Non-Formal Education: Process towards Integration

by Farida Akhtar

wn that education is the key to success. It is the learning of skills, information and ideas that make a person knowledgeable and, thus, a useful member of society. Education is a change in behavior and improvement in abilities, when ignorance is changed into knowledge and awareness. An unskilled one becomes skilled, and his values, appreciations and outlook of life also change in a more positive way. Education need not necessarily be through formal schooling; it can also be imparted in a non-formal setting. Very recently the Ministry of Education has announced the start of non-formal education nearly in sixtynine schools in Bangladesh with support from the UNICEF.

The concept of non-formal education is relatively new in this country though some of the organizations have started to work and some of them have achieved significant success in this area. But people in general are not clear enough what actually is meant by non formal education, its purpose. difference between formal and non-formal education and so on. Different academicians have described it in different ways but if we review the opinions, some ideas about the concept can be obtained.

Non-formal education is organized and systematic like formal education.

· It is used to be delivered outside the organized school system that means it has to be imparted after school hours or in another setting.

Non-formal education meets shot-term learning needs of individuals and communities, it emphasizes the learning of specific knowledge and skills and help inculcate specific, attitudes that bring immediate functional behavioural change where as

formal education is expected to provide the basis for an individuals' whole future life. Therefore, it is general in na-

Formal education is teacher-oriented while nonformal education is learneroriented. The basic aims of both types of education are the same, their approach is quite different, the non-formal approach to education can be described as the absence of a formal, and captive way of teaching and evaluation.

The aim of non-formal education is to increase productivity and improve living standards of adults and of out-of-

To retrain adults for the changing requirements of jobs and family life.

To provide life-long education. Education is a life-long process, which can only be met by non-formal education.

The decision to start nonformal education Bangladesh by the Ministry of Education is undoubtedly a good step. We already know that the introduction of nonformal education in Bangladesh in a wide range was to complement formal education and this was one of the suggestions of "Kudrat-E-Khuda **Education Committee Report** (1974)".

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school youths.

tion, it is not necessary to put work in to education, because most of the persons coming for non-formal education would already be working. But it enables the learner to increase his or her productivity in term of out put and also to improve the quality of the work in which he or she is already engaged.

It is important to know why we need the programme of non-formal education in Bangladesh. Very precisely we can say that non-formal education programme is necessary:

To complement formal education in Bangladesh where we have a large number of uneducated people.

To educate the dropouts from formal setting. To raise the extent of func-

To prepare individual for self employment.

tional literacy.

In this connection, some of In the non-formal educa- the areas can be considered with importance for a more meaningful and useful implementation of non-formal edu-

> munity. The areas are: This programme is more useful to promote education of women in the community, therefore, it can be an integrated approach to educate

cation programme, which may

be easily acceptable to a large

group of people in the com-

both men and women. Non-formal educational programme can introduce and uphold the education and training facility for both able and disabled persons in the community in an integrated

Curriculum if any for nonformal education is prepared, may be compared with the curricula already prepared and implemented by different organizations who are engaged in such programmes.

As initiated by the government, this programme can be started in ready facilities like health centers, cyclone centers, community centers, li-

braries etc. Subjects/topics of the curriculum must be chosen very earefully ensuring effective means to develop learners' ability, knowledge and awareness by which they can increase their productivity, develop and maintain physical and mental health, and hence, make themselves useful mem-

bers of the society. Non-formal education can play a pioneering role to implement the concept of "subject integration" which makes education more func-

tional and need-oriented. Teacher need very effective training on non-formal education which must be very functional and applicable in nature. Since one of the courses chosen by the open university is "teachers' training", possibly it will be effective to start teachers' training programme for both teachers of formal and non-formal education at this university.

Curriculum, if any, for nonformal education is prepared, it will be useful to outline a "teacher instruction manual" together with the curriculum. Learning materials may be developed in relation to the curriculum and teacher instruction manual.

Research work may be designed and implemented to evaluate the effectiveness and need of such programme. The plan to start non-formal education and its subsequent implementation in Bangladesh can raise the process of integration within different groups and areas, which is necessary to build a society where equal opportunity is ensured for all.

(The writer is a lecturer, National Centre for Special Education, Dhaka).

Unique Linguistics Programme Fights the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, the Rockefeller HEY ran as fast as they Tribal Illiteracy

could, braving the hot ashes from the rumb ling Pinatubo volcano, all for a study they felt they should not miss: a hymn writing seminar.

They were Ayta (a minority tribe living in Central and Eastern Luzon) refugees who came down from their hillside settlements to attend the seminar at the Asian Institute of Liturgy and Music.

long seminar, the Aytas composed many songs in music unique to their own culture and expressing deep emotions stirred by the volcano's erup-

In the course of the week-

The Ayta Hymn Writing Seminar was just one of the innovative literacy programmes conducted by the Summer Institute of Linguisby Romeo B. Abundo

derstanding in 1973. tuations. SIL's approach to community literacy appears to be working well. "Effective learning frequently takes place outside the classrooms through creative use of everyday opportunities," SIL reports.

For its contributions to Philippine education and more specifically literacy campaign, the Institute continues to reap tributes. Last year, for example, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) cited SIL Philippines "for its outstanding work in literacy among cultural communities in the Philip-

The Institute does intensive linguistic research which includes analysing phonological and grammatical patterns. collecting texts and producing dictionaries. Its linguists have done research in 91 dialects of the Philippines.

"Through linguistic rescarch, SIL members acquire fluency and mastery of a language, which in turn, enables them to produce quality vernacular materials for the development and enrichment of the cultural communities," say the report.



Outside activities adds to their learning

tics (SIL) Philippines, a private voluntary organisation for cultural communities in the coun-

Last year alone, SIL Philippines produced 1,171 graduates in basic literacy, 216 in advanced literacy and 13 in teacher literacy.

Assessing the results of its literacy drive last year, the Institute says: "Young and old from the cultural communities gained greater access to the printed message, both in their mother tongue, in Filipino and/or in another language through literacy programmes specifically tailored to their si-

pines". The citation was presented during the UNESCO Literacy Award ceremony held in Paris in observance of International Literacy Day.

A Filipino SIL volunteer, Sister Isabelita Riego de Dios, received a citation for producing a comprehensive dictionary of Philippine Creole Spanish. The citation was presented during the 10th National Book Awards ceremony held at the University of Sto.

SIL Philippines also received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Un-

protection of children. INAME

controls and administers all

establishments that provide

government services to chil-

7,000 children referred to it

by the court or social services

It is responsible for some

Photo: IDRC Reports

A major concern of SIL Philippines is the translation of the Bible into languages of the cultural communities. So far, the Institute has completed the translation of the New Testament into 31 lan-

For the cultural communities in the Cordillera mountain ranges in northern Philippines, SIL Philippines is producing 6,000 primers, easy reading books, song books and story books for grade-l pupils in 40 schools. The project is being supported by the Programme for Asian Projects of and over 90,000 pounds of cargo in 485 mercy missions in 1991. Later last year, the Department of Health gave SIL Philippines a plaque of appreciation "for assistance to rural

Brothers Fund and the Aus-

health books for grades one to

six in Bontoc, Igorot and Sina-

bangan dialects and in Filipino

SIL Philippines also partici-

pates in health care pro-

grammes and community ser-

vice projects that promote

self-sufficiency, according to

its director, Helmut Weins.

And it has special teams doing relief work for victims of disas-

For instance, its aviation

service ferried 857 passengers

Now in production are

traltan Embassy.

and English.

ern Luzon. For its literacy and social welfare services, SIL Philippines counts on the help of 308 volunteers from Australia, Britain, Canada, Germany Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, the United States and the Philippines. Funding for its programmes comes mainly

SIL does similar work in other parts of the world. In Africa, it has 773 volunteers involved in 184 active language projects.

In Asia, SIL has fielded 797 volunteers in 167 language projects. It has more in the Americas: 1,216 workers in 288 language projects.

The SIL again showed its usual modesty, which has characterised its work, in acknowledging UNESCO's award.

"Our contribution is small in comparison with the work of the education department and others, without whose sponsorship and support we could never even begin to make a contribution to the national plan for Education for All," says Mr Weins.

New Zealand Markets on Asian Students

IGII schools in the more relaxed part of New L Zealand, the far south, are catching on to the fact that there is money to be made in educating Asian students.

Educational institutions and

entrepreneurs in the north have known this for a couple of years and already some less than scrupulous operators have appeared, trying to cash in on the wave of interest.

Before its defeat in 1990. the last Labour government introduced reforms which gave the state-run schooling system much greater freedom to manage its affairs on a local basis.

These changes encouraged boards of trustees to set up new courses and take in foreign students to boost their school incomes, as long as they met their obligations to their communities.

The present government has continued these policies, which have attracted investors from as far away as South Korea into the education business, often to set up "schools" offering tuition in English to

Some of these hasty creations have collapsed after taking students' fees or been deregistered by a governmentappointed watchdog, the Qualifications Authority, because they failed to live up to their promises.

Education law now requires private schools to hold in trust all fees they collect in advance. Students get a week after the courses begin to decide whether they are getting what they paid for. If they are dissatisfied, they can demand their money back.

This year, the offering of a sound, all-around education taught in the English language has caught on with high school boards in the South Island provinces of Otago and South-

Dunedin, a university city with a long reputation for teaching and research in medicine, has a number of excellent state-run secondary

schools. They have enrolled more than 60 foreign students among them.

Most of these are seniors. aged 16 to 18 years. Their parents pay between US \$2,725 and US \$3,800 a year for tuition and US \$54-76 a week for school hostel or pri-

Special tuition in English is available at some colleges as an extra. The demand is such that some principals are limiting their foreign enrollments to avoid any clash with their primary task of educating young New Zealanders.

Apart from the income they bring a school, Asian students are welcomed in the south as good influences in classrooms because of their high level of motivation, their industry and their commitment to learning.

Kaikorai Valley High Schools in South Dunedin has forged an educational link with

Sakuragoaka High School, in

Toyahashi City, Japan. During a

recent visit, a Sakuragoaka

teacher of English, Tadashi

Harada, said Japanese students

"feel safer" studying in New

had tended to send their off-

spring to the United States for

an English education were now

English quelled a better

chance of a place in a Japanese

New Zealand was seen as a

university, and better job

safe and beautiful land, with

kind people, he told a local

newspaper during a visit with

Sakuragoaka school president

Minoru Mitsuda to cement a

High schools at Invercargill,

student exchange programme.

the southernmost city in New

Zealand, are also venturing

prospects on graduation.

looking more favourably on

Mr Harada said better

Parents who is past years

south

Zealand.

New Zealand.

into the "foreign education" business, but with the caution for which the people of the rich farming area are noted.

Some principals say openly they are in it for the money. Others see the cultural exchange benefits. The head of one girls' college wants to put income carned from teaching vate board. overseas students into a fund to help pupils whose parents

are not well off. Most schools in the underpopulated and insular south have had little experience in marketing overseas and prefer to follow rather than to lead in the race for a share of Asian

students One of the more go-ahead is Mount Aspiring College, situated in the small mountainand-lake resort town of Wanaka, a four-hour drive inland from Dunedin.

State-funded schools have been given new freedom to

run their own affairs, and the possibilities of selling

education have now penetrated the conservative

In the early 1980s, Wanaka struck up a twin-town rela-

tionship with Hikimi in the

Japanese mountains behind

Hiroshima. An Osaka busi-

nessman with close ties in

Hikimi, a forestry centre, saw

the benefits tourism had

He felt they might be ap-

plied to Hikimi's ailing econ-

omy and a link was formed at

local government level. Two

students from each local high

school exchanged classrooms

for three months and were bil-

The scheme faltered four

The governing board of the

Wanaka college had branched

out this year on two fronts to

capitalise on the popularity of

years ago when Hikimi's high

school closed, but was revived

when students from nearby

Nara agreed to join in the ex-

leted in private homes.

brought to Wanaka.

its outdoor pursuits course, which teaches independence and leadership.

Making the most of the re gion's scenic mountains, lakes and rivers, the college offers specialist instruction in skiing, kayaking, rock-climbing and bushcraft, as well as a sound academic education.

It has found the outdoors experience segment very pop ular with exchange students from Japan, for most of whom three ski fields within 30 km of the town is a novelty. This year, the college has attracted four full-time students from Japan and is teaching many more English through short term courses.

The second venture is a "lifestyle skills" course to pre pare rural youth for life away from home when they go to university in the city.

Senior students live four to a flat in town, preparing their own meals and doing their household chores under supervision, while attending academic and outdoor pursuits classes at the college.

There was initial interest from Hong Kong in the first intake, which quickly filled with New Zealanders after word of the concept got around.

But getting an education in New Zealand is not all roses for young Asians. In Auckland, magnet for most immigrant families from Hong Kong and Taiwan, assimilation difficulties have surfaced.

Two Chinese boys, left at school in South Auckland when their parents returned to their homes overseas, were recently convicted of arson. They torched their classrooms one night, doing damage amounting to more than US \$54,500.

School arson is an all-toocommon crime, but it is rare Tor police to find that Asians have been involved. Even more unusual in this case was that the judge ordered US \$49,000 to be paid through the boys' parents in reparation to the school board.

The school board chairman, Mr Wayne Cartright, said the rapid growth of Asian pupils to 10 per cent of the college roll of 1,400 in two years had created stresses among ethnic groups.

The incident had been a setback to melding Asian and European cultures, but there was still a strong will in all sections of the community for a harmonious working relationship.

Finding an Access to the Latest Research Studies by Robert Charbonneau

HE developing world is a world of children, as the saying goes. But what kind of world is it? Poverty, large families, precarious housing, hunger, and hours spent working the streets are the lot of a great many young people in

developing countries. When society takes these children in for protection, to help them get established and reoriented, its resources are often limited and inadequate.

That is why an organization based in Uruguay has devoted its efforts over the years to increasing knowledge of children's living conditions and the resources available to them. L'Instituto Interamericano del Nino (IIN), was founded in 1927, under a resolution passed by the Organization of American

Thanks in part to the cfforts of IDRC, the Interamerican Information Programme on Childhood and the Family (IIPCF/PINFA) is now computerized. The data base provides politicians, institutions, researchers, and planners throughout Latin America with access to the latest research studies and their findings as they affect the region's children.

This information is statistical, legal, or sociological in nature, or it may involve studies on health services, education, or drug abuse. The data base includes more than 18,000 bibliographical references, recent papers, and studies (including 420 periodicals) and serves more than 1,625 users in a great many countries in the Americas, Europe, and even in Asia. In addition to its headquarters in Montevideo, Uruguay, the HPCF has local centres in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador.

Each centre has qualified librarians and computer technicians to respond to the heavy volume of requests, between 300 and 400 a month. When a catalogue of new listings is published, the number of requests can peak at 1,000 a The data bank enables doc-

uments to be located in were lost. French, Spanish, English, and even Portuguese. Moreover, in addition to Paraguay, Brazil will soon join the list of documentation centres specializing in This, however, is only one

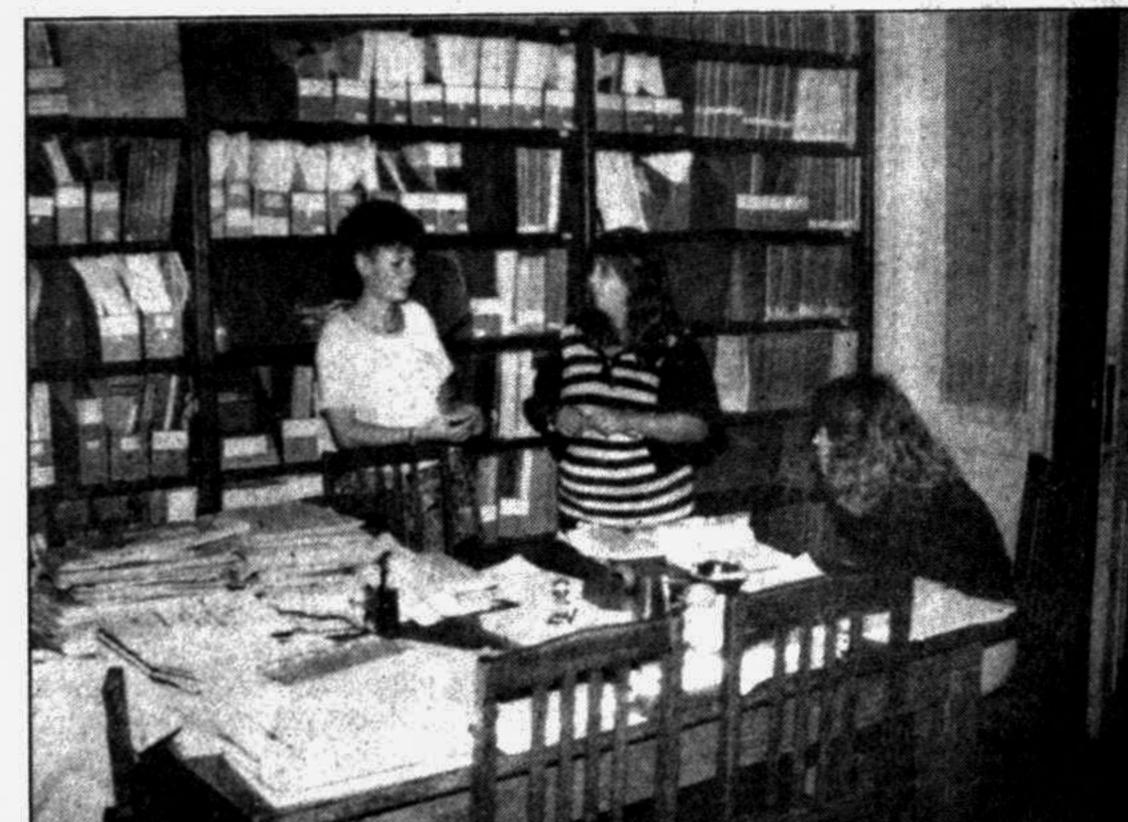
aspect of lin's work in had reached. Uruguay: The Institute has been associated since 1989 with INAME, the Instituto na-- Depthnews Asia | cional del menor, the national

a set of universal indicators for governmental children's aid use by children's aid institutes agency, in setting up SIPI, an information system for the

throughout the region. Numerous institutes in a variety of countries (Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Jamaica, and Perul were approached to evaluate the list of indicators produced. wanted," explained systems analyst Rosario Vera, "to en-

one-third of the data entries are covered by the pilot proicct. A total of about 25 institutions are involved in the project and pass on data regularly to the children's aid admission centre. The advantage of our system," explained Vera, "is that the data structure we developed is universal and independent of the institutes' administrative structures."

Julio Max Rosenblatt, the



The data base provides politicians, institutions, researchers, and planners throughout Latin America with access to the latest research studies and their findings as they affect the

region's children. agencies, children who have been abandoned, mistreated, found, or adopted. These are children who need to be placed in a wide range of institutions (daycare, rchabilitation centres) or who require treatment by specialists (such as psychologists or psychiatrists) or counselling of some

kind. In the past, the system used at INAME had become overburdened by increasing requests for information. Sometimes, records of children who had been taken under the wing of the Institute

For example, no one could say for sure whether a particular child had run away for the first or second time, or whether the child had been referred to a counsellor, or what conclusions a specialist

INAME, in cooperation with IIN, launched a pilot project in the spring of 1989 to develop

sure from the outset that the system would meet the expectations of all Latin American institutes and subsequently be

The project included a survey of the forms in use, the design of new computer forms and methods, and a user evaluation (for doctors as well as the institutions' technical and administrative personnel) to avoid problems in practice. "Today, we work more with the administrative personnel in charge of operations," Vera said. They are the ones who enter the data and who were trained to manage the system."

Three microcomputers linked by telephone have been installed at INAME. Satellite institutions (such as creches, daycare and rehabilitation centres) phone INAME every day at a specific time to send information on client movements over the past 24 hours. All information on clients is

now catalogues, although only

gotiating with the Brazilian and Ecuadorian governments to set up the information system in both countries and anticipates IDRC support for the programme in Ecuador. By developing a single,

project leader, is currently ne-

flexible computer system that is compatible with all institutes in the region, and by continuous consultation from the system design phase onward, IDRC, INAME in Uruguay, and the IIN throughout the region have supported the creation of new resources to help children in Latin America.

Not only will these systems enable the institutes to provide more effective assistance to children, they will also constitute a mine of statistical data vital to everyone - whether researchers or field workers involved in the welfare of young people. - IDRC Reports

