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ADULT EDUCATION IN NEPAL.

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IN THIS REPORT ON ADULT EDUCATION IN NEPAL, THE GEOGRAPHIC, ETHNIC, ECONOMIC, EDUCATIONAL, AND POLITICAL FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARE DISCUSSED. THE EXTENT OF PROGRESS IN NATIONAL EDUCATION (INCLUDING LITERACY CAMPAIGNS) SINCE 1951 PROVIDES BACKGROUND FOR A DESCRIPTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND INTEGRATION OF ADULT EDUCATION AND A DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES BETWEEN ADULT AND CHILD EDUCATION, PROPOSED NATIONAL AND UNESCO-AIDED LITERACY PROJECTS, AND EXTENSION OF LITERACY AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION TO NEEDY ISOLATED AREAS. THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND OF CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTERS FOR LITERATE ADULTS, THE VALUE OF USING EXISTING INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL FROM ALL LEVELS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO SERVE ADULTS, AND THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE ADULT EDUCATION SECTION OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ARE SET FORTH. ALSO CONSIDERED IS THE VITAL ROLE OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL PANCHAYAT DEMOCRACY IN THE UNIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEPAL. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE ON UNIVERSITY EXTENSION, TEACHER TRAINING, AND RELATED TOPICS. (LY)

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ADULT EDUCATION IN NEPAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>I</u>	Introduction	Page	1
<u>II</u>	Difficulties facing Educational, Social and Economic Development in Nepal	"	2
<u>III</u>	Educational Development in Nepal	"	8
<u>IV</u>	Adult Education and Adult Literacy in Nepal	"	10
<u>V</u>	Problems of Priority in Education	"	18
<u>VI</u>	Integration and Planning of Education	"	24
<u>VII</u>	Priorities for Adult Education	"	25
<u>VIII</u>	Summary of Recommendation	"	40

ADULT EDUCATION IN NEPAL.I INTRODUCTION.

This report embodies the summary of impressions gained, and tentative conclusions reached, during a ten day visit to Nepal between 12 and 21 October 1966. The visit took place at the invitation of the National Commission for Unesco in Nepal. The purpose of the visit was to hold discussions with educational and government leaders in connection with the development of Nepal's adult education programme, with special reference to its adult literacy programme.

The visit was brief and it was not possible to examine in detail the functioning of the programme in villages or urban centres outside the Kathmandu Valley. These limitations must be borne in mind when examining the report as a whole and when considering the value of any tentative recommendations made as to future policy and administrative organization. Nonetheless, time permitted detailed discussion with the Joint Secretary of Education, the Director of Education (Primary and Secondary) and the heads of (1) the Elementary Education Section, (2) the Multipurpose High School Education Section, (3) the Teachers' Training Section, (4) the Educational Material Production Section, (5) the Cottage Industries Training Centre, and (6) the National Commission for Unesco. Discussions were also held with the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar of the National University, with the President of the Nepal Women's Organization and with leaders of the Nepal Youth Organization. The most important discussions, naturally, were those held with the Chief Adult Education Officer (Mr. Guari Shankar Saiju) and members of his staff. These discussions continued throughout the visit and proved most helpful and valuable. However, in all cases, educational leaders, government officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations proved most willing to talk frankly about their work and made no attempt to gloss over any difficulties they might face in achieving the objective set by policy and programme.

Apart from discussions with educational leaders, time permitted me to see examples of the adult education programmes and literacy work undertaken at the village level in the Kathmandu Valley. Visits were paid to intensive literacy projects in Thaiva and Nagadesh and to the Adult Education Centre for Women (vocational and literacy) at Thamel, as well as to the Cottage Industry Training Centre in the suburbs of Kathmandu. A visit was also made to certain areas outside the Kathmandu Valley itself, notably to Panch Khal which is destined to be utilized as a pilot project area in the establishment of a model panchayat. Other visits were made to the University of Nepal and to a planned industrial estate where the Government provides roads and services such as power, water and sewerage and then leases the factory sites to private firms prepared to establish new industries. This latter visit was to discuss the question of functional literacy and vocational educational programmes for new industrial workers.

I am conscious of the honour extended to me in the form of the invitation to visit Nepal for discussions on adult education policy and programmes and for the opportunity presented to me to see something of the Nepalese literacy projects. I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my appreciation of the kind welcome and thoughtful arrangements made for my visit by the National Commission for Unesco in Nepal and by the Ministry of Education. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation for the generous assistance provided by the Director of Education (Mr. Netra Bahadur Thapa), the Adviser to the National Commission for Unesco (Mr. Raj Dilli Uprety), and the Chief Adult Education Officer (Mr. Guari Shankar Saiju), and members of his staff.

II DIFFICULTIES FACING EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NEPAL.

In a report primarily intended for the consideration of the Nepalese Government it might appear unnecessary to sketch even briefly the factors which shape and even limit educational, social and economic development in Nepal. It is true that these factors have a distinct bearing upon educational policy and development including the nature and scope of any adult literacy campaign or adult education programme. But these are factors of which Nepalese administrators and educationists who will read this report are even

more aware than I. If they are briefly sketched here it is merely to emphasize that I was conscious of them when preparing the report and took them into account when making the recommendations embodied in the text.

(a) Geographic Factors

Nepal, a mountainous landlocked rectangle, extends approximately 530 miles in the north-west and south-east direction with an average width of about 100 miles. It is divided into three main areas: the Kathmandu Valley, the Tarai Belt and the Mountain Region. The Kathmandu Valley is relatively small (218 sq. miles) but is fertile and is one of the most densely populated areas in the country (2163 people per sq. mile); the Tarai Zone (approximately one quarter of the total land area) includes the Gangetic Plains area along the boundary with India, plus the lower hills on the southern boundary up to about 4000 ft. The Mountain Area is divided into two zones: "The Foothills" and "The High Mountain Area". The so-called "foothills" however would include the higher section of the Mahabhat Lekh Range and high lying valleys up to 10,000 ft. The Mountain Zone proper includes the upper part of the Himalayan Range with altitudes between 10,000 to 29,000 ft. with a snow-line between 12,000 to 14,000 ft. according to precipitation. The Mountain Area, including the foothills, covers almost three-quarters of the country. The valleys are deep and the dividing ranges are sharp and steep. The parallel chains of the Siwalik Range, the Mahabhat Lekh Range and the Himalayan Range break the country into east-west strips, creating communication difficulties between south and north. The three major river systems of the Karnali, Narayani and the Kosi divide the country into east-west divisions with communication and transport difficulties over the watersheds separating the river systems.

These geographical factors clearly have implications in terms of economic and social development. The mountainous nature of the country makes road building a major engineering feat and extremely costly. It is not surprising therefore that until 1963 there was little more than 500 miles of formed road in the country of which most are in the Kathmandu Valley and the Tarai Zone. Of this mileage, only half represented all-weather roads.

Over most of the country (apart from the development of air transport to selected centres) communication is by foot trail and goods are transported by porters with some use of pack animals, such as the yak, in the higher altitudes. These transportation difficulties hinder agricultural development through lack of access to outside markets, make it difficult to exploit the rich timber resources and makes it extremely difficult to diversify the economy in local areas through industrialization because of transportation costs of raw materials or essential supplies. They also tend to strengthen the rigidity of local social and even political separation based upon isolation. In some areas, instructions from the national ministries in Kathmandu may reach local officials more than a month after their despatch. This position may be even worse in the rainy season when torrential rains flood the river crossings and cause slips on the mountain trails.

(b) Ethnic Factors

The population in Nepal is a little over the 9½ million mark. Most of the population through historical origins and continued linguistic and cultural connections can be broadly classified into two categories: the Indo-Nepalese and the Tibeto-Nepalese. The complex tangle of deep valleys and high separating ridges encouraged a tendency, however, towards diversity even within the broad ethnic groupings themselves so that we find a wide range of small isolated and relatively self-sufficient communities which are distinguished one from the other by social, economic and linguistic differences. The nature of the landscape has led to a vertical as well as a lateral sorting out of population with most of the ethnic groups settled at different altitudes in the country.

Census of 1952-54 listed 30 separate languages and dialects and at least five regional groups of local dialects. However many of these are spoken by very small groups indeed. It was estimated that at least 20 languages were spoken by fewer than a thousand persons each. Almost 50% of the people of Nepal speak Nepali (the official language) as their mother tongue. Nepali, long before it became the official national language, had already

acquired the status of a lingua-franca for communication between the various language groups and a high percentage of the population would understand it and speak it even if they did not use it extensively in the home or local community. Nepali appears to be replacing the use of some of the smaller local languages. Even allowing for these factors, however, there are at least nine groups ranging from 100,000 to 650,000 who speak languages other than Nepali as their mother tongue.

These ethnic and lingual differences do provide obstacles in the way of welding all the people into a unified nation with a sense of national unity. These factors of ethnic cultural and lingual diversity do provide problems which have implications for educational policy including adult education policy.

(c) Economic Factors

As a result of the factors referred to above, the Nepalese economy is predominantly a subsistence level agricultural economy. Over 90% of the economically active population is engaged in agriculture. Lack of markets, the rugged nature of the terrain, difficulties in land tenure, and, on the whole, somewhat simple traditional cultivation methods have prevented agriculture in the past rising much above the bare subsistence level. It is estimated that the average national per capita income including cash and kind is at present about 370 rupees (U.S. \$50.00). This factor has tended to limit the national resources from which national development in industry, public works, health and education can be financed internally and have forced the Nepalese Govt. to rely possibly too heavily on technical assistance and capital advances from abroad for the support of national, social and economic development plans.

It seems clear that a break-through towards higher levels of production and standards of living will depend to a very great extent upon the degree of success achieved in the educational programme initiated since 1956. In view of the inevitable rigidity of traditional customs and practices, the break-through will also depend to a very great extent upon the success of an adult education programme which will make the adult members of the community conscious

of the significance of education for their children and of the need to be receptive themselves to new methods in production and in community living and practices.

(d) Educational Factors

When Nepal emerged in 1951 from the obscurity of almost complete isolation imposed upon her by the Rana autocracy for more than 100 years, education in the formal sense was limited to the children of the ruling group. Even though some slight modification in educational policy was introduced in the latter stage of the Rana rule, there existed in the whole of the country in 1950 no more than 200 primary schools, 21 high schools and one college. Under the leadership of King Mahendra, Nepal has made great efforts to correct this weakness. Today there are at least 5,700 primary schools, over 400 middle schools, 263 high schools, 35 colleges and one university.

However, in spite of these great efforts, it must be recognized that the low average level of educational attainment achieved by the population represents the major barrier to national efforts to transform a multi-ethnic, economically-underdeveloped country into a modern state. At present no more than 27% of the children of the age group 5-10 years of age are in school. Although this represents a major achievement in view of the short period of time that has elapsed since the programme was introduced, the Nepalese Government would be the first to recognize that (a) the standard achieved in many rural schools remains low, (b) too many children drop out of school as soon as they are old enough to assist their parents in the field after having received no more than one or two years of schooling, and (c) the percentage of girls enrolling remains disappointingly low.

As far as the adults are concerned, the position is probably worse since so many of them passed through the school age before the present schooling facilities were available. Over 90% of the total population remains illiterate and this means that even a higher proportion of the active productive workers are still illiterate and cannot participate effectively in the political and social life of the community and nation. Government plans and programmes designed to increase agricultural

production and raise the standards of the rural people in the fields of health, education and food, are severely handicapped by problems of communication created by the widespread existence of illiteracy. It is clear that until the educational problems can be overcome, social and economic development will continue to lag. The problems facing the country are too acute and pressing to permit the Nepalese Government to wait while the slow passage of time leads to the gradual elimination of the illiterate adult population and their replacement by a younger group who have passed through the school system and are equipped by education to deal with modern problems. In fact, the programme of compulsory education of the young is likely to be seriously handicapped unless the adults themselves are aware and conscious of the need and value of education so that they are prepared to make the necessary sacrifice to keep their children at school until they have completed their formal education.

(e) Political Factors

All of the factors enumerated above - geographic divisions, complex terrain, difficulties in communication and transportation, ethnic and cultural divisions, local isolation and loyalties, subsistence agriculture and economic backwardness, low educational levels and the existence of mass illiteracy, complicates immensely the effort to create a modern state and a sense of national consciousness and unity throughout the country.

The Government of Nepal has staked the future stability and the economic, social and political development of the country as a unified nation on the experiment of panchayat democracy in which all the adults will be actively involved as individuals in the administrative and economic development of the country, directly through the village and town assemblies, and indirectly through district and zonal assemblies, and through village, district, zonal and national panchayats.

The effectiveness of the system will depend essentially upon the extent to which the individual adult at the village or town level understands the nature and scope of their civic responsibilities and

rights and to the degree to which they can assess the problems facing their community and nation as a whole. It will depend too, upon the extent to which they understand the relationship between local or district development projects and the overall national development plans.

Such understanding must depend upon education and almost inevitably, by reason of the nature of the problem, upon the degree of success of a well planned and well organized programme of education aimed at the adult members of the community.

III EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NEPAL

It has been recognized that education represents the foundations upon which national unity and economic and social development in Nepal must be erected if they are to be soundly based. Reference has already been made to the notable progress which has already been achieved in the fields of education since 1951 and particularly since 1956. Between 1962 and 1965, enrolments in primary schools rose from 16.3% of the appropriate age group to a total of 27%.

Recognizing that the provision of a decent minimum standard of living, comparable to that existing in more developed parts of the world, depends largely upon education, Nepal has accepted the significance and extreme urgency of ensuring that the average child receives adequate educational training. Nepal has endorsed the aims set by the Karachi Plan for ensuring free and compulsory primary education for every child between five and ten years of age by the year 1980.

Expansion in the field of tertiary education has been as notable as that taking place in elementary education. From one college existing in 1950, the number of institutions of higher education has risen to a total of 35 colleges and one national university today. In addition to the number of students enrolled in the institutes of higher education in Nepal itself, some 1,400 students travelled abroad for higher studies between 1961 and 1965 and the number is increasing each year. In all more than 20% of the total education budget today is spent on higher education.

The need for an effort in adult education comparable to that made in the fields of elementary, secondary and higher education, has been recognized by government leaders from the King down. The relationship between social and economic development and the education of adults (particularly the drag created by the high degree of adult illiteracy in the country) has long been recognized.

The need for giving adult literacy and community education programmes priority rating in educational development has been stressed in a number of public statements on educational policy. However, in face of pressures for expenditure on formal education of young people, little progress has been made in implementing these expressed views. While exact figures are difficult to obtain, it appears doubtful whether more than 5% of the total education budget is at present spent on the education of adults. In light of a tendency for the proportion of total government expenditure devoted to education as a whole to decrease in recent years, the achievement of the overall educational goal seems likely to be delayed. Although the absolute expenditure on education continues to rise, the percentage of the total budget spent on education has shown a downward trend in the last five years. While the percentage spent on education naturally varies slightly from year to year according to short-term requirements the percentage has dropped rather consistently from the level of 10.67% in 1960-61 to a level of 7.9% in 1964-65/

I would naturally hesitate to question in any way, the allocation of the Nepalese Government's expenditure on the many pressing fields of education and social and economic development. This must be determined by those responsible in light of all the factors involved, yet this downward grading in the priority given to education must be a matter of some concern. The very low priority given to adult education in the situation which exists in Nepal must be regarded with even greater concern. It could be argued with reasonable justification, that much of the expenditure on child education (as well as expenditure on other fields of government concern such as agricultural improvement, health, local government, land reforms, compulsory savings, development of co-operatives or industrial development) are likely to be less effective or even wasted unless backed by a much more expanded and effective programme of adult literacy and community education throughout the country.

IV ADULT EDUCATION AND ADULT LITERACY IN NEPAL

Illiteracy in Nepal remains at the figure of approximately 90%. Since the expanded programme of elementary education among young children between five and ten years of age over the last decade will have reduced slightly the percentage of illiteracy in that age group, it is likely that the illiteracy rate amongst adults eighteen years and upwards remains well above the figure mentioned. The position, of course, is bound to be worse in the more isolated rural sectors than in the more closely populated areas of Kathmandu Valley and the Tarai Zone, and even worse amongst women than among men. It is in the isolated areas that educational advancement is most essential if plans to create a modern national state and a unified national consciousness are to succeed, for it is in these areas that local particularism is most obvious and a sense of national unity is weakest. If plans to provide compulsory education for all children between the ages of five and ten are to succeed, the parents, more particularly mothers, must be convinced of the value of literacy and education for their children. But it is particularly amongst women that illiteracy is the highest and if they have never experienced the benefits of education, they are unlikely to recognize the need of education for their sons, and even less for their daughters. Even at the present time the number of female children enrolled in elementary schools is far below that of boys of the same age group (approximately 14%)¹. The problem has been recognized and sincere efforts been made to deal with the developing situation. The literacy and community education programme has passed through three stages linked with the formal development plans for these periods: 1956-61, 1962-1965 and 1966-1970.

In 1954, the National Educational Planning Commission laid down a programme whereby 100,000 illiterates would be made literate by 1960 and 100,000 each year between 1961 and 1965. In face of the competition and demand for financial resources for other educational programmes and for other phases of government development, e.g. land reform, agricultural improvement

¹ Records of the Second General Assembly Nepal National Commission for Unesco 1966.

panchayat development, public works and so forth, this programme proved too ambitious and funds allocated to adult literacy and community education proved inadequate to achieve the objective set. The figures available for the period 1956-1961 indicate that approximately 46,350 illiterates were made literate. Even this result was reached only with the assistance of a great deal of financial and technical aid for the literacy programme received through USAID. However, since the programme had to be organized, teachers trained and essential material prepared, the failure to reach the target figure of 100,000 can, in part, be discounted as part of the cost of establishing the necessary machinery and administrative structure for a full fledged literacy campaign.

Certainly in the second development plan (1962-65), the figures of new literates increased sharply although still falling well below the target set by the National Education Planning Commission of 1954. During these three years some 48,650 illiterates were made literate under the programme. No doubt in each of the periods in question, the actual total of new literates was somewhat higher than indicated here, for many would learn to read and write under programmes organized by religious bodies, or voluntary organizations, by self study or through the efforts of individual voluntary teachers. However, one must also allow for the possibility of some wastage arising from failure to complete the courses to a level which would enable the new literate to maintain the skills acquired, or through failure to use the skills on completion of the course thus leading to a gradual relapse to illiteracy again.

In the third five-year plan (1966-1970) the goal aimed at is a total of 250,000 new literates¹. This is still ambitious in terms of existing resources. The programme for 1966 involves approximately 500 literacy classes of nine months duration for approximately 10,000 students. Unless resources are made available on a much greater scale in the final four years, it is difficult to see how the figure of an average of 50,000 new literates

¹ Records of Second General Assembly, Nepal National Commission for Unesco 1966 p.63

a year over the five year period as a whole can be reached.

The literacy programme has never been confined to the simple teaching of reading and writing and has always aimed at a functional education involving understanding of agricultural processes, health information, simple civics, nutrition and child care. In the early stages a good deal of attention was paid to the possible use of radio in the literacy programme but the experiment at that time proved disappointing. Maintenance and servicing of radio sets in isolated communities proved almost impossible, the mountainous nature of the country made reception of the broadcasts from the relatively low-powered station in Kathmandu difficult, while in some cases the sets provided by the Government ended up, no doubt, by being used more for the entertainment of the holders' families than for the general education of the village community. With strong, simple and relatively cheap transistor sets now available and the switch over to more powerful broadcasting facilities in Kathmandu, radio may prove a more powerful weapon in adult literacy and community education programmes in the future than it has in the past.

The present position of adult education and adult literacy work in Nepal may be summarized briefly under five main headings: (a) Administrative Organization of Adult Education; (b) Intensive Literacy Centres; (c) School Teachers and Adult Literacy; (d) Reading Material for Literacy Programmes; and (e) The Role of Other Government Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations.

(a) Administration Organization of Adult Education

As part of its programme of adult literacy and adult education, the Government has constituted a separate section of adult education within the Department of Education. The Department has a Chief Adult Education Officer in charge with a staff of approximately twenty assistants. Of these, one is an officer in charge of women's adult education work; and one is editor of the Magazine and publications. In addition there is an assistant for Women's Adult Education working under the specialist for women's education, and there are four field supervisors. The rest are accounting and administrative staff supported by clerks, bearers and drivers.

The four field supervisors are responsible for the supervision of literacy and adult education work in the fourteen administrative zones - each one taking charge of a number of the zones. The fourteen zones are further subdivided into 75 districts and therefore each of the field supervisors is responsible for the adult education work in approximately twenty of these districts and in carrying out this work, maintains liaison with the district education supervisor and his assistant - there being one education supervisor and one assistant supervisor in each of the 75 districts.

in each of the zonal administrative districts, there is an education supervisor assisted by a deputy supervisor but their main responsibility is to supervise the secondary schools of their respective zones. The responsibility for direct oversight of literacy classes and general community education work, therefore, falls on the 75 district education supervisors and their assistants, with some guidance and assistance from the four field supervisors attached to the section on adult education in the Ministry. The district education supervisors and their assistants are, of course, primarily concerned with the overall inspection of educational work in the elementary schools in the district. The adult education work they undertake is subsidiary to their main concerns and interests. These inspectors are given each year a three weeks' refresher course to keep them up-to-date in educational policy and methods. These refresher courses necessarily deal mainly with primary education and with general administrative duties, but they do include some training in adult education policy and methods with special reference to the literacy programme.

The district supervisors and their assistants are responsible for providing five-day training courses for teachers taking adult literacy courses. These may be primary school teachers or volunteer teachers from the educated section of the community. The training course is a five day course with special attention to methods of teaching reading and writing to adult illiterates and the effective presentation of material that is involved in the functional literacy course. The

training course is planned by the specialist in 'planning and training' at the head office and may be supervised and assisted by the field supervisors of the Adult Education Section. The number of teachers attending such a training course from any particular village in the district vary according to the quota of classes allocated to the particular area. In cases where the numbers attending the training course are too large for the district supervisor to handle, assistance is provided by members of the head office of the Adult Education Section and the field supervisors.

(b) Intensive Literacy Centres

To make the adult literacy and general community education programme more effective and to create greater continuity from year to year, a pattern of permanent intensive adult education centres are being created. There are 25 such centres established with another 15 planned for establishment in the 1966-67 period. These centres have a permanent headquarters of their own in a selected hamlet although they may use rooms in other buildings for their activities within the same hamlet or within surrounding hamlets. They are provided with a staff of three teachers, who, although part-time workers, have been given a training in adult literacy and community education work. The Head of the Intensive Adult Education Centres staff is responsible for the supervision of the work of his two assistants and undertakes teaching and organizing of the post-literacy work which covers the final three months of the standard nine months course. His two assistants, a man and a woman -- are responsible for the straight six months literacy classes with one being responsible for men's work and one for educational work with women.

The three responsible officers in these intensive adult education centres are given a more intensive training course than that provided by district supervisors for the teachers of single literacy classes. The training is undertaken by members of the Adult Education Section in the Ministry and is of one month's duration in residence. Membership is drawn from elementary schoolteachers or local volunteers who possess an education up to school-leaving level and who have shown an

active interest in the literacy campaign and community education programme. The course deals with the techniques of teaching reading and writing to adults, methods of general community education and, in addition, the trainees are briefed by lectures and demonstrations given by experts from Government departments concerned with rural development, agriculture, home science and co-operatives. The first of these training courses was held in 1965 when 52 teachers received the training to fit them for leadership in the Adult Education Centre. A second course is planned for December 1966, running into January 1967. Again approximately 50 teachers will be trained for work in the centres. In each case the programme plans to train three teachers for each centre, one who will be the head teacher, one for women's work and one teacher for literacy work amongst men.

Even though the facilities in these centres remain somewhat spartan, there can be no question that this development is along reasonably sound lines. The intensive adult education centres I had the privilege to visit appeared to be working very satisfactorily. No doubt the range of activities taking place on the occasion of my visit may not have been completely characteristic. There might have been a natural desire to show me as wide a range of work as possible, and therefore some activities may have been adjusted to fit in with the occasion of my visit. None-the-less, the spirit of the centres was excellent and I was impressed both by the quality and enthusiasm of those in charge. Even if the few centres I was able to see were of higher calibre than the general run of centres throughout the country they at least gave an indication of the standard aimed at and, as such, represent an example to other centres throughout the country. It was clear that, apart from the direct literacy classes and other formal activities carried out within the centre, centre leaders had an influence on a wide range of community activities outside the walls of the centre itself.

(c) School Teachers and Adult Literacy

Apart from the training courses for teachers of literacy classes and for leaders in Panchayats and Adult Education Centres, some training is given to all teacher trainees going through the teachers' training colleges. This programme is well designed but at the moment is not fully effective since none of the teachers at the teachers' training colleges have the necessary background of knowledge and experience in adult and community education to teach the units embodied in the curriculum. Suggestions will be made in a later section of the report on methods of overcoming this present weakness.

(d) Reading Material for Literacy Programme

Provision of material in the form of readers and follow-up reading material is well planned and well produced. Apart from the magazine in the Adult Education Division, the Government has set up an Educational Materials Organization (established in 1958) which has produced a wide range of instructional material. This organization has a Writers' Division and a Production Division. The Writers' Division is equipped with trained professional writers who prepare manuscripts both for primary and adult education classes. From my observations they appear to be showing a great deal of imagination and initiative in their approach to their responsibilities. Both the Writers' Division and the Production Division of the Educational Materials Organization have done a commendable job in the fields of the production of educational material. Naturally most of the material and manuscripts prepared have been for the formal educational system both primary and secondary, but the books and pamphlets prepared for adult education and adult literacy programmes are attractive and well printed. My only criticism would be that some of the

material seems to be printed in a rather small type considering that it is supposed to be studied by adults who meet in rooms lit only by one or two hurricane lamps. Possibly a larger print type would be more suitable for adults whose sight may not be as sharp as that of young children. I was not able to judge the adequacy of the supplies of material for the adult literacy and adult education programmes although I was assured they were adequate in terms of the present number of classes that can be organized with the available resources. Certainly when the new Production Centre on the Sancthi site is in operation next year, any problem of quantity should be solved. Clearly the full programme of adult literacy and adult education will call for a very expanded production, not only of text books, primers, readers, but for the mass of follow-up material that should be made available if the programme of adult literacy and community education is to be consolidated.

(e) Role of Government Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations

Many other government departments apart from Education are concerned in one way or another with educational programmes, notably Departments and Ministries concerned with health, agriculture, economic development and the panchayats. It is important that the specialist resources of these departments should be utilized when appropriate in the functional literacy programme and in the education of adults. Adult education is always likely to be characterized by the multiplicity of organizations participating to a lesser or greater degree in the work.

Apart from the work of government departments certain non-governmental organizations also play a part, for example, the Women's Organization, the Returned Servicemen's Organization and religious bodies.

The Ministry of Education works closely with most of the government departments and some of the voluntary organizations in an effort to co-ordinate their activities and programmes. This is specially true in areas where Intensive Literacy Centres

have been established. More formal machinery for liaison and coordination must be established however, if overlapping and duplication of efforts are to be avoided. Suggestions for such machinery will be made in later sections.

V PROBLEMS OF PRIORITY IN EDUCATION

Even in the short time available for my discussions and studies it became reasonably clear that if weakness existed in the adult literacy programme, it did not lie in the area of administrative organization and planning. In the analyzing of the problems to be tackled, in the preparation and organization of a national literacy programme, in the working out of the curriculum for direct functional teaching, in the production of the necessary material, in the planning of training courses for those involved in teaching and in local organizing, the problems had been identified and the methods of overcoming them worked out and laid down in terms of long range policy. The weaknesses, such as they are, possibly lie in two main areas:

- (a) The resources in staff, equipment and money available remain quite inadequate to achieve the literacy goals set by the present 5-year plans or the general objectives of Government policy, and
- (b) The work of the Department or Section of Adult Education is concerned too predominantly with the functional literacy programme aimed at the illiterate, out-of-school youth or adults, and possibly not enough attention has been paid to the need to see the field of adult education as a whole.

In this section I will refer to the first of these weaknesses, leaving consideration of the second to a later section.

I recognize the difficulties confronting the Nepalese Government in seeking to provide adequate funds for the literacy and community education programme while faced with pressing demands for additional funds from other branches of education and for the many social and economical development plans it is initiating; and while faced, at the same time, with the harsh realities of a low GNP and a population, the bulk of whom exist close to the subsistence level. Yet there are strong arguments in favour of giving adult literacy and adult education a higher priority in educational planning than it enjoys at present.

(a) Educational Priorities

The attack against illiteracy is a two-pronged affair: firstly there is a drive to ensure that all children receive a basic primary education. The second prong is represented by an adult literacy programme aimed at making adults literate who have failed to receive formal education in childhood. The two approaches are seldom seen as direct alternatives and, (as in Nepal), are usually carried out at one and the same time. It is rather a question therefore of the priority stress given to one or other of the two approaches. The case for prior concentration on the education of the young is strong. They are at a flexible age and can be made to attend school by law or the decision of their parents. Unlike older adults, they have all their working life before them to make full use of the acquired literacy skills. Moreover, given sufficient time, the provision of primary education to all children should lead to the total elimination of illiteracy as the older illiterate adults gradually die off.

Yet experience indicates that given a very high degree of illiteracy in a community, the young child with only a few years of formal primary education, may well lapse back into illiteracy again when he leaves school and enters an illiterate adult community which sets little value on formal education and provides few opportunities for a youngster to utilize his literacy skills. It may be that spending slightly more money on the education of adults and, in the initial stages, spending slightly less on elementary education for children, would prove to be the more economic approach. Adults, particularly parents, once they recognize the value of education for themselves, will be more willing to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure that their children attend school and stay there long enough to get a soundly based education.

Figures for the distribution of children through the grades of the elementary schools in Nepal give some indication that an enforced drop-out problem does exist in the country and that many children leave after the first or second year of primary school. In Nepal at present some 27% of the total number of children of the primary school age are

enrolled in school, but almost half of those enrolled (48.62%) are enrolled in grade 1, while only 18.39% of these are enrolled in grade 2. Since there has been a steady increase in the number of new primary schools opened, many starting with grade 1 students only this ~~would~~ lead to a higher proportion of students being in grade 1 than in other grades. Nevertheless, the marked fall in the percentage between grade 1 and other grades in the primary school system does suggest that many children enrolled in school fail to continue their studies beyond the first or second grade. This would be in line with the experience of other developing countries where illiterate parents, unaware of the value of education, are reluctant to leave their children at school once they have reached an age at which they can perform simple but useful jobs in the paddy fields or around the home.

Statistics are not available which clearly distinguish between the grade percentages in schools in urban areas (where educational motivation is likely to be higher) and schools in rural areas. Nor, on the other hand, is it possible to estimate the difference existing between schools in areas such as Kathmandu or in certain parts of the Tarai (where parents' interest in children's education has a stronger tradition) and more isolated areas (where such tradition is only in its infancy). It would not be unreasonable to assume that these differences do exist and that in isolated areas where educational facilities have been almost non-existent in the past and where the degree of illiteracy is very high, the percentage of children in the different grades is more uneven than in some of the panchayats where there has been a marked tradition of interest in education. The **problem** of the drop-out is likely to be greater in a number of areas than would be indicated by the total national figures. If this is true then the position is likely to become even more acute as new schools are established in remoter areas of the country where an even higher degree of adult illiteracy exists.

These trends may well indicate that the rapid expansion of primary education for children in isolated areas of high illiteracy may involve increasing wastage unless it is accompanied or preceded by a well organized programme of adult education and adult literacy which will help to create the necessary climate of opinion in the community favourable to the organized education of the young.

(b) Adult Education and Child Education

The advantages of giving, in the initial stages, a higher priority to adult education than to the primary education of children in the communities where the establishment of formal education of the young presents difficulties because of the indifference (if not hostility) of the parents, is not restricted merely to the question of the extent to which this process might create slowly but steadily a more favourable climate for the introduction of a sound school system. The process may well further the actual education of the young from the beginning. Parents, particularly mothers, will almost certainly try to pass on to their young children much of what they have learned in adult literacy classes. Older children can (as they do in certain cases now) attend adult literacy classes with their parents. This approach may well help to prevent the emergence of an unhealthy gulf between literate youth and illiterate parents and prevent too sharp a break in the traditional practices through which parents teach the young those things that are necessary to equip them for participation in community life. It may also ease some of the existing problems faced by semi-trained school teachers in attempting to handle all five grades in a one-teacher school. Finally the education of mothers may help materially in breaking down existing resistances to the education of girls.

It is true that if the parents take a larger share in the education of their children it cannot be regarded as more than a temporary stage in the development of formal education for the young. Untrained in teaching methods and only possessing the most rudimentary educational instruction themselves, their efforts cannot be compared with the results achieved by trained teachers in well organized schools. Yet the total community results may possibly be better than those at present obtained

by partially trained teachers working under circumstances which make it unlikely that they will retain many of their young students for more than one or two years. If the young teacher is given some training in the techniques and methods appropriate in adult literacy and community education work he may well find that his teaching experience with adults is quite helpful in his more direct teaching work with children once circumstances and changing climate in the community enable him to concentrate more completely upon his professional career of child education.

(c) Panchayat Democracy

All aspects of Nepal's educational, social and economic development programme are closely interwoven but all will depend for their ultimate success upon the prior success of the Panchayat experiment.

The principle of the Panchayat system is that of direct democracy at the village level and indirect democracy through the higher levels. The structure is a complex system of hierarchically arranged assemblies and councils. Resting on a basis of village assemblies and rising through a series of indirectly elected higher bodies, it culminates in a national deliberative body empowered to recommend legislation to the King. There are four levels, the village and town (3,524 units), district (75 units), zonal (14 units) and national (1). The adult participates actively and directly at village or town level and indirectly through the higher levels, in two capacities: first as a citizen of his community, and secondly, as a member of his class or professional group, e.g. peasant organization, youth organization, women's organization, returned servicemen's organization, etc. These latter organizations carry out a number of programmes on behalf of their members and are entitled to elect a prescribed number of delegates to the panchayats at different levels.

A major purpose in creating the panchayat system was to decentralize administrative responsibility for economic development and social reform. Accompanying the establishment of panchayats at each level has been the formation of a parallel administrative structure whose

primary unit is at a local level. These local units represent the first uniform system of local self government in Nepal. The local panchayats carry out a variety of activities. They are authorized to levy taxes. They may act as arbitral and judicial bodies with original jurisdiction over certain civil and criminal cases. They maintain land and other records, compile statistics and, through local development boards and centres, engage in development and public work activities in the general fields of agriculture, education, animal husbandry, transportation, and public health. They are responsible for drafting local development plans for submission to the central government through the higher levels of the panchayat system.

This process of decentralization of authority to local institutions throws great responsibility upon the village and town citizens. To carry out his responsibilities he must understand the nature of the problems on which action must be taken and be aware of the alternative choices available. This understanding and awareness comes with education. The problems facing the adult citizen are not of a kind which have meaning for young children between five and ten years of age, and no primary education aimed at this age group will assist the community to meet the problems facing it or the responsibilities delegated to it. The success of the panchayat system will depend upon the educational programme carried out with the adults at village and town level and particularly with those adults who carry responsibility (whether in an elected or professional capacity) on the Panchayat Councils or in the administrative units at local, district or zonal levels.

The local panchayats have certain responsibilities in the field of education and are empowered to raise taxes to introduce free and compulsory primary education for the children of a village area. To create a favourable climate for these developments, a higher priority for adult education is justifiable and in certain areas of the country may prove to be essential.

VI INTEGRATION AND PLANNING OF EDUCATION

The above arguments in favour of giving adult education a higher priority in the total educational plan of Nepal merely re-emphasizes the general principle endorsed at a number of major international conferences on educational policy including the "Unesco World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy" held in Teheran in September 1965, and the "Conference of Asian Ministers of Education and Planning" held in Bangkok in November 1965. The Teheran Congress recommended that:-

- (a) literacy be recognized as a special but nonetheless integral part of the overall adult education programme of each country;
- (b) adult education, including literacy, in its turn should be recognized as an integral and planned part of the total educational system of the country and educational plans, budgets and organizational structure should take into account this essential relationship.

The first point made in the Teheran recommendations emphasizes that adult literacy programmes, while likely to be a dominant concern in countries faced with mass illiteracy amongst the adult population, must be seen as merely one stage (or only one aspect) of the overall adult education programme. Adult education does not become unnecessary or less important once the problem of adult literacy has been overcome. This essential fact must be kept clearly in mind even while priority attention is being directed to the literacy campaign.

The second point made in the Teheran recommendations emphasizes that adult education (including literacy) must be seen as an essential component of the total educational plan and integrated into the national educational system. This view accepts the concept that education is a lifelong process in which the formal education provided for children and young people in schools and colleges represents preparation for the process of adult education which will continue for the rest of an individual's life.

The idea of a terminal education which can be completed within a number of specified years in childhood and youth and which will provide the individual with a stock of knowledge sufficient to carry him effectively through his adult years may be satisfactory in a relatively static society where little

change takes place from one generation to another. It is incompatible with the view adopted by the Ministers of Education at Teheran and is meaningless in a country like Nepal which, by deliberate decision, is attempting to modernize and change at a tempo which will accelerate rather than slacken with every successful move forward.

Present educational plans for primary, secondary and tertiary education in Nepal (primary education between 5 and 10 years of age for all children, secondary education for approximately 20% of those enrolling in primary schools, and provision for higher education for about 5% of secondary school pupils) coupled with the present relatively low priority given to adult education, suggests that the concept of a terminal education adjusted in length according to the roles different groups will play in society, still colours educational thinking. This is understandable since the pattern of education with slight curriculum modifications to suit Nepalese needs has been adopted from overseas models. In the relatively educationally advanced countries from which the models have been drawn, it is only in recent years that the implication of "education permanente" or lifelong integrated education in today's world has been given any real consideration. Even in these countries the need for a fresh look at the various stages in the formal education of the young in light of the concept is hardly recognized yet. However, a few educationists have posed the question and Unesco is turning its attention to the implications of the concept. Provision has been made in the 1967-68 budget and programme of Unesco for studies and conferences on the implications of "education permanente" for education planning. It may be useful for the Nepalese educationists to keep closely in touch with the results of these Unesco organized studies and discussions. It may even be possible for one of the Unesco studies to be carried out in Nepal itself so that the implications of the concept for future educational planning in that country can be seen more clearly.

VII PRIORITIES FOR ADULT EDUCATION

If a higher priority is given to adult education within the overall educational plan and if greater resources are allocated to adult literacy and adult education than in the past, it must be recognized that these expanded resources are unlikely to permit the provision of all necessary or desired

education services for out-of-school youth and adults. Just as it is necessary to determine priorities within the total education plan, so there will still be a need to consider priorities within the overall programme of adult education to ensure that limited resources are utilized as economically as possible. The question of priorities may be examined under the following headings:- (a) functional literacy programme; (b) continuing education of adults; (c) the utilization of existing educational resources, e.g. schools and universities, (d) the role of government departments (other than education) and of non-governmental organizations in adult education, and (e) the strengthening of the adult education department or section.

(a) Functional Literacy Programme

With an illiteracy rate of 90% or more it is clear that major efforts in the field of adult education must be concentrated for some time to come upon the eradication of illiteracy and the provision of functional literacy education programmes for illiterate out-of-school youth and adults. Yet even in this area the task is so great that it must be tackled in stages and certain priorities must be established. With limited resources it might appear advisable to devote major attention to the education of illiterates (1) with a high motivation for education, and (2) to those living in areas where the new functional skills would be fully utilized in economic development projects and where economic development projects are likely to be handicapped by the existence of widespread illiteracy.

In Nepal this would mean concentration upon areas where (1) the movement of rural dwellers into urban centres is creating economic and social problems, and (2) areas where economic development projects call for functionally literate workers on a large scale.

However, in Nepal, the experiment in panchayat democracy requires the support of a sound adult community education programme in all village and town panchayat areas throughout the country. This requirement, in its turn, conflicts with the desirability of concentrating literacy and adult education efforts in selected areas where rapid urbanization and major economic development projects present special problems. In Nepal

this conflict of priorities clearly creates difficulties but they may not prove insuperable if different approaches are used in different areas. These may be discussed under the headings of:- (1) Unesco-Nepalese intensive literacy projects; (2) Nepalese intensive literacy projects, and (3) adult education and community education in isolated areas.

(1) Unesco-Nepalese Intensive Literacy Projects

The intensive literacy projects carried out with the assistance and co-operation of Unesco may not differ materially in programme or methods from intensive literacy projects initiated directly by the Nepalese Government in other panchayat areas. The Unesco assisted projects are likely to be carried out, however, in areas where major economic development projects are being introduced and where social and economic change is occurring at an accelerated rate. Moreover they will be backed by the guidance of Unesco experts and supported by international aid funds. In order to take advantage of Unesco's experience and financial support these selected projects will call for a major contribution on the part of the Nepalese Government. These Unesco supported literacy projects, tied to economic development will not only throw some light on the correlation between adult education (including literacy) and economic and social development, but will also provide a useful guide to methods and policy which could be used or followed in intensive literacy projects in other parts of the country. For all these reasons, Unesco supported intensive literacy projects should be considered separately from other literacy projects of a similar type.

Consideration has already been given to the possibility of such joint assisted Unesco projects in the industrial areas of the Biratnagar and Birgunj and in two agricultural areas, Hitarua and Pokhara. Discussions have been held with Unesco in connection with the selection of one or two of these areas for joint Nepalese-Unesco intensive projects. A two-man Unesco mission is to visit Nepal early in 1967 to survey the situation and prepare a request for financial assistance. Since the mission members will make a thorough investigation of any proposed joint projects and will have

the advantage of a Unesco experience of other projects of similar type there is little need to elaborate further here.

All it is necessary to stress here is that, because of the importance of such joint projects as pilot experiments in a development oriented adult education programme, they should be given first priority in the national literacy and adult education programme.

(2) Selected Intensive Literacy Projects

Some progress has already been made in establishing an intensive literacy project in selected Panchayat areas where rapid changes and the nature of local social and economic development plans justifies special effort in literacy and adult education. Reference has already been made to the setting up of permanent adult education centres and the work such centres undertake. Plans have been made to establish similar centres in fourteen or fifteen other Panchayats during the 1966-67 period selecting areas where the Land Reform Act and the Compulsory Education Act have already been implemented. In these areas the Department of Education is working closely with the Ministries of Panchayats, of Health, of Agriculture, and with other departments or services to ensure that the literacy and adult education programmes will be integrated as far as possible into the overall educational, social and economic activities of these villages.

The present literacy course places heavy demands upon the adult student since it requires them to attend classes for two hours each night for six days a week over a period of nine months. Such an intensive course may be quite suitable in the areas selected for intensive literacy projects where a reasonably high motivation towards education may be expected. It certainly would be appropriate wherever the adult student or out-of-school youth expects to benefit by the acquired skills through wider vocational opportunities. In the latter case, the aim of the students would be to complete the educational training as quickly as possible whatever the sacrifice of time and effort. It may be questioned, however, whether it is not too demanding in time and effort for many who would benefit by the course but would find the strain of constant attendance over the nine months period too great in light of their

work and family commitments. Experiments might be undertaken in selected areas to see whether breaking the total course down into a series of shorter linked units might not prove meaningful in terms of the villagers' pattern of life. The fact that a unit could be completed in a shorter period of time (or at least without spending six nights a week in classes) might well provide students with a greater sense of achievement from one stage to another which might foster the development of stronger motivation for continued learning and thus encourage students to complete further units until the total course is completed.

The significance of these intensive literacy projects in terms of contribution to the successful carrying out of economic and social development projects at a local level justify them being given a fairly high priority in the over-all adult education programme of the country.

(3) Adult Literacy and Community Education in Isolated Areas

The problem of isolated communities is major one in Nepal. These communities though small as individual units are scattered over a considerable proportion of the land area of Nepal and include a not inconsiderable section of the total population. These are communities in which change is likely to be less rapid and where the local, social and economic development programmes are likely to be on a more modest basis and as such of less significance perhaps in national terms. They are also areas where illiteracy is likely to be higher than the national average but where opportunities for utilizing literacy skills are more limited and motivation towards education correspondingly low.

In a country unified by historical, cultural and linguistic and ethnic factors these communities might be placed low on the priority list in the functional literacy programme, at least so long as resources remained inadequate to establish a sound adult education programme throughout the country. Nepal, however, is faced by the necessity of drawing these isolated communities into the stream of national life and in the task of creating a spirit of national unity and a sense of national consciousness throughout the country. Communities isolated by geographical and ethnic factors

and separated by language divisions and culture from the main stream of modern Nepal may move further towards particularism as educational, social and economic development in other regions of the country widen the existing gulf between more isolated regions and the more heavily populated areas. For these reasons it is difficult to see how the extension of literacy and adult education programmes to these communities can be postponed. Yet an attempt to treat all areas as having equal priority rights is almost certain to lead to a failure of the national literacy campaign as a result of existing resources and efforts being spread too thinly (even if more evenly) over the whole country. Clearly these communities cannot be left out of the literacy programme and just as clearly programmes in isolated areas must be of a different kind to those designed for the intensive literacy projects described above.

While these isolated communities may have a lower priority rating within the overall functional literacy programme, this position might be compensated for by giving a higher priority rating to adult education in these communities within the framework of local educational, social and economic development programmes. It has already been suggested in an earlier section of the report that giving a higher priority to adult education in these communities over the establishment of elementary education may be one of the best means of ensuring that the climate is created for the establishment of a successful primary school system. To demonstrate whether there is such a correlation between adult education and educational, economic and social development as a whole, it might be useful to try out a pilot project embracing three isolated communities with approximately the same population and with similar social, economic and cultural backgrounds.

In the first community almost all of the resources available should be concentrated upon the building up of system of primary education for young children between five and ten years of age.

In the second community the available resources should be divided equally between the tasks of primary education for young children and a functional literacy programme aimed at the adults.

In the third community almost all resources should be concentrated

upon a broad general programme of literacy and community education with the adults.

In all three cases the final objective would be the same - the establishment of a sound system of primary education for the young in which the problem of drop-outs has been reduced to negligible proportions. The different approaches adopted would throw some light on whether the direct or indirect approach is likely to prove most effective in areas of high illiteracy where parents are indifferent at present to the education of the children. However, such an experiment might also demonstrate what correlation, if any, there is between the education of adults and the general economic and social development of a community.

In these isolated communities where opportunities for the use of certain literacy skills such as writing are limited it might be economical to concentrate efforts upon developing the skill of reading first. Separate courses for writing could be provided at a later stage for those who had a strong motivation and who expected to be able to use the skills such as the members of the village Panchayat or other community leaders. The Nepalese Government has inaugurated programmes designed to increase agricultural production, start co-operatives, improve the transportation of agricultural products and raise the living standards of the rural people in the fields of health, education and food. Thanks to scientific progress necessary knowledge and techniques are now available. However, in order that this scientific knowledge and these techniques are effective, it is necessary that the agents in charge of the implementation of the programmes at village level be able to communicate them to the interested population. Experience in Nepal indicates that it is very hard indeed to introduce modern farm methods or to improve the traditional agricultural techniques in an illiterate community. This communication would be greatly improved if the villagers could read. They would then be in a position readily to gain information on new techniques, new methods and on the solution of community and social problems through reading the pamphlets and printed material made available through various Government Departments or agencies; or by a process of discussion based upon the material provided in a written

form. Writing itself is not quite so essential at this stage. A functional literacy programme for the majority of the villagers tied to questions of children's education and child care, nutrition, health, agricultural development, co-operatives and Panchayat problems and responsibilities could be based upon the acquisition of reading skills alone.

The success of this reading and oral programme of adult education aimed at the illiterate villagers must be accompanied by a continuing education programme for village leaders, particularly those leaders who are likely to have the greatest influence in achieving necessary changes in social and economic practices. This, however, will be referred to in the next section dealing with "continuing education programmes".

With the provision of greater power for the main national broadcasting station and with the availability of strong, simple and reasonably cheap transistor radios, further experimentation might be undertaken in the use of radio in the functional literacy programmes for isolated communities.

(b) Continuing Education of Adults

The formal adult education programme of Nepal is directed almost exclusively to the eradication of illiteracy. It is true that the aim of the literacy programme is not aimed at providing illiterates with the skills of reading, writing and simple arithmetic alone but it is directed towards the goal of "functional" literacy which it is hoped will provide new literates with knowledges and skills enabling them to participate effectively in the life of their community. As such the programme does involve the acquisition of knowledge about new agricultural processes, health and sanitation, minor vocational skills, the organisation of co-operatives, questions of child care and nutrition and simple civics. Moreover, efforts are being made to provide simple Panchayat libraries which will permit the new literates to continue their education through self-study and this process is further stimulated by the educational talks and programmes broadcast over the radio stations.

This concentration on the problems of the illiterate adult and out-of-school youth is understandable in a country where the existence of mass

illiteracy represents one of the major obstacles to social and economic development and to the modernisation of the national structure. Nevertheless, concentration upon the literacy campaign may lead to a tendency to correlate the literacy programme with "adult education" instead of seeing it merely as a special though important aspect of an overall programme concerned with the educational needs of the adult population as a whole. While the existence of mass illiteracy is an obvious drag upon economic and social development in a country seeking to modernise rapidly, it is possible that at certain stage the need for further education for the literate members of society may be even more important in terms of society's needs than the extension of literacy programmes to further groups of illiterates. Just as the development of facilities for the young must be carried on concurrently with the provision of literacy training for the illiterate adults, so further educational opportunities for literate adults must be provided even while priority attention is being paid to the education of illiterates.

Many literate members of society may have had a limited education. Yet because they are literate they may be called upon to carry social, vocational and community responsibilities for which their original educational training ill equips them. Even those who have benefited most from a reasonably sound education in youth are likely to be carrying responsibilities which necessitate an upgrading, a broadening or an updating of their educational qualifications to fit them for the tasks they must undertake in a rapidly changing society. It is these people who are likely to be leaders, or potential leaders, at the village, district, zonal or even national level and who will (or could) be influences for change. Their leadership could well be decisive in the success or failure of the modernisation of Nepal. I was impressed, for example, with the enthusiasm and ability of a number of leaders connected with the existing permanent adult education centres and am convinced that serious efforts to broaden and strengthen the education of these leaders through conferences, seminars, and training workshops would pay dividends in the long run in terms of social and community development.

In discussing the question of the functional literacy programmes in isolated areas I pointed out that the literacy campaign in these areas must be accompanied by a planned programme of continuing education, particularly

for those who might be leaders at the village level. Consideration might be given to the provision of residential courses of three to five months' duration in which young people who have shown leadership potentiality in community life might be given an opportunity for a broad liberal education designed to equip them for leadership in their village communities. These residential centres should not be located in Kathmandu or other major urban areas but in centrally located regional areas characterised by a network of isolated communities. One of the difficulties facing Nepal today is that a high proportion of those possessing appropriate educational qualifications have received their education in Kathmandu or one or other of the major urban centres. Experience indicates that many of these people are reluctant to accept posts in isolated areas, and even where they are willing to do so are not always welcomed by the local community. Insofar as young people are sent from the isolated communities to Kathmandu or other centres for extended training, e.g., teachers' training colleges, it appears that they, too, develop a reluctance to return to their home communities and take up work after completion of training. The problem may be overcome, in part, if residential courses for potential leaders in the villages are provided along the lines suggested above. While it would not solve all the problems it would help to strengthen the village community, speed up local social and economic development, create an environment more likely to attract back again young people from the locality who have received advanced training elsewhere, and may help to break down existing resistance to the appointment of officials from Kathmandu or other outside centres.

For those who have received a reasonable secondary education in youth or even attended university, high level refresher courses and seminars should be arranged at regular intervals to keep them abreast of new knowledge and developments in their own field. No doubt this process is already occurring in the form of in-service conferences, seminars and training courses arranged by various Government Departments. It should be recognised, however, as an essential feature of the total programme of total adult education in the country. An attempt should be made to evaluate the extent, the nature and the purpose of existing programmes of this type and to pinpoint any gaps which should be filled. There is a need to ensure that the resources of the university system are available in any programme

of refresher courses in adult education carried out at this level. I will have more to say on this point in the next section when attention is paid to the role of various existing educational institutions in the general adult education programme.

(c) The Use of Existing Educational Resources

In view of the magnitude of the literacy and general education problems and the limited resources available to meet them, every effort must be made to use wherever feasible the existing educational facilities of the country in the task of adult education. The use of existing educational facilities for these programmes in Nepal can be usefully examined under three headings: (1) the utilisation of elementary schools; (2) the utilisation of multi-purpose high schools; and (3) the use of university resources.

(1) Primary Schools and Primary School Teachers

In a number of Asian countries, notably the Philippines and Thailand, effective use has been made of the facilities of village schools and the services of primary school teachers in functional literacy work and in general adult education. These developments have been noted by those responsible for educational policy in Nepal, and the policy of preparing primary school teachers for active participation in the functional literacy programme has been accepted. Two major difficulties face Nepalese administrators at present. The first is the lack of suitable school buildings which would enable local schools to function satisfactorily as centres for community education. The second is the lack of instructors in the teachers' training colleges possessing the necessary background of training and experience to ensure that teacher-trainees leave the training colleges equipped to play an effective role in community education amongst adults. There is of course a third factor which handicaps primary education as well as the ability of the teacher to participate in community education and the training of adults. This lies in the extent to which teachers, lacking qualifications acquired through successful completion of a formal teacher training course, must be employed in many areas of the country. The percentage of trained teachers ranges from nil in the Karnali zone to a maximum of 46.8

per cent in the Behri zone with an overall average of 22.5 per cent of trained teachers throughout the country.

With the rapid development of primary education, the provisions of adequate buildings and facilities has lagged behind. Most primary schools in Nepal are housed in rooms or buildings designed for other purposes and in some of the more tropical areas of the country the school may be no more than the shade of a suitable tree. Creating a network of adequate primary school buildings throughout Nepal will be a long and costly process though the success of a carefully executed programme of adult education may shorten it by encouraging local community effort in the erection of suitable premises. In the meantime the policy of establishing separate intensive literacy centres for adult education work is understandable. There is, however, a case for linking such centres with the local school wherever conditions make it possible or appropriate.

At this stage the next step forward lies in a more effective use of primary school teachers in the functional literacy campaign and as a catalyst in general community education. This step forward would not involve any major change in policy and could be carried out without great expense. The main need is to ensure that the course in functional literacy methods and community education procedures for teacher training is translated from its present stage of theory to one of operative practice. This could be achieved by sending selected training college teachers to the Philippine-Unesco National Training Centre at Bayambang in the Philippines. The advantage of this training centre is that teaching is in English. It would be desirable, at the same time, to arrange if possible for a Unesco expert in community education to be appointed to the staff of the major teachers training college in Nepal as adviser on the practical implementation of training in functional literacy and general community education (both theoretical and practical) within the teachers training college curriculum.

(2) Multi-purpose High Schools

With the setting up of an increasing number of multi-purpose high schools equipped with vocational training workshops, greater efforts should be made to utilise their equipment and staff for the further education of young adults both vocational and general. Many youngsters who for various reasons are unable to attend as full-time students might benefit by opportunities for secondary education and for vocational training and could be served by the provision of evening courses at the multi-purpose high schools or alternatively by intensive courses arranged during the school vacation periods.

(3) Use of University Resources

The University of Tribhuvan and its constituent colleges should play an active part in the adult education programme in Nepal. It is particularly in the sphere of high level refresher courses, educational conferences and seminars that the university can assist a wide range of professional and sub-professional groups to keep abreast of the latest developments in their special spheres of interest and can encourage the examination of a wide range of social and economic and community problems. Moreover, the university, by the nature of its resources would make a valuable contribution to needed research in the field of adult education and to the training of those who are likely to be involved in administration of the programme at the higher level.

In discussions with the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar of Tribhuvan University I was informed of plans for the university to call together a group of leaders from the various organisations involved in one way and another in the literacy and adult programme of the country to consider future policy and ways of avoiding unnecessary duplication and overlapping. These plans indicate in a modest way the type of contribution the university can appropriately make to ensure that the resources of the university are fully utilised for the furtherance of the adult education programmes of the country. A separate department concerned with adult education or university extension should be established. Here again the initial expenses should not be unduly burdensome. No doubt in the first stage some

assistance might be obtained from overseas governments or interested foundations to enable an expert in university adult education (preferably somebody with experience of university extension in developing countries) to be seconded to the Tribhuvan University to assist in the setting up of a department of university extension or adult education.

During 1967 Dr. A.A. Liveright, Secretary of the International Congress of University/^{Adult} Education, will be visiting Asia. Arrangements might be made for him to visit Nepal for discussions with university authorities and other educational leaders as to the steps that might be taken to establish a pilot project in university adult education within the framework of the Tribhuvan University.

(d) Role of Government Department and non-Governmental Organisations

I have emphasised the importance of adult education (including literacy) being integrated as a normal and permanent feature of the total educational system of the country. This means that the Ministry of Education should have the major responsibility for ensuring that provisions are made to meet educational needs both general and vocational of the adult population and out-of-school youth. The department of adult education within the Ministry of Education should be staffed and equipped adequately to fulfil these responsibilities.

This does not imply that the Ministry of Education must be responsible for providing all programmes or undertaking all the work. By its nature the field of adult education is likely to be characterised by a multiplicity of organisations involved to a greater or lesser degree in the work. Many Government Departments concerned with special aspects of Nepal's social and economic programme will find that an educational programme aimed at the general adult population and/or concerned with the further training of their own officers, is essential to the successful carrying out of their policy and programmes, e.g. departments concerned with health, agriculture, Panchayat development, compulsory savings, land reform, co-operatives or industrial development. It is important that the highly skilled and specialised staff of these agencies should be involved in the general programme of functional literacy in ways appropriate to the purposes of the department itself and to the expertise of their officers. In the same way

the resources and efforts of the voluntary organisations such as the youth associations, the peasant or workers' organisations, and the returned services association, could play an important part in organising educational courses for their members, or in providing volunteer workers for literacy and continuing education projects. The National Women's Association is already active in the field of literacy and vocational education for women and could make a major contribution to breaking down the prejudice or indifference which still exists in connection with the education of women and girls.

While this diversity of programmes and multiplicity of participating agencies is a sign of strength rather than weakness, care must be taken to see that wasteful duplication and overlapping of effort and programmes is avoided. To ensure the orderly progress of the overall programme, a national co-ordinating committee should be established. The role of the council should be to create closer liaison and co-ordination between the various agencies and organisations active in the field of literacy and adult education so that their programmes are effectively integrated into the national economic and social programme. The council should include representatives from the major Government Ministries or Departments concerned with educational, social and economic development, and from major national voluntary organisations. The Chairman and secretary should be appointed by the Ministry of Education and it would be useful if the Director or senior officer of the Adult Education Section of the Ministry of Education acted as secretary to the council.

(e) Future Development of the Adult Education Section

In order that the Ministry of Education can carry out its responsibilities it will be necessary to strengthen the permanent staff of the department or section of adult education within the Ministry. I have already stressed the fact that the senior officers of the section are well aware of the nature of the tasks facing their section in the area of the functional literacy campaign and have worked out plans and programmes necessary for success. What is lacking is the required resources in staff and equipment to carry the programmes and projects to success on the scale required.

In the first stage priority should be given to building up the staff of field supervisors with an ultimate goal of providing one trained and

experienced supervisor for each of the fourteen zonal areas.

The second priority is to recognise that the department or section should not restrict its attention to the functional literacy programme alone, even though such a programme may beon large for many years to come. Even at this stage there should be at least one highly qualified member of the staff who is free to concentrate upon policy and programmes in the area of the post-literacy and continuing education of adults. Reference has already been made to the work in the area of vocational and general education of adults which could be (and should be) undertaken by the multi-purpose high schools, and of the high level extension courses, seminars and conferences which might be provided by the university. The officer for post-literacy work in the Ministry section could act as liaison officer, stimulating and guiding the work of the multi-purpose high schools and keeping in touch with the work undertaken by the university.

VIII SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) Higher priority should be given to adult education within
 - (1) the educational budget and
 - (2) within the overall national economic and social economic development plans.
- (b) The staff of the Department of Adult Education within the Ministry of Education should be strengthened
 - (1) by increasing the number of field supervisors, with the eventual objective of having at least one field supervisor for each of the fourteen zones;
 - (2) by appointing a high level professional officer concerned with the programmes and planning in the area of post-literacy continuing education of adults and out-of-school youth.
- (c) Village schools shall be consciously developed as community schools concerned with the education of adults and out-of-school youth as well as children
 - (1) by ensuring that trainee teachers passing through the teacher training institutions receive a sound training in community and adult education methods as well as the philosophy and techniques appropriate to child education;

- (2) by improving the effectiveness of present training for young teachers in community education procedures. To this end:-
 - (aa) arrangements should be made for one or two members of the training college to attend a year's course at the Philippine-Unesco National Training Centre in the Philippines;
 - (bb) arrangements should be made for a Unesco expert in community schools to be seconded to work with the teachers training college to improve the section of the curriculum concerned with adult and community education;
- (3) that where satisfactory primary school facilities have been created, the permanent intensive literacy centres should be linked with such schools.
- (d) Greater effort should be made to see that the resources of multi-purpose high schools are utilised fully for the vocational and general education of out-of-school youth and adults.
- (e) Resources of the Tribhuvan University and its constituent colleges should be made available for high level refresher courses, seminars, conferences, research and training in adult education
 - (1) by establishing a department of university extension; and
 - (2) by seeking through Unesco, educational foundations or bi-lateral assistance, the services of an expert in university adult education (preferably with experience of university extension in developing countries) to place the new department and its programmes on a sound basis.
- (f) Priorities in the functional literacy programme should be:-
 - (1) arrangement of special joint Unesco-Nepalese intensive literacy projects in selected areas and linked closely with selected economic development projects;
 - (2) the introduction of intensive functional literacy projects in areas of rapid urbanisation and marked social and economic change;
 - (3) the initiation of special experimental projects in isolated areas.

- (g) To further VIII(c) above, a special experiment along the lines proposed in sub-section VII(d)(3) should be instituted to discover the correlation if any between literacy programmes and educational, social and economic development in isolated areas of high illiteracy.
- (h) Centres should be established in regional areas to enable leaders and potential leaders from isolated communities to undertake residential educational courses of three to five months duration.
- (i) More definite steps should be taken to involve the major non-Government organisations, particularly the women's associations, in the functional literacy programmes
- (1) by involving the leaders in planning of the overall programme;
 - (2) by making them more conscious of the role of adult education in national, local and social economic development plans; and
 - (3) by training voluntary leaders from these organisations in adult education techniques and methods (including literacy teaching).
- (j) To encourage liaison and co-ordination between the various agencies and organisations involved in educational work with adults and to avoid unnecessary overlap or duplication, a national co-ordinating council for adult education should be established, to be followed by the creation of similar councils or co-ordinating committees at the zonal level as and when conditions justify this step.
- (k) Further attention should be paid to the role of the mass media particularly radio in a co-ordinated national functional literacy and continuing education programme, with special attention to the part the radio can play in the work in isolated communities. To further this aspect of the programme the services of an expert in the use of radio in functional literacy should be obtained through some international agency such as Unesco.

Wellington,
New Zealand.

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CONTINUING EDUCATION

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