ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS

OF

SINGLE-TEACHER SCHOOLS AND MULTI-GRADE CLASSES

Synthesis of Case Studies

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

1. THE PRESENT STATUS OF SINGLE-TEACHER SCHOOLS AND MULTI-GRADE CLASSES

   1. Single-teacher schools
   2. Reasons for creating and maintaining single-teacher schools
   3. Legislative and statutory measures for schools
   4. The status and management of single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes
   5. School clusters
   6. Financial and material resources for single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes

## II. ORGANIZATION, OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1. General organization and administration

   1.1 Length of schooling and career prospects for pupils
   1.2 Enrolments and composition of pupil groups
   1.3 The administration of schools (time-tables, etc.)

2. Educational Management

   2.1 Curricula and syllabi
   2.2 Time-tables and schedules
   2.3 Methods, techniques and teaching materials
III. TEACHING PERSONNEL

1. Teacher training

1.1 Teacher remuneration

1.2 Transfers and promotions

IV. THE EVALUATION OF SINGLE-TEACHER SCHOOLS AND MULTI-GRADE CLASSES: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

1. Advantages and disadvantages identified by countries studied

1.1 Disadvantages

1.2 Advantages

2. Parameters for evaluating multi-grade classes

3. Specific advantages and disadvantages in countries

3.1 Australia

3.2 Bolivia

3.3 France

3.4 Greece

3.5 Mali

3.6 Portugal

3.7 Russia

3.8 Zaire

PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION
INTRODUCTION

Since 1988 UNESCO has been implementing a programme aimed at improving single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes. In cooperation with other institutions, UNESCO conducted two series of case studies. On the basis of the lessons drawn from those studies an interregional Workshop will be held in Norway in 1996, in order to provide information training materials and a methodological guide. The first series of studies focussed on pedagogical approaches; the second, on organization, administration, finance and management. The second study was undertaken in fourteen countries: Australia, Bolivia, Burkina-Faso, China, Korea, France, Greece, Lesotho, Mali, the Philippines, Portugal, Tanzania, Russia and Zaire. A questionnaire was prepared in order to make national monographs more easily comparable within an integrated framework. Countries replies were classified according to those of other countries. Comparisons could not always be made since some aspects were dealt with in depth and others were not treated at all. It was decided to choose the most important findings without making value judgements. The result is a diagnosis and assessment of single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes for the purpose of drawing up an effective school policy. A certain number of general observations can be made:

1. single-teacher schools exist in all countries whatever their level of economic and cultural development;
2. very great differences appear among countries in teacher/pupil ratios;
3. it is certain that this type of school will exist in the future although the evidence shows that they are falling in number;
4. the nature of these schools is not recognized either in national legislation or in the training and salaries of teachers;
5. the years of study and the curricula of single-teacher schools, although different from those of other schools, permit pupils to advance to secondary or teacher-training education;
6. shared teaching loads, alternating group work with individual tuition, illustrate the various means of overcoming teacher shortages;
7. this inquiry enabled a basic assessment to be made of the advantages and disadvantages of this type of school to be made;
8. these schools lack an appropriate infrastructure and equipment;
9. the majority of teachers working in these schools received neither initial nor in-service training;
10. working and living conditions of the staff in such schools are inadequate.
I. THE PRESENT STATUS OF SINGLE-TEACHER SCHOOLS AND MULTI-GRADE CLASSES

The majority of countries provided global percentages of these classes in comparison with primary school classes. Two countries (Australia, Portugal) provided precise regional information. Certain countries pointed out that statistics were inexact and there was a lack of data and data-processing systems. Industrialized and urbanized countries had a large number of such classes. Single-teacher schools are commonest in rural and isolated areas. Efforts are made to regroup these schools either by transforming single-teacher schools into normal schools or by eliminating them altogether.

1. Single-teacher schools

In Australia: There are no statistics on the number of single-teacher schools or multi-grade classes. Nevertheless, 17 per cent of Australian schools have an enrolment of fewer than 36 pupils. It is reasonable to believe that the majority have multi-grade classes. Schools with one or two classes account for 12 per cent of total enrolments.

In Bolivia: primary teaching is organized according to "central schools". Out of a total of 14,533 schools, 6,418 are urban and 8,115 are rural schools (central and sectoral). 1,480 centres; and 6,636 sectoral (multi-grade) schools exist; 50 per cent of the latter have a single teacher with mixed classes of 25 to 30 pupils. Multi-grade classes represent 46 per cent of all schools (urban and rural) and 80 per cent of the teachers are bilingual. These schools need particular attention.

In Burkina-Faso: schools with one or two classes account for 41 per cent of total enrolments.

In China: about half of the total number of primary schools are single-teacher and multi-grade.

In France: there are 8,892 registered single-teacher schools, i.e. 21.5 per cent of the total number of schools. One school in five has only one class. In four departments more than half the schools are single-teacher schools. In the two, three and four-class schools, there are multi-grade classes: 5,436 schools or 40 per cent. More urbanized departments have few multi-grade classes (total: 45,000). There was an interesting tendency for the total number of classes to decrease in proportion to single classes by 10 per cent in 1960-61 and by 5.5 per cent in 1985-86. There are half as many of these schools as there were thirty years ago (18,500 in 1958 and 8,900 in 1987). In 1975, more than two out of three French people lived in an urban community. In 1982, this urbanization ended and a reverse tendency appeared. Intercommunity educational regroupings (RPI) have been set up to meet pre-school needs and this has led to a streamlining of the educational network. The number of communities without a school increased from 7,946 in 1985-86 to 8,254 in 1986-87. In certain regions communities exist without public schools but with one or more private schools.
In Greece: statistics for 1987-88 indicate that:

- 31.5 per cent of the schools with 5.1 per cent of the pupils are single-teacher institutions
- 19.3 per cent of the schools with 6.9 per cent of the pupils are two-teacher institutions
- 11.3 per cent of the schools with 6.2 per cent of the pupils are three-teacher institutions
- 30.6 per cent of the schools with 13.9 per cent of the pupils are two and three-class institutions.

In Korea: 6 per cent of the schools with 1 per cent of the pupils have multi-grade classes. Schools with one or two classes are annexes of larger schools which administer and supervise them.

In Lesotho: single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes are half of the total number of primary schools.

In Mali: there are no single-teacher schools. Primary schooling is provided in multi-grade classes or in schools with two-grades. The latter can later be assimilated into multi-grade classes. Schools with two grades are found in all regions in Mali. A census carried out of primary level education shows that out of a total of 1,408 primary schools, 495 are of this type. 35.5 per cent of schools have two-grades. They are unequally distributed in the regions. There are large numbers in the regions of Gao and Timbuctu, some in Koulikoro, Kayes, Mopti and very few in the regions of Sikasso, Segou and Bamako.

In Portugal primary teaching is lacking in the most isolated villages (thereby confirming the conclusions of an OECD report in 1984). Out of a total of 9,818 primary schools registered in 1987-88, 2,769 (28 per cent) are single-teacher schools. Of the latter, 40.1 per cent (1,110) have an enrolment of at least 10 pupils (Tras-os-Montes, Alentejo, Algarve). In Tras-os-Montes, 23.2 per cent are single-teacher schools. The Tras-os-Montes region has the highest level of single-teacher schools followed closely by Alentejo (46.6 per cent), the Algarve (39.6 per cent and the Littoral (16.6 per cent). An analysis of the number of teachers in single-teacher schools in relation to the total number of teachers in the country shows that in 1987-88, out of 40,536 teachers, 2,769 (6.8 per cent) were in single-teacher schools. The same applies to Tras-os-Montes where 23.2 per cent of the total teachers are of this type, but where the total number of teachers is very low (only 7.8 per cent of the whole country).

In Russia: after a brief overview of "free schools for the teaching of peasants" and the appearance in the 19th century of "low enrolment schools", there is a definition of such schools based on enrolments:

- low enrolment primary schools have from 20 to 30, 10 to 20 or fewer than 10 pupils;
- the decrease in the rural population has led to a decrease in primary enrolments but an increase in the number of schools as a result of regrouping in:
(i) normal secondary schools (eight classes) with reduced enrolments of 50 to 100, 20 to 50 or only 20 pupils;

(ii) normal secondary schools with low enrolments;

normal and incomplete secondary schools called "on wheels" since these schools are attended by pupils travelling by bus from different villages (classes of about 10 pupil).

In Zaire: 4,180,654 pupils (one million in the first year) are enrolled in 10,601 primary schools in 116,186 classes, with an overall average rate of enrolment of 75.9 per cent, which is constantly decreasing. A class of fewer than 26 pupils is considered unviable and should be closed. In practice this does not always happen.

2. Reasons for creating and maintaining single-teacher schools

They are due to:
- regions have small numbers of school age children;
- the decrease and migration of rural populations;
- villages are remote and isolated;
- geographical or climatic conditions;
- cultural or socio-economic conditions preventing attendance at regular school;
- deprived and inaccessible communities;
- the permanent settling of nomadic schools;
- the lack of teachers;
- a policy of locating schools near the parents' residence;
- it is the only form of school to reach remote or border communities;
- a desire to provide educational opportunities for all children;
- historical or political reasons for supporting border villages (Greece).

The reasons are essentially geographic and demographic.

Russia is an example of how primary and incomplete secondary schools with low enrolments provide schooling relevant for certain regions. In the mountainous Republic of Daguestan, which is a part of the Russian Federation, the people speak 33 national languages. At the beginning of 1984, the number of schools of this type increased from 45.8 per cent to 82.7 per cent. The Daguestan school with its reduced enrolment has problems related to the ethnic composition of classes and multiple language teaching.

There are three types of school:
(i) schools where the teaching is offered in the mother tongue and in Russian and where the teachers find themselves in a bilingual situation. One of the principal reasons for the upsurge of national schools with reduced enrolments is the desire of parents to preserve the traditional way of life;
(ii) schools attended by pupils belonging to ethnic groups without their own script (Agoules, Izpheurs, Routouls) and who arrive at school without knowing the language of information. The teacher often does not speak the mother tongue of the children;

(iii) schools where children of different nationalities study Russian at the same time. It becomes impossible to teach these multi-national classes, and the training of teachers is difficult. But these classes will continue to exist for demographic and geographic reasons. In 1940 the birth rate was 31.2 per thousand, in 1980, 18.3 per thousand and in 1985, 19.4 per thousand. The migration of the rural population, the division of localities, the development of villages and agricultural production as well as the lack of alternatives to low-enrolment schools (i.e. transportation, boarding) all explain the reasons for maintaining them.

In several countries, small primary and secondary schools have been established in towns and villages for ethnic and religious reasons, e.g. the Aborigines in Australia, and catholic confessional schools in France. In Africa, in particular in Zaire, the same phenomenon is to be noted though in a different context. Finally, there are profit-making schools supported by private initiative whose structure and operation are independent of the national authorities.

3. **Legislative and statutory measures for schools**

There are no special legislative or statutory measures governing the setting up of single-teacher schools, e.g. the minimum number of pupils, maximum distance from the pupil's home to the school; the availability of accommodation for the teacher, the minimum number of inhabitants, the isolation of the community, poor communications, etc. All these considerations may lead to the establishment of such schools. The pupils' parents may take the initiative. This is particularly the case in certain African countries where pressures for schooling are great and communities raise the funds required. Multi-grade classes generally operate in conditions similar to those of other schools but may experience difficulties because of isolation and an unfavourable environment. But they may benefit from flexibility in the implementation of programmes and timetables, incentive measures for teachers (isolation allowances, early promotion, in-service training and pedagogical support), the use of distance education, etc.

In Australia special measures benefit schools with multi-grade classes, e.g. administrative support for the school or incentive allowances.

In Burkina-Faso the legal basis for multi-grade classes and double shift schools has created a body for monitoring and evaluating pedagogical innovations. Multi grade classes are set up with pupils from two successive grades. Incentive measures are foreseen for teachers and students in new schools. Teachers receive a subsidy of 25 per cent of their salary plus teaching materials. Pupils are provided with textbooks. Scientific publications and maps are also supplied to these schools.
The most complete regulations on this matter are found in France and date from the Third Republic, when public education became universal. The State can legally open a public school in a community (law of 20 March, 1983) and education is compulsory, free and non-religious (laws, 1881, 1883, 1886). In rural areas, a school is set up if the distance from the next village is more than 3 kilometres, which is the maximum distance for a pupil to walk to school. All schools are subject to the same rules and decisions and depend on the same educational structure, e.g. the maintaining or closing of a single-teacher school depends on "Inspecteur d'Academie" (a civil servant in charge of a department) after consultation with the local authorities. A school with only 9 or 10 pupils should be closed but there are local exceptions.

In Korea, at least six pupils are needed for a single-teacher school. Each class can cover only two grades. The one or two-class schools are annexes (satellites or branches) of bigger schools, which manage and supervise them. Small schools have one class with two grades and admit young infants in the first and second year of elementary schooling (from 6 to 7 or 8 years). Older children must walk to the principal (or central) schools. The importance of measures taken by Korea to develop a transport system using rail, boats and roads and to limit the number of school annexes is worthy of note. 40 pupils is the maximum in an ordinary class and 20 in a two-grade one.

In Zaire, there is a central organization of classes. Single-teacher schools are considered "branch" schools. They depend on a "mother-school", which is the administrative body with a director. "Branch" schools have a head who carries out administrative as well as teaching duties. Single-teacher schools are covered by the same regulations as ordinary schools, particularly regarding admissions, syllabi, examinations, sanctions, and the transfer of teachers.

4. The status and management of single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes

Questions were asked to find out whether these schools depended on the same authority as other primary schools, whether they were autonomous or satellite schools attached to a central school; whether the local communities were involved in their management and whether parents participated in their activities. All replies were unanimous on one matter. For the national administration there was no difference between the primary schools. Whenever there was a higher authority, in charge of rural education, the single-teacher schools depended on this authority. In some countries, the single-teacher primary schools depended on a bigger neighbouring primary school.

In Australia, small schools with multi-grade classes are managed by administrative services in each state but function within a centralized system. Some decentralization permits the delegation of certain decisions to district education services which administer all types of education (notably private schools which have classes at various grades). The schools have school councils made up of teachers, parents and local council representatives. School councils have a consultative role and do not intervene in the recruitment of teaching staff or syllabus content. In Australia multi-grade classes are of various kinds: multi-age groups, composite classes, vertical groups, vertical integration, family and integrated learning groups. The single-teacher school tends to disappear since in many the teacher is assisted by a second teacher, working on a part-time basis and in charge of certain duties. The current reorganization of multi-age classes is characterized by two groups of different grades with at least two teachers.
In **Bolivia**, rural education is part of the "integrated nuclear system". A director of a "school nucleus" is responsible for the organization and administration of the central school as well as the multi-grade schools, all of which are dependent on a central school and are organized as follows:
- single-teacher schools with one, two or three grades with 25 to 30 pupils;
- schools with two teachers for one, two and three basic grades and 50 to 60 pupils;
- schools with three teachers for one to five grades and 70 to 90 pupils.

There is no information on how these schools are managed, or whether there are parents' committees.

In **Burkina-Faso**, multi-grade classes were established recently (1992) within the formal education system. One teacher is in charge of pupils from two successive grades. Single-teacher schools are rare.

In **China**, single-teacher schools in remote areas are also called single-class double shift. In other regions they are known as all-round primary schools or teaching places, or grass-roots units.

In **France**, there is an official authority for the School Council to encourage dialogue between teachers and parents and local councils. At the departmental level, the Chief Education Officer is responsible for these schools and for making decisions regarding them.

In **Greece**, there is a School Board, and a tripartite Executive Board for schools consisting of a representative of the local community (president), a representative of parents and a school principal. (It is not specified whether there is a representative of the national educational administration. The powers of this executive board are not defined).

In **Mali**, schools with multi-grade classes are under the same education authority as other primary schools, i.e. the National Office for Basic Education. Their management and administration are considered in the same way as for other primary schools, e.g. basic education inspectors, school principals and counsellors. The population participates in the running of the primary schools by means of the APE (Parent Teachers' Association), i.e. the construction, equipment and maintenance of school buildings with both human and financial resources. The APEs are responsible for the purchase of school equipment, teaching aids and furniture and meet costs related to examinations held at the end of primary schooling.

In **Portugal**, primary level education is administered by the director and a collective organization called the School Council consisting of all the teachers in a school. Teaching and pedagogical problems in the school, the composition of classes, time-tables and pupil evaluations are dealt with by the Council. Meetings of the School Council take place twice a month and must last for at least two and a half hours. In the case of single or even two-teacher schools, School Council meetings are necessary to overcome the professional isolation of the teachers. Schools are open to the community to ensure more democratic management and to encourage better administration.
5. School clusters

Clusters of schools with multi-grade classes are rare or unknown in the countries studied. Four countries refer to experiences based on pedagogical considerations (pedagogical animation groups in Burkina-Faso, the utilization of common services in Australia, clusters of schools located in the same area in Tanzania or in parishes in Lesotho). Clustered schools maintain their organic, teaching and administrative independence and the teaching staff is integrated into a single-school council. The decisions of the council are applicable to all clustered schools. The president of the school council is elected by principals or those responsible for the administration of the clustered schools. Clustering in the school council is obligatory for schools with one or two teachers. These clusters cover several school years and are maintained from one school year to the next so long as a school council gives approval. They are, therefore, of a provisional nature.

In Russia, there is an official structure for managing public education, which included the State Committee for Public Education, the ministers of each republic, the departments of public education of regional departments. An unofficial structure operates in rural areas: the supervision of one or several primary schools by schools with eight classes:

- the primary school by the secondary school;
- the eight-class school by the secondary school;
- the eight-class school by a larger school of eight classes;
- a primary and eight-class school by a secondary school;
- a secondary rural school with reduced enrolments by a comprehensive secondary school.

These types of administrative grouping permit a number of problems to be resolved:

- they ensure the relationship between different schools;
- they contribute to the organization of satellite multi-grades as the basis for the type of school required and the environment.

The grouping of multi-grade schools for administrative purposes brings all the children into one community independent of the schools they attend. Parents' committees are created with a view to promoting education. Their activities are defined by the regulations of the parents' committee of each school. They strengthen the link between the school and the family. In cooperation with the school administration, the parents' committee takes part in the preparation and the organization of meetings, conferences and evening festivities. Discussions are held with the principal of the school and the educational committee to improve the work of the pupils outside the school and they consider the possibility of providing assistance from public education funds, and the needs of problem families. School councils are made up of a third from the teaching force, a third from parents and social organizations and a third from pupils.
6. **Financial and material resources for single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes**

There are no special measures for these schools. As with other schools, funds come from three main sources: the state, local communities, associations or enterprises and pupils/parents. The remuneration is provided in all cases by the state (but only one answer provides details of the conditions offered to teachers).

In **Australia**, financial and material resources are provided by:

- federal funds, though all schools do not receive them;
- the central services of each state which provide teaching and non-teaching personnel;
- operating and equipment credits;

No distinction is made between ordinary schools and small rural schools. The district educational services, (under the financial and administrative control of the states) provide the counsellors, directors and finance for small works. The schools are authorized to collect funds through the participation of pupils and the organization of activities. The parents and general public provide funds for the school.

In **Bolivia**, administrative and union organizations participate in the working of the school through the Commission for School Aid in cooperation with the national supervision of financial administration. The regional and local communities provide assistance for school building, furniture, etc.

In **Korea**, all school expenses are paid by the state. Education is included in the national plan. The state gives priority to annexed schools for furniture and teaching aids. Local factories and enterprises contribute to the maintenance of the buildings and the supply of materials.

In **France**, the state and communities provide the funds for the schools. As elsewhere, the PTAs participate. The remuneration of teaching staff, whatever type of school they are in, is linked to the function they perform (e.g. School Director), to length of service and age. The schools do not have their own budgets. The community, which owns the building is responsible for school construction; repair, equipment and operation obligatory expenses are distinct from optional subsidies (canteen, studies, nurseries).

In **Greece**, funds are provided by the state and the regional educational supervisory service distributes funds. Small rural schools are often neglected. Some own land which they rent to peasants. Parents are asked to participate by meeting some expenses and by carrying out some repairs themselves (in some districts it is difficult to find workers).

In **Mali**, as in all primary schools, teachers' salaries and indemnities are paid by the state. The public pays for certain expenses (the purchase of school furniture, teaching aids) through the PTAs (Parent Teachers' Associations). Other financial resources for schools come from pupils' fees, funding-raising activities and agricultural produce.
In Russia, the statute on the public secondary school, adopted in 1970, defined school finance as part of the budget of the region and the village. The regulation covering secondary public schools was published in 1988 (it is assumed that it applies equally to primary schools). The principal source of funds allocated to schools is the state and the minimum amount is determined according to the nature of the region, the type of school and the number of pupils.

Funds for a school are determined in the following manner:

- grants from regional funds for school development;
- grants from firms and organizations;
- income from paid services, rent of buildings, materials;
- voluntary donations from parents and other citizens;
- income from school enterprises, farms, etc.;
- the parents participate in the repair of school buildings, the purchase of educational materials and the upgrading of libraries as well as the organization of work groups.

Small rural schools are sometimes neglected. Certain rural schools rent land to the peasants. The parents are invited to participate in certain expenses or works (repairs are carried out by them as there is a shortage of labour).

II. ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1. General organization and Administration

The objective of the enquiry was not to compare different systems of education but to place the schools studied within a precise framework. The answers to the questionnaire show that in all the countries considered, this framework was identical to that of ordinary schools. In all cases schooling was compulsory but the level of school attendance varied from one country to another. In general, children go to primary school from the age of six. This obligation remains theoretical in third world countries where the demand for schooling is far from being met. At the same time entrance to kindergarten can be at two, three, four or five years of age or not at all. Primary level education generally lasts six years with the possibility of extension to two years and more if repeaters are considered. The school system may provide fundamental or basic education lasting for nine years in which primary education and the first cycle of secondary learning are combined. At times there is some vertical and horizontal organization (Russia) of different kinds of schools with both primary and secondary and even a "nuclear" system with central and satellite schools. In all cases the small rural school is much neglected or forgotten.

1.1 Length of schooling and career prospects for pupils

In all the countries studied, children had the same length of schooling whether they attended a single-teacher school or a school with several teachers. Theoretically they had the same prospects for pursuing their secondary studies.
In **Australia**, children from 6 to 15 years are legally obliged to attend school. In certain states compulsory schooling is longer and in others children under six years of age can attend school. This is the case in the State of Western Australia where children from 5 to 6 years attend pre-school. This is followed by elementary schooling of 7 years followed by 5 years of secondary school. The first three years of secondary education are compulsory for everyone. In certain states, schooling is as follows: six years of elementary education followed by six years of secondary school. Each college is linked to different schools which provide a pool of recruitment. In single-class schools there are often eight levels of teaching: a pre-school year for children from five to six years of age plus seven years of elementary school. When enrolments are insufficient, four year olds are enrolled exceptionally.

It is worth noting that certain single-class schools receive pupils from the secondary level who follow correspondence courses, and the teacher provides additional teaching (which means that some teachers provide 13 levels of teaching).

In **Bolivia**, children spend three years in single-teacher schools plus five years in a school with three teachers or eight years in a central normal school (five for the basic cycle and three for the intermediate one). The schools with multi-grade classes in Bolivia are called "section schools".

The length of school at the primary level is as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Primary Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate cycle:</td>
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<td>Third Year</td>
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<td>Second Year</td>
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<td>First Year</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Pre-school |
| At the school | 4-5 years |
| Out of the school | 0-3 years |

Pupils in these schools can enter normal primary level education. When they enter the central school, they can follow either secondary technical education or receive professional training. There is no law which forces children to enter the central schools but in certain communities the children are obliged to attend them. This depends on the distance between the closest central school and the schools with multi-grade classes.
In France, no matter where they are elementary pupils must follow five levels of education (a pupil may be permitted exceptionally to skip a year). Schooling is compulsory from the ages of 6 to 16. At 6 years of age all children attend primary school until the age of 11. In cases of failure or weakness, a pupil in a multi-grade class may be allowed to repeat the class. In single-teacher schools, the idea of repetition makes little sense. The teacher can reinforce the pupil's knowledge and skills by encouraging him or her to follow a lower class. Some single-teacher schools have six levels (from kindergarten to the 6th grade).

In Greece, three are six years of compulsory elementary schooling and three years of secondary. In theory, there are no differences between the small and large schools.

In Mali, the length of school in double-grade schools is the same as in ordinary primary schools which is six years. As with regular schools, schooling in two-grade schools can be extended to 8 years due to the fact that a pupil can only repeat each cycle once. In these primary schools a pupil cannot repeat the same class twice and a second repetition means expulsion. After the primary level, pupils in two-grade classes reach the second level of basic education which corresponds to a multi-grade primary school. This three-year educational institution is the only opportunity offered those pupils from the two-grade and regular schools. In two-grade schools, pupils are awarded a diploma after six years of study: the first level basic education school leaving certificate (CFEPCEF).

In Portugal, primary education, designated as the first level of basic education, consists of four years of schooling in two stages of two years. Primary education is a part of basic education which consists of nine years of compulsory schooling at three levels: the first level followed by the second two-year level, then the third level of three years in which the structure is similar to secondary level schooling.

In Zaire, entrance to first year primary schooling is at the end of the age of six. The age limit for entry is eight years and according to law, no child after the age of eight is allowed to enter the first year of primary school unless special permission is given. Primary studies are organized in a six-year cycle sub-divided into three levels of two years each: elementary, middle and terminal. Progression from one year to the next is based on an average of at least 50 per cent in all subjects. Repetition is allowed once only for each certificate. The primary level ends with a certificate of primary studies awarded by the school.

1.2 \textbf{Enrolments and composition of pupil groups}

Enrolments vary greatly from one country to another; from five or six pupils up to 30-40 or more in certain African countries. This same disparity can be seen in the way pupils are grouped.

In Australia, a minimum of eight pupils is necessary, when there are more than thirty pupils a second class is opened. A school with two teachers is reclassified and permits an increase in classes and resources. Children can be enrolled from four years of age in order to maintain the necessary enrolled. A school with less than eight pupils can remain open while awaiting an increase in enrolment or if the Minister of Education feels that it is in the interest of the community to keep it open. The number of levels in each class varies. Sometimes they reach 13. The teachers regroup in two major sections:
from pre-primary year to third year elementary;
- from fourth year to seventh year primary inclusive.

This regrouping is the most common but there are other criteria such as:

- the number of pupils at each level;
- their level of knowledge and competence;
- management of the time-table.

In Bolivia, the national education code and regulations on "nuclear schools" establish the teacher/pupil ratio for schools with multi-grade classes at 1/30. In small, scattered communities which do not have 30 pupils, a regrouping is made to establish a single teacher school. The same law permits a ratio of one teacher for 15 pupils in isolated and frontier areas. At present there are 6,636 sectoral schools with multi-grade classes (with one to three teachers) in the whole country. But the school map is incomplete. The criteria which determine the composition of groups of pupils for each school is chronological age. On this basis levels and small groups are constituted, the grouping of pupils being made as follows:

- groups by level are organised to provide a form of education in which content is dealt with in the same way for all pupils attending the same lesson. At the same time other pupils carry out individual or group activities as foreseen in the weekly time-table.

- the organization of small groups within levels: small groups of three, four or five children of both sexes and the same level are formed. Usually the definition "slow" or "advanced" is used and in some cases heterogeneous groups are formed. The goal of these groups is to organize study and work sessions and open air games.

- the organization of periodic groups: these groups are heterogenous (sex, age, level), last generally one week and provide school services (cleaning, animal husbandry, gardening, etc.). Each group has a specific area to maintain at a high level of cleanliness.

- the organization of large groups: set-up by the teacher and the pupils to carry out joint activities: music, physical education, home economics, health.

In France, the smallest enrolment in 1988 was three (Haute Corse) with four pupils in seven departments in mountainous or isolated valley zones (Alps Hautes Provence, Ardeche, Lozere, Aveyron, etc.). The largest enrolment in a single-class was 40 pupils (Bas Rhin) and 35/36 in a few departments (Drome, Eure et Loire). The average number of pupils in multi-grade classes is lower (19.6 pupils) than in other schools (21.9 pupils). In the majority of preparatory classes (ages 6/7) there are 21 to 25 pupils while only one third of the multi-grade classes have this number and more than half have only 1 to 20 pupils.
The continuing drop-outs in some areas create serious problems:

- as 300 single teacher classes close each year, certain geographical areas are without schools.

In Greece, there is a difference between the official and real statistics relating to enrolments. Pupil averages per class vary according to the number of classes in the school:

- 16.3 for one-class schools;
- 18.2 for two-class schools;
- 21.6 for a normal six-teacher school.

There must be 10 pupils to open and maintain a school and repeaters are uncommon. Groups are formed either by grade or levels. For example: in mathematics each level has its own syllabus while in history and physics, children from the third and fourth levels work together. Each pupil is placed in a level according to his or her age.

In Korea, primary classes never exceed 40 pupils or 20 pupils in two-grade classes. A minimum of six pupils is needed to open a two-grade class.

In Mali, no official regulations govern enrolment rates for two-grade classes, which may vary from 50 to 60 pupils per class and sometimes even 70, i.e. 25, 30 or even 35 pupils per course. In such classes, as in normal ones, groups are mixed. A group is constituted according to age and learning level. In two-grade classes, pupils are grouped in such a way that "introductory" classes, "aptitude" classes and "careers" classes are held together. A second-year class would not be conducted with a fifth-year class or a first-year class with a fourth-year class. Two-grade classes are made up of groups of consecutive years.

In Portugal, legislation determines the maximum number of pupils per class or per teacher. At least 24 pupils are needed for classes where there are pupils with special needs or where the school is in need of priority attention. At present, a school with a teacher/pupil ratio of less than 10 pupils is closed as soon as alternative schooling can be found.

In Zaire, grouped classes have on average a maximum enrolment of 30 to 40 pupils. When there are over 40 pupils, distinct groups are formed. Information on the minimum and maximum enrolments is not available.

The grouping of classes is carried out by level. A teacher has elementary (first and second year), middle (third and fourth year) and terminal (fifth and sixth year) classes. There are cases where classes are grouped in two different levels, especially when the cycle is incomplete. Pupils are usually placed in two rows, each one representing a school year, those in the lower grade at the front and those in the upper grade at the back. There are two blackboards, one in front of each group.
1.3 The administration of schools (time-tables, etc.)

The average week has 25 academic hours for grades 1 and 2, and for upper grades the average is 28. The average number of days of schooling is 197 (between 176 and 242); but days of student leave and absence may account for between 34 and 122 days a year. Absence is due to different reasons: sickness, climatic conditions, work at home or on the farm, and when the teacher travels to fetch his or her salary or attends meetings (there is no replacement).

In Australia, the number of daily and weekly class hours varies according to the state. For example in the Western State, it is 5 hours 25 minutes five days a week including recreation. There are 40 weeks in a year spread over four semesters. Each state decides the number of hours per week to be allocated to each subject, but teachers are given some discretion. As in other schools, the grouping of pupils by level is based in the first instance on age. Nevertheless, other groups can be constituted according to criteria set by the teacher: e.g. available space, resources, subjects studied, etc. Subject grouping is unusual. In fact school teachers in single classes combine subjects and thus reduce the amount of material to be learned. For example, in the social sciences the pupils in the sixth and seventh levels may work for one year on a sixth-year subject and the next year on a seventh-year subject. They also combine subjects in the field of health. In music, drama or PE, they are allowed to teach the same subject to all pupils in the school by arranging degrees of difficulty according to different competences. Subjects are sometimes grouped by themes, e.g. science subjects may include mathematical concepts such as measurement and graphs. Pupils are split into two pre-primary groups until and including the third year and from the fourth to the seventh year. One group works with the teacher while the other works independently.

In Bolivia, there are five hours of teaching daily but this can be modified by the teacher and the local community. There are 25 periods a week including separated work with each level as well as lessons in common. The time given to each activity is divided in 45-minute periods. In all schools with multi-grade classes, the teacher works with three levels of pupils in the classroom. Activities by level and in common occur when the teacher covers them simultaneously without an assistant. The school work is carried out throughout the day, and sometimes without breaks. There is no other organizational system such as half-day teaching or alternate weeks or with other groups of teachers. Common subjects are related to health, the preparation of food, agricultural tasks, handicrafts and music. Since 1931, Bolivia has adopted the “nuclear system” for its school organization, i.e. a central school linked to several schools with multi-grade classes of two or three grades. After finishing the first level of such schools, the pupils attend a central school to complete their basic learning (maximum distance 4 to 7 kilometres). These schools are administered by a director of the central school who also supervises the satellites.

In France, the number of class hours per week is 27 in all types of schools. There are no rules concerning groupings in single-teacher schools. The teacher usually organizes the levels in the school in three groups: the younger, middle and older ones. This organization may vary according to the subjects taught, the age and level of knowledge determining the groups in French and mathematics, the type of subject matter being the deciding factor in physical education, art, science, history and geography. Assignments to groups can be changed when necessary. Levels are homogeneous in multi-grade classes in the attainment of knowledge, reading skills being the main factor in assignment to groups. For the younger classes language attainment is the criteria for the assignment to groups.
One problem has not been resolved in these schools: viz. problem pupils. The absence of any specialized structure is a handicap for young rural pupils.

In Greece, the weekly length of classes varies from 23 hours in the first two years to 25 hours in the last four years, with 4 to 5 hours daily. There are variations according to school size. In schools with one or two teachers the pupils have 30 hours a week, 6 hours a day. In schools with three classes, levels one and two have 25 hours weekly, 5 hours a day, while the middle and upper levels have 27 hours a week and 5 to 6 hours a day. In schools with five or six classes, single level classes follow the normal schedule while classes with two levels follow the time-table of schools with three teachers. Classes are grouped either by grade or are two-grade, each following its own syllabus. For example, children are regrouped for teaching mathematics, history and physics. Standard time-tables exist for single class schools, two-grade schools, three-grade schools, and six-grade schools. Pupils are placed at the level for their age.

In Korea, time-tables are the same for all schools and each academic period lasts 45 minutes. Students from different grades are put together, but sometimes the first and third grade, or the second and fourth grade are put together so that older students may help the younger ones.

In Mali, in double two-grade classes, the number of daily hours is four in the morning and two and a half in the afternoon and 32 hours weekly, including extra-curricular activities. The "double vacation" system is not used in these classes. One teacher receives two different groups of pupils at the same time. The time-table offers common subjects for two different groups (French, arithmetic, science observation) and single subjects for each division (history, geography). Two-grade classes resemble ordinary classes in that they follow daily and weekly subjects but are different in substance as the methods used are not the same. While the teacher explains the lesson to one group the other does exercises. There is no educational grouping between schools.

In Portugal, primary-level schools provide two systems: a normal and a double one. The normal system is compulsory unless there is a space shortage. The normal and double systems have weekly time-tables of 25 hours and differ in that the first has the same pupils in the morning and afternoon of each day, while the second has one set of pupils in the morning and another in the afternoon. In the normal system in single teacher schools, courses take place between 9 and 12 o'clock. This schedule may be changed to suit local conditions, in particular the lack of accommodation for the teacher, a lack of public transport and difficulty of access to the school.

In Zaire, single teacher schools are "branch schools" or "mother schools". As with ordinary schools, a "class head" is chosen by the teacher from among the pupils who has leadership qualities and who, in some ways, is the teacher's assistant in various tasks, e.g. handing in lessons and carrying out exercises.
2. Educational Management

The curricula and syllabi are not very different from those of ordinary schools, though there are restrictions related to easier curricula. The working week usually includes the same number of class hours in both single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes. The breakdown of the time-table in these schools is of importance from the teaching point of view. There is a breakdown of activities in all countries. Even when there is a standard time-table, it is the teacher who makes the weekly and daily breakdown of lesson plans. The major problem for the single-class teacher is to keep all pupils busy by alternating class lessons with individual work. There are no teacher's manuals for single-class schools but there are general educational guides for the teachers.

2.1 Curricula and syllabi

In Bolivia, there is an on-going experiment. Although curricula for schools with multigrade classes are no different from those of other schools with a teacher for each level, their content has been rationalized, and integrated to reduce coverage. The syllabus has been modified to make it more able to assist the teacher to work simultaneously at two or three levels. The number of subjects has been reduced to eight by merging, for example, health and home economics, physical education and music, in order to create recreation subjects. According to the theme, the contents are dealt with either at two or three levels or independently. These curricula are experimental and for economic reasons are not employed in all schools. They are structured vertically by level and permit the development of the content, objectives and activities in such a way that the difficulties increase from level to level and from one subject to another.

The following elements form part of these programmes:

- objectives by level: the goal to be reached;
- content: what is to be learnt at each level;
- specific objectives: specific learning tasks;
- activities: individual or collective;
- evaluation: established according to objectives.

In certain circumstances, the most isolated teachers follow the normal school curricula. As the curricula in schools with multi-grade classes are no different from those in ordinary schools, there is an apparent disadvantage in the slow pace of learning. On the other hand, the advantage of these curricula is to offer the content sequences which the teacher can handle without difficulty.

2.2 Time-tables and schedules

In Australia, it is the responsibility of the teacher to draw up a flexible time-table according to the rules.

In France, a study of a single-teacher or multi-grade class time-table leads to the conclusion that:
while the teacher attends to one level, other pupils do exercises (prepare, revise) either individually or in groups of two or three pupils; it is important that the teacher's instructions are clear; the teacher relies on the ability of pupils to work alone and to accept responsibility for working alone; this flexible time-table for pupils demands:

- careful work preparation;
- good management of activities and presence in the class;
- a management of activities which avoids periods of inactivity and lack of time to complete tasks;
- the arrangement of class space: permanent and temporary space, furniture, aisles;
- the provision of reading materials so that pupils can work alone.

The issues require appropriate teaching methods, techniques and materials (cf. 2.3.). The time-table is drawn up with various constraints in mind:

- respect for official school hours;
- the rotation of teachers' and pupils' activities;
- the planning of school space and the disposition of buildings.

A comparison between official and actual school hours shows deficiencies in certain disciplines (French, mathematics, physical education and sports).

In Greece, the school hours and time-table depend on the size of the school. (i.e. the number of classes). If different subjects are studied in all classes, whatever the size of the school and the variation in school hours, time allocated to each subject must vary. There is a standard time-table for each level according to whether there are one, two, three or more teachers.

In Mali, the time-table outlines activities in sufficient detail to guide the teacher in his or her daily work, since it is the teacher who is responsible for the breakdown of the weekly programme. This breakdown is usually spread over nine months, i.e. 34 weeks of schooling.
The following is a time table of weekly hours for two-grade classes:

**WEEKLY HOURS FOR TWO-GRADE CLASSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
<th>1st and 2nd</th>
<th>3rd and 4th</th>
<th>5th and 6th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French language</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor senses</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recitation</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual Training</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>32.10</td>
<td>32.30</td>
<td>32.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Portugal, the curricula, syllabi, and teaching content in primary schools are the responsibility of the Minister of Education and are identical in all schools regardless of the number of classes.

### 2.3 Methods, techniques and teaching materials

This topic has been well developed by different countries in their replies to the questionnaire. Teaching materials for the single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes are not available. In certain countries like Greece, textbooks are common to all schools whatever their size and are provided by the National Ministry of Education. There are also teacher’s guides which allow little initiative. These initiative documents are not always easy to use with multi-grade classes and there is a request to adapt them accordingly. The teaching methods and techniques used are according to the initiative of the teacher responsible for the class.

In Australia, the shortage of appropriate teaching materials has been emphasized although make-shift resources can be adapted for use. This shortage is covered by teachers who write their own courses, with the assistance of the district offices which arrange for meetings of teachers to prepare course materials and teaching aids. The teachers interviewed indicated a number of strategies and methods which they use:
1. **self-learning** by one or two older pupils has proved beneficial. Some advantages are:

- it frees the teacher to help other pupils;
- the pupil/teacher strengthens his or her own skills;
- this activity provides the young pupil with a feeling of security.

2. **contracts with the pupils**: the contract lists the activities to be carried out during a certain period of time (generally a full or half working day) which offers the pupil flexibility in carrying out tasks.

3. **group rotation** allows pupils to be active and receive attention from the teacher. One group works with the teacher while others do exercises and revise previous ones (whether or not they deal with the same subject or theme).

4. **a combination of different subject matter**

5. **the need to establish precise rules and habits**: example: a group is put in charge of organizing the P.E. programme.

6. **the pupils evaluate and give marks for their own and their classmates' work.** The teacher makes corrections.

7. **the use of teaching materials** assist different levels of difficulty and permit pupils to work independently. A file is used for self-correction.

8. **computer-assisted teaching**: in Australia there are programmes drawn up by the Ministry of Education and distributed by local councils of education to primary schools.

9. **pupils alone or in pairs carry out tasks**: determined in advance, others work with the teacher (this type of work is similar to the contract mentioned above).

10. **group levels**: this takes into consideration the needs of pupils.

11. **the organization of centres of interest in the class**: materials are developed for different levels and permit individual work. These centres may have several forms: an information area, a play area, a library area, a cassette playing area. In general, files allow pupils to evaluate and correct themselves.

12. **exercise files** can be distributed after each lesson and extend independent work.

13. **the use of television or other registered programmes such as the tape-recorder**

14. **the use of the cassette player in a listening area**.

15. **unplanned tasks for those who finish tasks early**.

20
16. teachers in single-teacher schools may take their pupils on a visit to similar schools to encourage interaction with counterparts.

17. the organization of camps and different sporting events with other counterparts.

18. the use of telematic newsheets which permits pupils to keep in touch with their counterparts.

19. the use of a photo-copier which permits the low-cost reproduction of work files and exercises.

In Portugal, researchers considered the advantages and disadvantages of combining subjects in multi-grade classes.

(a) advantages
- the repetition of skills promotes a reinforcement of knowledge.
- pupils work in an enlarged group which permits greater interaction and exchanges.

(b) disadvantages
- There is little effect on the real learning of pupils if certain precautions are not taken.
- In order to avoid dealing with the same subject matter several times, the teacher should list the subjects dealt with.
- it is recommended that all work done in class by the pupils be recorded in a work or exercise book.

In Bolivia, the teaching methods used in multi-grade classes in rural areas are based on the principles of community education. The isolation and lack of adequate direction has left teachers in multi-grade schools free to choose a method and organize their classes as best they can. Two kinds of methodological approaches are of interest:

- the method called "generating activities", is based on daily community activities according to the period of the year (even unforeseen activities are used). The teacher uses these activities for a more global education.
- the "by correlation" method. Living organisms are linked among themselves and with the surrounding environment, from which they receive sustenance and energy. In the same way humans establish economic and social relationships from which other relationships develop through work. This universal correlation is a philosophical approach. Through teaching, the learning of isolated matter is avoided. It is the same when learning about the past, present and future. A more complex form of learning embraces important units and establishes a correlation between school levels. This strategy provides greater force to knowledge acquired at different levels. Each level adapts its particular activities to achieve objectives.

Recently there has been concern about the development of teaching materials for use in multi-grade schools though sophisticated audiovisual materials are not used. In the schools there are:

- curricula and syllabi (for 1st and 3rd grades and grades 4 and 5):
- teachers' manuals (teacher's guide, practical teaching guide).
In China agricultural activities have been introduced as an experiment in schools with multi-grade classes (Hunan Province). Students work part-time in agriculture and pisciculture. Results seem to be positive in terms of production and the experiment could provide an example for deprived villages. On the other hand a number of studies has been conducted aimed at improving the quality of teaching in multi-grade classes; the utilization of modern teaching methods, the reorganization of classroom arrangements, the standardization of classroom work, management models for rural schools. Pedagogical reviews and seminars are organized by the central government and by the autonomous regions, which permit teachers to exchange experiences and to do research on teaching in multi-grade classes.

In France, the teachers working in these classes base their teaching methods on the autonomy of the pupils to discover an idea or acquire a skill. They systematically remind the learners of their responsibilities to the programme and direct learning, evaluate competence, performance and capacity. Self-correcting and self-evaluating files are additional exercises which are indispensable aids to the teacher.

Sometimes older pupils participate in the running of the classes:

- by distributing material to younger pupils;
- through cohort learning; reminding them of the teacher's instructions, reading a story to the younger ones, an older pupil monitoring certain activities (graphics, cutting out); by correcting exercises: with or without self-corrective files (assisting each other).

It is difficult for the teacher to avoid making the older ones assist the younger ones and make the strong assist the weak. This participation of pupils must be explained to the families as they would not accept that the teacher abandon teaching responsibilities by transferring them to an older pupil.

The teacher sets up a resource centre in a corner of a classroom using manuals which the pupils use for documentary research and special projects. To meet the shortage of manuals due to cost, the teacher has the use of a photo-copier. There are guides or teachers' aids. Teaching aids in schools provide solutions to difficulties encountered by colleagues in furnishing buildings, organizing the time-table, preparing the class and programme activities.

Among other sources of documentation are:

- the use of slides, audiovisual aids (edited by publishing houses, produced by the teacher or put together by documentation centres);
- the use of educational television and radio. Rural schools seek to communicate with the outside world. Correspondence education is well developed and permits exchanges with other classes in another region which leads to acquaintance with another environment and other cultures.

School excursions and interclass exchanges also open new horizons.
In Mali, the methods used in two-stream classes are the same as those in single-course classes. The teaching techniques used in these classes have been developed by experienced teachers who have received no special training. In classes for the fifth and sixth years, the teacher may give the same lesson to two groups but without using the same exercises. In cases where the fifth and sixth years are joined, teachers favour the sixth year. The methods and techniques used consist of resolving a major difficulty: giving attention to two groups of pupils simultaneously or alternatively. The teacher is called upon to perform two tasks: a) make sure that there is no confusion regarding levels and b) work within the time available.

In Zaire, the daily allocation of activities to a class with two different groups of pupils aims at allowing each group to develop its curriculum independently of the other: e.g. when one group is involved in an activity demanding heavy concentration, (reading) the other carries out more practical tasks (drawing, writing) which do not require instructions from the teacher. Activities such as physical education, manual work and observation lessons are carried out together and outside the class.

Regroupings are made for religion, physical education, diction, etc. It was not possible to give examples of daily schedules of activities. Primary teachers are instructed to use active methods of teaching.

III. TEACHING PERSONNEL

1. Teacher training

Single-class teachers have not generally received training. In a few instances emphasis is given to this type of teaching in theoretical training. The teachers are not prepared for teaching in these schools as there are no training courses for single-teacher schools. The training for teachers in single-teacher schools is the same as for normal schools. In-service training courses for teachers make no distinction between in-service training for normal schools and for single-teacher schools.

In Australia, teachers are expected to know the objectives of curricula in their own State and to take into account the pupils' backgrounds and cultural diversity.

Initial training stresses the following:

- to provide young people under training with the skills to teach the subjects and have the necessary knowledge;
- to provide courses in teaching methods in order to foster teaching experiences in schools (practice teaching);
- to consider education from the psychological and philosophical points of view;
- to have a better understanding of the backgrounds of the children (sociological approach);
- to understand school administration;
- to acquire evaluation skills.

These have importance in initial training though theory is given greater importance than practice.
The teachers in single-teacher schools do not receive special training though some courses are useful for them:

- developing curricula for multi-grade classes;
- awareness of differences;
- group leadership;
- relationship with the local community.

In the past, it was possible to have initial classroom training in teaching in single-teacher schools:

- the pupils were taken by bus to the training centre and the young teacher gradually took over the class.

At present, there is a decrease in the number of single-teacher schools. Since 1988, in-service training seminars for single-classroom school teachers have been organized. The objective is to study problems, find and exchange solutions and produce special materials for these classes.

In Bolivia, the training of teachers for rural education is controlled by the government by means of a document entitled: "Strategy for the Development of Normal Rural Education". This document requires three years of study, two of which are given to theoretical training, and the third to practical training. There are 27 normal schools in the country, 10 urban and 17 rural, mainly concentrated in the high plateau (Altiplano).

These have two principal functions:

- the training of teaching personnel;
- professional training for interim teachers.

"Integrated" normal schools train teachers for all cycles and "specialized" normal schools for one cycle only. Each normal school operates in a zone where schools carry out teaching projects.

In the Bolivian education system, the terms "basic training" and "under recruitment" are not used. Normal schools teachers are distinguished from "interims" who have no training and are given temporary employment as teachers when there is a shortage of trained teachers. "Normal school" teacher training provides instruction in theory followed by practice teaching to prepare the teacher gradually for the tasks to be carried out.

The most important activities are:

- to organize, direct and evaluate school activities during a full day at a central school and a multi-grade school and provide adult education literacy instruction.
- establish a detailed, weekly syllabus including work plans and a daily work sheet for multi-grade schools.
In Burkina-Faso, training in the teaching of big classes and group-work are foreseen. Two training sessions of one week in length were organized for headmasters, teachers of multi-grade classes, inspectors and pedagogical counsellors. Training focuses on the formulation of learning objectives, observation in classes, the pedagogy of alternance, modular teaching, the pedagogy of objectives, school mapping.

In China, the Teacher Training Department of the State Education Commission, has produced, with the assistance of UNICEF, video cassettes on teaching in multi-grade classes as pedagogical support for rural teachers. Refresher courses and symposia were organized under the auspices of UNESCO and UNICEF.

In France, basic training is clearly distinguished from in-service training. Four areas of training are undertaken:

(i) general teacher training, theoretical and practical;
(ii) subject matter training;
(iii) administrative and social training;
(iv) optional in-depth study.

These are practical training courses in schools. This training is evaluated at the national level. Teachers have a right to in-service training: Every teacher is allowed 35 weeks of paid in-service training, during their career with the exception of the first and last five years of service. The teacher is replaced in the classroom while under the training which is of varying length and in different centres: one to nine weeks; training centre or locally.

Basic and in-service teacher training in Mali is given in the IPEG (Training Institute for general teaching). This secondary level teaching institute accepts trainees who have the basic studies diploma (DEF) and after a competitive examination. Student teachers receive training over a period of four years. In addition to the course, which corresponds to the 10th and 11th years of secondary education, the IPEG student teachers receive rural training. The rural programme of the IPEG covers many fields of rural life: gardening, technology, family economics, agriculture, weaving, woodworking, sculpture, etc. This helps the educator in his role as teacher, organizer and catalyst in rural surroundings. Near the end of the training, the IPEG student teachers have practical training in practising schools.

In Korea, basic training for two-grade classes is the same as the training for normal classes. Student teachers are admitted after 11 years of compulsory schooling and spend three years in training. In mountainous regions, they teach two-grade classes. Correspondence courses are organized for teachers who have had no basic training:

- every five or six years they attend three to six-month training courses;
- twice a year they follow two-week courses during the summer and winter vacations;
- local seminars are also organized.
In Portugal, basic training for primary level teachers is given in normal schools - which are now being phased out. At the end of the present school year, the last 6 of 24 schools will be closed. The training offered within these schools was not intended to cover teaching practice in single-teacher schools or multi-grade classes. It took place in practising school annexes situated near normal schools, i.e. in urban areas. Integrated higher teaching schools were created in 1979 in polytechnic institutes and teacher training centres within universities. Normal schools provided middle-level training whereas the ESE and CIFOP provided student teachers with a diploma of higher studies which is the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. The candidate must have completed 12 years of education, i.e. both primary and secondary education, to be admitted to these schools. Studies last for three years (6 semesters). Each ESE and CIFOP has a certain autonomy in providing its study programmes. Certain schools offer subjects related to regional variations. There is no practising school designed to provide teaching practice.

Practice takes place in regular primary schools where the governing council has established an annual agreement with the higher institution. A few of these primary schools are situated in rural areas which allows the student teacher to gain experience in non-urban schools. The in-service training of primary level teachers in Portugal has never dealt with the problems of the isolated single teacher. Primary school supervisors of the Ministry of Education are concerned with this matter. New social functions are being given to schools which require another type of teacher and new kinds of basic training and strategy for further training. This will enable the teacher to be:

- an innovator
- a collaborator
- an organizer
- a trainer

The in-service training of primary teachers is a matter of urgency.

1.1 Teacher remuneration

It is necessary to distinguish between salaries and bonuses, allowances, grants and gifts. The basic salary is generally the same for all teachers whether teaching in a single-class or multi-teacher school, although there are certain advantages and allowances for the former:

- a residence allowance based on the area;
- a supervisory or administrative duties allowance;
- free lodging;
- a high cost of living allowance;
- a special conditions allowance.

Some of these advantages may be granted to schools with several teachers.

In Australia, single-class teachers receive extra salary for administrative duties but differences in salary are calculated according to teachers' qualifications and length of service (a single-class teacher with four years' qualification and maximum service would earn 2,158 Australian dollars annually).
1.2 **Transfer and Promotions**

Transfers of teachers are made by applying a scale based on: qualifications, professional evaluation and, in certain cases, the length of service and family responsibilities. In only one country (Australia) is teaching in a single-teacher school considered worthy of promotion. 10 years ago in the State of Western Australia, teachers in single-teacher schools were recruited from teacher training graduates, but since then service in such a school is seen as a means of increasing the chances of promotion (promotion is based on merit and not on length of service). To hold such a post, it is necessary to have a diploma after three years professional training as well as being considered by an inspector to be "above average" in the following:

- basic education;
- class teaching at different levels;
- oral and written communication;
- syllabi preparation.

In Bolivia, teachers from rural normal schools start their careers in a multi-grade school and spend four or five years there. No regulations govern this. The teacher then has the possibility of requesting a transfer to a central (nucleo) school. There teaching is at only one level with one examination to prepare and no technical subjects (music, physical education, etc.). If they wish to be promoted they can compete for a nucleo school This promotion is linked to an examination and an evaluation of professional competence. All qualified teachers may apply for a single-class school (becoming the principal) or a multi-grade school where they are given lodgings. There are also residence allowances according to the area.

In France, any qualified teacher may compete for a single-teacher school or multi-grade school without any pre-conditions regarding diplomas or additional training except in the case of the principal. In view of the difficulty of appointing teachers for this work, chief education officers responsible for transfers have decided to give extra points in the salary scale for those remaining in post. A teacher who remains three of four years in a single-class post may earn additional points and have his or her transfer scale increased. This procedure is not generalized.

Teachers are appointed in Greece by the Ministry of Education. They are generally young and in their first post. They receive no additional emoluments except an allowance for administrative duties. In order to promote a certain stability in the teaching profession in Korea, married couples are sent to mountainous regions and benefit from financial allowances. There are no conditions or transfer regulations in Zaire. Therefore, there is no incentive to teach in small rural schools which present disadvantages for teachers (distance, lodgings, food, schools for teachers' children). No special emoluments are given.
IV. THE EVALUATION OF SINGLE-TEACHER SCHOOLS AND MULTI-GRADE CLASSES: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

This part of the survey raised much interest and all countries provided detailed replies from which long excerpts have been selected. An examination of these case studies shows there are various opinions about the single-teacher school. This kind of school is an imperfect but necessary means of educating children and combating illiteracy in the remote and isolated regions. There are more shortcomings than benefits and countries do their best to do away with or regroup these schools by organizing school transportation.

Some state that in isolated regions the school provides a focus for social and cultural life and, though imperfect, the school has a place in the national education system. In the majority of cases, more qualified judgements are made and comparisons of the advantages and disadvantages of these schools are provided. Only two countries (Australia, Mali) listed the disadvantages before the advantages. The rest did the reverse, which indicated a negative point of view. Divergent views exist and disadvantages for some are seen as advantages by others. For example, some countries denounce the high cost of single-class schools, while others feel that these schools are economic since they avoid the need for expensive bus services (which may tire the pupils and cause stress). For some the large amount of written work done at school is an advantage, while others deplore the insufficient development of the spoken word. Pupils attainment as well as career opportunities are not seen in the same way. Some differences of opinion are seriously incompatible contradictions.

Does the teacher feel rejected or respected and appreciated?
   - the teacher feels a stranger in the community but could become an outstanding member of it;
   - the community imposes too many tasks on the teacher, parental pressure is intense and yet the teacher feels a personal satisfaction and recognition.

Emulation or apathy?
   - the small number of pupils is seen on the one hand as reducing teacher motivation and limiting teaching opportunities and on the other it is seen as facilitating learning and a way of establishing closer links with the community.

Are there differences of opinion?
   - writing up lessons is difficult and time-consuming: flexible time-tables and administration permit the teacher to organize work more easily.
   - pupils are obliged to work alone and lack social contacts.

What is an advantage for the teachers may be a disadvantage for the pupils.
   - the single-class enables the teacher to become familiar with all levels of primary education and to obtain a mastery of teaching, but are the difficulties of teaching pupils of different ages simultaneously irreconcilable?

28
Is this relationship liberating or oppressive?

- does the permanent and direct influence of the teacher over the pupil offer advantages only?

All scenarios and arguments are presented and advanced. A synthesis of what most countries consider the inconveniences and advantages of single and multi-grade classes is presented. It deals with teachers, pupils and the administration.

This synthesis is followed by appraisals of the different countries since there is little in common between agricultural concerns in Australia in a modern technological environment and villages in Zaire or Mali.

A case study of this type reveals a methodological problem that cannot be ignored. Comparisons should not be made of what is incomparable or unreliable conclusions will result.

1. **Advantages and disadvantages identified by countries studied**

1.1 **Disadvantages**

(a) For teachers
- teachers' tasks are more difficult (lesson preparation, time-tableing, correction of homework, etc.) leading to overwork;
- difficulty in teaching pupils of different ages simultaneously;
- professional and social isolation;
- necessity to perform administrative tasks.

(b) For pupils
- insufficient individual attention by the teacher to the pupil;
- syllabus might not be covered;
- pupils' attainment is inferior when an inexperienced teacher is employed;
- insufficient social contracts among pupils of the same age.

(c) For the administration
- the smaller the school the higher the costs;
- poor state of buildings, inadequate equipment and teaching materials;
- lack of educational services (library, etc.);
- difficulty in recruiting trained teachers for these schools, frequent changes of personnel;
- school closure when the teacher is absent or ill.
1.2 Advantages

(a) From the teaching point of view

The teacher, unable to look after all pupils at once, distributes individual work to the pupils who learn to work alone (with or without outside assistance);

(b) for the pupils

The single teacher school prevents pupils from being separated from their families:
- this conforms with natural education processes;
- it brings the family together;

(c) From the administrative point of view

The schools provide the only means of teaching for children who live far from education services and without it they are condemned to illiteracy. This is an objective judgement which is often the justification for what is unavoidable (e.g. the cost of these schools compared to boarding schools and school transportation).
- a means of spreading education to the most isolated regions;
- the social role of these schools in isolated adult populations;
- schools adapted to the economic conditions of the country.

2. Parameters to consider when evaluating multi-grade classes

Each country has its own educational policy. Account must be taken of the ideological orientation and of unavoidable constraints. Teaching does not occur until the end of the process when all parameters have been studied and all pre-requisites satisfied. A serious study of the organization and function of any educational system should include a certain number of parameters:

- situation of the country: size, relief, demography, etc.;
- economic: present level of development, evolution and tendency in relation to countries with the same economic indicators;
- technical: degree of sophistication, technological equipment evolutionary; an appreciation of the technological environment, its relevance, viability and perspectives;
- financial: status of the GDP and national debt, theoretical and actual functioning of state financial organizations, interior and exterior private fortunes and investments;
- political/administrative: centralized or federal structure; autonomy or decentralization to regions, authoritarian or democratic, a description of the administrative system;
- education and culture: historical and cultural identity (including philosophical and psychological aspects), society (interaction of ancient and modern customs and practices);
- description of the education system, organization and operation of the school.
3. Specific advantages and disadvantages in some countries

3.1 Australia

Australia considers that single-teacher schools, multi-grade classes, offer more advantages than disadvantages.

The arguments are:

A. Disadvantages

(a) For the teacher

The teacher is busy 24 hours a day 7 days a week and must always be available for questions from parents. The teacher feels as a stranger in the community and is obliged to integrate to avoid being isolated - a difficult task. The competence of the multi-grade teacher is learned on-the-job which creates a lack of confidence in the teacher, and causes a feeling of frustration and anguish. It is difficult to give sufficient time to each level of learning provoking a feeling of incompetence and even of guilt. Teachers do not feel accepted or appreciated by the system. Multi-grade classes do not appear to be a priority. Teachers lose interest because of the small number of pupils in these classes. How can a sports team be organized with 10 pupils, 4 of them under 8 years of age? There are almost no materials available for multi-level classes. One of the major disadvantages is a lack of contact with other teachers with the same professional concerns. Each thinks that he or she is the only one with such concerns. In-service training is not a solution as the teachers are reluctant to abandon their pupils. In a single-teacher school, the administrative tasks are considerable. There is as much paper work in a single-teacher school as in a school with 500 pupils, the teachers complain. In small schools, half a day is given for administrative tasks whereas in large schools full-time persons may perform these tasks. These tasks are often carried out at the end of the day after classes because:

- it is impossible for the teacher to find time;
- certain teachers negotiate with the person responsible for the administration in order to divide the pupils into two groups.

Lesson planning is complex and time-consuming, e.g. in a one-level class, there are approximately 16 subjects and there could be 8 times more in a single-class school. Administrative tasks take time needed for lesson preparation and telephone calls may interrupt lessons. It is difficult to have new ideas and motivation when dealing with the same children every year. In addition to administrative tasks, the teacher is responsible for sports supervision, which is generally shared by a number of teachers. There is little financial encouragement for the a teacher in a single-teacher school, e.g. in Australia, a very small allowance is given. The teachers say they have little time for their own families.
(b) For the pupil:

The number of subjects taught is reduced at each level. The smaller number of pupils does not permit as rich a teaching experience as in the larger schools (e.g. in sports and simulation games).

Pupils who do not attend school frequently may miss certain subjects or repeat them depending on how they are time-tabled. A lack of contact with children of the same age makes comparisons impossible. Sometimes the pupils compare themselves with older pupils which could lead to lower self-esteem. Some children may become disoriented when they arrive at a larger school or college. For lack of time some subjects may not be covered or only covered partially. Human resources are reduced for two reasons:

- the absence of specialist teachers, e.g. music, PE, etc.
- limitation in the skills offered (inhibiting character development).

It is difficult for the teacher to be experienced at all levels, e.g. in pre-school learning. Pupils lose interest if they have already learnt certain topics in an earlier class. Isolation causes a sense of insecurity. Children may become insecure if they find themselves in an urban environment later.

(c) For the administration:

The costs of maintenance and administration of small schools is higher than the organization of school transportation (when this is possible). As administrative tasks are not highly regarded compared with teaching, certain requests are not answered, e.g. the completion of forms.

The cost of transportation is high when an excursion or visit is organized because of distance and isolation.

B. Advantages

(a) For the teacher:

- The chances of promotion increase.
- In a single-class school the teacher has a sound knowledge of curricula and has skills for teaching different subjects.
- These teachers have a sound knowledge of and experience in administration.
- Small schools permit the teacher to understand teaching and education approaches from drawing up syllabi. This may have a positive effect on the teacher's self-image, a realization of his or her worth.
- It provides the opportunity for the teacher to become familiar with all levels of primary teaching. Certain inspectors feel that teaching methods used in multi-grade
classes are a base for ordinary teaching.  
Since the problem of discipline is often less frequent in these schools, the teacher works in a more relaxed atmosphere.

- Quite often teachers become outstanding members of the community, especially if they participate in local events (sports, cultural events, etc.) and are considered good teachers.
- Acceptance by the community creates a feeling of personal satisfaction. Sometimes the teachers are regarded as avuncular by the pupils.
- When support is given by the community, all parents may participate in the school council and assist in decision-taking.
- Fund-raising becomes easier, above all if a project is considered valuable and interesting.
- In view of the small number of pupils, the teacher can organize many activities, e.g. excursions.
- The teacher is solely responsible for the organization of different activities (courses, counselling, sports activities, etc.) and for greater flexibility in timetabling and the management of time.
- The teacher is more able to carry out teaching experiments without the constraints found in large schools.
- The teacher has sole control of financial and human resources in the school.

(b) For the pupil:

- The possibility of individualized teaching which takes into consideration pupil competence. It is teaching with a dual relationship.
- More active teaching. The pupils use the materials themselves and with less teacher involvement.
- The environment is warmer and more friendly, which promotes learning. The class is like a large family where it is common to see brothers and sisters helping each other.
- The child is recognized as an individual which allows a close relationship to develop with the teacher. There are almost no disciplinary problems.
- The attainment of younger children improves because of the influence of older ones. This assistance of peers means that learning problems may be solved quickly and non-authoritatively.
- In peer teaching the tutors have the opportunity to master the concepts they are teaching other pupils.
- There is a greater autonomy among pupils who may seek the assistance of their comrades when the teacher is not there.
- Learning problems can be more easily targeted by the teacher.
- Children learn to work alone, to exercise greater personal discipline and learn at their own rate.
- There is more time to use technical aids to facilitate learning.
- A computer in a class of 15 pupils can be used by one of them each day.
- Social interaction occurs among children of different ages and they can work with members of the same family in a more formal framework.
Children have the same teacher during consecutive years and get to know him or her better. Yearly adaptation is not necessary.

Children are taught to understand the feelings of others.

The children acquire a positive attitude to the school which assists the learning process at the secondary level.

Knowledge and skills are often acquired before the pupil reaches the class level where they are taught.

The evaluation of the pupil by the teacher can be personalized and continuous. No pupil is unnoticed as is the case in large classes.

Small, single-teacher schools allow children from remote areas to receive a normal education without making long journeys (on foot or by bus) or take correspondence courses.

(c) Structural level :

The small single-teacher school is often the focal point of the community. Most of the time there are excellent relations between them, which helps to foster a positive attitude towards the education system and the government.

(d) Tendency :

The prevailing view among educators is that these multi-level schools offer numerous advantages. Studies carried out in Australia, based on observation in schools, interviews with teachers, reports of education counsellors and inspectors show that single-class schools provide more advantages than disadvantages.

3.2 Bolivia

A. Advantages

(a) For the teacher :

The school with multi-grade classes is a unique institution whose structure promotes community development. Despite the creation of basic schools with a resulting decrease in single-class schools, thousands of children still attend schools with multi-grade classes. The learning process is an integrated one related to the social and cultural problems of the community. The teacher knows all the pupils in the school and has a close relationship with their families. This helps to reorient teaching to harmonize it more with the child's background. As the school is the focal point for community activities the children and the parents participate together in school and cultural activities.

(b) For the pupils :

A characteristic of schools with multi-grade classes is continuity with family life education. There is no break. Social interaction is most important in this education. The child is considered to be the centre of the school, the family and the community.
(c) From the administrative point of view:

Schools with multi-grade classes are adapted to economic conditions. In Bolivia, small single-teacher schools cannot have an additional teacher until there are a sufficient number of pupils to meet the minimum teacher pupil ratio. Schools with multi-grade classes fulfil an important social function in the adult population. Under its influence, illiteracy is diminishing. The school also participates in community activities in a way that is not possible in conventional schools.

B. The disadvantages

(a) For teaching:

Teachers are confronted with difficulties because of differences in age at each level. The teacher must prepare work plans and materials (syllabi), and determine the content and activities of each group. The correction of exercises and work at different levels in small groups is a workload the teacher cannot accept in the same way as in a school with several teachers.

(b) For the pupils:

Direct co-operation with the teacher is unusual and incentives are few. All the curriculum is not covered and certain activities are sacrificed and objectives are not reached.

(c) The school structure:

Buildings and equipment are generally inadequate. There is a lack of materials and libraries (6,000 are needed to cover all schools with multi-grade classes.) Although teacher training institutions prepare teachers to serve in schools with multi-grade classes, many do not serve in them (conditions are considered poor as they are in remote areas, without lodging, low salaries, etc.). Therefore, it becomes necessary at times to recruit teachers who have not been appropriately trained.

(d) Technical assistance for teachers

The follow-up and supervision of teachers is lacking in many school clusters (comprised of an average of 10 schools). The principal makes one or two visits every month but the area supervisors do not visit the schools at all. They are content instead to bring the teachers together from time to time to provide teaching instructions. Language problems also create difficulties. In these schools the teacher must be bilingual. For example, the children speak a mother tongue (e.g. Quechua, Guarani, etc.) whereas at school they learn Spanish.
(e) Search for solutions to meet difficulties and problems encountered in schools with multi-grade classes

Despite the training they have received in rural teacher training institutions, teachers need upgrading courses in several areas (above all in community development activities). There is no policy for these schools. Only the skill, imagination and creativity of the teachers makes it possible for them to operate. Despite scarce resources, the community participates actively in the construction and maintenance of school buildings. State assistance is not sufficient to assure normal functioning of the schools.

A major problem is the unwillingness of teachers to work in remote communities with poor means of communication and for low salaries. Incentive measures (such as "distance points") should be offered to encourage teachers to go there to work. The areas in which these schools are situated require special support from the authorities (Ministries of Education and Culture, Transport and Communications, Health, etc.) as well as from international organizations. It would be advisable to make more viable development projects for remote communities including agrarian reform, road networks, basic equipment, water, electricity, etc. This would encourage the setting up of single-teacher schools or multi-grade classes.

3.3 France

An evaluation by the Minister of National Education assisted by the Evaluation and Futurology Bureau in 1983 revealed that the pupils of the 6th grade in either a rural school (single class or multi-grade classes) or in a normal 6th grade performed equally well. The success rate in French language and mathematics was similar even though within each subject there were elements specific to each group. The children in rural classes did not have weaker basic skills than urban pupils. The generally accepted argument that rural area schools are neglected and less efficient is inadmissible.

Advantages and disadvantages

This evaluation should be publicized to:

- rebuild the confidence of rural teachers whose work has been vindicated;
- disprove a commonly held view that normal classes are a teaching panacea. The view is based on a false idea of commonality, i.e. that all children at a certain age have the same qualities, the same needs, the same rate of learning and the same way of learning. In normal classes, it is also necessary to vary teaching to the needs of each pupil.

As single-class or multi-grade classes allow real educational continuity they offer an alternative for education systems which vainly search means of ensuring learning achievement for large numbers. The French report adds that a detailed analysis of methods and procedures used in single-teacher schools is necessary in order to find reasons for their success, to discover impediments to change, reasons for failures, and stimulate teachers to reflect on the choices available to guarantee success.
3.4 Greece

The advantages and disadvantages in Greece have already been presented. It should be stated that the authors consider the best system to be the three-class one as it has the advantages but none of the disadvantages of large and small schools.

3.5 Mali

Mali considers that the two-grade school has a place in the education system for cost reasons as a means of providing access to education for large numbers. Despite these reasons, two-stream classes have certain disadvantages. They are:

A. Disadvantages

(a) For the teacher:

Difficulties met when teaching large numbers. Class excursions are impossible since it is not possible to leave part of the class to visit a historic site, monument, hill, etc.

(b) For the pupil:

Pupils do not benefit from assistance from the teacher. There are distractions, time wasting and insufficient tests. One course may be neglected at the expense of another and pupils in lower courses are pressurized to follow the same programme as those in upper courses.

(c) For the administration:

School buildings and equipment are inadequate for the high number of pupils.

Despite disadvantages they do not outweigh the advantages.

B. Advantages

(a) For teachers:

The concepts taught in one multi-grade class link up with those taught in others. The teacher has time to control and correct mistakes.

(b) For pupils:

In two-grade classes, the children develop faster than in single-grade ones, because:
- they feel at home;
- the higher classes act as a stimulant for the lower ones, encourage competition, stimulate curiosity, a liking for work and a desire to learn;
- older children have the satisfaction of helping younger ones.
Intelligent young pupils in the lower courses learn from older ones.
Older pupils profit from lessons taught to the lower level and fill their knowledge gaps.
Another advantage is career orientation. The best pupils in the 5th year might sit 6th year examinations. These schools provide an administrative means of extending education to isolated regions. These institutions are adapted to economic conditions.

3.6 Portugal

In Portugal, in addition to the advantages and disadvantages listed in the synthesis, the following should be mentioned:

A. The advantages of single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes

They permit families to participate more actively in educational activities in the school, pupils to develop in a secure family environment, adults to benefit from the school and from the services of an experienced teacher. These schools provide a suitable framework for sociological study. They use small groups, cohort learning and self-learning, all of which are effective. They adapt to the backgrounds and needs of the children. They provide continuity with family education and there is no break in the education process and children are not uprooted from their background. Autonomy, a sense of responsibility, solidarity and sensitivity to society are helped by a school integrated within the community.

B. The deficiencies and disadvantages of single-teacher schools and multi-grade classes

These have been referred to elsewhere in the synthesis. Professional isolation is only reduced by means of meetings of the education board.

3.7 Russia

The Russian report mentions advantages and disadvantages as well as suggested improvements:

A. The shortcomings of the rural school with a small enrolment

- higher cost (4 to 5 times more) due to the teacher/pupil ratio.
- the level of knowledge of the pupils is lower than in larger schools, especially in languages (including Russian) and mathematics.
- changes in teaching personnel and inadequate qualifications for teaching certain subjects.
- no upgrading of subject matter and teaching methodology for lack of training.
- insufficient teaching materials and run-down buildings.
- lack of studies on the way these schools operate.
- direct contact between the pupil and teacher leads to emotional overload on the part of the pupil. In low enrolment classes, the pupils constantly resent the control of the teacher over activities and have little opportunity to escape
control.
- There is a lack of competitive spirit as there is little variation from collective work to stimulate self-improvement.
- A lack of in-depth study of certain subjects and inadequate development of intellectual curiosity.
- Difficulties in organizing teaching, the absence of class responsibility, lack of a "pioneer organization" at the primary level.
- Little freedom for the teacher who is the centre of attention in a small village.
- Difficulty in preparing and giving 12 lessons a day on different themes. This leads to constant staff changes.

B. Real merits
- Such a school becomes the cultural centre for the village and its prestige is greater in rural areas than in towns.
- It is the source of innovation and is the only place where adults can obtain information.
- In a school of this type, contacts between pupils and teachers, and teachers and parents are closer.
- The atmosphere is reminiscent of that of a family - warm, informal and with mutual understanding.
- The teacher is able to respond better to the individual needs of the child.
- The small school favours greater use of non-traditional methods and procedures for developing a spirit of initiative and enterprise in the child as well as respect for traditions and customs.
- It has potential for collective action including the participation of adults.
- Each rural school with low enrolment has a small school garden for manual training and work opportunities.
- Children of different ages learn the work ethic through collective work, as well as the habit of working and developing an interest in agriculture and a love of the land.

C. How to overcome shortcomings
- Change the structure of the traditional lessons.
- Provide relevant educational materials.
- More audio-visual aids.
- Vertical multi-grade lessons, following various levels of difficulty.

The use of technical aids in low-enrolment primary schools makes the teacher's work easier, is a source of knowledge, improves the learning of pupils by allowing them to organize their own work. Today there are several management patterns for small rural schools with low enrolments which facilitate their operation:
- regrouping primary and secondary schools with low enrolments in a region.
- besides the official management structure for public education, in rural areas there is a non-official structure which has the following characteristics:
- the supervision of one or more primary schools by an eight class secondary school;
- the primary school by a secondary school;
- an eight-class school by a secondary school;
- an eight-class school by a larger eight-class school, etc.

These regroupings resolve a certain number of problems:

- they provide continuity from school to school;
- the multi-grade regrouping in low density collectives gives the children experience in organization;
- the "multi-grade" classes regroup the children in a community regardless of the schools they attend;
- the needs created by a lack of communication are sufficiently met.

3.8 Zaire

Among the advantages, Zaire notes that:

- The system of single-teacher schools improves the teacher/pupil ratio and reduces running costs;
- It promotes active teaching and prepares pupils better for real life situations. This develops their sense of responsibility, maturity and leads them to greater self-reliance.

All these advantages are not apparent unless the system is well organized. This requires a lot of work for the teacher. The Zaire report concludes that the situation is satisfactory and pupils generally follow the official syllabus and finish the primary cycle. The report also recommends that these classes be recognized by the government and that rules be set for the establishment of such schools, principles for teaching in them, how to manage them, the profile of teachers assigned to them and the advantages of attending them. This should be accompanied by a study of training needs.
PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

To sum up, the general tendency is towards the regrouping or suppression of these schools rather than to maintain them (except in regions where there are insoluble geographic or demographic constraints).

These schools will continue to be needed in all these countries. It is agreed that the operation of these schools should be improved and that certain measures should be taken:

1. Appropriate educational policies and legislation should be drawn up for their operation.

2. These schools require special attention with regard to equipment, teaching materials and services for providing assistance to teachers.

3. Material, financial and professional advancement measures should govern the assignment of teachers to these schools in compensation for the isolation and difficulties they experience.

4. A plan is needed for the theoretical and practical pre- and in-service training of teachers working within a decentralized structure.
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