizenship, self-help and cultural activities, and community studies. While the first area corresponds to the normal primary school curriculum in all respects, the other areas brought in non-traditional and innovative learning experiences - e.g., child's relationship with and obligations to his family, village and society, self-help, maintenance of the school, preservation and growth of national culture, skills and attitudes necessary for good health, farming and life in the village. Each curriculum area was developed around a topic of interest and worked out on a flexible time table. Self-help activities were of two types: those associated with the running of the school and those in co-operation with the village as joint
development projects. The day-to-day work plan of the school is organized by the Self-Help Committee comprising fourteen students, the Head Teacher, a teacher and two members of the Village Council. The school is closely integrated with the community where villagers and children happily work side by side at joint development tasks or at traditional crafts or enjoying themselves in sports and cultural activities.

The Ruralized Primary School - Cameroon

It was recognized that the existing primary schools were cut off from the natural and human environment, which was essentially rural, thus making the school work abstract, boring and meaningless to a vast majority of children. In order to eliminate this maladjustment, it was thought that the old type of school and the traditional teacher must be replaced by a rural school and a rural teacher. The concept of "ruralization" of primary education thus evolved. Ruralization of the primary school was expected to make it "a centre of influence in the community". The education imparted will have two aspects: firstly, children will be taught the basic skills which will enable them to understand the world in which they live and be able to make use of the natural resources available to them; secondly, they must also be able to put these skills into good use. The school should, therefore, not only awaken the child's interest in doing practical tasks in his environment, but even take responsibility for cultivating and tending a field or an orchard. In order to ensure that a dual system will not exist, it was decided that the rural primary school will be the only primary school, whether in town or country. The rural primary school teacher is called a "teacher-community leader" in order to emphasize his new dual role: an in-school function to educate pupils according to the new perspective; an out-of-school function to organize adult community activities.
IREC Primary School – Sudan

The primary school of the Integrated Rural Education Centre, Sudan is an institution offering a six-year primary school programme appropriate for rural living to meet basic education needs of rural children. The curriculum takes due cognizance of the rural environment and is directed towards the development of skills and attitudes relevant to manual work and rural life.

In this process the school utilizes the potentialities, resources and facilities of the rural community and puts its own facilities and resources at the services of the village community and becomes an integral part of that community. The local environment is the basis source from which the curriculum content is derived. Observation, analysis, discovery and problem-solving based on the resources of the rural community constitute the essence of the teaching approach. Out-of-school informal and extra-curricula activities supplement and become an essential component of the regular school programme. Parents and members of the local community participate in the activities of the school and often serve as resource persons. IREC schools established in areas where there are no regular schools have catch-up programmes which adapt the primary school programmes for rural youth (10-15 years) who have missed the chance to attend school.

The Bhumiadhar Project – India

The primary level pilot project in Bhumiadhar, India is an example of an attempt to provide primary education to school drop-outs through part-time courses using a nonformal approach so that they might later re-enter a formal school. One important feature of this programme is that educational activities are intimately linked with community development activities. Classes are held in the evenings using a school building which is occupied by the regular school only in the morning. Most of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and
values are being developed in the children through work-experience. Some fundamentals of languages, arithmetic, science and social studies are also given to the children. It has no fixed time table and is open to the children at their convenience. The children get an education not only during the hours they spend at the centre, but also from their domestic work. The parents and the community members are being trained through the community development programme to help their children work more systematically and become more productive.

The following, among others, are some interesting examples of alternatives to conventional primary schooling cited by Coombs, Posser and Ahmed (1973):

**Upper Volta - An Alternative to Conventional Primary Schooling**

Upper Volta's Rural Education System is an all too rare example of an effort to provide a workable alternative to the conventional primary school and its follow-up in a situation where such schooling can be afforded only on an extremely modest scale. This relatively larger, unconventional programme - the object of considerable controversy - combines the equivalent of lower primary schooling with practical agricultural and other rural skill training for unschooled teen-agers over a three-year period.

**Thailand - A Large-Scale School Equivalency Programme**

This "second chance" programme in Thailand - under the Ministry of Education - enables out-of-school adolescents (boys and girls) with four years of primary schooling to complete the equivalent of the next three primary grades and three grades at the secondary level and obtain an official school certificate in less than half the time and at a fraction of the cost of regular schools.

**Primary School Equivalency Programmes**

Some countries have developed primary school equivalency programmes to give a "second chance" to unschooled youth and drop-outs to remedy their primary education deficiencies. The following are some examples:

"ACPO in Colombia offers, among other things, literacy training and primary school equivalency for out-of-school young people through radio lessons and related booklets. In East Africa, programmes in Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia use radio and correspondence for formal education equivalency for older adolescents and adults. The aim of Upper Volta's rural education
centres is to combine basic primary education and agricultural training for adolescents in rural areas without enough primary schools. Thailand has started part-time courses at the upper primary and secondary levels as a "second chance" for older adolescents.

A closer examination of the content and learning/teaching methodology of these programmes reveals that many of them are non-conventional only to the extent that their structures are different from those of the conventional formal system; and that the content, methods and materials are often not very different from those used in formal primary schools. Since many programmes make use of primary school teachers of the formal system as part-time teachers without giving them adequate training in nonformal methodology, it is inevitable that they adopt methods and use materials that are familiar to them. There are, of course, several examples of programmes where the content and methodology have been suitably adapted to meet the needs of learners in nonformal settings, particularly with the participation of the learners, instructors and members of the local community (see, for example, Naik, 1985). It is clear that those small innovative projects organized at the local (city or village) level with maximum participation by the local community at all stages of planning and implementation have a much greater claim to be genuinely "alternative" than the larger state-controlled projects.

It is asserted in most of the literature that the success of alternative approaches depend to a great extent on the degree of involvement of the participants in the determination of their own programmes; the local community in the planning and management process; and the extent of the collaboration of various governmental and non-governmental agencies besides the Ministries of Education (or Nonformal Education) which are normally expected to be responsible for these programmes. The extent to which the community could contribute to the success of a project is demonstrated by the 'Village Education Committee' approach adopted in the action-research project on UPE in Pune, India (Naik, 1985, p. 8).
3.4 Some Structural and Methodological Features of Nonformal Approaches

The non-conventional initiatives in this survey have certain common characteristics which, if properly harnessed, have certain capacities to meet the basic learning needs of the above-mentioned target groups more effectively than through the formal system. The most significant factor, among others, is the flexibility that is characteristic of these initiatives with regard to:

- age range in relation to level of course
- place of holding classes
- grade structure within a group
- frequency and timing of classes
- regularity of attendance
- teaching methodology and content of curriculum
- curricular demands for accreditation
- modes of evaluation and testing

The age-group of learners for whom these are designed varies but, in general, they cater to the 9-15 age group. Some countries have programmes for children below 9 years and the programme for those above 15 years are generally classified as adult education programmes.

Many countries make use of the physical and human resources of the formal system to implement nonformal programmes, e.g., school buildings and formal school teachers are utilized after normal school time to run nonformal classes. When such facilities are not available or suitable, the learners and instructors jointly locate suitable centres in a public or private building to suit the convenience of both parties.

The learning arrangements are made flexible in order to suit the needs of the learners. The face-to-face instruction is generally for 2-3 hours a day. There may also be special types of classes to meet special needs where the time duration is even more flexible (e.g., as in morning study classes, mid-
day classes, night classes, every-other-day classes, breaktime classes, mobile classes, etc. in China). The nonformal education programme is compressed to be completed in a shorter period of time than the formal primary education programme (e.g., in India, 5 years of formal compressed to 2 years of nonformal. In Venezuela, 9 years of formal to 6 years of nonformal). The nonformal classes do not follow the rigid grade structure of the formal system with fixed entry and exit points. There are multi-grade classes and flexible entry and exit points. Also, the learner is allowed to progress at his own pace.

In most countries, face-to-face instruction is the most important modality used. Some countries use distance education techniques in addition to face-to-face instruction. Self-learning modules are used, for example, in Indonesia. Radio and TV are being increasingly used where such facilities are available, e.g., India-radio and TV, Brazil-TV, Zambia-radio, Venezuela-radio + printed materials.

3.5 Teachers and Teacher Training

There are several categories of teachers for nonformal educational programmes:

(1) Teachers of the formal system specially trained to teach at primary level working on a part-time basis;

(2) Teachers who have been specially trained for nonformal education programmes;

(3) Personnel with expertise in various fields but not necessarily professional teachers, such as social workers, worker educators, "popular educators", vocational trainers, information specialists, extension workers in health, agriculture, etc., skilled workers, craftsmen, etc.;

(4) Volunteers including retired persons, students, and members of the clergy.

In most developing countries, categories (1), (3) and (4) are usually available but it is very rare to find category (2).
All these categories need preservice or inservice training to function effectively in NFE. Many countries have short inservice programmes which give the minimum competencies, but few have adequate preservice programmes. For economic reasons, developing countries have to benefit from all available human resources and take steps to train them to play the role of teachers in nonformal programmes.

Many of these teachers received modest allowances which were less than the salaries of formal primary school teachers while some worked on a voluntary basis. The justification for paying them lower salaries was the reduction in daily hours of teaching and lower qualifications demanded of nonformal teachers.

3.6 Finance and Other Resources

The principal sources of funds for NFE are:

- national or local government budgets
- NGOs and voluntary donations
- intergovernmental agencies
- multilateral and bilateral aid

Donations in cash and kind are made by the target community, for example through gifts of land, buildings, teaching materials and voluntary teaching. In general, nonformal approaches, as practised today are found to be cheaper than formal education because of the following factors:

- condensed curriculum (generally 2-3 years)
- shorter daily teaching time
- use of community and private premises
- lower pay for instructors
3.7 **Policy-making, Planning and Organization**

It is found that in most cases, the national governments take major responsibility for programmes, and either establish NFE within its existing administrative structure or create a separate department. Some governments (e.g., India) give financial support of NGOs and local projects. The need to have co-ordination among various ministries and departments besides education, such as health, agriculture, rural development, sports, social services and economic affairs has been recognized for preventing overlap and making maximum use of available resources. This co-operation is seen even at programme level where resource persons from various fields function as instructors. However, the need for participatory planning and involvement of learners and other personnel at all levels and in all aspects of the process is recognized to be necessary for the success of programmes. Small projects which have been planned and implemented by NGOs at the local level with learner and community participation have been found to be quite successful.

4. **ISSUES FOR PLANNING AND RESEARCH**

Flexibility, diversity and often uncertainty are among the important characteristics of nonformal and non-conventional approaches to primary level education as opposed to the rigidity, homogeneity, uniformity and certainty obtaining in formal education with reference to aspects such as the structure, clientele, curriculum, content, learning/teaching methodologies and materials, monitoring and evaluation, teachers and management. Hence the problem faced by educational planners in the context of an urgent present day problem: How could one meet the challenge of planning for flexibility, diversity and uncertainty in the provision of primary level education for out-of-school learners? Considering the nature of NFE educational planners have raised an even more fundamental question: "Can nonformal education be effectively planned and if so, in what ways and by whom?" (Evans, 1981, p. 11).
In response to this question Evans raises a number of relevant issues which should receive the attention of planners. Considering NFE as a component of the whole integrated concept of the education system existing in equal partnership with the formal system, he asserts as a basic premise that "the planning of nonformal education becomes a process which must take place in the context of planning for the complete range of educational activities in society" (ibid, p. 12). Assuming that the success of nonformal programmes has been due to "characteristics incompatible with large bureaucracies" such as their flexibility, the question arises whether NFE should be planned and organized as a national system which parallels the formal system or decentralized and left in the hands of the individual practitioners at the local level. Should NFE be primarily a public enterprise or an activity that is best left in the hands of volunteers and religious organizations, or both? Referring to planning at the national level, Evans (ibid, p. 69) favours that it "should be much more an exercise in what might be called 'minimal planning', where the emphasis is placed on policy alternatives and on the qualitative aspects of education".

The preservation of the character and strength of NFE and the effective mobilization of local resources depend to a great extent on the extent of participation and control that is made possible at the local level.

Another issue concerns the improvement of the quality of NFE. The further development of NFE does not lie in the direction of attempting to make nonformal more and more like formal. The strategy should be to develop curricula, teaching/learning methodologies, and evaluation and monitoring practices which are unique and characteristic of NFE, independent of the formal models, thereby developing NFE in its own right and not as a substitute. Self-learning,
peer-tutoring, inter-learning and self-evaluation are among the innovative strategies and practices that deserve serious consideration in this regard.

Evans refers to some positive aspects and potentialities of the non-formal system in planning to accommodate some of the features mentioned above:

A major contribution of nonformal education is to free planners from the very limited set of alternatives provided by the schooling model and to open a broad new range of design possibilities. Using a set of dimensions can provide planners, especially at the project level, with the basis for systematic design procedures that give serious consideration to the full range of alternatives, and can result in a learning environment, or curriculum in the most general sense, which is the most effective way of meeting educational needs (Ibid, p. 31).

How does one cope with the 'diversity versus homogeneity' dilemma encountered in the nonformal and formal system? A possible solution would be to think of a differentiated set of planning procedures with different methods for different categories of programmes (Ibid, p. 64) instead of a single planning strategy.

Last but not the least is the importance of learner participation; besides contributing to make the programme more relevant and meaningful to the learners, it helps to develop skills, motivate them and enhance self reliance.

5. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORMAL, NONFORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING - PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

NFE does not exist in a social vacuum, and therefore to be effective has to have strong horizontal linkages to the community environment and the pre-existing modes of informal learning. These include the influences of family, elders, peer groups, religious and political institutions, employers, social and cultural events, and the mass media.

Similarly, NFE fails to be a true alternative if there is a disadvantageous dichotomy between it and formal education. A Unesco/Unicef Regional Seminar on UPE in Latin America has concluded that:
"formal and nonformal education must be conceived as mutually complementary. Nonformal programmes must be completed by establishing and developing links with formal education. On the other hand, formal programmes, methods and organizations must be more flexible and nonformal whenever possible ... The main danger is that two educational systems of different quality and prestige will develop, and thus contribute to perpetuating and increasing the existing socio-economic disparities" (Unesco/Unicef, 1987, p. 13).

This danger must be overcome. It therefore needs to be recognised that NFE has a valid role to play in educational provision because it can make a contribution which formal education cannot. Nonformal approaches should be seen as part of a broader vision in which

"formal, nonformal and informal modes of learning can and should constitute the building blocks of a nation-wide comprehensive learning network in each country cemented into one meaningful mosaic by the concept of lifelong and recurrent learning opportunities for all" (Ahmed, 1982, p. 139).

Proposals for introducing alternative non-conventional approaches to primary level education have always been in danger of being regarded as offering second rate alternatives to 'real education'. It is inevitable that the debate on UPE had been linked with the debate on Universalization of Basic Education (UBE) since what had been proposed in the 1970's as a temporary crash programme to meet the basic minimum learning needs of children had been transformed into a new concept and a new strategy to meet the challenge of UPE.

The recommendation of the Faure Report that:

Universal basic education, in a variety of forms depending on possibilities and needs, should be the top priority for educational policies in the 1970's (Faure, et al., 1972, p. 192)

had been followed up and linked to UPE by Phillips as follows:

At present, however, as later chapters will show, it is not feasible to universalize the human right to education except
by a shorter cycle which provides for the mass of drop-outs. For at least a decade or two the role of UPE (universal primary education) in bringing the mass of educationally deprived children above the educational poverty line probably has to be assumed by UBE (universal basic education) together with supporting services of a nonformal kind for the purpose of literacy retention and recuperation of drop-outs (Philippe, 1975, p. 8).

In defending the need for the existence of a dual system - one providing a "sound minimum primary education system of the conventional kind", and another which provides "a minimum form of functional literacy, similar to that which is given in adult functional literacy programmes" to children outside the formal system - he states:

The existence of such a dual system may be regarded as discriminatory but surely it is less discriminatory than the unconscious present discrimination of giving children no education at all (ibid, p. 158).

Querying whether basic education is a tool of liberation or exploitation, Mbilinyi makes the following critical comment:

Because of the lack of financial and other resources, basic education is to be low-cost, cheap education for the masses - i.e., its form and content is determined by the material base of underdeveloped society. This also means it will contribute to the reproduction of the same underdeveloped material base, and to the reproduction of the exploited and dominated position of the masses within the society itself (Mbilinyi, 1977, p. 494).

It is clear from the above that any proposals for radical restructuring of primary education are bound to be met with strong criticisms and resistance.

One of the main socio-political barriers to the development of nonformal approaches, particularly in the developing countries, is the power and control exerted by those who want to maintain the traditional formal system and de-value the nonformal structures as inferior substitutes. This raises an important issue regarding the equivalence of the nonformal programmes in relation to the formal system and their acceptability for purposes of employment or re-entry to the formal main-stream. The problem of assessment for accreditation and equivalence becomes critical in this context:
The key to such acceptability lies in the assessment system. Alternative 'basic systems' have been devalued precisely because they are not seen to be leading anywhere (except possibly back to the farm). Once it can be proved that a certain level of publicly certified performances can lead learners on and up in the struggle for individual betterment, which, for good or ill, is part of everyone's aspirations, then the mode of getting there will also be accepted (Hawes, 1983, p. 135).

The need to reinforce interaction among different elements of a basic level of education has been stressed (Unicef-Unesco Joint Working Group, 1984, p. 34):

"Strengthening the mutually supportive relationship between early childhood programmes, primary education, literacy and post-literacy programmes and viewing them from a broad perspective of a basic level of education geared to the community's total learning needs is an essential element of the tasks to be undertaken".

The quest for effective personnel, adequate physical facilities and financial resources, untapped potentials for both human and material resources and evaluation of achievement are other issues which are being discussed (Coombs, Prosser, Ahmed, 1973, pp. 55-76).

A wide and comprehensive range of general principles and key concepts to guide the process of UPE have been formulated and recommended by the International Conference on Education, 39th Session, Geneva, October 1984, Final Report, p. 28.
Nonformal and alternative approaches to provide primary level education for out-of-school children

A synthesis of six case studies from Bangladesh, Burundi, Colombia, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

Prepared by
Mercy Abreu de Armengol
1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

The purpose of this synthesis is to present the experiences of six countries in an important aspect of nonformal education which is considered to be most significant for the eradication of illiteracy and achievement of the goals of Education for All, i.e., the provision of nonformal and non-conventional approaches to education at the primary (or first) level for out-of-school children and youth. A preliminary study conducted by the Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg and other similar studies have shown that the formal system alone cannot cope with the problems of Universalization of Primary Education (UPE) and that nonformal alternatives should no longer be looked at as marginal, second chance substitutes designed merely to support the main stream in developing countries.

Considering the importance of the development of nonformal approaches to primary level education, UPE in close collaboration with ED/PLA, Unesco conducted case studies in 6 countries with a view to disseminating the experiences and insights gained through these in order to stimulate action for strengthening primary level education programmes in developing countries.

Several developing countries are now determined to achieve the universalization of primary level education before the end of the century. In spite of enormous efforts made by these countries, which have been concentrated on the expansion and strengthening of the formal school system and have led to increasing the enrollment rates. Many developing countries have not succeeded in retaining these children until they acquire an adequate level of education enabling them to fully participate in the social, political, economic and cultural development of their nations. Available data state that there are all over the world almost 200 million children in the age range 5 to 14 who do not attend schools. Some of them were enrolled in the formal system but dropped out prematurely and did not even attain the minimum educational level needed to become productive citizens.

Even though nonformal education has been recognized as an acceptable second channel for the universalization of primary education, preliminary studies carried out in this area have suggested that not many countries have introduced such approaches on a large scale to attain UPE, and some nonformal programmes that have been tried out didn't prove successful under the circumstances they were implemented. It has also been found that there are other fruitful experiences whose...
careful analysis may contribute to identify those intervening factors that make the nonformal approaches appropriate avenues that shall help in achieving the goals set by developing countries for the universalization of primary education.

The study undertaken by UIE was focused on finding out relevant features of alternative approaches to provide nonformal education opportunities to out-of-school children in developing countries. The synthesis and comparative analysis presented here comprise six case studies that were carried out by national specialists working in this area in their respective countries: Bangladesh, Burundi, Colombia, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

2. THE COUNTRIES AND THEIR NATIONAL POLICIES ON UPE AND NONFORMAL EDUCATION

The existence in developing countries of a large number of children in the 6-14 age group who do not attend school poses a problem that shows considerable differences in magnitude and other features between countries. There are countries such as Colombia, in South America, and Sri Lanka, in Asia, in which only 10% or less of school age children are non-school goers. While the problem in these countries is not so large numerically, - although there is no less urgency in solving it - there are other countries like Bangladesh, Burundi and Pakistan in which the percentage of non enrollment is so high that it demands a mass scale solution. These differences cannot be understood without reference to particular social, historical, economical, cultural and political situations.

Both types of countries are represented in the UIE explanatory study, which also includes the case of India, where the enrollment rate is more than 90%, but does not fit into the low scale category because of the magnitude of the problem in terms of absolute numbers: there are 45 million children out of the formal school system.

The majority of the population in these countries live in rural areas (except in Colombia), as shown in Table 1. All of them face the problems of development which are characteristic of agrarian societies with masses of rural poor. The accelerated urbanization process that has taken place in Colombia makes this country an exception in the group, but there the phenomenon of large migration to the cities contributes to increase the extreme poverty conditions of the over-
populated urban slums. These countries are facing a common situation: about 40% of their population is classified as living below the poverty line.

Table 1: Total Population and its Urban-Rural Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Total population in millions</th>
<th>% Rural</th>
<th>% Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>102.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>731.4</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another common feature these countries share is the high rates of school drop-outs, who do not achieve an acceptable level of literacy skills before leaving the formal education system. This fact is related to the incapacity of the school system for retaining the children in spite of the efforts made by governments to expand the educational services at the primary level. The main cause of early school drop-out is reported to be the situation of poverty and deprivation these children are living in, which obliges them to leave school in order to help their parents in day-to-day tasks or engage in various income-generating activities. Besides, the lack of food and proper clothing or the fact that they live in distant areas where schools are not available have been indicated as related to the problems of drop-out and non-enrollment. Gender discrimination towards girls is another reason for school non-attendance in some countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan, India). In addition, the irrelevancy of the school curriculum, which is not related to the daily life of rural children, the high rates of repetition in the first three grades of elementary school, its repressive norms, and the requirements the formal schools impose, which poor families are not able to fulfil, are reasons that exclude large numbers of children from the formal system of education in the countries participating in the study.

This reality contrasts with legal dispositions existing in all countries regarding the universalization of primary education. Either the national
constitutions entrust upon the State the responsibility to ensure free and compulsory education at the primary level or national or state laws express the governments' intention of eradicating illiteracy and increasing the rate of student participants in the formal system. Unfortunately, these laws are not strictly enforced and the previously mentioned problems of non-enrollment, non-attendance and drop-out have become persistent.

On the other hand, national policies declare the commitment of the governments to undertake the necessary efforts leading towards the universalization of primary education through various measures: opening new schools, working in two sessions with two different groups of children daily, the adoption of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, collective promotion of students, new methods for multigrade classes with a single teacher and trying out various non-formal alternatives for providing primary level education.

Nonformal education is now recognized worldwide as a suitable channel for attaining an acceptable level of basic education. An example of the legal status given to nonformal education is the the 22nd Article of Law 13 of July 1989 promulgated in Burundi, which states: "Nonformal education comprises all educational activities geared to out-of-school youngsters and adults and those who prematurely dropped out from the basic education system". While this definition is related to the target population characterized by its exclusion from the formal system, Decree 088/76 of Colombia defines nonformal education in contrast with formal schooling as that which is not imparted in a regular sequence, does not award titles and may be complementary of formal education.

Five Year Plans of Education in India have included, since 1975, schemes of part-time nonformal primary education by giving special assistance to those states identified as containing the larger groups of out-of-school children. This measure emphasizes nonformal alternatives for rural girls. The VIth Five Year Plan gave a clear guideline when it stated that "every child in the age-group 6 - 14 should continue to learn on a full time basis if possible, and on a part time basis if necessary."

In 1977, the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka set up a Nonformal Education Section with the aim of catering to educational needs of groups outside the formal
system. It identified the out-of-school children as a target group on which attention should be focussed. Based on the national intention of increasing student participation, the educational policy in Sri Lanka states that alternative strategies should be adopted for those groups who do not complete the compulsory education cycle (5-14 age group). While retaining the aims of formal primary education, nonformal education is expected to have special features, since it could often be a terminal basic education for many and should meet the need of the majority to whom employment is a primary objective.

In Burundi the government supports nonformal education programmes under the Department of Parallel Education of the General Directorate of Basic Education. There is an Interministries Commission for Nonformal Basic Education which has proposed the creation of a National Bureau of Nonformal Education responsible for coordinating nonformal education activities geared to young people and adults. The educational policy of the Ministry of Education has established as objectives of nonformal education to increase the functional literacy rate, provide training for work and solve the problem of unemployment, and increase the participation of young people in community development.

1. **GENESIS AND EVOLUTION OF THE PROGRAMMES SELECTED**

From the various alternatives being implemented in the six countries participating in the present UPE study, one was selected from each country to be analysed in the respective case study. Most countries selected governmental programmes geared to children of the 6-14 age group living in rural areas who never attended or dropped out prematurely from the formal school system. Burundi described private centres conducted by religious bodies which offer basic level education. Bangladesh reported the experience of a non-governmental organization implementing a nonformal supplementary UPE programme, while the case study from Colombia presented the experience of a special programme geared to the rehabilitation of street children in Bogotá, the capital city of the country.

**BURUNDI:** The Yagamukama Centres of Nonformal Education.

**Target population:** Out of School children and youngsters aged 9 to 13 who enroll voluntarily in the centres with the intention of receiving Catholic catechesis.

**Origin and evolution of the programme:** For many years there have existed in Burundi catechesis centres founded by Christian missions which have provided elementary education as a system parallel to formal education. The Yagamukama Centres have
been promoted by the Catholic Church for providing primary level education along with aesthetics. Since 1960 the instruction they imparted has been organized as a basic education programme. Ever since many innovations have been introduced according to the circumstances of the moment. This programme is considered to be the most effective system of nonformal education in the country, offering opportunities to a large portion of the population to become literate and learn an income generating occupation.

Present trends indicate that as primary education is extended, these centres shall expand their service to youngsters who had no access to secondary education.

Future perspectives include appropriate workshops and training programmes that shall insure a certain continuity with Rural Development Centres in order to link the place of training with the life environment.

**COLOMBIA: The Nonformal Education Programme Bosconia - La Florida.**

**Target population:** Street children who are called "gamines" and live in the big cities of the country. They are mainly boys who stay on the streets the whole day wandering about, stealing or begging for money and even sleep out of doors in small groups. They have left their homes and schools and maintain no links with their parents, who were not able to satisfy their basic needs of protection and affection. These boys are a product of the determination of the family life in those sectors characterized by critical poverty, deprivation and other socio-economic factors. Freedom and autonomy are highly valued by them, who enter the programme voluntarily after a period of motivation animated by specially trained educators.

**Origin and evolution of the programme:** The programme started 20 years ago in Bogotá as an alternative educational response to rehabilitation programmes for pre-delinquent youngsters. It is intended to help the street children to overcome the situation of abandonment in which they are living through a distinct educational model intimately linked to productive work. Its aims are the integral rehabilitation of the street children and their return to society.

Since its start in 1970 the Programme has evolved on the basis of continuous reflection-in-action, expanding the educational opportunity offered to secondary and medium vocational education which includes labour training and the creation of a different prospect of life in rural areas of the country. Self-financing of the
labour training stage through the Juvenile Industry is expected to be attained soon.

**Bangladesh:** Nonformal and Alternative Approach to Primary Level Education operated by Swanirvar (Self-Reliant) Bangladesh

**Target population:** Out-of-school over-aged (6+) children belonging to extremely poor families who have to help in supplementing their family income and, hence, are not in a position to take advantage of formal primary education.

**Origin and evolution of the programme:** In 1984 the government of Bangladesh accepted the recommendation of the World Bank to enlist the cooperation of non governmental organizations to achieve the universalization of primary education by means of organizing programmes geared to children of deprived families. In its Fourth Year Plan the government entrusted selected NGOs with the operation of nonformal primary education programmes. Swanirvar Bangladesh, the oldest NGO in the country, previously involved in literacy activities, accepted to participate in the UPE efforts offering a nonformal education alternative aiming at providing primary education from grade I through V to children of poor and deprived families. These children are given the opportunity to attend classes while pursuing various income generating activities. The programme was launched in six centres located in two towns of the Tangail District. After a five year cycle it has covered 1,529 children (54% males and 36% females). Since it has demonstrated great possibilities for replication all over the country, Swanirvar Bangladesh hopes to open 1,280 new nonformal UPE centres to cater to 250 children each.

**Sri Lanka:** Nonformal arrangements for alternative primary education: Literacy classes and Learning Activity Centres.

**Target population:** Non-schoolgoers of the age range 5 - 15 and early drop-outs from primary level education who have to help their parents in day to day tasks (a fact that impedes them from attending school), and those who live in distant areas away from towns or cities where no primary school is available.

**Origin and evolution of the programme:** It was launched after the decision taken in the 1981 National Workshop on nonformal education to commence a nonformal education pilot study geared to target groups of out-of-school children. Twelve pilot centres were opened in locations identified by Adult Education Officers, where non-schooling and early drop-out were significantly noticeable. Establishing a centre involved the identification of the learners, contacting their parents and commencing operations. In 1989, 350 Literacy Centres and 75 Learning Activity
Centres had been established. Future models like the open school and community school concepts are being envisaged as further developments of nonformal education programmes for the urban areas. Special programmes are being developed for groups with special needs for basic education (e.g., those in detention and prison, children or adults subject to drug addiction, street children).

PAKISTAN: Hai Roshni Schools.
Target Population: Children in the age range 10 - 14 who cannot attend schools because they have to assist their parents in earning their livelihood.
Origin and evolution of the programme: It started in 1985 as a project under the government programme for the uplifting of poor masses of the country, which intended to increase the literacy rate to 50% by the year 1990. About 15,000 schools were opened throughout the country to provide to school drop-outs and those not getting admission in formal primary schools a second chance to benefit from an educational opportunity. It also intended to offer liberal opportunities for jobs to educated unemployed, increasing their participation in national building activities. After the evaluation of the programme in 1988, it is being revised in the light of the experience gained. Some future prospects relate to the training of teachers through distance education techniques, promotion of effective participation of females by engaging 30% of teachers drawn amongst educated women, the introduction of vocational training and provision of labour training facilities.

INDIA: Action-Research Project in Part-Time Nonformal Primary Education.
Target population: Non enrolled working children of rural areas who being over age (9 - 14 years old) had no chance of being admitted to grade I of the local primary schools, and illiterate drop-outs from the formal system, belonging to deprived families.
Origin and evolution of the programme: The project was conceived by the Indian Institute of Education, Pune, as a response to the need "to build up with an open mind, a systematic programme of nonformal education and test its efficacy". It was planned to cover a five year period and it intended to foster UPE, improve the quality of primary schools and relate education to the life and needs of the children and to rural development, produce improved educational material and devise techniques to produce materials for the effective training of teachers. It started in 1979 with three pilot classes and planned to conduct one hundred classes per year in twenty to twenty two contiguous villages and habitations, covering three
batches of pupils. Good results were evident in the conclusion of the pilot project. The Institute then set up a training centre for functionaries of voluntary agencies. It is now conducting primary education programmes in 137 villages under the new project PROPEL, and, along with nonformal education classes it is conducting adult literacy activities, child recreation centres and women's empowerment groups.

4. STRUCTURES AND ORGANIZATION

Alternative nonformal structures to cater to the educational needs of out-of-school children and youth are required in all countries where formal systems of education are not capable of meeting the target of UPE. Most of these countries have organized nonformal education structures which take into consideration the special needs of the poor and deprived sectors unreached by formal systems. Because of its qualities of flexibility and adaptability, nonformal education programmes are best suited to produce quick results, more economically, through innovative alternatives which incorporate flexible organizational arrangements and new teaching-learning methods. Some of these innovative alternatives are described in this section.

Pakistan established in 1985 a network of about 15,000 Nai Roshni Schools (NRS) which tried to apply nonformal education principles. These schools functioned in regular school buildings and other government or privately owned buildings provided free or on a nominal rent. They offered the complete primary education cycle (up to V class standard) in two years through three-hour classes given in the afternoon or the evenings to suit the convenience of children (10 to 14 years old) who worked during daytime. These schools were required to function throughout the year without any long break in order to match the formal primary school curriculum in a shorter time. After completion of two years of study in NRS the students could join class VI of the formal system. They were eligible for taking formal primary level examinations under Provincial Education Departments and could also avail themselves of the facilities of Allama Iqbal Open University which offers a range of vocational courses through its distance education system.

The Nonformal Alternative Primary Education Programme of Sri Lanka, organized and conducted by the Ministry of Education, is composed of two arrangements:
- Literacy Centres, meant for children who have had no previous access to education or have dropped-out from school. These are conducted in State schools after school hours on three days a week for three hours each day. Occasionally the Centres are conducted in temples or community centres.

- Learning Activity Centres which provide alternative primary level education to children who do not have access to a school in their locality. Suitable places such as temples, community centres or a portion of the house of a family are used as classrooms.

The programme in both Literacy Centres and Learning Activity Centres is a two stage programme going on for two academic years. Literacy Centres offer an optional third year to those who wish to continue their learning process. Many linkages exist with the formal programmes of education with the intention of pushing back early drop-outs to regular schools when this will not imply a disservice for the child. Close contacts are established with voluntary, nongovernmental and other governmental agencies as well as with other community development projects, e.g., the Integrated Rural Development Project.

The Action-Research Project in Nonformal Education launched in Pune District in Maharashtra State, India, was organized as part-time nonformal primary classes with much community support. Classes were conducted in the evenings for two hours in about 300 days a year; holidays and vacations were determined by each class according to situational needs. Classes were ungraded and each enrolled twenty pupils. The village determined the number of classes required according to the number of children. Among these, priority was given to children of the age range 9 - 13 who had not enrolled at school or were illiterate drop-outs. Lateral entry into the formal school could be arranged at level III or above after a test in language and mathematics given by the headmaster of the school in the second year of the nonformal education course. To provide continuing education opportunities Reading and Listening Centres where cultural activities also took place were organized with success and these have inspired a similar structure called People's House of Learning which provide continuing education for nonformal education graduates and adult literates.
Community participation was achieved not only in organizing the classes and providing rent-free accommodation in school rooms, private houses, temples, village council offices, cow sheds and other structures, but gradually in taking over the supervision of the programmes and the evaluation of the students and teachers performance. Community meetings provided opportunities to discuss the roles of community leaders, parents, pupils and the local project staff including volunteer teachers selected from community members who were paid a small remuneration. Such links with the community gave the programme the character of a community enterprise.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have also contributed in organizing nonformal education programmes for the universalization of primary education, usually in cooperation or with government support. Bangladesh reports the action of Swanirvar Bangladesh, an NGO which launched its nonformal education programme in six centres with the intention of providing the five primary year learning cycle in three or four years. Flexible school timing permits children to get employed in suitable jobs while studying in the centres. After completion of their studies at the Swanirvar centres the students may get enrolled in grade V of a secondary school after passing admission tests given by the school. The programme leans heavily on community support. Communities have usually donated the land for building the bamboo houses where the centres function. This programme is linked with other areas covered by the organization in a variety of vocational fields such as food processing, poultry and duck raising, tailoring, weaving, embroidery, fishery, livestock, bamboo and wood crafts, sewing and repairing. The aim of catechization in Burundi has been associated with the provision of basic education opportunities. The Waganukama centres run by the Catholic church offer the opportunity not only to become literate but also to complete a primary level education. Each centre located in buildings belonging to the diocese has its own organization varying greatly from one to another. According to the convenience of participants some centres operate two days a week while others function up to six days a week, usually from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Each parish organizes courses independently and adapts programmes to each of the levels offered. No linkages have been established with the formal system.

The programme geared to street children in Bogotá, Colombia, constitutes a different type of alternative since it is intended to meet the special social situation characteristic of a group of children who are not likely to be served
by the formal school system. During the time these children stay in the programme they have little contact with the larger society. Instead, they develop in specially created environments: the house, the school and the workshops where learning takes place during the whole day. The programme, as a totality, is organized in five stages (Initial contact, Motivation, Personalization, Socialization and Production) in a sequence that takes the child from the street to the self-government experience of La Florida and the work experience in the Juvenile Industry. Primary level education is offered when a boy decides to enter the programme and is placed in the appropriate grade on the result of a placement test. He can complete the five years of elementary education in a shorter time according to his learning pace, attending classes five days a week in the morning. These boys receive vocational training from 2 to 4:30 p.m. Opportunities for further learning are provided inside the programme, which has organized secondary and medium vocational education equivalent to the formal system and labour training. Institutional cooperation is sought instead of community participation, but active participation of the children is stimulated in the community in which the programme operates. A boy can enter and leave the programme at any time of the year, and if he applies for re-admission he is required to follow all the stages from the beginning, but would be placed in the school grade he had left.

The above examples show common features of nonformal education in a variety of particular experiences: flexibility in the time frame; adaptability to the target group's convenience (in time, place and duration of the education cycle) and linkage with the formal school system for admission at the primary level or for further learning or at least matching the learning outcomes. A certain concern for linking the programme to the opportunities to get a job or prepare the child for the world of work is only present in those cases run on a small scale or by NGOs (Colombia, Burundi, Bangladesh). It may be hypothesized that among those governmental programmes included in the UIE study that were intended to be implemented on a large scale, even if they apply principles of nonformal education and relate their contents to the daily life of students (as in India and Sri Lanka) the purpose of imparting literacy and numeracy skills prevailed over the immediate need of participants for occupational training, because of the difficulties involved in making appropriate arrangements and equipping them with the necessary implements to meet this need.


5. **THE CURRICULUM**

Curricula developed for UPE are aimed in most cases to enable the child to cope with normal situations of everyday life and to pursue further studies, for which laying good foundations of literacy, numeracy and general education are deemed essential. This is not different from the objectives of formal school curricula for the primary level. For this reason, perhaps, many countries have taken the prescribed formal education curriculum as the basis for developing the curriculum for nonformal alternatives contributing to UPE. Consequently, their efforts have been reduced to condensing the syllabi in order to shorten the time needed to acquire the proposed knowledge, skills and attitudes, by selecting fundamental topics, as reported in case studies from Bangladesh, Burundi and Pakistan. Nevertheless, efforts were made to enrich the content with some vocational components in the Swaraj experience of Bangladesh and to link the contents to the needs and characteristics of the rural life in the Yagamukama Centres of Burundi.

In the experience selected from Colombia, attempts have been made to adapt the contents of the official study programmes of primary education to the special target group of street children. The traditional areas of language, mathematics, natural science and social science have been kept as the curricular areas. The main emphasis is, though, the development of practical skills, the change of attitudes and values and promoting critical reasoning. The vocational areas are introduced separately in the workshops although some links with academic areas have been established.

Sri Lanka and India have adopted a different approach to curriculum development. Although the respective curricula were developed by specialists at a central level with little community participation, in both cases attention was paid to some basic considerations which contribute to increase the confidence of both the children and their parents. The Indian project states that the contents should adjust to the age and circumstances of the pupils on the one hand and the requirements of the prescribed full-time primary learning on the other. From another point of view, the nonformal literacy programme is considered as terminal for most children in Sri Lanka, because of their generally deprived circumstances. With this in mind, the most relevant knowledge had to be included in terms of their learning needs for vocational training and general education. The content was decided on the basis of a needs survey and the experience of the curriculum staff.
Compared to the formal curriculum the content is reduced but stressed on in specific needed areas. Basically, the core activities were similar to those of the formal school curriculum, but a wide range of subsidiary activities and content had to be deleted or included when formulating the nonformal curriculum for UFE, according to the children's context and needs. In a similar way, in India, part-time classes covered foundational units of learning similar to those of the formal school curriculum; to these were added other dimensions relevant to the pupils' level of maturity and their cultural environment as well as to the needs of the community by means of interweaving a cluster of activities that enlivened the curriculum.

Integration of content areas was also used in developing the curricula in both India and Sri Lanka. In India, science, history and geography were treated as integrated knowledge of human environment, natural phenomena and human affairs. Language and mathematics should facilitate the pupils' real life experiences. Other areas such as dramatics, rhythmic songs, stories and games were viewed as essential parts of a curriculum for personal and social development which takes care of the total person. The contents were worked out in consultation with educationists and knowledgeable members of the communities concerned in order to ensure the quality of learning.

In Sri Lanka, four areas emerged from a needs survey: literacy, numeracy, vocational skills and environmental orientation. Sixty themes were identified, each consisting of four or five lessons, which covered the four areas and were horizontally integrated. Horizontal integration was usually effected through a skill task which highlighted the theme, for instance, making a kite or a broom. The vocational component was always present, since most pupils were willing to engage in an income generating task quickly after completing the nonformal programme. In the process of curriculum development there was much feedback from the teachers experience and further surveys which allowed to formulate again the content critical mass. In the future, more flexibility is expected from the teachers in the use of a core curriculum and optional sections, to be used at their discretion.

Except in the cases of India and Sri Lanka, the adaptation of the existing formal curricula to be implemented through alternative approaches applying nonformal methods seemed to be an obvious way of matching the objectives of the
formal education system. The question arises as to the extent of adaptation done in order to achieve the objectives of the nonformal programme. Does it really meet the needs, interests and aspirations of the target population? As reported in the study from Pakistan, selecting at random a number of themes from the formal school textbooks with the purpose of shortening the time needed to complete the cycle was not adequate. The selection of themes related to the characteristics and requirements of overaged, poor and deprived out-of-school children, in other words, the contextualization of the curriculum in order to guarantee its relevance to meet the daily life needs of the children concerned, including vocational training within their geographic, socio-economic and cultural milieu seems to be necessary for upgrading the quality of the outcome these programmes are supposed to attain.

5. **THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS**

Special characteristics of the learning groups involved in nonformal education programmes for UPE must be taken into account when selecting teaching-learning methods in order to ensure their appropriateness for attaining the development objectives generally stated in the curriculum. Learners in nonformal classes are usually heterogeneous with respect to age and educational background. What they usually have in common is the educational deprivation they have suffered and the feeling of oppression by poverty and, sometimes, tradition. Under these circumstances, these overaged (with respect to formal school standards) usually working children need a motivational climate appropriate for increasing their self-esteem and overcoming inferiority feelings associated with ignorance.

Besides the arrangements discussed in a previous chapter, devised to suit these children's convenience, in terms of flexibility of the schedules, the use of community facilities, the adaptation of contents to their basic educational needs, the shortening of the duration of courses, the use of the mother tongue, etc., innovative pedagogical methods and techniques in combination with human relations strategies have been tried out in order to create an appropriate class climate as reported in the case studies from India and Colombia. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have also used individualized self-instruction in order to take care of individual differences, together with mutual learning or interlearning modalities.

The case studies from India and Colombia report the creation of an informal interpersonal relationship between the learner and the teacher by changing the traditional image of the teacher as an authoritarian and oppressive person. This
has been the key factor in the Bosconia - La Florida in Colombia, where the educator's role is that of a guide and facilitator of learning. A friendly relationship must be established with the children, which is founded on mutual respect. Similarly, in the Indian part-time classes, the informal relationship with the teacher, who is called 'brother or sister' instead of Sir or Madam (as is usually the case), contributes to build an appropriate, tension-free class climate. The atmosphere created is enriched with the face to face interaction facilitated by the circular formation of the class, in which the teacher takes a place just as any other member of the group. This arrangement, in addition, is ideal for story telling, dramatics, singing, holding discussions and performing science demonstrations.

As also mentioned in the studies from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, the Indian and Colombian experiences make use of small peer group interaction where the pupils profit from an interlearning relationship. They also take turns as tutors and tutees, creating a cooperative climate where the advanced children help the others to learn what they have already mastered.

Mastery learning and personalized instruction are methods frequently used in nonformal education programmes, because of their capacity for shortening the learning cycle depending on the child's own learning pace. Learning to learn (Colombia) and self-directed learning and interlearning (Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh), have been mentioned as learning principles related to lifelong education which the different countries are incorporating as alternative methods both in formal and nonformal settings and which, appropriately used, may enhance the quality of the outcomes expected from non-conventional programmes for the universalization of primary education.

In addition, India reports the adoption of several ways of reinforcing learning through evaluation in nonformal part-time classes geared to out-of-school children: These are (i) testing of learners by peers, (ii) using graded evaluation material for self-testing of progress (also used in the Colombian programme) and (iii) demonstration of learning everyday, if possible to the family and periodically to the Village Education Committee and the village as a whole. Reading out newspapers, stories, circulars; writing letters, messages; writing down daily accounts are various forms of demonstrating in public the learning gained, which is emotionally satisfying and helpful for increasing self-esteem in a self-development process.
The stress-free evaluation carried out during Children's Fairs was also described as a successful innovation introduced in the Indian action research project. It consists of periodical testing of the learners' progress and is held in a gathering of several classes with an external teacher who impartially supervises the evaluation. This form of checking out the progress of the children has proved to remove the stress of examinations, since testing is carried out as part of other activities of the Children's Fair which include story-telling, singing, games and sports. The children exhibit their skills and enjoy the activities, testing being a part of demonstrating in the presence of the community, what they have been capable of achieving.

7. TEACHING-LEARNING MATERIALS

The objectives and content of the curriculum are usually presented through the textbooks and other printed materials which are basic aids in the teaching-learning process. Nonformal approaches to provide primary education to out-of-school children make use of the same types of material that are helpful in formal settings. However, these should be prepared for the specific learning situations devised for a particular programme in order to attain the expected outcomes. This does not preclude the use of material for consultation which are general in character and may be associated with the use of libraries as a learning strategy.

All the country experiences involved in the study, except Colombia, report the use of textbooks in the programmes selected for analysis. While experience from Pakistan resorted to prescribed textbooks of the formal primary school in order to conform to its standards while condensing the curriculum content, in Bangladesh a practical approach to learning is emphasized requiring the use of teacher-pupil made teaching aids such as charts, models, illustrations, etc.

The Basic Education Service of CED-Caritas, in charge of preparing the curriculum for Yagamukama Centres in Burundi also prepares the didactic material, mainly booklets, needed for carrying out the programme. These are sold to the parishes who in turn distribute it to the training centres to be used by teachers and learners.

In Sri Lanka, in addition to workbooks provided for self-learning (three for each of the two years comprising the programme), twenty supplementary texts based on the themes which constitute the curriculum content were produced. These include
ncoral messages and instructions on a useful vocational task in story form. The Non-Formal Education/END Centre has produced models for developing teaching aids out of locally available materials (and improvising them too), designed to facilitate teaching in areas of language, numeracy and environmental topics (picture cards, picture puzzles, adding machine, adding clock, etc.). Radio cassettes were provided to each centre mostly for aesthetic education.

The Indian case study reports the use of a variety of materials including primers, charts, flannel-graph and a box of cut-out wooden letters, a small blackboard, reading cards, story books, workbooks, a letter-writing guide-book and four page folders for beginning, second and third levels on a variety of matters for reading and writing; illustrated cards, beads, stones, booklets, geometrical shapes for mathematics; four page illustrated folders, charts of health and safety for science. Careful attention was paid to technical aspects in the production of material both related to the use of space and illustration and to the ways of presenting contents and formulating inferential questions to stimulate "thinking around" and prevent mechanical repetition. The participation of some members of the community was helpful mainly with regard to the relevance of the content, and the style of language and vocabulary to ensure comprehension by rural readers.

A different type of material is used in the Colombian programme. Following the principles of personalized learning, the curriculum is delivered mainly through the use of guide sheets for self-learning. These not only provide enough information, but also guide the student to undertake practical work, carry out experiments, solve exercises, invent stories, etc. The guide sheets are photocopied in the school in the number required, depending on the progress of the children. Additional exercises are made in copybooks. Textbooks and other books may be consulted in the library, which also lends books to read for pleasure. Some recommendations drawn from the evaluation of the Nai Roshni Schools in Pakistan refer to the production of textbooks. It is recommended to use an integrated approach in the production of textbooks, and to prepare separate workbooks for the learners. The textbooks should relate contents to the mental level and the requirement of the target group. A recommendation for producing teachers' guides was also included.
III. PERSONNEL AND TRAINING OF PERSONNEL

The success of an educational programme is largely dependent upon efficient performance of the teachers involved. This is particularly important in nonformal education programmes which often depend on recruiting personnel who have not had previous training nor experience as teachers. The scarcity of people trained in nonformal education approaches makes it necessary to organize training actions in order to enable the available human resources to play the role of teachers, especially when massive education programmes are to be implemented. Even the teachers trained for teaching at the primary level need special training for joining nonformal programmes geared to out-of-school children.

All the countries included in the present UTE study report experiences which involved the training or orientation of the teachers who were selected to participate in the respective programmes. Their qualifications not only differ from country to country but also within each country experience, comprising teachers of the formal system possessing a teachers certificate (Colombia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan), volunteer teachers selected among members of the communities (India), young people who had only completed primary education or one or two years of secondary education (Burundi), and young people with SS or HS certificate (Bangladesh, Pakistan). Special pre-service and/or in-service training had to be organized in all cases in the form of short courses, workshops, refresher courses or orientation experiences. Although information from Burundi is not complete, it seems that the personnel recruited as teachers of the Yagamukama Centres are not adequately prepared to get involved in providing education through normal modalities. Pakistan poses as a serious difficulty the fact that the teachers recruited were fresh matriculates with no teaching experience or training, indicating that the training courses of five days organized for batches of fifty teachers each, at district level, by groups of two master trainers did not prepare them to face the nonformal teaching-learning situations encountered in teaching aged working children from deprived sectors of the society. Even though these courses included methods of instruction for children of this age group handling of students and eliciting cooperation from parents and other agencies as well as training to improve their competence on the subject matter (language - Urdu, Pashto or Sindhi, Mathematics and general knowledge - Islamiyat, science and social studies), the time devoted to this training was not enough to assimilate all the contents and acquire the skills envisaged.
In Sri Lanka and Colombia teachers mainly from the formal system have been appointed as teachers of the Literacy Centres or Learning Activity Centres and of the Bosconia - La Florida Programme, respectively. In the case of Sri Lanka the workshops that were normally held twice a year seemed to meet the training needs of the teachers. The intensive training of twenty to thirty days duration provided in Colombia to graduate teachers of the formal system before they join the special programme geared to street children, exposes them to the strategies and form of operation of the programme in a practical way, getting involved in the different stages while they are being familiarized with the philosophy of the programme. Getting in contact with educators who have stayed for a long period in the programme and with the children themselves facilitate their decision to stay or leave if they are not sure that they can handle the situations under the principles of the programme, which are based on respect for the child's freedom and autonomy, avoiding punishment and appealing to constant positive reinforcement and encouragement of the child's progress.

Rural volunteer teachers recruited among the local community members had to be provided with special training to perform their role in the action research project on nonformal education for overaged working children carried out in India. Most of these teachers were housewives, labourers and farmers who had not gone beyond grade VII in their formal school experience and had no further opportunities to practice their literacy skills. Under these circumstances part of their training had to be re-education and it should convince them of the advantages of nonformal pedagogical techniques over those methods they had been subjected to when they attended formal schools. Training was planned in a way that could fit the limiting circumstances of the trainees and was conducted in a decentralized way at the local level, organized into a period of ten days for induction training, ten three-day sessions of recurrent training in the first year and another ten three-day sessions in the second year. Recurrent training, taking place every four or six weeks, was meant to review problems, prepare lessons and devise the required teaching aids. This training, conducted as a nonformal educational experience, provided them opportunities to exchange ideas, and learn from each other while it demonstrated how to conduct a nonformal teaching-learning process. Material prepared for the training of voluntary teachers proved to be useful and was published as a handbook of training for teachers of nonformal classes.
The training offered to teachers - who only had an intermediate level of education - in the Swarirvar programme in Bangladesh incorporates an interesting feature: local resource persons such as physicians, experienced farmers, masons, carpenters as well as representatives of government agencies along with educational officers and the core trainers of the programme are involved in the training. They are also invited to talk to the children about the areas of their specialization.

There are other educational agents involved in nonformal education alternatives geared to out-of-school children. These are the project staff, master trainers, supervisors, principals of schools where the classes take place and administrative personnel. Pakistan reports that special training was provided to each of these in the Mai Roshi School Programme with a view to help them perform their functions appropriately, but this concern was not expressed in any of the other case studies, except for supervisors and principals of schools in Sri Lanka.

9. QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

When launching massive nonformal education programmes that shall contribute to the universalization of primary education by reaching out-of-school children or when trying out innovative alternatives some kind of mechanism for ensuring feedback and the timely introduction of corrective measures is needed. All the country experiences analysed in the case studies have incorporated at least learner evaluation and some kind of supervision of the programme that allows to assess the quality of the outcomes.

Burundi and Bangladesh only report their experience on learner evaluation through examinations that are organized like those traditionally applied in the formal school for checking the learning achieved. In Swarirvar Bangladesh, periodical and annual examinations are taken by the children in academic subjects (verbal and reasoning abilities are tested) and practical subjects (testing manual dexterity). These are used for purposes of grading and promotion of the children. In Bangladesh, passing these examinations is the requirement for issuing a certificate on their performance, but in Burundi no certificate is given to the children who complete the basic education cycle offered by the Yagamakama Centres.

Pakistan, Colombia, India, and Sri Lanka have incorporated an evaluation component built into the development of their respective nonformal education programmes.
Pakistan has established in the Nai Roshni Schools a system to monitor the progress of students through periodic testing carried out by the teachers in collaboration with the supervisors. Results of this assessment were also used by supervisors to assess the performance of teachers and by teachers to improve their efficiency as teachers and adjust to the needs of their individual students. Learner achievement was evaluated at the end of the cycle taking as the criterion of reference the achievement of the formal school leavers. Terminal examinations were conducted in each school by teachers from other Nai Roshni Schools with the collaboration of education officers and other teachers of the formal schools. All the teams used written tests and oral examinations. Those who passed received certificates in recognition of their achievement.

Colombia, India and Sri Lanka, following a mastery learning approach, have succeeded in making learner evaluation an inconspicuous process, yet providing the teacher criteria for differential assessment and giving the necessary assistance to each child, according to his/her specific needs. Evaluation techniques are built into the curricula in these three countries. At the end of each theme in the Literacy Centres of Sri Lanka the children perform tasks or exercises which are a demonstration of the learning acquired. Self-evaluation has been incorporated in the Colombian and Indian experiences and evaluation by peers was mentioned in the latter. These innovative procedures contribute to enhance the quality of the outcomes related to academic achievement. If evaluation is carried out in a stress-free atmosphere, then it may be used as a medium to increase the children's self-esteem, since in the process of becoming conscious of their progress, they acquire a positive self-image which is related to self-assurance, essential, in turn, for a good performance. It is in this sense that innovations such as the stress-free evaluation that takes place in the Children's Fairs, which was already mentioned above, contribute to attain outcomes of the desired quality in nonformal situations of learning.

Learners' evaluation is usually the basis for accreditation of the acquisition of a basic level of education after the completion of the cycle or cycles in which these kinds of nonformal education programmes, contributing to achieve the targets of UPE, are organized. In most countries, participants of these programmes are awarded a certificate which they appreciate as a recognition of having completed a cycle or level which is equivalent to the respective one of the formal system.
The equivalence between formal and nonformal education systems is usually accepted if the participants of the nonformal education programmes pass examinations based on the formal education standards. In cases where such equivalence is needed for accreditation purposes, students of nonformal programmes are allowed to sit for examinations corresponding to a certain level of the formal schools. In India, for example, the law allows admission of external students to grade IV or grade VII examinations provided that they are at least one year more than the age prescribed for the grade concerned. Participants of the Action Research NPE Programme have passed these examinations and have been awarded the certificate they wished to obtain. However, it must be mentioned that they had to practice in answering "examination-papers" and prepare themselves to face this kind of testing situation which is not characteristic of the nonformal practices to which they were accustomed.

The case study from Sri Lanka poses some reasonable doubts on the question of equivalence. As it has been stated, the formal system is the yardstick with which one tends to measure the merits of nonformal education programmes. However, "it might not be always relevant to speak of equivalence. The formal school system is a step by step process. Under nonformal situations, the totality of the child's needs before he or she enters the adult world (the world of work) is looked at and the various aspects of the educational needs are set out in the form of a useful package. It would therefore not be quite in order to speak of equivalence for situations in which the requirements of the two groups might basically differ".

Besides learner evaluation, all these programmes have introduced some kind of supervisory or monitoring system. In a traditional way, supervision ensures that the programme is being carried out as it was planned with the assistance supervisors provide to teachers when they face some difficulties. Each Parish in Bulundi is responsible for looking after its specific programme, which may be different from the others, due to the characteristic flexibility with which Yagamukana Centres operate. Supervisors working at district, upazila and grassroots levels are responsible for monitoring the Swanirvar programme in Bangladesh.

The Bosconia - La Florida Programme in Colombia has built-in its own supervising (undertaken by the Director of the school and Technical Subdirector of the Programme) and evaluation methods to ensure the effectiveness of the strategies being utilized in the different stages of the programme. Collective self-
evaluation by the members of the staff, including teachers and instructors is carried out in their weekly meetings. It takes the form of reflection on the progress made and the problems encountered and is also intended to introduce the frequent changes that are necessary to uplift the quality of the programme and to decide about new solutions that should be tried out in order to overcome new problems that often emerge as the programme develops.

In Sri Lanka, the Nonformal Education Sector of the Education Ministry has made use of the evaluation process for making decisions concerning the curriculum of the Nonformal Alternative Primary Programme, which has been redesigned and shortened to a two-year programme with an optional year. Other suggestions derived from the evaluation carried out in 1986 refer to the need of a primer and of a manual to guide the teachers.

Another evaluation strategy reported from Sri Lanka is promoting discussions in the workshops for the training of teachers on problems concerning both administrative matters and teaching-learning situations. A regular supervisory system has also been introduced for the programme in Sri Lanka which is essentially regional. Where the Nonformal Education Section of the Ministry receives a monthly report from each Literacy Centre in addition to the reports of the Adult Education Officers, which provide information of the work being done in the respective area of supervision. These reports are used for monitoring the programme. UNICEF, who sponsors the programme in Sri Lanka, has also conducted an external evaluation at the end of the first five years of implementation.

The Mahi Roshni Schools Project of Pakistan was evaluated in 1988. But the case study only reports aspects related to curriculum evaluation, undertaken by a special committee in which the contents of the curriculum and all the textbooks were examined. Members of the evaluation committee also visited schools and interviewed teachers, students and their parents. The satisfaction with the contents and the textbooks that the people interviewed expressed contrasted with the opinions of the evaluators whose judgements were not favourable in relation to the organization of the curriculum. They found it academically defective, overburdening for illiterate children, and having no relation to the requirements of the target group. They made recommendations for improving the curriculum and materials and suggested to produce guidebooks for the teachers. The results of the evaluation were important in the decision to disband the programme after completion.
of the first cycle and to revise the whole programme in order to launch a new programme which, hopefully, would overcome the shortfalls that were found in the Nazi Roshni Schools Project.

The project reported by India is an action-research project. As such, evaluation has been incorporated into the project from its start, and this intention is evident in three of the specific objectives that were set, which state the purpose of evaluation—improving the quality of the schools, of the educational materials and the techniques to produce material for effective training of teachers. Under this approach, action is planned on the basis of the research findings, which in turn is submitted to further research in a continuous process that takes place while the programme is being developed. The case study reports that good results have become visible when the project arrived at its termination. Its pedagogical approach, monitoring and supervision through the Village Education Committees and community participation were appreciated by those educators and administrators who made contacts with the project actions. The gradual involvement of community members in the supervision of the classes and the evaluation of the students' performance in a stress-free atmosphere are important features of the project that have a bearing on the quality of the outcomes. The action-research methodology adopted in the project appears as an appropriate approach to organize, implement and improve the type of action needed to contribute to UPE by means of alternative nonformal education programmes.

10. FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Funding required for the implementation of nonformal education programmes geared to out-of-school children are usually provided by the State since governments of developing countries have recognized the need for alternative approaches which may contribute to attain the target of UPE in the shortest time possible. In addition, financial support from international agencies concerned with development of Third World countries and which value the contribution that education can make to this end has been obtained to organize, implement and expand these programmes. UNESCO, UNICEF and other international organizations have provided help to specific programmes launched in a number of countries.

Except for the centres sponsored by the Catholic Church in Burundi, which function with private funding (from parishes and dioceses as well as religious organizations providing help for development), all the other experiences analysed
in the present study are either government programmes (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) or programmes carried out by NGOs with financial support from the State (Bangladesh, Colombia). They all report some external help from international agencies.

The possibility of self-financing (which is a goal for the last stage of the programme - that of the Juvenile Industry) has only been stated in the Bosconia - La Florida Programme, from Colombia. Although this programme is very costly, because it takes full care of more than one thousand street children and youngsters for a period that can comprise up to 10 or 12 years, until the boy has finished medium vocational education and/or is ready to find a job and take care of himself - providing additional help and orientation even after the young man has left the programme - it receives enough State funds and donations from national and international sources, besides institutional cooperation.

The government of Bangladesh has recognized the experience of Swanirvar Bangladesh to run the nonformal primary education programme that has been reported here. Although there are financial limitations for expanding this programme, its costs, which are almost half in comparison to those established for educating a child in the primary formal school system, give hope for opening opportunities for 145,000 more out-of-school working children in the period 1990-1995 with government support.

Pakistan reports that the Hai Roshni Schools project was almost fully governmental. Except for accommodation provided for 6% of the schools by the respective communities, no efforts were made to generate funds through donations or mobilization of community resources. In fact, they had financial constraints for attaining the goals they had envisaged and extraordinary efforts will be required in order to finance the new programme that is now being launched.

Sri Lanka and India have had cooperation from UNICEF to support their governments' efforts in reaching the population of children that had no access or dropped-out from the formal school system through nonformal education projects. UNICEF funds have been used in Sri Lanka to provide a variety of services, including the renovation of classrooms when necessary and developing materials and teaching aids. In India, UNICEF financed the research component of the project. In both cases, as well as in Pakistan, government funds have been devoted to the
payment of teachers and administrative and supervisory staff. Pakistan also spent funds for the purchase of teaching materials, office equipment for transport and for the development and printing of textbooks. The Indian project was assisted by the Ford Foundation for further refining their teaching-learning materials and the teachers guide-book.

Most programmes rely on community mobilization for additional support. Communities provided the necessary buildings in cases when no official buildings were available. Voluntary teachers have been locally recruited in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Burundi; they are given a token payment in recognition for their work. Community organizations such as the Lions' Club helped the learning centres in Sri Lanka through provision of exercise books, garments, etc.; individuals and groups willingly provided assistance on occasions such as prize-givings functions, etc.

Community mobilization in India needs to be highlighted: the establishment of Village Education Committees, organizing village conferences, household surveys by community members and selection of local teachers were different forms of making the community to become aware of and willing to participate in solving the problems related to the universalization of primary education and appreciating the purposes of the nonformal education project carried out in Pune district by the Indian Institute of Education.

11. REVIEW OF MAJOR OUTCOMES AND INNOVATIONS

Besides the obvious aim of attempting to reach a target population of out-of-school children that had no chance of attaining a primary level education within the formal system of education, the experiences reported by the different countries involved in the present study, while recognizing some weaknesses, include certain relevant outcomes that ought to be considered:

The experience of Swarajvar Bangladesh in nonformal education programmes geared to illiterate adults has been useful in imparting literacy to overaged children using a practical approach to the teaching-learning situation. These courses have become popular since they not only conform to the accepted aims and standards of primary education but are advantageous for the children, because they are offered the opportunity to learn "with accelerated methods and to receive training in various crafts while working in different income generating activities meant for
poor adults. These features probably account for the 70% retention rate (in contrast to 30% in formal system at the primary level) that the Swaminarayan Bangadesh programme has achieved.

Burundi's Yagamukama Centres have succeeded in providing functional literacy, linked to the needs of their rural life, to out-of-school children having no other opportunities to acquire a basic education level. The Bosconia - La Florida Programme, reported from Colombia, has accomplished a significant function both for the children and the society. It has not only satisfied basic needs of street children and provided them with a dignifying educational opportunity for personal, social and vocational development, but may also be viewed as a delinquency prevention programme which has succeeded in keeping these children away from becoming criminals as a natural consequence of their life in the streets. The education provided is considered at least as good as that of the formal system, not only because the mastery learning approach adopted ensures the desired achievement, but also because these children have the opportunity to develop manual skills in their vocational training and critical thinking in the reflection meetings that they hold daily.

In Pakistan, 75% of the 380,000 children enrolled in Nai Roshni Schools passed the examinations and were issued certificates in recognition of their achievement. The evaluation of the experience pinpointed all those aspects that needed to be modified in order to improve the quality of the outcomes in the new programme that is being implemented.

Sri Lanka relates the major outcomes of the Nonformal Alternative Programme to developing a curriculum which takes into reckoning the needs of the children, their parents and society. This needs-based curriculum is, therefore, considered more suitable and relevant than the formal primary school curriculum. The programme is still in the formative stage and remedial action is being taken to eliminate the weak spots that have been found in the process of expanding the experience from 12 pilot centres to 350 in different parts of the country.

The project from India reported the learning outcomes of three batches of pupils who attended the programme during a period of five years (1980-1995). Their main achievements were basic literacy-numeracy, acquisition to varied general and scientific information and freedom from the fear of academic failure. However, the
Most important achievement was converting the image these children had of themselves as helpless individuals forced by circumstances into that of capable and assertive individuals who had gained knowledge through the educational opportunity they had profited from. Some side effects of the project were the creation of continuing education opportunities inspired in the Reading and Listening Centres that were established in some of the learning centres, the demonstration of the effectiveness of the training programme for volunteer teachers that was designed, and the appropriateness of promoting decentralized planning through Village Education Committees. It also showed the possibilities of nonformal modalities to influence the formal system of education by introducing some of its principles. Some innovative features introduced in the programmes that have been analysed may be a fruitful source of some ideas for improving the attempts of utilizing nonformal education programmes aimed at contributing to the universalization of primary education. Although these are not new in the field of education, the creative and appropriate uses they have been put to in some of these programmes are worthy of being highlighted.

First, community participation, as promoted in the experiences from Sri Lanka and India proved to be the most important factor for guaranteeing success. Special reference must be made to the community climate that was achieved in the action-research project implemented in India. Community support was gradually obtained and it was in part achieved because of the evidence community members had that the programme had official backing on the one hand and the results they witnessed on the other hand, which ensured their concern and involvement in the project as a collective enterprise all of them were responsible for.

Another innovative feature that has been reported to produce the expected outcomes was the creation of an appropriate tension-free class climate through informal interpersonal relationships between learners and the teacher.

The use of mastery learning approaches which allow the children to progress at their own pace and the utilization of the evaluation of learning as an in-built component providing feedback for giving assistance to individual differences among learners, were reported as innovations that contributed in several of the experiences, to the quality of the learning these children were able to attain in combination with opportunities for group work which promotes mutual learning or interlearning.
Innovations in the evaluation approach were devised particularly in the action-research project implemented in India. The creative use of evaluation by peers and by demonstrating learning at home and to the village Education Committees, together with the use of self-evaluation for improving performance proved to contribute to uplifting the children's self-image and achieving self-assurance.

The selection of teachers from community members was an innovation which proved to be fruitful if an appropriate training programme (suited to the needs of the teachers and their convenience) accompanied the development of the project.

The development of a needs-based curriculum and the introduction of a vocational component at the primary level is a successful measure not only for satisfying the children's needs and their parents' expectations, but also for increasing the retention rates in nonformal primary education programmes.

Finally, the utilization of an action-research approach in which community participation becomes a pivotal feature seems to produce successful outcomes, since research-based actions are planned whose appropriateness is tested with the necessary participation of community members in different aspects during its implementation (including organization, monitoring and evaluation). These actions are capable of tackling the problems as soon as they are identified and of opening new paths leading to the implementation of new ideas in future developments of the project.

10. PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Most problems concerning the implementation of nonformal alternative approaches for the universalization of primary education relate to the scarcity of resources (human and financial), especially when the expansion of the experience initially conducted on a small scale is attempted or when massive programmes are to be implemented from the start.

There are enough arguments to justify the need for implementing nonformal alternatives based both on the shortcomings of the formal system which together with societal structural factors constitute the cause of the problem and on the advantages of nonformal approaches over the formal. However, unlike in the case of the expansion and strengthening of the formal system, nonformal modalities are
required to present very well founded justifications to obtain economic support from governments.

Even when funding for these programmes is available from governmental sources and international agencies, problems related to the scarcity of teachers and their lack of appropriate training emerge. In addition, the low remuneration they are paid constitutes a factor which reduces their initial motivation. Pre-service teacher training programmes for the primary formal system in developing countries do not produce an adequate number of teachers per year to meet their needs. Young people with secondary level education and no training in teaching are often recruited to satisfy the demand for teachers within the formal system. This is also the case for nonformal education programmes, since it is not common to count on personnel especially trained for nonformal education. Most countries participating in this study reported that they had recruited local voluntary teachers with no teaching experience or resorted to teachers from the formal system who could devote some additional time to nonformal projects aimed at the universalization of primary education. In both cases, training courses were needed to give them the training required, especially in the use of methodologies characteristic of nonformal approaches. The lack of appropriate training of the teachers and supervisory personnel was mentioned as a serious difficulty for attaining outcomes of the desired quality in the cases of Pakistan and Burundi.

When no systematic or scientific procedure is used for developing a nonformal curriculum for delivering primary education problems are likely to emerge. The first is related to the relevance of the contents to the needs and aspirations of the target population. The probability of dropping-out from the programme increases if the criterion of curricular relevance is not met.

If no motivational action is undertaken to prepare the potential clients and, particularly, to involve their parents, and to achieve their confidence, probabilities of success are less. Especially in those countries where tradition has kept women aside from the educational opportunities, low female participation is still a problem to be faced.

13. CONCLUSIONS

After recognizing the fact that children belonging to poverty groups and subjected to deprivations do not receive full benefits from the formal education
System, most developing countries have formulated policies which favour the utilization of nonformal education modalities targeted to serve these groups of out-of-school children. However, the motivation for education is not strong among these children and their parents since their experience, if any, with the formal school has not been positive in most cases. Hence, there is need to design appropriate motivational campaigns in order to change negative attitudes and to devise appropriate community participation strategies capable of creating a favourable community climate and collective responsibility towards the development of the nonformal alternative approaches. There is need to provide for effective female participation of rural girls. To this end, countries may appeal to recruiting teachers among educated women and training them for participating in nonformal education programmes with special emphasis on the education of out-of-school rural girls.

Although in an ideal situation professional training should be provided to teachers and other personnel working in nonformal education programmes, this is not likely to be achieved in most developing countries which, nevertheless, should organize appropriate in-service training for the personnel recruited for implementing the nonformal primary education programmes. Besides academic and pedagogical knowledge they must be trained in the principles and use of methodologies characteristic of nonformal approaches.

Motivation of the teachers responsible for the implementation of these programmes is a key factor for ensuring success. The question of adequate remuneration for the teachers is a matter that needs attention. In addition, they must be convinced of the advantages of applying a nonformal education approach (since they are used to the methods of the formal system of education), and they should be able to establish sufficient coordination and understanding with community members, education officers and project staff in order to implement the programme appropriately.

The relevance of the curriculum is perhaps the most critical factor for ensuring motivation of the learners, confidence of their parents and community involvement. The introduction of vocational training related to the needs of the communities and to possibilities of engaging in an income generating activity frequently increase relevance, and consequently the retention rates. On the other hand, the necessary facilities and equipment for vocational training are costly,
and there is usually a short supply of trained manpower. These facts must be taken into account when planning the programme and the expansion of pilot experiences.

Some factors contribute to make these programmes economical alternatives: the use of schools and other official buildings, or buildings provided by the community, the use of volunteer teachers (often locally recruited, who are in most cases only given a token remuneration in recognition of their effort) the accelerated methods utilized, which allow to provide the whole primary education cycle in a short time, etc. These programmes are less costly for parents who, besides not having to meet the requirements of proper clothing and other requisites, continue to receive the help provided by their children in supplementing the family income with their work.

Awarding accreditation for the attendance and achievement in nonformal primary education programmes is usually claimed by the participants. Serious thinking is needed in order to establish appropriate equivalence between the nonformal education cycles and the formal system, not necessarily based on the requirements of the formal curriculum but on the objectives of a needs-based nonformal curriculum.

It must be realized that the completion of the nonformal education cycle provided by these programmes does not mean that these, once-children will cease to be poor working children and become eager to enter the formal system. However, nonformal education opportunities are capable of laying the foundations of a continuous process of lifelong education that shall help not only in enhancing self-esteem but also in improving, hopefully, the quality of life of these children and their communities through personal, social and vocational development.

Finally, it must be stated that there exists the need for further research on the problems of primary education of out-of-school children, particularly the working children and rural girls and investigations on fruitful solutions to these problems.
Diffusion of the research results is another requirement for overcoming the problems related to the universalization of primary education and taking advantage of the possibilities offered by the exploration of nonformal approaches in primary education for out-of-school children.
Appendix

The present comparative analysis was based on the following case studies:

**BANGLADESH**


**BURUNDI**


**COLOMBIA**


**INDIA**


**PAKISTAN**


**SRI LANKA**