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ABSTRACT

One in a series of 12 documents devoted to the priority themes of International Education Year, this document provides basic information and suggests directions for study, discussion, and action in adapting education to the needs of the modern world in rural areas. The main emphasis in this essay revolves around the hypothesis that no effective national development is possible where the rural sector of the economy is deficient. The issues discussed pertaining to the rural population in developing nations are the numerical problem; the school's burden; the community's need; rural and urban coordination; lifelong education; primary and secondary education; continuity and cost; the content of agricultural courses; and the planning and implementation of programs which unite educational, agricultural, and health officers along with other community workers in the development of a common sense of purpose. It is inferred that a pressing need exists (1) to orient education to economic and social development in the rural areas of young nations; (2) to effect a continuous educational process for the purpose of creating a lifelong learning process; (3) to harmonize urban and rural societies among all levels of the school system and among responsible agencies and parties; and (4) to plan carefully all conceptual, technical, economic, and administrative elements. (HBC)

international education year 1970

Adaptation of Education to the Needs of the Modern World in Rural Areas

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This document forms part of a series of twelve devoted to the priority themes of International Education Year.

It provides basic information and suggests directions for study, discussion and action; no attempt is made to analyse the subject exhaustively or to express the official views of Unesco.

In the course of IEY, the Secretariat would welcome reports and comments on the use of the document.

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ADAPTATION OF EDUCATION TO THE NEEDS OF THE MODERN WORLD IN RURAL AREAS

The long neglected relationship between education and rural development - and between rural growth and national interest - has become a subject of general concern, especially in the developing nations. Educators and economic planners are now grappling with the task of making the educational process an active and integral part of a total effort towards social and economic development. Yet, the problem of how to gear planning to modern needs is a delicate question and a complex one.

The dimensions of the challenge have to be expressed in quantitative as well as qualitative terms. Volume and cost factors created by the recent "education explosion" represent one dimension of the challenge while, simultaneously, the job of reorienting education to shifting realities in a world of change bears heavily upon planners, educators and governments. Above all, educational reform - its function and its limits - must be conceived and appraised in the light of agrarian reform and other elements of social and cultural progress.

The coming of the "green revolution" - or appearance of new, dramatically high-yield wheat, rice and corn varieties - is surely a boon to developing areas; yet, this breakthrough has in part created the impression that illiteracy is no longer a real obstacle to increased agricultural production. On the contrary, a simple increase in the agricultural economy and hence in food production is but one important part of the objectives of rural development. For the fact is that as methods and standards improve, as a subsistence economy in time becomes a market economy, the need for more sophisticated skill in planning, management and productive techniques becomes manifest.

Even at earlier stages of development a similar need exists. In Iran's north-west province of Guilan, for example, agricultural advisers recommended that rice growers use a certain quantity of seed per acre when sowing seed-nurseries. Yet, because most of the Guilan rice farmers could do no arithmetic they used far too much seed; it has been calculated that in Guilan Province alone this ignorance costs 14,000 metric tons of paddy worth over 210 million rials in wasted seed each year. The national loss in capital and productivity is immense.

Just as no effective national development is possible where the rural sector of the economy is deficient, no rural development can be properly effective if its educational facilities are insufficient or badly constructed. To this end Unesco stresses the teaching of functional literacy,

the first step in the process of a meaningful integrated education. Thus a recent Unesco team reported, after a survey (September 1970) of educational reform in the Iranian area of Isphahan, that, "In their commitment to the term 'functional' in functional literacy, the project team in Iran stresses equipping learners with skills and attitudes useful in such development tasks as plant protection in small scale agriculture; automotive maintenance and repair; health, nutrition and family planning, to name only three of the 18 curricula which have been developed. Literacy thus comes as a by-product of helping adults to define their own development problems and to gain skills in dealing with these problems through study and practice".

Yet, given any substantial efforts in educational reform, the quantitative side of the problem weighs heavily.

The numerical problem

During the 1950-1965 period, total enrolment in schools and tertiary education almost tripled. An initial rise in primary school enrolment during this period from 57 million to 137 million in turn provoked even greater pressure for a corresponding increase in secondary school facilities. With the additional impetus produced by governmental awareness of the need for high- and middle-level manpower, secondary enrolment grew at a still more accelerated pace - from 1.5 million to 5.8 million, and tertiary enrolment from one to 3.5 million during the same period. Thus, the annual rate of growth in educational expenditure between 1960 and 1965 has been 13% in Asia, 16% in Africa and over 20% in Latin America. In 1965, developing countries devoted 3.42% of their GNPs to education, or about 15% to 25% of their governmental expenditures.

Furthermore, these statistics imply particular stress in regard to rural areas. For in developing countries the rural population represents at least 70% of the total, and in some nations accounts for as much as 95%. To further complicate the problem, at least 40% of the population in most developing areas is under 15 years of age.

The school's burden

Yet, the facts on the internal productivity of education are at least as disturbing. In most African and Latin American countries over half the primary school pupils never return to school after the second year, and this phenomenon is especially true in rural areas. Even fewer go on to any programme of secondary studies. In addition, those who do manage to complete the primary level tend to receive an inadequate and badly oriented schooling given the demands of their rural community life - especially from the economic point of view. It has been pointed out that a serious gap exists in most developing countries between educational opportunities offered to the rural and urban child. Indeed, the reason why many children are classed as "drop-outs" after their second year is simply that in many areas only two grades of primary school exist.

At the secondary level, the educational systems at work in developing countries are generally formulated along lines that have proven successful in the experience of the formerly dominant powers but which are usually ill-suited to the existing situation. This has an automatically bad effect upon the planning of primary programmes as well since the earlier training is usually geared to the task of preparing pupils for entrance into secondary school - despite the fact that only about 10% actually do go on.

The community's need

The consequences in terms of employment and the need for skills and abilities in a functioning society are especially grave. Programmes for secondary schools are rarely designed to equip their graduates to meet the requirements of industry, agriculture or government. Training is often purely academic and detached, without regard for practical application. The ideal of a true integration of knowledge and skills in the light of local and national necessity - for which functional literacy is the spring-board - is often sacrificed entirely. And so, indeed, is the individual's personal development as a responsive human being in the context of his place and time.

One conclusion is necessarily that a constructive effort must be made not only at the school planning level but throughout the social and economic system to produce a cogently integrated mechanism of education and development. The agricultural system itself, industrial growth, economic reorganization and a receptive labour market are all of importance.

William J. Platt, (IEY Trend Paper No.5 "Educating for Development",) specifies a "comprehensive and interrelated set of changes" which include, along with increased farm productivity, such domains as food processing, storage and marketing; the provision of agricultural credit; co-operatives; development programmes for improved water supply, roads and sanitation; services for supplying fertilizers, seeds, insecticides; distribution and repair services for equipment. "Education", Platt observes, "ought to have a more instrumental rôle in contributing to the now more optimistic rural transformation than it has sought or been accorded in the past".

An important prerequisite cited is the question of land tenure which has been described by many observers as the key to promotion of education and development of rural areas. In those countries where 80% of the land belongs to two per cent of the population - a common phenomenon - it becomes impossible to stimulate interest or even to demonstrate the value of education unless agrarian reform occurs first - specifically, a redistribution of the land in which landless peasants working under a feudal system become free small farmers eager to make the best possible use of their property. Until this basic problem is solved it generally remains impossible to realize the other aspects of rural reform.

Rural and urban co-ordination

The concept of rural reform, however, very much implies an interdependency of rural and urban areas, one of the bases of any significant effort towards integrated rural development, the two populations can no longer be thought of as separate societies. In economic terms, the industrialized towns have a large stake in rural development and the rural dweller looks to the towns for markets and for industrial outlets. The transition of a predominantly rural society towards a better balanced rural-urban complex will begin with changes in the rural situation itself, gradually becoming an agro-industrial situation. For industrial expansion in a developing country does not progress as an alternative to the rural economy; the two are in fact part of one interacting complex.

In addition, any effort to isolate the content and method of rural schools from those of urban schools only results in invidious comparisons of the two to the disadvantage of rural education. Then, the "second class" status of rural education further accelerates the exodus of students from rural to urban areas, even though most of those students will therefore only become the next generation of frustrated educated unemployed. In light of this situation, it becomes essential to reform the entire school system and - particularly at the primary levels - to bend over backwards to make the content in urban as well as rural schools relevant to the rural milieu of the nation. Arithmetic problems, reading assignments, social studies, should all reflect the agriculturally based economy that will continue to characterize most developing countries. Such a concentration will not handicap the progress of urban students; in fact, it should give them a more realistic appreciation of their country's real situation(1).

It must be remembered that incessant change is a key factor in all such considerations. The Unesco team in Isphahan emphasized that, "Most of the projects Unesco assists in education could be better designed and implemented if they started, as the Isphahan project did, with baseline surveys of the community or regional milieu as a means of finding the pre-project situation and as a means of better determining development needs. Similarly, it is important to find the characteristics of the target population(s) to be served by the educational project. Characteristics need to be expressed in demographic and socio-economic terms and in expectations".

Indeed, the human factor must be considered as well as the economic factor. Along with a balance in economic opportunity to help stem the flow of discouraged rural youth to employment in urban centres, education is responsible for arriving at a cultural balance in urban and rural consciousness. If an awareness of literature, music and art is to be associated exclusively with city life, and farm existence psychologically linked to drudgery, dullness and naiveté, it will be that much harder for the rural areas to form

(1) Treated in more detail in the subsequent section entitled "The Agricultural Content".

and retain the kind of intelligent and alert personnel so necessary to development. President Nyerere of Tanzania stated in the "Arusha Declaration" that, "The human element is a greater causative force in development than money".

It remains true that the institutions and structures of rural society are the basic cultural endowment of the emergent nations. The phenomenon indicates, on the one hand, a basis of social order, stability, security, and a deeply rooted set of values, and, on the other hand, a tendancy towards static and even stagnant attitudes to thought and policy - along with the possible disruptive forces of communalism, religious friction, and even linguistic strife. Thus, planners for an integrated society might bear in mind the extent to which rural institutions and the values they preserve promote both the assets and liabilities of the developing nations.

Life-long education

Within any given programme, the concept of a "unified system of education" has been strongly advocated. Such a system opposes the idea of separating or disassociating primary, secondary, technical, youth, and adult education on a compartmentalized basis. Instead, the unified concept takes learning to be a process that augments and interrelates as it goes on for a lifetime; it implies a functional basis and links up directly with economic and social development. The learning process from childhood to adulthood embraces the many transformations in existing structures and permits fundamental change in the thought processes of the indivfdual. Thus, it becomes desirable for formal education to recognize the importance of "life-long education" at each level and to maximize this view in the form of the "open-ended school". In this way, the absorption of facts and the examination system become less crucial than the training of the mind, the formation of thought patterns, habits of inquiry and analysis, with an eye to later adult development. It must not be confused with the tacking on of adult education facilities to a usual compartmentalized structure.

To this end, governmental and non-governmental departments and agencies, national and local organizations, must play a part towards integration with the economic and social interests of the country and its overall system. At all levels of planning, the benefits of the individual and of society must be wedded. Even where technical or vocational components are introduced into the general education framework it becomes imperative that those disciplines contribute on an integral basis to capacities of lucid thinking, self-reliance, problem-solving and, again, an awareness of national and community structures.

A regional paper on agricultural education in the Oceania region for the World Conference on Agricultural Education and Training held in Copenhagen, July-August 1970, reported that, "Recent years have seen decreasing emphasis on school agriculture in New Zealand. Twenty years ago there were some 30 high schools offering courses in agriculture. Today, only some six high schools offer agriculture and it is no longer a university entrance

subject. This decline reflects a widespread belief that school education for potential agriculturists should be general with emphasis on mathematics, science and humanities rather than vocationally-oriented". The paper also reported a similar trend in Australia. In fact, the extent to which an agricultural component belongs in a general education curriculum is a subject of controversy and in part must be dictated by national demand; yet the direction reported in New Zealand and Australia represents a step towards integration of rural and urban environments and towards the institution of life-long integrated education.

Primary education

For several reasons, the primary level can be seen as the most sensitive area of educational planning and development; firstly, because pupils who enter at the age of five or six, "scheduled" to leave at 12 or 14, acquire at those impressionable ages thought patterns and habits that will affect them throughout their lives; secondly, because primary education bears the brunt of today's education explosion; thirdly, because many young people, especially in rural areas, will never receive any further school experience; fourthly, because any egalitarian educational frame must provide the minimum learning skills to all.

In terms of rural development, primary level schooling shoulders a difficult responsibility in respect to the problem of future employment. The pupil's future, including the question of whether he eventually remains at the farm or village or migrates to the towns, may depend heavily upon what he has gained in primary school.

Thus, teaching aimed at development within a rural society is paramount at this point. A purely academic approach is self-defeating. In other words, the teacher who explains that four plus three equals seven will be less helpful than one who asks how long a journey will take if it requires four days on horseback and then three days on foot. A familiarity with the function of extension services and related agencies, and an awareness that the government is there to promote and assist as well as to tax, is not the least of a primary school's potential contributions - especially to the school leaver.

Experience drawn from the environment can be used as the medium of mental exercise in any area of teaching, whether in arithmetic, history, geography, reading, spelling. The basic communications skills of literacy - reading, listening, speaking, writing - are central to all learning, a process easier to handle in an area where the mother tongue is current, trickier where another language is stressed.

Nor should manual dexterity be ignored. As opposed to the traditional "white collar" approach to education, which obviously does nothing to help check townward migration, a respect for metal and wood crafts, home improvement and management, cooking and sewing, do much to promote environmental integration if taught as part of the general intellectual improvement

process, a learning-by-doing technique. Basically, this is the technique which has been used for centuries on a father-to-son, mother-to-daughter basis. The schools have an opportunity to introduce it into a broader learning process as well as to update, in so doing, many venerable techniques of greater and lesser merit.

An inculcation of human values is of course essential. Attitudes to co-operation and competition, leadership and tolerance, compassion and conformity, self-reliance and sensitivity, will largely be established at the primary level. The seeds of inter-cultural and international understanding and the basic concepts of individual dignity regardless of race, creed and colour, must develop early.

It should be added that equality of opportunity in regard to sex has long been a neglected factor. The proportion of girls in rural primary schools is much lower than in urban schools, and a general imbalance exists throughout the system. Consequently, women now constitute the majority of illiterates in most rural areas. Social and religious traditions, isolation and poor communications, and economic hardship are all contributing factors. However, the demands of economic development as well as of basic human dignity necessitate urgent reforms in this area. The rural wife plays an essential rôle as a home economics organizer. She is instrumental in family hygiene, the home garden and domestic animal sector, the family budget and home management.

In some areas an assertion of basic rights, improved transportation and communications, and the activity of women's organizations have already begun to redress the situation. A marked improvement in the Near East was reported to the Copenhagen Conference, since more girls in the region are now receiving primary, secondary, and higher education. Yet there, as in many other areas, much remains to be done if prejudices are to be dissolved. The participation of international, governmental and independent agencies is needed to speed progress through literacy programmes as well as through institutional support. Rural home economics schools must be expanded. A good recruitment policy and satisfactory training of women teachers are a necessity.

However, in this problem as in all others the school can only be responsible for part of its pupils' formation. The home and community attitudes in general play a major rôle in any child's development. For this reason a contact with parents, adult education and the long-range creation of a working life-long educational process becomes newly essential. In so many rural areas education is feared precisely as a potentially disruptive force and a source of emigration. In addition, set rural patterns often lead children to accept and not to question, to do as they are told. Such obstacles can hardly be overcome in a day. Yet, with effort and patience, a certain feed-back in the form of children educating their elders begins to materialize. Efforts to build up a rapport with parents will inevitably add to the burden of any teacher, but the initiative, in the course of time, may not only yield important results but may even spell the difference between success and failure.

Much has been said about the creation of incentives, the revelation of higher and more ambitious standards of living, as a goad to students. However, any such incentives must be geared to the rural context, with specific reference to environmental realities, lest mass emigration result. The process is inextricable from that of shaping the student's personality and attitudes to work. The school is well advised to use encouragement rather than threat, to cultivate a sense of accomplishment in learning, and to stress success rather than failure and punishment, to avoid frustration and humiliation. The value of labour ought to be linked to that of acumen and developed, not reduced, to the level of manual hardship.

Secondary education

In part, the efforts of the secondary school represent a continuation, a broadening and deepening of the same themes found in the primary level. Yet, now the child has a greater capacity for abstract thought, and a heightened maturity to apply to social understanding. All curricular elements ought to develop specifically those skills of logic and communication which promote and increase power of expression and precision of thought. Beyond the question of programmatic material, a training in scientific method itself is vital. The student must observe, must learn to set down his findings, engage in speculation followed by confirmation or refutation. In this way he will eventually find it possible to reappraise traditional values and institutions, and the existing possibilities of change.

Indeed, the capabilities and perspectives developed at the secondary level are crucial to the goal of rural development. The skills and potential for leadership acquired at this level are such that the lack of secondary schools in many rural areas in fact represents one of the most serious obstacles to progress for young nations seeking access to education.

In this respect, one important issue is that of the residential or consolidated secondary school in rural areas. In part, these institutions may provide an answer to the problem faced by areas whose population is too small to justify the creation of separate schools. In any case, given a sparsity of population, the catchment area for a secondary school which offers some variety in curriculum has to be wide, requiring either a residential arrangement or bus transportation, or both. There are several trade-offs here - transportation vs. boarding, variety in education vs. some loss of local identity, specialization possible in a large school vs. psychological problems of a student living away from home.

Any decisions regarding these pros and cons will have to be made at the national level in close consideration of demographic cultural, social and economic factors. In Peru and Bolivia, experience has shown that the consolidated schools work well in part, yet are of no value to the Indian population which constitutes 50% of the rural total. The Indian communities are in no position to utilize the vocational or academic skills their pupils bring back, and the towns lack facilities for employment.

Unesco's Division of Youth Activities stresses that in countries where the population under 20 years of age represents almost 50% of the total, consideration should be given to out-of-school youth programmes, so as to reach that critical minimum number of young persons which would keep the youth component of the society from becoming a liability and would turn it instead into a major contributor to economic and social development.

Such an out-of-school programme should permit the largest possible number of young persons to be reached within the limits of men, money and time. It has to provide the very basis of vocational training, while forming individuals and citizens; it must be rooted in society; it must be as practical as possible without compromising anyone's change for improvement; it must be open to those most in need as well as the more privileged. Out-of-school youth activities therefore should not be considered as marginal but as an aspect of the educational process, instrumental in the reformation of the educational system itself.

Another, and more controversial, issue is that of the extent to which teaching at the secondary level, in or out of school, must embody a political awareness, even going so far as to risk the emergence of dissident youth. The Division of Youth Activities takes the position that such a risk must be taken, that the element of political conviction is a necessary consideration even in reaching today's young people, and that political awareness and engagement in rural areas is greatly preferable to apathy or indifference.

Continuity and cost

The problem of the school leaver is a planning dilemma that has to be seen in the broad context of employment and economic integration. Wastage - which includes drop-outs and those who must repeat levels often because no appropriate facilities exist -, reaches proportions of nearly 70% in Africa, and from 40% to over 70% in Asia, at the primary level alone. In part, the drop-out phenomenon is due to low standards of living which oblige children to leave school in order to help farm subsistence crops. In part, the same low standards also deprive parents of understanding the benefits of education. The International Conference on Education, Geneva, 1970, also stressed causes inherent to the school systems such as inadequate teaching of reading skills early in the primary school level, and insufficient teacher training.

The solution is obviously twofold - the raising of standards through a cogent rural development, and the improvement of education itself. The Geneva Conference stressed the value of influencing parents, of sharpening methods used at primary and even pre-school levels, of ensuring continuity from level to level with a flexible system; and, in later stages, a diversification of the curriculum as a means of strengthening the student's motivation.

In the meantime, the wastage factor must be dealt with via institutional means. A gap of years and of skills constitutes a no-man's land between the society of older generations and the productive life of wage

employment which even a little education leads a younger generation to expect. In effect, continuing educational facilities are needed to make such progress a reality.

Post-primary and other interim methods may take the form of an institutionalized course, of seminars and workshops based at primary or secondary schools, or of work-study arrangements. In any case, youths and adults alike should participate in these programmes in order to break down the age barrier and facilitate the ideal of continuity.

Given variations in circumstance, suggestions to this end include: (a) use of an indigenous apprenticeship system; (b) training of youths to be of service to established farmers in areas where land is expensive, restricted or difficult to obtain; (c) changes in administrative structure to permit closer contact at the working level among educational services, health services, community development units and agricultural extension officers, to permit an integration of these forces; (d) polyvalent or multipurpose basic training for village level workers; (e) more training for government staff at all levels in rural development - including an awareness within universities of multidiscipline approaches and researches into local situations; (f) the use of primary schools as centres for development for youth and adults as well as children; (g) the encouragement of pre-vocational material in the secondary school.

The agricultural content

No programme or measures, however, can quite be considered apart from the question of the rôle of agricultural components in education at all levels. To what extent is the actual teaching of agriculture necessary in rural general education, and to what extent does this interfere with the aims of schooling?

Many attempts to introduce an "agricultural bias" into teaching have ended in disappointment. In part, this was so because ill-founded programming produced over-ambitious, misshapen aims, and failed to produce a cogent interaction of agricultural material with the fundamental themes of learning. Often, these programmes also failed to present the subject as an intellectual challenge of a high order in areas where farm work was associated with a demeaning state of poverty.

Varying opinions exist as to what should be done. One, for example, is that primary school is no place to introduce an agricultural course as such. Others feel that the subject can be raised and integrated with the usual academic pursuits, even at the earliest levels. Most would agree that since primary and secondary schooling must prepare young people for eventual entry into adult society, material of practical application to life and environment would necessarily include some agricultural bias - if only through pre-science and later biology - through nature studies, experience with animals, and the like. A development of managerial skills is also much to the point.

Environmental studies concentrating on crops, markets, animals, insects, would create concepts and attitudes to serve as a foundation for later specialized training, would sponsor an internalized commitment to farm improvement and rural development, would link agricultural interests to the pupil's success in education. The idea, at heart, is to transform the natural environment by first transforming the student's conception of it. The process includes an introduction to technical concepts and a familiarity with sources of technical information, the creation of a realistic image of agricultural professions, training in cost/benefit analysis, teaching about modern farm production and marketing, an awareness of the demands and problems of crop and animal husbandry, a training in small machine technology and manual skills.

Yet, even proponents of a strong agricultural bias agree that the aim is defeated if teaching in this area is not equal to and integrated with the rest of the curriculum. Thus, the supplementary techniques mentioned above bear various relation to the larger issue. The use of primary schools as "centres" for development lends itself to a number of creative possibilities since it brings agriculture to the scene of general educat on. The encouragement of pre-vocational material in secondary school would have to be delicately integrated with other educational demands. The use of indigenous apprenticeship systems is not ideal unless accompanied by sufficient background and orientation in general science. Even youths engaged in part-time or self-employment should, simultaneously, be given opportunities to continue their general education.

Planning and implementation

This group of young people will generally be between the ages of 13 and 17, both boys and girls. Some will have attended school as children, but for unequal lengths of time; many will have had no schooling at all and many will be illiterate. Some will have a grasp of change, others will be tied to traditional habits and patterns. Some will have expanded their earlier training, others will have forgotten most of it. And yet, future prosperity will depend largely upon this educationally amorphous group.

Possibly, the general education component in their work can be handled by teachers while the pre-vocational aspect is tackled by extension officers. However, such a system risks separating the two and compromising an integrated result. Alternatively, or as a supplement, clubs can be of use. Young farmers' clubs, or 4-K clubs as in Kenya, or 4-H clubs as in the United States of America, help to unite young people in an organization that is truly theirs, a source of social communication, of pleasure, and frequently of profit.

Further instruction can be set up in "youth training centres" which attempt to link academic education to practical goals and stress an orientation of both to rural life. The centres recruit school leavers of about 17 or 18 for a two-year programme, after which they graduate to settlement farms. During the training period they are assigned plots to cultivate and

market. Part of the profits are held in a savings account for later investment on the student's eventual farm.

Constant thought to job opportunities is essential, however. Not all school leavers can return to self-employment or become landowners. Any manpower surplus must be diverted to other jobs beneficial to the national interest. An increase in unemployment - even and especially in the area of skilled labour - can mean complete failure for a rural development effort.

In many emergent countries, national youth organizations, sometimes with camp facilities, have been established to "employ" youth in projects such as community road construction, equipment making, home building. These programmes of course help promote a vocational bias. Correspondance courses and education via radio and television can also be of service.

Throughout, our goal of integrated education must never be abandoned. Unesco programmes stress functional literacy, as described earlier. Thus, literacy taught with a vocational component or orientation enables the unschooled adult to take advantage of facilities available for other facets of life-long learning.

In terms of organization, the process must be viewed from the bottom up; if such planning is to work effectively on a national basis it must first be well adapted to local concerns. A national development centre or, possibly, a board of adult education, might be the main co-ordinating agency for the continuing education of youth and adults; but care must be taken to ensure that the local committees are fully representative. Sufficient implementation can only become a reality when all concerned develop a common sense of purpose, when educational, agricultural and health officers along with community development workers and other aids think of themselves as part of a single line of activity for progressive change. The actions of any one department must be harmonized with all other agencies.

Member States might consider the establishment of an advisory body representing public and private organizations, business and industrial firms, trade unions, co-operatives, and all institutions concerned with youth and adult training. The board would associate non-governmental organizations for the planning and implementation of policy and programmes.

The concept of continuing education can be stimulated by a few pilot experiments where a complex of institutions and agencies exists, by preparing a list of non-educational organizations which might share responsibility, by assigning research teams to the task of ferreting out obstacles to implementation.

Research and comparative studies in technology, methodology, and materials are no less important. These efforts would include pedagogical, psychological and sociological aspects, including motivation and interest, learning processes, curriculum building, evaluation, and training methods.

At all levels, sufficient foresight and perceptive calculation of necessities and costs is essential. A certain effort will have to be reserved for questions of adult education. Each stage bears upon the others; the process must be thought of as a dynamic whole.

Aims and realities

Thus, certain goals and some specific guidelines to success are generally topics of agreement. The pressing need to orient education to economic and social development in the rural areas of young nations involves the promotion of a close integration of teaching and environment; it indicates the desirability of evolving a continuous educational process to the end of creating a life-long learning process; it calls for a functioning harmony between urban and rural societies, among all levels of the school system, and among all responsible agencies and parties; it demands careful planning of all conceptual, technical, economic and administrative elements.

Debate exists as to specific methods and techniques within these encompassing goals. However, much of that controversy can only be solved in practice and much of it in fact corresponds to the varying needs of nations and regions. It has been pointed out that, above all, a study of local need and local reality is the key to educational planning for rural development in terms of actual implementation. If the approach is both flexible and perceptive, then methodology follows. The challenge is great, the need is imperative.