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ABSTRACT
                Organized to focus world-wide public attention on the
massive gender inequalities in many areas of the world, a seminar
entitled "Women and Literacy Development--Constraints and Prospects"
was held in Sweden during August 1991. This book presents conference
papers by female literacy experts from 12 developing nations (three
in Latin America, five in Africa, three in Asia, and one in the South
Pacific Region) on the literacy situation for girls and women in
their respective countries. Papers in the book are: (1) "Women and
Literacy Development in the Third World: A Rapsodic Overview" (Eve
Malmquist); (2) "Women and Literacy Development in India" (Anita
Dighe); (3) "Women and Literacy Development in Pakistan" (Neelam
Hussain); (4) "Flowers in Bloom: An Account of Women and Literacy
Development in Thailand" (Kasama Varavarn); (5) "Women and Literacy
Development in the South Pacific Region" (Barbara Moore); (6)
"Illiterate Rural Women In Egypt: Their Educational Needs and
Problems: A Case Study" (Nadia Gamal El-Din); (7) "Women and Literacy
Development in Botswana: Some Implementation Strategies" (Kgomotso D.
Motlotle); (8) "Women and Literacy Development in East Africa with
Particular Reference to Tanzania" (Mary Rusimbi); (9) "Women and
Literacy Development in Mozambique" (Teresa Veloso); (10) "Women and
Literacy Development: A Zimbabwean Perspective" (Maseabata E. Tsosane
and John A. Marks); (11) "Women and Literacy Development in Mexico"
(Geraldine Novelo Oppenheim); (12) "A Post-Literacy Project with the
Women of the Indian Community of San Lorenzo, Colombia" (Mirvan
Zuniga); (13) "Gender Subordination and Literacy in Brazil" (Fulvia
Rosemberg); (14) "Women and Literacy: Summary of Discussions at the
International Linkoping Seminar" (Ulla-Britt Persson and Neelam
Hussain); and (15) "Concluding Remarks, Suggestions and
Recommendations" (Eve Malmquist). (RS)

WOMEN
and Literacy Development
in the Third World

Eve Malmquist (ed.)

Linköping University, Department of Education and Psychology
in cooperation with UNESCO and SIDA

Linköping, Sweden, 1992

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Contents

Introduction

The city of Linköping, Sweden, was chosen as the site for an international seminar on the theme "WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT - CONSTRAINTS AND PROSPECTS" during August 1991.

The seminar was arranged by Linköping University, Sweden, and sponsored by UNESCO's Participation Program, Paris, France, Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), Stockholm, Sweden, Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, and Swedish National Commission for International Literacy Year 1990.

Female literacy experts from twelve developing countries (three in Latin America, five in Africa, three in Asia, and one in The Caribbean) were especially invited and asked to prepare a brief, engaging, informative and provocative paper for the seminar on the literacy situation for women in their respective country.

The intent to publish all the papers, presented at the seminar, in a special handbook was announced in advance to all the invited participants, and a writing guide for authors of chapters for the planned handbook was attached to the invitation.

The present volume includes an introductory, rapsodic overview on the theme Women and Literacy Development in the Third World, and evaluative descriptions of the literacy situation for girls and women in the following countries: India, Pakistan, Thailand, The South Pacific Region, Egypt, Botswana, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Mexico, Colombia, and Brazil.

In addition, a summary of discussions, held at the seminar, is presented, as well as some concluding remarks, suggestions and recommendations.

The purpose of the publication is identical with the stated objectives of the international seminar:

- to focus general, world wide public attention to the existence of multiple deprivation and massive gender inequalities in many areas of the world;

- to arouse awareness of the urgent need of renewed dedication and efforts at all levels required to overcome the intolerable discrimination, that is a common experience faced by many women;

- to get reviews carried out of the major issues and problems in connection with women's literacy acquisition from a number of selected Third World countries; and to discuss in some detail some compelling questions related to the literacy development of girls and women.

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Sixty-five per cent and maybe even more of the world's illiterates are women. This is simply one of the many statistical figures, which highlights the necessity of particular priority on the needs, concerns, and problems of women as individuals, as well as on their situation and roles in relation to broader issues of regional and national development in our plans of action for the improvement of literacy among women throughout the world.

We sincerely hope that models of strategies (procedures) used, and successes as well as failures, portrayed in literacy education for women in various countries, described in this handbook can be of value for literacy programmes also in other areas, where similar situations exist.

May I conclude by expressing our great appreciation and thanks to the sponsoring bodies mentioned above. And logically, my thoughts and feelings of gratitude lead to Director General Birgitta Ulfhammar, Swedish Ministry of Education, and to Dr. Phil. Agneta Lind, SIDA. No doubt, it was their conviction, transferred to the donor organizations, which led to the decisions of financial support, without which the arrangement of this seminar had not been possible. Secondly, I would like to thank the administrative personnel, headed by Dr. Phil. Håkan Hult, Director of the Department of Education and Psychology at Linköping University for its professional and personal commitments. Thanks and appreciation are also owed to Miss Maritta Edman, Linköping University, for her dedicated secretarial assistance in preparing the manuscript, to Lecturer Ulla-Britt Persson, Linköping University, for efficient proof-reading, and to Dr. Hassan Mustapha, University of Salford, England, for his valuable review of two of the chapters in this book.

Linköping in May, 1992

Eve Malmquist
Seminar leader, Editor

EVE MALMQUIST
Linköping, Sweden

Chapter 1

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD. A RAPSODIC OVERVIEW

The World Conference in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, on the theme "Education For All", staged by four U.N. Agencies - UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and World Bank - brought together the largest number ever of high-level government representatives, international and bilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations and professional organizations of various kinds - and what is exceedingly remarkable and encouraging - reached a global consensus on needs, objectives and strategies as regards basic educa-tion for the world in the 1990's.

The goals outlined at this world conference in Thailand was later in 1990 endorsed by the World Summit for Children at the United Nations. They read as follows:

a)   the expansion of early childhood development activities;

b)   universal access to basic education, including completion of primary education or equivalent learning achievement by at least 80 per cent of the relevant school-age children with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls;

c)   the reduction of adult literacy by half, with emphasis on female literacy;

d)   vocational training and preparation for employment, and

e)   increased acquisition of knowledge, skills and values through all edu-cational channels, including modern and traditional communication media, to improve the quality of life of children and families.

I have referred to this "Education for All" document, because it has in a fitting and suitable way placed *literacy* in the context of basic learning needs of all people around the world. It is also highlighting the necessity of par-ticular priority on the needs, concerns and problems of women and literacy development.

And that is of special relevance for all of us at this international seminar in Linköping, Sweden, having as its main objective to focus world wide public attention to the existence of multiple deprivation and massive gender

inequalities in many areas of the world and the special problems connected with women's literacy development.

As some kind of a basis of our deliberations at this seminar I would like to remind you in a rather rapsodic form of some general aspects of the global literacy situation.

Illiteracy a serious obstacle to all kinds of development

Since 1948, The General Assembly of United Nations has stated many times in various resolutions, that the right to education is one of the fundamental rights of man, and also that illiteracy is one of the most serious obstacles to economic, political, social and individual development we know. Lack of good reading and writing ability has been characterized as a grave block to international understanding and cooperation, and the most stubborn threat to peace in our time, both within and between nations.

In practically all countries, governing bodies seem to be conscious of the exceedingly important role good literacy skills play in all life's activities.

There is, however, still to be noticed a tremendous gap between statements and resolutions on solemn occasions as regards the human right to education and the real situation for many hundreds of million children and adults in the world. This statement is applicable to highly industrialized countries as well as so called Third World countries,

The importance of reaching a rapid solution to the world wide gigantic problem of illiteracy is generally recognized in *principle*. But when it comes to *practical action*, other priority problems hitherto seem to over-shadow literacy programs at all levels, for example food and so called "defence".

National literacy commissions in the struggle against illiteracy

Many member countries of U.N. have established national commissions to celebrate the International Literacy Year 1990.

The reports I have received from various countries point in the direction that some of these national literacy commissions have taken some highly praiseworthy initiatives in creating public consciousness of the far-reaching problem of illiteracy through the use of mass media, radio, TV and press agencies. Plans of action for possible solutions have been designed and started.

In many areas of the world, however, they seem to lead a rather silent and anonymous life, I am sorry to admit.

Still a deeply rooted view appears to remain; "Illiteracy is a problem of another country than mine." And we may ask: What will be the effect of the grand declarations on the theme "Education for All" in Thailand 1990, I

have just referred to? And what will happen after the International Literacy Year? Will the ILY national literacy commissions, established in 1990, cease to exist? Or will they continue only in a dormant state until the year 2000, which according to the United Nations' plan is the target year for effective literacy and a literate environment world-wide?

I sincerely hope not! These national literacy commissions could be wonderful instruments in the struggle against illiteracy.

What is heavily needed is cooperation in all dimensions and at all levels. International Literacy Year 1990 represented a unique opportunity to focus public attention to one of the most demanding and important issues of our time. Its declarations and activities can still serve as highly useful and valuable starting points. But literacy improvement needs continuity and persistence.

It is certainly not a one-year-affair!

Literacy around the world. How is the present state of affairs?

To what extent has the fundamental right of every human being to get an opportunity to learn to read and write been realized?

A high priority has during the last decades been placed on education in national as well as international development programmes. Substantial worldwide increases in enrolments at schools and colleges have been recorded. In low-income nations the expansion has above all involved primary school-age children.

In the economically developed countries secondary and higher education has been considerably expanded.

But the growing demand for education has far outpaced the ability to cope with it.

The expansion noted is in many ways gratifying, and the efforts put down to reach the outlined goals worthy of the greatest respect and admiration.

Nevertheless, it must be conceded, that the world's educational status, in general, continues to be very disquieting, yes, alarming.

The map of illiteracy closely coincides with the maps of poverty, illnesses, hunger, high infant mortality, low life expectancy, unemployment, environmental destruction and multiple other inequalities. The map of low-income-countries is to a great extent identical with the map of countries, which have recently acquired national independence. The gap between them and the high-income countries is an ever-growing economic and political danger.

Illiteracy has always existed, but in primitive societies with traditional patterns of living, the inability to read and write was hardly a big handicap for sustaining human life.

Today, however, greatly improved means of transportation and communication have brought all people living on this earth closer together.

The use of advanced technical equipment has become increasingly neces-
sary for survival everywhere in the world.

Therefore illiteracy has become a more and more serious problem.

There will be fewer and fewer jobs available for unskilled illiterate
workers in any part of the world of today. "Last hired, first fired" is a
common expression. And "first fired" very often are those, who are
illiterates.

## Some statistics on the global literacy situation

It is important to underscore, that we must be exceedingly cautious with
regard to the validity of available world statistics. Definitions concerning
reading ability, literacy, functional illiteracy, length of schooling, teacher-
pupil ratios, and other similar categories of data often differ quite con-
siderably in different countries as do statistical competence and techniques.
Keeping these precautions in mind we may none the less be allowed to draw
certain conclusions from available United Nations and World Bank data,
attempting to assess the world-wide literacy situation.

1) Universal school enrolment at the primary level has practically
   speaking been achieved in the industrialized nations around the world
   and also in some developing countries.

2) A number of the most advanced industrialized countries have a second-
   ary school attendance beyond 90 per cent and most of the others in
   excess of 70 per cent.

3) More than half the populations of developing regions of the world
   have, however, never been to school, never been given the chance to
   learn to read and write, less than 25 per cent go to secondary school,
   and less than 5 per cent continue their education at higher learning
   institutes and universities.

4) The percentage of adults (i.e. persons aged 15 and over), who are
   illiterate has *decreased* from 44,4% in 1950, to 39,3% in 1960, to 32,9%
   in 1970, to 29,9% in 1985, to 26,9% in 1990, and is estimated to be
   around 22% by the year 2000, unless radical improvements are made.

5) While the percentage of illiterates in many countries has been reduced,
   in absolute figures the number of illiterates is estimated to increase by
   25 to 35 million persons each year, owing to the fact that educational
   progress has not kept pace with the rapid population growth, and that
   many neoliterates relapse into illiteracy. The majority of these new
   illiterates are women.

6) The illiteracy rate is estimated to be over 40% in 48 of the member
   countries of the United Nations, 29 of them in Sub-Saharan Africa.

7) In 18 countries more than 90% of the population is almost entirely
   illiterate.

Table 1: Adult illiterates (age 15 and over) and illiteracy rates.

	Adult Illiterates (in millions)			Illiteracy Rates (%)			Decrease 1985-2000	
	1985	1990	2000	1985	1990	2000	%	Points
WORLD TOTAL	965.1	962.6	942.0	29.9	26.9	22.0		-7.9
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES of which	908.1	920.6	918.5	39.4	35.1	28.1		-11.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	133.6	138.8	146.8	59.1	52.7	40.3		-18.8
Arab States	58.6	61.1	65.8	54.5	4..7	38.1		-16.4
Latin America/Caribbean	44.2	43.5	40.9	17.6	15.2	11.3		-6.3
Eastern Asia	297.3	281.0	233.7	28.7	24.0	17.0		-11.7
Southern Asia	374.1	397.3	437.0	57.7	53.8	45.9		-11.8
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	57.0	42.0	23.5	6.2	4..	2.3		-3.9

Source: UNESCO, 1990
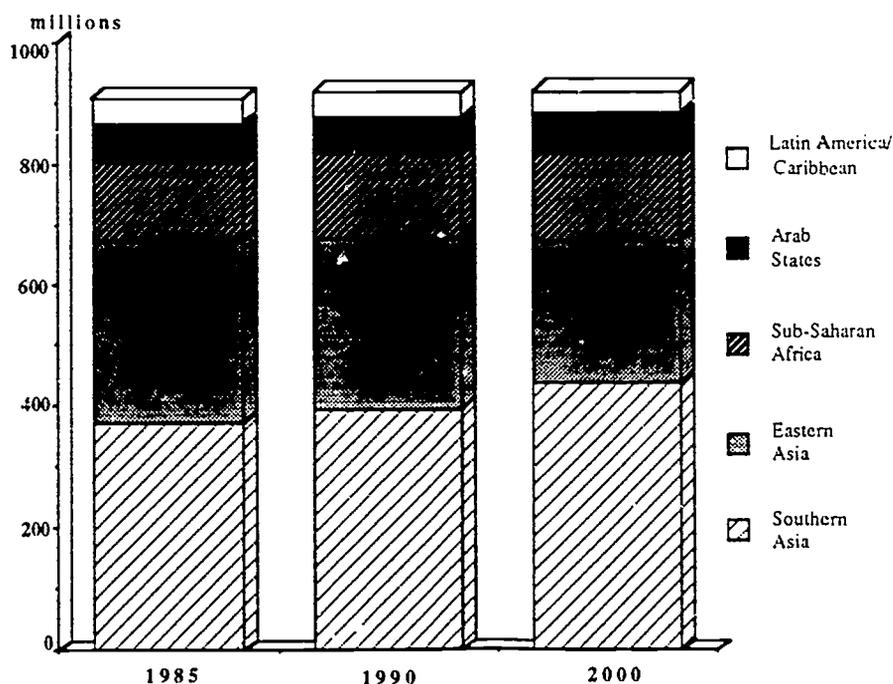
Source: UNESCO, 1990

Figure 1: Number of adult illiterates in developing countries.

8) After thirty years of growth as regards education in the Third World countries, the number of children in the elementary schools are now *declining*. In half of the developing countries the number of school children has diminished, mainly because of the economic crisis, the debt crisis. A large proportion of school children drop out of school very early.

Girls represent around 75% of the drop-outs. During the International Literacy Year 1990 around 40 million children left school, before they had received elementary skills in reading and writing, out of the around 100 million children having begun school this year, according to a UNICEF report (1990).

Sex discrimination in literacy development

The overwhelming majority of the illiterate population in the world - 98% - are to be found in the developing countries, and it will continue to be so. This is UNESCO's tragical and depressing prediction for the year 2000. Invariably, females constitute the majority of the illiterate population (around 2/3).

And the gap between men and women as regards illiteracy is increasing, not decreasing
Only ten countries account for 73% of the world's illiterate population - 6 are in Asia, 3 in Africa and 1 in Latin America (UNESCO, 1990).
As is expected, these are among the most populous countries in these regions. Of these ten countries, India and China together, account for just over one-half (52%) of the world's illiterates in 1990. Most of the illiterates and semi-illiterates in China are also women. In accordance with The National Census of 1982, women account for 76% of the illiterates between the ages 12-40.
Among a number of national minorities in China women are practically all illiterates (Yao Xhongda, 1985).

Experiences from India
If India is to succeed in eradicating illiteracy, far-reaching and drastic interventions are indeed necessary. In spite of great and highly praise-worthy efforts the number of illiterates in the country continues to grow, and is by UNESCO (1990) estimated to be 280 million, out of which the great majority are women.
Other sources present estimates of the number of illiterates in India at a much higher order. Anita Dighe, in her chapter in this volume, presents the figure 324 million illiterates in India according to the 1991 Census, out of which 190 million were women. Of these, 170.7 million lived in rural

areas. "In other words", she concludes, "more than half of the total illiterates in India were rural females."

Bordia and Kaul (1990) state, that the problem of illiteracy in India still is growing. They estimate the number of illiterates to 437 million. The varied estimates of the magnitude of illiteracy in the country seem to be mainly due to differences in definitions of the concept literacy. Regardless of what figures we find most plausible, we may be allowed to make the general declaration, that the problem of illiteracy in India is of a gigantic order and remains a great challenge. Bordia and Kaul have as so many other investigators pointed to the gravity and the urgency of the task to realize the goal of universal literacy in India. They refer to three main issues for possible success: "ensuring that primary education becomes available to all children (so that fresh flow of illiterates is arrested); literacy being an inherent need, and the right, of the masses, the responsibility for its delivery should be transferred from the hierarchy of officialdom to mass organizations; and a shift of emphasis should take place from one-time literacy learning to life-long education, which would improve the condition of life of the learners" (1990, p. 19).

They also advocate that dialogue and discussion should be an integral part of literacy programmes.

> These enable learners to systematize their thoughts, relate learning to their own situation, and articulate their views. In the case of women, this is of greater importance, because they have been accustomed to a culture of silence in a fashion the males of their own family are not. It is also of importance, that women acquire a feminine solidarity based on communality of experience. From cultivation of this togetherness emerges a different self-perception and different image of themselves (ibid. p.15).

Women left behind

In all regions of the world, without exception, there are more illiterate women than men. The literacy gap between the sexes, which grows in proportion to the rate of illiteracy, is most pronounced in the Least Developed Countries, then Africa, the Developing countries, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and finally, the Developed Countries.
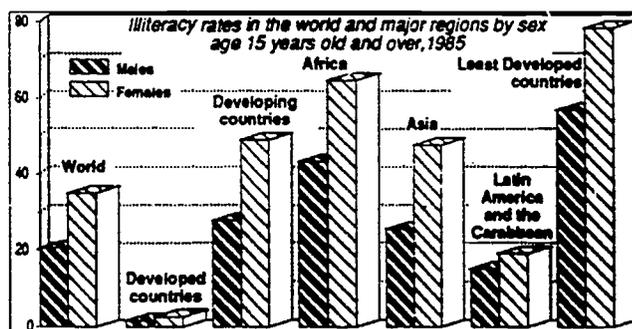
Illiteracy rates by region and sex (1985).
Source : Unesco Office of Statistics. UNESCO SOURCES N° 2 · MARCH 1989

Figure 2: The male/female literacy gap.

The government of India has initiated a move to start a number of so-called "missions", directed to support of disadvantaged groups in society. National Literacy Mission, started in 1988, was one such societal "mission", aiming at imparting functional literacy to 80 million adults in the 15-35 age group by 1995.

This "mission" has "in the last two years made it possible for the country to adopt a systematically planned campaign approach, characterized by large scale mobilization and the creation of an atmosphere, in which educated youth, students and community volunteers take on the challenge of illiteracy. This approach has brought a fresh air of excitement to the entire literacy scene" (Bordia and Kaul, 1990, p. 9).

Some examples from Morocco and Brazil

In the rural areas of Morocco boys outnumber girls as regards enrolment in primary schooling at a rate of over 2 to 1 (boys at 71%, girls at 29%). According to 1990 World Bank estimates, 78 per cent of the adult female population was reported to be illiterate in Morocco, in contrast to 67 per cent of males. The gender gap remains greatest in the rural areas.

As has been reported also from other countries, Moroccan women with higher levels of education tend to have fewer children, lose fewer children because of illnesses in infancy and childhood, and are more likely to use modern health care facilities and vaccinations.

Based on 1986 estimates by Morocco's Ministry of Planning, the fertility rate for women at the ages 45-49, who had no education, was 7 births per woman, while the rate decreased dramatically with increasing levels of education; for those with primary education, the rate dropped to 6 births per woman; junior secondary 4,6 births; senior secondary 3,3 births; higher education 2,8 births (Centre d'Etudes Des Recherches Demographiques - CERD, Morocco, 1988).

A survey of 18 Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America reveals a high rate of illiteracy - 19,5% on an average - especially in rural areas and among women (César Picón, 1985, p. 142).

Illiteracy among adults - 15 years and above - in absolute figures seems to be a rather stationary problem in Latin America and the Caribbean - 44 million in 1970 and the same figure in 1985 and 1990. Optimistic estimates for the year 2000 will give a relatively moderate reduction to 41 million.

Most of the illiterates in Latin America are to be found among the very poor in the rural areas, such as those in the northern states of Brazil, and among non-Spanish speaking populations of Peru, Guatemala and Bolivia. Brazil alone accounts for around 44% of the illiterates in Latin America.

But as Fúlvia Rosemberg underlines in her chapter of this volume:

In Brazil the educational system has been allowing equal access to girls and boys along the last forty years. Inequalities concerning access to, and staying in school draw on other factors than sex - e.g. social class, urban or rural dwelling, region of birth and race belonging.

Further may be added, that two out of every three adult women in Africa, and one of every two in Asia are illiterate.

Around one billion illiterates are waiting for national and international action and cooperative efforts.

Examples of inequalities of educational provision

The solemn declarations from time to time on the theme "Education For All" and equality between sexes as regards opportunity to education have hitherto not been transferred into reality.

On the contrary - the discrimination against women in the field of education continues. Females constitute the majority of the illiterate population at the World level also in 1990 in accordance with UNESCO's estimates. And in the projections for the year 2000 UNESCO concludes, that this situation will remain (UNESCO, 1990, p. 40). In spite of increased efforts to reduce the gap between the two sexes, it is widening. In 1960, 58% of the illiterates in the world were women; by 1970 this percentage had risen to 60%; and by 1985 it had gone up to 63% and by 1990 it is estimated to be 66%.

The total increase of the number of illiterates among the adult population in the world between 1960 and 1985 was estimated to be around 154 million. Out of this total increase 133 million have been found to be women (86%). This is another way of demonstrating the widening gap between men and women as to educational opportunities.

The reality behind the statistics concerning the growth of the number of illiterates in the world is indeed a tragic one.

For children and adults denied the right to education, the right to learn to read and write well enough to get along in today's society, the prediction of a life marked by unemployment, poverty, yes, in many cases, drugs and crime, might unfortunately often be true.

The inequality of educational provision in various parts of the world may be exemplified in many ways.

Children in industrialized countries will enjoy full-time (primary/secondary) schooling from the age of 5/6/7 until 18 years of age (in some cases). Many will continue to tertiary education. In some advanced countries 80 to 85% of the population at 18 years of age are enrolled full time in higher educational institutions.

At the other end of the scale UNESCO reports at least four countries as having no enrolments at all in tertiary education. Most primary schools in Third World countries are in villages, where water may be extremely scarce and electricity non-existent. Books and other teaching equipment are often in extremely short supply. In many countries school buildings are unsuitable. There is a severe shortage of teachers in service at schools, and many have no teacher training at all. This in spite of a rewarding increase of the number of primary school teachers in the world between 1970 and 1987 - from 14,3 to 21,8 million (UNESCO, 1990).

About half the world's children of school age (6-12 years of age) are not attending school and will probably never learn to read and write, unless radical improvements are made.
In half the countries of the world, half the children attending school do not complete the primary school. And let us remind ourselves, that many more girls than boys drop out of school, before completing the third grade.
This fact leads to the plausible conclusion, that the rate of female illiteracy might be considerably underestimated.

Consequences of neglect and discrimination of females

The evident literacy gap between men and women is one of many significant indicators of the economic, social and cultural inequalities for many girls and women.
The consequences of this neglect and discrimination of females are multiple and extremely serious. UNESCO has expressed this in the following way in a recent publication:

> Women bear the main responsibility for the well-being of their family and play the major role in efforts to improve health and nutritional standard and to introduce family planning practices. They are also the principal educators of coming generations.
> In the poorest strata of society, whether rural or urban, women perform economic functions, which are essential to society and crucial for their family's survival.
> Education of girls and women is, thus, a priority, wether one's criterion is economic development, or greater equity. Women are a major productive as well as the only reproductive force of society, and, at the same time, are often the poorest of the poor.
> This is a deeply rooted problem, which will not be rapidly solved, but experience shows, that properly designed programmes, which address the urgent needs of women, can produce significant short-term results, while providing a basis for longer term progress (UNESCO, 1989, p. 3).

Table 2: Education at the first level. Apparent survival rates.

	Initial Year	Percentage of Cohort Reaching Grade 1	2	3	4
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES					
Sub-Saharan Africa	1975	100	79	72	64
	1986	100	79	72	66
Arab States	1975	100	94	88	88
	1986	100	99	95	93
Latin America and the Caribbean	1975	100	65	56	49
	1986	100	70	61	55
Eastern Asia	1975	100	82	77	71
	1986	100	87	83	78
Southern Asia	1975	100	70	60	50
	1986	100	69	65	59
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	1975	100	97	96	96
	1986	100	98	97	97

Education at the first level

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4

Sub-Saharan
Africa

Arab
States

Latin America/
Caribbean

Eastern
Asia

Southern
Asia
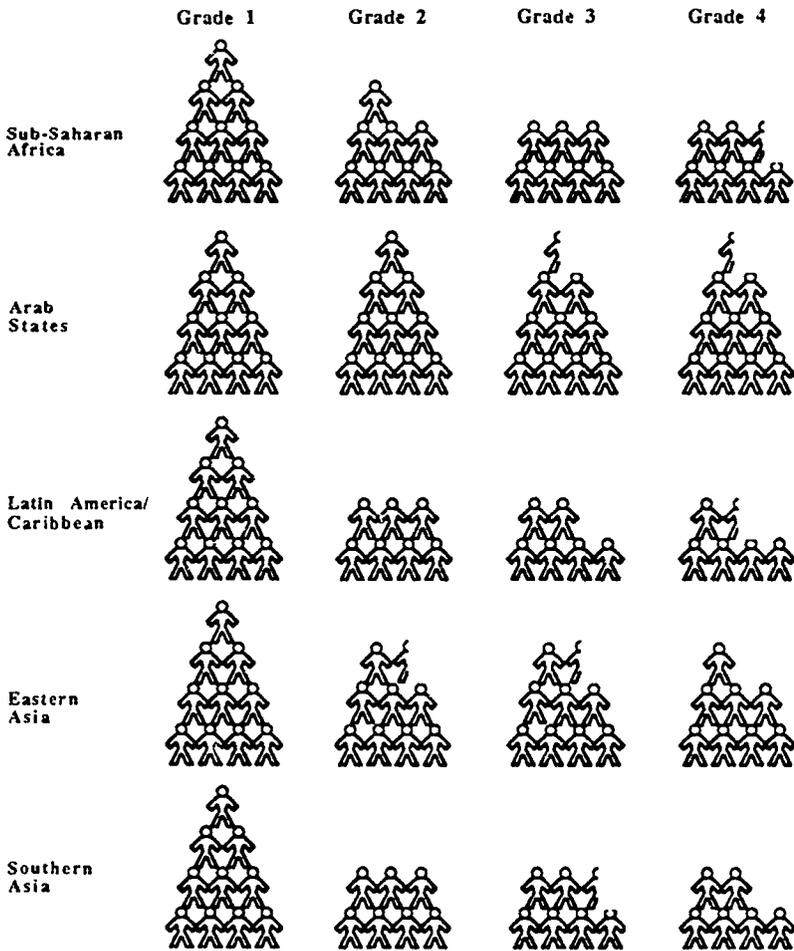
Figure 3: Apparent survival rates, developing countries, initial year
1986.

Source: UNESCO, 1990

Sex differences at various school levels

The regulations governing the education preceding the first level of schooling are rather flexible and vary considerably from country to country around the world. In both Developing and Developed countries, the most common entrance age is 3 years and the normal duration is either 2 or 3 years. An entrance age of 4 years with a duration of 2 years is also quite prevalent in Third World countries according to UNESCO (1990). For the Developed countries, in 1987, 2 out of 3 children were enrolled in pre-primary education.

For the Third World countries, 2 out of 10 children were enrolled, with great variations by the major sub-regions, though.

For Latin-America and the Caribbean, in 1987, almost 4 out of 10 children attended pre-primary institutions and for Eastern Asia 3 out of 10 children. For Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab states and Southern Asia, the ratios were much lower, namely respectively 4,9%, 14,0% and 8,7%.

> HELPING GIRLS SUCCEED AT SCHOOL
> * Change attitudes in communities where (male) cultural traditions do not allow girls to go to school.
> * Increase the number of female teachers by encouraging rural women to follow teaching careers by relaxing the qualifications for their recruitment.
> * Run special condensed in-service courses for female teachers.
> * Provide residential accommodation for female teachers.
> * Stop girls being removed from school for early marriage.
> * Set targets for increasing the number of girls enrolled in education.
> * Provide child-care services so as to free young girls from looking after their younger brothers and sisters.
>
> (Unesco: International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 1991)

For this international seminar, focusing on the female literacy situation, it is of great interest to note, that as regards enrolment in pre-primary education there are practically no differences between boys and girls, with the exception of Arab States and to a much lesser extent Southern Asia, where girls are in a minority.

Primary education in schools
The enrolment data, presented by UNESCO (1990), for primary education in schools around the world, imply inter alia:

There exists parity in access between the sexes in the Developed Countries and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Eastern Asia and Oceania are close to achieving parity in enrolment by sex. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab States and Southern Asia, however, there are big differences between sexes. Girls are enrolled in schools at a much lower rate than boys.

This sex disparity must be considered to be one of the major obstacles to the achievement of the goal proclaimed by U.N. - Universal Primary Education.
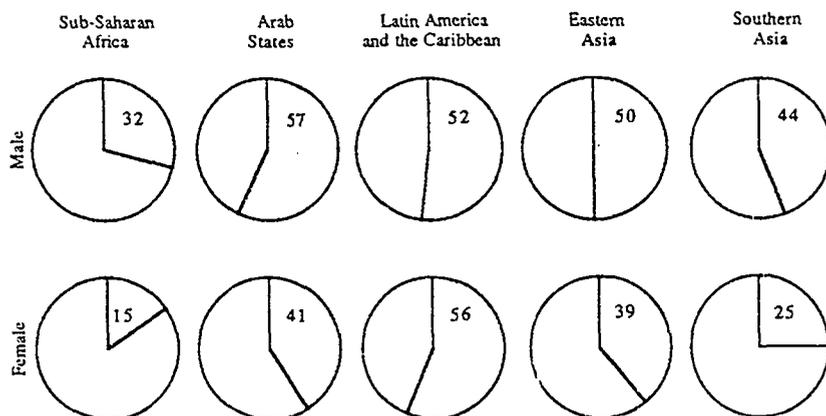
Figure 4:   Adjusted gross enrolment ratios by sex (%), developing countries, 1987. Education at the Second level.

Source: UNESCO, 1990

Constraints preventing women from literacy acquisition

Poverty and illiteracy seem to go hand in hand. The majority of the illiterates live in countries with increasing economic difficulties and enormous debt burdens, rapid population growth, starvation catastrophies, high rate of illnesses and infant mortality, and destruction of environment.

Following the world wide economic crisis, we have noticed a backward-pointing change, an evident decline of educational opportunities in many of the least developed countries. Many reports from literacy campaigns during the last decades demonstrate an evident lack of attention to the social, economic and legal advancement of women.

WHAT STOPS WOMEN LEARNING

Women often face practical barriers to their participation in literacy programmes, such as:
- hostile family or community attitudes;
- local traditions and ancestral customs about their role in society;
- lack of time after family and household commitments;
- frequent pregnancies;
- irrelevant literacy programmes:
- lack of child-care facilities.

(Unesco: International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 1991)

Table 3: Adjusted gross enrolment ratios by sex (in %). Education at the
second level.

	Year	MF	M	F
WORLD TOTAL	1970	36	41	32
	1980	45	50	39
	1987	49	54	43
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	1970	24	30	18
of which	1980	35	42	29
	1987	40	47	33
Sub-Saharan Africa	1970	7	10	4
	1980	17	22	11
	1987	24	32	15
Arab States	1970	20	28	13
	1980	38	47	29
	1987	49	57	41
Latin America and the Caribbean	1970	26	26	25
	1980	45	44	45
	1987	54	52	56
Eastern Asia	1970	29	33	24
	1980	44	50	37
	1987	45	50	39
Southern Asia	1970	22	31	13
	1980	27	35	18
	1987	35	44	25
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	1970	77	77	76
	1980	84	83	86
	1987	91	91	92

Source: UNESCO, 1990

The existence of multiple deprivation and discrimination against the female
population is easily revealed. Surprisingly little has been done to change
and improve the situation, however.
Agneta Lind (1989) has noted, that neither adult literacy studies nor
"women in development" studies have focused on women's literacy. In the
majority of literacy campaigns the administrators as well as the teachers
have failed in displaying a sensitivity to the special needs, concerns and
problems of women.
The statements made by Lind and Johnston (1990) about women's experi-
ences of participation in literacy programmes deserve indeed general
attention:

> Women often constitute the majority of literacy learners. However, a
> process cf social change, including community involvement and
> mobilization in favour of women's literacy, is needed to sustain female
> participation and overcome male resistance. A common problem is that
> literacy programmes, often integrated with other practical activities,
> seldom adapt to the real learning conditions of women. Not enough
> time and attention is given to the literacy component, and special pro-
> visions for facilitating women's full participation are seldom provided.
> Thus irregular attendance, high dropout rates and weak results are

common e··· :ywhere. The successful examples which do exist demonstrate the importance of the process of participation and awareness-raising, and of creative organizational and mobilizational approaches. They also show that literacy is a potential empowering tool for women. Literacy in itself does not, however, present a way out of the existing submission of women, due to hindrances of poverty, religious and cultural traditions and the political milieu, which impose a strict enforcement of the economic and social subjugation of women.

Forms of patriarchal and economic oppression and subordination of illiterate women are nearly everywhere to be found, differing in accordance with the history and culture of each region and country.

.....Even if the open discrimination practiced during colonial days is less common today, patriarchal ideologies and social systems that discriminate against women have persisted. This, in combination with the lack of provision for girls' and women's full participation in public education, has meant continued gender inequality.

In fact, education systems of today reproduce not only the social class power structure, but also the existing gender differences. Nonetheless, girls' equal access to formal schooling is a right that must be pursued (Lind and Johnston, 1990, pp. 112-113).

The Kenyan and the South East Asian perspectives on women's education

It is true that everywhere women are becoming more and more aware of the many inequalities they have had to suffer.

There is an increased tendency amongst women in many countries, as observed by e.g. Jennifer Riria (1983) in her studies of rural women in Kenya, to actively seek more freedom from authorities in the tribe, the family and the community and take a more firm command of their own lives.

> THE ENEMIES OF
> MOTIVATION
> • Ill-adapted curricula (often copied from the primary school);
> • lack of time;
> • too few teachers;
> • badly trained teachers;
> • insufficient teaching materials:
> • ostracism, shame and embarrassment.
> • lack of child-care facilities.
>
> (Unesco: International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 1991)

Literacy an instrument for raised self-respect among women

In this respect many have found reading and writing ability as one of many desirable instruments to be used in their search for raised self-confidence, self-respect and freedom from oppression.

Basic education might be a starting point for many women to become actively involved in the developmental process, not only in the home but also in the community and the nation.

Through acceptable literacy skills they may facilitate their own personal development.

22

AGE GROUP 6-11 YEARS

1985
134 millions

2000
118 millions

36% 25%
7%
26% 6%

34% 31%
22% 6% 7%

Sub-Saharan
Africa

Arab
States

Latin America
and the Caribbean

Eastern
Asia

Southern
Asia

AGE GROUP 12-17 YEARS

1985
283 millions

2000
259 millions

34% 12%
5%
6%
43%

42% 18%
6%
6%
28%
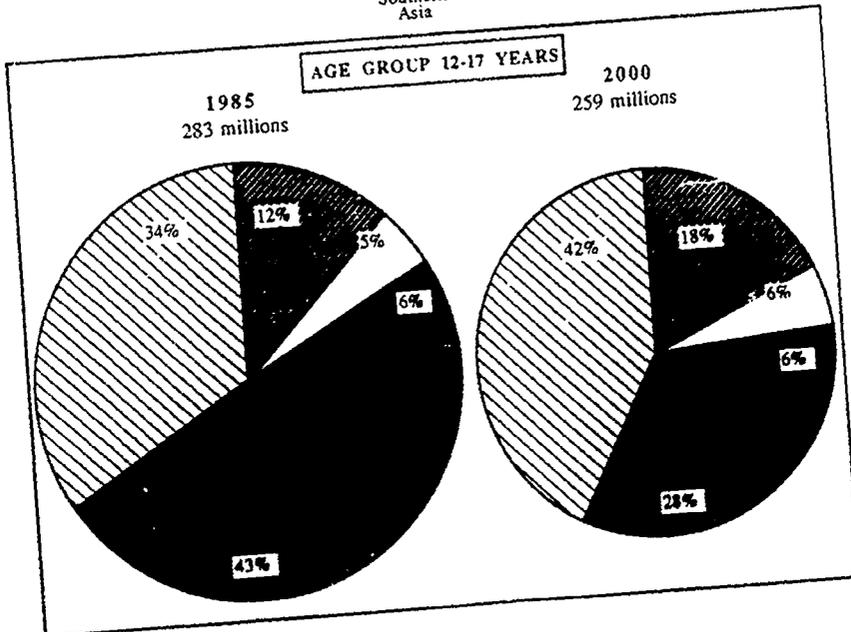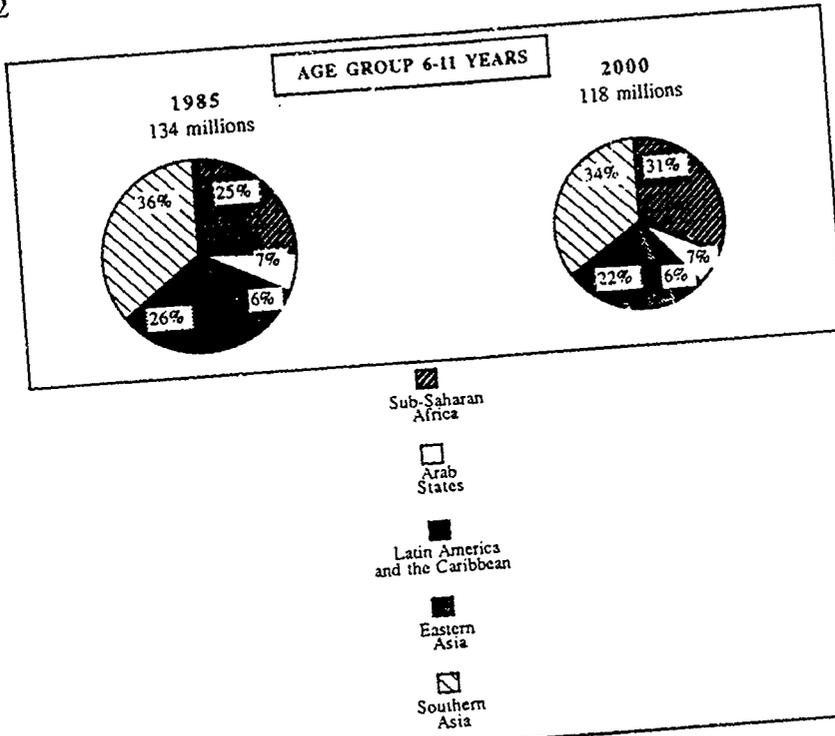
Figure 5: Developing countries, out-of-school youth, both sexes.

Source: UNESCO, 1990

> Utilization of available potential will not only mean a happy home and family, but eventually a healthy nation. In mcdern society, and very much so in the Kenyan case, the aim of enhancing the quality of life will not be realized, until and unless the whole society is involved.
> The society here includes men and women. Hence no nation building programmes will succeed, unless and until the total population is made to participate fully in development. For women, who have been ignored for so long, to be involved in this process, basic education is essential (Riria, 1983, p. 7 and cited by Fordham, 1985, p. 43).

The view expressed by Jennifer Riria, that women in Kenya no longer wish to be just passive, but rather are seeking for self-expression and want to be actors on the same level as men in all societies, has been the object of comments by for instance Kumad Bansal. She declares herself in full agreement with Riria, when underlining the significance of women's education in the development of a country, but she is of the opinion, that from a South East Asian perspective it is not entirely true, that awareness among women of the need of basic education to be freed from oppression, is in any way increasing.

Some of Riria's statements, that there has been an upgrading of women's functional and technological skills may be suited to the African situation, but not to that of the Indian or South Asian situation, she says.

Women in South Asia still relegated to subordinated positions

Kumad Bansal underscores, that especially in the rural areas of South Asia, religions still relegate women to a secondary position.

> The weight of tradition and customs inhibit women from gaining equality. The failure of the national governments in strengthening women's productive and economic role has not only accentuated inequality and exploitation, but has eroded employment opportunities for women. Poverty and the social milieu have reduced the lives of women to sheer labour and drudgery. The basic question regarding women's literacy in this region is motivation (Bansal, 1983, p. 2, cited by Fordham, 1985, p. 44).

Bansal also makes a recapitulation of some of the meaningful experiences in this region. As an illustration she mentions, that Sri Lanka's Women's Association has made a systematic effort in building up programmes and infra-structure at the national, provincial and block level for educational, social and economic development for women in Sri Lanka.

The teaching of literacy has been an essential part of a large learning package, in most of which the participants had a keen interest. The women had seen the usefulness of literacy learning by the linkage of literacy programmes to vocational training.

Also, linkage of literacy with programmes of health and nutritional services of children has acted as effective motivators for women to participate in development activities and to become aware of the need for women to take initiatives and accept leadership in women's programmes.

Integration of literacy activities for women into development projects of various kinds

Some studies in the Caribbean reveal, that most literacy programmes for women at the community level have been focused on activities like home economics, child care, food preservation, craft and so called income-generating projects. As stated by e.g. Ellis (1983), however,

> the majority of these projects did not seem to generate much, if any income. .. The majority of programmes too were ad hoc and short term and in the most cases lacked direction and were without any clear objectives. All of the programmes suffered from the absence of personnel, trained in the methods of teaching adults. In the majority of cases too, those involved, as teachers as well as participants, did not display a sensitivity to, or an understanding of, the needs, concerns and problems of women; nor of their situation and roles in relationship to wider issues of national development. Neither was there any evidence of attempts to document and/or evaluate the effect and/or impact, which these programmes were having on participants or on the society as a whole (Ellis, 1983, p. 17).

Integration of literacy activities for women into development projects of various kinds is a common feature also in many other Third World countries. Such approaches are indeed justified by generally accepted pedagogical principles. The literacy learners may easier realize the practical need of good reading and writing skills in a context, where these abilities immediately come to use.

Literacy programmes in interaction with other meaningful activities may undoubtedly play an important role in creating a motivation and an increased interest in continued learning.

But as has been observed, "this approach often implies, that literacy instruction becomes neglected, since the participating women are expected to be involved in many other activities at the same time. It is upsetting to observe, that women organized in many integrated projects neither manage to generate income nor to learn literacy skills" (Lind, Gleditsch and Henson, 1986).

MEASURES IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN
- Choose reading materials dealing with subjects of interest to female learners;
- Let illiterate women choose their own teachers;
- Provide child-care facilities;
- Run courses at times when women with young children are free to attend;
- Include course material emphasizing that men and women are equal;
- Form national commissions on women's education;
- Recruit educated women as literacy volunteers;
- In *post-literacy activities*, women should be encouraged to set up their own co-operatives and income-generating projects, particularly those saving them time and energy for other purposes.

(Unesco: International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 1991)

It is indeed encouraging to note that more and more women in Third World countries have come to the understanding, that they need some functional literacy abilities, not only for their own individual development, but also in order to be able to take care of their duties in the family and as citizens in the society at large in a more efficient way.

Functional literacy as an instrument for change

Literacy is not the only means to development. But it must be considered as an essential instrument for change in a positive direction, as regards for instance economy, improvement of social and cultural conditions and individual self-fulfilment. But what level of literacy skills is needed?
Without going into the history of definitions of functional literacy (see e.g. Chall, 1990, Venezky et al., 1990 and Powell Newman and Beverstock, 1990) we may be allowed to state that literacy should be considered as a developmental process, which is ongoing during the whole life-time of an individual from early childhood up to adult age. Functional literacy is a relative, multidimensional concept. The literacy needs vary of course among individuals within a certain cultural group and also among groups of various kinds within a given country. The assessment of minimum per-formance levels as regards reading and writing skills is a complex task. The criteria are undergoing continuous change. The needs and interests of an individual will vary with the demands of society and the individual situa-tion. They differ from society to society. The may also differ considerably from one phase of a person's life to the next.

Under all circumstances, there is a great need in any country to come to some kind of agreement on which literacy levels and what kind of reading and writing skills we should aim at giving the students in schools and adult literacy programmes. The desirable objective could well be, that all students reach at least a basic-minimal level, before they leave school or an adult literacy course - a level, that allows self-sustained development in literacy.

The first language of literacy instruction
There seems to be a rather general agreement around the world as regards the importance of using the learner's mother tongue as the language of teaching literacy. The supposedly unifying effect of using a single national or official language is also recognized. The choice of the language of instruction is, however, more complicated than it might appear at first sight.
It is in many Third World nations extremely difficult to apply the above mentioned recommendations.
In the first hand we may point to the fact, that there is a multiplicity of languages spoken in many countries.

As examples of the complex language situation, I may only mention, that French is the official language in Zaire (before 1971 named Congo). But there are also four official languages and around 220 local languages, out of which the majority lack writing systems.

Nigeria has 250 ethnic groups, each one having its own language.

There are over 800 languages spoken in Indonesia.

In Ethiopia there are more than seventy tribal languages of Hamitic and Semitic origin. Only the following five languages possess written forms: Arabic, Galligna, Tigrinia, Ge'ez (the ancient church language) and the national language - Amharic.

Hindi is since 1965 the official language in India. English is, however, still used as a subsidiary official language. According to Chinna Chacko Oomen of Madras, India (unpubl. manuscript, 1985) there are in India 1,625 mother tongues - including 179 languages, and 16 so-called major languages.

It is easy to understand, that the problems encountered in realizing the right-to-read goal are of an immense magnitude in a country, where such a multiplicity of languages and dialects are used.

The planners of literacy programmes are confronted with a reality, which very often imposes a choice of language of literacy instruction, which is only the second best.

Because of lack of resources for transferring the spoken language into a writing system, and thereby create opportunities for construction of suitable material for literacy instruction at various levels in the learner's mother tongue, they have to arrange for literacy training in a second language.

As Ryan (1980) i.a. has pointed out, learners in multilingual societies will often be required to achieve literacy in more than one language.

It has therefore been recommended, that related or adjacent languages make use of the same or similar orthographies. In this way, the task of achieving literacy in a second language is facilitated.

A related advantage is that the same type-setting and printing equipment can be used for several languages.

> In West Africa, an agreement has been reached among neighboring states to develop a unified orthographic system for six language groups: Hausa, Kanuri, The Mande group, Fulani, Songhai-Xerma, and Tamashek. ...

Ryan concludes:

> The promotion of literacy, in many countries, will not be able to progress far, until coherent language policies are formulated and instructional approaches developed, that take into account the realities of the learning situation these policies impose (Ryan, 1980, pp. 111-112).

The relationship between literacy and socio-economic development

There are many studies reporting high correlations between progress in literacy campaigns through primary education in parallel to adult literacy campaigns and a number of favourable socio-economic indicators.

But this does not necessarily indicate causal links.

We cannot expect that a beneficial and desired socio-economic development automatically will follow from increases in literacy rates and progress of primary education.

A positive effect of improved fundamental education on mother and child care, family planning, health and nutrition has been observed in some studies (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). Some World Bank studies state that farmers having completed four years of schooling tend to increase their agricultural productivity (King, 1990).

There are also examples of some very poor countries such as Nicaragua, Ethiopia and Tanzania, having devoted much time and efforts to literacy campaigns and also succeeded in raising literacy rates to a considerable extent. But the desired effects of raised educational standard in the form of improvement of other socio-economic indicators have not yet been clearly demonstrated. A plausible explanation might be that, the relationship between literacy progress and a general improvement in the socio-economic situation of the inhabitants in a country is an interactive, mutual and cumulative one. This means, that the hypothesis of a simple, linear relationship should be rejected.

Literacy is in itself only a potential way of learning, an instrument, a tool, a means to achieve certain objectives, which might be of an economic, political, social, cultural or individual character.

In other words, what might be reasonable to claim, is not that a specific level of economic development and rate of economic growth is linked with a particular literacy rate.

(For example, at least 80% national literacy for rapid economic development and at least 40% literacy rate for a minimal amount of economic development, as Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985, indicate.)

But rather than a simple linear relationship, that over a period of time there will be an interactive connection between progress in literacy and the development of economy, living conditions of people, physical infrastructure, technology, culture etc.

The complexity of the relationships between a successful literacy campaign and the effects for individuals and societies should not be hidden under mythical statements and ungrounded hopes.

But from my point of view, literacy is demeaned, however, if its only value is seen in terms of achieving improved production, economic progress, and technological advancement. Literacy must also be seen as a primary means for the aggrandizement of man, as a unique instrument to release the rich potentials of the innermost of a human being, the feelings of joy, trust, love, and caringness - the rich feelings, which give life its fullness.

Special difficulties meeting female learners

The majority of participants in literacy courses are often women.
But the drop-out rates are not seldom much higher for women than those of
men. The traditional roles of women in the family and the labour market
create great difficulties for them to attend the courses regularly. Their
many duties within the household, their up-bringing of many children as
well as their participation in farming or other income-bringing hard work,
give them little time and energy for efficient learning. Interruptions of
women's participation in literacy classes are also frequently caused by their
giving birth to babies, often every two or three years.
Sometimes women have to bring with them their smallest children to the
literacy classes. It is self-evident and understandable, that their concentra-
tion on learning activities will be considerably diminished under such
conditions.

Men may forbid women to participate in literacy activities
Further, reading materials, based on women's special needs and interests,
are seldom provided. The power of tradition may in many countries work
against education for women. There may be a negative attitude, yes, a clear
opposition against the advancement of women in the society as a whole and
especially in the local, rural communities. Male teachers may even demon-
strate contemptuous and scornful attitudes towards women's abilities of
learning.
It happens not infrequently that men - including fathers and husbands - even
completely forbid women to participate in literacy learning activities.
According to i.a. Riria (1983) and Lind-Johnston (1990) men may be
afraid, that if their women have learnt more than they themselves, it may
expose their own ignorance (Riria op. cit. p. 2).
And even more, the educated woman may threaten a man's position as the
dominating figure within the family. Violent reactions against women may
follow, further preventing women from participation in educational
activities (Stromquist, 1989).
Wife-beating is unfortunately not a rare phenomenon in some countries.
Other constraints for women's participation in literacy courses are the
often long distances they have to the literacy centres. Most women have to
return to their homes early. They avoid going to evening classes, because of
lack of security on the way home.
Rural women in Third World countries account for at least 50% of all food
production. In Africa they perform about 80% of all agricultural work, in
the Himalayan region 70% (Bhargavi Nagaraja, 1991).

"If you educate a woman, you educate a whole family"
Thus their involvement and interaction with their environment is intimate
and immediate.

> Yet their access to the food they help to grow is questioned, as well as
> the water they need to maintain good health, the fuel, which they must
> gather to keep their home fires burning etc. Women do not always have
> ownership rights to land, which remain vested in a husband, father,
> brother or a son.
> As women's claims are maintained through this relationship with a
> male, any alienation might result in the loss of rights of land use, even
> if they are the main cultivators (Nagaraja, 1991, p. 20).

Technology has permeated work practices in many ways, but does not
always necessarily reach women. Their tools are in Third World countries
often no more efficient today than they were many years ago.

> Women's status, poverty and population problems are all interlinked in
> the Third World. Any relative improvement in one of them brings in its
> wake all-round benefits. Women's role in the disadvantaged population
> en masse is of great relevance, as even within the given number they
> form the poorest of the poor (op. cit., p. 20).

Enhancing the status of women through giving them access to basic needs
and human rights will result in an improvement of the total development in
a nation. "Female literacy, awareness and education go hand in hand with an
up-lifting of this kind, demystifying traditional taboos in reaching aware-
ness of self and society to women" (Nagaraja, 1991, p. 20).
An often quoted statement in this connection is the following: "If you edu-
cate a woman, you educate a whole family."
No country can develop - socially, economically, politically - if half of the
population - the women - is not given an opportunity to participate in the
process of self-sustaining, self-reliant development to change their present
circumstances.
Also as preservers and transmitters of social and cultural values women
play a vital role in shaping the destiny of a nation.
Or in the words of the Indian statesman Nehru: "to awaken the people, it is
the woman, who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family
moves, the village moves, the nation moves."

Discrimination of girls often starts already at birth in the Third World
The economic crisis of the late 80's and beginning of 90's, characterized by
soaring interest rates, high inflation, rising cost of energy etc. has certainly
contributed to the evident decline of educational activities in many Third
World countries. And in this decline the women have suffered the most.
Available documentation shows, that even in the first years of life, girls
have an inferior situation and less access to food, health care, and education.
As adults they receive less education and training. In spite of the fact that
they not seldom work longer periods - more hours per week than men -
they have lower incomes and have few rights to own property, if any at all.
Discrimination against girls starts already at birth. Girls die in the Third
World countries at an earlier age. If they survive beyond puberty, the
noticed high maternal mortality rates show, that they suffer during child

bearing. In times of economic difficulties the women are the first to suffer (Hammad, 1990).
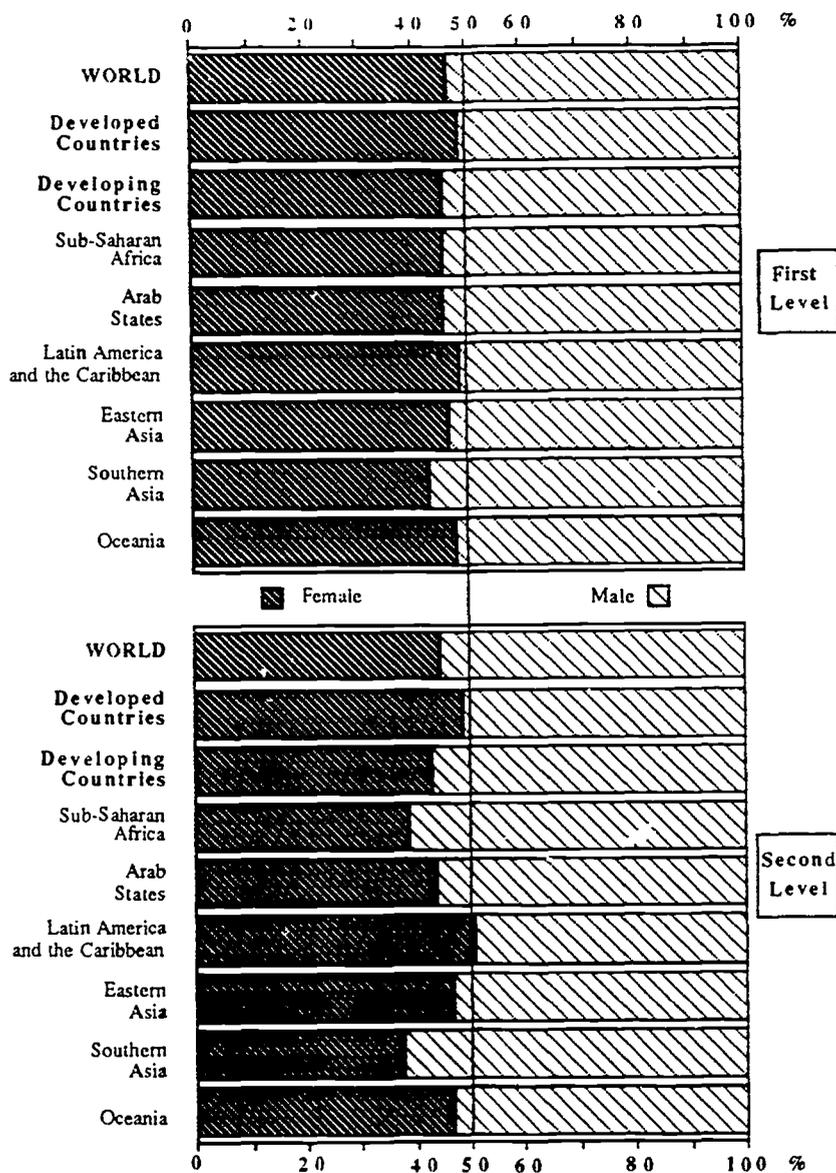
Figure 6: Percentage of enrolment in school by sex and level of education in the year 2000.

Source: UNESCO, 1990

In a report of a U.N. agency we may note an astounding and disappointing statement: half a billion rural women have witnessed very little change in their situation over the last thirty years (UNDP, 1990).

As we have earlier noted, the special needs, concerns and problems of girls and women in literacy learning have in general not been fully met in Third World countries. Gender inequalities are still rather the regular phenomena than the exceptions. Girls and women are denied full participation in public education on the same conditions as those existing for boys and men. The rate of drop-out from the formal school system before completion of the third grade is often much higher for girls than for boys. Fewer girls than boys continue studies at higher school levels.

Many constraints prevent adult women to join literacy courses in the first place, and often they stop their participation, when they have acquired only elementary literacy skills.

Both girls and women will therefore run great risks of relapsing into illiteracy. It is indeed urgently necessary to forcefully stop this fatal phenomenon of reversal into illiteracy - a wastage of invaluable human potential.

Initial literacy programmes are not sufficient. They should always be followed up by post-literacy programmes and continuing education, arranged in a systematic way. Learning strategies, appropriately adopted to the special needs of women and flexible enough to be easily suited to local circumstances should be elaborated. The post-literacy programmes should aim at facilitation of retention of literacy skills and form a starting point for continued adequate education, hopefully leading to needed functional literacy abilities. Women need more than a rudimentary literacy as a means to developmental change. They need a greatly improved education and a critical, powerful and creative literacy of a high order.

A necessity in order to enable them *to work individually and together with other women as well as with men to bring about changes in their lives towards improved quality of all social, economic, political and cultural dimensions.*

Objectives of the international seminar in Linköping, Sweden, 1991

The objectives of this international seminar are inter alia:

to focus general world wide public attention to the existence of multiple deprivation and massive gender inequalities in many areas of the world;

to arouse awareness of the urgent need of renewed dedication and efforts at all levels required to overcome the intolerable discrimination, that is a common experience faced by many women;

to get reviews carried out of the major issues and problems in connection with women's literacy acquisition from a number of selected Third World countries;

to discuss a number of questions related to women's literacy development, such as for example economic difficulties, population explosion, poverty, malnutrition, shortages of educational facilities, lack of qualified teachers, multiple languages in certain countries;

to discuss a number of other compelling questions like

What kind of strategies, what kind of programmes and materials have been successful in improving literacy among women ?
Urban women? Rural women? Failures? Which were the reasons?

How has the problem of integrating the formal educational system with functional literacy training for adult women been solved?

What has been done to prevent the high drop-out rate among girls in primary schooling? At the secondary level? At higher school levels and universities?

What kind of motivational factors for women's participation in literacy learning courses seem to have been most efficient?

What experiences are presently available as regards integration of literacy courses into programmes related to health care, family planning, nutrition, agriculture, industry, commerce, economy etc.?

What has been done to help immigrants and often isolated women in immigrant families to acquire reading and writing abilities in the language of their new country?

What is done to assist the unemployed illiterate women?

What can be accomplished through literacy courses for adult women over radio and television? In schools? In industrial and administrative facilities?

How to arrange learning facilities especially adjusted to women's needs, interests and special problems, such as need of help with child care during courses, transportation the often long distances to literacy centres etc.?

How can latent resources best be used in adult literacy campaigns for females? - For instance: teachers, male or female, both sexes, students, local key persons, military personnel, workers in industries, members of

voluntary service organizations, retired people with various professional training, health personnel etc.?

What kind of properly controlled evaluative studies on the effects of literacy training for women are available from various parts of the world?

What follow-up activities should be included in a literacy programme?

How about political will, political support of women's literacy development? At the community level? Regional level? National level?

How can international exchange of ideas, experiences and research regarding literacy development for women be facilitated?

What suggestions and recommendations for future action can we offer, to make access to education, enrolment and achievement of education, within and outside schools for girls and women effective?

As concluding remarks of this rapsodic overview and at the same time as an introductory declaration in the very beginning of our work together I would like to make three brief statements:

1)   I see you, participants of this international seminar - distinguished literacy experts from 14 different countries as you are - as being particularly qualified to serve as leaders, key persons and as motivating and inspiring sources in a variety of capacities in our strivings to improve the literacy situation of girls and women throughout the world.

2)   I sincerely believe, that your contributions at this seminar and in follow-up-activities later on in local, national, and international circles, might have a significant, stimulating effect all around the world and

3)   Actually, I see this seminar as a very exciting, pioneering venture, one full of challenges and promises, hopefully leading to some release of so much hitherto wasted human potential among girls and women all around the world.

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Appendix 1

Enrolment by level of education (in thousands) and percentage female.

	Year	Pre-primary MF	%F	1st level MF	%F	2nd level MF	%F
WORLD TOTAL	1970	...	...	433414	45	159124	42
	1975	43553	48	513009	45	210268	43
	1980	57609	48	554758	45	245699	43
	1985	70103	48	577029	45	271966	43
	1987	77651	48	586502	45	290038	43
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	1970	...	...	310147	43	80375	36
	1975	13716	47	398282	44	119494	38
	1980	25069	47	444366	44	157409	39
	1985	35733	47	468089	44	182863	40
	1987	42204	47	477592	45	199451	40
Sub-Sanaran Africa	1970	220	44	20672	39	2543	31
	1975	478	45	30340	41	4110	32
	1980	1515	45	47499	43	8175	34
	1985	1727	48	51881	44	11576	33
	1987	1951	49	56447	45	14301	32
Arab States	.970	290	47	12609	36	3519	30
	1975	753	36	16656	38	5645	34
	1980	1189	36	20604	41	8692	37
	1985	1584	39	25013	42	12282	40
	1987	1743	40	27336	43	13586	41
Latin America/Caribbean	1970	1727	50	47050	49	7502	48
	1975	2796	50	56218	49	12568	48
	1980	4748	50	64770	49	17572	50
	1985	8262	50	69558	48	21364	51
	1987	9341	50	72173	48	23286	51
Eastern Asia	1970	...	...	152022	45	37717	41
	1975	8096	48	202872	46	61675	40
	1980	15135	48	209298	45	78745	41
	1985	19594	48	201392	46	78721	42
	1987	23837	48	194268	46	84014	43
Southern Asia	1970	848	38	71561	36	25785	28
	1975	1400	41	86062	37	31563	30
	1980	2284	44	96251	38	39783	33
	1985	4252	40	113474	40	54005	33
	1987	5032	41	120541	40	59029	34
Oceania	1970	14	50	487	44	122	44
	1975	28	49	568	44	176	45
	1980	37	49	650	45	207	46
	1985	41	46	734	46	233	47
	1987	45	47	778	47	249	47
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	1970	24144	49	123267	49	78749	49
	1975	29837	49	114727	49	90774	49
	1980	32539	49	110392	49	88290	50
	1985	34369	49	108940	49	89103	49
	1987	35448	49	108910	49	90587	49

Source: UNESCO, 1990

Distribution of developing countries according to illiteracy rates and number of illiterates.

Number of Illiterates \ Illiteracy Rates	Year	Less than 10%	10% to 20%	20% to 30%	30% to 40%	40% to 50%	More than 50%	Total Countries
Less than 500,000	1990	9	5	3	1	4	2	24
	2000	11	6	1	4	-	3	25
500,000 to 2 millions	1990	4	7	4	4	3	10	32
	2000	9	6	4	5	5	1	30
2 millions to 5 millions	1990	i	2	1	4	3	13	24
	2000	3	3	5	3	5	8	27
5 millions to 10 millions	1990	.	2	3	1	2	4	12
	2000	.	2	2	1	2	3	10
10 millions and above	1990	-	1	2	.	2	5	10
	2000	-	3	.	2	2	3	10
Total Countries	1990	14	17	13	10	14	34	102
	2000	23	20	12	15	14	18	102

Source: UNESCO, 1990

Countries with 10 million and more illiterates aged 15 and over in 1990.

Country	Illiteracy Rates (%)	Number of Illiterates (millions)	Proportion of World Total (%)	Proportion of World Total (cum. %)
India	51.7	280	29.1	29.1
China	26.5	222	23.1	52.2
Pakistan	65.1	43	4.5	56.7
Bangladesh	64.7	42	4.4	61.1
Nigeria	49.2	29	3.0	64.1
Indonesia	22.9	27	2.8	66.9
Brazil	18.7	18	1.9	68.8
Egypt	51.5	16	1.7	70.5
Iran	46.0	15	1.5	72.0
Sudan	72.8	10	1.0	73.0
Sub-Total (10 countries)		702	73.0	
World Total		963		100

Source: UNESCO, 1990

Appendix 3

Adult literacy rates by sex, 1990 (percentages)[1]

	Both sexes	Males	Females
WORLD TOTAL	73.5	80.6	66.4
Developing countries of which:	65.1	74.9	55 0
Sub-Saharan Africa	47.3	59.0	36.1
Arab States	51.3	64.3	38.0
Latin America/ Caribbean	84.7	86.4	83.0
Eastern Asia	76.2	85.7	66.4
Southern Asia	46.1	59.1	32.2
Least-developed countries	39.6	51.4	27.9
Developed countries	96.7	97.4	96.1
BY CONTINENT			
Africa	49.9	61.7	38.5
America	90.0	90.8	89.2
Asia	66.5	76.6	56.0
Europe/USSR	96.9	97.7	91.1
Oceania	92.5	93.9	91.1

[1] **The percentage of literate adults in the population aged 15 years and over.**

Source: UNESCO. *World education report*, 1991. p. 26.

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Chapter 2

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Since the time India achieved Independence in 1947, definite progress has been made with regard to access and reach of the educational system to the masses. Despite this, the fact remains that the present educational status of a vast majority of Indian women is abysmally poor. With regard to women belonging to the economically and socially deprived groups, the situation is particularly grim.

In order to ascertain the magnitude of this problem, it is necessary to develop a profile of female illiteracy. An attempt is made below to high-light salient statistics on female literacy on the basis of Census data, in relation to different states, variations within states, rural/urban differential, and various socio-economic groups. Such an overview would help in understanding the profile of those women, who are illiterate and for whom educational interventions are being designed.

Literacy Statistics

At the time of Independence, female literacy rate was merely 6% and the total number of female students, who were enrolled at all levels of the edu-cational system numbered a little over 4 million. Over the years, however, there has been a steady improvement in the literacy rates as shown in Table 1 below.

The Census of 1991 for the first time excluded 0-6 age group for enu-meration of literacy statistics. Provisional data now indicate comparative literacy rates for 1981 and 1991 for the population aged 7 and above as under.

		Persons	Male	Female
1981*	All Areas	43.5%	56.3%	29.7%
1991**	All Areas	52.1%	63.8%	39.4%

* excludes Assam where 1981 Census was not held
** excludes J&K where Census is yet to be conducted

Table 1: Literacy Rates.

Year	Total	Male	Female
1901	5.35	9.38	0.60
1911	5.92	10.56	1.05
1921	7.16	12.21	1.81
1931	9.50	15.59	2.93
1941	16.10	24.90	7.30
1951	16.67	24.95	7.93
1961	24.02	34.44	12.95
1971	29.45	39.45	18.69
1981	36.23	46.89	24.82

(Excl. Assam)

Source: Census of India - 1981, Series 1 - India, Paper - 1 of 1981, Provisional
          Population Total

But over the decades, while literacy rates have showed an upward trend, the total number of illiterates have also showed an alarming increase. According to the 1981 Census, of the 340.5 million illiterates (excluding 0-4 age group), 200.3 million were women. Of these, 170.7 million lived in rural areas. In other words, more than half of the total illiterates in India were rural females.

According to the estimates worked out by the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development (1991), the absolute number of literates and illiterates in the age-group 7 years and above for 1981 and 1991 was as below.

From Table 2 it can be seen that while the number of literates increased by 118.13 million, i.e., by 50.5%, the number of illiterates also increased, though marginally, by 22.10 million, i.e., 7.32%. The contention is therefore made, that the decrease in illiteracy is a direct outcome of increased primary education and adult literacy efforts in the country. This optimistic analysis, notwithstanding declining sex ratio is a cause for concern and underscores the need to pay serious attention to women, who still form three-fifths of the total illiterates in the country.

The problem of women's illiteracy is not an isolated phenomenon. It is inextricably linked to the socio-economic conditions that prevail in different parts of the country. Thus, on the one hand, the state of Kerala has the highest female literacy rate (86.9% according to 1991 Census data and 96% after the total Literacy campaign in Kerala was completed in April 1991). At the other end of the spectrum is the state of Rajasthan, where the female literacy rate is 20.8%.

Table 2: Number of Literates and Illiterates Among Population Aged 7 Years and Above - India: 1981-1991 (in thousand)

Literates/Illiterates	Persons	Males	Females
Literates			
1981	233.947	156.953	76.994
1991	352.082	224.288	127.794
Increase in 1991 over 1981	118.135	67.335	50.800
Illiterates			
1981	301.933	120.902	181.031
1991	324.030	126.694	197.336
Increase in 1991 over 1981	22.097	5.792	16.305

Notes:
1. The figures exclude Assam and J&K. For Assam, the 1981 figures are not available as the 1981 census could not be held there, while for J&K, the 1991 figures are not yet available as the 1991 census is yet to be conducted there.
2. Figures of literate population for 1991 are as per the provisional results of the 1991 census. The figures of illiterate population aged 7 years and above are estimated figures based on certain assumptions on population, age structure, and are likely to undergo changes.

From among the 14 most populous states of India, the major concentration of female illiterates is to be found in five states, viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. But if an attempt is made to look at the district level literacy statistics, it becomes obvious that even intrastate variations become considerable. Kurrien (1988) has shown, how of the 373 districts (inclusive of rural populations but exclusive of urban agglomerations) about a third of the districts had a rural female literacy rate of less than 10 per cent and about half, less than 15 per cent (as 1981 Census data). Again, the largest number of districts with low rural female literacy rates were concentrated in the 5 states mentioned above. In each of the 26 districts of Rajasthan, more than 90 per cent of the rural female population was illiterate.

Yet another important variable is the literacy levels of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. If their literacy rates are disaggregated at the all-India level by sex and location, then it becomes obvious that these are lower than the corresponding national figures. Illiteracy is particularly high among the rural women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as shown in the following table:

Table 3: Literacy rate of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (%) by sex and location, 1981.

Category	All-India Male Literacy Rates	All-India Female Literacy Rates	Scheduled Tribe Male Literacy Rates	Scheduled Tribe Female Literacy Rates	Scheduled Caste Male Literacy Rates	Scheduled Caste Female Literacy Rates
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Total	46.9	24.8	24.5	8.0	31.1	10.9
Rural	40.8	18.0	22.9	6.8	27.9	8.5
Urban	65.8	47.8	47.6	27.3	47.5	24.3

Source: Census of India -1981

Development correlates of female literacy

There is growing evidence world-wide to show that there are economic, social and technological gains from providing basic primary education. As a matter of fact, such an evidence demonstrating that completed primary education has a positive effect on poverty alleviation and economic and social development is compelling. A diverse body of literature from developing countries is beginning to show, that adults with higher levels of educational attainment have higher individual earnings, more frequent employment in the urban labour markets, greater agricultural productivity, lower fertility, better health and nutritional status, more modern attitudes and in turn, are more likely to send their children to school - all dimensions of development (Lockhead and Verspoor, 1990).

More importantly, however, research evidence is now beginning to show that a mother's level of schooling is highly correlated with infant and child mortality (Lockhead and Verspoor, 1990). Even in India, an analysis of 1981 Census data has corroborated, that the educational level of the mother has a very strong influence in reducing child mortality (Child Marriage, Age at Marriage and Fertility in India, 1989). Furthermore, age at marriage is positively correlated with the levels of education of the women, both for rural and urban areas. For a gradual increase is seen in the mean age at marriage with the increase in women's educational level (Advance Report on Age at Marriage Differentials in India, 1988). Also, an analysis of the educational level of the mother by various fertility indicators shows a positive correlation between women's level of education with her fertility (Child Marriage, Age at Marriage and Fertility in India, 1989).

In order to understand to what extent literacy is a basic concomitant of development, female literacy rates for women aged 15 and above were correlated with other socio-economic and demographic indices for 14 major states (Sharma and Retherford, 1987). Their study showed that female literacy rate is strongly and positively related with mean age at marriage and strongly and negatively related with infant mortality rate, crude birth rate, and total fertility rate. Studies by Nuna (1986, 1990) corroborate the above findings, that female literacy is strongly correlated with quality of life indicators such as infant mortality rate, death rate, birth rate and percentage of married females in the 15-19 age group.

Conversely, female illiterates are characterized by indicators of under-development, for they are worse off in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality, educational, health and nutrition status than their compatriots who are literate. Unesco's Report on the State of the World's Children, 1989, has established the link between female illiteracy and all other basic indicators of under development such as per capita gross national product, life expectancy, infant mortality, school enrollment and nutrition. It would therefore not be a truism to state, that the map of female illiteracy, on the whole, coincides with the map of under-development.

If literacy has such a positive impact on women's overall development, why then are the vast masses of Indian women still illiterate. In order to understand this, one has to understand the various social, cultural, economic and psychological barriers to women's education.

Social, Cultural, Economic, Psychological Barriers to Women's Education

The status of women in India has to be gauged within the socio-cultural framework, that determines the norms, mores and value systems that govern the life and behaviour patterns of the people. The societal expectations reflect a traditions bias - the idea of womanhood being that of a woman, who is loyal, faithful, passive, submissive, self-sacrificing, self-effacing. It is the institution of marriage, that defines and circumscribes the life of a woman - as a girl she is groomed for marriage and as she grows up and gets married, the only possible roles she has are those of a wife, a mother, a homemaker. Any other work that a woman does, e.g., as an agricultural worker, as an artisan, receives scant attention. It is therefore her reproductive rather than her productive role, that has been emphasized. This erosion of her productive role with primary emphasis on her position as a bearer of children has made her life easily expandable through increasing malnutrition and repeated pregnancies. Due to low literacy levels and lack of training opportunities, she lacks employable skills. In

other words, the social and economic factors militate against her participation in any educational programme.

Furthermore, religion, customs, traditions have all along emphasized and reinforced a woman's low status and role in society. This has caused a systematic and insidious internalization of a low self-image and has inhibited any real initiative for learning on the part of women in general.

The process of interiorized inferiority begins early in life. Discrimination begins with the birth of the female child, for it is the birth of the male child that is welcomed. Neglect of the female infant and as she grows up, early marriage, early pregnancy, poor pre-natal and post-natal care and poor nutrition characterize the life of the female child, as she matures into womanhood. As a large majority of girls, especially in poor rural homes, are required to work at a very early age in various domestic chores, such as looking after the siblings, tending cattle, contributing to the family income by their own labour, they are less likely to enter school in the first place and more likely to drop out because of all the socio-economic pressures. Due to conditions of poverty, the poor cannot see, how sending their daughters to school can ever change their existing reality. Even when the girls enroll in schools, the aim of education is to reinforce their subordination. Patriarchal ideology and a social system that discriminates against women permeates the formal system. In this manner the existing system of education reproduces not only the social class power structure, but also existing gender differences (Stromquist, 1986).

For women, besides daily struggle for food, fuel, water, fodder for cattle, child bearing and child rearing, poor women also have to work for their livelihood. Lack of time for any educational activity, therefore, becomes a severe constraint. Just the fact of giving birth frequently, often every two years, leaves little time and energy for any additional work such as attending a literacy class. This often leads to frequent interruptions. Even when mothers attend classes, in most cases they have to bring the youngest children along with them. Concentration on learning becomes difficult when the mother's attention is constantly distracted to what the babies and toddlers are doing.

As the female child grows up to be woman, the process of internalizing her subordination is complete. One of the consequences is the lack of self-confidence and a poor self-image most women have. Socially they are isolated. Their social and family roles are well-defined and their social interaction is determined by cultural traditions and taboos. They therefore go about their daily routine chores in isolation and have no time or space to talk about themselves with other women. They have very little control over or knowledge about their bodies. As a result, most suffer from social and physical oppression.

Women are moreover discouraged by the attitude of men in their families. Husbands, fathers, brothers at times even completely forbid their women-folk to participate in literacy programmes. It has been observed that this is because men are afraid that if their women learnt more than they themselves did, it might expose their own ignorance and subsequently, even challenge the power relations within the family. On the other hand, women in the interests of maintaining family peace, decide to opt out of joining the literacy programme. Any literacy programme would therefore have to deal with the larger issue of male attitudes towards female literacy. Even at the level of the policy makers, planners and administrators, most of whom are male, a critical appraisal of attitudes and values would be crucial (Ramdas, 1989).

Understanding Women's Learning Processes

Lind (1989) has commented on the fact that literacy for women in the Third World has been a somewhat underresearched area. In most literature that is available on adult literacy, references are occasionally made to the female literacy situation, but data oftentimes are either not disaggregated by sex or there is no attempt to treat the issue of female literacy in a systematic, concerted manner. As a result, women have been subsumed under the general category of all learners, which really means male learners. Women's issues, their concerns, their perspectives, their learning styles have never received the focused attention they deserve.

At a recent seminar on 'Tenets of Women's Learning', Dhar (1991) tried to spell out a few significant features, that seem to characterize learning processes of poor women. While she recognized that several of the issues and processes might be true of marginalized and oppressed groups of men as well, yet the fact remains, that poor women become a separate category, as they are doubly oppressed by virtue of class and gender biases.

Some of the characteristics are spelt out below, and an attempt is made to relate these tenets of women's learning to one's experience with working on literacy programmes for women.

A woman's lack of self confidence has been commented upon earlier. This is because as the girl child grows up, she lacks the identity of a 'self'. A woman's identity is always established vis-à-vis her relation to a man - she is invariably someone's mother, wife, daughter, daughter-in-law. This denial of personhood affects her self-esteem and self-image, so that she begins to feel that she is a useless and worthless learner. Coupled with the back-breaking chores she is engaged in day in and day out, her resistance to literacy becomes an impregnable barrier. What Kusma, an adult learner, had to say on the first day she was approached to join a literacy class,

probably epitomizes the attitude of most poor rural women towards literacy.

> I don't want to become literate. What will I get by becoming literate? I break stones every day, fetch water, cook, and work non-stop all through the day. Now you want me to study - to apply my mind? No, that I will not be able to do. By learning how to draw lines and write, will I get food to eat? By becoming literate at this age, will I get a government job?

> I am hopeless - I can never learn. You will also get tired trying to get anything into my big head. Each and every joint in my body is aching - what will I do now by becoming literate?

> Why don't you teach my child instead? -----

In order to overcome this attitude, the learning process must enable women to be themselves, to be valued the way they are, to experience personhood, to move from a feeling of worthlessness to a feeling of self-worth. It also indicates, that no matter what the agenda of a meeting, discussion or a training might be - the starting point must establish an ambience, in which women feel comfortable, relaxed and do not experience anxieties. Said a would-be literacy instructor on the second day of her training: "When I came yesterday, I was nervous and did not know, how I could possibly relate to you (a short-haired, urban, middle-class woman). Now I know I can look you in the face, that I too have a voice".

The social organization of women's lives is such, that as girls they are kept at home to help with the work of the household. Unable to go to school and mix with other children, they have no friends, so that as adults most women lead extremely isolated lives. Even though a majority of poor rural women work as agricultural workers, and in that sense are not home-bound, the fact remains that with housework and looking after children, isolation gets structured into their lives. The social dimension of literacy programmes therefore has to be recognized. Literacy programmes have to provide for social contact with other women, so that they not only reduce women's isolation but the confidence gained through such a contact also enhances their learning (Horsman, 1988). Such contacts include discussion groups, meetings as well as informal opportunities for women to come together. It is only through opportunities to talk about their lives, to share experiences, that women begin to understand, how isolation is structured into their lives. In this way, programmes can provide forums for women to question their situation and challenge the social organization, that isolates them at home. A recent attempt to evaluate the impact of literacy programme in a slum in Delhi showed, that earlier women did not relate to one another - not even to their neighbours. The strength of the literacy programme for them clearly was, that it ended their isolation, their feeling of being alone, of not being able to relate to others.

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Another aspect of women's lives is, that they lack social space, where they can go without a man. In a communications study, Mukhopadhyay identified several 'gossip centres', where men meet, chat, exchange information. Among such 'gossip centres' are included the village tea stall, the panchayat ghar, the chaupal. But for women the only place they can meet other women is at the village well or at the hand pump for drawing water. Frayed tempers, anger, frustration characterize the mood of such places for the most part. Clearly women need a place, where they can feel comfortable alone, a place to chat with other women. Programmes that provide women the social space to be away from their homes, to be relaxed, to talk to others, to seek help from other women, are known to enhance women's learning. Increasingly, women's groups in the country are becoming to realize the importance of organizing residential training camps for women. The experience of Women's Development Programme (WDP) of Rajasthan and of Mahila Samakhya that is now in operation in three states viz. Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, has shown, how women enjoy being and working together. They are also provided an opportunity to discover that they are not alone with their problems - that such problems are experienced by others as well.

Related to the issue of providing social space for women is that of recognizing, that women have a different pace, a special rhythm of learning. According to Dhar (1991) women tend to think in a 'cyclical process' - a process that incorporates the wholeness of life, as it is for them a process, that includes the concerns of their children, homes, work places, neighbours, community, village etc. It is for this reason that in a learning situation, women often seem to go off at a tangent, to even intercept the flow of a discussion with narration of a personal experience, anecdote, story etc. At times there is even a feeling that 'they are here now, as well as there' at the same time. It may even seem that their concentration is wavering, their attention span is beginning to flag. Apart from being sensitive to this aspect of women's learning, it has to be recognized, that women take interest in learning, when they feel it relates to their daily life. For literacy programmes, it is vital to root the content of literacy to the realities of women's everyday experience. This principle of adult learning is particularly relevant insofar as women are concerned for they learn from the concreteness of existential issues to begin with and then gradually move on to newer and larger issues.

The formal system of education encourages individualized learning and even promotes competitiveness among the learners. Illiterate women, on the other hand, seem to learn best in a group situation. They enjoy the opportunity a group gives them to make friends and realize that they are not alone with their problems. Whenever training programmes have promoted collective mode of learning, women have invariably echoed the sentiment

expressed by Lalita, a literacy worker, "I have never been so happy before. I have made friends here. I feel we are now a part of one big family."

Women are known to flower as persons, given an environment, in which there is a conscious effort to affirm values and processes, that are conducive to their gaining confidence, a positive sense of self and strength from being part of a collective. However, as they undergo a transformation in their selves, they have to face ridicule, even insults from the male members of the community they live in. As literacy workers they are taunted with such remarks as 'oh, here comes the masterni (the female teacher)', 'so you think you've become a neta (leader) now' and other such derogatory remarks. Even other women are not sparing in their attempt to ridicule. In our effort to raise gender-consciousness among women learners at literacy classes, we encouraged them to sing songs on themes that questioned the existing realities of women's lives. One of the women in the group subsequently started writing her own songs, which others gladly sang. But after each such session, as Sonia walked home, there were whispered comments from women she met on the way 'she is a randi' (a whore, a nautch girl). When Sonia shared this experience with other women in the group, she was able to get the support she needed to face the challenges and the motivation to move ahead. Supportive relationships develop best in groups and help women learn.

Literacy involves more than the technical skills of reading and writing, it is also about learning a language. Language, however, is not simply a tool or a medium of communication, it is, 'packed with ideology' and reproduces the oppressor's world (Rockhill, 1988). Feminists now strongly aver that the form of the dominant language as a 'man-made language' eclipses women's presence, cuts out their discourse and effectively silences their gender-specific experiences. In the case of poor illiterate women, their popular knowledge is even more derecognized and delegitimized. Shirali (1988) presents a case study of an illiterate but wise and knowledgeable Himalayan woman, who ably managed family and village affairs, farms, herbal healing, spinning and stitching. She could read the weather, the land, the trees, the crops, birds, animals and people. But her native, indigenous knowledge was never recognized - in fact, it was even devalued.

Hundreds and thousands of poor illiterate women in this manner have been denied an opportunity to articulate reality as they see it or allowed to say things, which are important to their lives. They are also denied an opportunity to find an expression in modes, that they are comfortable with, and which are often popular forms of expression such as folklore, stories, songs, drawings, plays etc.

If one looks carefully at language, one can see that language has the power to shape our experiences. Dale Spender (1980) observes "language is not

neutral. It is not merely a vehicle which carries ideas. It is itself a shaper of ideas". Female literacy learners have to become aware, that language is not neutral. Language shapes their experiences and as a result, their experiences need to be represented in the language (Gaber-Kantz and Horsman, 1988).

For planners of literacy programmes it becomes incumbent to find ways to include literacy learners in the public realm by assisting them to create language, which represents their experiences. Experience is now beginning to show, that stories told by learners become effective learning materials. Learners find these stories interesting, when they see their own struggles and experiences reflected. Because language or even the dialect of the learner is used in the stories, women find them easy to read. Language experience stories can also provide a source of inexpensive and creative reading material especially when such materials are in short supply. But it is not enough for women learners to accept such experience stories uncritically. If literacy has to empower women, then clearly experience is the crucial point from which to make a beginning. But women must also learn to develop a critical attitude by questioning their experience as well as the rationale behind them.

Literacy Programmes for Women - An analysis of Past Experiences

What has been the general experience with regard to literacy programmes for women so far?

A significant characteristic of the Government-run adult education programmes has been its singular preoccupation with teaching the technical skills of reading and writing. Several evaluation studies have pointed this out (NLM, 1988).

Over the years women's participation in the adult education programmes has shown a phenomenal increase. This has been borne out by the evaluation studies undertaken by various social science research organizations in the country (NLM, 1988). Despite the initial resistance to literacy as typified by the comment made by Kusma (quoted earlier) women are somehow persuaded to come to the literacy centres. On their part, in order to counter the negative attitude towards literacy, the organizers of literacy programmes (mostly better educated, urban based) provide middle class prescriptions by saying 'literacy will enable you to read letters', 'to read the bus numbers', without realizing, that few rural women need to board buses, much less feel the need to write letters. As a result, while women come initially to the literacy classes in the hope that such classes would be worth their time and energy, very soon the ambience of the literacy centre, the

attitude of the literacy workers, the content of the literacy primer, alienate them. Gradually they begin to drop out or come irregularly. 'My child became sick', 'I was unwell', 'I could find no time to come', 'I couldn't come, because we had to visit our sick relative', become the all-too-frequent excuses for not coming. This is mainly because literacy is neither a felt need of the poor nor is it perceived by them as a central skill, which will help them to improve their lives to a significant extent. Having learnt to cope without literacy, they have neither the motivation nor the interest to continue once the initial novelty effect wears off. The sheer strain of acquiring literacy skills begins to make demands on their time and energy. But even if some of them overcome these barriers and do become literate, the use of their recently acquired literacy skills and hence literacy retention, become severely limited by their lack of easy access to reading and writing materials. Women are therefore prone to relapse into illiteracy faster than men (Lind, 1989).

On their part, organizers of literacy programmes complain of lack of motivation on the part of the learners. An income-generating activity is therefore regarded as a necessary supplement to most literacy programmes. The rationale given is that in conditions of poverty, literacy per se does not always attract women. An income generating activity, on the other hand, is presumed to provide the necessary motivation for women to come to the adult education centre. Studies on such non-formal education programmes and income-generating activities have shown, that most of these pro-grammes, which are either run by the state or voluntary organizations are focused on mother-child health, nutrition, food preservation, cooking, sewing, handcrafts and similar 'feminine' activities, the majority of which do not seem to be generating much income (Stromquist, 1987). While teaching of literacy is intended to be one of the components, in reality it easily gets lost due to all the other time-consuming activities. Aside from the fact that the income generating activities emphasize the reproductive role of women, a disturbing fact is that women, who are engaged in such activities neither manage to generate income nor to learn literacy skills (Lind et al., 1986).

What is in fact characteristic of these income generating activities is that they are mainly fragmented activities with no efforts made to enable women to exercise control over their planning, operationalization and management. Nor are these activities accompanied by discussions, that would enable women to question the gender-based division of labour in society, that is responsible for women pursuing only certain types of occupations.

There are other aspects of women's literacy programmes that need special attention. These relate to content of the literacy primers and the methodol-ogy used in literacy teaching. When women are visible as the 'objects' of

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literacy programmes they are portrayed as being helpless and inefficient. Bhasin (1984) and Ramdas (1985) have drawn attention to 'blame-the-victim' syndrome, which focuses on the 'illiterate' rather than on the need for structural change. Bhasin is critical of the Indian programme for perpetuating stereotypes, which do not reflect the lives of working class women. Primers invariably depict women as wives and mothers and gloss over their work as labourers, as producers of food. Neither do the primers tell women of their legal rights or of the ways to seek redressal for the wrongs done to them. The main ideology is to promote women's domesticity and make them better wives and mothers. It is in order to reverse this prevailing ethos that Ramdas (1990) makes a plea, that women should demand literacy, but on their own terms and that literacy must be practical and relevant to the lives and needs of women. She calls for a drastic revision of content and materials so as to make them consciously emancipatory as opposed to promoting a 'status quo-ist' approach.

Teaching methods play an important role in literacy participation and for sustaining motivation among women in particular. A superior and patronizing teaching attitude discourages interest, while a democratic open and involved attitude, treating the learners as equal adults, and creating an atmosphere of confidence, is found to have a positive influence on attendance and results (Lind, 1989) The efforts of some of the voluntary organizations have been particularly significant in this regard. For their experience has clearly shown, how the attitude of the literacy teacher as well as the teaching methodology can create the right conditions for attracting women to the literacy classes.

But a more serious critique of the literacy programmes so far is that these programmes do not empower women. If anything, they reinforce traditional values and only domesticate them. It is now becoming increasingly clear that in conditions of poverty, deprivation and powerlessness, the only strategy, that is effective is bringing together women in groups around a common issue or problem and through a process of dialogue and discussion, raising their critical consciousness. As women begin to analyze and consider alternatives, they realize the importance of collective action, that can bring about changes in their existing conditions. If literacy has to be of any value for women, it must be a means for raising their consciousness about the oppressive structures within which they live and must empower them to organize themselves in order to change the existing reality.

Most literacy programmes so far have not provided women with the tools to understand and analyze the true nature of social, political and economic systems that govern their lives and oppress them. What they need is an understanding of social forces, that result in women bearing so many children, working endless hours without respite, being beaten and raped, putting up with alcoholic husbands and going hungry (Anand, 1982). This

cannot be achieved by their learning 3 Rs alone. What is necessary for initiating a literacy programme for women is an analysis of the structure of poverty and exploitation, which prevents a large percentage of women from not only being literate but also from being treated as equals. Illiteracy cannot be eradicated, unless there is a wider struggle to eliminate poverty, exploitation and grave inequities in society. In other words, the strategy for eradicating illiteracy has to be part of and related to the strategy for removal of inequality, injustice, and political subjugation of the people (Bhasin, 1985).

Exploring New Approaches to Women's Literacy

The literacy programmes for women thus far have been based on the centre-based model, which has been uniformly in operation throughout the country. The centre-based model implies, that one literacy instructor who is paid a small token honorarium every month, teaches a group of learners (initially this was insistence on a group of 30 learners per centre, which in recent years has been reduced to about 15-20 learners or even less). A resource and administrative support is provided to the literacy instructor.

The centre-based model has suffered from some serious problems. Lack of motivation of the learners as also of the instructors has become a severe handicap. Organizationally, the literacy programme has remained bureaucratic, top-down, with complete absence of community involvement.

Two interesting developments have taken place in recent years in India. The experiences of various women's groups in the country and of the Women's Development Programme (WDP) in Rajasthan in particular, showed that concerted attention needs to be paid to some of the tenets of women's learning (as discussed earlier in this chapter). In many ways, a distillation of these experiences and of the lessons learnt led to formulation of the Mahila Samakhya Programme, that has now been in operation in three states of India viz. Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Women's Development Programme and Mahila Samakhya are government-run programmes, that address themselves specifically to women-related issues.

While these two programmes have underscored the need to give women the time and space they need for any development or educational intervention, Mahila Samakhya specifically emphasizes, that literacy will not be foisted on women. Rather, the starting point for the educational intervention would be the needs and the problems as articulated by women themselves. Literacy would then be introduced, when the women feel the need to become literate.

The other development is the launching of literacy campaigns in nearly 50 districts of the country, which are at varying stages of completion of the

basic literacy phase. Starting with Ernakulum district, which first became fully literate, subsequently the entire state of Kerala achieved 100 per cent literacy in April 1991. The mass campaign approach is now fast emerging as a viable model for total literacy effort. In these mass campaigns the focus is not necessarily women's literacy or women's issues, but on mobilizing all sections of the society, so that a climate for literacy gets created and subsequently the demand for literacy is articulate'. These mass campaigns, which in effect have become 'People's movement' for literacy, are mainly based on the experiences of People's Science movements, especially that of the Kerala Sashtra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) and the Bharat Jan Vigyan Jatha (All India People's Science Movement), which have shown, that it is possible to mobilize people for such programmes. The experience of the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha (All India Movement for Literacy and Science) which took place between Oct. 2 - Nov. 14, 1990 showed how Kala Jathas (cultural troupes), that used popular education forms such as street plays, singing, music etc. created a suitable environment for literacy. As a matter of fact it would not be an overstatement to say that the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha (BGVJ) snowballed into total literacy campaigns in most districts.

How have these two developments in the country affected the literacy programme for women generally or enhanced our understanding relating to literacy programmes for women? At one level, these two developments have represented two approaches to women's literacy. Programmes such as Women's Development Programmes (WDP) and Mahila Samakhya have attempted to raise women's consciousness on issues that affect their lives, and mobilized them for collective action. The educational process has enabled women to ask questions, seek answers, act, reflect on actions and raise new questions. This type of education invariably takes as its starting point an investigation of the socio-economic reality of women, an examination of the problems faced by them, leading to a collective action against injustices suffered by them in the home, the work place and society. Literacy is not imposed on women, rather they are allowed to seek literacy at a point, when its meaning and value become evident to them.

In the case of the mass literacy campaigns, on the other hand, emphasis is unequivocally placed on literacy first. The ability to read, write and compute are regarded as desirable skills that would help the illiterate to assume control over his/her own life as well as see, how illiteracy is inextricably linked to poverty and deprivation. But literacy is not regarded as an end in itself. Rather, the literacy movement has already shown the potential to develop into a movement beyond literacy - whether it is to create a scientific outlook among the masses or raise the demand among adults for universal elementary education of their children or engage people in a mass resource planning exercise at the grassroots level

Research evidence is still not available as to the overall impact of the literacy campaigns on women. What is known, however, is that women participate enthusiastically in these campaigns - as learners and as volunteers. In Kerala, about three-fourths of the volunteers for the literacy campaign were women. Kerala was also unique in that two all-women cultural troupes first toured the length and breadth of the state as part of the special Kala Jatha to raise women's consciousness. A video cassette on these cultural events shows, how these troupes sang songs and performed street plays on girl and women-related issues. These issues concerned the birth of the girl child and absence of celebration at her birth, differences in the socialization of the girl child as opposed to the male child, the attitude of the school teacher towards a male and female student in the class, the problems faced by a young woman, when she goes outside to seek a job, the problem she encounters, when a dowry is demanded at the time of her marriage and even after marriage, the double burden of work she carries especially, if she also works outside the home. Through the street plays and songs, the exhortation made by the cultural troups was for women to become aware of various forms of exploitation within the home and outside, to exercise control over their lives, to take action to change such a reality by becoming literate first. What is important to note is that subsequently the state of Kerala achieved 96 per cent literacy by April 1991.

A video ascertaining the impact of the total literacy campaign in Kerala shows two interesting sequences. One shows a group of women, now literate, confident, bold, visiting a police station in the vicinity of their homes for the first time. One woman after another is shown to be questioning the Police Officer on duty about various aspects of police help they are entitled to. Some even show they are not convinced by the replies given to their queries.

In another sequence, at monthly village meetings, that have become a regular feature after the literacy campaign was over, women are shown to be questioning men as to why they have to carry a double burden of work every day. No rancour, no bitterness, just straight questions to which they expect straight answers.

The impact of mass literacy campaigns on women will require serious study. Some of the questions that will need to be asked are: Are women getting empowered because of literacy in other campaign districts as well? In what different ways? Are women able to sustain the level of literacy, that they have acquired? Or, as has been the experience elsewhere (Lind, 1989), are women less likely to reach the level of literacy that would enable them to get a certificate?

The experience of Women's Development Programme and of Mahila Samakhya on the other hand, is beginning to show that as women begin

collectively to address themselves to their everyday problems, they realize that all the problems are linked to the basic issue of access to authentic information and hence to literacy. Once the demand for literacy has been articulated, women have sought creative solutions to become literate. The revised document on Mahila Samakhya (1991) describes several of the field experiments in literacy that are currently under way. Thus open agenda literacy workshops have been held in some places, in which the learners control the pace and method of their own instruction. These workshops have also initiated the long but necessary process of generating literacy materials in local dialects.

In Bidar district in Karnataka a series of short-duration literacy workshops resulted in a chain-reaction of teaching-learning process. Hundreds of women have acquired some literacy skills, which they in turn pass on to others in the village. "Each link in this chain transmits not only an alphabet she has recently learned but more importantly her enthusiasm and motivation to learn" (Mahila Samakhya, 1991). Literacy learning is not daunting - once again the pace and the rhythm of women's learning is respected.

Several places, independent of one another, have evolved a camp-based model for imparting literacy skills. In this model, residential literacy camps (of 10-15 days duration) are interspersed with a follow up period of learning (approximately one month) in the village itself. This is followed by a third phase (of about 5 days' duration), in which women further consolidate the literacy skills they have acquired earlier. Shrivastava and Sharma (1991) capture the texture of one such literacy camp held in Udaipur district of Rajasthan, when they write

> The camp was a 'learning home'. We slept, ate, laughed, and learnt together. This was in contrast to the truncated 'centre approach' which is marked by its abruptness within which the learner is looked at in a fragmented way. In the camp situation, there is flow, learning is woven into the daily living experience. The learner is addressed wholly. The constancy enabled by the camp is significant in sustaining the high level of concentration required. Though literacy learning is basically an individual activity, the learning situation allowed collective process of learning to come into play. Group affirmation enhanced the learning process.

This experience with the camp approach is getting validated in other parts of the country as well and is emerging as yet another model for teaching literacy to women. Women who are unable to spend long stretches of time away from their village during a period of intense agricultural activity, seem to opt for such intensive residential camps. Women have another reason for deciding on such an option. Said a group of Sathins (village level workers of WDP), who had made up their minds to become literate.

Take us away from our homes - from our everyday chores, from our husbands, our children. Don't expect us to learn at a literacy centre for two hours every day. We are not able to concentrate - our minds wander, we are too tired. But take us to a camp for a short duration and we will show you we can become literate too.

Concluding Remarks

Literacy programmes for women are complex educational undertakings. They require sensitivity to the social, cultural and economic conditions, that prevail in different parts of the country. Unfortunately these programmes have never been a creative response to the needs of women, particularly of poor women. This is largely because it is male planners, administrators, policy makers, who have designed literacy programmes for women from an essentially male perspective. If this has to change, then the starting point could well be to try asking the women themselves. It is possible women will ask to be relieved of their daily chores for creches to be provided, for an easy access to fuel, fodder, water. It is also possible, that they will ask to be trained in employable skills, so that their entry into the job market is made possible. This would mean that various skills and vocational training programmes would have to be provided. Those who have became literate might even want to enter the formal stream of education in order to obtain certification, which is a 'gate pass' to vertical mobility. For other neo-literates the task would be to ensure, that they are able to sustain their newly acquired literacy skills.

My experience in working with a literacy programme for women in a slum in Delhi has shown that all of the above has started happening in some small measure. This experience has strengthened my conviction, that women's literacy programmes provide a challenge that require innovative responses in such areas as planning, implementation strategies, resource and material support, preparation of basic literacy and post literacy materials, research, evaluation, documentation. The task is formidable - probably the work has just begun.

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Chapter 3

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN

1. Regional overview

The problem of education and lack of equal opportunity are like other gender issues common to many societies of the world. An analysis of female literacy amongst countries with the same level of development indicates that Pakistan's ratio of female literacy is far below that of other developing countries in Asia and Africa (see Table 1). Ironically, female literacy figures in Pakistan are even lower than Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) which has a GNP p.c. of 170 as compared to Pakistan's GNP p.c. of 350!

Table 1: Per capita GNP and literacy ratios in different UDCs.

Country	GNP per capita	Adult Literacy	
		Total	Female
Bangladesh	170	33	22
Nepal	180	26	12
Zambia	290	74	67
China	330	69	55
India	340	43	29
Pakistan	350	30	19
Kenya	370	59	49
Sri Lanka	420	87	83
Indonesia	440	74	65

An analysis of the slow progress made in Literacy eradication in Pakistan reveals that the country has not been affording education the priority it deserves. It has been allocating a smaller percentage of its GNP to education (1.7%), as compared with Nepal (2.4%), India (2.6%) or Malaysia (6.7%). Consequently, literacy ratios for Pakistan for 1951-91 indicate low enrolment patterns for primary and especially secondary education. The

official figures for literacy are 26.2%. There are sharp differences between rural and urban literacy ratios. The ratio for literacy swings from 55.3% for urban males to 7.3% for rural females showing a seven and a half fold difference.

Differences in literacy ratios also exist amongst the four provinces of Pakistan. Sind has the highest literacy ratio (31.5%), followed by Punjab (27.4%), the North West Frontier Province (16.7%) and Baluchistan (10.3%).

Females constitute the largest group of illiterates in Pakistan with literacy rates at a mere 19% in the country. Ratios for rural female literacy are as low as 7,3%. There are areas in Pakistan where female literacy is nominal. In rural Baluchistan for instance, female literacy has been estimated at 1.8% (see Table 2).

Table 2: Enrolment in educational institutions by kind, level and sex.

Particulars	1949-50	1959-60	1969-70	1979-80	1988-89
Primary Stage (I-V) In Thousands					
Total	920	1890	3910	5213	8273
Male	800	1520	2880	3537	5518
Female	120	370	1030	1676	2755
Middle Stage (VI-VIII) In Thousands					
Total	250	422	899	1391	2221
Male	226	359	724	1046	1595
Female	24	63	175	345	626
Secondary School (IX-X) In Thousands					
Total	62	162	366	511	771
Male	51	136	295	379	565
Female	11	26	71	132	206
Arts & Science Colleges In Thousands					
Total	21	76	175	253	419
Male	19	64	130	175	286
Female	2	12	45	78	133
Professional Colleges (Nos.)					
Total	4925	12434	33633	72479	80316
Male	4531	10583	29414	59273	60517
Female	394	1851	4219	13206	19799
Universities (Nos.)					
Total	737	4092	15475	41810	69271
Male	666	3314	12000	36098	58938
Female	71	778	3475	5712	10333

In order to remove the disparity that exists in literacy ratios, on the basis of gender, the government of Pakistan will have to consolidate primary education and encourage large-scale expansion in the existing adult literacy infrastructure.

Although primary education has been one of the major factors influencing literacy, yet a little more than 50% of the children of school-going age are enrolled in primary schools. About 50% of these children will drop out before acquiring any worthwhile literacy skills. Two-thirds of the drop-outs at school-going age are female. Thus a great number of female children who do not get access to basic education or drop out before acquiring literacy skills join the 45 million adult illiterates in the country every year, which adversely effects the literacy situation in the country (see Table 3).

Table 3: Drop-out rates during primary education.

Year	Drop-out Rate	
	Male	Female
1949-50	71.75	80.00
1959-60	76.38	82.97
1969-70	74.86	83.01
1979-80	70.43	79.42
1988-89	71.09	77.28

Pakistan has a very high birth rate. Two to three million children are born every year in the country and unless some provision is made to absorb them into the formal school system they will continue to add to the number of illiterates in the country. (Ironically, studies indicate that women's education appears to induce a more favourable response to birth control.)

Efforts to promote adult literacy in Pakistan have been made in the past, commencing with the village aid workers programme which was initiated in the 1950's. The low literacy ratios are indicative of the ineffectiveness of these efforts.

2.   A review of literacy programmes in Pakistan

In order to cognize the factors that affect female literacy, it is necessary to review on-going programmes and the effectiveness with which they have operated in the Pakistani context.

Literacy programmes in the province of Baluchistan, over the years, have been hindered because of the scattered population. The average distance between villages is about 50 miles. Primary schools are limited. (A mere 2,600 villages out of 5,800 have primary schools.) Female literacy is low and therefore it is impossible to find female teachers. This poses serious problems for female literacy enhancement, as tribal customs prevail and it is culturally not acceptable to have male teachers for female literacy programmes. Most women in the province have limited access to the public sphere and are isolated from the social mainstream. The Literacy and Mass Education Commission has recommended that community centres be organized in parts of the Province where women could acquire literacy along with vocational skills.

The Local Government Ordinance in the province of Punjab entrusts adult education to the Local Bodies Centres of adult education which are established on the recommendation of the Union Councils who also decide their locations. Community involvement is encouraged by the formation of committees at the village level to plan, supervise and manage adult education programmes. Teachers are trained at the Union Council level and the secretary of the committee is trained at the Local Government Training Institute. Mobile teachers are used where local people are not available. Community support is solicited to identify adults in the community who will enroll in the literacy programmes. The time and place for teaching is also decided after consultation with the local leaders. Most centres receive financial support from the women's Division (a wing of the central government which was created to advance the cause of women in Pakistan and therefore special centres for female literacy are encouraged).

The Province of Sind has the highest rate for female literacy in Pakistan (21.6%). However, the ratios for female literacy in rural Sind are a mere 5.2%. This is due to the fact that Sind has a higher concentration of literates in the two major urban centres in the province - Karachi and Hyderabad. Thus literacy programmes seem to have met with nominal success in the rural areas of Sind.

The Adult Basic Education Society of Gujranwala was established in 1947. The ABES operates as a private, independent and non-profit making organization. It was registered as a voluntary social welfare agency with the Social Welfare Department of the Government of the Punjab in November, 1972. Its literacy projects are supported through private donations, community support, foreign aid-giving agencies and sale of books that the society produces.

Whilst the ABES has been involved in providing adult literacy classes since it was founded in 1947, the development of the society in its current form can best be traced from the first Adult Literacy Pilot Project in Shah Jhugi

in 1963. Although this project was far from successful, in itself, it did embody a number of essential characteristics that mark it as the beginning of a coherent process of literacy development. Characteristics of a literacy programme, that have been tested and found to be successful by the ABES can be summarized as follows:

1. programmes are open to everyone in the area;
2. programmes are located only in those areas which show a strong motivation towards literacy;
3. programmes are located only in those areas which specifically request a literacy programme;
4. village leaders are involved at every stage of the planning and implementation of the programme:
5. the teachers are volunteers who are paid a small honorarium for their services;
6. teachers are local to the area;
7. teachers are trained by ABES;
8. adequate supervision is provided;
9. good quality teaching materials are provided;
10. each lesson is about one hour in length.

The literacy programme of the Family Planning Association of Pakistan is somewhat akin to that of ABES. The FPAP initiates a simple and inexpensive welfare programme, which the community can run independently. Community involvement is therefore necessary for the success of the programmes. The field workers of FPAP study the community before designing and launching a project. The programmes are initiated through local leadership by involving community leaders. Linkages are established between development including basic education and family planning.

The Allama Iqbal Open University at Islamabad has been experimenting with a series of pilot projects on literacy. The University has designed projects and developed materials for literacy along with organizing the training of literacy personnel. The programme design, curriculum and materials are prepared in accordance with local requirements. The duration of literacy programmes is six months and they are funded by AIOU and UNICEF. Primary school teachers are used as resource persons. This programme focuses on social education, productive skills and literacy.

The AIOU developed a comprehensive programme of education and training for the female population in the country for the period 1983-88. The programme cost 25 million rupees and basically aimed at broadening female access to education and training through distance learning. The programme designed in the context of life-long education, aimed at organizing a network of adult literacy/education centres throughout the country. The programmes hoped to provide meaningful post secondary education to women which would enhance their academic and professional

skills. The success rate of this endeavour by the AIOU has so far not been evaluated.

LAMEC, or the Literacy and Mass Education Commission was established by the Government of Pakistan primarily to improve the low literacy rate in the country. The government felt the need to supplement formal education with a non-formal approach to literacy enhancement. A National Literacy Programme was therefore started by LAMEC in 1985. Initially a three-year model project, it continued to work til! 1986 and was implemented in nine districts in the country. The first year's target was roughly half a million people. The Commission, however, was able to impart literacy to only 18,000 people in this period.

LAMEC had calculated spending Rs. 140 on making a person literate. Instead they ended up actually spending over Rs. 3,000 per person. Owing to its lack of success the programme was subsequently called off. All the schools organized under the National Literacy Programme were formally closed on September 30, 1986.

Why did the programme fail? One of the reasons ascertained by LAMEC for the failures of the National Literacy Programme was the fact that teachers were paid a meager honorarium of Rs. 250 per month. This was not enough for them to devote sufficient time to their jobs and thus they were unable to motivate people to participate in this literacy effort.

Moreover, there was no effective way of monitoring the schools or teachers employed by this scheme. The schools in this programme were in different villages, sometimes spread over a distance of 10 miles - working at different timings in order to accommodate the needs of the residents. It thus became impossible for supervisors working at a salary of Rs. 500 to go and check all the schools running under their supervision. Some of the schools under this scheme did not actually exist in reality. The whole scheme eventually became a mere paper exercise.

In 1987 the Prime Minister of Pakistan (Mr. Junejo) announced a Five-Point Programme, which aimed at doubling the literacy rate in the country within a period of four years. Th's could only be realized by more work in the formal primary education sector as well as increased efforts in the adult education sector.

The Ministry of Education decided that nearly 150 million illiterate persons would be educated through adult education programmes. A Pilot Project 'Iqra' was devised to be run in Rawalpindi and Islamabad districts. Iqra an adult literacy programme would encourage individuals to teach illiterates for monetary rewards.

Alongside Iqra, another scheme was launched, to attract those students who had dropped out of primary education due to social or financial reasons. This project was named the 'Nai Roshni Scheme'. According to this scheme, 22,000 new centres were to be opened. These centres would run afternoon classes in the existing schools in the country. Regular primary school teachers would run these centres. The budget for this project for a period of four years was Rs. 3,100 million. The Nai Roshni Schools started with a great deal of fanfare in 1987, during the Zia-era but ended disappointingly in June 1989, when its first batch of literates completed their two-year condensed course. The programme was criticized by educators on the grounds that the two-year prescribed course could only teach a person literacy and numeracy but it would fail to mainstream him into formal education at grade V level, as envisaged by policy makers. The financial planning for this project was also unrealistic. It cost LAMEC Rs. 950 to educate a child while government primary schools spend only Rs. 650 per student.

The 'Iqra' project restricted to a pilot project in Islamabad had unlimited potential for corruption and consequently also proved unsuccessful.

In order to encourage literacy, an ordinance was passed in 1985, according to which no illiterate would be issued a passport nor would any illiterate get employment with any federal institution or agency. Furthermore, the education department also declared that no degree would be issued to students, who could not prove that they had participated in the national literacy drive. The spirit behind these directives was punitive rather than inspirational. It is therefore not surprising that these measures did not make any substantive difference to literacy ratios in the country.

Literacy up-date 1987-1991. Since 1989 the changing political climate has had its effect on literacy efforts and campaigns in the country. The Bhutto-government, which succeeded Zia was in office for a mere 18 months. During this period the Bhutto government drafted a tentative policy for literacy and education in Pakistan with the following salient features:

- The government decided to modify its party manifesto - promise in the education sector in view of resource constraints. It changed its promised attempt to achieve 90% literacy to confining itself to providing an educational infrastructure for all children in the age groups 5 to 9. The policy makers hoped that such an infrastructure would be instrumental in removing existing disparities between the rural and urban area. They were also hoping to remove the disparity that exists in the literacy ratios on the basis of gender.

- The Bhutto government had also decided to make a strong recovery effort to sustain the expansion of educational facilities and to expand primary education facilities with commensurate expansion of secondary and technical education.

- It had also been suggested that the private sector be encouraged to *undertake educational projects* as it was not feasible for the government to increase expenditure on education by more than 16% per annum on provincial basis.

- The government planned for all new primary and middle schools to be constructed during the seventh plan period to be placed under district education officers who were to be elected. The above policy failed to translate into action due to the short term of office enjoyed by Ms. Bhutto as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The present IJI government has been in office for less than a year and it is too early to predict the outcome of literacy and education programmes during their term of office. However, with the passing of the Shariat Bill, some indicators with regard to education have been under discussion - prominent amongst them is the need to Islamize education in the country.

3.   Constraints on female literacy

Female literacy ratios in Pakistan are amongst the lowest in the world though successive governments have articulated the need for women's development and education, yet very few schemes have been implemented. Women's issues have not met with the kind of attention they deserve.

In order to gain insight into resistance to female literacy it is necessary to examine the value a patriarchal economic and social order puts on female literacy and education, in a society where seclusion of women is practiced in many forms.

Seclusion of women is not only a physical veiling but it is a broader principle of exclusion of women from economic, political and social power, authority and influence (Krishnaraj and Channa, 1989, p. 11).

Research indicates that compared to boys, far less value is attached to the education of girls (ibid, p. 45). Families plan on marrying females at an early age. Since girls are likely to leave home after their marriage, financial investment in their education seems futile. Even when families do invest in girls' education they get little time for school work, as they are burdened with household chores and child care. Females, therefore, often drop out of primary education and literacy programmes. A girl's education

is thus 'narrowly conceived' (ibid, p. 45). It does not include her 'personal development or social mobility or the acquisition of vocational skills'!

Gender is considered to be an important factor in the 'allocation of roles, status and power in all societies' (ibid, p. 3). In traditional societies 'socialization of boys and girls as well as child rearing beliefs and practices' are in general 'organized on the basis of position, status and roles of men and women in families and in society' (ibid, p. 3). This is true of the society of Pakistan as well. The spheres of activity for males and females are rigidly demarced. Males control all major social and political institutions. Females' lives are generally linked to the household and child care. There is a lack of appreciation of any link between literacy and economic benefit for women. Thus the options of work available to women in general are restricted, 'due to social attitudes of employee, denial and lack of access to training opportunity in requisite skills, women's own perception about themselves, besides their ignorance of available options' (Government of Pakistan and UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation, 1987, p. 87).

Policy-makers and successive governments have been unable to sensitize themselves to their responsibility to enhance women's status in Pakistani society. Owing to negative depiction of females in society, women are visualized as dependent citizens. Such a state of affairs usually results in discriminatory legislation, which is an attempt by the state to give legal expression to women's reduced status. Pakistani women face such a threat, when their rights are periodically reviewed on obscurantist insistence. With the current trend towards islamization in Pakistan the position of women has been the focus of extended academic debate. Urban, educated women have mobilized to protest against 'biased' interpretation of Islamic texts, whose implementation would reduce their legal, economic and social status. Such a debate denigrates the status of women in society. It jeopardizes the access women have to the public sphere and makes them question, whether education without social sanction will substantially benefit their lives. It creates great ambivalences within females with regard to literacy and education.

Thus in planning for female literacy, governments need to realize that by allowing an examination of issues, that negatively address the status of women in the country, they only create a climate, in which women's inferior start in education is further threatened. The need for a more egalitarian social order exists - an order in which masculine and feminine spheres of activity are not rigidly demarced and females are afforded greater access to education, the public sphere and the work place. It is hoped that the state will find appropriate strategies and mechanisms to realize female potential through literacy and education and facilitate female participation in the national mainstream.

Males in Pakistan have a disproportionately higher number of institutions at primary, secondary and higher levels of education available to them as compared to females. Disparities in enrolment patterns between males and females have also unfortunately widened in recent years.

Resources and services for female literacy have been inadequate. There is inadequate provision for the schooling of girls in the country. Shortage of women with education in rural areas creates a shortage of teachers in literacy centres and primary schools. An infrastructure for training female teachers in rural areas has so far not been organized in Pakistan. Supervisory staff for literacy centres also needs to be trained in order to facilitate female literacy. There is a general lack of appropriate instructional material and follow-up literature related to the diverse needs of target groups.

Little or no coordination exists amongst various agencies engaged in female literacy programmes. Often inconvenient timings and inappropriate locations are selected for female literacy centres. Community involvement needs to be encouraged, especially the support of community leaders needs to be solicited to ensure the success of female literacy programmes.

The supervision and evaluation of literacy programmes for females needs to be an on-going process. Programmes in the past have been hampered by erratic supervision with its resultant negative effect on literacy attainment.

4.   Policy recommendations

In view of the Pakistani literacy experience the following recommendations are suggested for the enhancement of education opportunities for women:

Female literacy efforts in the Third World can be enhanced by creating an awareness of the need for cultural change especially with reference to the status of women in society. Thus a progressive and consistent government policy with regard to the status of women in Pakistan is necessary for the promotion of female education. Support for women's development programmes and efforts to promote their self-image should not fall victim to political pressure or expediency. Successive governments will have to demonstrate a commitment to an egalitarian social order, before attempts at improving women's inferior start in education begin to show any appreciable improvement. The material and ideological basis of sexual inequality, in the family, the labour market, politics, education, the media, literature and popular culture needs to be cognized by policy makers and attempts made to create a more just order in society.

Large scale motivational campaigns need to be conducted in the country through the mass media in order to bring about a change in the existing orthodox attitude towards female emancipation in general and female literacy in particular.

Sex role stereotyping in text books, reading content and m: ᵕ media presentations must be discouraged. Public recognition of disι ϳuished women will result in providing positive role models for women.

In trying to improve the status of women in Pakistan, particular emphasis should be directed to women in rural areas or areas of extreme poverty.

Policy makers need to realize that the disparity between rich and poor tends to counteract the equalizing effects of education. Thus females living in extreme poverty fall victim to both class and gender discrimination.

Resource allocation for literacy and education in general and female literacy in particular, needs to be enhanced. In Pakistan GNP allocations for education need to be increased in order to afford education the priority it deserves. In the course of implementation, the funding assigned to education is sometimes lowered. This results in drastic cuts or shelving of programmes which effect women the most. Care must be taken to ensure that resource allocation for female education is not subjected to unnecessary cuts.

The allocation to higher education, which services fewer numbers at the cost of cuts in primary school funding, eventually hampers literacy efforts in the country. Nothing portrays the lopsided state of educational priorities in Pakistan better than the Fifth Plan experience - the co-existence of the quantitative expansion of the consumptive higher education sector and the falling rates of primary education. While the base of the educational pyramid did not expand satisfactorily the top was raised further by the opening of new colleges and universities (see Table 4).

Table 4: Unit recurring cost per student per year.

Sub-Sector		1982-83	1987-88	Average Cost recovered	
Primary Education		350	650	N11	
Secondary Education		500	1200	Rs. GO	
College Education		2200	2850	FA	Rs. 180
				BA	Rs. 240
University:	General	8522	15282	MA	Rs. 240
				MSc	Rs. 300
	Technical	5156	10387		Rs. 90

The success of the ABES projects provides useful pointers for literacy development for the future. The need to initiate female literacy programmes on a local rather than national scale seems to be more feasible for Pakistan. Programmes with a limited outreach are easier for organizers to monitor, at all stages of implementation. Weakness in the programme design or implementation can be identified easily and corrected promptly.

Research and evaluation of the effectiveness of programmes as an on-going component of the strategy to eradicate literacy must be encouraged.

Cost effectiveness of literacy programmes must be reviewed often in order to avoid a repetition of the mistakes committed in literacy implementation in the past.

The ABES success reflects the importance of involving non-governmental organizations in female literacy promotion. Women activists should be encouraged to participate in female literacy programmes in all stages of their planning and implementation. Human rights organizations should also have consultative status in female literacy planning.

Literacy programmes acquire efficiency and refinement over a substantial period of time. The ABES project has been in existence since 1947. Its drop-out rate for literacy improved from 80% in 1963 to 7% in 1973, in a period of 10 years. Governments must allow literacy programmes substantial time to mature before shelving them as unsuccessful. There is a need for long term comprehensive programmes, implemented in phases, which eventually become self-sustaining.

Recently elected governments must plan realistically for literacy. Election promises often need modification in implementation on a national scale.

Widening enrolment patterns between males and females at all levels of education must be noticed and removed in the years to come, through systematic planning at a national level.

Resources and services for female literacy have been inadequate and must be substantially enhanced. The number of literacy centres and primary schools for girls in Pakistan must be increased on a priority basis in the near future.

Shortage of female teachers for literacy projects, especially in rural and tribal areas, hampers literacy efforts in Pakistan. An infrastructure for training female teachers in rural areas in Pakistan needs to be organized in order to meet the urgent need of female literacy. Incentives for teachers and prestige for working with literacy and education projects need to be inculcated amongst women. The underutilization of the existing infra-

structure for literacy, calls for the use of mobile units to persuade females to utilize literacy and skill-training centres. Mobile teams need to organize using personnel from the department of education, female doctors and community development workers. The presence of women workers in rural areas will not only enhance literacy but bring about greater social acceptance of females in the public sphere.

The women's cadet corps should be encouraged to work for female uplift in rural areas. Incentives such as honorariums and instituting of ranks should be offered to corps members. The cadet corps should be encouraged to work in areas of health, sanitation, shelter and education.

Provision must also be made for the training of supervisory and administrative staff for female literacy centres.

The target population for literacy enhancement should be manageable groups of females at both the primary and adult-literacy level. Rural and urban areas must be serviced simultaneously. These projects should be afforded a 'lighthouse' status - affording planners an opportunity to make a breakthrough in literacy through the observation of their operation.

Initially, an effort must be made to involve communities with a higher motivation for literacy, since past experience has shown that community cooperation is necessary for programme success. Once a degree of operational success has been attained within the light-house projects the campaign should endeavour into communities that have exhibited a reluctance to participate in literacy campaigns. With the passage of time literacy approaches will refine and provide useful pointers for initial handling or target populations.

Female literacy programmes should impart literacy skills within the developmental context. Thus neo-literates should not only be able to read, write and acquire basic arithmetic skills but they should also be able to participate in the national development efforts as responsible citizens.

Linkages need to be developed between development, basic education and family planning in order to discourage overpopulation, which impedes the growth of literacy in Pakistani society.

Organizers of literacy projects will have to match teaching methodologies to the specific needs of a community.

Small group teaching which allows for direct contact with teaching personnel has been successful in some literacy projects (like the ABES).

However, long distance teaching, using radio and television has also been tried in Pakistan.

The use of radio and television will afford organizers of literacy pro-grammes a greater outreach capacity. Long distance teaching methods also make good use of multi-media packages and instructional materials. These materials free the participants from unnecessary costly travel and encourage the students to move away from the traditional rote methods of acquiring literacy, to more creative ways of learning 'as the Rotary Foun-dation 3-H Project in Thailand has so adequately demonstrated' (Louw, 1988, p. 1).

While television usage will assist literacy planners in reaching a greater number of females, yet the logistics of distributing and maintaining television sets to a community will not be without difficulty. Moreover, supervision of literacy programmes, being aired simultaneously to several communities, is not an easy task.

Literacy programmes on television and radio are frequently interrupted in developing countries for lack of alternative networks. Thus programme planners using television and radio for female literacy programmes must anticipate a tendency of participants dropping out due to frequent inter-ruptions in the sequence of learning.

Future planning for female literacy enhancement will have to consider creative alternatives to the rather traditional practices in vogue. Learning will have to become a more interesting process, depicting experiences that relate to the readers interest and arouse curiosity in them. The didactic content of existing primers for females cannot motivate the participants to acquire literacy with enthusiasm. The need to review and update the content of female literacy primers exists and must be addressed by planners with the sensitivity it merits.

Low cost post-literacy reading materials need to be developed in order to ensure that neo-literates continue to progress after their literacy acquire-ment. Box and mobile libraries for neo-literates should be generously provided for the use of neo-literates.

Post-literacy linkages with the formal, non-formal and vocational educa-tion need to continue. Planners for female literacy projects will have to assess the post-literacy needs of participants, keeping in mind the socio-cultural conditions of the community they inhabit. Thus where community attitudes to female education are benign, the choice of formal education as a post-literacy alternative may be exercised.

In conservative communities, where females have limited access to the public sphere, or where formal educational facilities are at a distance from the participants, the alternative of informal post-literacy courses would be more viable. Females are often burdened with household chores and child care. In planning for literacy care must be taken to provide a convenient time and place for female education. Child care centres should be provided by the state to enable women to attend literacy classes.

Past experiences in literacy in Pakistan have revealed that in many areas of Pakistan, the people are not interested in literacy per se. In such areas, literacy needs to be linked with income-generating schemes in order to motivate females to acquire education and vocational training.

Pakistan has four provinces, each with its own socio-cultural traditions: each with its own provincial language. Thus females in each province need to be planned for individually - keeping in mind the unique constraints and prospects that exist in their province with regard to female education.

A national curriculum-package for literacy has been used in the past for literacy enhancement in all the Provinces of Pakistan.The failure of past literacy projects was partly due to such a literacy package not meeting the needs of individual communities. The need to plan a separate curriculum package for each province must be addressed in the near future, by literacy agencies in Pakistan.

The needs of rural and urban areas also need to be handled with sensitivity. Research indicates that rural primary education is basically urban-based and to a large extent irrelevant to rural life.

The temptation for policy makers to link female literacy projects with an on-going successful project, with a low female drop-out rate will always exist. However, literacy efforts in Pakistan need to diversify and discover new solutions to the growing problem of illiteracy. Mere repetition of the ABES programme structure and philosophy will slow down the generation of ideas and mechanisms for improving the literacy situation in Pakistan. Alternative structures need to be encouraged in order to improve the quality of literacy education in Pakistan.

Public motivation for literacy cannot be greater than the importance the sponsors themselves attach to literacy enhancement in terms of commitment. Governmental support and funding alone will not suffice to bring about an appreciable rise in the literacy rate in the country.

The devising plans for modernization of literacy and educational system is not simply a technical matter of finding the optimum mix of scarce resources and competing priorities or about de-schooling society

(Williamson, 1979, p. 2). Educational planning is fundamentally about social ends. Social ends reflect the interest and power of different social groups. Governments in the Third World will have to identify their ideological basis, which will determine the model of development for educational planners.

Meaningful change in the female literacy situation in Pakistan will only occur, when the state commitment to women's uplift is reflected in the broader social ends achieved through education.

Concluding remarks

Secure self-sufficient, self-actualizing women are not supported by society. A female, who is motivated to achieve, contradicts the feminine role expectations society has of her. Research indicates (Groth, 1975) that patterns for men's success are straight and conventional and are encouraged by society. Women's patterns of success are far more complicated and even success can bring failure.

The issue of the under-achieving female should be examined in the light of these complex implications.

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Appendix I

Enrolment increase during 1949-1989 (in percentages).

Level	Total	Male	Female
Primary	799	590	2196
Middle	788	606	2508
Secondary	1144	1008	1773
Arts & Science Colleges	1895	1405	6550
Professional Colleges	1531	1236	4925
University	9299	8750	14451

Source: Monthly Bulletin of Statistics July, 1989.

Literacy ratio by sex, rural/urban and Province since 1961

Province/ Year	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PAKISTAN									
1961	16.7	25.1	6.7	10.6	18.0	2.2	34.8	44.9	21.3
1972	21.7	30.2	11.6	14.3	22.6	4.7	41.5	49.9	30.9
1981	26.2	35.0	16.0	17.3	26.2	7.3	47.1	55.3	37.3
1988	27.7	38.0	16.7	20.7	31.9	8.8	44.3	52.5	35.4
NWFP									
1961	13.8	23.2	3.4	9.7	17.6	1.4	30.9	43.4	13.3
1972	14.5	23.1	4.7	11.0	19.0	2.2	33.7	44.7	19.9
1981	16.7	25.8	6.5	13.2	21.7	3.8	35.8	47.0	21.9
1988	20.7	33.3	7.4	18.6	31.5	5.0	31.7	42.5	19.7
PUNJAB									
1961	16.1	24.5	6.2	10.9	18.3	2.5	34.6	45.5	20.4
1972	20.7	29.1	10.7	14.7	22.9	5.2	38.9	47.8	28.0
1981	27.4	36.8	16.8	20.0	29.6	9.4	46.7	55.2	36.7
1988	27.2	36.4	17.4	22.0	31.9	11.4	41.8	48.6	34.5
SIND									
1961	21.0	29.0	10.6	11.5	19.0	2.2	36.1	44.3	25.0
1972	30.2	39.1	19.2	17.6	27.5	5.8	47.4	54.5	38.4
1981	31.4	39.7	21.6	15.6	24.5	5.2	50.8	57.8	42.2
1988	34.8	46.8	21.9	19.7	34.0	3.9	50.8	60.5	40.6
BALUCHISTAN									
1961	9.8	15.2	2.9	4.0	7.0	0.3	34.8	46.1	16.2
1972	10.1	14.8	4.2	5.6	9.2	1.3	32.3	42.4	19.2
1981	10.3	15.2	4.3	6.2	9.8	1.7	32.2	42.4	18.5
1988	18.4	29.3	6.7	14.6	24.8	3.6	38.5	52.7	22.8
ISLAMABAD									
1961	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1972	40.1	53.2	22.7	26.5	41.8	8.3	67.3	72.7	58.2
1981	51.7	63.1	37.5	33.8	49.6	15.9	63.3	71.3	52.7

Notes: 1. Literacy ratio is the percentage of literates (10 years & over) in the total population of the same age group.
2. The data of NWFP and Pakistan for 1961 could not be adjusted according to provincial boundaries at the time of 1981 Census because question on literacy was not asked in some parts of NWFP.
3. The figures of Islamabad for 1961 are included in the Punjab province.
4. This table excludes data of FATA.

Appendix II (B)

Literacy ratio by sex, rural/urban and district: 1981

District	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
				NWFP					
1. Chitral	14.1	24.1	2.9	14.1	24.1	14.1	-	-	-
2. Dir	10.2	16.9	2.8	10.2	16.9	2.8	-	-	-
3. Swat	8.7	15.1	1.7	7.6	13.4	1.2	23.7	35.9	9.2
4. Malakand	16.3	26.4	5.4	16.3	26.4	5.4	-	-	-
5. Kohistan	1.4	1.9	0.7	1.4	1.9	0.7	-	-	-
6. Mansehra	14.1	20.9	6.5	13.0	19.7	5.5	44.3	54.0	33.4
7. Abbottabad	26.7	41.6	10.9	23.1	38.3	7.9	48.8	59.5	33.9
8. Mardan	15.9	26.1	5.1	14.0	23.8	3.6	26.9	38.8	13.6
9. Pershawar	21.8	31.3	10.9	13.1	21.6	3.8	36.0	46.1	23.3
10. Kohat	19.4	32.1	6.4	15.4	27.0	4.0	36.9	51.3	18.2
11. Bannu	16.0	27.1	3.4	14.2	24.9	2.1	34.3	47.5	17.2
12. D.I. Khan	18.4	27.2	8.0	13.7	21.8	4.0	38.4	50.2	24.6
				PUNJAB					
13. Attock	24.1	37.0	11.1	20.2	32.9	7.8	48.5	59.7	34.6
14. Rawalpindi	46.6	60.8	31.3	37.2	55.0	19.8	56.8	66.4	45.2
15. Jhelum	38.9	53.4	24.7	35.1	50.8	20.4	55.9	63.7	46.7
16. Gujrat	31.3	42.8	18.7	26.8	38.7	14.3	49.8	58.9	38.6
17. Mianwali	21.4	33.7	8.0	18.0	29.5	5.5	37.6	52.8	20.5
18. Sargodha	24.9	35.9	12.8	19.3	30.5	7.0	41.5	51.6	30.1
19. Faisalabad	31.8	41.6	20.7	25.6	35.9	14.1	42.6	54.6	36.4
20. Jhang	20.3	30.0	9.3	14.3	23.2	4.1	41.7	54.0	27.6
21. Sialkot	30.8	40.1	20.6	25.0	34.9	14.3	52.4	59.1	44.7
22. Gujranwala	29.9	38.2	20.5	21.4	29.9	11.7	43.1	50.8	34.3
23. Sheikhupura	22.4	30.9	12.5	18.7	27.0	9.1	39.3	48.4	28.7
24. Lahore	48.4	54.6	40.9	20.2	28.4	10.5	53.4	59.3	46.4
25. Kasur	18.7	26.8	9.5	15.5	23.3	6.7	30.4	39.8	19.6
26. D.G. Khan	16.3	23.2	8.1	12.7	19.0	5.3	42.3	53.9	28.7
27. Muzaffargarh	16.8	25.8	6.3	14.1	22.8	3.8	40.3	51.0	27.6
28. Multan	23.5	32.6	12.9	16.7	25.8	6.2	41.3	50.3	30.7
29. Vehari	19.1	27.9	9.2	16.2	24.8	6.6	37.6	47.5	26.1
30. Sahiwal	21.7	30.5	11.7	17.5	26.1	7.6	43.5	52.8	32.9
31. Bahawalpur	20.4	27.4	12.2	13.7	20.0	6.3	42.8	52.2	31.9
32. Bahawalnagar	19.5	28.3	9.6	17.2	25.7	7.7	30.3	40.3	18.7
33. R.Y. Khan	20.0	28.0	10.6	15.1	22.9	6.1	44.5	53.6	33.7

District	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
				SIND					
34. Jaccobabad	10.9	17.4	3.2	7.4	12.6	1.2	29.2	42.8	13.2
35. Sukkur	26.3	37.5	12.8	18.8	30.2	4.9	43.9	54.4	31.1
36. Shikarpur	22.9	35.6	8.7	17.7	30.0	4.1	44.8	59.4	28.4
37. Larkana	22.1	32.6	9.9	16.4	26.6	4.7	41.0	52.4	27.5
38. Nawabshah	23.0	34.1	10.8	18.3	29.1	6.6	46.1	58.0	32.3
39. Khairpur	21.7	34.2	7.1	17.8	30.0	3.5	33.1	46.5	17.4
40. Dadu	21.5	32.5	8.6	18.5	29.4	5.7	39.6	50.6	26.2
41. Hyderabad	28.7	36.5	19.8	18.1	26.4	9.0	41.2	48.3	33.0
42. Badin	14.8	21.8	6.8	12.1	18.4	4.8	37.6	49.0	23.5
43. Sanghar	19.2	28.5	8.5	13.2	21.4	3.6	41.0	53.9	26.0
44. Therparkar	16.4	23.7	7.9	11.9	18.4	4.2	38.2	49.2	25.5
45. Thatta	17.8	26.5	7.7	15.8	23.9	6.5	35.4	49.9	18.8
46. Karachi (Div.)	55.0	60.0	48.8	17.1	23.4	9.1	56.6	61.5	50.5
				BALUCHISTAN					
47. Quetta	39.7	49.0	26.6	18.4	28.2	4.7	46.4	55.5	33.6
48. Pishin	9.4	14.8	2.9	8.3	13.4	2.2	17.4	25.4	8.2
49. Loralai	6.9	10.8	2.0	5.4	8.7	1.4	32.7	43.7	14.8
50. Zhob	8.5	13.5	2.1	6.9	11.1	1.5	25.2	37.7	8.3
51. Chagai	10.2	17.2	1.9	9.0	15.4	1.3	21.9	33.4	7.5
52. Sibi	13.7	19.5	6.9	9.3	13.6	4.3	29.0	39.2	16.2
53. Nasirabad	5.1	8.4	1.4	3.9	6.6	1.0	20.3	31.0	6.4
54. Kachhi	8.5	13.7	2.6	7.4	12.1	2.2	22.1	32.5	9.1
55. Kohiu	4.0	6.1	1.4	4.0	6.1	1.4	-	-	-
56. Kalat	6.2	10.5	1.4	4.7	8.1	0.7	23.5	37.3	8.5
57. Khuzdar	7.5	10.4	3.9	6.6	8.9	3.7	17.3	25.2	5.7
58. Kharan	4.1	6.9	0.6	2.8	4.7	0.4	19.0	35.2	2.8
59. Lzsbela	5.7	8.5	2.2	2.7	4.2	0.9	20.3	27.2	9.7
60. Turbat	7.3	11.5	1.6	5.3	8.3	1.2	20.2	33.2	3.9
61. Gawadar	6.8	11.7	1.3	3.1	5.3	0.6	12.8	22.3	2.5
62. Panjgur	8.5	13.4	1.7	7.7	12.2	1.5	22.0	36.9	4.6
				ISLAMABAD					
63. Islamabad	51.7	63.1	37.5	33.8	49.6	15.9	63.3	71.3	52.7

Enrolment ratio by sex, rural/urban and province: 1981

Province	Enrolment ratio		
	Both sexes	Male	Female
1	2	3	4
PAKISTAN			
Total	14.82	19.09	10.00
Rural	9.43	14.35	3.87
Urban	27.52	30.23	24.45
NWFP			
Total	12.71	19.29	5.19
Rural	10.71	17.61	2.87
Urban	23.88	28.54	18.40
PUNJAB			
Total	14.10	18.29	9.45
Rural	10.39	15.33	4.91
Urban	23.41	25.65	20.88
SIND			
Total	19.50	23.02	15.50
Rural	7.02	11.18	2.28
Urban	34.98	37.76	31.82
BALUCHISTAN			
Total	6.16	9.05	2.53
Rural	3.83	6.24	0.78
Urban	19.01	24.72	12.00
ISLAMABAD			
Total	38.41	43.32	32.82
Rural	24.37	32.33	15.55
Urban	47.91	50.54	44.82

Notes: 1. Enrolment ratio is the percentage of students aged 5 - 24 years in the population of the same age.
   2. This table excludes data of FATA as the question on educational institutior attendance was not asked there.

Number of educational institutions by kind, level & sex

Particulars	1949-50;	1959-60;	1969-70;	1979-80;	1983-84;	1984-85;	1985-86;	1986-87;	1987-88;	1988-89;	1989-90 (E)
Primary schools											
Total	9411	17901	41290	57220	72758	73812	77207	78819	81152	85846	90942
Male	7825	11641	30120	39449	51882	52261	54766	55780	56465	59884	63623
Female	1586	3260	11170	17771	20876	21551	22441	23039	24687	25962	27319
Middle schools											
Total	2134	1974	3560	9059	5984	6132	6260	6769	6880	6997	7117
Male	1962	1693	2700	5233	4219	4315	4367	4707	4768	4838	4911
Female	172	281	860	3826	1765	1817	1893	2062	2112	2159	2206
Secondary school (a)											
Total	528	1169	2185	3580	4120	4630	4677	5253	5432	5622	5816
Male	414	931	1575	2571	2849	3380	3362	3715	3834	3961	4091
Female	114	283	610	1009	1271	1250	1315	1538	1598	1661	1725
Arts & science college (b)											
Total	46	126	290	430	469	467	528	551	574	586	592
Male	37	94	205	312	319	314	361	337	392	401	405
Female	9	32	85	118	150	153	167	174	182	185	187
Professional college											
Total	19	40	59	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Male	17	35	54	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91
Female	2	5	5	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Universities											
Total	2	4	7	15	21	21	22	22	22	22	22

(a) Secondary School includes Secondary Vocational In. ( ) Data of colleges adjusted slightly due to fall.
(E) Estimated

Enrolment in educational institutions by kind, level & sex

Particulars	1949-50;	1959-60;	1969-70;	1979-80;	1983-84;	1984-85;	1985-86;	1986-87;	1987-88;	1988-89;	1989-90 (E)
Primary stage (I-V) (In thousand)											
Total	920	1890	3910	5313	6860	6828	7049	7756	7992	8273	8635
Male	800	1520	2880	3537	4686	4576	4684	5178	5331	5518	5773
Female	120	370	1030	1676	2174	2252	2365	2578	2661	2755	2862
Middle stage (VI-VIII) (In thousand)											
Total	250	422	899	1391	1730	1805	1911	1934	2064	2221	2402
Male	226	359	724	1046	1306	1359	1395	1378	1476	1595	1735
Female	24	63	175	345	424	446	516	556	588	626	667
Secondary school (a) (In thousand)											
Total	62	162	366	511	659	646	667	709	733	771	816
Male	51	136	295	379	504	485	490	522	538	565	598
Female	11	26	71	132	155	161	177	187	195	206	218
Art & science colleges (b) (In thousand)											
Total	21	76	175	253	355	373	385	399	409	419	429
Male	19	64	130	175	244	256	264	273	280	286	292
Female	2	12	45	78	111	117	121	126	129	133	137
Professional colleges (Nos.)											
Total	4925	12434	33633	72479	56276	59169	68317	72317	77465	80316	83167
Male	4531	10583	29414	59273	46962	49427	54500	56500	59573	60517	61461
Female	394	1851	4219	13206	9314	9712	13817	15817	17892	19799	21706
Universities (Nos.)											
Total	737	4092	15475	41810	49000	54031	59891	61319	65340	69271	73382
Male	666	3314	12000	36098	41400	45624	51090	51796	55554	58938	63072
Female	71	778	347⁵	5712	7600	8407	8801	9523	9786	10333	10310

(a) Secondary school includes Secondary Vocational In. ( ) Data of colleges adjusted slightly due to fall.
(E) Estimated
ss   The data for 1989-90 (II) has been incorporated from "The survey of Pakistan 1989-90".

Resource persons and agencies for female literacy

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        Women's Division,
        Government of Pakistan,
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        Jhang.

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16.   Miss Nighat Afza,
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        District Mirpur, A.J.K.

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        Section FATA,
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32   Miss Asma Wasi,
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33.   Miss Naila Jamil,
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        F.G. College for Women,
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Figure 1: Gross participation rates in urban and rural areas, 1985-1986

Percent
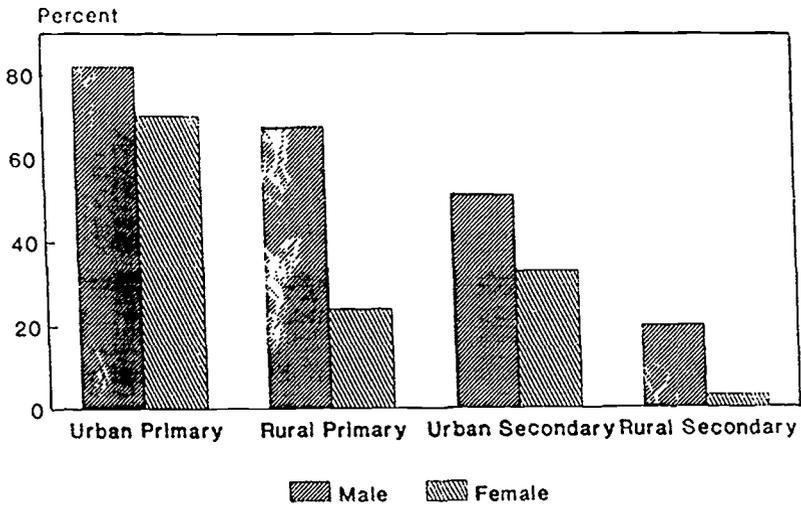
Primary (5-9 year olds)
Secondary (10-14 year olds)

Figure 2: Participation of different age groups in education, 1985-1986
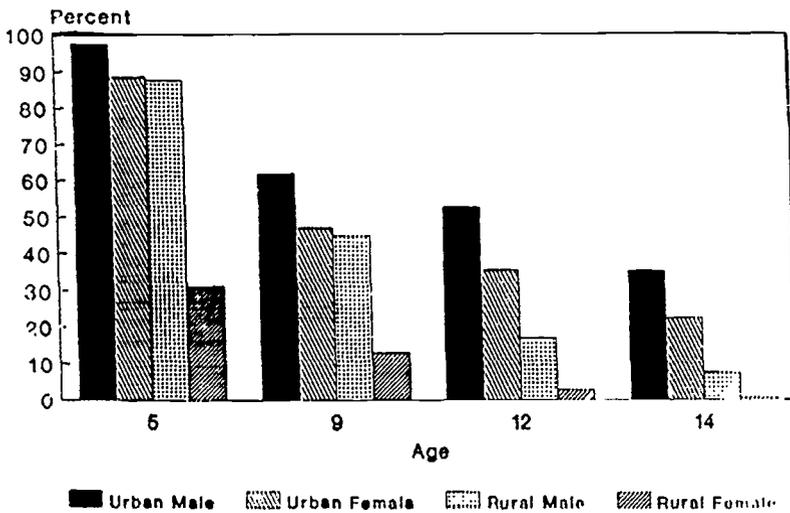
KASAMA VARAVARN
Bangkok, Thailand

Chapter 4

FLOWERS IN BLOOM. AN ACCOUNT OF WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN THAILAND

"... With one hand, she rocked the cradle,
   with the other, she took up sword to defend the land..."

> (Excerpt from a poem in praise of
> Thai heroines in the Eighteenth Century)

"... Woman has two hands
      Not for vanities indulged by man
      But to grasp the meaning of life
      To weave and work with all her might

      ....
      ....

      Blossoming flowers, thorny stems
      Bloomed not to be wasted by men
      But to nourish and nurture
      The creation of our nature."

> (An unauthorized translation of
> excerpts from
> "The Arrogance of Flowers",
> a contemporary poem
> by Sea-Write award winner
> Poet Jiranan Pitpreecha)

I.   Introduction

Since ancient times, Thai women had been valued for their inner strengths, integrity and selfless sacrifice, all the qualities which underlined their roles as dutiful daughters, loyal wives and devoted mothers. Although Thai women worked alongside with men in the fields, took responsibilities for the trading of their products, or even in time of war, helped to defend the land, their contributions outside the homes were rarely recognized. Furthermore, women were unable to perpetuate the families' names, nor were they able to become monks to make merits for their parents.[1]

For these reasons, literacy skills were not seen as essential life tools for women. In fact, too much education was considered harmful as it tended to

make women "opinionated, aggressive and headstrong". With the excep-
tions of a handful among the royal families and the nobility, young girls in
the old days rarely had the opportunity to learn literacy skills and were
prepared for their future roles as mothers and wives within the homes.
Boys, on the other hand, were sent to the Buddhist temples to become
ordained as novices or serve as temple-boys to acquire literacy skills and
other essential life skills.[2]

Over the years, the sharp division of responsibilities between men and
women gradually diminished and in 1921, King Rama VI promulgated the
first compulsory education law to ensure primary education for all children
between 7-11 years of age, irrespective of gender. The traditional
preference for education for boys over girls, however, continued to prevail
and to leave a legacy on the current status of Thai women and their future
development.

II. Current status of Thai women in education

While the 1921 Compulsory Education Act aimed to ensure the right of
women to primary education, it took more than a half century for women
to overcome the obstacles and begin to gain equitable access to education to
men.

In 1937, when the first national census was conducted in Thailand, the
overall literacy rate was reported at 31.2 per cent. Only 14.9 per cent of
women aged 10 and above were found literate, compared to 47.3 per cent
among men. Forty-three years later, in 1980, national literacy rate rose to
89.5 per cent. Women's literacy rate increased to 86.2 per cent, lagging
behind the literacy rate among men by 5.9 per cent.[3]

These achievements have been brought about by a combination of con-
tributing factors. Among these are *inter alia* the homogeneity of the Thai
language, the expansion of primary schools to reach almost every two
villages of the country, the adaptive utilization of literacy strategies and
adult non-formal education, the increasingly rich literate environment, the
improved economic conditions, and the supportive formal, non-formal and
informal learning networks of which literacy programmes are integral
parts.

Apart from these positive influencing factors, women's education has also
benefitted from the recognition of the increasingly visible economic, social
and political roles of women in the society, the changing attitudes on the
value of education for women and the emergence of a critical mass of
educated and professional women.

It is not surprising, therefore, that by 1980, girls represented close to 50 per cent of enrolment in most levels of formal education and in certain areas such as general secondary education and university education, even exceeded the proportion of male students.[4]

Enrolment in non-formal education likewise reflects high participation among women. Women account for 70 per cent of participants in vocational courses, 58 per cent in literacy classes and 46 per cent in Equivalency Distance Education.[5]

While the increasingly high girl enrolment and women participation in education programmes portray promising signs of greater access to education, they should not obscure the fact that a large number of young girls and women continue to suffer from illiteracy, lack of opportunities for meaningful education, and for continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills, which are critical for effective functioning in the changing world.[6]

In examining the current educational status of Thai women, the following problems are identified as being critical to their future development:

1.   **Higher illiteracy rate among women.**

While literacy rates among Thai women have increased much more rapidly than among men, over 2.3 million women remained illiterate in 1980, twice the number of illiterate men. Close to one million of these women are below the age of 50.[7] Their inadequate mastery of the basic learning tools can, therefore, seriously jeopardize their employment opportunities, their legal transactions and the management of their family affairs, particularly among the increasing numbers of women, who are heads of households, their exercise of political rights and responsibilities, and their acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Most importantly, interviews with illiterate women revealed that by being deprived of these basic communicating and learning tools, they often develop a sense of incompetency and tend to avoid being in situations, where literacy skills might be called for.[8]

It has also been observed that due to the increasing complexity of the language and women's limited opportunities to use literacy skills in everyday life, the number of functionally illiterate women in rural areas may be even greater.[9]

Attempts must be made, therefore, to equip women with literacy skills and to assist them to continually upgrade these skills so they can become effective self-directed learners.

2.   **Limited access to primary education among disadvantaged school-age children**

Inspite of the near universal coverage of primary education, there continue to be children and youths of both sexes, who failed to be enrolled in the schools or dropped out before completion of primary education. The present enrolment rate is 92.6 per cent among children aged 6-11 and survival rate through the 6-year primary education system is estimated at 80.4 per cent.[10] It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the 1980 National Census found over 11 million children and youths outside the formal school system, 49 per cent of whom are female.[11]

Educationally disadvantaged children can be found in every province of the country. But the dominant groups have been identified as the nomadic hilltribes along the Northern and Western mountain ranges, the physically handicapped, working and street children, children of migrant workers, and those living in remote rural areas.[12] In addition, it is important to note that the nature of these marginalized children do not remain static but evolve with the changes in the socio-economic conditions of the country.

Strategies for identifying and reaching these marginalized groups must be found. However, the strategies cannot be mere replica of what may have been effective with the mainstream target groups but need to take into account their diverse needs and conditions.

3.   **Lower progression rate to secondary education**

While illiterate women are already handicapped by their illiteracy, they are further placed at a greater disadvantage by the demand for even higher educational attainments among the workforce. As the country moves from agrarian to industrializing economy, as modern technology penetrates every sphere of living, as information floods even the remotest village, simple literacy is no longer adequate to assist women to cope effectively in the changing world. In more concrete terms, most well established factories now require at least lower secondary education even among the lowest-paid employees. For these reasons, the Thai Government has given top priority to expanding basic education to cover 9 years of education, namely, 6 years of primary education and 3 years of lower secondary education.

The report of the labour force survey, however, found that only 15 per cent of women in the workforce had lower secondary education or higher, as compared to 20 per cent among men.[13] The levels of educational attainments varied greatly both between genders and between rural and urban areas. Thirty-nine per cent of urban women and only 9 per cent of rural

women had access to lower secondary education compared to 48 per cent among urban men and 14 per cent among rural men.

Statistics on current enrolment in secondary schools are even more discouraging. Only 38 per cent of girls graduating from primary schools continue on to secondary education compared to 44 per cent progression rate among boy graduates.[14]

It seemed, therefore, that the struggle to achieve equal access, that seems to have been overcome at the primary level, has to be tackled once again at the secondary level to ensure that women will be equally prepared for the world of works.

4. Inadequate opportunities for continuing education

It has been fully recognized that women can continue to upgrade their knowledge and skills through non-formal education and informal learning opportunities to compensate for and supplement their inadequacy in childhood education. Unfortunately, such information is often not readily available to allow for accurate assessment of the situation.

According to participation statistics of the Department of Non-Formal Education, which is the major responsible agency in the field, over 200,000 women benefitted from literacy, general education and vocational programmes annually. But, although these women account for close to 70 per cent of the programme beneficiaries, they represent only a small proportion of disadvantaged girls and women, who are in need of such services.

Data on self-directed acquisition of knowledge and skills is even more limited. It has been found, however, that men tend to read newspapers more regularly than women[15] but women listen to radio programmes more frequently than men.[16]

It is important, therefore, to study the patterns of self-directed learning in greater depth so that women would not forfeit the opportunity to upgrade their competencies through non-formal and informal learning opportunities.

5. The tradition-oriented choice of studies, contents and learning process

In addition to the issue of limited access to education among women, it has been further observed that the choice of studies, contents and the learning processes within the education programmes continue to be oriented towards

traditional roles of women and contribute more towards furthering the subjugation of women rather than preparing them for more active participation in the society.[17]

In vocational education and in universities women tend to choose traditionally women-oriented subjects such as home economics, commerce, social sciences and humanities. Although increasing numbers of female students are now entering technical and industrial fields, engineering and medicines their representations among the student body are still much lower than men.[18]

Similar attitudes have also been found among agencies offering non-formal and continuing programmes for women. Courses for women tend to perpetuate their roles as wives and mothers. Women are often not included in courses relating to modern technology, thus being placed at greater disadvantage in the increasingly technological world of works.[19]

Relatively little research has been carried out on sexstereotyping in the contents and the processes of the Thai education system. However, it has been observed by many renowned educators, social scientists and prominent women leaders that the contents of education continue to portray women in traditional roles. Moreover, the learning process often neglects to conscientize women about their own potentials as well as inadequately empower them as individual women or as groups.[20] Within the primary school environment 70 per cent of the administrators are men, while 76 per cent of teaching staff are women.[21]

Traditional roles are further reinforced by the mass media, particularly advertisements, which have been found to portray women primarily as sex objects (60 per cent), housekeepers (22 per cent), career women (17 per cent) and mothers (4 per cent).[22]

The above overview of the current educational status of Thai women clearly indicates conflicting situations. On the one hand, present statistic data report of impressive progress towards equal access between men and women to education at all levels. At the same time, however, in-depth analysis of the situations reveals, that women continue to have higher illiteracy rates, limited access to primary education among disadvantaged school-age children, lower progression rate to secondary education, inadequate opportunities for continuing education and the tradition-oriented choice of studies, contents and learning processes. In order to ensure that women truly have access to meaningful education these problems need to be tackled.

III.   Current literacy and education efforts for women

Current literacy and education efforts for women evolve from over half a century of commitment to the promotion of literacy and basic education, the improved social and economic conditions, which enable women to participate more actively in employment and in the society, thereby creating demands for literate and educated women and the thrusts invigorated by the formulation of both long-term and medium-term women development plans since 1977, which clearly set out to tackle the problems of illiteracy and low educational attainments among women.[23]

Under the National Education Plans and the Women Development Plans, the Thai Government aims to achieve the following targets by or even before the year 2000:

1. Ensuring that every young girl attains quality primary education and at least 70 per cent of these graduates continue on to secondary education;

2. Equipping all women aged 50 and lower with functional literacy skills;

3. Upgrading the level of educational attainment of women aged 35 and below to at least lower secondary education;

4. Encouraging women to enter the non-tradition women-oriented fields;

5. Providing lifelong learning opportunities for all women to acquire knowledge and skills.[24]

Since the National Education Reform in 1977, formal, non-formal and informal education have been planned and implemented to complement each other towards the goals of education. In this section, experiences drawn from current educational undertakings will be discussed to illustrate, how they contribute to the education of girls and women.

1.   Provision of primary education for school-aged girls

The first primary school for girls was established in 1874, 11 years after the first school for boys.[25] Since then, the number of primary schools has increased to over 30,000 schools, reaching every sub-district of the country.[26] Each year, approximately 9-10 per cent of the national budget and 50-60 per cent of the total education budget are allocated to primary education.[27] But, in spite of the priority placed on primary education, the problems of non-enrolment, drop-outs, and poor quality continue to hamper educational provision for both boys and girls.

To reach the disadvantaged non-enrolees, to reduce drop-outs and to improve the quality of education, several measures have been carried out within the formal school system.[28] They are *inter alia*:

1. Carrying out school mapping to locate schools more effectively, and school census to determine the numbers of non-enrolees and reasons for non-enrolment
2. Providing kindergartens in linguistically and economically disadvantaged areas to better prepare the children for entry into primary schools;

3. Supplying textbooks, uniforms, stationery, and in an increasing number of schools lunches to needy pupils;

4. Improving quality of education through extensive teacher training, supervisory and monitoring system, establishment of school clusters through which small primary schools can assist each other;

5. Encouraging NGO's and government agencies to reach disadvantaged children, such as, the Border Police, setting up schools for children of the hilltribes or those living in remote areas, Foundation for Child Development, providing education for children in construction sites, and the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority, operating mobile schools into slum areas.

Non-formal and informal education programmes have also been conducted to complement primary schools in reaching disadvantaged school-aged children. Some of the innovative programmes that have demonstrated the potentials in being expanded respond to the priority learning needs of the disadvantaged groups include the following:

Hill Area Education Center

This project aims to extend educational services to approximately 500,000 nomadic hilltribesmen, among whom only around 20,000 children are presently attending primary schools. Trained non-formal education teachers are sent to live in the hill areas. A village education center is constructed with the help of the local community to serve as learning center as well as the lodging of the teacher. The villagers can come to read, play games, attend classes as well as engage in discussion with the teacher. The teacher, thus, becomes local resource person, who organizes classes for both adults and children and provides relevant information to assist the hilltribes to improve quality of life and become self-reliant.

Special curriculum for the hilltribes is developed with 25 per cent of the content based on issues of national concerns, 50 per cent dealing with

general problems of the hilltribes and 25 per cent addressing locally rele-
vant issues. Through a self-paced learning process and competency-based
tests, a child can complete primary education within 6,000 hours, while an
adult can do so within 2,800 hours.

The project began in 1980 and at present has served around 9,000
participants, 52 per cent of whom were children.[29]

Education for Street Children

The exact number of street children in Thailand is not known, but the prob-
lem is becoming increasingly serious. These children tend to be runaways
from home with the ages ranging from 6 to 18 years old. They constitute
one of the "risk groups", since they can easily be lured into illegal pro-
fession, drug abuse, as well as having no assurances for the future due to
their lack of or limited education. The number of girls is lower than boys,
but most often they end up as prostitutes. Education and care of these girls,
therefore, are of utmost importance.

Although the Department of Public Welfare operates Reception Homes for
Street Children, a large number are still roaming the streets of Bangkok.
The Foundation for Better Life of Children provides an alternative for
these children through volunteers called "Street Teachers" who are
assigned to patrol the streets of entertainment areas at night to get to know
the children, and win their trust, first by giving them some lessons, often
from 9 p.m. to 2 or 3 a.m., and finally to convince them to return home, get
a better job or continue their studies.[30]

This programme is one of the many innovative projects organized by
NGO's to reach disadvantaged children.

Distance Education

This project is an example of how informal learning can be harnessed to
improve quality of education. An educational radio station was established
in 1951 originally with the aim to provide public information and education
programmes. At present, the station has been upgraded into a Center for
Educational Technology responsible for developing and broadcasting over
8,000 school radio programmes to supplement teaching at primary and
secondary levels, distance education courses for adult learners and 9,150
public information programmes, annually. In addition, the Center also
produces educational television programmes for children, youths and
general audience.[31]

Surveys of radio listeners have clearly indicated that the large majority of
the listeners to educational radio programmes are young girls between the

ages of 15-24. In terms of occupational status, they include students, adult students, housewives and those working as hired labourers or self-employed in the informal sector. Favourite programmes are music, news, and magazine approach in which general public information is mixed with music and news. Due to the accessibility of radio within the country and women's propensity to listen to radio, educational radio and television programmes are effective means to reach the women audience.[32]

Parent Education

Relating to the attempts to increase access to primary education among disadvantaged children there have been efforts to upgrade the levels of educational attainments of community leaders and the workforce through evening classes and distance education. As research has shown that parents play a vital role in the decision on education of their children and that most parents would support their children to receive equivalent to or higher levels of education than their own, such projects can have positive impacts on enrolment of children and progression beyond secondary levels.[33]

From the above overview it is quite evident that the Thai strategy to ensure primary education for girls is integrated in the overall plan to serve every primary school-age child. Many of the approaches employed, however, are particularly pertinent to the problems of young girls.

By identifying the names and addresses of school-age girls through school census the problems of non-reporting are tackled. By extending the reach of the schools to the community, distance away from home, often cited as the main concerns among parents with daughters, is greatly reduced. By offering free tuition education and supporting children with basic necessities the schools enable the parents to send children of both sexes to classes. By providing flexible school schedules and introducing a self-paced learning process in the cases of working children and other disadvantaged groups, the programme helps reducing opportunity costs among children. By raising the educational attainments of the parents and the community the programme helps to establish primary and eventually secondary education as the community norms. Efforts to improve the school environment, curricula contents and learning processes contribute towards students' achievement and their positive attitudes toward the schools and education in general.

2.   Literacy programmes for out-of-school girls and women

While the vast majority of the Thai girls nowadays have access to primary education the country inherits a legacy of over 2 million women illiterates who must be served. Literacy programmes for out-of-school youths and

women therefore have received priorities in the national development plans.

Over the past 50 years Thailand has adopted a wide variety of literacy strategies ranging from compulsory mass literacy campaign in the late 1940's, basic education work-oriented functional literacy, community-based functional literacy, voluntary mass campaign, to distance equivalency basic education. Each strategy has been planned to further reinforce past achievement, to maximally capitalize on the prevailing political support and the institutional capabilities and to prepare for the future course of actions.

Some of the literacy efforts, which have been particularly beneficial to women, are as follows:

The Compulsory Mass Campaign was launched in 1940, when the first National Census revealed, that 68.8 per cent of the population and 85 per cent of the women were illiterate. A law was promulgated requiring all illiterates to attend classes, and all schools were instructed to open evening courses for these learners. Due to the high expenses involved, the campaign only lasted for 3 years. By the time the law was abolished and literacy classes continued on voluntary basis, over one million people had participated in the literacy classes.[34]

It is not known what percentage of these participants were women, but anecdotal accounts seem to indicate, that a vast number of women of all ages, who otherwise would have been inhibited by family objections, cultural barriers, shyness or lack of interest, were compelled by law to attend classes in the nearby schools. Much more important than the number of illiterates reached, the campaign had succeeded in establishing literacy as an accessible right for both men and women. It was not surprising therefore that within the subsequent 10-year period, women illiteracy rates dropped from 85 to 60 per cent in 1950.

After the compulsory mass campaign, literacy programmes were no longer supported by strong national and political commitment, and were left solely under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Various forms of literacy and adult programmes were developed. The most significant programme was the functional literacy and family life programme,[35] which aimed to respond to the felt needs of the learners by employing a problem-based learning approach to assist learners in acquiring literacy skills and in dealing with the problems in their lives. The programme was among the first to delegate curriculum development responsibilities to the field levels by allocating around 50 per cent of the content to provincial and local issues. Such approaches were later adopted in other Thai functional education curricula. The learning materials and learning process are designed to promote dialogues and exchange of knowledge and experiences

among the learners with teachers acting as the facilitators. Two types of teachers are employed, part-time primary schoolteachers and full-time non-formal education teachers, who are sent to live in the community.

Although the programme is designed to serve the community rather than the women per se, around 60 per cent of the participants are women. The positive aspects of the programme, which have attached women, include the practical and functional contents, particularly the emphasis on "Learning for today, not for tomorrow", the lively and participatory learning process, which resembles the way villagers sit and chat rather than formal classroom setup, the opportunity to meet other villagers, and the close proximity and flexible learning arrangements, which do not disrupt their daily routines. Very often acquiring literacy skills becomes the by-products of the programme, secondary to the opportunity to meet and discuss with other villagers problems of common concerns.

The programme has been heralded as one of the most successful literacy undertakings, and the approaches have been adopted to functionalize other non-formal education activities.

One major drawback of the programme, however, lies in the expenses involved in the payment of teachers, the training and the development of curricula. Consequently, only some 50,000 learners could be reached each year.

In 1982, with the government's surging commitment to mobilize all development agencies to serve the poorest of the poor, literacy planners saw another opportunity to launch a massive literacy campaign. Fully aware that they lacked the strong political fervour of the first campaign, they capitalized on the available resources and support possible at the time, namely, the relatively high literacy level in each community, the more normative literate environment, the policy to unite government's efforts towards serving the rural poor, rich experiences and resources in literacy education, the advancement in data collection and technology, and the nationwide network of non-formal educators to serve as coordinators.

The second mass campaign,[36] which was carried out between 1983-1987, was very different from the first one. It was a voluntary mass campaign aimed at serving approximately 700,000 illiterates, who had been identified by name as not having completed primary education and being unable to read and write. Over 300,000 people were mobilized to serve as volunteer teachers with schoolteachers and governmental workers providing technical backups.

The communities and a large number of private organizations also responded to the plea of the government and contributed to the campaign in

many ways. The religious institutions such as the Buddhist monks helped to persuade the illiterates to participate, motivate literate persons to serve as volunteers, organize literacy classes, and set up temple reading centres. Local village groups, particularly the housewives' groups, village scout groups, retired civil servants' groups and youth groups, were most instrumental in carrying out surveys of the illiterate population, motivating learners, organizing learning groups or collecting used books donated by the public. Many commercial enterprises set up literacy classes in their workplace. Artist groups helped to heighten awareness for illiteracy problems by integrating literacy messages in both folk and modern media. The non-profit, non-governmental organizations commonly known as NGO's initiated pilot projects to serve specific target groups, such as, a literacy project for "Tin" minority in the North by the Thai Scholarship Student Association, Literacy Classes for Women by the National Council of Women, and the bilingual classes for Khmer speaking children and youths by the Rotary International District 33. Successful lessons gained from these pilot projects are often adopted by the government to serve similar target groups in other localities.

The campaign formally ended in 1987 having reached close to 600,000 hard core illiterates, 60 per cent of whom were women. As in most of the Thai programmes the campaign did not aim only to serve illiterate women but to reach every illiterate identified. The contents and the learning arrangements are similarly designed to respond to individuals' readiness and convenience. However, the campaign did have many positive features that were particularly effective in facilitating women's participation. The campaign heightened awareness of the illiteracy problems, created a shared sense of responsibility and a climate of urgency for illiterates who were identified by names to become illiterate and for the families and the communities to assist them in the process, thereby helping women overcome most barriers traditionally imposed on them by the families, the communities or the culture. On the contrary, these people were assigned to convince the women to join the programme. The campaign further eases women's participation by providing self-paced learning opportunities within their home environment with people they are familiar with as teachers. The campaign also developed an elaborate system of reinforcement with regular visits, award of certificates by important personage to the learners, the teachers and the community, and public declaration of achievement.

While the campaign has succeeded in effectively reaching the hard core illiterates, it has been recognized from the beginning that literacy gains during such a short period of time would be short-lived. For this reason, systematic attempts to enrich the literate environment and to provide continuing education have been under way prior to, during and long after the literacy campaign.

3.   Continuing Education for Women

Continuing education is now fully recognized as an essential part of the basic education for all package. Continuing education has been used to enrich the literate environment to upgrade the newly mastered skills and to provide opportunities for acquisition of knowledge and skills.[37]

A variety of continuing education programmes are now available especially in the following broad categories :

Equivalency Functional Education[38]

In order to upgrade the levels of educational attainment among the general population the Thai government offers equivalency continuing education on 3 levels: upper primary education, lower secondary education and upper secondary education.

There are 3 learning approaches from which the students can choose: classroom approach, distance education, which combines radio, correspondence and self study or equivalency examination. To further facilitate participation of those, who have extensive life and occupational experiences, the programme also allows for transfer of life experiences, occupational experiences as well as credits from other educational activities to be counted towards the attainment of equivalency certificates.

Through these approaches the students can complete an equivalency course in a much shorter period of time than through the formal school system.

Due to the flexibility of these programmes and the opportunities they provide for the out-of-school population to upgrade their educational levels in response to the demands for more educated work force, the programmes have been highly popular, particularly among the youths. In 1990 there were 440,429 participants, around 46 per cent of whom are women. The percentage of women has increased steadily from 37 per cent in 1985 as more and more rural women, joining the urban labour market, feel the pressures to obtain higher levels of education. The women factory workers, for example, are among the largest groups of programme participants.

From the Thai experience, equivalency functional education is clearly one of the most effective ways to bridge the educational gaps between rural and urban women and in the long run between men and women from literacy up to secondary levels.

Vocational Training

Through a wide variety of vocational training courses, women can acquire employable skills and upgrade their literacy competencies. Some of the dominant approaches are

1. *Institutional training*[39] provides free lodging and educational services which combine general education with vocational training to women, mostly disadvantaged ones, who are offered shelters or are placed in institutions. Examples are programmes offered by the Department of Public Welfare and Women Emergency Shelters, operated by the Association for the Promotion of the States of Women.

2. *Short term vocational courses* are most common.
It has been estimated that at least 600,000 people around 60 per cent of whom are women benefit from such courses, which are organized by over 10 government agencies a year. The qualities of these training programmes differ greatly. Some courses have been found to be effective in initiating new earning opportunities, while others simply impart specific production skills. As a post literacy activity, they provide another opportunity for rural women to use literacy skills. In terms of preparing women for the changing world, however, these courses have been criticized in the past as orienting towards traditional roles of women and not preparing women to handle new technology. At present, such concerns are well recognized and both the government and NGO's have tried to include women participants in courses on new appropriate technology. One interesting scheme is being explored by a Thai NGO under the name "Technovest Fund" to help promote the transfer of technology to farm women as well as encourage them to test the technology by providing funds to share in the risks involved in introducing new technology. The NGO's involved will share profit as well as risk with the women in this joint investment.[40]

Such initiatives will certainly help to increase the effectiveness of short term vocational courses, which can be seen as both a post literacy activity and a vocational training programme.

3. *Complete Business Cycle Training* is becoming more prevalent among agencies involved in vocational training. Recognizing the limited impacts of vocational courses, which focus on training of specific production skills, more and more agencies are now attempting to assist women to go through the complete cycle of business management. Such courses usually begin with identification of viable earning opportunities, selecting the most appropriate earning opportunity, acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills in such areas as production, management, marketing, credit, and finally carrying out the selected activity with the guidance of the training organizations.

This approach has been supported by such organizations as Friends of Women's World Banking in Thailand, UNICEF, UNDP in cooperation with local organizations such as the National Council of Women, Department of Community Development, and Department of Non-Formal Education Department of Public Welfare, and Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement and Y.M.C.A.[41]

Experiences have indicated that this approach has been particularly effective in training women as individuals and as groups to become micro entrepreneurs. Through such a process, women's decision making abilities, networking as well as literacy skills and self-directed learning abilities are strengthened.

Lessons from the Thai experiences have clearly shown that vocational training in these different approaches can serve as entry points to literacy training for women, who may not be interested to participate in literacy programmes, as integral components of the learning process, so that women can gain something practical immediately after each lesson, and as follow-ups to assist women to continuously apply literacy skills in their every day lives.

Provision of News and Information

The problems of relapsing to illiteracy due to limited usage of literacy skills are well known in Thailand as among other developing countries. Research conducted among graduates from 4 years of primary education in 1971 found that around 33 per cent reverted to functional illiteracy three years after leaving schools. It was interesting to note that male graduates, who became ordained as monks or entered military services had higher retention rates. Due to the improvement in quality of education, a similar study conducted 10 years later reported that around 18 per cent of students with the 4 years primary education and 5.6 per cent of those with 6 years primary education became functional illiterates.[42] In the Thai National Literacy Campaign, where the learning process was even more reduced, 11 per cent of those initially passing the literacy tests failed to do equivalent tests one year later.

The issue of learning retention is particularly pertinent among rural women, who reside in an environment, where reading materials are virtually non-existent. For these reasons, there have been systematic attempts to enrich the literate environment prior to, during and long after the organization of literacy activities. Examples of programmes in this area are:

1. Village Reading Centre[43]

Neo-literates must have ready access to reading materials in order to retain and further develop their newly acquired skills. Equally important, these materials should be continuously supplied, and they should provide up-to-date information. For the past 20 years, the government has gradually established a nationwide network of village reading centres. Two daily newspapers along with periodic reading materials are provided to the village if the community can undertake to build a simple center and set up a committee to operate such centres. By 1990, there are village reading centres in 50 per cent of the villages with the goal to cover all the 60,000 villages by the year 2000.

Follow-up of graduates from literacy programmes found higher retention of literacy among villagers residing in communities with reading centres than among those living in areas without such services.[44] By carefully mapping out the coverage of the centres, the programme also helps to extend commercial delivery network into the areas, through which other reading materials can be sent along with daily newspaper.

Studies on the utilization of the centres found that women, particularly neo-literates, are often inhibited to use the centres. Several provinces have tackled the problems by setting up similar centres for every ten households or by binding used newspapers and rotating them among the homes of the illiterates so that they can practice to read in their own privacy.

To further accelerate the expansion of reading centres, the government is cooperating with other agencies such as the temples, the primary schools and the factories. Over 2,000 reading centres are now set up in temples donated by the public. Around 50 factories are now offering reading corners to their workers. Many bus-stations have set up similar services. Many primary schools opened up their school fences to establish reading centres for both children and the communities.

With these efforts, Thailand will be able to provide relevant reading materials to all villages by the year 2000.

2. Public Libraries[45]

Along with the attempts to supply all villages with simple reading materials, a nation-wide public library system has been established for over 40 years. With contribution from the public, there are 488 public libraries, one in every provincial city, and in 55 per cent of the districts with over 7 million users per year. Attempts are also being made to strengthen and diversify the services of these libraries to support the village reading centres through production of relevant reading materials, mobile services and training of

committee members, as well as to offer a variety of learning activities ranging from skills training, exhibition and lectures to audio-visual presentation.

The demands for public libraries are so high that each year the government receives more offers for community counterpart funding, than the numbers that can be accommodated within the government's annual budget allocation. In 1991 alone, over 3 million US dollars were donated by the public to set up public libraries in 51 districts to celebrate Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's 36th anniversary. By 2000, therefore, it is envisioned that every district of the country will be served by a public library.

3. Good books for villagers' campaign

In order to increase the supply of reading materials to the rural areas, several measures have been carried out:

3.1 The Department of Non-Formal Education as the lead agency in the field has developed several hundred versions of pictorial booklets written in simple language and dealing with a wide variety of topics for distribution to every village of the country.

Attempts have also been made to serve the needs of rural women both by selecting topics, which are central to the concerns of women, and by training youth and women groups to produce reading materials themselves. Both approaches have been found to be quite effective. There are now pictorial booklets dealing with women issues such as marriage laws, the life of a village headwoman, migration to the city, out-of-wedlock children or even one with a challenging title "Who says women do not work ?"

3.2 Requests have been made to major rural development agencies to be aware of the needs of neo-literates and to modify their printed materials accordingly. For example in 1987, the Department of Non-Formal Education received assistance from the Canadian Development Assistance Agency in the forms of printing paper worth 3.6 million Canadian dollars. This paper has been used by 20 agencies to print rural oriented materials.

3.3 All provinces receive government support to produce simple wall newspapers focussing on local news and information and utilizing village writers.

3.4 A major campaign to donate used books for villagers is conducted. Each year, over 2 million books are donated but in certain years, when intensive campaigns were launched, the number of used books contributed can reach over 10 million volumes within a 3 months period. These printed materials

were selected and sent to rural schools, village reading centres and public libraries.

3.5 A private organization named "Good Book for Villagers" has been set up to promote production and distribution of suitable books for villagers. The organization produces low cost printed materials for sale, certifies books, which are appropriate for villagers and encourages book publishers as well as the general public to supply books to the rural areas.
Through these measures, it is hoped that rural communities in Thailand will have greater access to quality printed materials.

3.6 The Reading Promotion Campaign

While the above activities help to increase the availability of reading materials to the rural areas, they do not guarantee that neo-literates, particularly women, will utilize these opportunities. Some of the measures, that have been found to be effective in promoting reading habits, include organizing reading circles, discussion groups on community issues, animated book presentation and story telling, reading competition, book exhibition, training of rural writers, and promotion of reading through various forms of folk and modern media. Folk media, puppet shows, publication of stories from popular soap operas televised, women discussion groups, combining vocational training with reading, are among the most effective activities with women.

In conclusion, continuing education is a relatively new educational undertaking, and there remains a great deal of conceptual clarification, strategic planning and exploration of effective programmes and activities to be carried out. But the Thai experiences have amply indicated, that by providing opportunities for equivalency education, and vocational training and by increasing access to continuous flows of knowledge and information, women will become motivated to acquire literacy and higher levels of education, the learning processes will become more meaningful, and the literacy skills attained will have better retention and more effective application to their lives.

4.   Catering to the needs and concerns of women

In response to the increasing concerns about the traditionally oriented choice of study, contents and learning process, several activities have been carried out by universities, professional women groups and NGO's to correct the situation. Some of the noteworthy attempts include presentation of awards to exemplary women, provision of counselling and scholarships by professional women groups in traditionally - male - dominated fields, introduction of gender analysis in programme planning, development and evaluation, research conducted by universities and institutions on different

aspects of women issues, training and seminars to sensitize policy makers, administrators and educators on the needs and problems of women, intro-duction of women's studies in universities and initiation of responsive women development projects sponsored by such organizations as WELD (Women Economic and Leadership Development Programme) by the Canadian International Development Assistance.[46]

These activities, although they are still limited in scale, will in the long run heighten awareness of the specific needs of women among educators and provide examples, how education can be responsive to the needs of women and contribute towards achieving the new visions of women.

Two particularly innovative projects carried out by NGO's are: a project carried out by the Foundation of Women, in which pictorial booklets are used to facilitate discussion with primary school graduates on the issues of prostitution, and theatre work conducted by EMPOWER, a women's group to provide opportunities for bar girls to learn English as well as to explore and express their inner feelings through performing arts.

IV.   Lessons Learned from the Thai Experiences

Based on Thailand's half a century of experiences in literacy promotion and the past decade of invigorated efforts to educate and empower women, the following lessons have been identified as valuable considerations in planning our future efforts :

1. It is evident that acquisition of functional literacy requires a continuous learning process. Likewise, literacy promotion for women or any other target groups cannot be viewed as a one-shot effort. Literacy targets can certainly be set and achieved, but these targets should be regarded as mile-stones towards increasingly more complex, more functional and more meaningful levels of literacy attainment, which, as the language itself, evolves with time and with the changes in society.

Furthermore, as the demands for educational levels of the workforce increase, women should also be assisted to upgrade their educational attain-ment not to simply confine them to mere acquisition of literacy skills.

2. Universal primary education, meaningful reduction of illiteracy and the creation of a supportive learning environment are closely related. Signifi-cant progress in one area cannot be effectively achieved without adequate attention to the other two areas. Therefore, efforts to ensure primary edu-cation for girls, to reduce illiteracy among out-of-school women and to provide continuous learning opportunities, should be planned in integra-

tion, so that they can adequately and timely complement and reinforce each other.

3. National commitment and support are essential conditions for any significant literacy and women development efforts. Such commitments need not be for literacy or women directly but can be for other issues, which are affected by literacy and women development. Support for women literacy, for example, have come from diverse groups such as those, who are concerned about nutrition for children, quality of export products, fair voting or drug control. Researchers and planners, therefore, should be prepared to make available data in support linkages. Without periodic reinforcements, particularly in the form of concrete results, national commitment and personal motivation for women literacy can diminish quite rapidly.

4. Strategies for promotion of women literacy must be diverse and adaptive. The Thai experiences have amply demonstrated, that there is no single formula for success. All strategies, whether they be compulsory mass campaign, voluntary mass campaign, work oriented literacy, integrated model of literacy and development, distance education, or functional literacy, have their ingredients of success and failures. Therefore, they should be planned to further reinforce each other, to maximally capitalize on the political support and the institutional capabilities and to prepare for the future goal of literacy for all women.

5. The teaching and learning strategies, likewise, should be diverse and responsive to the needs and conditions of illiterate women, who are motivated differently. Women-only learning groupings, for example, can be effective in areas with strong cultural barriers or in the case of women joining to pursue issues of common concern. At the same time, mixed groupings provide opportunities for men and women to learn, to discuss and function as teams.

6. In planning literacy curricula for women, while it is recognized that the curricula should ultimately empower women as individuals and as groups to assume new roles in the society, curriculum development must be carried out with utmost sensitivity. Too sharp deviation from the norms can damage the supports from the community just as too conforming curriculum will serve only to perpetuate the prevailing situations.

Among the measures that have been effective in bridging the gaps between the ideal and the reality are training of literacy workers and planners to be aware of women issues, leadership development among the key learners, the use of respected resource persons, emphasis on training of critical thinking abilities and self-directed learning, so that women will seek the appropriate roles and solutions on their own, and assisting women to work as a group on well accepted functions.

7. Most literacy programmes have been criticized for achieving poor quality and short-term results. Certain standards of learning achievements, therefore, should be set as guidelines for literacy workers and learners to strive for the attainment of literacy at the level, which will be truly functional. However, such standards should not be so restrictive as to prohibit non-professional educators from participating in the learning and teaching processes. With proper technical back-ups from the professional educators, these non-professional teachers, particularly village volunteers, can greatly extend the coverage of literacy services, increase the relevancy of the content, and even improve their own skills.

The strengths of women as individuals and as groups in particular should be mobilized. By working with illiterate women educated women are sensitized to women's problems and learn, how they can help those, who are less fortunate. Village women, who serve as volunteer teachers, also developed new rapport with other women in the communities and gained more respect from the men they taught.

8. In order to formulate responsive and adaptive strategies at national and operational levels, there is a need for an effective system to continuously assess the literacy situation and monitor the progress. The definition of literacy and the method of assessment should be periodically reviewed to ensure their functionality. Gender analysis should be applied to accurately determine the impact and the participation of women.

9. Resources for literacy and women development which often exist independently should be harnessed and synchronized. All the machinery and personnel for literacy should be educated on women issues just as women organizations should be aware of their roles in promoting literacy for women.

10. Finally, literacy should be viewed in its proper perspective. It can indeed be a powerful tool for self-directed learning, for communication, and for liberation of the mind. But, literacy by itself, is certainly not a cure to all social ills. Without efforts to continuously develop women's potentials and to remove other barriers to women's development, literacy programmes can become merely a token service to justify for the lack of genuine concerns for the overall development of women.

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Table 1: Literacy rates between 1937-1980.

Year	Literates as percentage of population		
	Male	Female	Total
1937	47.3	14.9	31.2
1947	67.4	40.1	53.7
1960	80.6	61.0	70.8
1970	88.9	74.8	81.8
1980	93.1	86.2	89.5

Source: Thailand's Experiences in the Promotion of Literacy. Department of Non-Formal Education of Thailand. 1987

Table 2: Population 10 years of age and over by literacy, age groups and gender 1980.

Age Groups	Number of Illiterates		Illiteracy Rates	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
10-14	87,979	96,198	3 %	3 %
15-24	119,461	190,494	2 %	4 %
25-39	179,149	330,796	4 %	7 %
40-49	173,058	355,108	8 %	17 %
50 and over	586,996	1,370,544	24%	51 %
Total	1,137,643	2,343,140	6 %	13 %

Source: The National Census 1980

BARBARA MOORE
Suva, Fiji

Chapter 5

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC REGION

> Saturday morning in Suva, Fiji, the last Saturday of the school holidays. The town is busy with people buying produce from the market and the supermarkets, meeting friends, talking, laughing.... In a stationer's shop a Fijian woman is buying pencils, pens and erasers for her three sons aged between seven and eleven, smiling as she pays for them, proud that they are going to begin the second term of 1991 with new tools for learning. What are her hopes for their future? What will they be writing with those pencils and pens? Will they be exploring the world around them and writing down their interpretations, developing a powerful literacy that will enable them to take their place in a literate world? Or will they be copying from the blackboard, completing exercises and preparing for examinations, developing a literacy that will be merely functional? And what of their sisters and their educational prospects?

In the island region of the South Pacific women's issues and literacy issues are closely related. Development for both is constrained by the following factors:
- a mythical view of the South Pacific Island region
- denial that severe social problems exist or that gender inequalities matter
- misconceptions as to the nature of literacy and literacy learning

There are, however, prospects for improvement and change which will be discussed once the constraints have been outlined.

The South Pacific Island Region

Fiji is one of the many small island states of the South Pacific Islands which will be referred to in this discussion of women and literacy development. The University of the South Pacific has its main campus in Suva, Fiji, and students from the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, Tokelau, Western Samoa, Niue, Cook Islands and Fiji study there.

There is an agricultural campus in Western Samoa and USP Centres in each country for students who are studying through extension (distance education). The Marshall Islands in the Northern Pacific has recently joined the university and many other tropical island groups in the Northern Pacific, as well as other islands in the south but not part of the university region would share a similar historical background and way of life.

A brief description of several of the island states is given here to show that there is diversity between the countries, differences in size, physical characteristics, degree of isolation, population density and political status. A map of the Pacific region is provided and Table 1 provides further data.

The Solomon Islands are part of a chain of volcanic islands stretching from Choiseul and New Georgia in the north-west to San Cristobal in the south-east. The land area is 27,556 square kilometres and the sea area is 1,340,000 square kilometres. The population of over 263,000 are of mainly Melanesian descent, traditionally living in inland villages and dependent on agriculture or in coastal villages, fishing, gardening, canoe building and trading for a living. Many villages are still small and isolated but many people have moved to the larger settlements. Forestry and fishing, copra and palm oil exports are sources of revenue. The Solomon Islands was a British Protectorate gaining independence in 1978. There are 62 distinct indigenous languages; English is used for education but the lingua franca is Pidjin. Many children do not attend school at all (45%) and a large percentage do not finish primary school. The World Bank is financing a programme to provide more classrooms, train teachers, and develop curriculum.

The Republic of Kiribati is located in the Central Pacific and is made up of 32 low-lying coral islands with a combined land area of 690 square kilometres. There are three main island groups, the Kiribati Group of 17 atolls, the Phoenix Group with 8 atolls and the Line Group of 8 atolls. Tarawa, in the Kiribati Group is the capital of the nation and the centre for administration. The Kiribati people are of Micronesian descent with some inter-marriage with Chinese, Europeans, and Polynesians from Tuvalu. The population was 66,110 in the census of 1985, and had an annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent per annum which is a cause for concern as the economy cannot sustain such growth. Fishing and associate activities are the mainstay for the people of the atolls, part of their subsistence and a source of income. Kiribati is a Republic within the Commonwealth and before independence from Britain in 1979 it was part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. The word 'Kiribati' is derived from 'Gilberts' and is pronounced 'Kiribas'. There are 105 government primary schools and a school population of 14,782 pupils and 488 trained teachers.

Fiji is between 15° and 20° south of the Equator at the 180th meridian of longitude, the International Dateline. There are 332 islands in the group, varying in size from 10,000 square kilometres to just a few square metres in land area. The total land area is 18,272 square kilometres spread over a sea area of 1,290,000 square kilometres. Viti Levu is the largest island and the most populated, with Suva the seat of government, the main port and centre of commerce. The total population is 670,000 and this is made up of indigenous Fijians, people of Indian and Chinese descent, people from other Pacific Islands, and Europeans. The economy is based on the sugar industry, tourism, forestry, agriculture and gold mining. Fiji became independent from Britain in 1970 and a republic in 1987 after the elected government of Dr Timoci Bavadra was overthrown by the army. There are 665 primary schools spread over 55 of the islands and they are run by local school committees, by religious groups and education societies. There are 144,000 pupils in primary school and 48,000 in secondary school, with 4,215 primary school teachers and 2,600 secondary school teachers.

Tokelau is made up of three atolls, Faka'ofa, Atafu and Nukunono, situated 480 kilometres north of Western Samoa. The atolls have a total land area of 10 square kilometres. There are 2,000 Tokelauans living on the atolls and 4,000 Tokelauans living in New Zealand. Because of the rising population and frequent hurricane damage many Tokelauans have migrated to New Zealand. Tokelau is a dependency of New Zealand but there is a large measure of self-government. The Office for Tokelau Affairs (Ofiha O Na Matakupu Tokelau) is situated in Apia, Western Samoa, and linked to the atolls by radio and by the monthly visits of a supply ship. Fishing is the most important occupation and some cash is earned from the sale of handcrafts, stamps and coins. There is a school on each island and children attend from five to sixteen.

Small island states no matter how isolated are dependent on the outside world and vulnerable to the escalations of the world economy. Travel and communications are expensive but necessary and, in spite of efforts to maintain subsistence living and avoid borrowing, aid is needed for development and for providing health services and education. Outside consultants and advisers may be needed but there must be co-ordination and collaboration between projects and programmes to avoid conflict and duplication. Local counterparts must be trained to take over. Smallness, however, means that local experts often have more work than can be managed, too few people with all the responsibility. Small communities have many strengths, but there can be problems too when family and tribal ties lead to nepotism and rivalry. Even the sincere wish of small island states to be independent and do their own planning and development can be dysfunctional as it can mean that aid funds are used for small projects in individual countries rather than for a regional project that could be more effective.

THE NEW PACIFIC
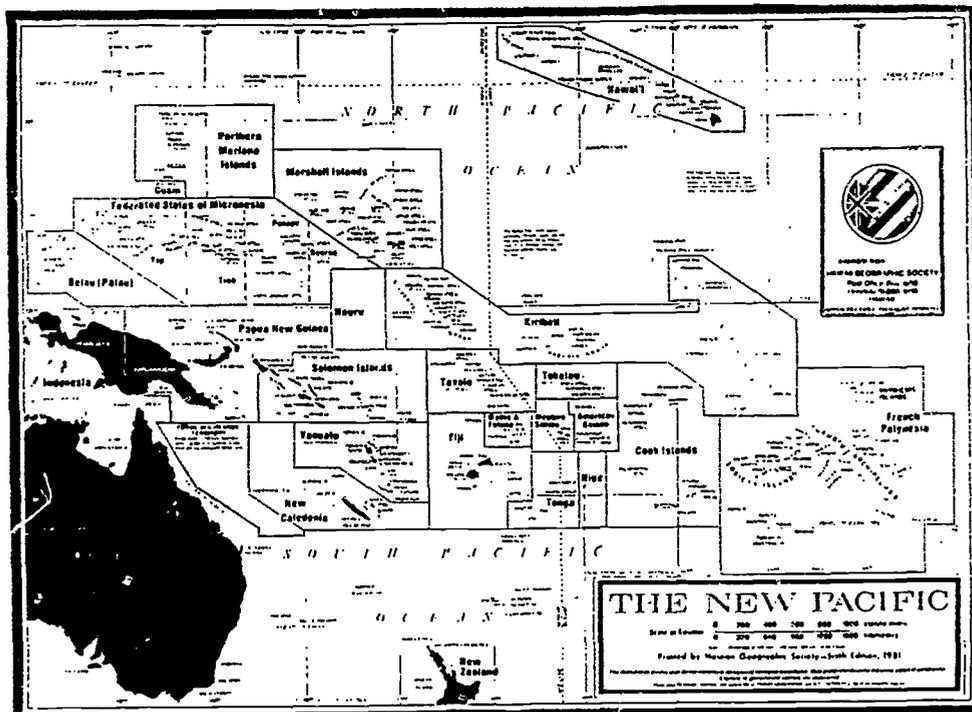
Table 1: South Pacific Island Countries: Statistics.

COUNTRY	LAND AREA (KM²)	SEA AREA (KM²)	POPULATION	POPULATION DENSITY (PER KM²)	PRIMARY SCHOOLS			ADULT * LITERACY RATE %
					SCHOOLS	TEACHER	PUPILS	
Cook Is	240	1,830,000	19,000	79	41			92
Fiji	18,272	1,290,000	715,735	39	665	4,214	144,000	85
Kiribati	690	3,550,000	66,110	95	105	488	14,782	95
Nauru	21	320,000	8,000	348	7			
Niue	259	390,000	2,000	7	1	30	381	100
Solomon Is	27,556	1,340,000	285,796	10	454	2,026	58,595	51
Tokelau	10	290,000	1,703	170	3			97
Tonga	699	700,000	104,000	149	115	687	16,502	99
Tuvalu	26	900,000	8,500	326	11	68	1,500	98
Vanuatu	11,880	680,000	140,154	11	253	830	24,206	
Western Samoa	2,935	120,220	162,220	54	139	1,204	32,430	97

Sources: Unesco Office for the Pacific States, 1991
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* official estimates based on four years at school or census

The South Sea Island Myth

To the romantic and to the tourist the South Pacific Islands are a paradise of
endless sunshine and beauty, turquoise lagoons, outrigger canoes, tropical
fish and flowers, the trade winds whispering in the palm trees, moonlight
and dancing. Life seems simpler and better than elsewhere, closer to nature,

more peaceful, more enjoyable. An advertising campaign for Fiji not long before the violence and disillusionment of the 1987 Military Coups described Fiji as "the way the world should be".

There is beauty and there is romance, and communities rich in tradition and culture, but nature is not always kind and violence and poverty are more and more prevalent. Malaria, dengue fever and hepatitis are common illnesses and village life is far from idyllic when lagoons become polluted, and there are storms or droughts. People move to urban areas to seek a better way of life for their children, hoping for educational opportunities for them, and for work and money for themselves. Visitors stay in fine resorts and enjoy the life and colour around them, the markets, the buses, the smiles, the kindness, the human qualities that exist throughout the islands. But that is not the whole of life.

Governments are reluctant to admit that poverty and social problems exist, or are as bad as those, who work among the poor say they are. In Fiji, for example, a survey entitled *Poverty in Fiji* published by the Fiji Forum for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in 1990, states:

> A number of people are persuaded that we have no poverty or very little poverty in Fiji. Some claim that poverty is a figment of the misguided imagination of academics and do-gooders. They seem to think we need to see the glaring destitution evident in Calcutta, before we admit to the existence of poverty.

and

> Poverty is widespread right across Fijian society, though its breadth and depth do vary. Yet, generally speaking, the rich and privileged in Fiji (as in the rest of the world) have little idea, how difficult life can be for the poor.

The book is dedicated:

> To the shoe-shiners, housegirls,
>   bottle collectors,
>   prostitutes, cane-cutters,
>   wheel barrow operators,
>   garment workers and so many others,
>   whose stories are told in this book.
>   They represent the poor of this
>   country. They do not attract tourists,
>   and they know from experience that
>   Fiji is not "the way the world should be".
> In the hope that hearts will be touched,
>   and things will be changed.

From the evidence available from reports, case studies, and statistics from earlier studies it was concluded, that many thousands of people in Fiji live in poverty in rural villages, low cost housing areas, and in urban squatter

settlements. Inequality, which has always existed, is increasing with figures for 1985 showing, that the top 10% of income earners receive 50% of the total income and the bottom 10% receive 1%. It should be noted, that although there are many wealthy Indian families, the same proportion of Fijians and Indo-Fijians live in poverty.

The incidence of poverty has increased dramatically since the military coups of 1987, though the government claims that new economic measures are providing more job opportunities and the economy is strengthening. The conclusions touch on unemployment, the difficulties of seasonal workers, the drop-out rates from education, the high expenditure on the Army and Defence, and the breakdown of traditional patterns in Fijian village life and Indo-Fijian family life caused by social circumstances. All these areas are of great significance, but for our particular purposes we will quote the paragraph on the position of women:

> Women rank much higher than men in levels of unemployment. Indications are that there are a disproportionate number of women who are poor (single mothers, widows, separated or divorced wives). Some take on jobs as housegirls or factory workers in low-paid employment. Some work as prostitutes. Many women are exploited, rejected, over-worked, unappreciated, and poorly trained.

The situation would not be exactly the same in other South Pacific Island countries but there would be similar elements - areas of relative poverty and need, problems caused by alcohol and violence, social inequality and injustice. The Fiji example refutes the idea of the South Pacific Islands as a tranquil paradise. They are real places with real people and real problems. And of course, there are prospects, ideals and hopes for the future.

South Pacific Island Women

The mother bying pencils for her children in a Suva shop is fulfilling the traditional role of women in the Pacific Islands, caring for her children and her husband, meeting the customary obligations of being Fijian, acting out of a strong sense of duty and never questioning her work. Historically, Fijian women played an important role in supporting their families and communities through their domestic labour and through the production of goods such as mats, oil and bark cloth for ceremonies and for exchange. They were subservient to men and took no part in decision making or in the ceremonies associated with important community matters. Women of chiefly rank had special privileges but the chiefly system was patriarchal in nature. The system continues today and has been strengthened through the Military Coups of 1987 and by the new and controversial Constitution promulgated in 1990 by decree.

Jessie Tuivaga (1988) writes in *Pacific Women: Roles and Status of Women in Pacific Societies:*

> Traditionally women are seen and not heard despite their contribution to the family's welfare and economy. While women are responsible for the cleanliness of the home, cooking, and general comfort of the family, they are also involved in wage employment for the financial maintenance of the family. Sometimes they are the sole income earners but usually they supplement their husband's income.
>
> The perception of women's roles and status in contemporary Fijian society is very much determined by their level of education and the degree of their exposure to values outside their traditional culture and the village environment.

In the Solomon Islands women are expected to conform to the traditional female role of being subordinate and inferior to men (Pollard, 1990). As well as domestic duties women are expected to garden, fish, collect firewood and fetch water. Girls are expected to treat their brothers with great respect. Jully Sipolo expresses this in the following poem:

> **A Man's World**
> My brother can sit on the table
> I mustn't
> He can say what he likes whenever he likes
> I must keep quiet
> He can order me around like a slave
> I must not back-chat
> He gives me his dirty clothes to wash
> I wish he could wash mine!
> If he sits on the front steps
> I must go round the back door
> If the house is full
> I must crawl on my hands and knees
> I must walk behind him not in front
> Watch my speech when he is in the house
> Don't say "face" but say "front"
> Not "teeth" but "stone"
> Carry out my love affairs behind his back
> Custom allows him to thrash both of us if caught
> But he can carry on in front of me
> That's his privilege
> I must pay compensation
> If I'm to get married
> Or pregnant without a hubby
> A brother can make a living out of his sisters!
>
> by Jully Sipolo

Marriages are arranged and women are valued as an economic asset.

> At marriage they are exchanged for a bride-price which is paid to the bride's family and clan. This also establishes and extends friendship with the groom's family and clan who value the bride as the future

bearer of children to ensure the continued existence of the kinship line. Traditionally, the children belong not to the mother but to the father's clan (who contributed the bride price), without whose wealth the children would not have been born.

As a daughter-in-law, a woman is expected to perform her duties to her husband's family - to help in agriculture and domestic activities and to cheerfully and generously provide for their needs. She is then praised and well liked by her husband's kin, but is gossiped about, condemned and criticised, if she fails in her duty.

Pollard, 1988

Women in Tonga have higher status and although traditionally they do not take part in political decision making, two women have become the rulers of the country. The first was Tupoumoheofa, and the second, Queen Salote, who set a fine example of leadership during her reign from 1918 to 1965. However, Mosikaka Moengangongo (1988) writes that:

The traditional role of women is rather subservient. The head of the household is male. A woman is supposed to be seen and not heard. On the domestic front, the ideal wife is obliging, obedient and holds an inferior position in the husband's family, especially his sisters and their children.

In Vanuatu women are traditionally viewed and treated as an economic asset and a 'big-man' will gain his wealth and status through the industry of his wife or wives. They produce what is required for feasts and ceremonies, the mats and the food. Kathleen Rarua (1988) writes:

The practices of the bride-price and polygamy imply, that the women are being bought and sold as a commodity. They are an economic asset which brings wealth to the husband. A man who has many wives is usually wealthy and of high status, not only because he could afford the bride prices involved, but also because the wives' services produce more wealth necessary for status-achieving activities. Without this wealth, a man's political and social power is reduced to nothing.

There are variations between the different countries and within countries as well, but there is a common theme of subservience brought about by tradition and by religious custom. It would seem that women in the Melanesian countries have the greatest difficulties to overcome, because they are burdened with an unequal amount of work. Their position is poignantly described by Grace Mera Molisa:

Non-entity

Living
on sufferance
taken
for granted
having
no worth
more or less
non existent.

Nothing more
than convenience
attributed
no worth

no feeling
no value.

Trapped
kept
ensnared
into
a cocoon
of non-entity.

Misis
ino gat raet
Misis
i nating!

And so
misis
misses out
on life's
dynamic
challenges,
self-esteem,
self-worth,
becoming
a non-entity.

A nameless
mass
of modern
native
womanhood
ensnared
enslaved.

Such is
the fate of
the ni-Vanuatu
wife.

Everywhere women have problems to overcome. The poor in each society are burdened with the problems of survival. The more fortunate have the difficulty of balancing their family and community responsibilities with their careers. Many women in the region have benefitted from education and hold positions of importance and influence. Grace Molisa was the first woman from the island of Ambae to attend a secondary school and the first Ni-Vanuatu woman to obtain a university degree. In her book of poems, *Colonised People*, her life is summarised:

> Grace Mera started school in 1956, at ten years old, under threat from the Missionaries that if she did not enter school that year she would not be allowed to go to school at all. Even so, her Guardians and Grandparents insisted that she learn to read and write Ambae before going to school with the Missionaries. So it was not until August 1956 that Grace Mera was admitted and enrolled at St Anne's School, Torgil, on Ambae.

> Grace's upbringing was steeped in Ambae Tradition laced with Monastic Anglo-Christian Culture, the combination of which has exposed her to wealth, destitution, conflict, loyalty and treachery to an extent which has sharpened her sensitivity to the Ni-Vanuatu Human Condition and what she believes to be right for the Ni-Vanuatu and Vanuatu. The same forces have conditioned her to be a teacher, educator, facilitator, developer, and promoter of the Melanesian, Ni-Vanuatu, Manples.

Her influence and inspiration have reached across the Pacific Ocean to others, who are becoming aware, that the traditional role of women is not necessarily the only role or the right role. This awareness is only just beginning to develop, for many women accept the way things are through pride, through conviction, through necessity and through fear. Pollard (1988) writes:

> ... a Solomon Island woman is proud of herself and her supportive
> role, because the success of husbands, and men in general, reflects the
> success of wives and women in general.

In March 1987 a Workshop on Women, Development and Empowerment
was held in Fiji with representatives from New Caledonia, Solomon
Islands, Western Samoa, Kiribati, Tonga, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Hawaii,
Papua New Guinea, Ponapei and Guam. A report was published, edited by
Vanessa Griffen and entitled, *Women, Development and Empowerment: A
Pacific Feminist Perspective.* The guiding objective of the workshop was to
enable Pacific women to assess development in the region affecting them
and to consider strategies for the social, economic and political empower-
ment of women.

The workshop began with a debate on the relationship of feminism and
traditional culture. Some participants felt that women already had status
within their culture and were wary of criticising tradition. As the workshop
continued they began to see, that the issues of traditional culture and
women's status could not be separated. The time had come to question
Pacific cultures.

The women found a common meeting ground for reaching this conclusion,
when they began to discuss violence against women. The issue of violence
often becomes the focus for discussion among women in the Pacific and was
an issue during the South Pacific Seminar on the United Nations Convention
on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women held in
Rarotonga Cook Islands in April 1991.

The editorial from The Fiji Times for International Women's Day 1990
and the answers given by women to the question, "What is the most
important issue facing women in Fiji today?" reflect this concern.

THE
Fiji Times
International
Women's Day

INTERNATIONAL Women's Day, observed yesterday, has one again focussed attention on the plight of women around the world.

To mark the occasion, Amnesty International has produced a report highlighting barbaric abuses being inflicted on women in 40 countries. Victims have ranged from babies to teenagers, pregnant mothers as well as old women.

While rape and sexual abuse are the most common forms of torture and degradation inflicted, other serious crimes are women bashing, long term imprisonments and bodily torture of female political dissidents, prisoners etc.

The report is a horrendous indictment on governments which allow such abuses to be either perpetrated by others or are guilty of the crimes themselves.

Says Amnesty International: "When governments ignore their responsibility to protect the rights of one sector of society, no one's human rights are safe."

Here in Fiji we do not have extreme forms of abuse against women although rape has always been a matter of serious concern.

But the plight of women in Fiji, nonetheless, is not idyllic. In many instances not even satisfactory.

Stories abound of exploitation in the workplace, sexual harassment by employers, discrimination in promotions and pays on the grounds of sex. The tragic case of women being abused and exploited in garment industries in Fiji has become almost legendary.

There are abandoned wives left to feed, educate and rear on a pittance a pack of children left behind by absconding husbands, teenage girls and unmarried women forced to turn to illegal means to abort their babies because society frowns disapprovingly on such women.

Wife bashing is a common occurrence and even though we are almost in the 21st Century, society still regards women as subjective to the whims of men.

The message of International Women's Day is clear: Women have to be accorded a dignity in keeping with their important roles as mothers.

In this age of enlightenment women must be seen as equal partners in the development of a nation. The world over women today work alongside men as scientists, judges, doctors, lawyers, technicians of all kinds, politicians and entertainers.

In almost all instances, they also continue to function in their more traditional roles as mothers and wives. They need to be recognised as a vital component of society, and treated with the dignity they deserve in their dual roles.

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Q&A OFF THE CUFF

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION: What is the most important issue facing women in Fiji today?

ELENOA MARAMA, cleaner, Suva: "Divorces and unemployment are important issues women must face."

JACQUI KAVE, nail technician, Suva: "Abuse is an issue and women abusers should be dealt with severely."

MARY SINGH, student, Suva: "Broken marriages is the most important issue."

SONI RITA DASS, secretary, Lautoka: "The most common issue faced by women today is controlling the family budget against the high inflation rate."

PUSHPA KUMARI, cashier, Lautoka: "Women are not recognised and should be given equal rights in all fields of work."

INISE RAVUTU, domestic duties, Naodamu, Labasa: "The terms and conditions of work where women are mainly engaged."

RAZMA RAJ, office cleaner, cleaner, Vunivau, Labasa: "The exploitation of workers specially in the garment industry."

ADI LAISA, student, Suva: "Prostitution and the risk of getting AIDS."

(The Fiji Times - Saturday, March 9, 1991)

Statistics from Vanuatu provide grim evidence of the extent of reported wife abuse and domestic violence.

Table 2: Women victims of domestic violence. Vila and Santo hospitals - 1984.

| | Vila | | Santo | | |
	15-49	50+	15-49	50+	Total
Violent beating	213	9	144	1	367
Broken bones	9	2	17	-	28
Fighting couple	23	1	10	-	34
Broken leg or arm	22	4	20	2	46
Sore bodies	11	2	6	-	19
Others	22	2	9	1	7
Total					528

Source: Vila Hospital, 1985

Kathleen Rarua (1988) writes:

> Drunkenness is also a major problem. It causes family disputes and often leads to wife bashing, abuse and financial deprivation. Children from disrupted families are at greater risk of emotional instability. Often, women have to put up with drunken husbands and related problems such as negligence, psychological torment and other love affairs. Such problems usually lead to nervous and mental breakdowns.

Those in authority are not completely unaware of social issues and the consequences, for many of them have to live in fenced compounds with guard dogs and security guards. But their more immediate concerns are for law and order and the economy. Do-gooders, misguided academics and the trouble makers, who criticise the present order of things are unwelcome. It should be noted here, that the elected government of Dr Timoci Bavadra in Fiji, which was overthrown by the army, intended bringing about social changes, which would have benefitted the poor.

Sensitivity to criticism is understandable, when governments do try to ensure that everyone has a decent life, with adequate food, shelter, employment and education. The economic difficulties associated with limited resources, or all too frequent cyclones, constrain the best of intentions. Where there is political conflict, racial discrimination and persecution, and wide divisions between the rich and the poor there is less hope of change.

Women, Education and Literacy

Ever since the missionaries arrived in the South Pacific Island region in the 19th century literacy has been used as a means of education. As their main intention was to convert the people to Christianity, the missionaries translated the Bible into the vernacular languages and taught their converts to read and to behave as Christians. Records kept by the early missionaries provide vivid examples of the power of literacy. David Cargill was the first European missionary to reach Fiji, and although he was successful in converting the Tongans who lived on the island of Lakeba, he despaired of teaching the Fijians. On the 9 November 1835 he writes of his Tongan female school.

> ...all manifest a great desire to learn to read. This is encouraging. As we have no chapel or school-house, we have to conduct the school in the open air. Old and young sit upon the grass under the shade of a tree and seek instruction with great assiduity. When shall we see the Feejeens panting so eagerly to drink of the streams of salvation?

Mission schools were opened on many islands and were run by pastors, who were Pacific Island people trained by the missionaries. Teaching was normally in the vernacular. When the colonial governments were established towards the end of the century, English was introduced to a limited extent. Girls were sometimes able to attend the village schools, but were not encouraged or expected to continue their studies. This has changed greatly in the last twenty years as parents see the economic benefits of educating their daughters.

These figures from Fiji indicate, that women are receiving educational opportunities.

Table 3: Secondary Education of Native Fijians by Gender.

Year	Males	Females	Total population Males	Females
1970	2,394	2,426	8,890	7,075
1976	5,240	5,396	15,499	15,259
1985	8,839	8,625	20,816	20,689

Source: Social Indicators, Ministry of Education Report, 1985

Women comprise 47% of the teacher trainees in teachers' colleges in Fiji and 42% of all students enrolled at the University of the South Pacific. The majority of teachers in primary school are female (58%) and 46% of secondary school teachers are women.

This pattern is similar in the eastern islands of the South Pacific, where education is well established and girls are encouraged to attend school. In the Western Islands, however, many girls still do not attend school and boys have preference when it comes to educational opportunities. (See Table 4)

Table 4:

Level of Education	Number of women at that level	Percentage of t al at that level
No education age > 10 yrs	38,021	60
Attending primary school	34,861	44
Attending secondary school	4,470	31
Attending university	270	22

Source: Solomon Islands 1986 Population Census

And everywhere the less fortunate find it difficult to attend school, because of the expense involved, because of chronic ill health, or because they have family problems that make attending school impossible.

The investment in education is high and continues to grow as more schools are built, more teachers are trained, curriculum material is developed and examinations are devised. Schools take pride in their examinations results and often ensure, that only those who are likely to pass the examinations take part. Teachers are hard working and dedicated, even though their circumstances may be difficult - large classes, limited teaching resources, multiple classes. And there are children who do well and who are "at home in a literate world" (Meek, 1991).

For many, however, the education they receive is not developing the powerful literacy required for full participation in a difficult and changing world. Margaret Meek (1991), in her latest book *On Being Literate,* argues for a powerful literacy, which allows its possessors to choose and control all they read and write, a literacy that empowers, because the powerfully literate read and write critically and use their knowledge of the world for social purposes. Basic or functional literacy in comparison is literacy in its cheapest, meanest form. She writes of helping children learn the literacies they will need in a changing world:

> ...reading and writing have helped us understand the world and our place in it and will now allow us to consider the possibilities of different kinds of future. While we know from our history that literacy has not always been a benefit, has been associated with evil, wars, disease, oppression and self-regard, it has never encouraged, nor been part of, cultural despair or helplessness. On the contrary, it is also a mode of recreation, both effortful and restful. So we owe it to our

> children to understand as clearly as possible, what we mean, when we
> say we want them to be literate.

Reading programmes in the majority of schools in the region are not likely
to develop powerful literacy or literacies except for the fortunate children
who have access to literature and opportunities to discuss and write.
Because classes are large, often over 50 pupils, and because books are
scarce, most teaching is by rote repetition. Vernacular programmes usually
involve chanting letter names and sounds for the first weeks or months,
followed by a list of words from the first book. When Book 1 is introduced,
it will be read in unison from the blackboard. The book may be a
translation of an English book or follow a similar pattern as the books used
for English reading in the 1950s, Janet and John for example. Exercises and
phonics are used to consolidate the lesson and teachers are puzzled, when
the children are unable to read as there has been so much repetition.

English is introduced through the Tate Oral English Course (Tate, 1971), a
rote learning programme, where the children practice grammatical struc-
tures and pronunciation. The Junior Readers which complement this
course, are taught through repetition, reading in unison, and exercises. The
books are contrived in language and lack interest or story quality. This is a
typical page.

**Now Peter is climbing a tree.
He's climbing up.**

**Now Peter is falling.
He's falling.
Now Peter is lying down.
He's lying down.
Mary has a big coconut.**
Mary: **"Thank you, Peter."**
Peter: **"Thank you, Mary."**

Discussion and writing in Vernacular and English are limited to answering questions in the approved formal manner and writing the answers to comprehension questions. The knowledge required for passing tests and examinations is supplied by the teacher to be learnt by rote and used. There is little role for the practical or imaginative exploration of the environment or of ideas and themes, and few opportunities for discovery or problem solving. The pupils may learn to read, but literacy is not going to change their lives.

Colin Lankshear (1987) writes of proper and improper literacy, and it is the later type of literacy, that most of the children in the region receive. Proper literacy is practised and developed, when reading and writing are used to understand the world, the social and historical reality of one's own life. A proper literacy leads to a critical understanding of social reality and provides the power to question and to change. He writes:

> Education has become identified almost exclusively with schooling, and school itself has become a site wherein wider power differentials (economic, political and cultural), intersect to produce the ultimate form of educational anti-democracy: namely, structured illiteracy.

Literacy Levels in the South Pacific Island Region

Literacy rates appear to be high for many of the countries in the region, because they are based on attending school for four years, or on the census, when people have been asked, if they are literate by officials, who have to fill the form in for them. The following table provides figures for Fiji on the percentage of people considered to be functionally literate.

Table 5: Percentage who had completed four or more years of schooling.

	1966	1976	1986
Total Population:	72	79	87
Fijians	86	87	93
Indians	57	71	80
Males:	79	84	90
Fijians	89	89	94
Indians	67	79	85
Females:	66	74	84
Fijians	83	84	92
Indians	45	63	74

Source: Social Indicators for Fiji No. 5, pg 38, 1989

Literacy is not widely practised in the community. Francis Mangubhai (1989) writes:

> While the concept of being literate has been intellectually accepted, the practice of it has remained limited, because societies have not integrated its use extensively into the fabric of their social and cultural lives. The role of literacy in personal lives has remained largely circumscribed, its operation confined within a narrow range in the fields of religion, education and workplace.

A Sub-Regional Workshop on Youth and Adults with Limited Literacy Skills was organised by the Unesco Office for the Pacific States in Apia, Western Samoa, in May 1988, and the problems of illiteracy were discussed. Ways of gathering further information about hidden illiteracy were considered as well as ways of preventing failure through better primary school programmes, and ways of providing remedial help. This meeting and the awareness aroused by International Literacy Year activities have meant, that more consideration is being given to what it means to be literate.

In 1990 the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment undertook a study of Pacific Island Literacy Levels (PILL) on behalf of Unesco. The study was conducted by Graeme Withers and nine countries participated. Pupils at Class 6 level were tested in order to determine whether children, at that stage of their schooling, were in possession of basic reading skills in both English and Vernacular language as well as having basic numeracy. Over 2,500 children were tested.

The complete report is not yet available, but at a Unesco Sub-Regional Seminar for Enhancing Reading Skills in Pacific Primary Schools, held in Apia in March 1991, the preliminary results were discussed. It appeared that Class 6 students have acquired basic literacy, that standards are better than basic for many, and that they are doing so in circumstances that are often difficult.

It is probable that moves away from rote learning methods towards programmes, that value rhymes and stories and the children's own writing, are having an effect, especially in vernacular programmes. This comment was recorded, however, and is of great significance.

> ... basic literacy, however widespread, is not enough for the cognitive, academic and personal growth required by citizens in today's Pacific societies, or by Pacific Education Ministries. Nor is basic literacy sufficient for survival and happiness in the complex and often threatening world, in which these children live, and which they must understand and confront in future.

Women and Literacy Development

The women of the South Pacific Island region need a powerful, critical literacy to empower them to question, what is happening in their lives and to enable them to work together to construct a better life for everyone. Although there are outstanding women in many fields, and women are playing an important role in areas outside the home as well as a critical role in the traditional areas of home and family, too many are facing hardship.

The constraints outlined in the first part of this paper affect women and children most and are hard to overcome. The economic difficulties of small island nations lead to impoverishment and inequality, political difficulties and injustice. Governments are defensive and unwilling to admit the seriousness of poverty and social problems. The same attitude is often found in the community, where the poor are condemned as lazy or criminal (Barr, 1990). Gender issues are seen as the inventions of western feminists, who are trying to disturb the traditional way of life.

Education should be the means of breaking the cycle of poverty and violence, but this does not appear to be happening. For those in authority schools are for training respectful, law abiding citizens, who will provide a literate workforce and improve the economy. In Fiji, a garment industry is now flourishing, because of the introduction of tax free zones for the investor and because of the cheap labour available. Women work in sweat-shop conditions for F$28.00 a week, or less if they are being trained. Brave efforts are made from time to time to complain about the conditions, but the women workers need the money desperately, and the manufacturers need profits.

Parents, like our Suva mother, hope that their children will do well and are very proud, when school reports show, that their children are in the top places in class. For those at the bottom of the class there is little hope, and they are soon made to feel worthless.

Case study

Maria was a child from St Christopher's Home in Suva, a home for children, who were orphaned or whose parents were unable to care for them. Maria was bright and beautiful, but her time at school was not happy. She attended a school with a high academic reputation and a rigid instructional programme. She was the only girl there from the home, and this set her apart and also made it difficult for her at the home. So, right from her first years at school, Maria was at the bottom of the class, 50th, 51st or 52nd, no matter how hard she tried. She became very quiet and moody whenever school was mentioned, but enjoyed the story reading sessions, which took place at the home twice a week. Tuition was arranged for Maria, and she had lessons after school, when she listened to good stories and talked about them and wrote her own versions. There was no miraculous change in her school

results, and indeed it would have only meant that some other unfortunate pupil would be in bottom place, but she managed to work her way through secondary school. She was sent to a boarding school and used to write to her tutor to say, how much she enjoyed reading the books she was sent. School studies may have presented difficulties still, but reading held pleasure. Maria is now in her second year of training as a nurse. The patience and endurance she has shown in her life will surely help her in this vocation.

Education could be a way of enabling change to take place, but misconceptions over the nature of literacy, and over methods for teaching and learning, prevent education from being liberating personally or socially.

Prospects for the Future

Having considered the many constraints that exist for women and literacy development, it would be timely now to consider the type of literacy or literacies needed, and the moves that have been made towards providing literacy programmes for adult learners and new programmes for school learners.

An ideal literacy would lead to the elimination of poverty and gross inequality. The vicious circle of poverty can only be broken by critical understanding of social reality and by action to bring about social change.

An ideal literacy would lead to the sensitive examination of culture and tradition, respecting the values, beliefs and customs of the past but understanding too that culture can act to stifle and repress creative and growth impulses. Constructive changes would result (Maas, 1990-1991).

An ideal literacy would enable children to explore their world, its history, the natural environment, the way of life, and extend this exploration to the wider world.

An ideal literacy would lead to an understanding of self and others in a challenging and changing world so that:

> .. as I learn to like
> all the differences in me,
> I learn to like the differences in you.
>
> I Am Freedom's Child
> Bill Martyn Jnr.

In societies that are conservative and patriarchal, where women are subservient and where children are expected to be respectful, obedient and quiet, the idea of an empowering, liberating literacy would be regarded with great suspicion. But there is a growing awareness that all is not well

with the way that literacy is being developed (Unesco, 1991) and there are moves towards bringing about moderate changes.

During the 1970's concern was expressed that children were not learning to read well, and that students attending the University of the South Pacific were finding it difficult to read their text books. The evidence from a shared reading project in Niue (DeAth, 1980) and a book flood project in Fiji (Elley and Mangubhai, 1981) suggested, that enjoyable, informal experiences with story books were more effective for learning English than the rote learning of grammatical structures. A Primary Reading Project was developed at the Institute of Education, USP, and the Project Fellow, Barbara Moore, worked with teachers in the region on ways of improving reading programmes, on the development of Vernacular programmes, and on the production of books for reading programmes. Between 1988 and 1990 a trial English programme was introduced into classes in Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati and Vanuatu. Rhymes and songs and the Ready to Read series of books from New Zealand were used for the early stages of English Language learning. Through all this work in the region a great deal has been learned and a network of literacy educators has been developed. It is hoped that during the Decade of Literacy changes will take place on a wider scale.

Sereima Lumelume, Project Officer with the Institute of Education, supervises the IOE Reading Centre, where teachers and students attend workshops and tutorials on literacy and children's literature, and continues to develop the Ready to Read Programme. Barbara Moore is coordinating the South Pacific Literacy Project, part of an Oceania Literacy Development Programme, which originated at a meeting of the International Reading Association's (IRA) International Development in Oceania Committee, held at the Twelfth World Congress on Reading, at The Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia in 1988. With the encouragement of the professional reading associations of New Zealand and Australia, IRA, Unesco and Rotary International, and with funds from the Australian Government's International Literacy Year Programme, a South Pacific Literacy Education Course is being developed.

During 1990 the network of literacy educators (Key Literacy Workers) was strengthened so that the experiences and knowledge of those working in the region would inform the course as much as possible. International literacy consultants have provided advice and colleagues at the university have also helped. The units have been drafted and reviewed, and trials will be held with small groups of teachers in Suva, Fiji, and in Tarawa, Kiribati, during the second half of 1991. A spaced learning model will be used, so that the teachers are supported in school by the course tutor. Once the course has been evaluated, it will be reviewed and developed with a view to wider implementation in the region.

The course has been designed to help Primary School teachers:

- understand how children learn
- understand the nature and importance of literacy
- relate this understanding to the development of literacy
  programmes, which cater for different language needs.

The course is based on the following guiding principles:

- literacy is a basic human right, essential for human dignity and
  for participating fully in social and cultural activities

- literacy development in the children's first language is a
  priority, whenever this is possible

- literacy development in another language enriches the
  children's education

- literacy develops in schools through integrated programmes,
  which recognise the reading, writing, thinking processes.

The units deal with the following theoretical and practical aspects of an
integrated literacy programme.

1. Developing Literacy in the South Pacific Islands.
2. An Integrated Literacy Programme.
3. Exploring the Reading Process.
4. Poetry, Storytelling and Literature.
5. Using the Environment for Literacy Development.
6. Shared and Guided Reading.
7. The Special Role of Writing.
8. Reflecting on Language.
9. Monitoring Progress.
10. Providing for Differences.

The Ready to Read Programme and the South Pacific Literacy Education
Course could have great significance for literacy in the region. The Ready
to Read books and similar books of literary and artistic merit are now used
in pilot schools for the first four years of English. It is hoped that books
following the same principles of development, but locally written and
published, will take their place in the programme. The books are designed
to attract and interest children, but they do more than this. They present
themes and stories, imaginative and real-life experiences that have human
importance. For those who are sensitive to gender issues, girls are
presented as purposeful and determined (Greedy Cat is Hungry) and men
are not superior (The Great Grumbler and The Wonder Tree). Women are
practical and independent (Our Teacher, Miss Pool) and men can show
emotion (A Quilt for Kimi).

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Greedy Cat sat
on a mat
by the fridge.
Meow, meow, meow!

"Here!" said Katie.
"You're a hungry cat!"

Purr, purr, purr.

Mrs Finch went to Gretel, the garden witch.
"My husband is a great grumbler,"
she said.
"Nothing I grow is good enough for him."

"I'll give you a seed
which will settle that," said Gretel.
"It is hard to grow,
but you are a good gardener.
It's the seed of the wonder tree.
Mind you, it's not free.
You will have to pay me
with a trailer-load of turnips."

"Right!" said Mrs Finch.
"I'll bring them over with my tractor
at two o'clock this afternoon."
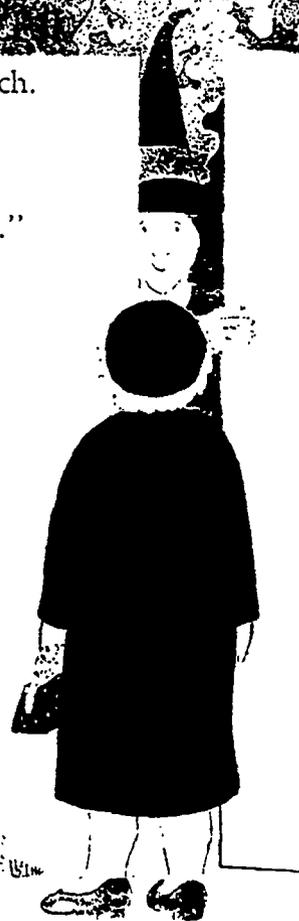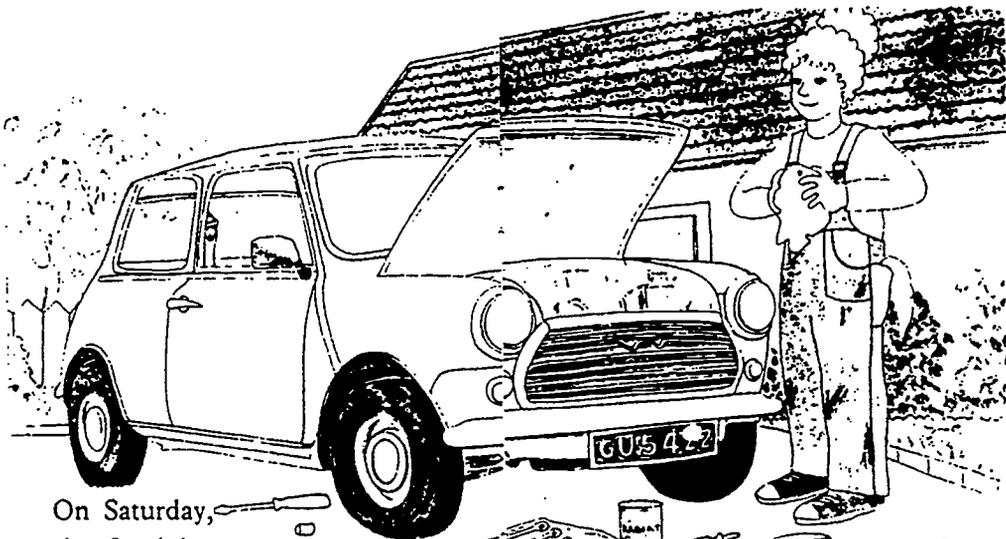
On Saturday,
she fixed her car.
"Now I can drive to school,"
said Miss Pool.

Kiri's dad wanted to go to the funeral,
but it was too far away.
Kiri and her mum hugged him.
Kiri had never seen him cry like that before.

The South Pacific Literacy Education Course will help teachers understand more about the wonder and complexity of language and literacy learning, the power-to-learn that children bring with them to school (Clay, 1885), and the ways we can build on that power rather than destroying it. Experiences with storytelling, poetry and literature will lure children to literacy and provide motivation for the written expression of ideas. Planned experiences in the immediate environment will extend the children's knowledge and appreciation of their world and provide reasons for writing notes, letters and reports. Such experiences can build bridges between the community and the school (Heath, 1986).

In March 1991 a meeting (already mentioned) was organised in Apia, Western Samoa, by the Unesco Office for the Pacific States, to consider whether the South Pacific Literacy Education Course could be co-ordinated with the successful UNDP/UNESCO Pacific Educational Management Project. This is still being discussed and a great deal will depend on future funding and the extent of government support and commitment.

The influence of International Literacy Year has already been mentioned too. As well as focussing attention on the benefits of literacy and on hidden illiteracy there are moves towards the development of courses for adults in villages and urban areas. The Fiji Association of Women Graduates had 'Literacy and Pacific Women' as the theme for their third biennial con-ference in October, 1990. The proceedings have been published in a book with the same title, *Literacy and Pacific Women*.

The reports express many of the same concerns as this paper - criticism of the SPC Programme, a call for more vernacular reading material, aware-ness of the special problems of women. But there are misconceptions too over literacy rates and what they mean. Leslie Mosley, from the USP Centre in Honiara, Solomon Islands, described the difficulties of Solomon Island women, many of whom have no formal education, because education for girls is a low priority in their families, the language situation, where schooling is in English but people speak Pidjin or the village language, and the course that was developed for them. The main difficulty was that of providing appropriate material and this is now being addressed.

In Fiji, the Fiji Association of Non-Formal Educators (FANFE) has done a great deal to arouse public awareness of literacy needs for adults. Adele Jones of USP was involved in a community programme and related how eager the adults were for help and how promising the programme was. The course was advertised as a Basic Education on English Course, so there was no shame attached to attending. Classes were to be given in Fijian and Hindi as well. The tutors were to be regarded as community development workers so that the programme remains informal and relaxed. Research is needed, however, on the best methods of training the tutors and the best

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methods to follow with adults. At this stage the tutors are sharing ideas and approaches. Government support has been given, and it is hoped that this good work is continued and expanded.

Other organisations help indirectly with literacy development for women. The Women's Rights Movement in Fiji, for example, work with women in villages and urban communities, encouraging them to express their ideas and experiences rather than just listen to an adviser. There are opportunities then for purposeful reading and for writing about powerful topics related to women's lives.

FORCE LINE IS RAPE

जबरजस्ती करना बलात्कार है

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FIJI WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT
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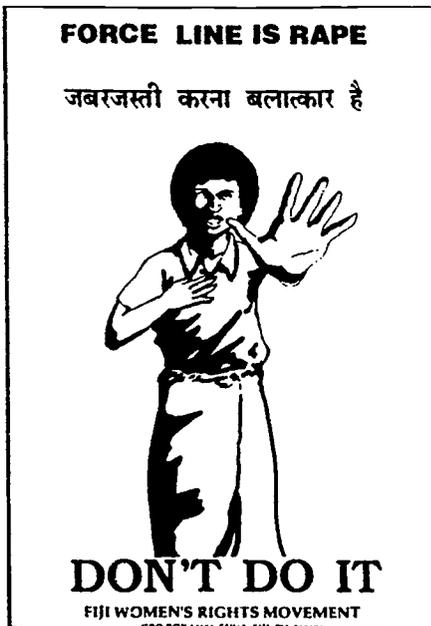
Conclusion

Social problems and human needs are providing a focus for literacy in the South Pacific Island region. In a changing and disturbing world a powerful critical literacy is required. Women have a vital role to play, not just as mothers who prepare their children for school, but as women concerned with the development of their own literacy and that of all people. We must all put ourselves "at the service of the world's castaways - helping them, not only to survive, but setting them free for lives protected by justice, empowered by knowledge, and illumined by imagination". This wonderful quotation from Katherine Paterson comes from a talk given at the Twelfth World Congress on Reading and is published in *Rescuing the Castaways: A South Pacific View of the Twelfth World Congress*. It reflects our hopes for the future.

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Chapter 6

ILLITERATE RURAL WOMEN IN EGYPT. THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PROBLEMS.
- A CASE STUDY

It is essential to emphasize that our discussion of the issue of women's education or illiteracy in Egypt does not mean, that we are implying, that there are two distinct worlds: a woman's world and a man's world. Men and women are constantly interacting with each other. Our separation between them and our decision to concentrate only on half of the society, i.e, women, is only a means to defining the area of study and to understanding the phenomena.

Although it is well-known that women have a very important role in society, yet they are rarely regarded as partners in the process of development. The emphasis is always on men and on their roles in bringing about development. This is especially true because of the existing inequality between men and women and because of the monopoly men have over economic, political and scientific fields. The major feature that characterizes the status of women in general, and in the Third World countries in particular, is their backwardness as compared to men in many social spheres, especially in education and work.

In short, it can be said, that there is a network of social, economic and cultural factors working together to hinder the actual and potential participation of women and standing in the way of raising the awareness of their needs and identifying them.

Since the International Conference on Women organized by the U.N. in Mexico in 1975, a flood of reports and research studies have emphasized, that women belong to the most deprived groups in society and are among the poorest of the poor. However, this perception of women as one of the most deprived groups, especially in terms of education, is a perception that is open to criticism. It cannot be accepted as a true statement nor can it be considered to hold a constructive attitude. A more realistic assessment is that women, because of their social class or as a result of the cultural values prevailing in their society, are allowed to receive a degree of education, that is much less than that allowed to men.[1] Men, within this framework,

assume the role of master, which prevents women from taking advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The suppression and subordination of women and the restriction of their movements, activities and ambitions, restrict their functional roles and render them constant receivers of whatever men are willing to give.

It is within this perspective that solutions must be sought. The problem could be solved through education, legislative amendments and long-term development. However, we have to bear in mind, that such an approach may not in itself be sufficient so long as sexual inequality remains the rule in most societies despite laws and legislation.

It is this image, in conjunction with others, that has induced the various international organizations, especially those affiliated with the U.N., to give special attention to women as one of the social groups most deserving attention. This attention on the part of international organizations does not only aim at realizing equality for women, but also aims at exploiting their potential for greater participation in social, economic and cultural life, a potential, which prevailing traditions clearly curb. Special developmental efforts have been directed to those areas, where women's conditions are most backward.

As there is inequality between men and women, there is also a bias in the attention given to rural and urban areas, whereby urban areas are always favoured over rural areas. Illiteracy is a rural phenomenon, as illiteracy rates among rural men and women are much higher than those in urban areas, and also as expected, illiteracy rates are higher among rural women than among rural men. Side by side with the attention given to women, special attention was also given to rural areas as a means of attacking poverty in the area, where it is most apparent.

Without drilling into international statistics, we can refer to the national level to clarify the features of this comprehensive image by taking Egypt as an example.

The following table (Table 1) indicates the illiteracy rate in Egypt according to the 1986 census broken down by sex and according to rural and urban residence.

Table 1: Illiteracy in Egypt, rural-urban, female-male, according to 1986 Census.

	Illiterates (Absolute Nos.)			Illiteracy to Population (%)		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Urban	2,172,655	3,412,010	5,584,665	26.5	44.4	35.1
Rural	4,630,514	6,945,445	11,575,959	47.3	76.4	61.3
Total	6,803,169	10,357,455	17,160,624	37.8	61.8	49.4

Source: The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Preliminary Results of general Census for Population, Housing and Buildings for 1986. (Numbers and percentages are extracted from Table No. 6, p. 51.)

The preceding numbers indicate:

- An obviously higher illiteracy rate among females than among males.
- An obviously higher illiteracy rate in rural than in urban areas.
- The astronomical number of illiterates whether males or females in both rural and urban areas.

The situation is more serious, if we take into account that women constitute approximately half the population. The census indicates that rural women constitute approximately 56.26% of the total Female population, who in turn constitute 56.05% of the total population. In other words, more than half of the females in Egypt live in rural areas.

It is worthwhile to refer here to the results of the sample labour survey conducted by the Central Agency For Mobilization and Statistics (May, 1984), and which highlighted the contributions of women in Egypt to agricultural production. The results indicate that 70% of the total rural Female Labour Force (age 12-64) work in the agricultural sector, and that this percentage is about 20% of the total Labour Force, males and females working in the agricultural sector in all of rural Egypt.[2] These data clarify the importance of the role, that women play and can play in rural work and in agricultural production.

The participation of women in agricultural production has also dramatically increased especially since the seventies due to a number of changes and variables relating to rural Egypt. The increase of temporary migration of males of working age to Arab oil-rich countries in particular indicates, that women are left behind to bear alone the responsibility of working inside their houses as well as outside. Some researchers refer to this phenomenon as the "feminization" of agricultural work in the Egypt village.[3]

These numbers and percentages might be clearer, if we add to them that women inside their houses represent a very important economic force. Besides bringing up her children, a woman is responsible for house economics such as storing the seeds for the coming year and for another new production, cattle and birds breeding, milking and baking. Besides playing the role of a wife, one can also say, that she is always the hidden force that underpins the economic decisions made by her husband, even if this role is not apparent. Outside the house, she is required to stand by her husband and share in cultivating the land, in irrigation, planting, harvesting, gathering and storing the crops etc. This can explain the high rates of illiteracy among women in the rural areas, which may continue for the coming years, as according to previous research about the labour force in Egypt, the percentage of girls at the age of 6 to 11 in 1984 represents approximately 19.7% of all the working women in the rural areas. This in turn leads us to talk in detail about the educational situation of rural women in Egypt.

According to the census of 1986, the percentage of illiteracy among the Egyptian population at the age of 10 and above is 49.4%. As our research is delimited to women's illiteracy, we can tell that the percentage of illiteracy among women of the age of 10 and above is 62%, while it reaches 38% among men. The significance of these figures is too obvious to comment on.

If we want to compare the educational situation of women in urban areas and those in rural areas, Table 2 indicates all the information.

Table 2: The educational situation of rural women in Egypt compared to urban women (individuals 10 years and above) according to 1986 Census.

Educational Level					
	Illiterate %	Read and write	Below university	University degree	Total %
Urban	44.4	22	28.2	5.4	100
Rural	76.4	14.6	8.4	0.6	100

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics: Preliminary data of the General Census for Population, Housing and Building, April 1987, p. 51.

The above table explains the difference between the educational situation of women in the rural areas in contrast to that of those in the urban areas. The percentage of illiterate women in the rural areas is about double the percentage of illiterate women in the urban areas, while the percentage of rural university degree holders amounts to 0.6% of the rural women population. In contrast 5.4% are urban university degree holders. The table

indicates that about 76.4% of rural women cannot read or write, which seems to imply a severe social suppression and a deterioration in their life style.

However, we have to note that the percentage of those, who can only read and write, which amounts to 14.6%, can be added to the percentage of illiterate women, which brings the total to 91%.

The above absolute figures and percentages could be enough to clarify the status of education of the rural women, but we do need to go to the Egyptian village, where illiterate women live. This might supply us with further and clearer details than those given by figures. What we need is not only to emphasize the importance of compulsory education for women but also to know much more about the educational needs of urban women.

Education as a basic need for the development of rural women

Illiterate women are the main focus of this paper. Those are women, who have not benefitted from their right to education, those who have not received any kind of education during compulsory stage, when they were supposed to be in elementary schools, also those who went to school during the compulsory stage but dropped out soon afterwards for different reasons. In short, the adult women, who went through life without ever learning or mastering the basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics.

All existing documents and sources agree, that women do not enjoy equal rights in formal education. However, in the field of adult education, it is possible to give women special attention as one of the social groups most deserving of this attention and in need of special care.

In countries of the Third World, adult education is a necessity imposed by the backwardness of these countries and by their inability, in the first place, to give the right to education to their adults, who are now facing a changing reality and are participating in the process of production. The other motivating factor in these countries is political, ,i.e, the realization of equality between all citizens.

If human beings are the bottleneck in the process of bringing about development, it is a well known fact, that human beings cannot be isolated from their environment. Thus development and bringing about change must begin in the local environment itself, so that the pattern of change emanates from a base, where people are motivated to care for themselves and to change their realities in all fields. The desired and required change is

from bottom to top, from the periphery to the centre, and not the contrary; development must be directed to serve the majority of the population.

The concept of the necessity of approaching the local community and developing it as a means to progress is associated among some with the concept of satisfying basic human needs. The latter concept assumes that Governments of developing countries should be re-directing development policies to make direct attacks on poverty among the most deprived. The Governments, according to this view, should be ready to give top priority in the process of development to meeting basic needs, i.e., nutrition, housing, health, combatting illiteracy, providing employment opportunities etc.

The concept of basic needs has been seriously criticized, as it seems to imply reducing poverty and not its elimination and also on the basis, that it does not address the essence of the problem, i.e., the total development of society.[4] However, this concept has been successful, because it allows the assessment of specific needs, their quantification and their realization for every member of society, at least, on a minimum level.

Within this understanding of basic needs, we must emphasize that satisfaction of basic needs does not mean the reduction of human needs to the minimum, but means securing on a continuous basis the minimum possible for the total satisfaction of all kinds of human needs. Education, in particular, is of special importance, as both a means and an end, as a human right and as a necessity for both individuals and society. Education is one of the basic needs that can be described as being cyclic, i.e., education is a condition for realizing development and also an aim that development seeks to realize as a means for further development etc.

However, it is important to elaborate, what we mean by "needs" or "educational needs" in particular. As the concept of needs is one of those concepts, that have been discussed for years, there are naturally several uses and definitions for it, which complicates rather than clarifies the process of discussing and presenting it.[5]

No matter what controversy there is, what is meant by educational needs, when used in the fields combatting illiteracy and adult education, and what we mean by it for the purposes of this paper are as follows:

The lack of skills, information and facts related to a human being, his life and his environment, all of which he presumably owns, and all of which can be satisfied through educational expertise.

To be more elaborate, educational needs expresses a lack, a need or a deprivation, from which a specific individual or group suffers. This may

take the form of lack of skills, information and facts relating to his life or to that of the group.

Educational needs refer only to a human being's educational needs and not to formal education, as it is only the human being, who is capable of learning for his own benefit and for the benefit of society as a natural consequence.

The needs approach concentrates on the beneficiary from education, his needs and those of the target population in the local community. The identification of educational needs not only contributes to the planning of the educational programme for the target population, but also decides the objectives of the education transmitted to them, as it is obvious that the programme aims at satisfying their needs. Thus the delineation of needs contributes to the delineation of objectives and their shaping.

It is important to mention here, that the expression of needs is a reflection of the social experience of target populations. One does not acquire experience in an impartial world or through an impartial culture, so that a person's absorption of his social world and his status within it is affected by his exposure to the surrounding culture. Even then, his expression of his need may only reflect his status in the social structure and is also relatively based on his interests. In other words, a person's expression of his needs may reflect "a forged assessment of these needs".[6]

It is our intention here to stress the importance of the environmental and social factors, that may hinder or enhance the existence of needs and consequently create motivation for seeking education.

However, opinions are many and varied, but it is important to emphasize the role of the specialist in the field of adult education, that is he who can diagnose and delineate needs and not those, who have these needs alone. The following case study is relevant to our investigation.

A case study

The present study is a preliminary investigation of the educational needs of women in rural areas. The use of ethnographic methodology, where observations and interviews are used, was thus thought to be much more realistic than those methodologies, which adopt tools such as closed questionnaire and statistical procedures.

To get an answer to the question: "why do rural women need education?" the researcher made several visits to villages such as Kafr Ashry and

El-Khamseen in Menofia Governorate in Egypt. The visits took place in the autumn of the year 1988 and after.

In view of the previously mentioned data about women's illiteracy in rural areas in Egypt, it did not seem strange, that most if not all women over 30 in those two villages are illiterate. But what is interesting to note is the increasing number of girls, at the age of twelve and above, who left school or had not been to school at all. This situation poses two questions for which we have to find an answer:

First: "Why didn't those girls go to school?" and
Second: "Why didn't they complete their education?"

The answers provided by the two groups of girls were varied. As far as the first question, the girls mentioned, that they had not been to school in accordance with their mother's wishes. Mothers want their girls to stay at home to help them in the house work, as it is taken for granted in villages, that at least one of the girls in a family has to stay at home.

Another answer was that the birth certificate has been lost or damaged, and there was no way for them to go to school. In other cases it was mentioned, that they were not requested officially by the authorities to go to school.

The answers reflect the fact, that life in villages can go smoothly and easily without the education of women, as girls do not feel that they lose much, if they do not go to school. Work in the fields is open for them, through which they can earn up to three pounds a day, which is quite a big sum, if compared to what educated girls can get in any other profession. This money could help them, when getting married or in sharing family responsibilities in case of the illness or death of the father or elder brother.

In a different site we can see girls earning quite a good sum of money out of selling soft-drinks, cigarettes and candies to passers-by and passengers on highways. All they need is just some simple calculation processes such as adding and subtracting. This is usually done by them mechanically without feeling a need for going to school. Out of this money they can share the family responsibilities as well as save some for time of needs.

This encourages some other girls to leave school after the third or fourth year of primary education as long as they could see encouraging rewards for the work they are doing.

Some other girls consider school life highly frustrating, too tiring and boring to continue their education. What makes the problem more serious is that families do not care at all to send them back to school.

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Another factor that contributes to the problem is the bad treatment the pupils receive from their teachers, they are heat scolded, beaten and punished in different ways.

In addition some of the girls have found out, that education cannot help much in finding jobs, as a lot of the educated girls could find jobs, that were not related at all to what they studied at school. Added to this is the fact, that unemployment has become a clear phenomenon in the Egyptian society on the whole and in the countryside in particular, not only among girls but also among young men, and this in itself is frustrating and discouraging for most of them and for their families. Some of the girls and mothers discovered, that a lot of their educated relatives have not got any jobs after their education, so why bother themselves and go to school.

In the case of Kafr Ashry in particular, which is located beside a small stream, as most of its men work in fishing, they suffer and die from bilharzia at an early age, so girls find themselves forced to substitute for their fathers and brothers in their work to keep life going, so there is no way for them to go to school. This shows how economical and social factors contribute strongly to pulling them out of school.

When mothers were asked, why their girls do not go to school, some of them answered, that the girls are born for marriage and bringing up the children, so why send them to school. Others said that domestic work is so hard, that their girls are needed inside the home.

On the whole, it was felt that most mothers were completely satisfied with the way, that they were brought up. Moreover, they believed that this is what God created them for: to get married, bring up the children and with no way to change their life.

However, whenever the mothers were asked, whether they would accept to be educated, if given the chance to do so, the answers were many. For some of them it was "No, we are busy all day, we have no time." For some others, the answer for the first time was "why not!" and for the second time "yes without any hesitation." The daughters themselves were enthusiastic about the idea of Literacy Classes on the condition, that they be opened at suitable times.

Now, let us move to the question directed to both mothers and daughters:

What do you need to learn?

Their answers came as expected, reading and writing but not maths, and that is because they are already familiar with some calculations, simple addition and subtraction.

The reasons behind this desire to learn reading and writing as expressed by most of this group of women were:

- education is good,
- to be enlightened.

Next to these two reasons came the following:

- reading the newspaper,
- reading names of streets in case of going to unfamiliar places,
- to know what they write in food stock cards,
- writing the details of food recipe as advertised on TV.

Most interesting was the response: that they need to be able to read the foreign TV series in subtitles in Arabic.

Another interesting response was given by a woman, who considers education as a means for being dressed the way TV stars are. When this woman was asked, whether she had read her marriage certificate the answer was: What for? My father took care of this.

All these responses reveal the rural women's *unawareness* of their right to education as well as of their other roles in life. Besides they show us, that the illiterate women, whatever their age is, are incapable of identifying their educational needs, inspite of the importance of these responses.

Therefore, the role of an educationist should be to help these women to come into awareness of their educational needs and to find out, how to state them. Based on these observed needs literacy programmes could be designed and carried out.

In short, the problems of women reflect the problems of society as a whole, and are also inseparable from society's socio-economic conditions, patterns of production, customs and beliefs. This means that a long time and hard work are required to overcome the obstacles, that stand in the way of the realization of sexual equality, and that also hinder the realization of the desired development.

Government Efforts

Needless to say, according to the previous data, the illiteracy problem is not confined to women or men, as it is a social phenomenon. It is a societal phenomenon, whose roots belong to the past. However, many government efforts have been to overcome this problem. In addition to expanding formal education for young generations of boys and girls, laws have been passed since the seventies concerning the illiterate adults, men and women.

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The first of these laws was law No. 67 of the year 1970, the second was law No. 40 of the year 1978. In spite of the decrease in the percentage of illiteracy from 63% of the total population of Egypt according to the 1966 census to 49.4% according to 1986 census, the problem is still serious.

This means that the yearly rate of the decrease is approximately 0.65%. This means that about hundred years are needed to eradicate illiteracy.

In fact, the percentages are a deceptive tool in this case, considering the absolute number of illiterates is increasing. According to the census of 1966 the number of illiterates was 13,4 million. This number increased to 17.2 million according to the 1986 census. So, the decrease of percentages is due to the increase of the population not the educational efforts. It is an urgent matter for the Egyptian Government, as well as all the interested societies and international aid organizations, to face this problem.

The last and most important step was the declaration made by the Egyptian President stating that the 90's is the decade of illiteracy eradication in Egypt.

Second to this is the law, which has been issued by the People's Assembly of Egypt at the beginning of this year (1991), which made it clear, that the problem of illiteracy in Egypt has to be solved.

According to this law illiteracy eradication and adult education became a national problem. This means that all efforts should be made to face and solve it. This most recent law of the year (1991) stated, that all the illiterate adults (aged 14-35) should have the chance to get education to reach the standard of the compulsory stage of schooling, i.e., eight years at school for the young. To put this into practice the fourth clause of the law stated the importance of setting up a National Institution to be concerned with illiteracy eradication and adult education. The branches of this National Institution will be situated in each Governorate of Egypt to organize and put into practice all the efforts to be made.[7]

However, the main point of this is, that illiteracy among women is only a part of the whole illiteracy problem in Egypt. Attention to men's needs is a duty, if we wish to improve women's conditions, as it is men, who decide whether women will or will not join the educational programmes.

So, in the education of adults, it is important to start by an identification of their basic educational needs, which is the basic step in the process of preparing educational programmes.

The educational needs approach is a suitable approach for adults, women and men, who, to some extent, have the ability to express what they want to

study, what interests them and what encourages them to join and continue in the programmes offered to them.

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Chapter 7

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN BOTSWANA. SOME IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Abstract

It is not the intention of this paper to get into analytical details of the existing National Literacy Programme (NLP) and its provision in Botswana, but rather to hypothesize that the current implementation process needs to be re-organized to keep pace with the changing societal expectations. There is a need for new implementation strategies. Using this hypothesis, this chapter briefly describes the existing literacy provision in Botswana and suggests an integrated implementation process. It is further hypothesized that the successfulness of the current literacy programme and its provision lies in the entire commitment of all government ministries and non-governmental organizations, which exist in the dynamics of Botswana's economy and societal interaction. This paper also establishes the promise that to a large extent Botswana government is committed to eradication of illiteracy, what seems to be lacking is the overall commitment relative to implementation. It is important that one mentions right from the beginning that the provision of literacy in Botswana is not restricted to any group of people. Put differently, literacy provision cuts across both sexes and across ages. At the moment the implementation process lies with the Department of Non-Formal Education of the Ministry of Education and of course with help from other departments. The biggest problem being that there is no clear-cut policy as to how other departments can see themselves as part and parcel of the programme. It is in this last statement that this paper makes a deliberate recommendation that:

(i)   the current Botswana National Service Scheme (called Tirelo Sechaba [TS] in the local language) and
(ii)   career guidance & counseling departments of senior secondary schools of the formal education system

both be fully involved in the integrated implementation strategy. I am tempted to believe that this can be done with, at least I think less added financial costs on the part of the current implementing department, that is, the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). The above recommen-

dation and/or suggestion is based on some few empirical studies, of which the author of this paper was a participant observer at a named senior secondary school. At the time this school offered a model of provision of basic literacy skills linked to:

(i)   formal schooling
(ii)   employment opportunity and
(iii) general development process of the individuals.

I   Introduction

The need for Third World countries or governments to focus on women and development in their respective national plans of action has been stressed on the agenda in various conferences since the 1980's. Two lines of arguments can be claimed here that (i) because Third World economies have been largely characterized by low agricultural farming and that the role has been seen mainly along those lines and including child-bearing and up-bringing, (ii) men have been economically advantaged over women, as they were regarded as the breadwinners and brainworkers in their family networks. This state of affairs has inevitably left women far behind in many ways; hence the second meeting of Commonwealth ministers responsible for women's affairs called for "integrating women & development" (Harare, August 1987). The question of ensuring that "women & development" issues are incorporated in national planning policies in all sectors of the economy has been addressed by Commonwealth governments. At the conference cited above each government has been urged to:

> develop a national policy on women & development, integrated into the National Development Plan, in order to provide an appropriate frame-work through which ministers can address women's concerns within their own sectoral areas responsibility (Harare, August 1987, Commonwealth Secretariat).

The focus on women and development in Botswana, by the women's affairs unit of the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs is therefore in part in response to the call to integrate women in development. Like perhaps in many parts of Third World countries, Botswana is also faced with the 1960's Heads of Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, saw the need to increase national recurrent budgets for formal schooling, which in turn increased the recipients' anticipations in terms of the labour market. During the protectorate days (colonial days) in Botswana both men and women were seen as cheap pool of labour for white South Africans. Men were hired to work in the South African mines and women were domestic hands in the white areas of South Africa.

The question of providing basic literacy was therefore never taken seriously, if at all it ever was attempted by the colonial administration, that

was resident in the Republic of South Africa. The question of eradicating illiteracy in Botswana therefore remains a complex task, given

(i)   the sparse population
(ii)   lack of adequate transport facilities
(iii)   poor communication systems to reach those in need of basic literacy skills
(iv)   the semi-desertness and general adverse climatic conditions
(v)   the existence and competition of the current literacy programme of the DNFE alongside the Formal Education (FE) system
(vi)   the labour market forces and the existence of private ownership of the means of production.

Notwithstanding the above, it is however fair and just to state, that the government of the Republic of Botswana is committed to provision of basic literacy. I am rather reluctant to talk about "eradication of illiteracy", given many operating practical problems that will always work against DNFE efforts towards provision of basic literacy. One basic variable to this end is the changing societal expectations that go with socio-economic being of a nation. For any programme to be successful, it must be seen to keep tempo with the dynamics of the society as a whole. This in itself is a dilemma.

II   Overview of Literacy Provision in Botswana

(1)   Statement of the Problem

There is no reliable statistics as to the rate of illiteracy in Botswana. As a result it is not possible to estimate even the rate of illiteracy among women. It is therefore urgent that a reliable statistical figure be established through purposeful action research. It is so far not statistically clear, how the 1980 illiteracy figure of 250,000 was reliably arrived at. A reliable working figure is important especially where this paper deliberately recommended an inter-marriage of rural development objectives between the department of Tirelo Sechaba and Literacy Section of DNFE. Crucial to the same end is the need to know the demographic characteristics of the target population.

(2)   Review of Literature on Literacy Provision in Botswana

(i)   Historical Note

Literacy provision in Botswana dates in theory as far back as the 1800's throughout to the 1930's, where the missionaries were interested in providing basic literacy skills of the 3Rs such that the 'natives' could simply read the scriptures. Literacy among local chiefs was provided for in Kweneng

around 1847 and Ngwato around 1860, when the missionary education emphasized the reading of the scriptures.

Because of labour demand basic literacy skills were taught to adults, and these were related to Health and Agriculture as the base lines.

The 1939-45 world war also froze the then existing colonial efforts to provide basic literacy to the general adult population. However, because Botswana took part in the 2nd world war, Pioneer Corps were taught how to read and write, so that they could write back home (see Raseroka, Unpublished dissertation 1977).

With Independent Botswana in 1966 the Department of Community Development was charged with the responsibility of eradication of illiteracy. Like the previous efforts, it fell through due to lack of clear cut implementation and relevant and appropriate material (see Botswana Extension College Report 1978). It was about the same time when voluntary and non-governmental organizations such as the Young Women's Christian Council and Botswana Christian Council tried to provide basic literacy but experienced implementation problems. In 1973 the Botswana Extension College, which offered some distant education, was established and also charged with the responsibility of eradication of illiteracy. The project did not take off due to logistical problems that were a characteristic of what contributed to all other efforts failing. It was however earlier in 1972, when a UNESCO consultant's (Brooks) recommendation that Botswana needed a National Work Oriented literacy was rejected, however for valid reasons at that time given the state of the low status of the national economy. In 1972 Botswana was experiencing balance of payments deficit on current accounts, therefore it was not possible for the government to embark on any massive project. However, this situation is different given the current favourable economic situation.

The birth of White Paper No. 1 on National Policy on Education of 1977 made flimsy reference to literacy that "consideration will be given to literacy programmes" (see National Policy on Education No. 1 of 1977). The March 1979 National Meeting on Education discussed needs to address the question of illiteracy in Botswana. It was at this meeting that Townsend's paper on "A National Approach to the Eradication of Illiteracy in Botswana" was discussed. A working committee was established to formulate a policy and strategy for national literacy programme (at that time referred to as 'project' - a term), which has its own setbacks by those, who were involved at district level as implementors of the 'project'. The working committee came up with a document called "The Eradication of Illiteracy in Botswana: A National Initiative" (Mutanyatta, JNS 1990, 7). In 1979/1980 Botswana National Literacy Project was launched. This project was limited in scope, and it became the sole responsibility of DNFE. It was limited in the sense, that it understood literacy in isolation of people's real

needs in the broader aspects of the socio-economic and political spheres. It was not different from earlier efforts of literacy provision, that focused on the basic literacy skills of reading, writing and numeracy. The National Literacy Programme launched under Botswana National Development Plan 5 (1979-1985) had as its main objectives:

- to eradicate illiteracy to enable an estimated population of 250,000 (40% of 15-45 year age group) to become literate in Setswana and numerate, within a period of five years (It is this 'five years' that made the programme more of a pilot project) that is during the period 1980-1985.

- to enable the National Literacy Programme Participants to apply knowledge in developing the cultural, social & economic life.

- to enable participants to perform duties on the one hand and to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship on the other.

(ii)   Literacy Programme in Action

Five primers in Setswana which are said to bring the recipients to standard 4 of primary formal schooling are being used. A survey carried out (see Mutanyatta, 1990) in 1965 indicated, that most of the Literacy Group Leaders (LGLs) were young females of ages 15-30 years. The most important finding of that survey is, that it was found out that 94.2% of the LGLs were females of either standard 7 or Junior Secondary school drop-outs (73% of the sample had finished standard 7, 13.7% had dropped from Junior certificate, and the rest was standard 1-4 (Mutanyatta, 1990, 8).

The participation of this calibre of literacy tutors left much to be desired in terms of adult education. It was observed that the LGLs were generally young and inexperienced, moreso that the kind of training provided for LGLs by Literacy Assistants (LAs) lasted for only two days during those years. This training therefore did not provide enough background such that the LGLs could gain confidence in themselves in terms of their task. It is also observed in the same survey, that because the programme was seen more as a project, then all the personnel involved at district level by then saw itself as temporary. This led to lack of stability and continuity. The same survey critically raised concerns over primary school-leavers being literacy group leaders. This was merely seen as 'seeds of alternative employment' by those who were LGLs. It is of equal importance here to note that perhaps the problem was not so much the level of formal education of the LGLs, but rather the amount and relevance of induction courses that the LGLs received. Currently there is stable administrative management at Headquarters of the DNFE of the Ministry of Education. It will be interesting, however, to assess the top down management process and see how in turn the bottom-up communication process works. Time has

now come that credit need to be given to the Literacy Programme, which is now seen as an on-going process and also linked to continuing education, because the existing programme does cater for functional literacy skills in various crafts.

The facilitation and co-ordination of literacy provision in Botswana lies with National Literacy Committee, which is made up of representatives of base line ministries; namely, Education, Health, Agriculture, Home Affairs, Local Governments and Lands and the Office of the President, Department of Information & Broadcasting (which also helps with radio broadcasts literacy programme in the local language). In the committee is also the chairperson of Rural Extension Co-ordination Committee. Notably, all the ministries and departments mentioned above have extension services, but it will be interesting to assess and evaluate the extent to which they are administratively integrated for the purposes of eradication of literacy. Pilot projects so far undertaken do indicate lack of networking in extension services. The question of institutional and/or departmental barriers does come in this respect, because every ministry, every depart- ment has its own objectives and therefore do not necessarily see themselves having to directly be fully committed to the question of literacy provision. This is only natural given the fact that all ministries have set priorities.

Like it has been pointed out in this paper, one would not outright criticize and/or enumerate weaknesses within the current literacy programme, but rather contend that what is needed is a co-ordinated approach. This assump- tion goes back to the issue raised earlier; that of linking literacy provision with the National Scheme service, where Tirelo Sechaba Participants (TSPs) are 'O'level school-leavers, and if well trained, can provide meaningful manpower. Assuming that the current literacy programme is appropriate in terms of functional and productive skills and drawing lessons from other countries, which have national service schemes tight to military, then Botswana has a chance to link Literacy eradication to the national service scheme at a much broader and wider level than the current system, where only a few are engaged in the exercise. Tirelo Sechaba scheme was incepted in 1980, and its main objective was to expose 'O'level school-leavers to rural life and also to address rural development problems. It is therefore in this regard that one advocates for government policy relating national service to functional literacy provision. Again projects that are in existence at the moment suffer several setbacks, such as shall be mentioned elsewhere in this paper. Such set-backs often are a result of lack of thorough knowledge on the part of literacy participants and the LGLs. It is in this regard that, because of their wide academic subjects, 'O'level school-leavers would be the ideal, since the majority of them will be having practical subjects such as Agriculture, Home-Economics, Craft, Design & Technology and basic scientific theories.

If the Botswana National service scheme is to instil a national maturity and youth commitment to the entire nation, such youth can therefore be fully trained to be the facilitators of the current literacy programme. This will help ease down manpower constraints that are prevalent in the current programme implementation process. It is here then that there is a need to cut off institutional barriers and interweave the department of Tirelo Sechaba, the Department of Non-Formal Education, formal secondary school education and extension services of other related ministries.

This paper now wishes to draw up a model of how at least three departments can team together in order to arrest illiteracy. The model may be too ambitious and too assuming, but if given much thought at policy level it can ease down on some of the constraints at work with the current efforts of DNFE to eradicate illiteracy. This model should be implemented very soon, because of the fact, that we also have some of the primary school-leavers relapsing into illiteracy. This paper draws a model team work between the departments of TS, NFE and Secondary Education (SE). The working assumptions under the suggestion is that:

- DNFE has administrative Head-Quarters personnel
- has funds to run the literacy programme
- has to a certain extent suitable material
- has work-oriented literacy programmes

but lacks qualified and stable manpower at district level to successfully implement the literacy programmes without straining Headquarters administrative personnel.

1   Department of Tirelo Sechaba (TS)

Every year 'O'level school-leavers join various user departments, which are mostly government. Tirelo Sechaba participants (TSPs) are placed all over the country. It has not always been easy for TS department to find suitable placements for the TSPs owing to the large numbers of Form 5s joining the 'compulsory' scheme. TS is also not without management and personnel problems at implementation level especially at district level. This chronic manpower constraints, if thoroughly researched into, can be partly solved. For instance if on one hand we have Literacy Assistants supervising TSPs attached to literacy programme and TS field Assistants on the other hand, then two government programmes are complementing each other at implementation level. Department of TS pays both the living allowance to the TSPs and to the parents/guardians/families of TSPs. Needless to mention that the government of Botswana spends huge sums of money to run the national service scheme. Attached to various user departments TSPs do not receive any other remuneration. For instance there are TSPs in schools functioning as assistant teachers in various academic school

subjects, some are 'barefoot' school (teacher-) librarians. Other TSPs join hospitals as laboratory technicians, other join various government extension services, and still a lot more remains under-utilized (theoretically placed, though).

2 Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) National Literacy Programme (NLP)

Assuming that NLP run by National Literacy Committee (NLC) of the department of NFE, sees the need to link the NLP to TS scheme, then the existing national literacy personnel currently deployed and the one still in training at the University of Botswana will have to play a major role; that of training TSPs as literacy tutors and/or 'teachers'. This can be a further joint effort between DNFE and the Institute of Adult Education at the University of Botswana. I believe that such kind of training for TSPs, who will be placed as literacy field assistants or group leaders, can be easily arranged for a reasonable number of weeks, given the fact that TS department does run orientation courses for the participants and invite various user departments as resource persons. Such training will draw resource persons from field literacy personnel (from district/urban levels), Headquarters of DNFE and staff of the institute of adult education of the university of Botswana. This training will have as its main objective - to provide basic literacy training skills to TSPs, who are going to be fully involved in the provision of functional literacy skills at various levels in Botswana. It will be at this level of training, that the TSPs have to be equipped with relevant and appropriate skills, such that there is no significant barrier or gap between the literacy target group and literacy assistants. More often than not, government policies can be good and meaningful on paper but get lost in the middle of lack of direction at implementation level, especially in terms of appropriate manpower to facilitate smooth running of such policies.

3 Department of Secondary Education (DSE) of the Ministry of Education

DSE of the Ministry of Education (MoE) is directly in charge of secondary schools/education in Botswana. There are at the moment 23 government and government aided and one private secondary schools, giving in all a total of about 20,000 (twenty thousand) students, the majority of which join TS schemes administered by TS department of the Office of the President. Within the secondary schools curriculum exists a career guidance and counseling programme, which aims at advising students in their future career prospects and generally about life outside the classroom. In theory every senior school has a careers' teacher, and there is supposed to be

career guidance and counseling periods for each of the classes in schools. Consequently, all students are to receive career guidance and counseling lessons in addition to their academic subjects. Within the curriculum development and evaluation unit of the ministry of education, exists a curriculum development officer (career guidance & counseling). This officer works very closely with career teachers in all schools in Botswana.

Looking at the departments mentioned above the picture is as follows:

A(i) Tirelo Sechaba Department has the manpower, that can be developed and used for provision of literacy (thus implementing NLP of the DNFE).

(ii) Tirelo Sechaba has yearly TSP intake.

(iii) DNFE NLP has limited manpower to train and/or supervise literacy assistants and other extension workers within the same department.

(iv) DNFE has literacy programme and that funds have been allocated jointly by the government and donor agencies.

(v) Basic literacy teaching material is available (the five primers).

(vi) There is provision of functional literacy going on in various districts.

(vii) Secondary schools have career guidance and counseling lessons.

The sum total of the picture above can therefore be explained thus:

(a) Arrangements can be made such that NL personnel is part of career guidance and counseling lessons in the Senior schools, where 'O'level students are. This can be an ongoing programme throughout the year in the schools' curriculum. The role of the NL personnel at various cadres will be to equip the would-be TSPs with necessary literacy assistant skills and acquaint them with materials and resources that are currently in use in the field.

(b) NLP will not have to set aside any extra funds (at least, I think, by way of the current national service operation), to pay literacy assistants and/or extension workers, because TS department pays TSPs allowances and not user departments.

The above model is also based on the assumption, that manpower constraints experienced by literacy programmes will be minimal, taking into account that TSPs are supervised by Field Assistants, even though in many cases the Field Assistants are also young and often immature, which again goes back to the kind of training they get as supervisors. If the current literacy implementation is met with literacy assistants and/or group leaders, who leave, because they feel insecure in their job. TSPs will at least not simply desert the programme, because they know they are in the scheme for

one year, at the end of which they will get Tirelo Sechaba Certificate, which is in turn a necessary requirement for further training and for seeking employment. The other advantage is that TSPs are governed by TS regulations, where disciplinary measures can be exercised on any one, who simply deserts the scheme. In theory this model will provide a continued pool of manpower required by national literacy programme. The above model is based on the empirical evidence, which will be discussed later in this paper, where as indicated earlier the author was a participant observer.

It will be an untrue state of affairs if this model does not briefly discuss some of the limitations that will go with it. The suggested model is not without its own complexities. For it to function there are certain basic steps to be taken. At this stage let me mention but a few of the necessary steps;

B(i) There will be a need for stream-lined and clear-cut communication procedures

(ii) There is also need for stream-lined objectives

(iii) All the departments involved must cut off institutional administrative barriers

(iv) Those involved should see themselves as having a common goal namely, that of eradicating illiteracy and providing functional literacy to the target group. To this end the departments involved should not see themselves as separate entities.

(v) There will be a need for well co-ordinated objectives, so that all involved are clear of the overall aims and objectives both at policy and implementation levels.

Admittedly the above suggested model is too ambitious. However, given the current literacy provision and manpower constraints, and given the fact that every year the department of TS has 'O'level school-leavers, who are placed nation-wide in various user departments (including DNFE in both distant and literacy programmes) then, if well thought of and planned, the scheme can be a 'temporary' solution to NLP manpower demand. One of the major set-backs in long term planning in Botswana is lack of co-ordinated communication and management lines. A number of policies that government come up with are in most cases sound, but easily get ill-directed at implementation, because often the political will is not there to assist in that process. Again there is often no assessment and evaluation of implemented programmes. As such it becomes difficult for the project/ programme supervisors to gauge the needs, the successes and failures by available and reliable data. Much as one advocates inter-ministerial or inter-departmental links, one does not disregard the fact that each ministry/ department has its own aims and objectives, which must be addressed. At the same time, if one argues that the developmental process is dimensional

and must involve all organs that go to make up that one body, then there is room to plan in an integrated way. After all there are extension services in various government ministries, that all aim at 'sustained socio-economic development'. All that is needed is sound inter-related/integrated planning to achieve the same goals in the long term. There would be, inevitably, status conflict, but one does not want to believe that it can be so serious such as to hamper progress. The greatest advantage of the suggested model is that it involves schools and curriculum developers and other departments at large. The reward will be reduced ratio of LAs:LGLs:LPs.

III   Women's Projects in Botswana: Successes and Failures

A.i
Within the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs (MLHA) is the Women's Affairs Unit (WAU), which is charged with the responsibility to facilitate the full participation of women in development (Alexander et al.,1989). Evaluators of women's projects in Botswana have pointed out one major problem; that:

> people lack the very necessary skills, experience and confidence that will enable them to "empower themselves" and assume greater control of their lives. It is this reality of the disadvantaged themselves that must form the basis of programmes directed towards them (Alexander et al., 1989, 43).

The above citation sums up the problem surrounding all efforts geared towards promotion of women's projects, and it is in these lines that one sees the need to conscientize the participants in women's projects much more than the narrow confines of basic non-functional skills.

Among many projects centred around women and development in Botswana there is one major project, which I wish to make reference to, mainly because an evaluation and assessment of the project was done and conclusions/suggestions made. In 1987 a horticultural project was commissioned by WAU of the MLHA and later in the same year an evaluation commission was constituted. The main aim of the project, as cited by the project evaluators, was:

> to address the training and productive needs of illiterate and enumerate women. Lessons learned from the combined training and production approach of the pilot project were to form basis for developing a long term holistic training programme in income generating activities for women in Botswana (Alexander et al., 1989, 7).

The said project was the first of its kind. It focused on the urban poor women, because it was argued, that the condition of a poor single woman in

an urban setting is even more vulnerable, hence the high motivation to participate in the income-generating project. The innovative project was carried out like this:

- the project took into account the women's level of education and experience
- women were trained in vegetable production and various related skills
- basic literacy and numeracy skills were taught
- 1.8 hectares of land along Segoditshane River was allocated
- 10 women grew vegetables
- 5 built concrete benches
  (Alexander op. cit.)

In evaluating this project the evaluation team felt, that there were no smooth and well-defined project co-ordinators. The extension workers from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) had actually not been fully involved, when in fact they should have been on the fore-front, given the nature of the project. The achievements of this project, however, were that participants were found to be highly motivated, which adds to the idea, that any project must be seen as addressing people's real issues, otherwise it will not be popular with them. One major recommendation that the evaluation team came up with was, that if Botswana government continues with such agricultural projects, it is important that the MoA with its technical know-how is made the integral part of project facilitation. However, this recommendation has to be taken with caution, considering that many extension workers in Botswana lack the very basic knowledge of the majority of the projects they are supposed to supervise, hence the need for appropriate skills training on their part. It is a true state of affairs that at times there exists a gap between the project participants and the extension workers. This can partly be attributed to the kind of training the personnel officers get, and the kind of material that is being used, which is often removed from the clientele. The other observation from the evaluators was, that most training projects embarked on were inaccessible to illiterate and innumerate women. It was cited that often women knew very little about the 'ins' and 'outs' of the projects they are participating in. Again it is in this regard one hopes, that the use of TSPs would be ideal. The evaluators concluded that:

> any attempt to replicate this project will be too early and possibly futile, unless the women's affairs unit is first strengthened. Even then replication must be preceded cautiously (Alexander op. cit. 8).

Failures:
Previous literacy programmes have indicated, that there has been greater emphasis on writing, reading and basic numeracy, and that these were not quite popular, because participants no longer just want to be able to write basic letters to their 'wives', 'husbands' and/or other relations like it was the

motivation during colonial days. Participants want functional productive skills, that can enable them to compete fairly in the labour competitive market. However, in response to this demand, DNFE current literacy programme offers functional productive skills. This does not mean there are no more problems. Lack of financial capital is always a problem, once participants have to stand on their own outside the donor/government funding. Many lack knowledge of financial assistance outlets. This goes back to reiterate on the fact, that existing programmes are not always well co-ordinated within the government ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The existing functional literacy programme in Botswana needs highly motivated literacy assistants, given the many constraints that are at work, as cited earlier in this paper. The project was funded by SIDA in conjunction with the Botswana government. Again this project did allow for inter-ministerial co-ordination, even though there were administrative bottlenecks. It is such loop-holes that need to be removed in order to ascertain smooth operation and co-ordination of projects. The short term successes of the kind of women projects in opera-tion lies in the availability of market outlets, accessibility to transport facilities and knowledge of financial assistance, that are meant for women's groups.

A.ii   Mahalapye Development Trust Projects

Mahalapye Development Trust, which has been part of Madiba Secondary School and Brigades (Vocational/Technical Centre) in the years prior to 1984 secondary education expansion, provides a model of integrated and collective approach to women's projects. At the current moment, Mahalapye Development Trust (MDT) textile industry is being run by various women grouped together for different projects. Some of the groups of women supply schools with uniforms including track-suits. Their main problem is that the demand is so high, that their intermediate technology does not easily help them cope with it, hence long working hours that are often counter-productive. It is often noticeable that these groups of women operate below the efficient level of production, mainly because of lack of necessary equipment and technological know-how. The advantage of these groups of women is, that they can borrow money from commercial institutions or Botswana National Development Bank and/or other financial institutions operating in Botswana. In certain cases it is the problem of 'riskphobia' on the part of the groups. There are, however, various finan-cial advisory services, such as those offered by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry through its financial assistance policy scheme and others. Again these groups of women experience the usual problem of lack of transport to reach the rest of the market. They have to rely on public transport, which is not always convenient to them, but all the same they have to rely on it.

Alongside various women's projects of MDT is a primary school, which basically started off as a basic literacy project. The school runs classes from Standard 1 to 6. The primary school is called Pudulogo. In the years past Madiba Secondary School students helped in the day to day teaching and provision of basic literacy. Each class from Form 1 to Form 5 had time-tabled periods to go and assist at the primary school. Madiba secondary students received basic training from projects directors, who were in most cases expatriates sent by different donor agencies such as USAID, SIDA etc. At this stage let me give a profile of 11 literacy participants of the then basic literacy teaching of Mahalapye Development Trust (as indicated earlier the author of this paper was a participant in the literacy programme).

A.ii (1)   Profile of 11 Literacy Participants

These joined the basic literacy classes at the age of 11 and over and all except two of the girls had not attempted any formal primary schooling before. Literacy assistants were Madiba Senior Secondary School students. The school had within its daily timetable periods set aside for some of the students to go and assist at Mahalapye Development Trust, while other students would be carrying out 'development work' in school, as it was called in Madiba School's curriculum. There were close working/teaching links between the school and the trust. All 11 joined formal primary schooling and Madiba brigades which offers various skills in vocational/ technical education. Of these 11 seven were females and four were males (the interest to follow these 11 was that the author of this paper was involved in their teaching). All 11 later joined Standard 5 to 7 of the formal primary school teaching. Four (one girl and three boys) joined Madiba brigades after completing Standard 7 (Primary School leaving). Seven joined Madiba Secondary School. Two of these seven are currently doing their final year 'O'level.

A.ii (2)   Problems

It was observed that often students from Madiba Secondary School lacked the necessary teaching skills. In certain cases the literacy participants were much older than the secondary school students and this often hindered smooth interaction.

A.ii (3)   Significance of this Study

- that functional literacy motivates
- that formal schools/institutions can play an important role in the pro-vision of literacy
- that some of the present vocational training centres can actually absorb ex-literacy participants

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The problem related to the current literacy programme is that there does not appear to be a clear-cut policy of what should happen to participants once they have gone through the primers. One may say there are financial assistance policies geared towards post-literacy programme. The question is: Are they really so and who helps the ex-participants? Further than that: Is there a follow up and/or evaluation to assess, what happens to the majority of the people, who shall have been products of the literacy programme? These questions are deliberately calling for a needs assessment, so that the programmes are designed along appropriate lines. One is however a little bit concerned about some of the interviews, that often take place over the local radio station (Radio Botswana), where a Literacy Assistant/Literacy Group Leader once was asked the question "What message would you pass on to the public about literacy?" The answer, perhaps quite unconsciously was "I encourage those, who do not know how to read and write to join the literacy groups, so that they can be able to read and write, since when they go to the towns to look for jobs this might/would help them" (As if the programme is preparing participants for jobs and in the towns). However, the truth is that participants get motivated in so far as they see the programme improving their conditions of living. I think it is generally true to say that the public is motivated, but the problem does not necessarily have to do with the programme itself, but rather with a nation-wide problem of lack of employment, hence tight competition for jobs in the labour market. In the past there was not much motivation among many for continuing education, but nowadays there are many more, who want to attend continuing education than the few established centres can admit into their existing programmes.

IV   Action Research (I)

(i)   Research setting: 4 senior secondary schools in Botswana (1989).
(ii)   Research population: 1,537 female students in Forms 4 & 5 (ages 15-22)
(iii)   Testing Instruments: structured questionnaire.
(iv)   Aims of Research:
- To find out how many of the female students had children
- To find out the extent to which parents at home read and understand correspondence from schools.

(v)   Findings:
- 92 females had children
- 16 of these 92 had mothers, who were either semi-literate or literate (and could therefore read correspondence from schools themselves)
- About 1,05 female students wrote that their mothers were illiterate. The rest were not too sure, whether their mothers were semi-literate or literate.

(vi)   Research Implications
-    There is a need to establish the extent to which all parents with children in formal schools are able to read and write, so that when school correspondence leaves schools, it is possible that it will be understood by the people it is meant for.

-    There is need for education of mothers especially in so far as sex education and teenage pregnancy are concerned.

-    There is need for networking in literacy programmes.

Action Research (II)

In a similar research survey carried out in one senior secondary school in 1989, it was found that of the 270 Form three students, who had just joined X senior secondary school, 161 students reported that their biological mothers could not read and write. The others had mothers, who could read and write, and/or students were not too sure. (It is important at this stage that we mention, why the action research concentrated on 'mothers'. Botswana experiences single parent families, and it is better for any research to avoid asking students questions on 'fathers' unless such research specifically wants to study the level of single parent families.)

In Botswana, there are cases of students cheating their parents about correspondence from schools, mainly because in the majority of the cases students are the ones to read letters to their parents. Often students are suspended or expelled from schools or have been given a letter to take to their parents and the same students make up stories. Schools have tried cases, where parents' signatures are required in certain cases. This has not solved the problem either.

The research findings above are only a sign of the need to carry out research on the actual rate of literacy/illiteracy among the adult population. This information will help plan literacy programmes with real needs. With these findings we again see the gap between the education of a child and his parents, and mainly because someone who is not able to read and write is taken advantage of by his own child. Admittedly this is not something that can be achieved overnight but it is the point at issue.

V   Debate

Botswana's economy is highly characterized by private ownership of the means of production. Therefore any programme that is not conceived or seen by participants as directly linked to effective employment is bound to be met with frustration and resistance. By the same notion, if literacy

programmes, no matter what target group are not seen to be in line with the formal education system and/or current job opportunities, then the situation is even more complicated than just knowing the literacy rate and addressing the illiterate populace.

Mahalapye Development Trust literacy programme of the 70's and the 80's was successful only in so far as participants saw themselves finally joining formal primary schooling and later joining Madiba Brigades for various crafts. They obtained certificates and were smoothly absorbed into the labour market. This hope has however been threatened by emerging Vocational Training Centres and the existing Botswana Polytechnic. Brigades trainees feel, that manpower within the Brigades system is not as qualified and experienced as that of the VTCs and Polytechnic. Here then is institutional clash and trainees' clash of interest. This is so because often the labour market prefers craftsmen from Botswana Polytechnic and Vocational Training Centres to those from the Brigades, even though trainees sit for the same Trade Tests.

The argument as cited above can only signal the problems experienced by those involved in eradication of literacy. Participants will be highly motivated only in so far as they see the functionality of the programme. This point is crucial given the fact that of late, young 'O'level school-leavers, mainly males, are no longer keen to join university education. In their eyes, the economic labour market swing entices them to go for vocational-technical education. It is this socio-economic swing that influences any clientele of any programme. Much as the National Literacy Programme has elements of functional literacy, the programme is however met with an enormous task of having to latently compete with forces of labour market (see Appendices).

Participants do not only wish to see themselves being able to manipulate basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. They instead want to see themselves in the economic developmental process. They are looking for positive high rates of return from their participation in any programme. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to successfully link any programme to the economic and social being of a people without complexities and insurmountable problems. Therefore to what extent can literacy be provided to the target population, and that population isolate provision of literacy from labour market? One is not calling for a polarization of the two, but rather to signal the complexity of people's economic and social expectations.

In the cause of eradicating illiteracy, new semi-literates emerge from the formal education system. Although there is no statistical data on this, there is room to hypothesize that some dropouts of formal schooling relapse into illiteracy. If this is so, to what extent is National Literacy Programme

committed to Post-literacy such that those, who have graduated from literacy instruction do not relapse into illiteracy? All these questions for debate can only confirm that eradication of illiteracy in Botswana cannot be left on paper objectives with a few uncoordinated departments taking part. There is dire need to reorganize the implementation strategy to integrate literacy programmes. Hence the need to cut institutional barriers. Once the institutional barriers are removed, the material development and imple- mentation process will be seen as holistic. Integrating the programme is however not without its own limitations, because society and economics are dynamic, and this dynamism influences individual expectations.

Given the above state of affairs it follows, that the practical task of reducing illiteracy in Botswana is a complex one. There is also the question of what we really do mean by literacy. Within Botswana National Literacy Pro- gramme, literacy is defined to imply written communications and simple computations, which are a part of daily life. This definition has overlooked the aspects of functional literacy, which is now the point of issue at implementation level. The efforts of literacy provision at prisons depart- ment is quite successful and offers a model of what motivates participants. Because of this kind of functional literacy programme within prisons department there is common talk in Botswana that "prisons are colleges of training", the argument being, that prisoners come out of prisons with functional skills. A number of evaluation assignments on literacy pro- gramme in Botswana have all indicated 'that the progress of NLP to date is successful in teaching those who stay in the programme basic literacy and numeracy, but there are no records to indicate drop-outs' (see Gaborone, S et al., 1988).

VI   Conclusions

It is difficult to assess the rate of literacy in Botswana for reasons that have been highlighted elsewhere in this paper. It is also difficult to discuss existing extension services in Botswana as providing any network, because there does not appear to be a clear-cut networking even in the provision of literacy itself. DNFE is the implementing department. There are similar programmes in other ministries, however, such as the Department of Com- munity Development of the Ministry of Local Governments and Lands, where extension services are successfully provided for in home economics at rural/district level.

On the whole there is potential for functional literacy provision in Botswana. What is needed is active mobilization of existing resources and re-organization of the current NLP to include all other ministries with similar programmes and perhaps to try the suggested implementation model given in this paper. There is room for literacy to be taught across the

schools' curriculum because at the moment the level of literacy among school-leavers, especially at Primary school level, is something that needs to be researched into. Although no immediate data are available to support the assumption that primary school-leavers easily relapse into illiteracy, there is room to say so. Therefore NLP finds itself having to cater for those who had never been to formal schools and those who have dropped out of the system.

The question of women and development in Botswana has not yet gained much attention, even though there are a number of women run projects nationwide. Again scanty literature on small scale businesses in Botswana indicate, that there are more women than men owning small scale businesses. The question of whether there is sex discrimination in the pro-vision of financial assistance outlets available in Botswana is a difficult one to allude to, because it depends on what the constitution of Botswana says and/or what the conditions of such services say regarding married and single women.

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Comparative Figures between 1980 - 1989

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Number of Participants	7976	23630	18779	27935	36068	38660	35354	20999	26200	33226
Number of Groups	699	1779	-	2942	2945	1901	2483	1509+	2038+	2996
Number of Literacy Group Leaders	-	1427	1188	1559	1633	1480	1221	907+	1136	1466
Number of Literacy Assistants	28	105	104	133	133	134	137	143	144	133

Source: Ministry of Education DNFE Annual Report on the National Literacy Programme 1989.

Appendix 2

NATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMME STATISTICS - 1989

DISTRICT	LAs	LGLs	Learners		Total No. of Learners	No. of Groups	Distribution by Primer Level						
			M	F			P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	NL	ENG
1. Southern	16	139	1275	1828	3103	319	1095	585	425	253	337	206	200
2. Tutume and Boteti	11	155	1135	3068	4203	330	2315	654	381	288	293	272	
3. Gantsi	3	33	520	601	1121	76	626	115	80	30	100	13	
4. Kang	3	18	223	152	375	28	201	91	40	6	21	15	
5. Tsabong	7	40	191	453	644	55	307	165	40	27	75	30	
6. Kgaleng	9	81	643	702	1345	132	620	148	142	69	273	93	
7. Ngamiland	10	80	688	999	1687	152	771	345	159	126	187	100	
8. Central - Serowe	14	217	1274	2063	3337	457	1671	501	341	222	318	284	
9. Central-Bobonong	8	187	1893	3488	5381	478	2957	828	472	309	419	396	
10. North-East	11	77	362	1053	1415	124	786	209	121	115	184	49	
11. Kweneng	20	192	2415	3273	5688	383	1944	865	574	554	380	243	
12. South East	7	70	823	827	1650	186	510	322	238	2171	255	154	
13. Chobe	3	21	194	263	459	36	221	86	82	53	36	8	
14. Central - Mahalapye	11	156	1039	1781	2820	240	1444	2397	276	219	297	187	
TOTAL	133	1466	12604	20622	33226	2996	15468	7311	3371	4442	3175	205	200

Source: Ministry of Education DNFE Annual Report on NLP, December 1989

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Education is a significant factor because it determines to a great extent the level of participation of women and men in the economy and the level of entry into the labour market. Educational opportunities and facilities have expanded remarkably since independence. There are important gender differences at the higher levels of the education system.

Citizens by School Attendance (1981)

School Attendance	Number Female	Male	% of Total Female	Male
Never at School	162,000	166,000	40	48
Still at School	101,600	84,300	25	24
Left School	142,300	99,000	35	28
Total	405,900	349,300	100	100

Source: Population and Housing Census, 1981, CSO MFDP

There are more men that had never been to school than women. On the other hand there are more girls than boys who are still at school.

There seems to be no reliable data to estimate the literacy rate in Botswana. However, census data on school attendance gives some indication of the literacy rate. If schooling is accepted as an approximation for literacy the 1971 census estimated that out of the total population of 15 years and above 60% had never been to school, constituting 58% of all women and 64% of all men. This suggests a 40% literacy rate. (Botswana Notes and Records 1988).

In the 1981 census it was estimated that of the total population 15 and above, 46% had no schooling, constituting 43% of all women and 51% of all men, suggesting a literacy rate of 54%. Therefore it seems that the literacy rate increased from 1971 to 1981. Given this trend it is estimated that the literacy rate in 1986 would be 61%. (Botswana Notes and Records 1988). Botswana is one of the few countries where literacy is higher for women than men.

It should be noted that there are inconsistencies in the data base used to estimate the literacy rate. Therefore the figures should be read with caution.

Literacy Rate:	The proportion of the population that can read and write a simple statement.
Net Enrolment rate:	The proportion of the school going age population that are at school, for instance, the 7-13 age group.

Source: Women & Men in Botswana. Facts & Figures, January 1991

Appendix 4

Employed Urban/Rural by Sector (1984/85)

Urban Job Status	Women Formal	Men Formal	Women Informal	Men Informal
Trad. Farmer	0	0	2,100	1,200
Paid Employee	12,900	30,400	8,200	1,900
Unpaid Employee	0	0	0	100
Self Employed	100	0	1,700	700
Employer	100	200	200	200
Rural Job Status	**Women Formal**	**Men Formal**	**Women Informal**	**Men Informal**
Trad. Farmer	0	0	78,900	60,700
Paid Employee	16,800	25,000	9,100	17,000
Unpaid Employee	0	0	400	200
Self Employed	100	200	2,400	1,000
Employer	200	200	200	400

Source : Labour Force Survey, 1984/85, CSO - MFDP

The informal secor is a very important employment sector for both women and men. A substantial proportion of women are self employed as compared to men.

Employed 12 years of Age and Over by Job Status (1984/85)

Self Employed
Unpaid Employee
Trad. Farmer
Employer
Paid Employee
Other

100 75 50 25 % 25 50 75 100
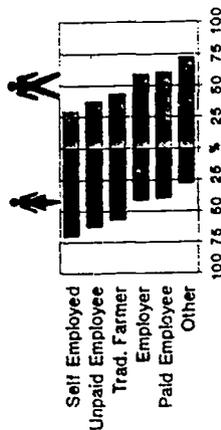
Source : Labour Force Survey, 1984/85, CSO - MFDP

Formal employment is the most attractive source of income for women and men. Available opportunities are limited and cannot meet the growing labour force. Given the nature of available employment opportunities women tend to have limited opportunities in the formal sector. Most jobs created are in the traditional male fields, for example, in construction. Most women and men are either traditional farmers or paid employees.

Source: Women and Men in Botswana. Facts and Figures, January 1991.

Men's gross earnings are generally higher as compared to women's earnings. For instance the most significant and interesting difference is between those who earn in the range P500-P1000 and over P1000. There are proportionately more men than women who earn above P500 per month.

There are also differences between the formal and informal sectors. A higher proportion of the employees in the informal sector earn less than P100 as compared to employees in the formal sector. Earnings are generally lower for employees in the informal sector where only a small proportion earn over P500 per month. The gap between women and men in the informal sector is smaller at the higher income level.

Employed Persons Gross Monthly Earnings by Sector (1985)

Earnings	Number		Total
	Women	Men	
Formal Sector			
Up to P10	800	400	1,200
P11 - 50	7,200	5,600	12,800
P51 - 75	2,300	2,200	4,500
P76 - 100	3,900	6,500	10,400
P101 - 150	4,500	12,700	17,200
P151 - 250	5,800	12,200	18,000
P251 - 500	5,600	10,600	16,200
P501 - 1,000	1,500	3,200	4,700
Over P1,000	200	2,100	2,300
Not Stated	300	500	800
Informal Sector			
Up to P10	2,100	2,800	4,900
P11 - 50	12,200	11,600	23,800
P51 - 75	3,500	2,200	5,700
P75 - 100	1,800	1,500	3,300
P101 - 150	900	1,000	1,900
P151 - 250	500	800	1,300
P251 - 500	300	500	800
P501 - 1,000	200	200	400
Over P1,000	100	200	300
Not Stated	500	300	800

Source : Labour Force Survey, 1984/85, CSO - MFDP

Source: Women and Men in Botswana. Facts and Figures, January 1991.

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Chapter 8

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN EAST AFRICA WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO TANZANIA

Introduction

This paper examines the literacy initiatives as they relate to women and development in East Africa, with particular reference to Tanzania, which exemplifies big strides yet with gaps, where women's recognition of their needs in literacy is concerned. The paper sets out with the objective of identifying the existing constraints and the literacy programmes developed in the Region, and brings out recommendations for working towards eliminating induced gender inequities and redressing historic patterns, that disadvantage women in their pursuit of acquiring and using literacy knowledge in their day-to-day lives and those of their families and social groups to which they belong.

In the paper, special emphasis in the discussion is given to issues surrounding the policies and methodologies of literacy development and its consequences on women. The issues are looked at in an integrative manner, while examining the links between the various organs and bodies, which deal with the education and training opportunities for girls and women.

Lastly, the paper contributes to existing documentation on the plight of women in social systems, that are yet to acknowledge the role they play in supporting the existing economies with little or no acknowledgement.

Theoretical framework

The integration of women as beneficiaries and agents of the development process was initially fuelled by demands for social justice, and respect for the human rights of women. Debates and research, which followed the well proclaimed International Women's Year (1975), elaborated that both national development plans of the Third world and International development strategies were failing in reducing the inequalities existing between men and women. In fact, it was demonstrated that disparity gaps between

men and women were on the increase. This observation concerned development projects as well as economic growth of countries.

In the recent years, it has also become clear, that the failure to recognise the vital role that women play in the economic health of domestic economies has had negative impact on the achievement of development objectives. For instance, while economists previously argued, that economic growth was a prerequisite for increased equality, it has now been understood that equality is a prerequisite for balanced economic growth, (CIDA 1990, Ottawa: Towards a National Plan of Action for Women). Moreover, it was becoming more and more clear that national development plans of the Third world in particular, need to be adjusted so as to include the female factor, so that communities do not waste half of their resources. As such, providing women with appropriate tools and opportunities to participate in the mainstream development has increasingly become not only an issue of equality but of economic efficiency in many of these countries.

In this realisation of women's role in development, the need for education and literacy in particular taking up a new role has become imperative. Literacy, as a tool with potentials of reducing poverty and inequities has thus been geared in adopting new approaches towards its clients, particularly women, as focus on literacy development is turning more and more towards encouraging initiatives, that are much more gender sensitive. In educational development terms thus, there is a genuine growing need for literacy initiatives to not only target women as a disadvantaged learning group but also to adopt initiatives, which look at the conditions, that limit women's access and capacities to benefit from the development process of their societies as a whole.

The development of literacy and women at the international level

The role of literacy in developing both women and men in societies is not a new agenda for policy makers and educational planners in both developed and developing countries. In the developing countries for example, literacy has been associated with women's improvement in numbers of key development indicators such as health, population, nutrition, education, household income and agricultural productivity, etc. As a result of such a potential; both international and national governments have been taking various initiatives for eradicating illiteracy, such as literacy programmes, campaigns etc.

Despite these efforts, however, illiteracy among women is still a major problem in the world and particularly in the Third World countries. As table 1 illustrates below, all over the world there are more female than

male adults, who have no access to knowledge, skills and technologies, that could improve the quality of their lives and assist them in their attempts to adapt to the social, economic and political changes in their communities.

Table 1: Number of illiterates and illiteracy rates in 1985 for the adult population aged 15 and over.

	Absolute number (in millions)	Illiteracy rates		
		Both sexes	Men	Women
World total	888.7	27.7	20.5	34.9
Developing Countries	868.9	38.2	27.9	48.9
Least Developed Countries	120.8	67.6	56.9	78.4
Developed Countries	19.8	2.1	1.7	2.6
Africa	161.9	54.0	43.3	64.5
Latin America	43.6	17.3	15.3	19.2
Asia	665.7	36.3	25.6	47.4
Oceania	1.6	8.9	7.6	10.2
Europe (including USSR)	13.9	2.3	1.6	3.0

Source: UNESCO office of statistics, The current Literacy situation in the world (UNESCO, July 1985).

The figures in table 1 do also indicate an overall map of world illiteracy, which closely coincides with maps of poverty and underdevelopment. Most countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, reflect this phenomenon. Women in Africa for instance, are indeed more economically active than men. But nevertheless, their hunger for literacy knowledge and skills is not provided for. They are also mostly the poorest of the poor. Some studies carried out in East Africa show for instance that, though on an average, women provide about 60-75% of all farm labour in agriculture, the majority of illiterates in the Region are women. They are the most underdeveloped segments of the population (Mbilinyi 1985, Kweka 1987). These women are worst off in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality, education provision, communications, nutrition, health and income. Their agriculture and industry are both less developed and less productive (Fisher:1982). In this context, African women do not only bear the brunt of being female and illiterate, but are also limited in acquiring the means, through which they could facilitate opportunities, that can work against their underdevelopment. This is not to propound that literacy is the only major underpinning factor for women's underdevelopment in African societies. It is, however, a critical one, when we recognise literacy's potentials in breaking down the vicious cycle of underdevelopment, in which

these women find themselves. This is a process, which includes under-development of resources, overwork, lack of recognition and opportunities, a denial of sufficient resources to improve their work, low performance and further underdevelopment.

The situation of literacy and women development in the region

The discussion in this section is centred on the various governmental and non governmental initiatives in the promotion for women in the Region of East Africa. The section examines issues surrounding the policies and practices of literacy development, as it relates to women situation in the Region, and in specific addresses the obstacles women face including access to literacy training opportunities, the content of the training on offer, mobility from one level of literacy training to another, which includes its functionality, and support systems while studying. The discussion takes an integrated approach to these issues and looks at the links existing in the Region, including the links between inter-governments and non-governmental initiatives in providing educational training opportunities for girls and women in general.

A historical perspective

Lack of literacy skills for the majority of both men and women adults in the Region was felt from the early years of independence. The colonial governments in the Region had, to a great extent, neglected promoting literacy for the majority of the adults in these countries. This situation was mainly due to literacy programmes being considered by the colonialists to be subversive. The programmes were in fact perceived as dealing with conscientization, mobilization and empowerment of the 'natives'.

With such perceptions, the colonialists in the three countries encouraged literacy acquisition among the adults only where it was deemed necessary. There were even some restrictions imposed on the expansion of literacy development. For example in Kenya one had to get an official permit from the District Commissioner, before a literacy class could be opened (Tai Afrik:1990).

It is however important to note that, though the three countries faced a serious illiteracy situation for both men and women adults, at the period of independencies of these countries, there were already an indication that, there were more women than men, who were illiterate. See for example the Tanzanian case in table 2.

Table 2: Rate of illiteracy in Tanzania 1968-1986 (%).

Year	Men	Women	Total
1967	56	80	67
1975	34	44	39
1977	-	-	27
1981	15	27	21
1983	10	21	15
1986	7.1	12	9.5

Source: MOE figures, 1989, Tanzania statistical Reports on Literacy Campaign.

The high illiteracy rate in the 1960's among women in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania was again partly an inherited reflection of colonialism, which developed economic, social and political policies that favoured men. Colonial educational policies in particular, were structured to prepare few male local functionaries for assisting in the upkeep of the Christian ideology and in the colonial administration of these societies. In this system, African women were not considered an important labour force, and educating them was not a priority.

For instance, mission education developed through adult education and schools in the 1930's, by its very nature provided few educational opportunities for women in literacy training and in other adult education skills. The initiated literacy training programmes by missionaries were taught mainly to Christian converts so as to enable them to read the Bible and other religious teachings. In this situation, literacy training did not reach many adults, who were believers of their own traditional faith. In particular, women beneficiaries from these programmes were fewer and were the ones mainly married to church leaders or those women, who lived near the mission centres established in these countries.

In the same way, the school system that was started by the missionaries in the same period, did not aim at benefitting the majority of women in these countries. In all the three countries in the region, the mission schools were run to a greater extent to meet the economic needs of the colonial governments. Because of this, the education system was specialised from the very beginning, and in the process, aggravated gender differentiation and inequities thus in the system. For example, by teaching literacy to the brightest 'natives' (chief's sons and other men), skilled trades like masonry and carpentry to the average Africans and manual work or agriculture to those considered below average. Women in this system were not the main target. In this way, the majority of young girls were not reached by the education provided.

The above tendency of overlooking women's needs in education was much more reflected in the provision of school education to the 'natives' - through colonial government administration. African women in this system became the most discriminated. Based on racial, ethnicity and gender lines, the colonial school system limited female enrolment to primary level. For instance, in Tanzania, schooling for the 'natives' began in the 1930's. However, by 1947 there were still no women enrolled in classes above the middle level (i.e. Std 8). It actually took more than 8 years for the colonialists to avail opportunities for the African young women in post-Std 8 schooling (SIDA Report: Education in Tanzania with a Gender Perspective, 1991).

Even for those girls who were 'lucky' to be enrolled at the middle school level, they were to a great extent, subjected to racial and gender streaming. In 1952 for instance, an attempt was made by the colonial government in Tanzania to officialize the policy for gender streaming through the introduction of provisional syllabi for middle schools. Through this policy, boys' schools in the rural areas were supposed to focus on agriculture or animal husbandry as the core of the syllabus, while the few African girls' schools in the country were to focus on homecraft. High-level academic and technical bias syllabi were aimed for the European and Asian urban population. However, the implementation of these syllabi failed after some few years of its introduction as African parents in the country refused to support them. Thus, by the late fifties the emphasis of the education provided to Africans was turned on to academics rather than in the practical orientations as proposed earlier.

Again when the colonial government directed its efforts in educating its adult population - particularly after the 2nd World War - women adults did not become the main agents of the programme in any of the three countries of East Africa. Literacy work going on in Tanzania in the late 1940's for instance, was mainly concentrated in the urban communities, where war veterans (men) met to socialize in the community centres. It was only in the 1950's, when the colonial government was implementing what is termed as "modernisation/improvement" programmes for colonised people, that some of the literacy programmes were directed to women in the country. Such programmes were started throughout the rural areas and in terms of implementation the programmes were heavily dependent on the local authorities.

Seemingly influenced by the western philosophies of "women's place is at home", the adult education programmes started at this period in Tanzania, concentrated on educating women on skills related to their roles as mothers and wives. Combining literacy, women's education and community self-help projects, the programme taught the women participants some 'modern' skills on cookery, needlework, housekeeping and gardening.

There seemed to be limited literacy skills taught in these classes and also limited acquisition of women's knowledge on their roles as active members in agriculture development in their communities.

Nevertheless, the above mentioned adult education programme attracted many women participants in the few first years of its implementation. In some of the areas, such as in the Pare literacy scheme in Northern Tanzania for example, the programme actually improved women's acquisition of literacy as well as other skills like sewing, etc (Kweka, 1987). In many of the other areas in the country though, the classes were discontinued after some few years of implementation, as women showed a decline of interest in the programme. Several factors have been attributed to women's loss of interest in the classes. Perhaps the main factor could be attributed to women's disillusionment by not being able to put into practice what they learnt. In many ways, the skills the adult women were learning in the classes, did not reflect the needs of their daily living, nor did the skills provided through the programmes support their economic requirements. As a result, women in the rural areas lost an opportunity of training in literacy and other adult education skills.

In the other two countries of Kenya and Uganda, literacy training which were mainly run by voluntary/religious agencies as far back as 1945, was in the same manner limited in nature and in implementation as far as women's educational and literacy training was concerned. Thus, due to the educational limited opportunities availed for both young girls and women in the colonialism through the mission education system as well as colonial government's schooling, many women in East Africa remained illiterate with very little chances of upward mobility. By 1957 for instance, only about 7.5% of females over 15 years of age had received any schooling in Tanzania (Kurtz, 1972). This meant that women in this country and in the other two countries in the Region were, as independence of their countries closed in, placed in a very disadvantaged position. For, without education and literacy training women's effective participation in the new economic, political and social opportunities opened up by the independent governments in the 1960's was limited.

Literacy development in the post-independence period

As pointed out earlier in the paper, at independence, the East African countries faced a serious illiteracy situation. A high percentage of illiterate adults has been inherited from the colonial government. Data on rates of adult literacy in 1960 showed that literacy rates for adults in the Region, was in average below 20%. Tanzania had only 17%, while its more literate neighbouring countries of Kenya and Uganda had 20% and 25% respectively (IIEP Research Report on Effects of Literacy in Tanzania, 1990).

With such low figures, illiteracy among adults came to be viewed as one of the main obstacles facing the postindependence governments from the early years. The first Five Year Development Plan, (1964-69) in Tanzania for example, categorically made reference to the importance of adult education and literacy in transforming the attitudes of the Tanzanian society. While officiating the plan, Julius Nyerere, the then President of United Republic of Tanzania stressed the fact, that educating adults was efficient. He noted:

> First we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our economic development for five, ten even twenty years. The attitudes of adults on the other hand have an impact now. The people must understand the (development) plans; and they must participate in changes which are necessary.

The independent Ugandan government also came out with clear emphasis on adult education in the country as early as 1964. By this time an attempt had been made by this government to launch a national literacy programme under the Ministry of Local Government. However, as years went by, the campaign was seriously interfered by the civil war against Idi Amin, whereby the programme became constrained with insufficient political commitment, shortage of manpower, finance and materials.

The above recognition that adult education and literacy would change the attitudes of adults towards development, and that with their training in different techniques, national development would take place sooner, was, however, not followed by adoption of national policies on adult education and literacy in any of the countries in the Region until in the 1970's.

Before this period literacy and other adult education initiatives in countries like Kenya and Tanzania, were small in scale and mainly run by agencies other than the governments. Before 1979 for instance, literacy pro-grammes in Kenya were managed by Non-Governmental Organisation, (mainly religious ones), which provided literacy training and other skills for both men and women in many locations of the country. The Kenyan government's first indication in getting involved in literacy development was when an act of Parliament in 1966 established the Board of Adult Education to oversee adult education activities in the rural areas. However, the Board's activities lasted only for four years. It was in 1979, that the government became fully involved with provision of literacy in the country, when the national functional literacy programme got underway (IIEP Research Workshop Review - Kenya, 1989).

In Tanzania, the literacy activities in the sixties, were run by the Com-munity Development department as part of the government's programme in 'stimulating' rural and urban communities for development. Supported by the then ruling Party (TANU) and some religious NGO's in mobilising the adults in the country, the CD department organised adult education

programmes that differed according to the needs of the different communities in the country. Kassam (1978) describes these literacy programmes as being uncoordinated and implemented with no direction. He noted that the programmes promoted at this period were ad hoc in nature and were actually isolated activities divorced from the national development priorities:

> Adult Education (literacy) in the country was generally amorphous in nature. It was organized on scattered, uncoordinated and limited basis, it received a very small allocation of funds from the national budget, it was characterized by general vagueness of its place and in the development process it lacked clearly defined objectives.

The implementation of these earlier educational initiatives for adults in the Region was also gender biased. The above programmes by the Community Development department in Tanzania for instance, were in the majority providing skills, that aimed at improving women's welfare within their accepted social status. Through literacy training, women in these classes were exposed to home-economics based skills, with emphasis on motherhood, nutrition, sewing and knitting, housework and sometimes handcrafts and voluntary work. The programmes also demanded women adults to contribute their labour in community 'self-help' projects without first questioning the existing unequal division of labour in these communities. In this sense, the literacy programmes offered ended in overburdening women, especially the rural ones.

The emphasis adopted by the above programmes on "home-economics" or "mother-hood" skills for women in literacy and adult education development at this period, was in a way, a carry over from the colonial mentalities that failed to recognise the actual role of the African women in their societies. And as noted by Marie A. Oomen this is a tendency which unfortunately is being continued by the national educational policy makers and planners to-date. Marie points out for instance that:

> African rural women have seen their workload become even heavier with the introduction of cash crop production in which they have to take part, in addition to all their other duties. The Western idea of women as only housewives and mother---introduced by missionaries and colonial administrators --- has been largely adopted by planners, experts and extension workers.

The adoption of national policies for literacy development

The adoption of national adult educational policies, that guided the implementation of adult education and literacy in this Region, was in essence very much politically motivated. In Kenya for instance, the adoption of such policy in 1979 came as part of the new programme, aimed at

meeting the needs of the poor. At this period, Kenya had still an estimated
figure of 5 million illiterate persons of over 15 years of age. This situation
of a high percentage of uneducated adults was i.a. due to not all schoolaged
children attending school, pre-mature drop-outs and lack of adequate funds
by government to run the earlier educational programmes for adults.
Efforts to promote intensive mass literacy campaigns among the 5 million
illiterate adults in Kenya was thus announced by President Daniel Arap Moi
in 1979. To implement the Presidential directive, a national seminar was set
up in the same year, to map out concrete details for the mobilization
approaches, curriculum, content and development, language etc.

The mass campaign in Kenya was intended to last for 5 years, cover the
entire country, starting slowly and reaching the peak during the final year.
The phasing out of the campaign programme was later revised to conform
with the national development plan. The literacy programme was largely
financed by the Kenyan government with a limited support of materials,
equipment and training staff received from International agencies and
friendly governments.

In Tanzania, the political motive of adopting directions for adult education
and literacy development was even more clear. This was the time, when the
country was shifting its ideological orientations in developing its people
economically and politically. In 1967, a new development approach of
socialism and self-reliance (Ujamaa) had been spelled out through the
Arusha Declaration. This change of policy called for increased communi-
cation between the Government and the adults. The (adult) population had
to understand what 'Ujamaa' is and how it is to function. Policy directions
for literacy training and adult education was thus important.

With this belief, the introduction of the educational policies during the
Post-Arusha Declaration period for both adults and children (education for
self-reliance) in Tanzania reflected the significant role of education and
literacy training in clarifying the objectives of socialism in the country.
When 1970 was declared "Adult Education Year" by the then President, the
objectives of adult education were stated as:

    i)   to shake ourselves out of a resignation to the kind of life
        Tanzanian people have lived for centuries past;

    ii)   to teach us how to improve our lives

    iii) to have everyone understand our national policies of socialism
        and self-reliance (Nyerere, 1969).

From these objectives, adult education and literacy in particular was given
a role of developing both men and women adults in Tanzania. Literacy and
other adult education activities were thus to provide knowledge and skills,
that could motivate self-confidence and positive development among the

adults. This in turn would alter their underdevelopment and make them understand their national policies.

In practical terms, the adult education adopted in Tanzania at this period reflected this thinking in a major way. The planning and the implementation of the literacy campaign developed in the country, were conceived with that understanding. The curricula and content in the teaching primers for adults, the methodology, training of the teachers as well as the mobilisation of learners had a lot of influence from the political and the economic context of the country.

It is, however, worth noting, that the developed adult education and literacy programme, as the Arusha Declaration, did not in a specific way, address gender issues. By implication, however, socialism as an ideology based in equality principles, and adult education as one of the means for the development of this ideology, allowed for an opportunity for women adults to reject their unequal and inferior status in the society. This implication does not seem, however, to have had registered well neither with the politicians, adult education/literacy providers nor with the adult learners themselves in the country.

For instance, when in 1969 the Ministry of Education was given the responsibility of coordinating adult/literacy programmes among the adults in the country, the programmes developed were conceived and directed to the total adult population with no gender sensitivity. As a result, the education and literacy skills provided through the literacy programme, post-literacy programmes in the form of follow-up reading materials, rural libraries, correspondence education, evening classes etc, did not, to a great extent, address the interests and needs of the women participants. The described programmes below reflect this fact in greater details.

Mwanza pilot literacy programme

The government's initial initiatives for massive eradication of illiteracy among the adults in Tanzania came in 1968 through a pilot Functional Literacy programme. This was a project supported by UNDP/UNESCO as part of world wide initiatives of eradicating illiteracy among adults through work. In this context, the literacy programme did not only aim at offering literacy skills to illiterate adults, but also at increasing their productivity through the literacy skills and other kind of knowledge provided. Implemented in several countries in the Third world, the programme has come to be criticised as having a hidden agenda of exploiting farmer's productivity in poor countries for the development of the international markets.

Tanzania was the only country in East Africa, where this experimental project took place. For example it was implemented in the Lake Victoria Region (Mwanza and the surrounding areas). The Lake zone was selected, because it was fulfilling the criteria for the experimental programme as was determined by the international donors. The area was growing cotton as a cash crop, and by then cotton was the most profitable cash crop in the country. It was assumed, that as the economic conditions of this zone were promising at this time. Motivation for literacy would be stronger there than in other areas of the country.

Indeed, as was envisaged in its initial stages of implementation, the pilot programme attracted many adults in the project area. By 1986 about 1,541,562 adults had enrolled in functional literacy classes, out of which 1,335,348 were women. Many women in this zone were mobilised into participation, as their occupation remained to be farming. The content and methodology adopted in the functional literacy programme did not favour, however, the women farmers. The knowledge and skills offered to them in the courses had very little relevance to their needs.

The curricula and the methods of teaching in the literacy programmes were in particular marginalizing women learners, but even as well to some extent men participants. This was mainly because the learner's participation in preparing syllabi for the various subjects, in which they were taught, was very limited. This was done by the Ministry of Education officials, and the teaching was handled by Primary school teachers, who were themselves not prepared enough for such a job. Unlike in Kenya, these teachers were working on part time basis and were paid exceedingly low salaries. This way of mobilising teachers plus the scarcity of resources for teaching, diminished the motivation of teachers in teaching the adults.

Lack of creative talents among the literacy teachers led to inability of adjusting instructional methodology to individual learners - especially women. They failed to engage the women in a conscious raising process that would have changed their pessimistic and fatalistic perspectives on reality. By using the traditional means of teaching functional literacy to adults (like school children), the programmes did not help female adults to acquire a "critical" vision of their environment and awareness of their capacities and means to change their cultural environment in particular. In this way, literacy provided to the women learners through the literacy classes did not make much desired impact on women's development, no matter what was taught in the classes.

However, to many Politicians and literacy practitioners at both the national and international levels, the Pilot Functional Literacy programme in Tanzania was a 'success' story and was actually used as a model when the literacy campaigns started throughout the country in the 1970's.

Mass literacy campaigns (1970- to date)

During the mid-seventies deliberate efforts were made in Tanzania to eradicate illiteracy in a massive way. This shift of emphasis in the development of adult education/literacy in Tanzania has been associated with two major reasons: the political need of having literate members for socialist transformation (Ministry of Education, 1972, Kassam 1978), and the need for extending the UNDP/UNESCO Functional Literacy Project with its emphasis on increased production of cash crops. Thus politically motivated, the government took the initiative of spreading the earlier adopted functional literacy approach to all the regions in the country. Using the already existing Party and Government machinery from the National to the village level, a lot of work was done in the early 70's in mobilising and enrolling illiterate adults in the classes.

The earlier work in the development of the literacy campaign involved the identification of illiterate adult population, which was 69% according to the population census of 1967; appointment of Adult Education Coordinators (AECs) at Regional, District, Divisional and at Ward (village) levels. Adult literacy centres were selected. Supervisors and Class Centres Committees, were appointed as well as Adult Education Committees at local and national levels to coordinate adult education activities between 1970-75. Massive training of literacy teachers through Regional and District trainers team took place between 1970-1975.

In the implementation process of the literacy campaigns of the 1970's the literacy organisers as well as the adults were highly motivated by the government's and party leaders' commitment to the literacy campaign. For example, the 1971 Party National Executive Committee's resolution of eradicating literacy among the adults in the country by 1975, was followed by many governmental directives of a positive kind. An example was an allocation of 10% of the educational budget for adult education and literacy training activities.

With such a politically-oriented approach in the implementation of the campaign, excitement and many expectations were raised among the adult population. Big numbers of female and male adults were mobilised and enrolled in the literacy classes throughout the country. As was the case in the earlier pilot literacy campaign, there were more women than men enrolled in the literacy classes during the mass campaign (see table 3). In Tanzania women had often shown more interest in becoming literate than men. A number of studies have demonstrated, that many rural women in the country had tended to regard literacy acquisition as a way of helping them to cope with new skills and responsibilities in their communities. Perhaps it is important to also point out, that women in the rural areas have always been much more easily mobilised than men in any communal

interventions in Tanzania. This is despite the fact, that women do mostly lack time and energy for extra activities.

Table 3: Enrolment in Adult Literacy Classes.

Year	Men	%	Women	Enrolment %	Total
1969	206,214	38	1,335,348	62	1,541,562
1975	2,287,921	44	2,896,061	56	5,184,982
1977	2,544,590	44	3,275,022	56	5,819,612
1981	2,716,791	45	3,382,406	55	6,099,197
1983	2,744,372	45	3,412,406	55	6,156,777
1986	2,866,864	45	3,445,424	55	6,312,888

Source: MOE figures, Tanzania statistical reports on Literacy campaigns - quoted from Report on Education in Tanzania with a Gender Perspective - Dar es Salaam, 1990.

Methodology

As reflected in the previous sections the majority of participants in the literacy classes have always been women. However, planning and implementation of the approach developed in the literacy campaigns in Tanzania during the period 1970 to 1991, seem to have neglected to consider this factor in practical terms. For instance, the emphasis in the campaign was mainly placed on pre-testing certain concepts and methodologies, on developing instructional materials and evolving methods of training personnel, planning and organizational structures in relation to the earlier concept of adult learning for use in work (i.e. functional literacy). The Ministry of Education prepared a curriculum, which reflected this concept. That is, as a principle, literacy teaching was integrated in the teaching of vocational skills. Twelve different primers of levels I and II were written on Better Cotton, Banana, Rice, Maize, Coconut, Cashew nut, Tobacco, Cattle keeping, Fishing, Home economics. One primer was prepared on the party philosophy of socialism and self-reliance. In essence the acquisition of literacy skills in this approach, was loaded with other training skills, an approach whose impact on women learners has increasingly been criticized (See Workshop Report: Research Findings on Effects of Literacy in Kenya, 1989).

Top-down planning of the literacy campaign resulted in a state of affairs, where women's contribution to the learning process was negligible. The Committee structure, which was set up to carry the democratisation of

adult education at the levels of classes, village, district, regional and national, seems to have failed to activate women's contribution to the content and methodology to be used. To-date, women sit in the class committees but have no voice. One can only foresee these class committees functioning effectively (and taking interest in women's issues and concerns in the learning process), if confidence would be built in women learners. This so that they could participate in planning, what they should learn rather than accepting it as a donation from others. To this, there was and there is still a need for democratisation of the literacy classes in the country and elsewhere.

The teaching methods used were also very traditional and sometimes led to patronizing attitudes, that discouraged open discussions between men and women. By encouraging separate learning settings (separate classes) for men and women for instance, literacy organisers and teachers were, in a way, perpetuating cultural attitudes and values, that deny women learners to be treated as equal to men. This in the long run worked towards eroding women's confidence rather than building it, as was anticipated.

Post-literacy programmes

The post-learning initiatives in Tanzania provided the potential of extensive possibilities for women neo-literates to continue education and to offer frameworks and means of using the acquired knowledge. However in practice, the initiatives' top down planning and implementation limitations, created an increased marginalization of women in the learning process and in their environment. For instance, the development of reading materials for post-literacy and continuing education reading materials for women, has generally been done by men through nationally organised writers' workshops. This system has created enormous limitations for positive curriculum development focusing on women needs, because men's needs, interests and problems in the learning process and in the communities are generally different from those of women. As an example I may mention, that the content of the reading materials for follow-up studies to be used in teaching female neo-literates literacy skills and other kinds of functional knowledge to enable them to perform their tasks in production and repro-duction more efficiently, did not question the existing division of labour solely based on sex. Pictures and concepts used in the books depicted exist-ing gender relations uncritically, for example women carrying water or cooking and a man reading a newspaper etc.

Recent attempts in Tanzania by a group of women intellectuals (WEG) to review and rewrite post-literacy reading materials from a gender per-spective in the fields of agriculture, technical skills and home economics for stage V and VI revealed a number of such weaknesses in the post-

literacy curricula. In the four different regions, where women were interviewed by WEG members on the content, provided through post-literacy learning situations, it was emphasized that the content left out many issues and concerns, which are relevant to their lives. Important issues, which should have been included, were for instance the workload in the family, decision-making, ownership of resources, sexuality and sexual harassment and restrictions of culture (WEG Report, 1987). The ongoing literature for post-literacy training and neo-literate adult learning in general has had very little of such discussions.

Due to such exclusion of issues surrounding women's lives as well as lack of time, energy and resources, women's participation in many of the post-literacy learning opportunities in Tanzania was not significant. This was specifically so in the rural areas, where facilities such as the rural libraries and institutions for studies by correspondence were not benefitting many women adults. The rural libraries had, for instance, failed to keep in line with women's work patterns and gave them few opportunities to influence book choice. Women's enrolment in correspondence courses was also generally very low, compared to that of men, as figures in table 4 indicate.

Table 4: Female enrolments in correspondence courses and rate of completion 1972 - 1989.

	Enrolled		Those who completed	
Year	Female %	Total N	Female %	Total N
1972	11	374	0	0
1973	7	4940	4	545
1974	8	5998	4	3266
1975	9	5995	5	3878
1976	15	6414	5	
1977	18	7042	5	4162
1978	20	6379	7	2931
1979	20	3776	7	2783
1980	13	1890	5	3065
1981	20	3181	7	1498
1982	21	3457	6	1779
1983	20	3794	8	1842
1984	22	3330	8	2293
1985	21	1770	8	2487
1986	18	2469	10	2346
1987	19	3195	11	1720
1988	19	3869	7	1256
1989	18	1725	9	663
Total	16	69598	6	37740

Source: SIDA Report: Education in Tanzania with a Gender Perspective

Many of the available correspondence courses required a certain level of basic literacy skills for the enrolment of adults. Many of the female adults were disqualified for enrolment, because of this imposition. Funding and personnel limitations were other barriers to women's motivation in enrolling in correspondence education at post-literacy level (Chale, 1975). Lack of funding and qualified personnel had, in some instances, led to launching of courses without prior study to assess the needs of the clients. Perhaps lack of assessment of the learning needs of women is one of the major reasons, why women's enrolment in correspondence courses is very low. Such revelations call for new strategies to be developed around issues of concentration of the skills provided and the requirement needed for enrolment as well as the methodology of publishing the Correspondence Education courses, so as to include more women in its programmes in Tanzania and elsewhere in the Region.

Some of the other post-literacy programmes are still functioning. But they need to be reorganized, so that they can be better utilized by female adults. For example, the zonal newspapers are operating in some places. They could be increased (i.e. the distribution system) and better organized to include topics of interest for women.

In general, if a literate environment is to be maintained for female neo-literates, we need to look at the whole issue of the deterioration of the performances of the economy of countries in the Region, and how this is affecting literacy development. For example, it is worth noting that the rising prices of newspapers in our country is keeping many literates away. This also means that not many people will be able to buy books. The difficult economic conditions have also affected women's (+ men's) perception about literacy, education and development. Many people are becoming more and more like West Bengal farmers, who asked "why should we learn to read and write?" A woman in Dar-es-Salaam recently made the following remark: "How can I go to a literacy class, when my children have nothing to eat?" This emphasizes the point; that poverty erodes the literacy environment. Many people are now concentrating on how to survive. All their efforts are focussed on how to get their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter fulfilled.

Monitoring and evaluation

The problems of how to monitor and evaluate the literacy programs in Tanzania, have been receiving a lot of emphasis from the very early years of their implementation. As a result of the extensive follow-up studies, a huge amount of statistics and experiences on literacy programmes in the country has been accumulated. The accuracy of the available statistics data

has, however, been questioned by many educational specialists (See Kweka 1986, 1987, Appendix 2).

Generally speaking, the monitoring and evaluation of the educational programmes for adults was mainly done by the Ministry of Education. In the due course of time the Ministry adopted different means and monitoring techniques, that included conducting of National literacy tests, submission of Reports and Attendance Registers by the Adult Education Coordinators at regional, district and village levels. Field visits were made by the Education Inspectors and Literacy Organisers. Different questionnaires to gather information on radio education programmes etc. and undertaking of evaluations at the national level were administered.

In implementation of the above strategies, there seemed to be very minimal involvement of adult learners, both men and women. The Ministry took over the responsibility of managing the monitoring process. The contribution of the adults in monitoring their own learning capacities and the levels of utilisation of skills acquired in their communities was in many ways lost. The preparation and administration of national tests was usually done through Task Force Committees, formed at the national level. These committees assumed the tasks of determining, which adult education skills should be tested as well as what the criteria for the level of achievements should be for the adult learners. Experiences from the National Literacy tests conducted so far in the country (six in total) show, that the examination mainly had consisted in testing skills in reading, writing and arithmetics. The performance of the adults in these examinations was ranked from level I to level IV (See Appendix 3). Those who reached level IV were regarded as functionally literates, but in some other places those, who reached level III were also included. These figures were then compiled for the whole country to show the rate of illiteracy, as seen in table 5.

Table 5: Rate of Illiteracy in Tanzania 1968 - 1986 (%)

Year	Men	Women	Total
1967	56	80	67
1975	34	44	39
1977	21	33	27
1981	15	27	21
1983	10	21	15
1986	7.1	12	9.5

Source: Ministry of Education, Adult Education - 1986

According to these figures, the mass literacy campaign has reduced national adult illiteracy in the country from 67% in 1967 to 9.5% in 1986. The above results also show, that female adult illiteracy has been reduced from 80% - 12% in the same period. With that level of literacy, it was assumed that illiteracy among women was no longer a national problem. That is, female graduates would use the 3Rs as a means of communicating with others in various fields of social life.

However, the overall picture of female learners' performance in these examinations, is not very encouraging. Women participants have not been performing well. The majority of women sitting for the exams throughout the country, are concentrated at Level I and Level II as table 6 below reflects. Female performances at the higher levels of literacy training seem to be extremely poor. This meant that women learners in the programmes were not moving easily from low levels of literacy when in training for the higher levels. Such tendency reveals some inherent limitations within the existing adult education and literacy training systems in Tanzania in terms of its content, methods of learning, literacy examinations etc.

Table 6: Differential Performance in Literacy Tests

| Year | Participants - Tested | | | | Percentage Qualifying stages | | |
	Men	Women	Total	%	Men	Women	%
1975	1,738,461	2,066,062	3,804,463	77	42	33	37
1977	1,066,759	1,276,395	2,346,154	34	43	28	34
1981	1,230,832	1,875,574	3,107,506	51	35	21	27
1983	777,015	1,312,799	2,089,814	34	40	18	33
1986	75,,376	120,717	2,018,093	32	66	54	57

Source: Education in Tanzania with a Gender Perspective, 1991.

As emphasized in the Kenyan Literacy Workshop in 1989, factors that motivate female learners in performing better in literacy examinations is an area, which needs more research. Such investigations would be useful in bringing out constraints, related to motivational issues, needing discussions and action, and which would make examinations more meaningful for women's lives. Female participants might not be performing well, because the examinations are not relevant to their day to day needs. For example, female participants may be needing literacy training for specific purposes, not requiring certificates. In this context, women in a community might need to be given training in literacy skills, so as to become more active Christians or Moslems. However, learning goals of that kind would not require examination certificates.

Effects of literacy

In terms of literacy programmes' qualitative effects on the lives of adults, the Ministry of Education has pinpointed a number of positive attainments. The evaluation of the impact of functional literacy in 1983, and comments on national literacy testing in particular, mention the reduction of illiteracy rate for both men and women in the country. Further on, the noticed change of attitudes on introduced innovations - including reading habits and the creation of political awareness - are some of the main attainments of literacy and adult education development in Tanzania.

However, recent studies on the current situation of literacy initiatives in Tanzania show, that such attainments have benefitted only a limited number of women. For example, the literacy primers used through the campaign provided, in the official view, very useful knowledge and skills to adults - whose main job is in agriculture. Skills on how to clean the farms, terraces, ridges, better seeds, planting season, crop rotation, preservative of crops, where to sell cash crops etc. were cited as being, what the adults needed. In some places this knowledge was new and useful. However, for some adults this knowledge was not new. The agricultural extension officer, the politicians and the radio have been providing similar information. For the female peasants in particular, the primers did not include much new information and neither did they include all that women needed to know about their everyday concerns and interests.

For instance, most of the above agricultural knowledge provided by the primers was related to cash crops, all of which are owned by men. Although in the learning process women did get skills and knowledge on how to grow these crops, they were not the ultimate beneficiaries. In order for the knowledge provided to be useful and meaningful to female participants, the primers ought to have featured also knowledge on food crops, which women plant and control. In that way they had been able to offer relevant knowledge needed for them in their own actual lives. And if the primers were for encouraging women to become more productive and also competitive in cash crop production, then the skills offered in the learning process should have prepared them in understanding that socio-economic dynamics, in which women are working. The primers needed to be able to promote discussions on the availability of agricultural resources such as farming implements, credit and markets for both men and women in a community. For, it is an indisputable fact, that, at present state of economic circumstance, women also need to involve themselves in and control earnings from cash crop production and even export trade. Yet women as well as some men lack information on how to be able to do that.

Similarly, the knowledge provided by the literacy primers and the approach emphasized in the teaching methods, was a clear case of perpetua-

tion of the society's male dominant ideology - which denies women's access to decision-making, equal division and distribution of resources, control of their own sexuality etc. In particular, literacy training and adult education activities did very little to challenge this ideology and to encourage the growth of a new kind of female individuals with capacity to question their old ways of living and thinking. In the process of learning how to read and write female adults in Tanzania lacked reading materials that were directed towards raising women's consciousness to matters pertaining to legal rights, such as in asset holding, transfer of ownership, property rights, including household incomes and decision making. Such a knowledge base is necessary to enable women to build confidence and 'countervailing power', in confronting the well established exploitative forces militating against them.

Societies in East Africa, as well as in many other areas of Africa, have generally been patrilineal, with male relatives controlling labour and owning the means of production. Women are in the majority not active participants in the decision-making processes, which are involved in all aspects of community life. Much of the problem lies in the attitudes of both men and women as was noted by Marie Oomen.

> Men do not value the work that women perform, they do not value
> domestic activities as much as public and social activities, and thus do
> not take on responsibilities within the house-hold and family.

Moreover, women themselves are socially conditioned into believing that their work is not as important or as valuable as men's work. They often do not regard it as work at all, especially, when referring to the agricultural production. In discounting their own abilities, women perpetuate their role as second-class citizens.

Julius Nyerere as an advocate of adult education in Tanzania once spoke of education being a matter of both attitudes and skills, and of how adult education is "crucial in raising people's educational level for their meaningful and intelligent participation in their own development." He added that education must "make an individual recognise his/her worth and dignity as a human being" as well as create an awareness of his/her potentialities. These are important ideas, when they are related to women and adult education in societies constrained by socio-economic factors as described above.

Discussions on such ideas should have been predominantly reflected in the learning messages and illustrations, the content and in the teaching of the literacy training acquisition throughout the Region. In practice, however, the relevance of such ideas has remained in theory. Even in the Political Education primers, which had much reference on human equality and democratisation processes in Tanzania, provided limited knowledge on how

women could work towards transforming their powerless position in the society. The major interest of Political education teachings todate seem to focus on providing information and skills to adults on how to act as good citizens in an 'Ujamaa' society. The primers did not bring forward in a meaningful way knowledge of such a kind that could influence both men and women to question and understand the implications of their unequal access to political, economic and social opportunities. In this way, women attending literacy classes as well as those out in the communities, remained passive observers in the whole educational journey during all these years. No wonder, women's participation in literacy training started to dwindle as years went by. As table 7 confirms, the reality remains to be, that pro-grammes, in which the content do not relate to women's interests and needs, tend to have diminishing participation and attendance.

Table 7: Enrolment in literacy classes 1981-1987.

| | 1981 | (Percentage increase) | | | | | 1987 |
		1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	
Total	35266565						2172900
% increase	+5	-16	-23	-3	+14	-1	-12
Post-literacy	1386069	-14	-41	-19	+16	-14	1803718
% increase	+49						+33
Male	831307						911869
% increase	+64	-20	+34	-21	+30	-19	+45
Female	554762						919949
% increase	31	-0.5	+44	-17	+2	-9	+45

Source: Mbelle and Kilindo 1989.

Funding

Unlike literacy programmes in Kenya and Uganda, the funding of adult and literacy education programmes in Tanzania, has very much depended on donor's support. SIDA for example has been one of the biggest donors over years for these programmes. With its ailing economy plus World Bank pressure to invest more in the "productive" sectors, the government's allo-cation of funds for the Education Sector in general and adult education in particular, has been dwindling at a great pace. When independence was proclaimed the national budget for Education Ministry was 20.0%, while now it is only 5.0%, which is allocated in 1990. In the same way, the Adult Education Directorate was receiving 10% in 1970 and now (in 1990) only 3.5% of government's funding.

However, as donor's support was becoming less and less in forthcoming, the funding issue has brought a lot of implications on the development of literacy as well as other adult education skills in the country. This tendency in turn has had impact on the participation of adults, and women in particular, in literacy. For instance, general lack of financial resources to buy classroom equipment such as chairs, materials such as teaching aids and learners' writing pads etc. as well as to train and motivate personnel, has led to the result that many adults - both men and women - have dropped out of the classes. This has in turn brought a high rate of relapses into illiteracy.

The poor economic situation prevailing in the implementation of the programmes especially affects female learners. Some of the well-established institutions and agencies for literacy development in the Region are not capable of readdressing the gender issue due to lack of funding. In Tanzania for example, the Ministries of Education - as the main overseer of the literacy - have limited capacities in terms of operating its programmes with gender retraining. For example; the training institutions operating under the Ministry are facing funding limitation of operations and programme delivery throughout the country. For these institutions with a gender perspective to meet the new needs and challenges of post-literacy continuing education in the rural areas, there is a need of great rehabilitation and support for such institutes to function effectively. Other institutions such as the Institute of Adult Education and the Correspondence Institute which offer courses designed for new literates in both general and vocational subjects, need some new strategies and support. Otherwise they cannot be able to implement their programs for incorporating more female learners in an effective way.

These institutions and others have managed to establish well linked networks with Regional and International adult education and Literacy training agencies. The Adult Education Association in Tanzania (CHEWATA) does offer supportive environment to the institutions in the country. However, there is a need for the Association to find a strategy as to efficient ways to offer this support taking into account the existing funding limitations.

Past experience of women's participation: Success and failure

While significant progress has been made by the national governments in improving the literacy situation for women in the Region, there are still many contradictions arising from the implementation of literacy education for women in these countries. These contradictions mainly stem from the narrow perspective, which is given to the role of literacy education in development. But also from the fact, that the attempt to change women

through the education system, involves changing socio-economic structures of societies as well.

Our previous discussion demonstrates that female adults in the East Africa have been constrained from benefitting fully from their mass participation in the literacy training schemes. They have also been limited in becoming full participants, who have a role to play as providers of learning. It can be argued for instance, that the educational opportunities opened up for women since the 1950's in Tanzania, has failed to a great extent to utilize women's potentials so as to change their lives in the rural areas, where the majority of them depend on farming for their subsistence needs.

The majority of female adults in rural communities have still very limited access to new information and literacy knowledge, that they could utilize in their day to day activities. Despite their participation in literacy class, many women still do not know that their working conditions and entrepreneurial capabilities can be improved through attaining of literacy skills and other adult education knowledge. In some cases the few, who know, tend to be lacking support, that could sustain their training and the new innovations introduced in their communities in practice. It is an established fact, that financial requirement is a perceived need of most women in the rural areas. Therefore, support in training women in literacy and numeracy skills as inevitable components in financial management has to be a priority of the literacy programmes conducted in any of the three countries. Valid support to women with such training in financial management should also be extended to include positive steps towards securing women's access to institutional credit, grants and saving mobilisation to encourage a self-help spirit among female learners.

Also, lack of operational skills including maintenance and repair among female adults has often resulted into raiding of female agro-processing projects and control by men in many places. Many women's projects are eventually taken over by men, because of lack of know-how among women on repair of technical means. This signifies the need of appropriate technology training for women in order to allow them to function effectively in their communities. Appropriate training through adult education classes in this respect will therefore be the identification of sources of technologies like milling technologies from local institutions as Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO*) and in local beer-brewing with fuel-saving stoves and drums from CARMETEC*. There is certainly also a need of literacy initiatives from the organisers in knowing and confiding in village artisans, who will help women not only in designing technologies they themselves considered appropriate, but also avail some guidance in maintenance and repair.

Similarly, production and marketing skills taught in the literacy/adult education programmes ought to be directed more towards husbandry prac-tices, that are relevant and beneficial to female peasants. Proper husbandry practice such as early planting of food crops and cash crops that they own; proper weeding, timely harvesting, storage and processing of these crops, are much needed to be taught to women in order to increase their produc-tivity. Observations show that the output from female farming activities in Tanzania and elsewhere in the Region, need to be doubled or trebled in order to get reasonable surpluses to engage in productive business. Much of this of course would have to involve changes in governmental policies and initiatives such as the protection of land worked and livestock tended by women; and more fundamentally a revision of cultural and in civil laws of tenure systems, which exclude women from ownership of production resources, notably land and big animals. However, while such initiatives are being encouraged by transformative intellectuals at different levels, agricultural extension education for women through literacy training and adult education need to adopt new approaches and strategies so as to reach more women in the farming activities.

As earlier mentioned, there has been a lot of shortcomings in those methodologies, utilizing the "Functional Literacy Approaches". In these approaches, skills and knowledge provided concentrated on cultivating cash crops and male farmers, who could adopt innovations, because they possess the needed skills, time and support for such endeavours. Women, who always form the majority of farming population, were perceived as just "the farmers' wives". As a result of such methodologies, many women in the practical sessions of the literacy classes were bypassed by the theories and practical knowledge provided, because the knowledge was not targeted to them. For instance, in most cases, class meetings and demonstrations on improved farming practices in the functional literacy approach were held at times and places highly inconvenient and inaccessible for female attend-ance. It was taken for granted that information offered to male learners will trickle down to female learners - which is not always the case.

Equally important for women in the rural areas is the acquisition of mar-keting skills. It is a common phenomenon for women in Tanzania for example, to have agricultural surpluses, which they are not able to market. Apart from problems such as poor transport set-ups and long distances to markets; rural women in particular lack knowledge in processing and preservation techniques and facilities of perishable produce like fruits, vegetables, meat, eggs and milk. Coupled with this is the lack of business acumen among most female entrepreneurs.

Literacy education plus training, that encompasses knowledge on marketing skills such as processing, preservation, advertising and sales promotion would greatly enhance business acumen amongst women. Adult Education

Field Days organised in communities need to be strengthened in villages, districts and regional headquarters to display and market produce, farmed by women. Providing information on marketing such as sources of markets and produce or export prices, for instance, would help women determine, what kind of farming enterprises, which could be expected to be most worthwhile for income generation.

Determining women's training needs in literacy development is therefore important in understanding women's roles, situation and economic contribution in agriculture. However, a number of issues need to be considered after the training needs have been assessed or determined. One of the critical factors is the conducting of the training itself. As already underlined in this paper, location of the training, and those who offer it, influences the adoption of the training skills of women. For instance, institutions like Folk Development Colleges in Tanzania, have always been faced with problems of providing facilities for women and their infants. Experience shows that training of women in skills, which they have determined, is more successful, even where mobility is not a problem, when it is undertaken within the village. Village level training facilitates regular follow-up on training provided. This is best ensured, if the trainers live near or within the community. This is a strong argument in favour of identifying and training local women, who can then act as trainers of other women. It has been proved, that women respond better to technical training (more especially) when it is given by other women than by men in some areas. This means that more female literacy/adult teachers and other female extension agents would help alleviate the situation a great deal. However, the discrepancy in numbers of female/male extension agents, particularly in the agriculture field, is beyond the scope of this paper!!

Future strategies

The participation of women in the adult education and literacy activities discussed earlier, is an indication, that women are determined to make use of the available educational opportunities in the Region. However, in order for the women to achieve maximum benefits, there is a need for the education programmes to depart from the traditional methods of viewing women as passive recipients of what the programmes offer. This calls for means and willingness from literacy organisers as well as the communities in devising new ways and strategies, that would allow new educational definitions, perceptions and methods to grow. Such new definitions etc. would of course lead to learner-oriented literacy and adult educational programs in the Region. Based on the concept of *communication* rather than teaching, this process would allow for literacy to be used as a tool, that would enable women to handle information they deem useful for their own

interests, as well as for sharing the experiences with others in their communication.

It is worth noting however that, the above noted approach of encouraging female learners into becoming 'active' participants in any training activity they engage in, is not a new method in adult education. Some adult educators have called the method participatory dialogue approach. It is however, the implementation of the approach, that had remained problematic. More often than not, the approach had failed in practice.

Below is an attempt to reflect how such a dialogue approach can be effectively utilized, while involving the women in developing literacy training programmes on their own terms.

Identifying target population, needs and methods

Based on the realities of the countries in the Region, the target population for the literacy programs should continue to be women in the rural areas, and the poor women in the urban areas. The majority of women in a country like Tanzania still live in the rural areas. As has previously been mentioned, women in the rural areas need a lot of support at different levels to income generating jobs commensurate with their new needs and perceptions. Literacy is necessary for providing information on how this is to be achieved.

However, in order to reach rural women more effectively, women would have to be targeted in groups or through NGO based activities. As organization of mass literacy campaigns in Tanzania has shown, unless there are deliberate efforts directed at supporting educational programmes organised this way, the mass literacy campaign of the 1970's have missed developing women's learning opportunities in an integrative way.

Strategically, when women meet in smaller, self-initiated groups, their activities are much more sustainable. In such groups, women are most of the time already committed to come together and do something related to their needs. Motivating such a group thus becomes easier and strategically provides an entry point to coordinated literacy development, that can take into account women's aspirations and needs.

Groups of women in a community could engage in meaningful learning processes, when they relate their literacy learning needs to the group's aspirations and interests. The literacy organisers, however, need to devote enough time to try to find out, what kind of problems they want to solve, when they come together in the first place, so as to be able to encourage the women and offer suitable support to them. With the understanding of the

problems, the facilitators together with the women would look for ways of solving the problems and the prospects created. The literacy learning materials, the methodology and support systems would thus serve the purpose of facilitating the solution of the identified problems. In this way, the success of the literacy programmes will be measured by how much the learners have been able to achieve in relation to their stated objectives rather than by a written test at the end of the literacy programmes.

The author has had considerable experience in using the dialogue approach in educational projects and in particular in the post-literacy preparation of female adults.

Working with the Institute of Adult Education in Tanzania for some years, the author has been involved in projects with the aim of reaching women in groups or in villages in an interactive learning process. Together a group of adult educators have left their working places in the cities and gone out to the villages in a frequent manner. In the cause of interacting with women in groups, we have given them opportunities of identifying constraints around themselves, and how they think such constraints could be removed by them and others in the communities. In such discussions the role of the facilitator becomes that of helping women to locate required resources to fulfil their needs rather than directly teaching them.

In this way, the project meets women's strategic needs by developing women's capabilities to analyze, make decisions, plan, organize and manage, and at the same time, promotes training activities, which improve women's educational level. The identified project is usually accompanied by supplied reading material, based on women's own experiences related to project activities. Thus, the books are meant to reinforce the project process as well as to equip the women with skills on how to organize themselves in groups, establish links with systems and agencies, which deal with women and provide technical skills - specifically basic accounting procedures, management etc., as the need arises.

However, it must be noted that the participatory approach has some limitations, that must be recognized. Experience has shown that women's development of collective capacity in articulating and analyzing needs can sometimes be constrained, if women are not well equipped with the skills to do so. The training component is important for raising women's consciousness and that of the community at large. There are still prevailing practices in the communities, which may hinder women's increasing prominence in the learning process. For example, women particularly in the rural areas are still faced with problems of lack of time, due to the common sexual division of labour, which leaves more work to women than men. In these places, there is still lack of essential services and facilities such as water, day care centres and medical facilities. Also societal attitudes that marginalize

women's involvement in modernisation and change. These are issues to which the development approach has to address itself.

it is important, that the "women initiatives approach" at the grassroots level has to be linked with other efforts at the National level. For example, the initiatives taken by the Tanzanian women in revising the teaching material for both men and women, and also in helping to train the trainers of adult educators should continue. This would help injecting some gender discussions among people not only in the classes but in the community at large through various means. This process can play a key role in facilitating the literacy programs, developed specifically for women at the community level.

For the national programmes to play its role in the communities, there is a need for adult education policies at national levels to come out more clearly on issues relating to gender. Women's organizations and intellectuals in each country could take a lead in strategizing, how the educational policies could be made more gender focused - so that they could offer gender sensitive literacy programmes. With a clear policy and strategies, mobilization of available resources in terms of community and national organization for the improvement of literacy for women in the countries is very possible. If the resources for facilitating women's training in literacy already are there, it is a matter of injecting some new strategies, which are gender conscious. This means that the available resources should become more oriented towards promoting literacy, that would benefit both men and women in societies.

Conclusion

In countries like Tanzania and Kenya, the political will of educating adults has already been shown since the 1970's. However, the supportive environment for providing female adults with the 'right' education and empowering them through the process, has not yet come out clearly. The Regional Governments should thus use the experiences and good will of donors, women's organizations, mass media, training institutions, to come up with strategies, that will commit its machineries to provide gender oriented programmes. This will mean encouraging supportive changes in adult education and literacy curriculum, content and teaching methods,that will address women's needs in their local social cultural context.

This is more important now than ever before; because with the poor economic situation for both the national governments and the families, new strategies of motivating both men and women to engagement in literacy activities is imperative. Female and also male adults, who were joining the

training with enthusiasm in the initial years of the programme (in Tanzania specifically) are now dropping out of the classes in large numbers.

The motivations, that kept the women coming to the classes, is crumbling down. The difficult economic conditions of the country is not only affecting literacy in terms of lacking resources and personnel to monitor the classes, but it has also affected people's perception about literacy, education and development. Some women in Tanzania are starting to regard literacy as not being able to cope with their daily basic problems like the need for food, clothing and shelter. Motivating the same women to get into classes becomes a serious issue. In this context it becomes difficult to talk about maintaining the literacy environment among women through improving their reading habits etc., while the rising prices of newspapers is keeping many new literates away. This also means that not many adults will be able to buy books or newspapers, unless these reading materials are talking issues, which they deem very necessary in their lives.

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Adult literacy rates by per cent of male/female

Ranked by region from lowest to highest GNP/Capital ($US 1986)

☐ Male 1970   ⬚ Female 1970   ■ Male 1985   ▨ Female 1985

Anglophone Africa

| | Tanzania ($250) | Zambi ($300) | Kenya ($300) | Ghana ($390) | Zimbabwe ($620) | Egypt ($760) |
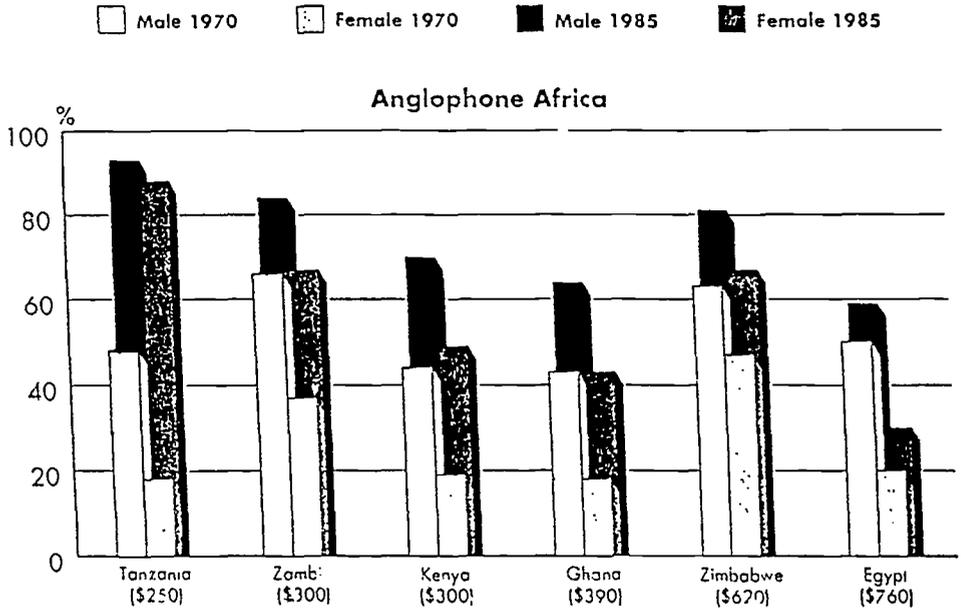
Source: CIDA Annual Report, 1989-90
World Development Report 1990, World Bank
Human Development Report 1990, UNDP

1989 literacy results null and void

THE Ministry of Education and Culture has decried the tendency of presenting incorrect and unrealistic figures, and has cancelled the 1989 literacy evaluation results.

Opening a week-long meeting of Regional Education Officers (REOs) at the Lutheran Uhuru Hostel in Moshi on Tuesday, the Minister for Education and Culture, Ndugu Charles Kabeho, said that after a thorough study of evaluation from 12 Mainland regions, the Ministry cancelled the results for 1989.

He named the regions as Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Dodoma, Tabora, Kagera, Mara, Tanga, Kilimanjaro, Mtwara, Shinyanga, Mwanza and Rukwa.

Giving incorrect information was one of the major problems facing adult education, he told the meeting whose theme is "Strengthening Primary and Adult Education". He said that figures on the number of illiterate people, attendance and even evaluation were frequently incorrect and lacked reality.

He directed the regional education officers to put up a new push to the implementation of the adult education campaign to enhance Tanzania's record among African countries and the world regarding adult education, *Shihata* reported.

He said previously, literacy campaigns were conducted in such a way that Tanzania scored praises from all over the world. "But the situation presently is unsatisfactory due to a number of reasons, including district education officers not following up class attendance," he stressed.

He also said that adult education teachers were not being paid their honorarium. He called on REOs to ensure that they were paid as per directives.

Ndugu Kabeho also said that adult education equipment were being stolen or being shared among officials instead of being used in strengthening adult education.

Meanwhile, Ndugu Kabeho has directed that REOs should make sure that teachers are being paid promptly and must follow up teachers' salaries with District Executive Directors (DED) and ensure that the salaries reached the teachers.

Warning over reports that some REOs colluded with DED in paying non-existing teachers, Ndugu Kabeho said that they should make sure that the lists submitted to the Ministry's Headquarters were authentic. He told them the lists should contain Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) numbers of all teachers.

He directed that regional TSC secretaries should prepare up-to-date lists of all teachers by the end of October to rectify the situation.

(Daily News, October 1990, Dar-es-Salaam)

Levels of Achievement in Tanzania

The levels of achievement of the adult learners are classified into levels I, II, III, IV.

Level I: A participant qualifies for this level, if he has attended 2/3 of the sessisons in any year of literacy activities.

Level II: A person who qualifies for level I also passed one or both of the following sub-levels.

Sub-Level I: A person who can recognise words or symbols, write some letters or syllables, write numbers or arithmetical signs, including metal calculations.

Sub-Level II: A person must be able to read short, simple, meaningful sentences, be able to write short sentences and to add or subtract one figure numbers.

Level III: A person who qualifies for level II and also has successfully passed one or both of the following sub-levels.

Sub-Level (i): Must be able to read short, simple meaningful sentences, be able to write a simple short sentence and to add and subtract two figure numbers.

Sub-Level (ii): Must have full mastery of letter and digit symbols, be able to encode and decode written messages and fluently read a simple text with understanding. He should also be able to write a simple short message or passage, add and subtract three figure numbers, multiply two figure numbers and divide by one figure.

Level IV: Must be able to continuously apply the acquired literacy skills, must be able to read and write messages, read newspapers and "do it yourself" books/booklets on better living, food, better ways of farming and also able to keep simple accounts in income and expenditure.

TERESA VELOSO
Maputo, Mozambique

Chapter 9

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

I.   Regional overview

The literacy sit_ation in the region

At Independence in 1975, Mozambique inherited a dramatically under-developed education system: 93 per cent of the whole population was illiterate.

The first five years of iependence were moments of big hopes, explosion in school population and mass literacy campaigns. In 1980 the illiteracy rate was brought wn to 73 per cent.

Since 1981 the country is confronting a serious threat to development efforts, la _ely due to the war of destabilization, in the context of the conflict situation in southern Africa. The situation of women cannot be understood without taking this reality into account, and the enormous and terrible social and economic problems, which it causes over both the short and longer term.

In 1989 Mozambique was the country with the highest under-five mortality rate in the world. For every 1,000 children born alive 297 died before the age of five.

Education is one of the sectors worst hit by the war. Schools and teaching materials have been systematically destroyed, teachers and pupils murdered. The result is that today around 45 per cent of the primary school network is paralyzed or destroyed. The net enrolment rate at First Primary Level is stabilized around 48 per cent over recent years, with 44 per cent of girls out of the total enrolment. The overall illiteracy rate for adults is presently estimated to be around 62%.

Mozambique is very young in demographic terms, and getting younger. The median age is currently 17.4 years compared with 18.5 years in 1960. In 1988 the school age population (7 - 13 years) represented 18.4 per cent

of the total resident population of the country, or some 2,493,400 children. By 1995 this will have risen by over 32 per cent to a total of 3,302,400.

With a total population of about 15 million, more than half of school age Mozambican children not going to school, most of them young girls, female illiteracy is a long term problem in this country.

Past and present experiences - failures and successes

Unserved or underserved pockets of female illiteracy

Illiteracy in Mozambique is considerably higher among women than among men. In 1980, while for men the illiteracy rate had already come down to 59 per cent, female's rate still was 85 per cent.

The data collected in 1980 show, that at that time younger women on an average were already more literate than women in higher age groups.

ILLITERACY RATES AMONG WOMEN AND MEN - 1980
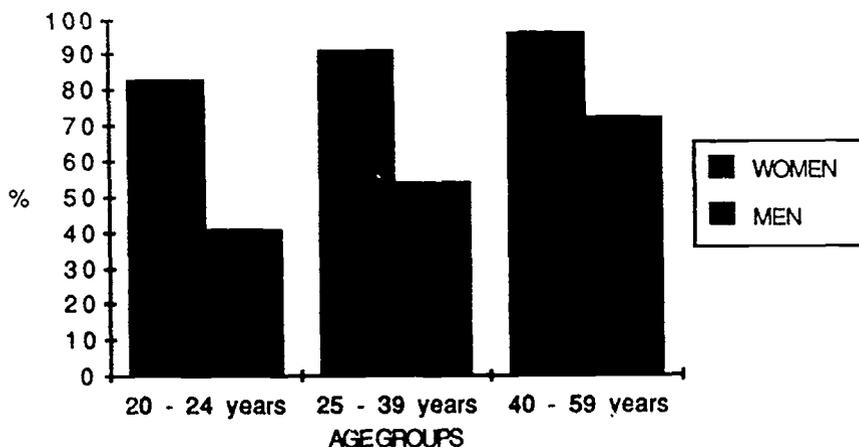
Source: General Population Census Report, 1983

More recent age group data are not available, but the overall literacy figures suggest a slow continued improvement.

In 1990, male and female illiteracy rates were 45 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. So, even if there is a global improvement, female illiteracy is still much higher than amongst men, and in fact the gap is actually widening.

EVOLUTION OF MALE/FEMALE LITERACY RATES
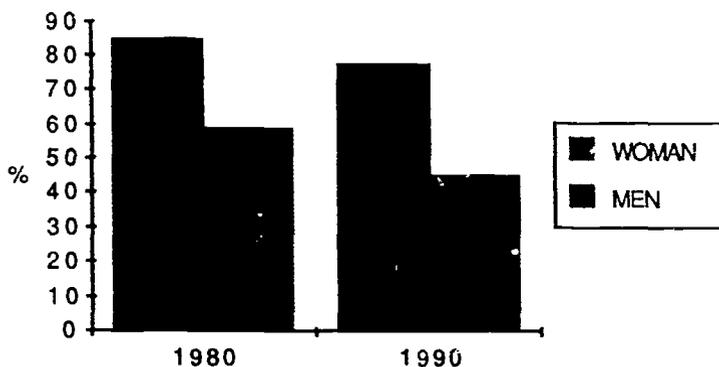
Sources: National Planning Directorate and Planning Department of the
Ministry of Education

Urban women are less illiterate than rural women. For example, in 1980,
89 per cent of women were illiterate in the rural areas against 57 per cent in
urban areas.

Illiteracy among women also declines from the north to the south of the
country, with the lowest rate being 43 per cent in Maputo City, situated at
the extreme south of the country.

Participation of women in literacy courses

In fact the literacy work that has been done in Mozambique in the last 16
years have predominantly benefitted men. But that doesn't mean, that
women were not interested in literacy.

During the first years of Independence thousands of women joined the
literacy classes, in bigger numbers than men. In 1978 the first literacy
campaign was launched and organized by the Ministry of Education, and in
August 1980, at the moment of the Population General Census, 54 per cent
of the participants in adult literacy classes were women: more than
300,000! The vast majority of those were rural women (more than
270,000).

However, female drop-out rate was much higher than that for men. And for
those who attended the whole year and were present at the final
examinations, women failed more than men. In 1980, only 39 per cent of
those, who passed the literacy test, were women (about 40,000).

The following years this decrease in female participation became a tendency: in 1982, last year of the literacy campaigns, only 75,000 women joined the literacy classes and only 22 per cent of those who passed the literacy test were women (about 10,000).

Very clearly the literacy campaigns organized during the early 80's, were not efficient for women. The present programs are a continuation of the kind of literacy programs, that existed ten years ago, with the enormous added constraints put on the whole population by the war.

In urban areas there is a small number of women who have a salaried work, either in industry, commerce or services. As since the early 80's literacy courses were organized predominantly at work places, female workers were included in literacy classes together with their male colleagues. More frequent absences than men, due to pregnancy, child birth and child care, contributed to their higher drop-out rates.

However, most urban woman don't have a salaried work. Very few stay at home, occupied with domestic care or some profit activity (preparing and selling food, sewing, knitting, etc). Many are dwelling very recently in the towns, fleeing the war in the countryside, and because of the economic situation, low salaries of their husbands and unemployment, many urban women have some agricultural activity, sometimes travelling many kilometres daily to go to the available places to grow vegetables and other crops (sweet popatoes, rice around Beira Town, corn, peanuts, etc). Others sell small quantities of agricultural or industrial products, at their doorsteps or in street markets, that have crawled and spread out in all Mozambican towns during the last five years.

Time for participating in literacy courses is very scarce. Even if they know that they will gain long term benefits by participation, the struggle for survival is the priority.

So, at present, it is easier to motivate women to participate in literacy courses, if the adult education center is an integrated one, with other training facilities more immediately profitable; cutting clothing and sewing, small animal husbandry, etc. In Beira, the second town of the country, there are several of these integrated centres, organized especially for women by the dynamic Town Directorate for Education. Female participation here is very high, with very low drop-out rates. They are located in the suburban area, women live nearby, and the timetable is more appropriate for them (normally after lunch time).

This is a very new experience in Mozambique, since most literacy centres were of two kinds until very recently: work place literacy centres and night school centres, normally functioning at a primary school. Very few villages

now have adult literacy centers, due to the instability and the emergency situation in the country.

But Beira has also experience of literacy centers with focus only on literacy, organized in the dwelling sub-urban areas, with adult literacy educators that had worked in work place centers with very few participants. They were transferred to newly crea..:d literacy centers, with the support of local town authorities, and they were stimulated with bicycles. One of these centers, at Munhava-Matope Bairro, enrolled in March this year (1991) 70 women and until now there are few drop outs. They formed a cultural group (dances and songs), painted the literacy center collectively, and it seems that these activities contributed to the building of the feeling that "our center is important, to become literate is important".

One question that affects the functioning of the literacy centers is the motivation of the educators themselves. The salaries are very low, so bicycles, other material and moral support is very important. Many literacy educators in the country are not supported by educational authorities, as adult education is loosing its political priority and government support in the present Structural Adjustment situation.

Literacy classes at Moamba (a rural District), 1983, by Jose Cabral, CFF.

We must consider also the calendar, or school year. Most literacy centers work along with the children's school year. This does not take into account the agricultural calendar that affect most women, even in urban areas.

So, the location of the literacy center, the timetable and the literacy activities calendar, are organizational factors that can favour or constraint female participation in literacy.

Motivational factors

What were the motivations for female participation in literacy learning ten years ago?

Studies were not made scientifically on this subject. From my experience I have the opinion that women in Mozambique in general are willing to become literate. To be literate is seen as an increase in the social status of the person. It is a very important aspect for the emancipation and independence of women, and is perceived like that equally by men and women. This is also a reason, why illiterate men and even some literate men normally don't agree with the participation of their wifes in literacy classes. They don't want to loose their predominance in the family.

At an inquiry made this year around Beira town in the center of the country, by the Institute where I work, to 30 illiterate women, all said they wanted to become literate (17 suburban and 13 rural). The reasons pointed out were the following:

- to write and read letters from family members ;
- to write to somebody to ask for something I need;
- to be informed of the news, read newspapers, notices;
- to know better and not forget my own language.

These mentioned motives bring forward the problem of language of literacy instruction. For many years this question has not been considered. Most illiterate persons are rural women, who don't speak the official language: Portuguese. They speak one or more Mozambican bantu language (there are at least 20 different languages in the country).

And all literacy programs since Independence until now have been using the official Portuguese language.

In my opinion this is a very important factor for the explanation of the failures in learning how to read and write, that especially affects rural women. Many urban women have some contact with the Portuguese language. And many rural men, mainly from the central and southern parts of the country, have done migrant labour inside the country (towns and big farms or enterprises) or in the neighbouring countries (South African

mines, Zimbabwe's plantations, etc). They have travelled to other parts of the country, learned other bantu languages, some Portuguese, and even some English. Most of them know a little bit of Portuguese, enough to make it possible for them to participate and make some progress in literacy courses in the official language.

That is not the case with most rural women, even if they also are motivated to learn Portuguese. In fact 16 out of the 17 suburban women who were inquired in Beira wanted to learn Portuguese, as well as 9 of the 13 rural women. Those five women who didn't want to learn that language, said they thought they were too old to have some benefit from that effort ("I passed the age to learn Portuguese; my time has passed; I'm old; I won't need it any more"). The reasons for their interest in learning the official language were:

- to communicate with other people who don't speak my language;
- to be able to read the newspaper and be informed of what is going on;
- to be able to communicate when I want to catch a bus;
- to communicate better with my husband, who comes from another region and doesn't speak my language."

So, literacy in a local language and learning Portuguese as a second step in a bilingual education program should be more adapted to rural women's needs.

Local employment needs of those with literacy handicaps

Illiteracy in Mozambique is a problem affecting not only the employed persons. In fact, very few mozambicans are employed, and employed women are a small minority.

Informal economy in rural and urban areas is occupying the majority, and literacy is felt as a need by many.

During the last 15 years the literacy programs at the work place have been very useful for many workers. Literacy (in Portuguese language) is the beginning of an adult education subsystem, since 1983 part of the National Education System, which offers the possibility to pursue primary level and secondary level studies, and even the possibility to have access to University.

There is no available data on this, but there is no doubt, that most illiterate workers at the time of Independence are literate now, and many have attained secondary level education and professional training. Many enterprises erradicated illiteracy and closed their literacy centers, and some 50 opened secondary level night or shift schools for their workers, during the 80's.

With the number of illiterate workers reduced to an overall of about 10% in most work places, and in the Structural Adjustment context, there is much less support from the part of enterprise management to carry on literacy and primary level education. Secondary level and continuing professional adult education is still supported, as the benefits from that training are more immediate and visible.

Since the beginning of Structural Adjustment measures in 1987 many enterprises also reduced the number of their workers, and among those who lost their jobs the majority were illiterate, many of them women. However, illiterate workers do the kind of work and are payed salaries, that those with some academic and professional qualifications don't accept. The result is that some enterprises fired some literate but unqualified workers and are accepting new illiterate workers.

One of the results of the school population explosion during the first years of Independence is that there are more and more young people with primary and even secondary education without employment.

In a country like mine, I don't think we can expect to find employment for all school leavers, let alone all literate persons, in the next 50 years. Development can only be achieved with a very important participation of the non-formal sector - family business. There, also, literacy may be felt as a need.

Materials available - materials needed

The literacy materials in the Portuguese language are available in enough quantities, but in extremely poor variety. For the 1978-82 literacy campaigns carried through was produced a literacy primer (in Portuguese) and four subject books for the primary education level (Portuguese, Mathematics, Geography and Sanitary Education).

Since 1983 a new program is implemented, with literacy in Portuguese language programmed for two school years, and a third year to complete primary education level (equivalent to five years schooling). There are in total four books to teach literacy and Portuguese, (two of them are primers), four books to teach mathematics and 1 book to teach science.

The books were designed to serve the whole population, rural and urban, men and women, from the seaside and interior, to be used in the whole country as a means to promote national unity.

Since 1983 the situation in the country has changed enormously, but the books are the same. They are not motivating, according to the opinion of

many learners (for example, women in Maputo green belt asked for a primer more adapted to their concrete situation).

There exists some material produced by rural extension services, the rural water program, health education projects, but they are very scarce and not graded for new readers, mainly directed to development agents.

Even worse, educators at the central and local levels feel incapable of producing new primers, the previous ones having been mostly produced by expatriate expertise, and there is no practise of writing stories and other texts for adult education at the central or local level.

Newspapers are very scarce, as well as magazines, and the few that exist have a very small distribution, mainly due to economic problems - lack of funds to import paper, etc.

Literature in Mozambican languages is very rare, even if we can note a new development. What exists with a more wide distribution is the Bible and religious publications, with different orthographies.

The National Institute for the Development of Education is engaged in an experimental bilingual women's education project to develop and test literacy primers and post-literacy materials in three different Mozambican languages, and also materials to teach Portuguese as a second language, but it is still at an initial stage.

However, I can say that through this project there are good perspectives to develop the habit of writing and publishing by literacy educators and by the learners themselves, using local small duplicating machines.

The machines, the materials and the knowledge of how to use and maintain them is missing.

Agencies and organizations with programs in operation in the region

As was said before, many literacy centers were organized by work places. The materials, the training of literacy educators and the examinations were the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, through its provincial bodies. The organization, selection and payment of literacy educators, etc., were the responsibility of the work place management.

Some economic sectors or big enterprises organized adult education co-ordination bodies, and some still function until present times. It is the case as regards Ports and Mozambican Railways, the biggest employer in the country. They run education courses for workers from literacy until secondary and professional training. Also the Ministry of Public Works

coordinates and supports adult education activities in the building enterprises, in the whole country. The sugar enterprises, with the agricultural sector and the sugar mills, also organized adult education for its workers, with a special calendar coordinated with the sugar milling campaign calendar. The Ministry of Justice has also an interesting program for education in prisons.

Literacy in Maputo and Beira green belt were also organized, involving thousands of women working in agricultural cooperatives (Maputo) or individual plots (Beira). The first program was the responsibility of Maputo Cooperatives Union, and the second of a UNICEF sponsored integrated project based at Beira agriculture authority entitled "Women In Beira Green Belt". They attained some success in 1985-87, but now both programs are running with some difficulties, due in my opinion to organizational problems and, at least in Maputo, to difficulties in the learning process, as the women don't speak enough Portuguese. In Nampula, the third town of the country, there exists also a development project supporting the cooperatives around the town, agricultural and others (pottery, sewing, etc). Many women are participating, and this program is supported by COCAMO, a consortium of Canadian NGO organizations.

Centers in dwelling areas, in towns and villages, were organized by local administrative structures, with the support of educational authorities. In towns they were and are still predominantly night courses, attended by men and women.

Since the last two years, some churches in Maputo began to be active again in organizing literacy activities for its community members. The system is the same for enterprises: locally organized centers, with the materials, training and examinations being the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

Some economic sectors, as well as some regions of the country, have a direct support from foreign organizations, some of them NGOs. The Ministry of Public Works adult education coordination group has the support of a Danish voluntary organization. Swedish ARO is present at Beira Town Directorate of Education, and helping very much with the integrated literacy centers for women. Both have engaged one person to work jointly with the Mozambican team, and this seems very helpful. In Cabo Delgado, a northern province, British OXFAM helped the literacy activities in rural areas during the years 1987-90, providing logistic support for training of literacy educators, money to buy educational material, etc.

All these literacy programs take place in the Portuguese language.

Since last year the Ministry of Education, through its National Institute for the Development of Education, with the financial support of UNICEF, is engaged in an experimental bilingual education program for rural women, with literacy materials being developed and tested in 4 Mozambican languages and Portuguese being taught as a second language at the post literacy phase.

Mozambique has about 20 bantu languages, but it is estimated that more than 80% of the population may speak 8 of these languages. There are many people who speak more than one Mozambican language, and some of them play a vernacular role for a certain region.

The teaching of Portuguese is included because it is the only possibility, for the moment, for further studies, and also because women feel the need to use it to communicate in a wider area. It is the official language, the only language spoken all over the country, and also a language that can give access to modernity and international life.

Governmental, community and family attitudes, political will

The Government presently doesn't have the financial possibility to support big adult education programs. With only 45 per cent of school age population in school, priority is not adult education. Also, the political will that existed 16 years ago has changed completely. However, the government for the moment is still paying salaries for some thousands of adult educators in the whole country. They have a professional career as have the primary school teachers, and the government is still running the provincial and the national adult educators training centers.

The failures of literacy campaigns, and of the literacy classes after 1983, with a big drop-out and high failure rates, provokes a natural disinterest and demotivation both from the part of government and from the people.

In my opinion, many people are interested in becoming literate, but they don't believe they will succeed with the present program.

As pointed out before, some men are not interested in seeing their wifes going to classes, but if that literacy is linked with an improvement in economic or survival capacity, and they can see concrete results for the family, they finally agree.

Religious organizations are very much interested in literacy in mother languages, because they use the reading of the Bible in Mozambican languages. Many of them are engaged in development work and use the Mozambican languages in their training as well as in other activities.

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This year (1991) is seeing the birth of the first Mozambican non govern-
mental and voluntary development organizations. Three local adult and
community education associations have been formed, and given the present
political and economic situation in the country, there is a great deal to be
done.

II. Specific ways in which organizations, agencies, educational institutions, researchers, teachers, etc. can help

Identifying the target population: examples

In my opinion we, adult educators, teachers, researchers, organizations,
agencies, institutions, etc., should not try to create new motivation for
literacy, but rather to identify, where this motivation already exists.
Further on, to find out why people did not have access to successful literacy
programs, in which language they want to learn, for what reasons, with
which calendar, etc.

Normally people who are changing their patterns of life, economically,
socially, culturally, feel the need to learn.

The lives of urban women are changing. They are struggling daily for
survival. They see the advantages of becoming literate. But they don't have
much time to loose, so literacy must be efficient.

They must feel, from the beginning, that they are not loosing time. They
must feel they are really learning something they can use.

Also rural women's lives are changing. The war disrupted the traditional
way of life, economically and socially. There are profound collective and
individual traumas that must be healed. Life can never be as before.
Husbands, wives and sons were murdered before one's eyes; husbands, sons
and cousins became bandits. Moral values are not respected, but because
they need to make sense out of their lives, they return to religion and
traditional beliefs and practices.

The rural population must learn how to defend their surviving children
from diarrhoea and malnutrition, from malaria and tuberculosis. Widows
must learn, how to survive and bring up their children on their own.

In this dramatically changing situation there is space for learning. But the
learning must be built on the recognition of what you are, of where you
come from, so it helps to rebuild your own person. That is why I think that
for the rural population, mainly living or coming from an emergency situa-

tion, literacy should be in their native language. And only when people ask for it.

From experiences we have. in Mozambique, even people living in an emergency situation will ask for it, if they are involved in a developmental process.

For example, during the years 1989-90 a small pilot education project supported by UNESCO took place in a village for displaced population near Dondo (60 km from Beira). Every week children died of diarrhea associated with malnutrition. There was no question of teaching literacy. The priorities were for sanitary education, agriculture, small industry co-operatives, improvement of the provisional buildings of the school, sanitary post and houses, and improvement of water supply. After one year the population asked for literacy classes. That had not been foreseen in the project plans. I believe people understood that they could improve their own lives, and they wanted to be more able to do so.

The first target population should be among those, who are already motivated to learn and were not able to do so. Don't organize literacy courses, if people don't want it. They have surely other more urgent needs.

Needs assessment. Methods, examples

To assess the needs you may discuss the matter with the interested persons or/and with community leaders. Coming from outside, if you ask rural people what they need, they will probably say they need clothes, food, kitchen ware, etc. If you say you are talking of other needs,like education, what they need to learn, they may loose their patience and ask: "If you can't give us what we asked, tell us what you can give so that we don't loose more time."

You must be prepared for that, you must have a proposition. It means that before organizing a meeting you must discuss with individuals who are members or know the community well.

Others may say: "Many have come and asked questions of that kind. We told them our needs in a report and sent it to Maputo. So you go to Maputo and see, what we said in the document".

If they ask for a football, when they are having enormous survival problems, give them a football. Not only may they organize football games with it, they are perhaps testing you. They want to know, if you are serious enough, reliable enough, for them to have confidence in you, and for them to tell you the rest.

If they feel sanitary education, agricultural education as a priority, organize it, even if they are illiterate. They may learn how to produce and use improved stoves, improved latrines, how to care for the water wells, even being illiterate. They may ask for literacy later on.

A well that needs improvement, Nampula town, 1988, by Lotte Aersoe, CFF

Practical options for assistance or pedagogical support

From the Beira experience of ARO cooperation, I think the direct support to provincial or even district educational authorities may be very helpful, especially if there is somebody from the donor organization working on the ground with the Mozambicans, in a two- or three-year contract, as an assistant. This may help in needs assessment, projects identification and design, in accordance with local needs and at the same time with donor needs. This kind of cooperation may also help in improving management procedures and abilities.

Another useful assistance is support to local projects organized by adult associations. There are now three adult associations, at Nampula, Beira and Maputo. I think that within one year, there will be more, also in other provinces (Mozambique has 10 provinces).

The Nampula association is receiving support from COCAMO. The Beira one is receiving some support from Dutch HIVOS, but the Maputo one is still looking for funding partners.

They are begir .ing to develop projects such as creating a training resource center for adult educators, developing literacy primers and materials in Mozambican languages, supporting women's cultural groups, supporting community primary schooling for out of school children, etc.

The association education movement in Mozambique is also receiving some support from AALAE (African Association for Literacy and Adult Education).

I am not in favour of the creation of projects with its own management organization. Normally they have expatriate project coordinators, locally contracted administrators or technical personnel. But when the project calendar arrives to an end - and all projects are designed in a 3 or maximum 5 years schedule - all this structure is dismantled. In general it does not help to build up some local permanent capacity.

As I said before, expatriates or foreign technical assistance may be very helpful, but much more as assistants than as coordinators and executors.

I think real cooperation has much more a solidarity approach than a helping approach. It may be much more valuable and have more long term effects, when foreign assistance does not execute the activities that should be done by the Mozambicans, but rather assist them doing, what they want to do. Even if the programs take much more time.

Providing related assistance: communication, transportation, employment, etc.

The transport and communication areas are confronted with great difficulties. There are no effective collective town transport systems, so many private vans transport town residents, and even make some trips to small interior towns. Transportation of this kind is very expensive, however.

Bicycles and motorbicycles are very useful for literacy educators and supervisors, not only for transportation but also as a complement to low salaries.

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Other useful complements are: bags to help the adult educators carry the educational material, suitcases, shoes and clothes for them once or twice a year.

The government is not very favourable to accept extra salary and monetary rewards. So materials of these kinds are very helpful to assure the motivation of the literacy educators.

However, voluntary association projects have no such restrictions in the distribution of a monetary salary complement. And it is in fact one reason, why they are creating such an interest in so many adult educators: to earn a salary complement, without getting out of an adult education profession.

Paper, duplicating machines, slates, stencils, ink and other consumables, as well as manual/portable type-writers, are always useful.

Village of displaced people at Dondo, Sofala Province, 1989, by Lotte Aersoe, CFF.

A bigger project, with several integrated education centers (literacy, sewing, animal husbandry) may need a car.

If a project develops new literacy and reading materials, it may need an adequate computer. Materials may be photocopied for small testing purposes, or printed with electronic stencils for broader use. There exist some local printing facilities in country towns, that may be used for Mozambican language materials, since these languages are very locally distributed and it would be more rational to print them near that region, where they will be used.

Which kind of literacy programs

In the present situation of Mozambique it is not possible to carry on mass literacy campaigns, not even a series of target focused campaigns. We need many different small programs, "light house" projects, adapted to the needs of a particular population group, and if they prove successful, they may be widened.

I don't think donor or technical assistance organizations should develop, on their own initiative, new programs, for the reasons already mentioned. If they are interested in expressing their solidarity in the field of literacy, they should assist the new literacy programs that are already being developed in Mozambique, both by government institutions (as INDE's bilingual education project, Beira's integrated literacy centers), and by voluntary associations. These programs need assistance, for the expanding, if they prove adapted and useful, or just for the continuation in time.

In my opinion you should think of planning an extension, only if the program proves successful, that is, if people ask for it.

Conclusions - what to do and what not to do

I would begin with the negatives: don't try to do literacy alone, except if people ask for it. Literacy is a part of development, at least in countries like Mozambique.

How many people in Mozambique and in the world have become literate in mass literacy campaigns and gained nothing from that effort, not being able to use what they have learned, and relapsed into illiteracy again?

Development activities for the improvement of agriculture, sanitary education, cooperative organization and management, are linked with literacy.

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Either it uses literacy skills, contributing to post literacy practice for those already literate, or it creates motivation for literacy.

And don't treat these other activities as less important than literacy, just as a bait to attract people to literacy classes.

On the other hand, don't try to create motivation for literacy, if the people with whom you are willing to work are not motivated. There are many other people, who are willing to become literate. They may already live in a context, where literacy could be very useful for them, but have not had any opportunity to join a course until now.

You should assist in their identification, in the study of their needs, in developing a well adapted literacy program, and in taking into account language, location of literacy classes, calendar, tirⁿtable, etc.

Women literacy is a long term challenge. But much can be done to make it a little bit more effective and helpful even on a short term basis.

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Appendix A

Mozambique Linguistic Map

Legend:
- Kiswahili
- Kimwani
- Shimakonde
- Ciyao
- Emakhuwa
- Ekoti
- Elomwe
- Echuwabo
- Cinyanja
- Cisenga
- Cinyungwe
- Cisena
- Cishona
- Xitswa
- Xitsonga (Xichangana)
- Gitonga
- Cicopi
- Xironga
- Swazi
- Zulu
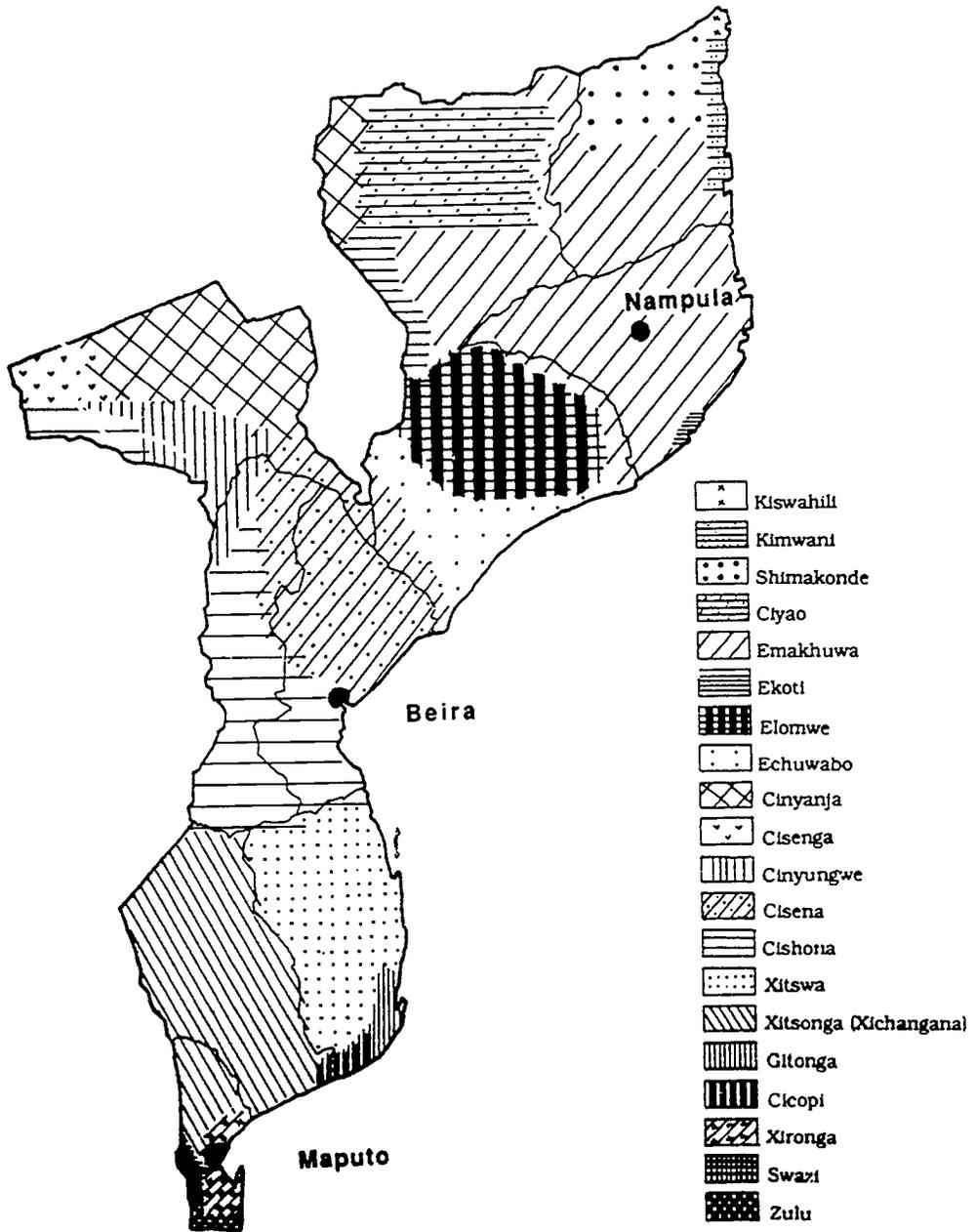
Source: NELIMO (Mozambican Languages Study Center), 1989

Training centres available and needed in the country for the training of literacy and adult educators

1. The National Training Center for Adult Educators is located in the center of the country, in Beira. This center also trains adult educators and literacy trainers, working at provincial levels to train adult educators.

   It is being supported by the Swedish SIDA. An upgrade of its trainers in view of the upgrading of the training, that is given there, is part of institutional building that would be useful in medium and long term perspectives for adult and literacy work in Mozambique. It would also be desirable that this Center be able to develop experimental projects (new primers, post literacy materials, training materials for adult educators, etc).

2. Maputo Town and Maputo rural Province have Provincial Adult Training Centers that are being rehabilitated with the help of British and French NGOs.

3. Provinces as Gaza, Inhambane, Tete and Nampula have local training Centers that are functioning badly in buildings and without maintenance, repairs and appropriate equipment. The government budget for running the centers is insufficient. They would welcome some support.

4. Manica, Zambezia and Cabo Delgado don't have local Adult Educators Training Centers. These provinces have lost the previous buildings attached to adult education. These buildings have been transferred to other kinds of use.

5. The newly created Beira Adult Education Association is planning to build an Adult Education Training and Resource Center with the already mentioned HIVOS support.

Appendix C

Relevant literature

Lind, Agneta: Adult Literacy, Lessons and Promises - Mozambican
Literacy Campaigns, 1978-82, University of Stockholm, Sweden, 1988 (in
English).

Balance of the the first ten years of Literacy in the People's Republic of
Mozambique, National Directorate for Adult Education, Ministry of
Education, Maputo, 1988 (in Portuguese).

First Seminar on Orthography Patronization of Mozambican Languages,
NELIMO, Arts Faculty, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, 1989 (in
Portuguese).

The Causes of Literacy Success and Failures in Enterprises, during the first
10 years of Literacy and Adult Education in the People's Republic of
Mozambique, National Directorate for Adult Education, Maputo, 1988 (in
Portuguese).

The Situation of Children and Women in Mozambique, Ministry of
Cooperation/UNICEF, Maputo, 1990 (in English).

UNICEF Annual Report, 1991 (in English).

Some examples of literacy primers

A - Used during 1978-82 literacy campaigns in the official language

enxada

en xa da

e x
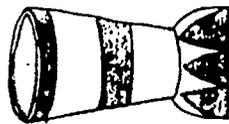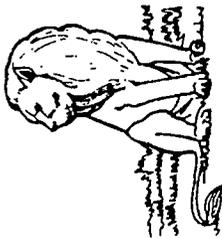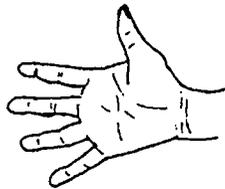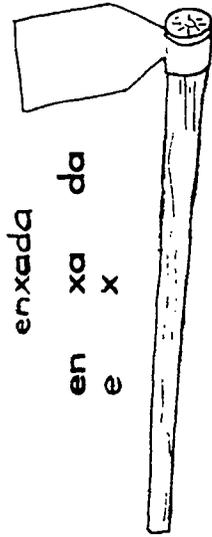
lixo   peixe   enxame   Maxixe

Pente   manta   dente   vento

O Xavier deu uma enxada ao neto.

A enxada é nova.

O Xavier vai pôr o peixe ao lume.

O Xavier vai tirar o peixe do lume.

x   x

pilão

leão

le ão

    ão

mão

limão   união   pão

O Filimone põe a panela ao lume.

O Filimone é irmão da Aida.

A Aida é irmã do Filimone.

A Adelina é a nãe da Aida e do Filimone.

ão   õe   ã   ãe

B - Used from 1983 to presen times in the official language

aula 31

A FRELIMO lutava pela Independência.
A nova vida começava nas Zonas da FRELIMO.
Ali havia escolas, cooperativas e postos de saúde.
Já ninguém roubava as colheitas
O povo conseguia viver melhor.

| contra | tula |

A FRELIMO lutava _____ o colonialismo.

Resposta

O que havia nas zonas da FRELIMO?

Resposta

| ninguém | os régulos |

.... as zonas da FRELIMO _____ roubavam as colheitas.

---

aula 32
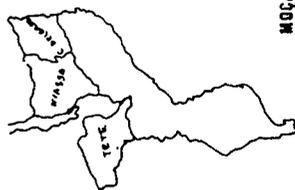
MOÇAMBIQUE

As zonas da FRELIMO eram zonas libertadas.
Ali, todos lutavam e trabalhavam juntos.
Os guerrilheiros faziam machambas com o povo.
As populações carregavam material de guerra,
Todos conseguiam viver organizados.

Onde ficavam as zonas libertadas?

Resposta

| eram | seu | que |

Os _____ lheiros faziam ma_____ bas com o povo.

DITADO:

C - Experimental version in one Mozambican language of the center, from August 1991

Mapfundzira 13

poto

poto
po
o

| o | i | u |
| po | pi | pu |

1.

2.
| pa |
| pi |
| po |

3.
te	ti	tu
ne	ni	nu
pe	pi	pu
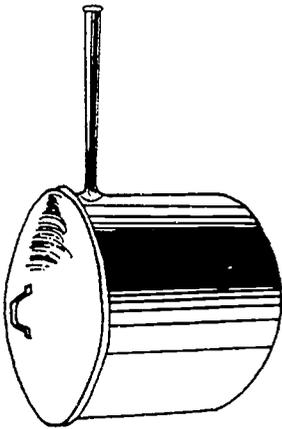
pi ku lu
pikulu

ni pa
nipa

a pa se
apase

a ta pa ta
atapata

a pu ku ta
apukuta

ma pi ka
mapika

4.

| p | poto | ⟨ |
| P | Poto | P |

5.

kumiti kuna uni
kumiti kuna moto
pamuti pana moto
pamoto pana nipa
pamoto pana poto
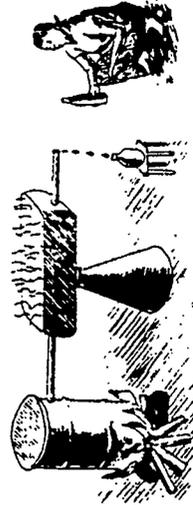
6.

Amuna ali kusaka nipa. Pamoto pana nipa. Nema anati apime nipa, apase amuna.

Akulu ali na makani, ana ali kuona mapika a 'Tatu na Luo. Mapika ndi makulu. Tatu atapata muoni na mapika.

Makolokoto, Tatu!

7.

Pamoto pana nipa.

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Chapter 10

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT. A ZIMBABWEAN PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

In this paper the question of why the majority of adult literacy learners in Zimbabwe are women, is considered. As a preliminary, various possible answers to the question: "Why are there more illiterate women than men in Zimbabwe?" were first considered. The reasons given as answers were not sufficient in themselves to answer the original question. But, it was recognised that some aspects of the social organisation and attitudes of the African village may account for the imbalance. These are

1. In rural African society, women learn to work together from an early age. And they can form very cohesive workforces at the village level.

2. The co-operation between women has led to the formation of women's co-operatives.

3. These co-operatives are able to support, and actively encourage literacy development. Thus completing the circle: to learn to work together - to work to learn together.

There is no evidence to suggest that women's co-operatives have run literacy classes for women exclusively, but there is strong evidence for suggesting, that men have excluded themselves by traditional attitudes, which enforce division between the sexes.

Introduction

In ancient Greece, if one had a problem causing some personal anxiety, then one way to resolve it was to go to Delphi to consult with the Oracle there. In ancient times, Delphi contained a great shrine and temple to the god Apollo. It was here that the seat of prophetic wisdom - the Oracle - was maintained.

But it was not possible to pose a question to the Oracle directly, and the services of an intermediary, the temple priest, were required. The priest

diligently wrote out the question uppermost in one's mind, and also returned with the Oracle's written reply.

The reply was usually cryptically worded and required some thought of its interpretation, but there was yet a further cause for ambiguity: the replies were always written in capital letters. In ancient Greek this implied the absence of any punctuation; one had to punctuate the reply for oneself to discover its true meaning.

When thinking of the theme of this workshop:

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

and what to write on it, one feels like an ancient Greek puzzling over an Oracular message: where does one put the punctuation? A full-stop after women? One could write endless amounts on the twin topics.

WOMEN. AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

But may be neither the twain shall meet!

And yet another punctuation possibility is the implied antithesis:

WO! MEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT.

For mountains could be written here on the attitudes of men, that have kept women uneducated and illiterate for so long. For even today, women still constitute the major portion of the world's adult illiterates. And part of the struggle, at least, for women's literacy development is the struggle to change men's hearts and minds.

To complete the possibilities considered here, there is the original title with a final full-stop:

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT.

But what interpretations can be given it? Well, one might write on the role of women in promoting literacy development, taking, for example, the familial perspective of Mahatma Gandhi:

> To educate a man is to educate an individual.
> To educate a woman is to educate a family.

In this paper we have chosen to write on one aspect of women's literacy development in Zimbabwe. This is the question, and it may also appear to some as a concern: why are the vast majority of adult literacy learners female?

Although this question is very narrowly focussed, it turns out that no single reason, of the many that have been suggested, is sufficient in itself to explain this imbalance between the sexes. By considering these reasons, however, we hope to show, how the literacy status of women has developed, and is developing in Zimbabwe. But before attempting to answer the question, the origins and history of adult literacy teaching in Zimbabwe need to be considered briefly.

1.1   The literacy inheritance at independence

While it is not true to say that the former colonial government of Rhodesia had completely ignored the problem of adult illiteracy, it had achieved little and had never adopted a policy for its solution.[1,8] It was only through the efforts of a small number of private charities (welfare organisations), churches, and a few companies that this problem was addressed at all prior to Independence.

The most important welfare organisation in this respect was ALOR, the Adult Literacy Organisation of Rhodesia, now renamed ALOZ. This organisation had conducted its own literacy programme for many years, and it had also trained many thousands of literacy teachers. But the organisation was always constrained by limited funds, most of which were raised by church groups abroad.[2] By 1978, the financial situation had become so difficult that ALOR had to abandon its own literacy teaching programme, and concentrated instead on training literacy teachers. ALOZ still plays a significant role in adult literacy development.

At Independence in 1980, it was estimated that there were between 1.9 and 2.5 million adult illiterates in Zimbabwe. (As an aside here, the term *adult illiterate* has a specific meaning in the paper and in reference work cited. An *adult* is a person of fifteen years or more, and an *illiterate* is a person who attended less than three complete years at primary school. This definition is arbitrary, since for one reason, it is only as good as the quality of primary education available.) The uncertainty in these illiteracy estimates arise, because the size and age distribution of the general population were not known accurately in 1980. But taking a mean value of 2.2 million illiterate adults, this group constituted nearly a third of the total population (31.1%),[5] and nearly two-thirds of the adult population.[7] Of this adult illiterate group, nearly two-thirds (64%) were women, and nearly three-quarters of the group lived in rural areas.[8]

1.2   The first national literacy campaign: 1981-1988

The new Government of Zimbabwe was well aware, from the very outset, of the gravity of the illiteracy problem it had inherited at Independence. The new Government's attitude to literacy has been expressed in the following remarkable statement:

> The Government conscious of its commitment to the establishment of an egalitarian society puts emphasis on the development of the individual. The new social order entails a fair and equitable distribution of knowledge and rights to every individual in our society. It is required that all citizens should have access to information and knowledge about their society, because the government recognises that the realisation of one's innate ability, the betterment of society, and the meaningful participation of the individual in development depends upon the ability to read and write.[11]

But if the Government was deeply committed to achieving universal literacy, it was also committed to achieving this goal as rapidly as possible.

The initial work of organising the Adult Literacy Campaign was carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture through its Non-formal Education Section.[4,8] This work began in September 1981 with the establishment of a literacy network throughout the country. In each district, two literacy coordinators were appointed and given responsibility to recruit and train voluntary literacy tutors (VLTs), and to establish and monitor literacy classes.[8] By the end of 1982, the first full year of the campaign, three thousand tutors had been recruited and 30,000 learners enrolled.[9]

In 1983 the Campaign was reorganised, this time with the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs acting in the leading role, with the Ministry of Education subordinated to it. See Appendix for more details of these ministries' roles in the Campaign. Problems of coordination between the two ministries appear to have arisen quite soon, however, and have been cited as one of the principal reasons why the campaign moved so slowly and enrolments were so small.[10] See Appendix.

The Literacy Campaign adopted a two-stage model for literacy development. The adult students or *learners* would first take a *basic literacy course*, so that they would be able to read, write and perform simple arithmetic (the 3R's) in their mother tongue. On satisfactory completion of the first stage, by passing a literacy test, the learners would then be *promoted* to the second stage: the *functional literacy course*.

The functional literacy programme was designed to help learners retain acquired literacy whilst at the same time improving their quality of life. To this end:

The programme and curricula of functional literacy will include peasant education, workers' education, women's education, family life - population education, basic primary health care, civics, co-operative education and Basic English for Communication.[10]

Emphasis was to be placed on post-literacy materials for study which would be of practical value to the learners, for example, income-generating projects.[10]

1.3 Statistics of learner enrolments and promotions: 1982-1990

Some statistics of the number of learners enrolled, and the number of learners promoted per year are given in Table 1. For ease of reference each table column has been numbered. The statistics cover the period of the First National Literacy Campaign: 1983 - 1988, but are incomplete. No evaluations were carried out in 1984, 1986 or 1988 by the Ministry of Education.

1.3.1 Enrolments

The numbers of students enrolled per year are given in column 1. Data on the sex of enrolled learners have not been reported. The numbers of learners repeating each year also nave not been reported, but there are good reasons for expecting that the number of repeaters must have been large since

a) the literacy evaluation (promotion) test was voluntary,
b) the number of learners taking the test per year was always much less than half the number of learners enrolled per year.

It would be of interest to know the breakdown by sex of the number of learners enrolled per year, and also *the average lifetime* of a learner in the basic literacy course, that is, the average number of years it takes for a learner to be promoted. The average lifetime is a practical measure for assessing the effect of changes to the programme on its efficiency of promoting learners. It is evident that reducing the average lifetime to the minimum time practicable to take the course, must increase the effective use of the resources available.[25] Optimal use of resources being attained, when the average lifetime equals this minimal practicable time for completing the (literacy) course.

Table 1: Basic literacy enrolments and promotions in the national literacy campaign for the period: 1982-1990.

year	no. of basic literacy learners enrolled	no. of learners taking literacy promotion test			no. of learners promoted			learners taking test as % of enrolled	learners promoted as % of enrolled	source
	col.no: (1)	m (2)	f (3)	tot (4)	m (5)	f (6)	tot (7)	(8)	(9)	
1982	30000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	14
1983	64130	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	15
1985	82169	4334	24236	28570	3492	18165	21657	34.77	26.36	16
1987	75395	4052	19017	23069	3347	14226	17573	30.60	23.31	16
1989	53607	3391	18715	22106	2625	13527	16152	41.24	30.13	16
1990	59968	3126	13953	17079	2617	10595	13212	28.48	22.03	16

Notes

* The National Literacy Campaign ran officially from 1983 to 1988.
m: Male
f: Female
tot: Total

1.3.2   Promotions

The numbers of learners taking the literacy evaluation test and the numbers of learners promoted are given in columns 2 - 4, and columns 5 - 7, respectively, of Table 1.[17] Pass rates were high and always more than two-thirds of the learners were promoted. But the most striking feature of these columns is the high ratio of females to males.

The numbers of male and female learners in basic literacy as a percentage of the group size, and the ratios of female to male taking the literacy evaluation test, and qualifying, are given in Table 2. The readers will recall the question originally asked: Why are the vast majority adult literacy learners female? Inspection of Table 2 (compare columns [2] with [3]) suggests that it would have been more accurate to ask: Why were the vast majority of adult literacy learners, who took the literacy evaluation test, female? In the absence of enrolment figures by sex, it will be taken here, that the number of learners taking the literacy evaluation test by sex reflects the number enrolled by that sex.

Table 2:   Female-Male Distribution of Learners in the Literacy Evaluation Test based on Table 1.

year	number of learners taking literacy evaluation test				number of learners qualifying in basic literacy (promoted)		
	Total	%f	%m	f:m	%f	%m	f:m
	col. no (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1985	28570	84.8	15.2	5.6:1	63.6	36.4	1.7:1
1987	23069	82.4	17.6	4.7:1	61.7	38.3	1.6:1
1989	21106	84.7	15.3	5.5:1	61.2	38.8	1.6:1
1990	17079	81.7	18.3	4.5:1	62.0	38.0	1.6:1

Note: f:m = Female to Male ratio

If the female/male ratios of columns (4) and (7) are compared, then it can be seen, that the ratio of the promoted group has decreased markedly. The reason is that the female participants fail in greater proportion to their numbers than the males. Why is this?

1.3.3   The education background of learners

One reason is suggested by the following table, Table 3, on the educational background of learners. This table is really a comparison between the

Table 3: The education background of learners in adult basic literacy.

year	total no. of learners	no. of learners with less than 4 years primary educ.				no. of learners with more than 4 years primary educ.				Source
		mt	%mp	ft	%fp	mt	%mp	ft	%fp	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
1985	28570	3214	78.2	18662	69.6	1120	88.2	5574	92.9	16
1987	23069	3105	79.7	14795	69.3	947	92.1	4222	94.1	16
1989	22106	2766	73.3	15463	67.5	625	95.8	3252	94.9	16
1990	17079	2204	80.4	10371	72.2	922	91.5	3582	86.9	16
Totals		11289	77.9±3.20	59291	69.65±1.94	3614	91.90±3.11	16630	(92.20±3.63)*	

Notes

mt: number of male participants tested;
%mp: number of male participants promoted as a percentage of the male participants tested.

ft: number of female participants tested;
%fp: number of female participants promoted as a percentage of the female participants tested.

* (mean ± standard deviation)

performance of those learners, who left school before reaching grade 4 primary level *or* didn't go to school at all, *and* those learners who left school some time after. In the table, the group who left school before reaching grade 3 also includes those learners, who didn't go to school at all. We will call the former group: *the pre-literate group*, and the latter group: *the post-literate group*. See Figure 1.

```
┌                ┌                                  NEVER ATTENDED
│                │                                  SCHOOL AT ALL
│                │
│  ACTUAL        │  PRE-LITERATE
│                │  GROUP
│                │                              ┌ LEFT SCHOOL      ┌ GRADE 1
│  ILLITERATE    │  (illiteracy                 │ BEFORE           └
│                │    group                     │ REACHING
│                │    definition)               │ GRADE 4          ┌ GRADE 2
│  'JUP          └                              │ PRIMARY          └
│                                               │
│                                               └                  ┌ GRADE 3
│                                                                  └
│                ┌                ┌ LEFT SCHOOL                    ┌ GRADE 4
│                │  POST-LITERATE │ AFTER REACHING                 └
│                │  GROUP         │ GRADE 4
└                └                │ PRIMARY                        ┌ GRADE 5
                                                                   └

                                                                   ┌ GRADE 6
                                                                   └

                                                                   ┌ GRADE 7
                                                                   └
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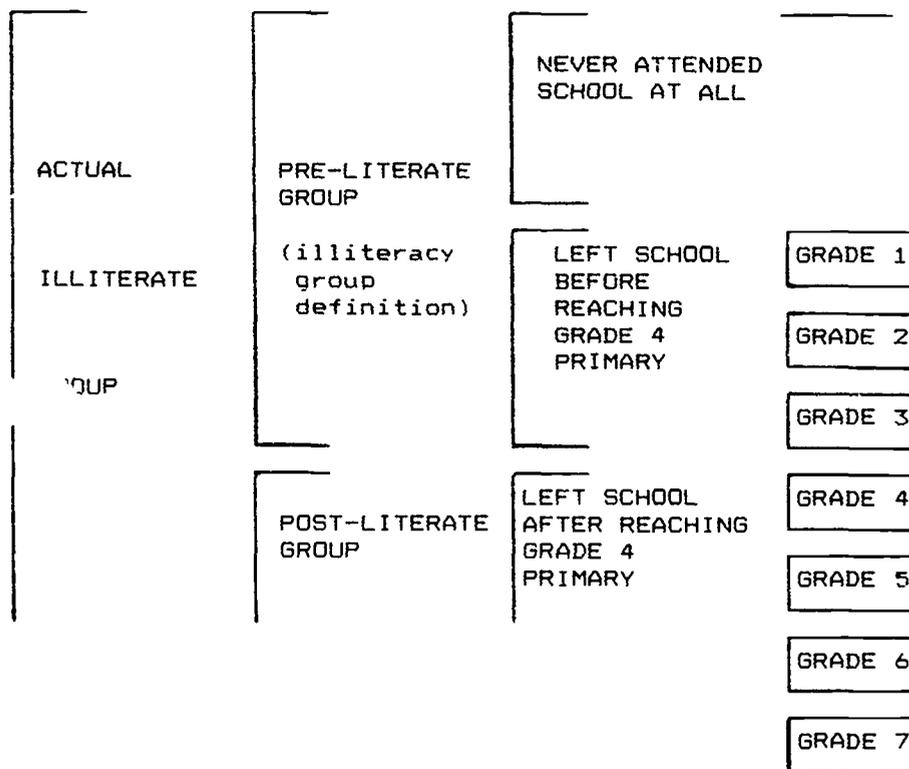
Figure 1:   Comparison of the composition of the illiteracy group definition with that of the actual group attending Basic Literacy classes.

If we compare the averages of the percentages of males and females promoted in the pre-literate group: (compare the averaged percentages in column [3] and [5]), we can see that the performance of women in this pre-literate group is significantly worse than for the men. In contrast to this, compare the averaged percentages of men and women in the post-literate group - there is no statistically-significant difference here.[18] This is what one would expect, given that the educational backgrounds of the males and females in this last group are so similar - they have all had at least three year primary level background. In the pre-literate group the lower per-centage average for the females promoted suggests, that the proportion of

female learners, who have never attended school at all, was significantly larger.[26]

Table 3 calls into question the usefulness of the definition of illiteracy as adopted here: no education at all or less than three complete years at primary school (this is the pre-literate group above), since it is evident that a sizeable portion of the learners are technically post-literate. The proportions are: one male illiterate in every four, and two illiterate females in every nine are post-literate. Why are the relative sizes of the post-literacy groups so large? One possibility is that learners in these groups have relapsed into illiteracy, but it would be interesting to know more about the reasons why.

2.   The question and its answers

Recall the question: Why are the vast majority of the adult literacy learners female? This question has been addressed at various times in the last few years. Most recently by Chivandire, an Assistant Regional Literacy Officer in ALOZ, in a recent interview reported in 'Learn and Work'.[19] Grainger[8] has also considered this question but approached it from its complement: "Why do you think men do not attend literacy classes?" The various answers to both questions have been listed in Table 4.

Grainger's question was used in an interview of 816 adult male illiterates conducted in eight provinces. The majority of this group (60.8 per cent) were not attending literacy classes. The percentage figure in parentheses after each reply, listed in Table 4, indicates the popularity of that reply in the answers received. Most of these replies are self-evident but some of them will be explored further, for example, 'Don't like mixing the sexes', reflects traditional values.

Grainger also interviewed the district literacy coordinators (DLCs) of the Literacy Campaign and gained many valuable insights from them which will also be discussed further.

What are the factors that have been isolated so far? They are

- the population factor (1)
- the rural factor (2)
- the traditional factor (3)

These three factors all have something to do with the question: Why are there more illiterate women than men? But are there more illiterate women than men? The answer is of course, a strong affirmative. This brings us to

- the literacy factor (4)

Table 4: Chivandire's Answers to the Question: Why are the vast majority of learners female?'[19]

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1. "There are more women than men in our population".

   - The population factor

2. "The other factor... is that in rural areas, the population is composed mostly of women as most men have gone to urban areas in search of employment. So literacy programmes in rural areas are really geared towards women's needs".

   - The rural factor

3. Many women were not able to take advantage of the educational opportunities because of the traditional attitudes and practices which discriminated against women.

   - The traditional factor

4. In many rural areas, there already exist many well-organised, active women's groups involved in a wide variety of projects, mainly income generating,ones. "It is therefore easy for these groups to start adult literacy programmes".

   - The feminine bias factor

The answers to the question "Why do you think men do not attend literacy classes?" stated in Grainger's paper[8]

1. Don't have interest (38.2%)
2. Don't have time (12.9%)
3. Don't have motivation (9.4%)
4. Don't like (8.3%)
5. Don't know (8.2%)
6. Don't like mixing the sexes (8.1%)
7. Other reasons (6.6%)
8. Drinking beer (6.5%)
9. Distance from classes (1.7%)

In one sense it is not a factor at all, but rather the result of the first three factors above. But, however that may be, it is a factor in answering the second question: Why do more illiterate women participate in literacy classes than men? Which is another form of our original question.

The factor that completes this programme, which, for the want of a more innocuous, but less forthright phrase, is called

- the feminine-bias factor (5).

Ugly sounding as it may be, some of the issues it generates need to be aired, because the suggestion has been made that the Ministry of Community

Development and Women's Affairs was really the Ministry of community development and WOMEN AFFAIRS![23]

2.1   The population factor

Some figures on the male and female population by age group are given in Table 5. These figures are expressed as percentages of the total adult population, that is, the population over fifteen years of age. In 1982, the year of the first post-Independence census, the adult population stood at 3,957,413 of which 2,022,520 were female. The adult female population exceeded the adult male population by 2.22 per cent; in other words, there were 87,627 more females than males in 1982.[20]

Table 5:   Adult population by sex and by age group expressed as a percentage of the total adult population (3,957,413 people). Source: 1982 Census data.

Age group	Female	Male	Difference
15 - 19	10.50	9.88	+0.62
20 - 24	9.33	7.59	+1.74
25 - 34	12.62	11.49	+1.13
35 - 44	7.70	7.68	+0.02
45 - 54	5.00	5.87	-0.87
55+	5.94	6.38	-0.44
Totals	51.11	48.89	2.22

If the percentages of each male age group in Table 5 is subtracted from the corresponding female age group percentage, it can be seen more clearly in which age groups there is a dearth or excess of females. These differences are shown in the bar chart in Figure 2. A positive difference indicates more females than males in that age group.

In the 15-34 age groups there was an excess of females to males. This can be partly attributed to the War of Liberation. In the older post-45 age groups, there is an excess of males. This suggests that in Zimbabwe the average life-span of women is shorter than that of men.[21] But whatever the reason, the difference in the female and male population is nowhere near large enough to give a satisfactory answer, by itself, to our question.[22]
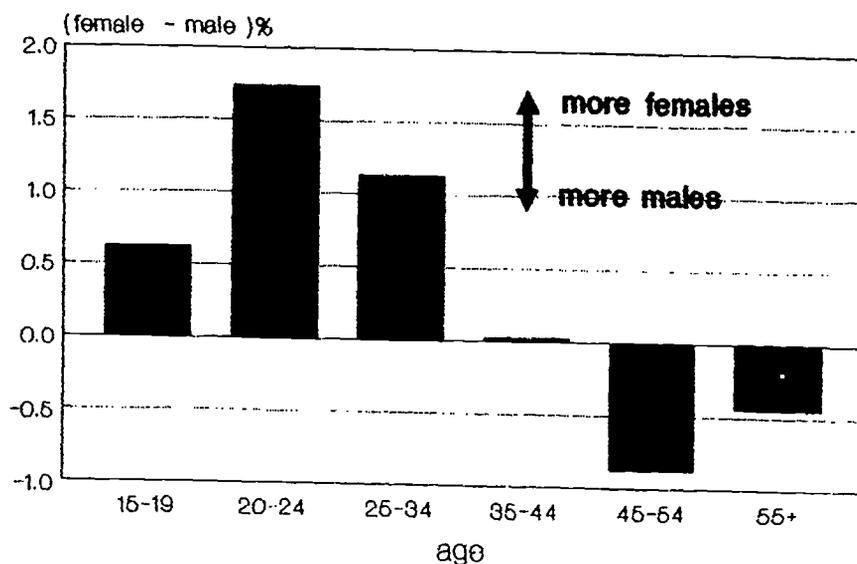
Figure 2: Differences between female and male % of total adult
population.

2.2   The rural factor

Here there are significant differences between the populations of the sexes
as a result of migrant labour movements within the country. But these
movements are not simply between the countryside and the towns, for there
is a substantial interprovincial movement as well, due to demand for labour
in the mining and commercial farming sectors. With these points in mind,
age group population data have been selected for two regions one of which
best represents an *urban area*: Harare, and the other a *rural area*: Masvingo.

The population data are presented in Table 6 and the corresponding
difference bar charts for urban and rural areas are contrasted in Figure 3.
The diagrams are clear enough - there is an enormous outflow of young
men to the cities, to the commercial farming areas, and to the mines in
search of work, leaving behind a large population of single and married
young women. But note that in Figure 3, the excess female population peaks
in the 25-34 age group. This is may be because women in this age group are
either moving away to work or live with their husbands in the urban and
other commercial areas, or their husbands are returning to live with their
wives in their rural homes.

Quite evidently then these migrant labour movements in the country
contribute to the significant disproportion of females and males in the rural

areas. But does this explain the very great difference in the populations at literacy classes?

Table 6: Adult population data by sex, age group and region: urban (Harare) or rural: (Masvingo). Data expressed as percentage of total local adult population. Source: 1982 Census.[20] The final column entry is the difference obtained by subtracting the male percentage entry by age group from the corresponding female figure.

a) Urban: Harare City

Age group	Female	Male	Difference
15 - 19	8.66	7.34	+1.32
20 - 24	9.90	10.40	-0.50
25 - 34	11.97	16.99	-5.02
35 - 44	6.27	10.18	-3.91
45 - 54	3.33	6.94	-3.61
55+	3.41	4.61	-1.20
Totals	43.54	56.46	-12.92

Total adult population = 423,456   Difference in adult population = 54,710 less females than males

b) Rural: Masvingo Province

Age group	Female	Male	Difference
15 - 19	11.15	10.89	+0.26
20 - 24	9.33	6.86	+2.47
25 - 34	13.26	9.88	+3.38
35 - 44	8.46	6.83	+1.63
45 - 54	5.40	4.87	+0.53
55+	6.98	6.09	+0.89
Totals	54.58	45.42	+9.16

Total adult population = 501,635   Difference in adult population = 45,950 more females than males

According to Chivandire, even in urban areas, most literacy classes are composed largely of women. She attributed this to 'imbalances created by the colonial system', which, she went on to say, meant that 'there are more educated skilled men than women in the country. So there are more women in the urban areas who work away from home, and who find it easier to

take advantage of the adult literacy programmes organised within their communities, particularly those organised during the day'.[19]
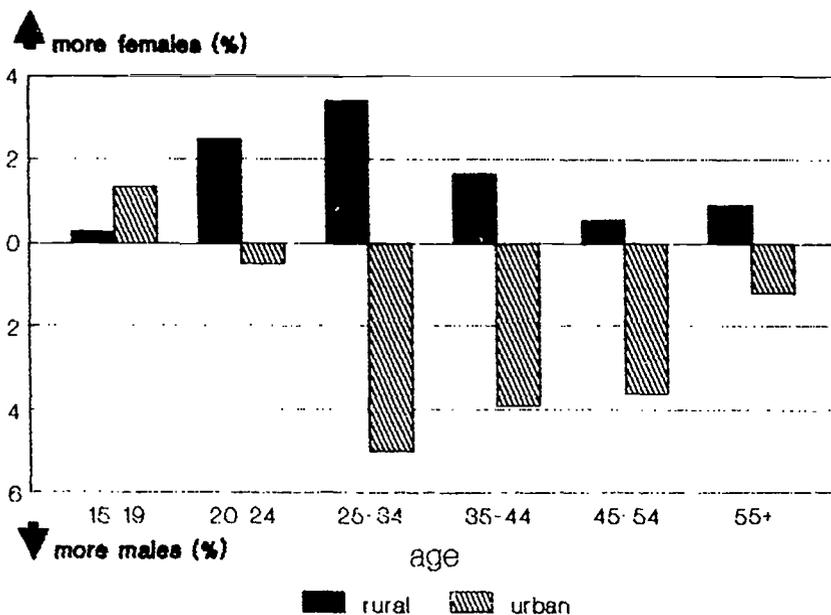
Figure 3: Difference between female and male % by age of rural and urban adult populations.

But also implicit in what Chivandire is saying is the conclusion, that the main reason for high female to male participation in literacy classes is the relatively high rate of illiteracy in the female population. This is discussed further under the literacy factor.

2.3   The traditional factor

Grainger cites a traditional factor as the sixth most common reason, why men do not attend literacy classes, this is 'don't like mixing the sexes'. 'Drinking beer' is another traditional factor in this regard.[8]

Chivandire has also cited 'traditional attitudes and practices, which dis-criminated against women' as the reasons 'why women were not able to take advantage of the educational opportunities' available. See Table 4, point 3. She did not explain what these 'attitudes and practices' were, however.[30]

But we need not dwell on particular attitudes and practices, for it need only be recognised, that women have been regarded as chattel, until relatively recently, not only in Africa but throughout the world. And so they had no

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choice about being in the position, as Dangarembga has described in her novel 'Nervous Conditions', of 'femaleness as opposed and inferior to maleness'.[29]

There are many traditional attitudes that could be taken account of, but those having some bearing on women's illiteracy can be identified by considering the possible answers to the parental question: Who can we afford to send to school? If we ask this question in the setting of the home of a poor rural African family of maybe four or five children, say thirty years ago, we can see, how some of these traditional attitudes were really economic considerations in disguise. The practice of sending the boys to school in preference to the girls, and which is now regarded as traditional, was really the result of the play of economic factors acting at that time. The practice is now called traditional, because these original economic reasons have been lost sight of, as indeed have the original settings.

It was the introduction of the head tax in the early part of this century that forced on African families the need to earn money, and therefore to send out the men as bread winners. The young men in preference to the young women. Men are stronger than women, or believed to be so, and therefore the men were better able to protect themselves. But this is a part-answer. For here custom prevailed - in economic disguise - the sons of the family were expected to keep the parents in their old age. But the value of the daughters to their parents was only their bride price or *lobola*, so the parents' efforts were directed to ensuring their daughters' worth in this regard: they were trained to cook and keep home.

But as the men worked, so did the benefits and the opportunities of work increase. And the value of being literate was soon recognised in these respects. The sons were now sent to school: the daughters were kept at home. But income generates needs and meets necessity. New opportunities for women were soon recognised, and better opportunities for educated women were also recognised.

Dangarembga captures the dilemma of opportunity facing parents in this awkward period of transition, in the following passage:

(Here Tambudzai is talking about her father):

> He became very agitated after he had found me several times reading the sheet of newspaper in which the bread from *magrosa* had been wrapped as I waited for the *sadza* to thicken. He thought I was emulating my brother, that the things I read would fill my mind with impractical ideas, making me quite useless for the real tasks of feminine living.

> It was a difficult time for him because Mr Matimba had shown him that in terms of cash my education was an investment, but then in terms of cattle so was my conformity.

2.4   The literacy factor

The rates of illiteracy expressed as a percentage of the age group by sex and age group are tabulated in Table 7. According to the definition of illiteracy adopted here, in 1982 there were 574,790 male illiterates out of a total of 1,934,893 adult males (29.71% of the adult male population). And there were 863,721 female illiterates out of a total of 2,022,520 adult females (42.71% of the adult female population). There were 288,931 more adult illiterate females than males that year.

Table 7:   Adult illiterate population by sex as a percentage of the total population of the same sex and age group. Source: 1982 Census data.

Age Group	Adult Illiterate Population		Illiterate Population as a % of Population Age group of same sex	
	male	female	m%	f%
15 - 19	79278	111857	20.27	26.91
20 - 24	55127	114665	18.36	31.05
25 - 34	91110	180264	20.04	36.08
35 - 44	89213	150477	29.33	49.41
45 - 54	101162	127833	43.53	63.05
55+	158900	181625	62.94	77.15
Totals	574790	863721	29.71	42.71

The total illiterate adult population was 1,438,511 in 1982. This is in terms of our definition of adult illiteracy given earlier, and falls short by a million of the 1980 UNESCO estimate.[8] But taking into account the sizeable post-literate group, which constitutes about a quarter of the adult illiterate population at literacy classes, then the Census figure represents about three-quarters of the true illiterate adult population, or 1,918 million adults. A figure which is in very good agreement with that of Dean.[3.2]

Table 7 also shows how illiteracy has shrunk in the younger age groups compared to the older, but the difference between younger and older female age groups is much more pronounced than for the males. A bar chart showing the illiteracy rates in the different age groups is shown in Figure 4. The data is drawn from Table 7. In the lower age groups there is

a convincing downward swing in the female illiteracy rate, so that it is approaching the male illiteracy rate. The general trend of the two rates makes clear that both the opportunity and the desire for educational advancement for both sexes have been increasing. (Increasing prior to Independence, of course, since the youngest adult in 1982 was born in 1967, and would normally have completed primary level by the age of 13, in 1980.)
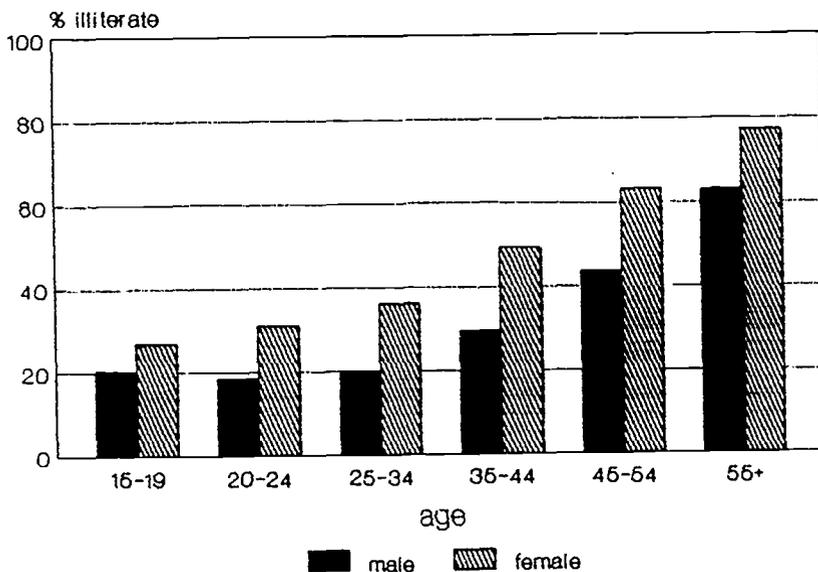
Figure 4: Adult illiterates as percentages of same sex and age groups.

In the higher age range, except for the 55+ age group the rates diverge, again reinforcing this last point. But the sud⁴ᵉn narrowing of the gap between the female and male illiteracy rates in the 55+ age group is unexplained. It may reflect an improvement in female literacy rate in this age group. But it might also reflect a growing vulnerability of the illiterate female with increasing age compared to her literate sisters. There are other possibilities, however, and the problem should be resolved with further research.

Some contrasts are drawn between the urban and rural areas in terms of literacy rates. For continuity, Harare and Masvingo Province are chosen again. In Table 8, and the corresponding Figure 5 these literacy rates are expressed as a percentage of the local populations by sex and age group. It is clear in both rural and urban population groups, illiteracy has fallen quite dramatically in the younger age groups. Below 35 years of age, however, the illiteracy rate of the urban population of either sex is almost a quarter of the corresponding rate in rural areas: the rural is significantly

disadvantaged educationally compared to the urban: and the female to the male. The worst lot of all is that of the rural female.

Table 8: Rural-Urban Contrast. Percentage illiteracy[24] for a) Harare (urban) and b) Masvingo Province (rural) by sex and age group. Source 1982 Census.[20]

Age Group	Illiteracy as a percentage of the total local population of the same sex and age group			
	Urban: Harare		Rural: Masvingo	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
15 - 19	4.97	8.91	22.22	29.91
20 - 24	5.46	10.47	22.96	37.98
25 - 34	7.68	13.16	25.56	42.99
35 - 44	15.57	22.31	31.44	55.92
45 - 54	25.90	28.57	43.70	21.77
55+	30.26	25.82	67.09	87.66
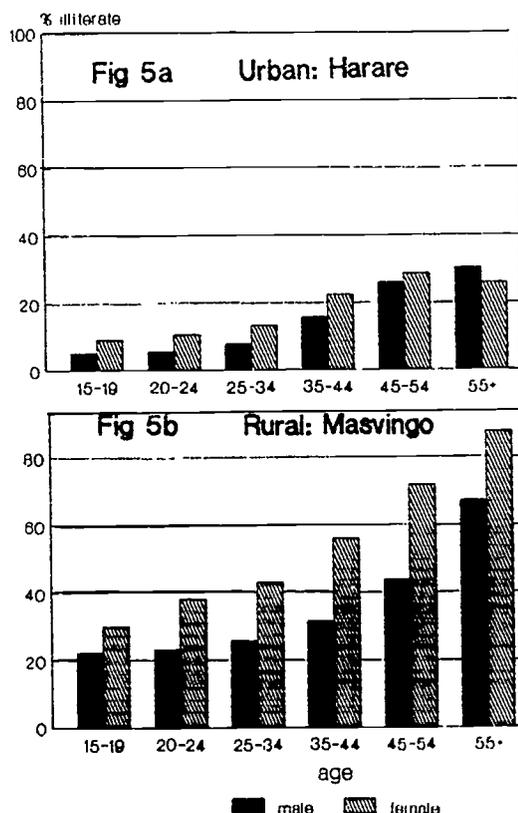
Figures 5a and 5b: Rural-urban contrast in percentages of illiterates for a) Harare (urban) and b) Masvingo Province (rural) by sex and age group - source 1982 Census.

2.5 The feminine-bias factor

It has been suggested that one reason why men do not attend literacy classes is because the Campaign is too strongly slanted towards women. This viewpoint is apparent in the questionnaire responses and interviews of district literacy co-ordinators reported on by Grainger[8] (point d)

> men believe that the Campaign is meant for women, a view supported by the fact that a number of lessons in the primer seem to them to be women-oriented. Most people held the view that adult literacy was meant only for women. This belief emanates from the view that all small-scale community-based activities are meant for women, while men should have formal engagement as exclusively male groups. Yet another supporting factor is that the Campaign is the responsibility of the Ministry of Community Development and *Women's Affairs*.

This statement mirrors that of Chivandire: point 4 in Table 4. The women establish some co-operative venture in the village. They can do this because they have learnt to work together. In the fields: tilling, harvesting, washing, fetching water, and cooking. So it is only a small step for them to work to learn together, to set up a literacy course.

The men remain aloof, fearful that their egos will be deflated in front of a class of women. And they become resentful that it is the women who have organised the literacy courses. Grainger reports an interesting comment here

> where many men participate, women are not reluctant to participate but, where women actively participate, the men leave.

But the question in the end is, if the men cannot co-operate with their women, can they co-operate with each other? The evidence suggests otherwise. Then should they be left to drink their beer under the Msasa trees?

3 Conclusion

The cycle

women's cooperatives —

women's literacy development
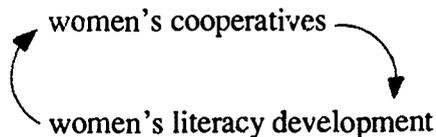
is potentially a very powerful way for women to help each other become literate, and therefore, remembering Gandhi's words, their families and their communities. Further aspects of this are discussed in the Appendix. Older illiterate men, especially in rural areas, seem to be beyond the pale of

this organising influence, the women's co-operative, as a result of their attitudes. But the longer these attitudes are held so, the longer they will remain so. Of course, hence, there is reason for change. But how is another question.

Notes and references

1. Dean P. (1981): 'Adult Literacy in Zimbabwe - An Overview', in 'Case Studies of Non-formal Education in Zimbabwe'. Editor: Shirley, J. Dock, Institute of Adult Education, University of Zimbabwe.

2. Swedish churches played a particularly important role here together with other churches from Western Europe and North America[1].

3. Dean put the figure at 1.908 million people. The higher figure of 2.5 million was the estimate of UNESCO statisticians[4].

4. *Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education*: (1988) Adult and Non-formal Education Division: 'The State of Affairs Regarding the Struggle Against the Problem of Illiteracy in Zimbabwe'.

5. The population in 1980 was estimated to be 7.07 million people. This figure is calculated from the 1982 Census figure of 7.501 million people, and assumes a 3.0% annual growth rate for 1980 and 1981. The census data is drawn from reference (6).

6. *Central Statistical Office*: (1989) 'Statistical Yearbook of Zimbabwe: 1989', Harare, Zimbabwe.

7. In developing countries like Zimbabwe, it has been found that about half the population is above the age of 15. This median age has remained approximately constant for some time and provides a simple, although still arbitrary, way of defining adulthood. So in 1980, half of 7.07 million (3.54 million) were adults, of which 2.2 million (62.2%) were illiterate.

8. *Grainger, I.P.* (1986): 'Literacy Participation in Zimbabwe', Private printing ISBN 0 7974 0 745 6.

9. *Ministry of Education and Culture* (1983). 'Annual Report of the Secretary for Education for the Year Ended 31st December 1982'. Non-formal Education Section, p. 23.

10. *Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education* (1989): Adult Literacy and Mass Education Section: 'Strategy to Revamp the Adult Literacy Campaign from 1990 to 1999'.

11. *Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs* (1983): 'National Adult Literacy Campaign'.

12. Slightly more flesh is put on the role of the Ministry of Education in the Campaign in reference (4):
    a) preparing teaching and learning materials;
    b) training field personnel: volunteer literacy tutors (VLTs) and district literacy coordinators (DLCs);
    c) evaluating the Campaign and progress to full literacy.

13. Non-payment of literacy tutors refers here to the fact that they were volunteers. Dean[1] had warned against the employment of voluntary literacy tutors in her statement on the experiences of ALOR/Z:

    > It is of little value to train literacy teachers who are not guaranteed salaries and classroom facilities. Voluntary teachers are not usually able to support themselves by other means and tend to change literacy students high fees, so defeating the aim of the programme.

    Whether similar practices were observed in the National Literacy Campaign is not known.

14. *Ministry of Education and Culture* (1983): 'Annual Report of the Secretary for Education for the Year Ended 31st December 1982', Non-formal Education Section, p. 25.

15. *Ministry of Education and Culture* (1984): 'Annual Report of the Secretary for Education for the Year Ended 31st December 1983', Non-formal Education Section, p. 25.

16. *Ministry of Education and Culture* (1990): Adult Literacy and Mass Education Section: 'Statistics of Learners'.

17. Many errors of addition and transcription were found in the learner evaluation and promotion data for 1985 in 'Statistics of Learner'[16]. Some errors were also found in the 1987 Table. It was possible to recompute the table entries to obtain a self-consistent set of data for both years. But the errors in the 1985 Table were so serious as to render to question the reliability of the summary data for that year.

18. If the absolute difference of the means of the two data sets is greater than the sum of their absolute variances then the points representing the means are distinct (with high probability). The argument is most easily seen geometrically. This inequality does not hold true for the post-literate means to these are not distinct points - they can be represented by the same point which means that this post-literate group is very homogeneous in educational background.

19. *Learn and Work* (1991): ZIMFEP - Zimbabwe Foundation for Education and Production Vol. 4, No. 2, page 3: 'Women and Adult Literacy'. Unsigned article - March 1991.

20. All data on the 1982 census is drawn from the following District Population Data Sheets which have recently been published in Harare by the Central Statistical Office. They are in chronological order of publication.

Central Statistics Office   District Population Data Sheets

May 1987:	- Manicaland Province;
Sept. 1988:	- Matabeleland North Province;
	- Midlands Province;
Dec. 1988:	- Masvingo Province;
	- Matabeleland South Province;
March 1989:	- Mashonaland East Province;
May 1989:	- Mashonaland West Province;
July 1989:	- Mashonaland Central Province;

21. This is not borne out by the 'Statistical Yearbook 1989' Male and Female Life Table for 1982, however[6]. The mean expectation of life of a 45 year old man was 24.77 years and for a woman of the same age 26.11 years. The discrepancy is not explained.

22. No data on the age distribution of adult learners has been published, but Dr S. Mpofu, of the Department of Adult Education, University of Zimbabwe, has observed that most female learners were usually older women. Since the female:male population is almost in balance in the 35-44 age group and a dearth of women occurs in the older age groups, the population factor is not likely to be important. See Figure 2.

23. This suggestion is expressed amongst the views of the district literacy co-ordinators, which are discussed by Grainger, p. 61[8]. The phrase 'Women's Affairs' is italicized in the quote in Grainger's paper.

24. NS or 'not stated' entries in the District Population Data Sheets have been excluded here. In determining the size of the adult illiterate group of either sex from these data sheets the following equation has been used.

Adult illiterate group (F or M)

= Adult 'never attended school' group (F or M)
+ Adult 'highest attainment level grade 1-3 primary' group.

25.　The average lifetime is defined in mathematical form by

$$\bar{l} = 1/n \sum_{i=1}^{n} li$$

where $\bar{l}$ is the average lifetime, n is the number of participants in the group, li is the lifetime of the ith participant. The sum is over all participants in the group. The group might be the literacy class, the district, or the province so relative performance at each of these levels can be assessed. The lifetime can be the time taken to be promoted from enrolment, but it might also be the time taken to read one's first book. Of course, there is a shortage of books especially in rural areas, which makes this latter choice impracticable at the moment.

26.　This suggestion is borne out by the following facts. In Harare, an urban area, the portion of females who have never attended school as a percentage of the illiterate group, in that locality, is 56%, for males it is also 56%. Compare this to Masvingo which is a very rural province. For females the same figure is 72% and for males it is 50%. Since there are many more literacy classes in rural compared to urban areas then the suggestion is supported.

27.　*Ministry of Education (Ethiopia)* (1989): National Literacy Campaign Co-ordinating Committee: 'The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign Retrospects and Prospects'.

28.　Dean's figure[3] of 1.908 million illiterate adults in 1980, was arrived at by the Whitson Foundation and is based on the 1969 Census.

29.　*Dangarembga, Tsitsi* (1988): 'Nervous Conditions'. Zimbabwe Publishing House, P O Box 350, Harare, Zimbabwe.

30.　A selection of some of the other responses of DLCs Grainger reported on is given below:

a)　'Most men fear losing the respect of women folk';

b)　Half of 'respondent DLCs believed that men liked beer and entertainment too much. This appeared to be a real factor as, in the rural areas, men do the so-called male work during the morning hours and spend the rest of the day drinking beer while, in urban areas, men spent most of their evening spare time in beer halls';

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c) 'Literacy classes do not give men immediate tangible benefits, e.g., money, clothing, etc. Men like to consider themselves very important and to be seen as people who do not perform menial tasks. They do not have the patience to wait for a year or more before literacy gives material benefits';

f) 'There are cultural difficulties such as the belief that certain family relationships cannot interact socially. ... Particularly in the smallest places, some illiterate men and women are usually somehow related. Some of these blood relationships prevents them from mixing freely. Eventually for these reasons, the male relative gives up.'

Appendix

History of the First National Literacy Campaign: 1983-1988

The First National Literacy Campaign was officially launched by the then prime minister, Robert G. Mugabe, in 1983. By that time overall control for the campaign had already been passed to the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs, with the Ministry of Education retaining some reduced responsibilities.

Roles of ministries and organisation of Campaign

The roles of the two ministries are clearly defined in the following extract:[11]

> In organising the campaign, the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs will perform the following functions:
>
> 1) Mobilize and organise the population for a literacy campaign.
>
> 2) Set up a National Literacy Coordinating Council whose responsibility will be to mobilize the Nation for a war against literacy.
>
> 3) Facilitate a direct link between literacy programmes and the various self-help projects of National and Local Development.
>
> 4) Provide basic data and information that is relevant to the development and production of learning materials.
>
> The Ministry of Education and Cultur·, being the sister ministry in the administering of Adult Literacy will pe. ˆorm the following tasks:
>
> 1) Training Literacy Tutors
> 2) Produce Materials
> 3) Carry out Evaluations
> 4) Prepare students and teachers for the campaign.[12]

The National Literacy Coordinating Council established coordinating committees throughout the country at the provincial, district, ward, village and literacy class levels.[8,11]

According to Grainger,[8] the government's purpose in dividing responsibilities for the campaign between the two ministries was to spread the work load of what was perceived to be a huge operation. But this does not explain, why control of the Literacy Campaign was transferred from the Ministry of Education which had, after all, the only experience of running the adult literacy programme. But, however it was, this arrangement between ministries soon proved difficult to work. The unwieldy nature of the hierarchy of literacy coordinating committees must also have greatly added to these difficulties.

Objectives of the Campaign

According to the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs, the broad objectives of the campaign were:[11]

1. To carry out a literacy campaign capable of wiping out illiteracy within a short period of time.

2. To promote national unity, consciousness and patriotism by a literacy campaign, in which people are encouraged to participate fully and effectively at all levels.

3. To promote and increase national productivity through enlightened literate workers and peasants.

4. To encourage and strengthen the participation of the newly literate people in organisations such as trade unions, co-operatives, women's groups, youth groups and other socially-motivated groups in our society.[11]

A series of specific objectives were also set down:

Through literature -

1. To impart skills on political education leading to political awareness and consciousness of the masses.

2. To impart communications skills on reading, writing and arithmetic.

3. To impart skills for contribution to economic production at all levels.

4. To provide continuing education to the new literates.

5. To eradicate illiteracy among Zimbabwean people.

Problems experienced during the Campaign

In its 'Strategy to revamp the Adult Literacy Campaign from 1990 to 1999', the Ministry of Education has stated, that the reasons why 'the Campaign moved rather slowly' was 'due to a number of problems which included, inter alia:

a) The dual responsibility, which caused many practical problems, chiefly in the area of coordination.

b) General lack of involvement by as many people as had been expected.

c) Shortage of full time personnel.

d) Inadequate financial resources.

e) Absence of an efficient system of storage and distribution of learning materials, which sometimes led to delays in getting these materials to the learners.

f)   Non-payment of literacy tutors, which in some cases led to their withdrawal from the Campaign and to consequent learner drop-out.[13]

g)   Lack of constant monitoring and supervision of field work.

h)   Failure to tap, to the full, the potential of commerce and industry to make a contribution to the Campaign. While some private companies did organise literacy classes on their premises the majority generally tended to hold aloof from the Campaign.[10]

A1.4   The Problem of Expectations

But if these were the reasons for failure, what then was its measure? Quite simply, it was the difference between actual and expected annual enrolments. When the actual fell short of the expected, doubts about how the Campaign was being managed and financed came to the fore. As these shortfalls occurred on an annual basis, these doubts were reinforced with each passing year. The Campaign entered deeper the gloom of despondency. And in 1988, the control of the Campaign was returned to the Ministry of Education.

But no one appears ever to have questioned, whether these original expected enrolments were reasonable or not. What were they? It seems that the enrolments were arrived at by applying the following simple formula:

$$\text{Expected annual enrolment} \ = \ \frac{\text{Size of target group}}{\text{number of years of the Campaign}}$$

If the size of the target group is taken to be the 1980 estimates of 2.5 million illiterate adults, and the number of years of the Campaign is five (1983-88), then the expected annual enrolment is

2.5 million/5 years = 0.5 million adults per year.

This same formula has been used for the revamped Literacy Campaign, with one slight modification: the Campaign is to run for a ten year period: from 1990 to 1999. Curiously, the estimated size of the target group for 1990, was still the same as 1980: 2.5 million illiterate adults. So the expected enrolment for the Revamped Campaign is a quarter of a million adults per year.[10]

But there are serious objections to this formula, and to the model which it implies - we call it here *the Ethiopian model*.[27]

1.   *Timing*: How long should the Campaign last? The obvious answer is for as long as there are adult illiterates. But that answer is ignored in

this model. For this model ignores the fact that each year brings a new flood of recruits to their ranks: these are those illiterates, who have just turned fifteen. Given that for as long as some children do not attend school at all, while others may not have learnt to read, write and do arithmetic effectively by the time they have left, then the problem of adult illiteracy will remain with us for a long time yet to come. Forever? Possibly, but at least as long as it takes to ensure that all children become literate. This is not simply a tautology, however. For any idea that complete literacy can be achieved in any time of our own choosing, that is, in any arbitrary time without reference to the problems of illiteracy is surely misguided.

2. *Mass mobilization*: how can full participation in literacy classes by the *expected portion* of the target group be ensured? By mass mobilization? By coercion? If not by coercion, then how? In a Democracy like Zimbabwe, people have freedom of choice. And because there is choice there is a market for choice - not only for how the people spend their money, but also for how they spend their time.

A1.5   The Future

Since the Campaign is competing for the time of its participants, then how best this needs be done requires thought. Some market research is needed: What activities compete for people's time? And what are their benefits? What benefits does the Campaign offer? And how best can these be improved? And so on.

But what best competes today may not do so tomorrow. The Literacy Campaign needs to have built-in features of 'willingness to learn' and 'willingness to grow'. The validity of expectations should always be questioned.

At the present time in the rural areas there is a strongly- and mutually-reinforcing mechanism for women's literacy - this involves women's co-operatives and is shown below. It is self-explanatory.

If women's co-operatives could be encouraged to grow and multiply then the benefits for women's literacy development would be enormous. Large-scale co-operative societies might also be formed - the result of many small women's co-operatives coming together. Many of the large-scale problems, such as transport and distribution, which small co-operatives face could be tackled in this way.

But such large-scale co-operatives must be kept firmly in the hands of the members that formed them, as should the co-operative movement, and not of the Government's. Co-operatives must be apolitical, that is, they must be

free of political control. Since any attempt by one party, group or faction means the exclusion of others. And that means the alienation of many of the women the co-operative is dedicated to help. The value of the women's co-operative as, for example, an educator of illiterate women, would be much diminished. For a co-operative movement to grow it must be careful to maintain universal appeal.

Figure A1: The reinforcement mechanism for promoting women's literacy or how 'learning to work together' (= women's co-operatives) helps 'working to learn together' (= women's literacy development)

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Chapter 11

WOMEN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN MEXICO

Socioeconomic conditions in Mexico

Mexico is located on the American continent; it shares a 3,326 km border with the United States of America to the north and with Guatemala and Belize to the south.

During the course of this century the country's population growth rate has been intense. In 1900 the population stood at 13.6 million and in 1990 the General Population and Housing Census registered 81.1 million inhabitants, of which 39.9 million are men and 41.3 million are women.

Mexico's rapid growth rate has led to profound social changes. The population's territorial distribution ratio has reversed during the course of this century; whereas in 1900 71.4% of the population lived in rural areas and only 28.6% lived in cities, in 1980 75.6% lived in cities and 24.4% lived in rural communities.

This trend has meant, that much of the population is concentrated in certain regions of the country. More than 40% of the population lives in 5 of the country's 32 states.

Migration within the country and abroad has a determining influence on population distribution.

Twelve of Mexico's states show the highest rates of migration and are also the states with the lowest standards of living. As regards international migration, the fact that 15 million Mexicans live in the United States is a conclusive indicator.

Statistics show that of every hundred Mexicans, who emigrate to the United States as illegal aliens, ten are women, mostly between the ages of 15 and 34 and mostly unmarried.

Of every hundred women, who have emigrated without working papers, sixteen have no education whatsoever and sixty have only attended one or

República Mexicana
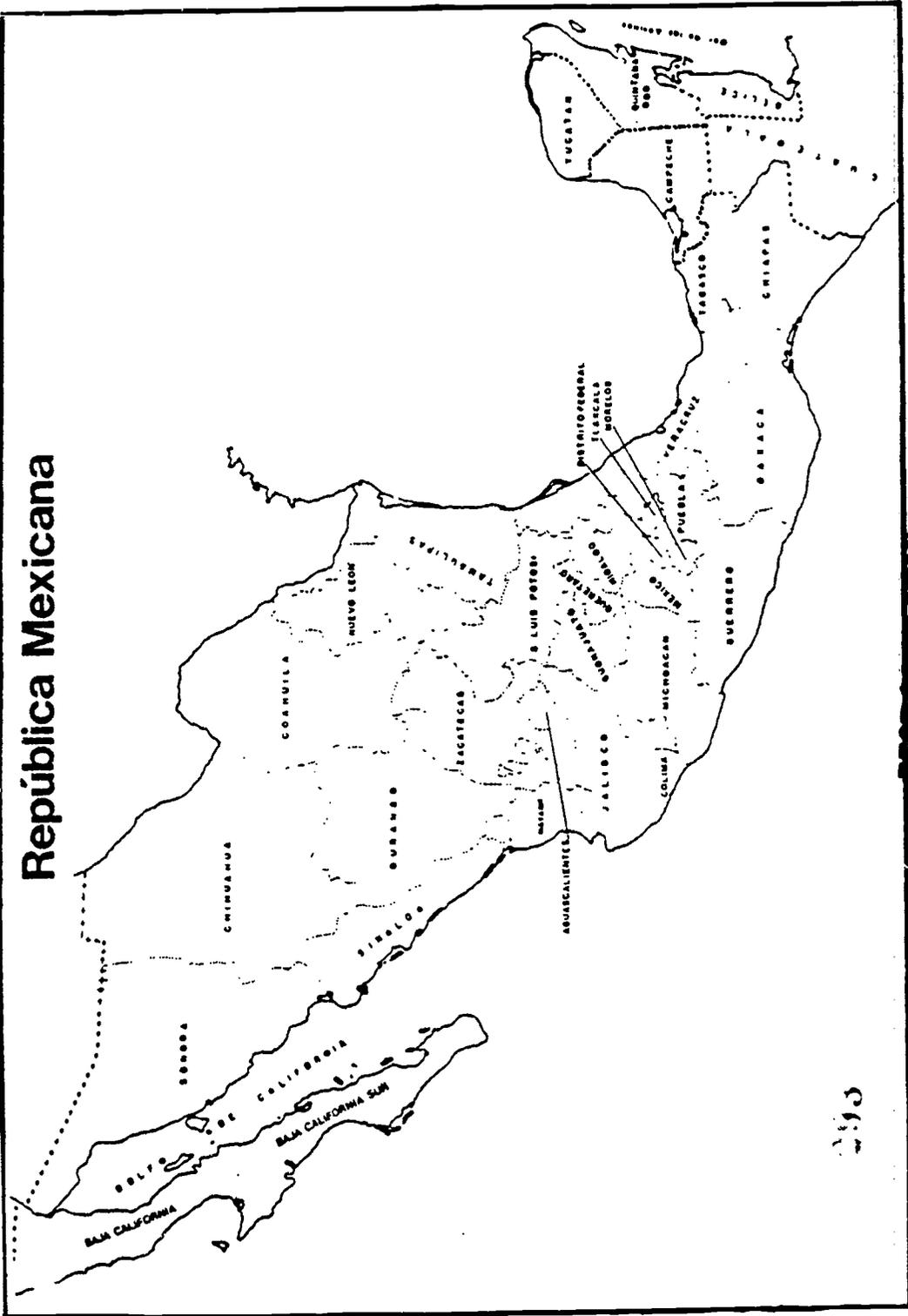
another level of primary school. Their main economic activities are centered around the provision of services of one kind or another.

The use and exploitation of the country's natural resources have led to problems of ecological balance: approximately half of the national territory has serious erosion problems, and many forested areas and jungles have disappeared, together with the innumerable animal species that inhabited them.

This is due to the exploitation of precious woods, excessive felling, extensive introduction of cattle, forest fires and misuse of pesticides.

During the 1980's Mexico experienced an acute economic crisis, that significantly affected the scope of social development programs. Foreign indebtedness led to the adoption of adjustment policies based mainly on currency devaluation, the elimination or reduction of subsidies for basic products, and reduced public spending.

During the period from 1982 to 1988, funds allocated to health care and education were cut back by 40% and 45% respectively.

The repercussions of the crisis affected the poorest sectors of the population the most, and it is estimated that five million inhabitants were left without formal employment due to the closing of employment sources; the purchasing power of wages dropped by 50%, affecting basic nutrition patterns, and of the 27 million economically active persons in 1988, approximately 50% earned less than the minimum wage.

In low-income sectors of the population, three-quarters of their income is used to purchase food-stuffs, and the rest is used to pay for expenses such as water, fuel, housing, clothing, transportation and medical assistance.

With regard to health and nutrition conditions in Mexico, UNICEF studies indicate, that eight of every ten inhabitants suffer from malnutrition at some stage of their lives, and about 50% of the infant population suffer from different degrees of malnutrition; the problem is more serious in rural areas in central and southern Mexico.

The quality of nutrition has decreased due to the tendency to replace food-stuffs, that are hard to acquire with other, cheaper items. This is the case with food of animal origin, which is replaced by agricultural food-stuffs, but also extends to basic grains such as rice, the consumption of which dropped by 40% as of 1988; corn decreased by 24%, and only beans have shown an increase, rising by 8.3% in the same period.

In addition to malnutrition, other health problems that were previously under control have also increased: during the past ten years diseases such as malaria, dengue fever and smallpox have now reached the levels that existed in 1950. As in the past, the illnesses, that currently continue to be the main causes of infant mortality, are gastro-intestinal and respiratory diseases.

Illiteracy characterizes the poorest sectors of the population, since they generally constitute a population group, that has little access to well-being.

The following conditions characterize the illiterate population at the national level: about half the group lives in housing conditions, that are inadequate in that floors are earthen. If this factor is taken as an indicator of the quality of the living conditions of this population group, then at least that proportion lives in extreme poverty. About a third do not have electricity at home and over a quarter do not have a radio.

As regards the occupation of illiterate women, the large majority are mainly devoted to household activities, but also carry out other secondary activities, that contribute to the family income.

The illiterate population lives both in rural areas and in marginalized urban zones. A significant proportion of the group is Indian, and this characteristic prevails throughout the country, due to the living conditions of the majority of Mexico's ethnic groups, both in rural areas and in cities.

Nearly one fifth of the illiterate population is functionally illiterate, and this is more common in cities than in rural areas, where total illiteracy prevails.

In order to correct the above deficiencies, adult education is currently focusing on improving the levels of well-being of this social group, through the development of an education model, whose contents include aspects of nutrition, health care and environmental protection, as part of the political determination to make a frontal attack on poverty and raise the levels of well-being of all the population.

Educational situation

The educational problems facing the population aged 15 and over are one of the most eloquent indicators of Mexico's socio-economic situation.

Due to deficiencies in the school system that have not made it possible to ensure, that the total population join, remain and complete the basic level, and to the acute deterioration of economic conditions over the past decade,

the country faces an educational backlog, that includes 70% of the adult population, estimated at 53.9 million Mexicans aged fifteen or more.

The country's 32 states show different levels of illiteracy, and this inequality runs parallel to socio-economic conditions in different regions.

The composition of the educational backlog of the adult population according to levels of schooling in 1990 shows, that around five million persons are illiterate.

It is estimated that about 20.2 million adults have not completed primary school. The population that finished primary school but did not complete their secondary education amounts to 16 million Mexicans.

The composition of the educational backlog shows, that the most outstanding problem lies in the absolute and relative magnitude of the population without primary education, which has repercussions at the secondary level.

Illiteracy continues to be a persistent problem in Mexico, and although the percentage has dropped in the overall educational backlog, in absolute terms it continues to affect several million Mexicans.

Illiteracy

During the course of this century major changes have taken place in national illiteracy rates, in keeping with the evolution of Mexican society. Illiteracy nevertheless continues to be a problem and has remained at the same absolute levels during the past few years due to population growth, school drop-out rates and the economic conditions facing most of the population.

The female population has historically been the demographic group with the highest levels of illiteracy nationwide; in 1960 56% of women were illiterate, in 1970 57% and in 1980 60.5%.

Those statistics show, that there has been little change in female illiteracy rates throughout this century, although literacy campaigns have had greater coverage among the female population. This is because in Mexico, as in many other countries, men have greater opportunities for attending school than women do.

In 1980 the illiteracy rate among people of 15 or more years of age stood at 17%; statistics are not yet available for 1990, but the rate is estimated at 10%.

A factor that aggravates the problems reflected in that rate is that functional illiteracy continues to be significant, since the drop-out rate from school is highest in the first three years of primary school.

Illiteracy in the female population

The sex ratio of Mexico's total population shows practically no difference between men and women, since out of a total population of 81 million in 1990, almost 40 million were men and 41 million were women. Nevertheless, the demographic ratio contrasts sharply with the socio-economic situation of women; despite women's equality before the law, in reality they face a series of limiting factors that prevent them from becoming fully incorporated into the country's economic, political, social and cultural life.

Women constitute the demographic group that has the highest rates of illiteracy.

Greater attention is paid to women in literacy programs, since more women remain outside the educational system due to the different customs and traditions of our society. According to INEA (National Adult Education Institute) figures, in 1959 59% of the adults taught to read and write were women.

The reasons why women encounter more difficulties in becoming incor-porated to educational processes are largely due to forms of family and social organization.

Marriage and maternity are important factors, that prevent women from receiving education.

Women in Mexico begin married life at a very early age, especially in rural areas.

The age at which women have their first child has a determining influence on the number of children they have. The average number of children born alive per woman was 6.9 in 1981. In the case of women who had inter-course for the first time before the age of fifteen, the average rises to 9.5. When sexual relations took place for the first time between the ages of 18 and 21, the average number of offspring was 7.1. The average dropped to 4.8 and 2.5 when intercourse first took place between the ages of 25 and 29 and 30 and above respectively.

In 1981 children of unschooled mothers were three times as likely to die before the age of one year as children of mothers, who had completed their

primary education. It should be mentioned in this respect, that the fact that the adult population is not well-informed, strongly limits the prevention of infant morbidity, since the possibility of parents' preventing such deaths is directly related to their access to information.

The level of schooling also has a bearing on the number of children a woman has, since mothers with little education have more offspring.

Mothers with no education have an average of 6.8 children born alive, whereas the average for mothers who have completed primary school is 5.1. These figures are in contrast with those for women, who have finished high school or higher education, who on average have 2.9 live births.

In 1981 the global fertility rate for women in urban areas was 3.6, whereas in rural areas it stood at 5.2.

The reasons why women decide to go to school, starting with literacy courses, varies according to their age. Adult women decide to join literacy programs due to a feeling of shame before their children and their community. Young women take literacy courses in order to improve their employment prospects, or because they recognize the need to learn to read and write.

It should be pointed out, that about 35% of students in literacy courses drop out for economic reasons, because they are forced to leave their place of origin to find employment elsewhere, or because their activities in the community (in the case of women) take up all their time; homemaking and children demand full-time attention, and there is a lack of real interest in learning.

Groups with lower levels of education and training face greater problems in joining the labor force, and are therefore underemployed or join the ranks of the unemployed.

Depending on the community or social group in which they live, women's contribution to family income is essential to cover basic needs, and they are forced to hold down two jobs, one at home and the other outside the home.

Of the total population, that registers for literacy courses, 57.4% list their homes as their main occupation.

The demand for female labor basically centers around services such as domestic activities, the clothing industry, food preparation, etc. In other words, it is largely determined by the roles, that society has traditionally assigned to women.

A large number of women are forced to emigrate to regions, where there are more opportunities for obtaining employment.

In view of the need to contribute to the family economy, young women need basic education, since it is likely, that they will have to leave their communities or their homes in order to find a means of helping their families.

A study undertaken by the National Survey on Migration to Urban Areas shows, that a greater proportion of women form part of interstate migration flows, especially from rural to urban areas. On average, 18% more women than men form part of migrant flows.

Some cases involve intensive female migration, as in Tijuana, Baja California, a city on the border with the United States, that exerts a strong attraction due to its concentration of in-bond plants for the clothing industry. More than 50% of the labor force in Tijuana is made up of women aged between 15 and 25; only 19.1% are originally from the state of Baja California, and the rest are mainly from the states of Sinaloa, Jalisco, Michoacan and Oaxaca.

Such workers are generally single, divorced, unwed mothers or widows, many of whom have low levels of education and therefore often are not aware of their labor rights. In a large number of cases, their stay in Tijuana is temporary, since their aim is to cross the border to find illegal work in agricultural activities.

The main market for female labor is in services, even in regions, where modern production techniques (agricultural and industrial) prevail.

Of the illegal workers, who migrate to the United States, about 10% are women, aged 28 on average. Of that proportion, 16.2% have no education and 60.8 have taken primary courses.

Mexico's experiences of literacy campaigns

Mexico's attempts and experiences in reducing illiteracy rates and the educational deficiencies of the adult population in general have persisted throughout this century. However, it has also remained a persistent problem in that illiteracy is directly related to the standards of living of the population. In the 1990's, the country has gradually begun to overcome the economic crisis; a series of governmental programs attending to the neediest sectors of the population have been implemented, and both the education and the health care sectors are being given strong, decisive support.

At the beginning of this century, education policy mainly addressed the needs of the urban population, with a high school and higher education system designed to train the country's management teams. The first night schools for workers and agricultural technical schools were also created at this time.

In 1911, rudimentary or rural education schools were established, and it was through them, that literacy actions were mainly carried out.

In 1919, the government turned educational matters over to town and city councils, and in 1921 the National University was given the task of guiding and supervising education throughout the country. The Public Education Secretariat was also founded at that time and began organizing Cultural Missions, whose aim was to establish a school in every village with the aid of volunteers. A total of 117,000 people were taught literacy during that year.

Cultural Missions were subsequently turned into a Department of the Public Education Secretariat, and the Rural Schools Department (formerly the Indian Culture Department) was established. The Urban Culture Mission was created in 1932.

In 1934, amendments were made to article 3 of the Constitution, which deals with education in Mexico. Adult, technical and agricultural education were promoted.

In that year the illiteracy rate stood at 50%, education of the masses became a priority objective, and a literacy campaign was launched, bringing illiteracy levels down to 45%. The National Institute for Workers' Education was founded in 1933.

At the outset of the 1940's Cultural Missions and the education system were restructured through the Organic Law on Public Education.

The Law on Public Education was enacted as part of that process, and acted as the legal foundation for the initiation of a National Literacy Campaign. All Mexicans residing on national territory aged 18 to 60, who were not physically impaired, and who were literate, were obliged to teach a fellow countryman between the ages of 6 and 40 to read and write.

The Literacy and Extracurricular Education Directorate was established during this period.

Despite the actions carried out during that decade, the illiteracy rate remained at similar levels, and in 1930 43% of the population was illiterate.

In 1951 the Regional Center for Adult Education and Functional Literacy for Latin America (CREFAL) was created following the General Conference of UNESCO held in Mexico. The literacy campaign continued and Educational Action Centers were established together with Popular Reading Rooms, Extramural Education Centers, Industrial and Agricultural Labor Training Centers and Regional Basic Education Centers.

During the 1960's impetus was given to literacy campaigns through the mass media, mobile classrooms were diversified, Popular Reading Rooms were restructured, Cultural Missions were expanded, primary education radio programs and secondary education television programs were launched and 40 experimental adult education centers were established.

For its part, CREFAL focused its research on functional literacy in rural areas.

In the period from 1964 to 1970 a new literacy campaign was launched to prevent any Mexican of school age from remaining illiterate.

Illiteracy rates among the population over 15 years of age were reduced from 34.6% in 1960 to 25.8% in 1970, according to data stemming from the 8th and 9th General Population Censuses.

During the 1970-1976 period, actions against illiteracy were carried out within the framework of permanent education. The 40 Adult Education Centers became Basic Education Centers for Adults (CEBA).

The Federal Education Law, which established a federal system of certifying officially valid courses, was enacted in 1972.

The Public Education Secretariat (SEP) gave priority to the implementation of the National Plan for Adult Education and the National Law on Adult Education went into effect in 1975.

In 1977 the National Education Plan for Underprivileged Groups was established and led to the creation of the "Education for All" Program.

The National Council on Education for Underprivileged Groups was founded in 1978, and both the Directorate for Indian Education and the Adult Education Directorate were established in the same year.

In 1981 the National Literacy Program was implemented, regulations on Community Education went into effect, and the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) was founded.

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INEA carried out its actions on the basis of 4 main programs, these being Literacy Teaching, Basic Education, Cultural Promotion, and Labor Training. State Delegations were created in the country's 32 states in order to implement these programs.

Since that time, INEA is in charge of carrying out research to formulate suitable teaching strategies and to study the characteristics and needs of adult education.

The Institute has designed education models on the basis of contents and strategies aimed at different age groups, ethnic and cultural groups, geographical locations and social strata, bearing in mind the need to promote national identity, culture and unity.

The methodological principles of self-teaching and social solidarity are used in adult education, in order to implement educational practices outside the school system.

This type of education is carried out with the participation of volunteers, many of which are young people, who in the main have completed their secondary education, and who are trained to assist the education of adults.

The materials prepared by the Institute for Literacy Programs are designed to promote the solid development of the skills and capabilities required for reading and writing and elementary arithmetics. An Editorial Program also exists to prevent students from falling back into illiteracy due to lack of practice.

The Institute also attends to the needs of children aged 10 to 14, who do not know how to read and write or who dropped out of school, through a primary-level program designed specifically to address their needs, as a means of preventing one of the causes of illiteracy among adults.

The Institute also has special literacy and post-literacy programs for the most numerous ethnic groups.

The post-literacy stage provides continuity to the education process through teaching materials focusing on health care, nutrition, civic education, family planning, culture and ecology.

Adult education programs are based on the principle, that learning is a natural right of all human beings, and therefore cover aspects of individual development outside the formal education system.

The policy to modernize education (1989-1994) seeks to modify the education system to address the needs of every individual in society, and defines

literacy as a preparatory study for primary instruction in the nonformal education.

In order to have a more efficient formal system, important modifications are being made to avoid the student's desertion.

Adults have been encouraged not to drop out of their studies by the preparation of educational materials, designed to cover different needs in accordance with the characteristics, interests, age groups, geographical location, social strata and ethnic origin of the population.

In order to provide quality service in adult education, teaching materials have been changed, teacher training has been improved, and a more flexible range of materials is being used, with the aid of radio and television programming. The Institute supervises over 2,500 Community Education Centers in rural areas and 211 in urban zones, known as Urban Permanent Education Centers. In addition, it attends to the needs of migrant day laborers in different states of the Republic through a program of camps.

Two models for teaching literacy and elementary arithmetics have been created for Spanish-speaking groups, one for rural areas and the other for urban dwellers. The Institute is also currently carrying out a series of radio broadcasts of literacy programs for the urban population and is developing another series for rural areas.

The needs of Indian groups are being addressed through 25 projects containing different materials for each group. In such projects courses are taught in native languages, Spanish is taught as a second language and basic arithmetics are also included. Mimeographs are available, so that adults can prepare their own reading materials on topics that are of interest to them.

Different reading materials covering subjects, that are closely linked to community education have been prepared in order to support the literacy teaching process and prevent participants from relapsing into illiteracy. Audiovisual materials on matters related to community well-being (the environment, health care, etc.) also strengthen the process of education. All materials are free, and the Institute also provides them on request to non-governmental organizations, basic education centers (CEBA) and governmental and private agencies, that have education programs for their workers.

By disseminating and promoting its activities and making use of its institutional structure, the Institute is able to identify the social groups and citizens, that are interested in taking part in education actions and attending directly to adults. Coverage is therefore very widespread, and thousands of volunteers join up, when literacy programs are launched.

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One of the ongoing actions of the Institute is to disseminate information on the problem of illiteracy, in order to create greater awareness of the importance of taking part in literacy programs.

Follow-up procedures are carried out on a nationwide basis, in order to gain insights into the literacy teaching process and pinpoint reorientation needs; a method of evaluating the results of the learning process has also been implemented to assess, whether students' literacy skills are sufficient to allow them to continue with the process of education.

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Chapter 12

A POST-LITERACY PROJECT WITH THE WOMEN OF THE INDIAN COMMUNITY OF SAN LORENZO, COLOMBIA

This paper attempts to present an overview of Colombia, to describe and evaluate the Colombian literacy policies, to tell the story of Carmelina as a typical Indian woman of San Lorenzo and to introduce a pedagogical model of a post-literacy programme, based on the concept of sustained health, which was developed with the San Lorenzo women.

The concept of sustained health is operationalized through a process, which articulates group production of food, nutrition as a source of health, the development of gender identity and the improvement of the quality of life.

1.   An overview of Colombia

Colombia is the northest country of South America, with borders on the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. It is located on the Equatorial line, which determines a tropical climate, modified only by the height variations above the level of the ocean. Colombia has 1,141,748 km^2 and a population of 32 million inhabitants, of which 28.5% live in the rural areas and 71.5% in the urban centres. The demographic growth has been decreasing during the last 20 years to reach 2.4% today.

Colombian economy depends mainly on primary products like coffee, banana flowers, petroleum, coal, gold and some manufactured products like clothing and leather goods.

The national product in 1989 was of US$6,142 billions and the external debt was of US$16,000.000.

69% of the Gross National Product belongs to 3.2% of the population; 20% to 45.3% of the population, and 51.5% of the population gets 11% of the G.N.P.

More than 40% of the population lives in poverty and the unemployment of the economically active population is around 12%.

Out of each 100 children of school age, only 80 could enter elementary school; of these, only 32 could finish 5th grade. Furthermore, 37.2% of the youngsters entered high school, but only 11% could finish it.

There are 11% illiterates in the country, out of which 8% are women, and most of them live in the rural areas.

2.   Colombian policies on adult education

Traditionally the literacy activities in Colombia have been compensatory and carried out by religious groups, who came to America, ignoring the native religious and cultural patterns of the Indians. They imposed Christianity and the norms and values of Europe in such a way, that the world vision of the natives, as well as that of the blacks, imported as slaves, was marginalized.

The first legislation about Adult Education dates since 1903 and then, different programmes have been developed - none of them has been specific for women. Their focus was based on the pedagogy of transmission of contents, values and patterns of behaviour. Besides, they were compensatory in the sense that they were designed for the ones that could not attend school as children. That is, these programmes were for the popular sectors of society.

As the basic education for adults was of the same kind as that of the children, the rate of drop-out was high: 60%. Adults were not motivated to follow courses designed for children.

Since 1980, Colombian government attempts to put the problem of adult illiteracy in focus according to the goal of the UNESCO Principal Project, and so, massive campaigns of literacy began to introduce in their discourse the concept of participation.

The first of these campaigns began in 1980 under the name of Simon Bolivar, and the second one began in 1982 with the name of Instruction, National Campaign (CAMINA).

Both campaigns were based on the concourse of governmental offices, non governmental organizations and communities. But the discourse of participation remained a formality without a real meaning.

That is, communities could not make decisions about the educational content and the methodology of their programmes.

The pedagogical focus of both campaigns continued to be compensatory in practice, but the content was selected by the Ministry of Education according to the perceived interest of adults: work, family, environment, community and state.

Since 1987 the government drew up a new educational policy, called Cultural and Educational Action. It was built upon the popular education experiences of non governmental organizations and of universities.

The goal of this policy is:

> To educate participating citizens, engaged in the consolidation of a democratic society, with ability to be creative and a critical attitude towards the development of science and technology. These men and women, should be actors in the production of a national identity by recognizing and enriching their history, values and culture" (MEN:1988).

Since 1988 to date, educational policies on adult literacy were operationalized into programmes and projects developed by universities, non governmental organizations and communities. Special priority has been given to adult education projects for women and for ethnic minorities.

The following are the programmes set up for the period 1991-1994:

1. Literacy and enforcement of reading and writing
2. Basic education for adults
3. Continuing education for social participation and self-management.

All of these programmes have in the horizon the principles and practices of popular education. That is, it is a compromise with the goals of popular sectors of society; it is a part of a process of popular organization and social movements; it is democratic and dialogical; it is critical; and it is related to the broad process of development (M. Acevedo, 1991).

In the following section of this paper, Carmelina, an indian woman of San Lorenzo, tells her story, to contextualize a post-literacy project for women, which defines adult basic education according to their learning needs. This project is an alternative to traditional adult education programmes.

3.   The story of Carmelina

> My name is Carmelina. I am 35 years old. I am an Indian, but I don't know which my ethnic group is, because we only reorganized our

tribal government 8 years ago. Before that, we were just peasants, who worked in our small farms, growing coffee. This crop had replaced our traditional crops of foods.

Our tribal government (The Cabildo) made an agreement with a non govern-mental organization, named Foundation for Community Alternatives (FUNDALCO) four years ago. Under this agreement Fundalco began to give us assistance to develop a popular education programme aimed towards cultural and productive development based on self management.

Our community bought a farm in which Fundalco assisted us to set up systems of agricultural production, in harmony with our ecosystem.

The community farm was divided into small lots to be worked by groups of men. One day a group of women went to the farm and asked for a lot of land to grow food to feed our families. Our men were surprised; some of them didn't like it; but we were firm in our decision, and there we are, working our lot for over 3 years. As we brought food to our homes, our men began to like our work in the community farm.

I had my first child, when I was 17 years old. I knew I was pregnant, when my period didn't come for 3 months and my stomach began to grow... I went to the doctor, and he told me I was pregnant. I felt embarrassed, because I didn't know, how my baby could come out from my stomach! I asked the doctor about it and he told me!

I have 5 children now. I gave birth to my second baby by myself. I was alone at home, when the baby came. My neighbours came to help me, when they heard the cry of the baby. The following day I was already working in our small farm.

I live with my husband, even though we are not married by law. He works for a salary in a big farm. We have a very small farm behind our house. There I also work, and the children help after school.

Some years ago, we went to the city to work and save some money to build our house. I want to have a nice house with a room for every child and a living room. So far we just have two rooms and a kitchen.

Every day I get up at 6 a.m. I make breakfast with tortillas and chocolate... once in a while we eat eggs.

After breakfast, my husband goes to work, and the children to the school. I clean the house, work in our farm, and then I sit down to make baskets. I listen to the radio, while working. Around 11 a.m I fix lunch: soup with potatoes, carrots and yuca; fried plantans; black beans and coffee or juice.

After lunch my girls help doing the washing up, the boys work in the farm with their father, and I make baskets again; I sell them in town.

I make dinner, while working on the baskets. I fix rice, beans and fried plantans.

Men don't help in the home business. They only bring the wood for cooking. Every Sunday we go to church and to the market. I don't have any recreation... I don't have spare time to have fun...

> Since I have been working in the community farm I have learned a lot.
> We grow soy and beans, which are rich in proteins; we also grow
> hens, curies and rabbits, whose meat provides proteins; we also grow
> medicinal plants, which help relieve some body aches.
>
> We attend workshops on Saturdays, in which we have learned about
> our body, our sexuality and our health. There, we have also learned to
> like ourselves and to appreciate our lives...
>
> I couldn't write well before, but now I write the recipes we make with
> the products we grow in the farm. I also write about the medical value
> of our plants, and about the nutritive value of our food, we have been
> making print out after every workshop, in which we share with other
> women, what we learned about nutrition, health and the production of
> vegetables and small animals for food. You don't believe it, but I feel
> like an author!"

The story of Carmelina could be considered as a typical story of the women
of San Lorenzo, were the project of post-literacy is developed by
FUNDALCO.

There are 40 women between 15 years old and "I don't remember it..." The
families have an average of 6 children and in general the first child was
born, when its mother was 15 or 17 years old.

Among these women there are 4 community mothers, who can read and
write. Some women are still attending high school. But most of them can
hardly read and write. After each workshop a print out is made by them
with its content. In this way, the need to communicate something, that is
considered valuable in the life of a woman, motivates the writing.

These women feel shy talking about sexuality but some group dynamics
have helped them to feel easy with each other and with the women, who
coordinate the workshop. There has developed some "complicity among
women".

This project attempts to train production groups of women in the growth of
crops and small animals to feed their families. The project is based on an
agriecological view of production, and it also aims at community develop-
ment.

This is in essence a project of popular education, because it emanates from
the sociocultural reality of women and advances through an educational
process to meet some goals, set up by the participants, which are related to
the betterment of their quality of life.

This project has a target group, native women from San Lorenzo, for the
following reasons:

1. They have shown great interest in developing activities toward the improvement of their community life in activities oriented in such a way as indicated by FUNDALCO.

2. Women are important social agents in the community, even though their work is not socially recognized, because of the patriarcal structure of society.

3   Women are important agents for the protection of the environment and the preservation of health. They live and work within an ecosystem, of which they take wood to cook, water and food.

4. Women are important factors for human development. They handle the complex network of family relations and are responsible for children's care. Without them, a fine project of cultural and economic development could not be achieved.

5. Family health care and nutrition is a job of women in San Lorenzo. There, most of the causes of disease come from the lack of an appropriate diet.

4.   The pedagogical model of the project

The selection, organization and sequence of the content of this project follow principles of curriculum flexibility, participation of the women in this process, sociocultural relevance, dialogue and interaction of experiences and knowledge. These principles conform a new concept of adult education oriented toward the development of every day life of the popular sectors of society.

Curriculum flexibility is expressed in the process of selection and organization of the content of the programme. This organization does not follow the order of the academic disciplines; they follow the order of every day life of the participants as the starting point of their closer experiences.

On the other hand, the workshops are developed in such a way, that there are no barriers between the different themes of health, nutrition, food production, food cooking and self-esteem. These themes flow easily into the context of each workshop.

The succession of the activities in the workshop begins with the everyday experience of women: the making of meals; then, it continues with some information about the body systems and their nutritional needs. While women cook in the community kitchen, there is a talk about diseases, produced by the lack of an appropriate diet. Information is also given about the role of the women in the family and in the community and how to

strengthen their self-esteem. At the end of the workshop all eat the meal that have been prepared.

Participation of women is realized in several ways: in the selection of themes of each workshop; in the preparation of meals with products, that are grown by themselves; in the provision of traditional medicaments to cure some bodily diseases; in the presentation of health and family problems to be discussed in the group; and in the sharing of stories and events related to female life and to family problems.

Sociocultural relevance is expressed through the themes treated in the workshops. They are related to the every day questions which women have about their lives. What they learn is also related to their social and physical environment. But what is most important is the fact that the workshops give excellent opportunities for women to meet and share their problems, fears and joys. It is indeed of great value for women to have a place, where they can meet and exchange thoughts and feelings, dreams as well as realities. Ordinarily they have to work alone and are seldom given time for enjoyment.

The following chart provides a clear view of the pedagogical model of the project.

THEMES OF THE WORKSHOPS

Cooking	Health	Nutrition	Self-esteem	Production	Culture
Steamed curi	The human body: male and female	Proteins	Gender roles	How to grow curies	The life of grandparents as compared with today's youngsters
Fried rabbit	Menstrua-tion, preg-nancy and delivery	Nutritional value of the meat of rabbit	Men and women work	How to grow rabbits	Stories about pregnancy and first menstruation
Peanut butter	The care of children	Calories	The care of girls and boys	How to grow peanuts	Medicinal plants of the region
Chachafruto's cake	Digestion	Proteins, calories and vitamins	Stories about girls	How to grow chachafrutos	Common diet of the region
Soy milk and candy sidra	Diseases of children	Vitamins	Men and women relationships	How to grow soys	Community celebrations
Cake of plantan's bellota	Diseases of men and women	Low cost protein	Family relationships	How to grow plantans	Stories about family life in San Lorenzo

In the context of popular education the educational process is taken as a dialogue of knowledges. The traditional knowledge of the participants; that is, their experience and world view which provides them with forms to interpret their lives, and the systematic knowledge of the coordinators of the workshops: a nurse, a teacher and an expert in agriculture.

The dialogue flows around the kitchen, the physical setting were women spend most of their time, and therefore the space, where they feel most comfortable.

This dialogue as regards experiences and knowledge is also important, not only because it is about relevant issues of the women's life, but because it contributes to the improvement of their self-esteem.

Through this kind of dialogue it was found that:

- The first menstruation arrives, when girls are eleven years old and that it was a surprise to them.

- Most women didn't understand the process of pregnancy even though it was accepted very naturally.

- People believe that breast feeding is good for the health of the babies.

- Boys go out with their father, and girls stay home with their mother.

- The best food is for the father because he works for a salary.

- The most common aches are headaches, diarrhea and colds.

- The typical diet is as follows:
  Breakfast: tortillas and chocolate
  Lunch: Soup, rice and juice
  Dinner: Rice, bean and plantans.

With this information a fine diet was drawn counting proteins, calories, vitamins, minerals and water using the products, that were grown in the community farm.

The following are the main achievements of the project:

1. Women understood the concept of sustained health based on good nutrition with the products they grow.

2. The pedagogical model follows the principles of popular education, according to which people have a traditional knowledge, which has been recuperated to give a training, which responds to their vital needs.

3. The project has encouraged alternative diets based on local products.

4. Some new products like soy beans and peanuts have been introduced in the people's diet. They are easy to grow and less expensive.

5. Some parts of the plants, that have not been used for human nutrition have been recuperated, like the "bellota" of the plantans, which is high in proteins.

6. Some cooking recipes have been tried and widely used during community events like football games and parties.

7. Some elements have been provided to enrich family relationships and to increase women's self-esteem.

8. The workshops as well as the work on the community farm have favoured collective thinking about community problems and recreation events.

9. Some links have been established with the school, the health post and state family programmes.

10. Groups of women for agricultural production have been consolidated

11. Groups of women are writing print outs to share their experiences in the community.

5.   Final Remarks

The positive experiences of FUNDALCO in San Lorenzo with the project of post-literacy in connection with health education give strong support to the alternative of designing adult education programmes around problems, that are meaningful to women: health and production. These problems relate to learning needs of the popular sectors of society. Furthermore, they give a wholistic view of development and could be treated in such a way, that women could be stimulated to consideration of their gender condition.

Health problems are important not least in the light of the following observations:

*   The most important causes of mortality in Colombia among women between 15 and 44 years old, are:

- Tumors	16.5%
- Accidents	7.3%
- Cerebral complications	6.4%
- Homicide	6.2%
- Pregnancy and delivery	6.0%
- Heart problems	4.2%
- Digestive problems	3.4%

- The main causes of morbidity among women between 15 and 44 years old, are:

  - Delivery   46.0%
  - Dental problems   11.0%
  - Abortion   8.0%
  - Gynecological problems   4.0%

- The main causes of mortality among children, are

  - Prenatal problems   19.0%
  - Annoxic affections   18.7%
  - Digestive problems   14.0%
  - Respiratory infections   11.1%
  - Nutritional deficiency   4.2%

(Patiño: 1988)

Themes about *production* are important for women:

- According to 1985 National census, 31.6% of the women older than 12, were economically active and their level of unemployment was 4.5% lower than that of men.

- There has been an increase in the employment of women during the last 25 years.

- Between 20% and 23% of women in Colombia are family heads.

- There is clear evidence that women in the rural areas work more than 16 hours a day.

Therefore literacy and adult education programmes based on themes of health and production are considered to be meaningful to women and contribute to community development.

By A. Pedrosa (1990):

1. To set up literacy programmes based on the communicational sense of being expressions of popular movements, such as those of women. Besides, making these programmes as communication spaces for women, since they live isolated in their homes.

2. To establish literacy and adult education programmes in order to integrate people through the production of printed materials of a kind, that has been done by the women in San Lorenzo.

3. To set up literacy and adult education programmes as a means for community development.

During the closing section of this project a woman of San Lorenzo said: "This is much better than taking evening classes at the adult education centre; here we learned things that help us to lead a better life".

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Chapter 13

GENDER SUBORDINATION AND LITERACY IN BRAZIL

Mimbó people descend from slaves. When slaves were delivered, their owner gave them this piece of land, which is still occupied by the community today. Along all this time here the group has been living together, living our own life. Few people from Mimbó marry people from other villages. That's why the community goes on living the same way. All live by the family law. Mimbó community is one only family, with around 300 people today. We are all relatives.

The first community school was created in 1971 and was set up down by the river. Before that, too many people were illiterate. Most could not even sign their names. The few who knew something had learned through much hardship. The community had joined in paying for a private teacher. That was my first school, with this teacher. He'd beat me so much that I had to leave school. I only learned how to read at the age of 14, when I went to live in a village nearby. I've studied for three and a half years.

In 1971 I was the first Mimbó teacher. (...) so far not one student has stopped studying. Only four students have left: they were the sons of clerks from a company that is invading our land, they've gone to another State.

We have three classes: 18 children in preschool, 34 in 1st grade and a multigraded class has 12 students from 2nd to 4th grades. Many students fail, but they remain at school the following term. But I think it could not be otherwise, for there are too many difficulties.

Students do not leave school 'cause their parents wouldn't let them. Parents even say I may punish and beat them, but I don't do that, 'cause I think it's mostly my fault, I can't give them better assistance. Yet this school is ours, it's our community, our family's school and we have to care for it. We must improve it, and we need help for that.

Around Mimbó there are other schools in other villages. They don't have as many difficulties as our school does. It even seems there is something against us. (...)

This is our school's experience, our people's experience. Our school is forgotten, 'cause our people are forgotten. We are treated as if we were not human like everybody. Everything is hard for us. The only thing really ours is our land - and that they are taking from us (Idelzuita Rabelo da Paixão, 1987:113-14).

The speech by teacher Idelzuita is no doubt a strong one. Her unadorned, matter-of-fact account describes the rigours of a great number of Brazilians. Her speech will also punctuate the present paper on gender subordination[1] and illiteracy in Brazil.

My central argument sustains that the search for solutions to the problem of Brazilian male and female illiteracy implies reflecting on the woman as schoolteacher. Instead of analyzing adult female illiteracy then, I shift the focus to the way along which women like Idelzuita teach boys and girls, blacks and whites. This shift is justifiable since, in Brazil,

1. illiteracy is not a mere heritage from the past, but fully reaches school-aged population (according to Constitution, schooling is compulsory from age 7 to 14);

2. men and women share equivalent educational destinies. Inequalities concerning access to, and staying in school draw on factors (social class, urban or rural dwelling, region of birth, and race belonging) other than sex. Gender subordination is evident from sexist components of curricula and in the sex distribution of schoolteachers;

3. elementary school teaching is a major female job, almost exclusively carried out by women in adverse conditions; and

4. neither organized sectors from civil society (women's groups, unions, or adult illiteracy) nor the state have ever ascribed priority to adult women's illiteracy.

1. Idelzuita is black and lives in rural northeast: learned to read and write at the age of 14

Available information on the extension and features of illiteracy in Brazil - bearing in mind that literacy is defined as the ability to read and write a simple message[2] - indicates some trends that we share with other countries, and perhaps other that are peculiar to our country.

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[1] Gender relations are here understood as those socially constructed, in the context of patriarchal societies, on the basis of sex attributes. For a discussion of this concept, see Scott (1986) and Bleichmar (1985).

[2] This concept of "literate" (one who can read and write a simple message) has been adopted in Brazilian censuses and PNADS - national household sample surveys - since 1872. Such condition is assessed through self-classification and seems to result in overestimation of literate population. Data here analyzed and transcribed, except when otherwise indicated, were taken from PNAD 1987. PNADs are carried out annually in between censuses - held every tenth year - and do not include rural population spread out in Northern regions. Thus an unknown factor must be added to overestimation, since rural populations, as compared to urban ones, tend to meet more hindrances to become literate.

First of all, the global rate of 19% illiterate among the population aged 10 and over conceals sharp regional, socio-economic inequalities (Table 1).

Table 1: Percentages of illiterate people by sex and different age groups, according to skin colour, zone and region. Brazil 1987.

SEX / AGE	SKIN COLOUR		ZONE		REGIONS					TOTAL
	WHITE	NON-W	URBAN	RURAL	N *	NE	SE	S	C-W	
MEN										
5 AND OVER	17.4	36.9	18.6	44.8	21.7	48.3	16.0	15.6	23.5	25.8
7 AND OVER	13.0	32.6	13.9	41.2	16.0	44.7	11.5	11.1	18.8	21.4
10 AND OVER	11.2	29.2	11.7	38.0	12.1	41.0	9.7	9.9	16.2	18.8
15 AND OVER	11.4	29.0	11.7	38.0	11.5	40.2	10.1	10.7	16.7	18.6
40 AND OVER	19.2	44.5	19.8	53.1	20.1	55.0	17.5	20.1	30.3	28.9
7-14(1)	18.9	47.7	21.7	50.1	28.1	56.7	16.9	12.9	25.5	30.5
15-39(2)	6.9	21.2	7.4	29.2	7.8	31.7	5.9	5.6	10.4	13.0
WOMEN										
5 AND OVER	18.5	35.6	19.8	43.2	21.4	42.6	18.2	17.6	23.2	25.6
7 AND OVER	14.4	31.6	15.8	39.2	16.2	38.8	14.2	13.5	18.6	21.6
10 AND OVER	13.1	28.9	14.4	36.1	12.9	35.4	13.1	12.7	16.5	19.6
15 AND OVER	14.0	30.5	15.4	37.9	13.7	36.4	14.3	14.0	17.7	20.5
40 AND OVER	26.4	53.7	29.3	64.5	29.5	57.7	27.5	27.9	38.7	36.5
7-14(1)	16.1	35.0	17.7	42.5	23.4	45.6	13.6	11.4	21.5	25.3
15-39(2)	6.6	18.4	7.5	24.7	7.4	24.3	6.4	6.3	8.8	11.5
TOTAL										
5 AND OVER	18.0	36.2	19.2	44.0	21.5	45.3	17.1	16.6	23.3	25.7
7 AND OVER	13.7	32.1	14.9	40.2	16.2	41.7	12.9	12.3	18.7	21.5
10 AND OVER	12.2	29.0	13.1	37.1	12.5	38.1	11.4	11.3	16.3	19.2
15 AND OVER	12.8	29.8	13.6	37.9	12.6	38.2	12.3	12.3	17.2	19.6
40 AND OVER	23.0	49.2	24.9	56.7	24.8	56.4	22.7	24.1	34.4	32.9
7-14(1)	17.5	38.9	19.7	46.4	25.7	51.1	15.3	12.2	23.5	27.9
15-39(2)	6.8	19.8	7.5	27.0	7.6	27.8	6.2	5.9	9.6	12.2

* EXCLUSIVE OF RURAL POPULATION
(1) SCHOOL AGE
(2) AGE OF HIGHEST PARTICIPATION IN LABOUR FORCE   Source: FIBGE. PNAD 1987.

Rates are higher in the inland (38%) than in the cities (13%), in poorer regions than in richer (41% in the Northeast and 10% in the Southeast). Also, like other multiracial societies, non-white population meets more hindrances to become literate (among whites the rate is 12%, and among non-whites, 29%). The superimposing of these living conditions results in

that, among 20 million Brazilian illiterates (aged 10 and over), 41% are *negro*[3] Northeasterners - yet *negroes* living in the Northeast are only 20% of the Brazilian population. In other words, as long as race discrimination persists, illiteracy will not disappear, for while 63% of illiterates are *negroes*, they make up 43% of the population aged 10 and over.

Unlike other underdeveloped countries, the chances of becoming literate are practically the same for men and women: within the same population aged 10 and over, male illiteracy rate is 19% and female 20%. In fact, as will be shortly discussed, the Brazilian education system has been allowing equal access to girls and boys along the last forty years (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Percentages of illiterate people aged 10 and over by region, zone, and sex. Brazil 1987.

REGION	URBAN			RURAL			TOTAL		
	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
NORTH *	12.1	12.9	12.5	-	-	-	12.1	12.9	12.5
NORTHEAST	26.8	25.2	25.9	58.5	50.7	54.6	41.0	35.4	38.1
SOUTHEAST	7.2	11.2	9.2	23.9	26.6	25.2	9.7	13.2	11.5
SOUTH	7.3	10.8	9.1	14.6	16.9	15.7	9.9	12.7	11.3
CENT.-WEST	11.1	12.7	11.9	29.1	28.8	29.0	16.3	16.5	16.4
BRAZIL	11.7	14.4	13.1	38.1	36.2	37.2	18.9	19.6	19.3

* Exclusive of rural population   Source: FIBGE. PNAD 1987

Table 3: Percentages of illiterate people by region, skin colour and sex. Brazil 1987.

REGION	WHITE			BLACK			MIXED			"NEGRO" *		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
NORTH **	8.5	9.0	8.8	28.1	24.5	26.3	13.1	14.3	13.7	13.4	14.5	14.0
NORTHEAST	31.8	27.1	29.3	47.9	47.9	47.9	45.1	38.9	41.9	45.4	39.8	42.5
SOUTHEAST	7.0	10.4	8.8	17.4	22.3	19.9	14.9	18.6	16.8	15.4	19.4	17.4
SOUTH	7.8	10.1	9.0	16.6	25.5	21.1	21.3	27.0	24.1	20.4	26.7	23.5
CENT.-WEST	11.4	11.8	11.6	34.9	35.5	35.2	19.8	20.4	20.1	20.9	21.5	21.2
BRAZIL	11.3	13.2	12.3	27.7	31.2	29.5	29.5	28.6	29.0	29.2	28.9	29.1

* NEGRO: BLACK + MIXED (SEE NOTE 3)
** EXCLUSIVE OF RURAL POPULATION   Source: FIBGE. PNAD 1987

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3 *Negro* are the segments of population having black or dark skin colour, thus encompassing blacks, indian and all other mixed, liable to be discriminated upon on the basis of their skin colour. It is the same denomination adopted by blacks/mixed organized movements struggling against racism in Brazil.

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Two other trends though must be stressed: a gradual, slow decrease in illiteracy rates has been followed by a steady growth in the actual numbers of illiterate people (attested up to last Census[4] - see Figures 1 and 2).
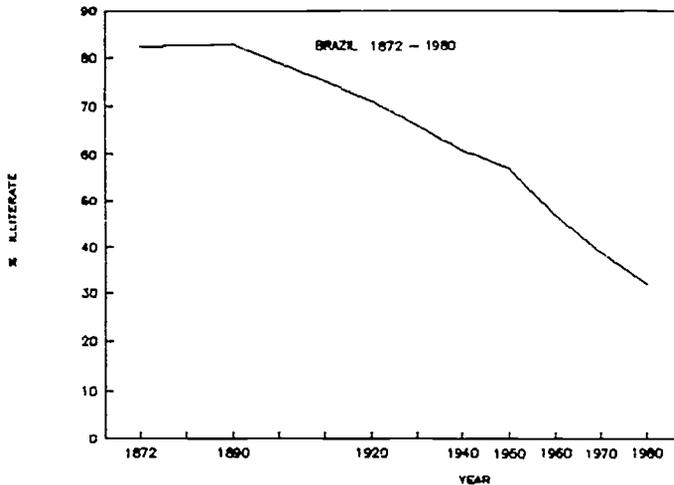
Source: Ferrari 1985:42,on data from demographic censuses.

Figure 1: Decrease in illiteracy rates among people aged 5 and over.
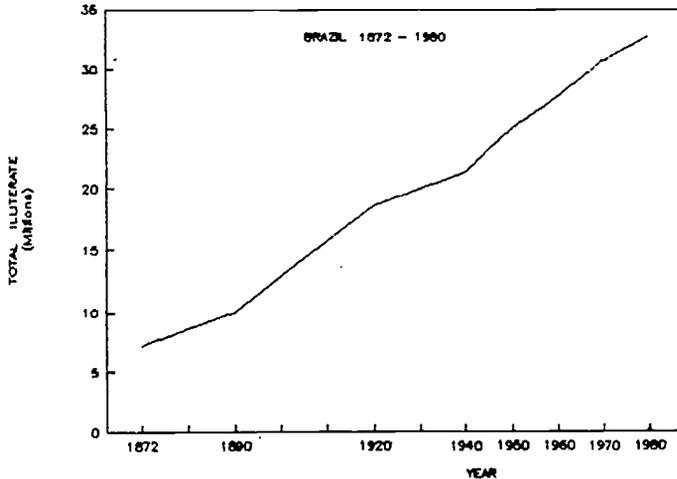
Source: Ferrari 1985:42,on data from demographic censuses.

Figure 2: Increase in total numbers of illiterate people aged 5 and over.

The continuous fall of illiteracy rates shows only one inflecting point, around the 50's, when an expansion of elementary school was followed by a

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4   The progressive growth of absolute numbers of illiterate people has been analyzed until 1980 (census data), not 1987 (PNAD data), due to above mentioned possible PNAD's overestimating literate population.

youth-and-adult literacy campaign, which has probably been the sole to have a significant impact on illiteracy rates.

Since the 30's, many campaigns had been launched to teach youth and adults, who had either never been to school or left it too early. In spite of their often innovative methodologies and varying proposals (using media, focusing on the student's culture, drawing on community support), adult literacy rates have grown very little (Figure 3, Table 4). And in spite of recent endeavour by civil or religious organizations having emerged in the 80's (a moment of political democratization after military government, when ideological suspicions became subdued and repression was reduced), their impact has been meagre in face of the great numbers of adults to be taught to read and write.
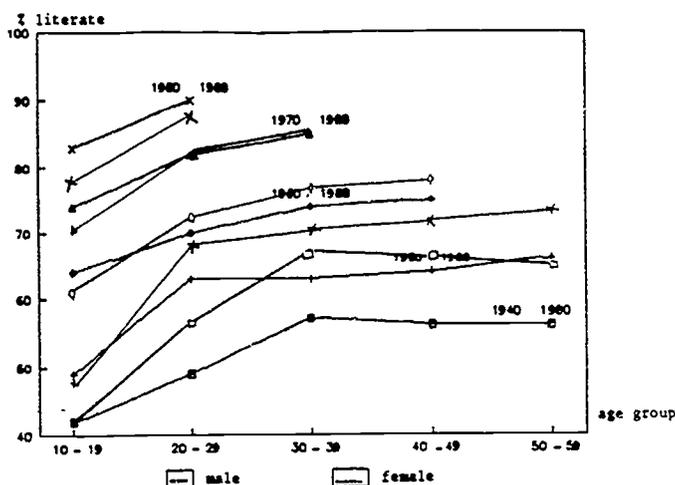
Figure 3: Literacy rates for male and female cohorts. Brazil.

Table 4: Literacy rates for male and female cohorts. Brazil, 1940-1988.*

	COHORTS									
AGE	1940 TO 1988		1950 TO 1988		1960 TO 1988		1970 TO 1988		1980 TO 1988	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
10-19	42	42	48	49	62	64	71	74	78	83
20-29	57	49	69	63	73	70	82	82	88	90
30-39	68	57	71	63	77	74	85	85		
40-49	67	56	72	64	78	75				
50-59	66	56	74	66						

* DATA FOR 1988 DO NOT INCLUDE NORTHERN REGION'S RURAL POPULATION

Source: FIBGE. Demographic Censuses. 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980; PNAD 1988.

This is not new, nor specific to Brazil. When evaluating adult literacy in rural areas, Nagel (1985:58) emphasizes that, in spite of large sums and human resources employed, the success of literacy campaigns "has been dubious. They seem to be effective only in special political conditions, when literacy is one of the elements of broader processes of popular mobilization".

The increase in absolute numbers of illiterate people shows that basic school expansion has been smaller than population growth. That is, Brazilian society "has not been able to teach reading and writing to all members of each coming generation" (Ferrari, 1985:46).

In this sense illiteracy is not a legacy from the past, but is produced at every generation's current time, either through great numbers of children being left out of school, or through low productivity of teaching. Brazilian elementary school may be considered an "illiteracy storehouse" (National Commission for the International Illiteracy Year, 1990 apud Romão, 1990), for:

- 4.4 million school-aged children - of which 2.7 million are *negro* - find no place at school;

- 61% of school-aged children are delayed in relation to the grade they should be attending;

- it takes 2.2 years for a child to achieve 1st grade (World Bank, 1988);

- 7.2 million school-aged children are illiterate, making up 23% of total illiteracy numbers.

Such indicators suggest the extremely low level of education among Brazilians - who attend school for a bare 4.5 years in average (varying from 5.2 in the Southeast to 3.1 in the Northeast - see Table 5).

Macro-structural factors deriving from the model of development adopted by the elites in power, interacting with the reduced bargaining power of popular classes, are the most common explanations advanced. Within the school system these explanations find support in its ineffectiveness or rather, in the inadequate distribution of financial resources for education, perversely directed to free, public higher education institutions attended by the economic elite[5]. Precisely in those regions, where illiteracy rates are the highest, the lowest are the expenditures of educational resources per child: lower in rural than in urban areas, and the lowest in the Northeast (Table 6).

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[5] Children from Brazilian rich families attend private basic and middle school, but public universities. In higher education, 0.7% are students from families of monthly income up to one minimum-wage (US$60) and 47.3% come from families of incomes over 10 m-w (Rosemberg et al., 1985:37).

Table 5: Average years of schooling of people aged 10 and over by region, skin colour, and sex. Brazil 1987.

REGION	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	WHITE			BLACK			MIXED			"NEGRO" #		
				M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
NORTH ##	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.8	6.0	5.9	3.3	3.8	3.5	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6
NORTHEAST	2.8	3.3	3.1	3.8	4.2	4.0	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.8	2.6
SOUTHEAST	5.3	5.1	5.2	5.9	5.7	5.8	3.7	3.5	3.6	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.0
SOUTH	5.0	4.9	4.9	5.3	5.2	5.2	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.2
CENT.-WEST	4.6	4.8	4.7	5.4	5.6	5.5	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.8	4.1	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.9
BRAZIL	4.5	4.6	4.5	5.4	5.3	5.4	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.3

"NEGRO" POPULATION: BLACK+MIXED
EXCLUSIVE OF NORTHERN REGION'S RURAL POPULATION

Source: FIBGE. PNAD 1987

Table 6: Cost* of student/year in public basic school by region (US$). Brazil 1987.

REGION	ZONE	COST FACTORS					TOTAL
		LABOUR		MATERIAL			
		TEACHER	NON-TEACHER	CONSUMPT.	PERMANENT	OTHER	
NORTH	URBAN	35.4	18.4	10.2	2.4	1.1	67.5
	RURAL	22.4	2.1	10.9	4.1	0.7	40.2
	TOTAL	24.0	4.1	10.8	3.8	0.7	43.4
NORTHEAST	URBAN	27.3	17.3	10.1	2.7	2.3	59.7
	RURAL	8.6	2.3	13.0	3.4	1.2	28.5
	TOTAL	11.8	4.9	12.5	3.1	1.4	33.7
SOUTHEAST	URBAN	120.5	46.1	18.0	6.2	3.2	194.0
	RURAL	121.8	21.0	35.5	12.0	6.9	197.2
	TOTAL	123.3	29.7	28.6	9.5	5.1	196.2
SOUTH	URBAN	66.2	38.7	19.0	9.2	4.3	137.4
	RURAL	56.9	12.4	25.2	16.5	4.1	115.1
	TOTAL	58.7	17.3	24.0	15.1	4.1	119.2
CENTRAL-WEST	URBAN	32.5	28.2	6.9	3.5	1.1	72.2
	RURAL	19.2	4.5	7.0	4.1	2.9	37.7
	TOTAL	24.4	10.7	7.0	3.9	2.4	48.4

Direct operating costs

Source: XAVIER and MARQUES 1987, apud BRASIL. Ministerio da Educacao, 1990:78

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Resource insufficiency, bad distribution and inadequate administration have not only generated a shortage of places at school, but also the school system's inefficiency. In order to expand the number of vacancies with limited resources, the number of school periods at the same premises has been increased (mainly in dense urban areas), to a point that it is not uncommon to find children attending school for a mere three daily hours. Similarly, the expansion carried out without the corresponding necessary means has brought about the worst working conditions for school teaching: inadequate premises, lack of equipment, low pay (mainly for 1st to 4th grade teachers), absence of incentive for updating or for professional improvement, unsuitable professional training. It can thus be said that expansion of basic schooling - besides being insufficient - has been carried out at the expenses of a deterioration in teachers' working conditions. And, schoolteachers in Brazil are women.

2. Idelzuita is a woman, has attended school for three and a half years

> I only learned how to read, when I was 14. (...) I've studied for three and a half years. In 1971 I was the first Mimbó teacher (Idelzuita Rabelo da Paixão, 1987:113)

Descending from a black, poor family, Idelzuita lives in rural Northeast. Her own person condenses those living conditions which are most inten- sively rejected by the Brazilian school system. Thanks to the community's effort to pay for a private teacher, and then to the chance of having moved to a larger town, she could read and write at the age of 14. As most Brazilian women, both younger and older than her, her learning took place in the regular elementary school.

In fact, women have gradually had access to all school levels in Brazil along the past decades. They are today 52% of all students and 82% of teachers/ professors at all levels. Female average schooling level is slightly higher than male, in all regions and strata (Table 7).

Women are better students than men, show higher achievement rates (Rosemberg, 1975). Except for the top staff positions, the school system is increasingly becoming female.

The educational situation of men and women in Brazil thus seems to differ from the one depicted by current analyses on educational opportunities in underdeveloped, patriarchal societies (Stromquist, 1990). Lesser access to school for girls due to household work, or educational attention favouring male siblings - apparently common situations in many underdeveloped countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America - do not prevail in Brazil. On

the contrary, although differences are not highly significant, the trend in Brazil points to more schooling for girls even in less developed regions - which even show broader differences favouring girls - and for *negro* populations. Furthermore, during the most severe years of economic crisis (beginning of the 80's), a sharp decrease in male enrolment for middle school has paralleled an equally sharp increase in female enrolment, in the South (Rosemberg, 1989).

Table 7: Percentages of women among students aged 5 and over, by education level and grade attended in 1987.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND GRADE	REGION					BRAZIL
	N *	NE	SE	S	C-W	
PRESCHOOL	49.8	51.0	47.9	48.5	51.3	49.5
BASIC SCHOOL	51.7	53.8	49.2	49.2	50.3	50.9
1st GRADE	46.6	48.2	47.0	47.4	47.4	47.6
2nd GRADE	47.7	53.1	47.2	47.3	47.8	49.2
3rd GRADE	51.8	54.1	49.3	49.2	49.3	50.9
4th GRADE	55.3	58.4	47.6	49.2	51.3	51.6
5th GRADE	55.5	58.5	50.0	50.5	50.8	52.6
6th GRADE	57.2	60.1	53.2	52.8	55.9	55.2
7th GRADE	55.6	60.3	52.1	51.8	58.0	54.7
8th GRADE	53.3	62.4	54.0	50.8	54.9	55.5
MIDDLE SCHOOL	59.5	63.4	57.6	53.4	58.8	58.5
HIGHER EDUCATION (**)	52.7	57.1	50.3	54.5	56.1	52.6
TOTAL	52.2	54.1	50.1	49.9	51.5	51.5

* EXCLUSIVE OF RURAL POPULATION
** INCLUDING MASTER AND DOCTORATE COURSES

Source: FIBGE, PNAD 1987

Evidences we have been amassing on the educational situation of men and women in Brazil (Rosemberg et al., 1982; 1985; 1990; Rosemberg, 1989) do not indicate that we would be living through a sex revolution or reaching an egalitarian paradise: but they do point to an intricate relation between education, housework and labour market, there included the education system itself - an issue that will be discussed further on.

The access of women to education reflects in male and female literacy rates, which have been showing a trend to even up along the four past decades; in addition, there are subtle evidences that literate women tend to outnumber literate men. Thus the female illiteracy profile is practically identical to the male one; both *negro* women and men, living in rural Northeast, face the same arduous hindrances to become literate.

However, the trend toward equalizing male and female literacy rates is affected by age: first, male rates are higher than female in older groups, thus showing that female schooling has become more effective in relatively recent periods; secondly, since the 40's, female literacy rates have been higher than males' for the younger groups (Table 8), including school age (7 to 14).

A series of factors seem to have brought about these differences:

- demographic - for, even in Brazil, women have longer life expectancy than men;

- migratory - for a larger number of male adults migrate from poor, rural regions to urban centres where, in order to face labour require-ments, they seek and get alternative ways to learn how to read and write;

- historic - for school has only been admitting massive numbers of women along the last five decades; and

- socio-educational - for female literacy relies mostly on formal schooling.

If formal schooling during childhood and youth is the chief means to a cohort's literacy, then this is particularly true of women, who have fewer opportunities to learn during adult life. In fact, while programmes for adult literacy tend to have a slighter impact than expected, in the case of women this trend is sharpened: programmes in general seldom take into account limitations imposed on women, such as less mobility, fatigue due to overburden, or the unwillingness to do things out of home which might compete with their family role.

Illiteracy among school-aged girls and young women (which reaches about 3.8 million between 7 and 24 years old) thus tends to remain along their lives, unlike boys and young men.

On the other hand, the assessment that women's access to schooling is exceeding that of men's brings in two major issues: why this is taking place, and what the impact is of this longer stay at school on women's lives. For the moment, one can only systematize some reflections, given the insufficiency of Brazilian research on gender relations and education.

The attempt to face the first issue requires thinking simultaneously of economic and cultural determinants from a capitalist-dependent system in the process of modernizing and urbanizing itself, but which always involves a patriarchy rationale, grounded on sexual division of labour and on the control of women's sexuality.

Table 8: Literacy rates for people aged 5 and over by age-group and sex. Brazil, 1940-1988.

LITERACY (%)

AGE GROUP	1940 CENSUS A	B	C	1950 CENSUS A	B	C	1960 CENSUS A	B	C	1970 CENSUS A	B	C	PNAD 1976 A	B	C	PNAD 1978 A	B	C	1980 CENSUS A	B	C	PNAD 1987 A	B	C	PNAD 1988 A	B	C
5-9	13.5	14.1	50.4	12.6	13.4	50.9	18.9	19.6	50.0	28.8	30.2	50.7	32.9	35.4	51.1	31.7	33.4	50.5	32.1	34.1	50.9	34.4	37.3	51.6	36.3	37.7	51.7
10-14	39.3	40.3	50.3	42.8	44.7	50.9	59.1	61.1	50.7	68.3	71.8	51.2	79.7	83.5	51.0	78.5	82.8	51.1	75.1	80.3	51.4	84.1	86.0	51.3	84.8	87.3	51.7
15-19	46.2	44.5	50.5	52.6	52.8	52.0	65.1	66.8	52.5	74.8	76.8	52.2	84.2	88.3	52.3	84.7	89.0	52.2	82.4	86.3	52.3	86.8	92.0	52.2	87.8	92.4	51.2
20-29	51.6	41.0	45.7	57.4	49.4	47.8	68.7	63.0	49.6	73.4	70.1	50.1	84.1	83.2	51.2	85.5	84.7	51.0	82.7	82.9	51.1	88.2	89.9	52.0	88.2	90.9	52.5
30-39	54.0	36.7	40.2	57.1	43.4	43.1	67.9	57.1	-	71.1	62.7	47.6	79.9	74.2	49.3	79.0	75.0	49.6	77.3	74.1	49.0	85.6	84.0	51.1	85.9	85.2	51.8
40-49	50.8	31.8	36.6	54.7	37.3	39.2	62.4	48.6	-	66.7	55.6	45.0	75.2	65.3	46.7	74.6	66.2	47.6	72.5	64.6	47.4	77.6	73.6	49.7	78.9	75.1	50.5
50-59	49.1	30.0	36.5	52.0	32.5	37.3	-	-	-	61.6	47.6	43.0	68.7	57.3	45.2	67.5	58.0	46.3	67.0	56.8	46.6	73.3	64.3	48.4	74.0	66.5	48.6
60 AND +	43.1	25.7	40.3	45.9	28.9	40.6	-	-	-	54.5	39.0	43.0	58.7	43.8	44.6	57.0	43.0	45.3	53.6	41.0	45.7	59.6	49.9	49.6	60.3	51.4	50.3
UNKNOWN AGE	56.2	44.2	48.5	36.8	25.4	44.5	46.3	41.2	48.1	34.0	30.4	46.7	72.7	37.2	71.9	72.2	50.5	46.8	62.2	57.2	45.8	100.0	54.7	63.6	-	32.3	100.0
TOTAL	2.3	34.1	44.7	46.0	39.3	46.4	55.7	50.6	47.8	62.0	58.7	49.0	71.4	69.4	49.9	71.0	69.6	50.1	69.4	68.1	50.1	74.6	74.3	51.1	75.1	75.8	51.4

* 1960 Census was diffently broken down by age, which does not allow full comparison

A male literates on total male population
B female literates on total female population
A literate women on total literate population

Sources: FIBGE. Demographic Censuses 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980; PNADs 1976, 1978, 1987, 1988.
(Data from PNADs do not include Northern Region's rural population)

Like other countries, Brazil has undergone a severe economic crisis in the beginning of the 80's, which has compelled families to enroll their youth and women in the labour market in order to keep their previously acquired status. Since the labour market is sexually segmented, it offers women a limited choice of professional opportunities (basically service occupations) with wage levels neatly inferior to men's, even when occupied male and female groups with the same educational level are compared.

Furthermore, job opportunities for women having low instruction levels are extremely wearing: rural occupations imply seasonal, underpaid work performed under stern physical conditions; in the cities the only choice is domestic service which, in the case of maids, becomes a stigma rather than a profession, often limiting life-projects and interfering with or hindering affective life and social mobility through marriage.

In order to compete in this labour market, women thus need exceeding educational qualification compared to men. Furthermore, male teenagers and youth are precociously pushed to the labour market, those living in the cities attaining the twofold condition of student-worker by attending night schools.

Girls and young women also work while studying, but more often doing household work which, both in rural and urban environment, tends to be an activity more compatible with day-time schooling. The duration and the rythm of household activities may be more easily controlled by the person performing it, rather than externally imposed. Besides, much housework allows for simultaneous carrying out of various activities - an ability from time immemorial developed by women: it is possible, though wearing, to do homework while watching a young sibling or the food on the stove. Yet housekeeping in poverty conditions is more tiresome, requiring much physical effort (for instance, to carry water), not allowing for a more rational organization of time, and eliminating spare-time or leisure. Lack of sufficient food, adequate clothing and home appliances make domestic work even more fragmented and repetitive than the one experienced by middle class women.

Even so, studies based on observation of female children and youth report their better adaptation to the regularity of school life.

While young men either drop out of school earlier or attend night schools (which, given their low quality and inefficiency, show extremely high dropout and failure rates), female teenagers attend preferably day-time schools, both because it is more easily compatible with domestic work and because families tend to avoid their going out in the evening fearing physical and sexual violence (aggravated at late hours, in badly lit streets with no police protection and insufficient means of transportation).

In addition to the reasons exposed, it must be underlined that Brazilian public school is chiefly guided by authoritarian pedagogic principles, requiring passivity from students, which is the dominant kind of family relationship between parents and children. School rewards attitudes of obedience, tidyness, and orderliness, which are attributes mostly enhanced in the education of girls in patriarchal societies. If, on the one hand, school as an institution does not merely reproduce the family, but opens up the field of social experiences for children, teenagers and adults, on the other hand it remains a rather more sheltered space than the labour market or the streets. It is a public space accepte ˙ for the circulation of girls for it is being guided by rules similar to those of the domestic family world.

Brazilian researchers have pointed out links - though not necessarily implying causal determination - between the increase in female schooling and certain structural transformations in the country. That is, general changes such as urbanization or modernization might be producing both increase and changes in the pattern of family organization. So, that increase has been associated to: women's participation in the labour market (Paiva, 1981); drop in fertility rates and marriage at a later age (Szmrecsanyi, 1988); reduction of infant mortality (Silva, 1982); broadening of women's participation in politics (Costa, 1991).

In spite of their more intense participation in the labour market, though, and of their higher schooling level, women go on being paid wages neatly inferior to men's and concentrating on occupations traditionally ascribed to women. Therefore, regardless of their having attended basic school, middle school or even a university, there are high chances that they end up joining teaching.

Unlike men's experience - who have more freedom of locomotion and of wandering through different regions - school is, for Brazilian women, the privileged space for learning, working and sharing social contact. It is an intermediate space between private and public. It is at school that they most likely can learn to read and write, practice sports, get informed on sexuality, meet boys, transgress, and, quite often, like Idelzuita, learn and carry out a profession: teaching (Rosemberg, 1990).

3. Idelzuita is a teacher at a rural northeastern school

In 1971 I was the first Mimbó teacher. It was a district school. In 1980 the mayor fired me and the school was closed for two years. Then the State school was built up the hill, I went back to teaching, where I've been up to now. (...).

I am the principal. But a Mimbó principal is also the schoolkeeper, the cleaning women, the cook (...).

> School opens at 7 a.m. but I start working at 6 a.m. I clean and tidy up the rooms. When students come, I call the roll and correct their homework. Then I give them a task to do in class and go out searching for firewood to cook their meal. Then I light the fire and go around the neighbours to borrow pans to cook. While I fix the meal, I go over to the classroom to calm down students' hubbub. Meal is cooked on some stones in the backyard. When it rains, I cook at one of the neighbouring houses.
>
> When students finish classwork, I distribute their luncheon. Then they have a 15-minute break and come back to class. At the end of class I give them homework to do. They leave at 11:30. I used to let them go at 11, but the supervisor complained that was too early, so now I send them home at 11:30 a.m.
>
> After they leave I stay at school to clean up and prepare school for the afternoon turn. Then I wash up and return the pans I had borrowed. Only then I go home to fix lunch for my family. Besides the school, I care for my husband and five children: they are aged 15, 8, 6, 4, and the one-year-old is still breastfed.
>
> In the afternoon I don't teach class, but I have to do everything else (Idelzuita Rabelo da Paixão, 1987:113).

As a rural teacher, Idelzuita belongs to a body of approximately 210 thousand rural teachers (from the total of 900 thousand Brazilian school teachers)[6]. She has attended school for three and a half years: like 74 thousand schoolteachers, she has not completed elementary school (about 43% of Brazilian rural schoolteachers have only attended the eight basic school years).

Not having legally required qualification, even so Idelzuita teaches at a public school. She is a lay teacher. "In general, lay teachers work in remote places of difficult access in rural Northeast, in single-multigraded-class district schools. Almost all are women and have many children" (Stahl, 1986:20). In urban zones, a considerable number of schoolteachers have even a university degree; in rural zones, 52% of the teachers are lay teachers. In Brazil, about 3.5 million basic-school students are taught by teachers who are not middle school graduates.

Idelzuita works in inappropriate premises[7]: 43% of Northeastern schools have no running water; 45% of rural schools have no toilets; almost half of Brazilian schools have no electric power supply (what about night literacy courses for youth and adults?). Equipment is insufficient: in 34% of

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6 Data on teachers' numbers, schooling and wages were taken from Angela Barreto's study (1990), based on statistics from Ministries and on PNAD 1982. Though very rich and detailed, the study does not compare data between sexes. In Brazil, women today make up an estimate just over 90% of schoolteachers.

7 Data on schools' physical conditions and equipment come from a research made by Castro and Fletcher (1986), who examined a random sample of 600 schools.

Northeastern schools there is no table for the teacher; in 47% of them there are not enough seats for the students. Most have a blackboard, but books, pedagogic materials, or maps are very rare (Castro & Fletcher, 1986).

Unlike Idelzuita, other schoolteachers don't even have a classroom or school: they work as public schoolteachers at their houses. These are "teacher's home schools".

> At one and the same time, she teaches, cooks, cares for one child, helps another. It can't work. The student is unassisted. (...) Teachers do what they can: they give their own house, all they have, that is, seats, the table, everything! And there is no reward" (a rural supervisor apud Maia, 1982:31).

In a situation similar to that of female workers for certain branches of industry (putting-out system), they endure the worst working conditions and get the lowest pay (in 1983, an estimated 59% of rural schoolteachers were home teachers, in three Northeastern States - Tavares & Ferreira, 1988).

Idelzuita can offer her students a daily luncheon (which is almost universally distributed in Brazilian public schools). But she has to fetch firewood, cook on stones or at the neighbours', borrow pans. In 97% of Northeastern schools there are no forks or spoons to eat luncheon (Castro & Fletcher, 1986).

Like most rural schoolteachers, Idelzuita's class is multigraded: a single teacher in one room, with insufficient equipment, and practically no pedagogic material, teaches a group of students of varying ages from grades ranging from 1st to 4th.

Let an eye-witness describe it (a researcher's field notes, when investigating classroom dynamics in rural Northeast): "when it's time to write, five students - all six-year olds plus one supposed by the teacher to have learning difficulties - get together around the table, standing up to write. The others place their notebooks on their legs, on half-walls, on the few available stools, most often sitting on the floor. Since there are only two blackboards and three grades, the teacher writes down on them the lessons for 1st and 2nd grades. 3rd-grade students have to wait until all the others are finished" (Gatti & Davis, 1991:18).

These teachers' day-by-day is extremely isolated. These are women, who spend most of their waking time in exclusive interaction with children and teenagers: their children and their students. And these are children, who live most of their time interacting with women: their mother and their teacher. Newspaper reading, unionism, books of libraries, on-the-job training or even experience-sharing with mates are all sheer mirage.

Idelzuita has not mentioned her salary. But the average female school-teachers' salary is US$190.34 monthly (the little group of male school-teachers, less than 10% of elementary school teachers, get around US$216.60). As a Northeastern teacher, chances are that her salary be much lower (average US$137.63). There are no data on schoolteachers' wages broken down by rural/urban zone, but it is well known that in some districts a rural teacher may be paid half the national minimum wage (US$60). Were she born in another region and had she chosen to be a secretary (whose average educational level is slightly lower than teachers'), she would have been paid 1.5 times as much (Table 9).

Table 9: Average monthly pay and average years of schooling of schoolteachers, accounting clerks, and secretaries, by region. Brazil 1987.

| REGION | MONTHLY PAY(US$) | | | YEARS OF SCHOOLING | | |
SEX	SCHOOLT.	ACC.CLERK	SECRET.	SCHOOLT.	ACC.CLERK	SECRET.
NORTH	171.05	231.55	195.40	10.96	9.72	9.63
NORTHEAST	137.63	228.09	207.90	9.46	10.06	10.76
SOUTHEAST	223.07	231.85	298.02	12.17	9.73	11.10
SOUTH	206.25	240.37	177.87	12.23	10.07	10.56
CENTRAL-WEST	157.76	230.05	216.26	10.85	9.70	10.39
BRAZIL						
MALE	216.60	303.96	270.30	11.91	10.17	10.09
FEMALE	190.34	178.63	263.56	11.35	9.58	11.01
TOTAL	192.89	232.40	264.27	11.41	9.83	10.91

Source: Ministry of Labour data apud Barreto, 1991.

It is likely that in Mimbó there are no alternative paid jobs. If there were any, it is quite likely that, as so many other rural or urban-periphery lay teachers, Idelzuita would have a second occupation. "Living and working conditions of lay teachers, with very low wages, drive them to a second job - as clerk, saleswoman or manual work - to round off family income, or even merely to survive; this, in some cases, implies a threefold or fourfold workday" (Stahl, 1986:20).

This is the case, for instance, of H.S.C., a 19-year-old young woman who, having completed basic school, is now attending adult classes of speeded-up middle school[8]. She teaches at an elementary school in Rio Branco, capital of the State of Acre, in the Amazon region.

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[8] There is a parallel school system of basic and middle schools for youth and adults in Brazil, which will be mentioned ahead.

> I get up at 4 a.m. and go to work at the bus station, selling tickets. I leave at 12:30 and go straight to school. I have a quick lunch and teach until evening. Then I go home, have a shower, sometimes have dinner, and rush to school, where I study till 10 p.m.
>
> On Saturday mornings I teach here at school and in the afternoon I work at the bus station. On Sunday mornings I also sell tickets and, in the afternoon, I do things like going to church, preparing classes or doing my homework... On Saturday evening I take part in a youth group.
>
> I prepare my class-plan on my own and show it to the supervisor, to discuss with her. She visits the classrooms to know every student's situation.
>
> My biggest trouble is controlling the stud... nts. They are between 9 and 17 years old. It is a very heterogeneous class. Sometimes I don't know what to do with them. I don't know whether to treat them as children or grown-ups. Some of them work. Sometimes those who work are tired (...) some even make things during luncheon time, to sell later.
>
> I love giving classes. I like the children, as if they were my children. They also like me. I have even thought of stopping giving classes, but the supervisor asked me not to, and so did the students. Then I didn't dare leaving them (CENAFOR, 1985:95-6).

Maybe a short passage in Idelzuita's speech has not been noticed by those not used to the peculiarities of Brazilian political culture. The first school where she taught was a local one, and was closed by the mayor for two years. Very often local schools are under the rule of local education boards, themselves subject to local politicians. This context may be either favourable or disadvantageous to local teachers, as politicians may appoint or fire anyone; they have the power to open or close schools, or determine a school's location (Gatti & Davis, 1991). And to be a rural schoolteacher, even in such adverse conditions, is still better than working with a hoe.

With insufficient knowledge[9], having no true professional training, living in isolation, and doing a caretaker's work, mainly in rural areas, teachers in fact perform domestic work rather than a professional activity.

However, a sizeable part of Brazilian literature has been treating the subject with an approach similar to that of industrial labour: they talk of taylorizing, of bureaucracy, of school versus factory. It is true that the teacher is referred to as a housewife, but within the frame of juxtaposition of functions (ANDE, 1982). So teachers' twofold or threefold work load is mentioned (Rosemberg et al., 1982; Madeira, 1982), as is their difficulty to

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[9] A survey among rural Northeastern schools in the early 80's assessed students' achievement through Portuguese and Math tests. 4th-grade tests were also given to schoolteachers, who scored 74.5 in Portuguese and 81.5 in Maths, on average (Gatti & Davis, 1991:24).

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take part in political or union activities (Ribeiro, 1982). When I use the term domestic teacher, though, I don't mean this juxtaposition of functions, but I want to stress that the analysis of schoolteachers' work might be enriched by viewing it under the paradigm of domestic work.

In spite of the processes undergone by the teaching profession - taylorizing, bureaucratizing - actual teachers' accounts or the description of their day-by-day work (Novaes, 1981; Mello, 1981) point to a certain degree of autonomy in the classroom, not only concerning pedagogic technique, but also what Novaes called "class handling". That is a knowledge and a practice of dealing with children that is not learned at any school. Teachers also report a broad list of functions that by far exceed mere teaching, when they assign themselves - or actually perform - socializing functions: to talk or play with children, to form their personality, to teach them good habits, to devote them love and tenderness (C..aindia & Lequerica, 1983) are all functions very close to mothering.

Assimilation of teaching to mothering is evident in teachers' speech, when love and affection are valued as basic requirements for their profession (Mello, 1981). This is their actual discourse, it is not illusory, even when practice does not confirm it. In as much as teachers in fact carry out functions other than sheer teaching; as children's socialization is part of teaching; and as teachers' training is insufficient, teachers make use of the repertoire learned at home. In so doing, they are fully supported by the school system which, albeit open to women, operates under patriarchal ideology, thus reinforcing and re-creating traditional patterns of gender relations.

In consonance with other Brazilian authors (Brandão, 1982; Arroyo, 1982; Gatti & Davis, 1991), I think any alternative solution to universalize good-quality basic school in Brazil - an imperative to eliminate illiteracy - can not do without, and must necessarily involve, the purpose of reclaiming the professional character of teaching.

4. Mimbó community organizes to defend their land and to pay for a teacher

Some ten years ago noone heard from Mimbó and nobody from Mimbó left the village. The community used to live by the river, where the soil is good, but there was not enough land. Then we moved up the hill, closer to the city. When the community moved up the hill, our land was being invaded by a farming company. People from the company have already fenced a very large tract. Then we started to seek help, from anyone who can help us, not to let them take our land. That's how people got to know of Mimbó. (...)

> The first school was created in 1971 and set up by the river. Before
> that, too many people were illiterate. Most could not even sign their
> names. (...) The community had joined in paying for a private teacher
> (Idelzuita Rabelo da Paixão, 1987:113).

Mimbó community organizes to pay for a children's teacher, or to defend
the land age-old occupied by the group. Mimbó community does not
mobilize itself to revindicate or set up literacy courses for adults.

"Subsequent adult literacy courses in rural zones are unsuccessful. Adults
think the effort to study is not worth it, unless it's very pressing. They want
school for the children, and undergo hardships so that, more and more,
children study longer" (Brandão, 1984:245). Likewise, Brazilian women's
groups from different social strata, who have been organizing to revin-
dicate basic rights (education, sanitation, health, family planning, land
ownership, civil rights) very seldom have claimed or set up adult literacy
courses. Popular education groups spread out over different regions of the
country have practically never organized to meet women's specific educa-
tional needs. Brazilian state has launched, along past decades, massive adult
literacy campaigns, none of which has paid special attention to women.

Neither unions, or churches, nor universities have ever been concerned
with illiterate women. In a recent review of Brazilian bibliography on
women's formal education - which gathered about seven hundred refer-
ences - I have found only one title on the subject (Rosemberg et al., 1990).
Curiously enough, the Councils of Women's Affairs (created during the
recent process of the country's democratization)[10] have given priority to
women's education solely through the approach to school as reproducing
gender subordination ideology. Several non-governmental women's
organizations equally include education among their aims, but education
there means courses on varying subjects, groups for debating, involving
consciousness-raising rather than acquisition of the ability to read, write,
and count.

Fellow researchers and militants, when asked about this blank, have chiefly
answered that this is not a woman's demand. Maybe it's true. But surely
women's literacy is becoming a main concern of international and inter-
government aid agencies for underdeveloped countries. It is likely that
quite soon Brazilian projects specific for adult women's literacy be
receiving foreign financial support. Some may even include topics on
family planning. Symptomatically, the only recent mention to women's
literacy I could find (in a document by the National Commission for the

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[10] Since the early 80's women's movements' activity has led to the creation of local,
state and federal Councils of Women's Affairs, whose members are usually public
officers and civil organization representatives. They have advisory functions and
encourage public mobilization around women's issues. Some of these councils have
had neat feminist directives.

International Literacy Year, after the Jomtien Conference) has a rather inauspicious content: "an educated woman is an educated generation" (no comments).

The last section of the present paper is then organized so as to bring in the scarce Brazilian information on the subject of young and adult women's literacy to address the issues proposed by this Conference.

In contemporary Brazil, different experiences of youth and adult education are organized around two philosophical-methodological approaches (Haddad et al., 1990): Permanent Education, developed mainly by the state, and Popular Education, steming from movements of popular culture in the 60's, whose chief theoretical reference was professor Paulo Freire.

Along the present century, the state has carried out several literacy campaigns that have always had lesser impact than has been claimed. Among recent ones, the most striking - for the amount of funds employed, the bureaucratic apparatus created, the number of people involved, and the promises pledged - has no doubt been the Movement for Adult Literacy (MOBRAL). Developed along the 70's until 1984, the programme was imbued by military government's guidelines. Grounded on the theory of human capital - along which education is viewed as a central tool to improve workmanship productivity - it believed that an increase in the labour force's educational level would provide useful knowledge to economy's requirements, improve workers' productivity, increase their income, and raise consumption. At the administration level, the programme followed a pattern compatible with military government, that is, it was totally centralized: funds, pedagogic methods, didactic materials were imposed by federal government on all Brazilian districts, no matter their diversity. Reflecting the political regime then experienced by Brazilian society, young people and adults were "submitted to educational projects produced far from their interests and without their contribution. Their role was to adapt acritically to the model of development, and it was the state's task to give them the necessary tools for this adaptation" (Haddad et al., 1990:7).

Assessments of MOBRAL have concluded on its ineffectiveness within the very paradigms of human capital: relatively few people became literate, and the impact of literacy on people's lives was small (Fletcher, 1983). Enrolled students, believed to be representative of the country's illiterate population (mainly from rural zones, *negroes*, having low qualified occupations), were found to have had previous schooling, and 27% of sample students were already literate. In addition, a very high rate (54%) of absenteeism from class was observed.

The impact of MOBRAL literacy courses on the lives of former students was assessed 16 months after completing it. The results were disappointing: the number of those having regressed to illiteracy almost matched that of successful students; no evidence was found of any significant change in the subjects' kind of occupation linked to attendance to the course; no evidence was found as to their income having increased. In short, there was no evidence "that the programme has contributed to any actual change in students' living conditions (...). We came to the conclusion that MOBRAL may have been successful in persuading students about the government's earnest intentions" (Fletcher, 1983:53-5).

There were political results: MOBRAL has operated as a public-relations service to the military administration, strengthening its position and relieving social tensions. In ten years' time, about US$300 million were spent and millions of people were involved to achieve that.

MOBRAL has paid no special attention to women. In 1975, possibly encouraged by International Women's Year, it published a document on educational programmes for socio-economic fostering of women from rural zones (Tinoco, 1975). It states that, since that was a massive pro-gramme, open to all groups, specific action toward women would be improper. Estimates on current attendance showed that women were about half of the total students: slightly more in urban zones, a little less in rural zones (Lovisolo, 1978)[11].

Like most programmes "for everybody", messages transmitted in the readers were notwithstanding sexist ones. When analyzing published material then used by MOBRAL, we could notice that, in addition to advertising the myths of emancipatory education and of individual respon-sibility for success or failure in social mobility, the texts publicized a polarized view on the sexes according to traditional roles (Rosemberg et al., 1982:29).

Recent democratization following military government has brought on a new Constitution, whose elaboration has mobilized broad sectors of society. Proposals were submitted concerning all aspects of social life. Citizenship was indeed enlarged. Illiterate people acquired the right to vote, the

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[11] Data on attendance to adult literacy courses are quite divergent according to the source. The only available national data come from 1980 census and are shown in Table 10. They concern strictly adult literacy courses and do not include attendance to supplementary adult basic school. Table 10 data do not match the above mentioned information on less literate adult women than men, thus raising some methodological questions: do women and men report as easily their being illiterate? Isn't there a trend among women to admit it more easily? Do women and men report as easily their attendance to adult literacy classes? These are reasonable issues in a lettered culture like the Brazilian one, where illiterate people are stigmatized, where expressions like national shame, or plague, are used, where it is said that illiteracy must be eradicated.

principle of isonomy between sexes and races was re-instated, and definite goals were established to eliminate illiteracy and universalize basic schooling: "along the first ten years after promulgation of this Constitution, the Administration shall apply itself to eliminate illiteracy and universalize basic schooling, by mobilizing all organized sectors of society, and by drawing on at least 50% of the funds mentioned in Art. 212 of this Constitution"[12] (...).

Table 10: Attendance to literacy courses: percent of people aged 14 and over who declare to attend literacy classes by age, zone, and sex. Brazil, 1980.

AGE	URBAN			RURAL			TOTAL		
	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
14	7.1	4.4	5.6	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	5.1	6.1
15	8.0	5.1	6.4	7.0	6.5	6.8	7.6	5.5	6.5
16	7.7	5.7	6.6	7.2	6.9	7.1	7.5	6.0	6.7
17	6.5	4.3	5.3	6.6	5.2	6.0	6.6	4.5	5.5
18	5.7	3.9	4.7	5.8	3.8	5.0	5.7	3.9	4.8
19	4.1	3.4	3.7	4.6	3.6	4.2	4.3	3.5	3.9
20-24	16.3	12.6	14.2	14.8	14.8	14.8	15.7	13.1	14.4
25-29	10.1	9.7	9.9	10.5	10.4	10.4	10.3	9.9	10.1
30-34	8.6	9.0	8.8	8.6	10.2	8.9	8.4	9.3	8.8
35 or +	25.6	41.7	34.6	28.3	31.2	29.4	26.6	39.1	33.0
unknown	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
TOTAL	43000	54158	97158	26387	17514	43901	69387	71672	141059

Source: FIBGE. 1980 Census.

Main principles guiding current Brazilian proposal for adult literacy are outlined in constitutional text:

• literacy as a necessary condition for citizenship;
• goals to eliminate illiteracy clearly associated to expansion of basic school;
• mobilization of all organized sectors of society.

These principles have been incorporated by present Administration (elected in 1989) into its National Plan for Literacy and Citizenship, whose aim is to reduce illiteracy by 70% until the end of its term (1994).

The Plan (launched at the end of 1990) is being put into practice following the same methodology applied during International Literacy Year: it relies on the mobilization of state and local commissions made up of government

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[12] According to Article 212 of the Constitution, Districts and States should invest at least 25%, and federal Administration 18%, of tax funds in education.

officials, non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives, educators, researchers, and experts, who must outline State and local plans.

For the coming semester (1991) the First Brazilian Conference on Literacy and Citizenship is being prepared. Documents issued at preparatory meetings for the Conference - though presenting pertinent diagnoses and judicious recommendations - include no direct or specific mention to women's or non-whites' needs (see Annex with recommendations by working group on youth and adult literacy). But one document contains important recommendations on teaching, especially suggesting a minimum nation wide salary for teachers which, if paid, would indeed mean a revaluation of the profession[13].

The impact of the Plan will no doubt depend on the government's creditability, since it heavily relies on civil society's mobilization.

During military government another adult education system was set up, called supplementary: parallel, regular basic and middle school classes offer youth and adults a speeded up, usually night school, mainly attended by young workers. There are no attendance data broken down by sex since, as a Ministry of Education officer has put it, "women have already reached schooling levels equal to men's, so there is no need to count them".

Punctual research carried out in specific regions supply contradictory information concerning sex composition of supplementary school students, alternately favouring one sex or another (Haddad, 1987). Informal observations and scattered information on these students' profile suggest that many of them are young women working as maids, for whom school is not a mere place to learn or get credentials, but a place for social interaction. By attending school one can change status - become a student - make friends, meet young men.

It is not surprising thus that students, when asked to state their motivation to attend adult classes, besides the possibility of improving material living conditions (to earn more, get money to buy a house, be able to have documents like a driving license, not be duped by boss or shopkeeper, etc.) indicate reasons like the opportunity to make friends or "to find a good husband". Some statements: "it's terrific, every evening you meet someone interesting..." (domestic maid); "I get eager that schooltime comes, 'cause I'll meet my boyfriend, but I also like to study", says a young clerk (apud Carvalho, 1984). Successful experiences of night school for young workers

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13 A nationwide minimum salary for schoolteachers might correct the extreme variations found among District and State school systems, partially responsible for the frequent practice of provisional hiring of unqualified teachers (official requirement is that schoolteachers graduate from a specific teacher-training middle school, or normal school).

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have drawn on this dimension: a space for cultural and social interaction (Zibas, 1991).

To find life in adult schools has been at least partially possible within experiments adopting Popular Education paradigms. Essentially based on Paulo Freire's proposals, Popular Education methodology - despite the broadness and diversity of definitions - can be said to have as its chief presupposition that of adding a political dimension to the pedagogic dimension, built on a critical appraisal of experienced reality. Developed in Brazil since the 60's, it was half-clandestine during military government, and re-emerged after MOBRAL was replaced by a new, decentralized national literacy programme (EDUCAR); now funds for adult literacy are passed on not only to State and local governments, but to NGOs as well, who can thus foster their own people's education programmes.

There are no data on the exact number, distribution, nor clientele of these organizations. They are usually small projects held by neighbour groups, churches, unions, grassroots. Teachers - possibly mostly women - are either qualified beginners, inexperienced, provisionally hired, or lay teachers, who try to make up for their being unskilled through political commitment (Siqueira, 1989:5). In both cases teacher turnover is likely to be intense, for not even political commitment can make up for insufficient pay.

Popular Education groups have brought no doubt a major contribution to the reorganization of civil society during the military period (Sader, 1987), and some adult literacy experiments were successful (as in Recife metropolitan area in the Northeast, or *Seringueiro* Project in the Amazon region); however, they show limitations bearing on their very origin.

Rooted in traditional left and in progressive Catholic Church movements (inspired by Theology of Liberation), Popular education groups are in general quite unaware of women's issues, even when a large part or most of their members are women. They mobilize around issues affecting lower classes, avoiding internal differentiations of sex and race. The mere female presence - albeit significant - in these groups has not assured their support to feminist revindications. Female requests that are absorbed by the group are those related to family needs, in most cases unable to challenge the model of catering women. By going through texts or documents prepared by Popular Education groups with the attention turned to gender subordination, one feels that only a part of actual life is depicted there: that which opposes, in labour or in politics, the oppression by the rich and the subordination of the poor. Furthermore, realism resulting from Paulo Freire's method has prevented the re-creation of a feminine symbolic

universe able to compete with age-old, religious or lay, myths of mother-woman[14].

At the same time, feminist groups have not assigned priority to women's literacy. Their action has been concentrated on the enlargement of civil rights, denouncing sex discrimination in the labour market, revindication of preschool, and struggling for women's reproductive rights.

Feminists' unconcern for women's illiteracy may be linked to middle-class origin of most feminist groups, or to the moment they emerged, when the political consciousness-raising dimension surpassed the pedagogical dimension in Popular Education, thus unbalancing the tension between the two axes - technical/pedagogic and ideologic-political - along which first illiteracy groups have operated (Torres, 1990). Furthermore, the kind of mobilization adopted by women's groups - mainly involving all-women reflection groups - may not be suitable to attract young illiterate women who long for social interaction in groups, where they can also meet young men.

Grassroots and NGOs in general present still another limitation not much discussed by literature: their geographic distribution and social origin of their members reflect socio-economic inequalities of Brazilian society. Even though claiming to be at people's service, they tend to cluster in more developed South and Southeast, and their members tend to belong to more schooled sectors of the population (Table 11).

Their contribution to youth and adult literacy, by developing new methodologies and fostering illiterate people's dignity, can not be minimized; nevertheless, it seems fallacious to expect that they operate a miracle, supported by international agencies and by local impoverished population.

It is also fallacious to suppose that poverty-stricken populations can be self-sufficient to meet their own educational needs. "It is not likely that economic, social, political and cultural lack be made up for, and a poor education be redressed, by relying on poor communities' resources, unless the

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[14] In an analysis of Latinamerican first readers for adults, German Marino (1990) judiciously observes that "they are made to 'give a lesson', they are sectarian and heavy, boring and sclerosing, scaring away the already few who dare enroll in adult literacy classes". Evoking the sense of "loss" of time and revindicating the introduction of cultural and affective life into the readers ("we must dance, brother, for those who don't dance are dead, and the dead can not help build life"), the author suggests adopting the model of photo-story magazines, which use photographic language and not always bear some moral ("through excess of didactics, instead of literature for adults we end up by making catechism"). To these comments I would add the unattractiveness of these readers, usually of poor print and finish quality, hence unable to compete with shiny magazines for s le at any stand or with television pyrotechnics.

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economic logics regulating the allocation of public funds is entirely redefined" (Arroyo, 1982:3).

Table 11: Percentages of people aged 18 and over who declare affiliation to community organizations per region, by years of schooling and sex. Brazil, 1986.

REGION AND NUMBER OF SCHOOL YEARS ATTENDED	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
NORTH	8.97	7.68	8.29
No instr. and -1 year	3.49	4.09	3.82
1 to 4 years	4.94	6.10	5.54
5 to 8 years	6.88	6.91	6.90
9 to 11 years	16.13	11.03	13.36
12 and over	28.68	18.37	23.92
unknown	10.66	12.19	11.53
NORTHEAST	5.04	4.50	4.76
No instr. and -1 year	1.47	1.86	1.67
1 to 4 years	3.43	3.34	3.39
5 to 8 years	7.36	6.18	6.73
9 to 11 years	15.08	10.21	12.22
12 and over	30.17	20.07	24.92
unknown	14.59	5.89	9.19
SOUTHEAST	17.23	15.44	16.30
No instr. and -1 year	5.66	6.63	6.23
1 to 4 years	11.39	11.46	11.43
5 to 8 years	17.05	15.61	16.34
9 to 11 years	27.68	25.23	26.39
12 and over	42.15	35.91	39.23
unknown	28.92	19.58	23.64
SOUTH	34.89	30.48	32.65
No instr. and -1 year	18.66	17.69	18.11
1 to 4 years	31.55	28.87	30.21
5 to 8 years	38.67	33.04	35.92
9 to 11 years	41.90	39.93	40.88
12 and over	61.18	49.91	56.01
unknown	44.85	22.34	34.64
CENTRAL-WEST	12.32	11.90	12.11
No instr. and -1 year	2.85	3.71	3.31
1 to 4 years	5.89	6.72	6.28
5 to 8 years	14.23	12.08	13.14
9 to 11 years	24.96	22.61	23.67
12 and over	46.51	41.24	43.97
unknown	14.64	13.43	13.95
BRAZIL	16.43	14.48	15.43
No instr. and -1 year	4.71	5.61	5.20
1 to 4 years	12.71	12.22	12.46
5 to 8 years	19.19	16.51	17.85
9 to 11 years	26.89	23.21	24.91
12 and over	43.80	35.80	40.01
unknown	23.46	14.00	18.10

Source: FIBGE. PNAD 1986 apud Campos, 1991.

Summing up: in the present Brazilian situation, women's illiteracy does not seem to avail as a specific issue; Brazilian society does not appear to hamper specifically women's schooling; but there seems to be the need for measures to lighten class and race subordination within the school system, which necessarily implies reclaiming the dignity of schoolteaching as a profession. Only then we might anticipate a literate country.

This chapter was written with the collaboration of: Isabel B. Ferreira (research assistant); Miriam Bizzocchi (tables and figures); Tina Amado (translation into English). The author is senior researcher at Fundação Carlos Chagas (Department of Educational Research) and professor of Social Psychology at Catholic University of São Paulo - PUC-SP.

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Recommendations forwarded by the working party on Youth and Adult Literacy to the national commission for the National Programme of Literacy and Citizenship - PNAC, 1990.

- Youth and adult literacy should be approached not as the mere domain of the written code, but as a means to a broadened perception of learner's reality and environment;
  - any youth and adult literacy course must take into full account learners' distinguishing life and work conditions (job mobility, change of work shifts, fatigue, etc.);
  - full attention is to be paid to the integration of theory and practice in youth and adult literacy.

- The state must attend to the population's educational needs together with civil society's organizations by:
  - using media to mobilize both illiterate people and educators;
  - opening up the regular school system to all age groups;
  - identifying the specific role of universities in the process of teaching youth and adults to read and write;
  - organizing locally-based Councils for Youth and Adult Education to administer the process;
  - establishing an incentive policy so that private enterprises join in setting out literacy courses for their workers;
  - establishing clear criteria for the allocation of funds for youth and adult education, as well as assuring full transparence in administration of funds;
  - providing systematical record and publication of experiments of adult literacy carried out in the country.

The Programme should be implemented by:
- providing appropriate infrastructure at schools and other facilities to serve as literacy classes (seats, lamps, etc.);
- settting up literacy classes at work places (with no increase in total-hour workweek and no reduction in pay);
- developing a policy encouraging the production of appropriate texts for adults, being taught or recently taught to read and write, involving stimulus to writers and editors, print equipment, etc.;
- supplying adequate, effective didactic material (black-boards, maps, projectors, etc.);
- supplying school luncheon to young and adult learners;
- avoiding that literacy activities or projects be temporary or circum-stancial, assuring their continuity;

- assuring to all learners the access to, permanence in, and continuity of literacy projects;
- assuring continuity of literacy process in courses adapted to workers-learners' characteristics and conditions, preferably with process-evaluation follow-up;
- assuring access to, and permanence in, literacy courses to those learners with specific needs and respecting their specific condition.

- As to teachers/educators, the Programme should assure:
  - professional treatment of educators (issued or not from specialized education courses), assuring them adequate pay and technical training, and requiring from them competence and commitment to the task;
  - the inclusion of the subject Adult Education in all official education/teacher-training courses, both at middle schools and in higher education;
  - enhancing of on-the-job training as a valuable means to acquire teaching abilities;
  - the permanence of youth and adult educators for at least three years in the project, to avoid wasting effort and resources used for their training;
  - payment to NGO teachers; projects financed by PNAC should assure training, technical support, and teachers' pay;
  - meetings and other forms of interaction among youth and adult educators.

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Chapter 14

WOMEN AND LITERACY. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AT THE INTERNATIONAL LINKÖPING SEMINAR

A.   Macro-level factors

1.   Political "will"

Third World nations are inevitably confronted with the dilemma of scarce resources and competing priorities. Thus, no substantial improvement in the literacy ratios in a country can be expected without political commitment to education.

Planning for education in developing countries will therefore have to identify and eliminate the gender, racial, ethnic, urban, and class bias that might exist in a particular social system, in order to enhance the process of mass education.

National governments do not seem to understand the implications. They give lip-service; they say that they are aware of the situation, but nothing is done. Data are collected and compiled, lists of problems and questions are made - no answers are given.

Economy rules - cheap labour is favoured instead of improvement of education to obtain a higher overall qualification level.

2.   International aid programmes

The governments and the people of the Third World must exercise considerable discretion in accepting aid from the developed world in order to ensure that real improvement accrues in their countries from the acceptance of foreign assistance.

Aid to developing countries brings with it unfavourable terms of trade for the recipient country. Thus, balance of payment deficits accumulate over

the years, resulting in the inability of the recipient country to repay the donor agency or nation.

Moreover, tied with international aid is the import of consultants and skilled workers from donor sources. The cost of importing these in terms of foreign currency is high for the recipient country. The most detrimental effects of importing consultancy are realized by a developing nation over a period of time with the lack of skilled native manpower. The expertise provided by foreign consultants is often irrelevant to the culture being served, since it is invariably based on a western model of development.

Preconditions by donor countries are not always appropriate and relevant. Macro-issues are hard to deal with. IMF, World Bank and other binding aid-programmes can be very strict, and the "debt trap" further delimits possibilities of development and freedom of activities.

There is a general need for micro-level programmes. Women can be used as resources at this level. When starting at micro-level, there has to be a link to macro-level, however. Women are also excellent agents in peace work. The message of peace should be used as a starting point, rather than using aid money for weapons.

Most of the refugees of the world come from developing countries and are seeking refuge in other developing countries. The establishment of education facilities in the camps causes great problems. Literacy programmes have to address refugees' specific needs and aspirations. Who should provide these programmes - national governments or international organizations or agencies?

The linkage between different donor countries or agencies is often poor, it should be improved. There may be a kind of "fashion" in what donations are used for. A coordinating body is needed.

What can UNESCO do? Available funds are scarce, but UNESCO could above all serve as a discussion forum and a help in setting up networks throughout the world.

3.   Formal and non-formal education

The reconstruction of existing non-formal education institutions (like mosque schools in Muslim countries) should be encouraged, especially in communities where such an infrastructure is an important part of society. The acceptability of such institutions to traditional communities should be tried as a starting point for female literacy enhancement.

A link between education and other sectors is called for. Female education is narrowly conceived - literacy is not enough. Women also need professional skills, and they want social mobility. Too often they are found in unqualified jobs. Options for work have to be extended to obtain equality.

A vast number of educated women are working as resources in communities, thus constituting an important part of a non-formal education system in many countries. The links between the formal and the non-formal educational systems could be closer. Small non-formal groups use what they have to build upon, and their feeling of "togetherness" is an asset in the community.

In the case of formal education, initially, an effort must be made to involve communities which have shown a higher motivation for literacy, since experiences in literacy have shown that community cooperation is necesssary for programme success. The need to conceive meaningful links between the formal and non-formal sector exists, and such links must be established in developing nations.

4.   Organizations

Articulation of a demand initiates the process of it being addressed. The crusade for women's literacy and education should be articulated at a macro as well as a micro level. A powerful source of pressure for women's uplift are women activist groups. By addressing women's literacy issues they sensitize governments and the public to the need for females to participate in the national development efforts as responsible citizens.

The international donor agencies can play a crucial role in female illiteracy eradication by increasing governments' sensitivity to women's welfare and productivity in developing countries. Conditionalities to financial aid and grants from these agencies must ensure, that adequate portions are allocated for female resource development and that an improvement in the economic and productive opportunities for women ensues from such grants.

5.   Mass media

Large scale campaigns need to be organised through the mass media in order to bring about a change in the existing orthodox attitudes towards female literacy.

Sex-role stereotyping in text-books, reading content and mass media presentations have to be discouraged. Large scale motivational campaigns, conducted through the mass media, should bring about a change in the

present negative attitude towards female education in the developing world. Radio, television, newspapers and text-books should be used to present a dynamic view of females, in order to improve their self-image and their status in society.

B.   Micro-level factors (psychological, pedagogical and social)

1.   Attitudes, language, culture and tradition

Historically across cultures, social processes and structures demarced and legitimized male and female areas of operation. Women need to question this scheme as being a cultural construct rather than an innate and invariable condition of social life.

Diversity exists in the overt and covert discrimination in educational opportunity based on gender, class, race and ethnicity. Accompanying these factors are the implications of the language of the dominant culture on minorities and educationally disadvantaged masses. These factors need to meet with the kind of governmental support they deserve.

There is a need to sensitize male opinion in developing nations to the under-utilization of human resources among its female population. Low female economic and educational status contributes to high population growth patterns and decreases the per capita income in a country. National development efforts slacken with a large percentage of the population being perpetually disadvantaged in most aspects of life.

The contemporary emphasis on women studies aspires to recreate reality, past and present, as perceived by females. It recognizes the existence of an intellectual and emotional culture, which is peculiar to females - it celebrates such a distinction in face of the reality that masculine ideas prevail in educational and intellectual perception. In promoting female literacy and designing literacy materials for the future, care must be taken to accommodate the above mentioned female culture.

Each country has its problems in this sense, but there is much commonality. The burdens women have to carry are not the same in different societies. Cultural diversities are obvious, but also religious, social (including colour and ethnicity) and political considerations have to be made when designing educational programmes. These and other conditional factors are often not recognized by governments as problems to be dealt with. One such impor-tant issue is language, especially in rural areas.

Women in general have an inferior start, and men must be made conscious of the situation for women. Some cultural patterns have to be questioned, not just taken for granted and accepted. It is a matter of power. Do men understand the impact of women's literacy? (Once again: "If you educate a woman, you educate a whole family.")

For substantive attitudinal change to occur, with regard to female educational opportunity, men *and* women will have to question their attitudes as concerns gender, culture and values. Unfortunately, women play a role in the social perpetuation of gender inequality - by accepting its existence - a role, which they must be encouraged to become aware of and discontinue in times to come.

2. Education: content, methods, teachers (agents), recruitment etc

Each country has its own needs, so education has to be specially designed. There are different perspectives as regards content relevance, but experience tells, that content which meets individual needs creates higher motivation and leads to success. It is therefore essential to start at micro-level, find out what the people want and try to combine that with what the system has to offer.

Education is a long-term venture, so long-term investments have to be made. Women can be used as agents in a much more goal-oriented way, through already existing groups.

Active recruitment policies have to be worked out and implemented, as regards literacy students as well as teachers. A general rule is to build upon what already exists - change and improve programmes, communication channels, organisations etc, instead of always starting from the beginning. Women's self-esteem can be improved by meeting their practical needs and building upon their sense of belonging to a group, a sense which is very strong in many communities, where women are accustomed to doing many things together.

Methods of reading instruction for adults as well as children have to be evaluated, changed, improved, "modernised" to meet with new needs. More important still are the teachers. UNESCO could be helpful in educating literacy teachers or tutors (volunteers).

Assessment, evaluation, informational efforts as concerns educational programmes have to be carried out. Stability and continuity in such undertakings must be considered. A meaningful definition of literacy is still non-existent, and research results in this area are still scarce, apart from statistical figures, which sometimes are not so reliable.

The medium of literacy instruction is important, especially in cultures where foreign language instruction has complex social and economic implications. The masses in underdeveloped countries are often imparted literacy in the vernacular alone, which restricts their participation in society and does not allow them upward social and political mobility. Thus, the hidden agenda for education, through unequal opportunity, perpetually divides a nation into the elite and the underprivileged.

Goals and objectives have to be worked out carefully. Literacy is not an end in itself - however important - it is a step on the road to acquire knowledge in many areas. It is also a step to democracy and to equality, not only for women but for the whole community.

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Chapter 15

CONCLUDING REMARKS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Illiteracy in Third World countries - the widening gender gap

In practically all countries around the world, governing bodies seem to be conscious of the exceedingly important role good literacy skills play in all activities of human life.

There is, however, still to be noticed a tremendous gap between statements and resolutions on solemn occasions as regards the human right to education and the real situation for many hundreds of million children and adults. The importance of reaching a rapid solution to the world wide gigantic problem of illiteracy is generally recognized in principle. But when it comes to practical action, other priority problems seem to over-shadow literacy programmes at all levels.

The map of illiteracy closely coincides with the maps of poverty, illnesses, hunger, high infant mortality, low life expectancy, unemployment, environmental destruction and multiple other inequalities.

Invariably, females constitute the majority of the illiterates in Third World countries. The declarations from time to time on the theme "education for all", "universal literacy" and "equality between sexes" as regards oppor-tunity to education have hitherto not been transferred into reality.

On the contrary - the discrimination against women in the field of education continues. The special needs, concerns and problems of girls and women in connection with literacy learning have in general not been fully met in Third World countries. Gender inequalities are still rather the regular phenomena than the exceptions.

In spite of increased efforts to reduce the gap between the two sexes, it is widening.
In 1960, 58% of the illiterates in the world were women; by 1970 this percentage had risen to 60%; and by 1985 it had gone up to 63% and by 1992 it is estimated to be 67%.

The total increase of the number of illiterates among the adult population in the world between 1960 and 1985 was estimated to be around 154 million. Out of this total increase 133 million have been found to be women (86%). This is another way of demonstrating the widening gap between men and women as to educational opportunities.

2. Sex discrimination - a major obstacle to universal education

The economic crisis of the 80's and the beginning of 90's, characterized by soaring interest rates, enormous debt burdens, high inflation, rising cost of energy etc., has certainly contributed to the evident decline of educational opportunities in many Third World countries. And in this decline the women have suffered the most.

Available documentation shows, that even in the first years of life, girls have an inferior situation and less access to food, health care and education. Discrimination against girls starts already at birth. Girls die in the Third World countries at an earlier age than boys. As adults they receive less education and training than men. In spite of the fact that they in general work more hours per week than men, they have lower incomes and have few rights to own property, if any at all. They are often the poorest of the poor.

Primary education has undergone extensive development throughout the world during the past two decades. But in the beginning of the nineties it is on an evident decline in many of the developing countries. Some 130 million children of school age did not attend school in 1990. Out of those over 80 million can be estimated to be girls, mostly from poor families in the rural regions.

With the exception of Latin America and The Pacific, the percentage of girl pupils in primary schools in most Third World countries is lower than that of boys.

Available enrolment data for primary education imply inter alia, that there exists equality as regards access to schooling between the sexes in Latin America and the Caribbean. Eastern Asia and Oceania are close to achieving parity in enrolment by sex. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab States and Southern Asia, however, there are considerable differences between sexes. Girls are enrolled in schools at a much lower rate than boys.

In Brazil, however, the chances of becoming literate are practically the same for men and women. Inequalities as regards access to education draw on other factors than sex - e.g. social class, race, urban or rural dwelling,

and region of birth. In fact, women have gradually had access to all school levels in Brazil along the last forty years (Rosemberg, chapter 13). The labour market, however, is still segmented by gender in Brazil, she states. "Women are offered a limited choice of professional opportunities, basically service occupations traditionally ascribed to women, with wages far inferior to those of men with the same educational level."

According to UNESCO statistics, in 1989, almost half the population of African girls of primary school age (6 to 11) were out of school. The rate of drop-out from the formal school system before completion of the third grade is generally much higher for girls (around 75%) than for boys.

Equal access to primary education for girls and for boys seems to be cn its way in many Third World countries.
But as regards education at the secondary and higher levels the discrimination is still evident. In most countries involved in this study there are inadequate opportunities for continuing education for women.

This sex disparity must be considered to be one of the major obstacles to the achievement of the goal proclaimed by U.N. - education for all.

3.   Serious consequences of neglect and discrimination of females in literacy education

The evident literacy gap between men and women is one of many significant indicators of the economic, social and cultural inequalities for many girls and women.
The consequences of this neglect and discrimination of females are multiple and extremely serious.

In the rural areas of some regions, religions still seem to relegate women to subordinated positions. Old customs and tradition have formed barriers for women's attempts in gaining equality. National governments have failed in strengthening the economic and productive role of women. Thereby employment opportunities for women have diminished and further accentuated poverty, exploitation and inequality.

As pointed out by e.g. UNESCO, women play the major role in efforts to improve health and nutritional standard and to introduce family planning practices. The education of coming generations is also mainly within their responsibility. Likewise, women perform important economic functions in the family, highly essential for society and crucial for their family's survival.
The conclusion to be drawn is evidently, that education of girls and women should be in the highest priority.

In the majority of literacy campaigns the administrators as well as the teachers have failed in displaying a sensitivity to the special needs, concerns and problems of women. Therefore, irregular attendance, high drop-out rates and poor results among female participants are common observations made in literacy programmes in many of the countries, covered in this volume. Gender inequality and discrimination has also persisted within the public school system, because of lack of provision for continuous participation through the grades by girls and women.

The existence of multiple deprivation and discrimination against the female population is easily manifested. Exceedingly little has hitherto been done to change and improve the situation, however.

4.   Reasons for women's failures in literacy-learning

The majority of participants in literacy courses are often women. The traditional roles of women in the family and the labour market create great difficulties for them to attend the courses regularly. Their many duties within the household, their up-bringing of many children as well as their participation in farming or other income-bringing hard work, give little time and energy for efficient learning.

Long distances to literacy centres and lack of adequate transportation means also impede their participation.

Further on, reading materials, based on women's special needs and interests, are very seldom provided. The power of tradition may in many countries work against education for girls and women. There may be a negative attitude, sometimes a clear opposition against the advancement of women in the society as a whole, and especially in the local, rural communities. Male teachers may even demonstrate contemptuous and scornful attitudes towards women's abilities of learning (Veloso, chapter 9; Tsosane-Marks, chapter 10; Novelo Oppenheim, chapter 11; Digue, chapter 2).

Wife-beating is unfortunately not a rare phenomenon in some countries. Violent reactions of various kinds against women may further prevent women from participation in educational programmes (Moore, chapter 5; Gamal-El-Din, chapter 6).

It happens not infrequently that men - including fathers and husbands - even completely forbid women to participate in literacy learning activities.

5. Encouraging trends

As an example of positive attitudes to literacy among many Governments of Third World countries we may refer to the following remarkable statement:

> The Government, conscious of its commitment to the establishment of an egalitarian society, puts emphasis on the development of the individual. The new social order entails a fair and equitable distribution of knowledge and rights to every individual in our society. It is required that all citizens should have access to information and knowledge about their society, because the government recognises, that the realisation of one's innate ability, the betterment of society, and the meaningful participation of the individual in development depends upon the ability to read and write. (Tsosane and Marks, chapter 10)

As has been observed by authors of this volume there seems to be an increased tendency amongst women in many countries to actively seek more freedom from authorities in the family and the community. Women are becoming more and more aware of the many inequalities they have had to suffer. Many have found reading and writing ability as one of many desirable instruments to be used in their search for raised self-confidence, self-respect and freedom from oppression (e.g. Varavarn, chapter 4; Moore, chapter 5; Hussain, chapter 3).

Basic education might be a starting point for many women to become actively involved in the developmental process, not only in the home but also in the community and the nation.

Through acceptable literacy skills they may facilitate their own personal development.

> Adults have been encouraged not to drop out of their studies by the preparation of educational materials, designed to cover different needs in accordance with the characteristics, interests, age groups, geographical location, social strata and ethnic origin of the population. Teacher training has been improved, and a more flexible range of materials is being used, with the aid of radio and television. (Novelo Oppenheim, chapter 11)

It is indeed encouraging to note that more and more women in Third World countries have come to the understanding, that they need some functional literacy abilities, not only for their own individual development, but also in order to be able to take care of their duties in the family and as citizens in the society at large in a more efficient way.

Enhancing the status of women by giving them access to basic needs and human rights, will result in an improvement of the total development in a nation. According to a law, issued in 1991, "all the illiterate adults (aged 14-35) should have the chance to get education to reach the standard of the

compulsory stage of schooling, i.e. eight years at school for the young"
(Gamal-El-Din, chapter 6).

> The educational process has enabled women to ask questions, seek
> answers, act, reflect on actions and raise new questions. The starting
> point is a study of the socio-economic reality of women leading to
> collective action against injustices suffered by them in the home, the
> work place and in the society. (Dighe, Chapter 2)

Some interesting experiments on literacy programmes for women are
reported (e.g. post-literacy projects, Zuniga, chapter 12, and Dighe,
chapter 2). Open agenda literacy workshops have been held in some places.
The learners have been allowed to control the pace and methods of their
own literacy-learning. Production of literacy materials in local dialects
have been initiated. Further on, camp-based models for women's literacy-
learning have been elaborated. Residential literacy campaigns, lasting 10-
15 days, are followed by a period of approximately one month in the actual
village itself. By a third phase, lasting about 5 days, the female learners
further consolidate the literacy skills they have acquired during earlier
training (Dighe, chapter 2).

> The camp was a 'learning home'. We slept, ate, laughed, and learnt
> together. This was in contrast to the truncated 'centre approach', which
> is marked by its abruptness, within which the learner is looked at in a
> fragmented way. In the camp situation, there is flow; learning is woven
> into the daily living experience. The learner is addressed wholly. The
> constancy enabled by the camp is significant in sustaining the high level
> of concentration required. (Shrivastava and Sharma, 1991; Dighe,
> chapter 2)

No country can make any progress in an efficient way - socially,
economically, politically - if half of the population - the women - is not
given an opportunity to participate in the process of self-sustaining, self-
reliant development to change their present circumstances.

Also as preservers and transmitters of social and cultural values women
play a vital role in shaping the destiny of a nation. Or in the words of the
Indian statesman Nehru: "to awaken the people, it is the woman, who must
be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the nation
moves." But much remains to be done.

6.   Noticed gains from provision of basic primary education

A World Bank study covering around 200 countries has demonstrated a
close link between women's education and social and economic develop-
ment. Nations having invested heavily in female primary education in the

past were found to avail by higher economic productivity and more favourable measures on a number of indicators of social development than comparable countries with lower education levels for women (King, 1990).

There is growing evidence showing that there are economic, social and technological gains from provision of basic primary education. Adults with higher levels of educational attainment, have higher individual earnings, more frequent employment in the urban labour markets, greater agricultural productivity, lower fertility, better health and nutritional status and are more likely to send their children to school (Dighe, chapter 2; Lockhead and Verspoor, 1990).

The existing documented experiences and research studies indicate, that literacy education is the most cost-effective tool available to promote broader objectives of national development.

In addition to the socio-economic benefits for women and their families literacy education will improve women's capacity to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of their society.

The benefits of improved literacy skills for women as regards individual status, self-esteem, personal dignity and increased employability in the work force are generally recognized. In addition also employers may be included in the winning group by the increase of productivity. And in the end the whole nation, with its implications for other social and cultural programmes such as health, nutrition, family-planning, economic growth etc. (Zúñiga, chapter 12; Veloso, chapter 9; Gamal-El-Din, chapter 6).

Brazilian researchers have pointed out links between the increase in female schooling and certain structural transformations in the country. The noticed increase has been associated to: women's participation in the labour market, drop in fertility rates and marriage at a later age, reduction of infant mortality and broadening of women's participation in politics (Rosemberg, chapter 13).

Literacy training may be an instrument towards greater freedom from economic exploitation and patriarchal oppression, and improved quality of life, contribute to higher earnings and in that way help them to take some steps away from extreme poverty and feelings of inferiority.

7.   A number of observations and suggestions

The participants of the Linköping international seminar have demonstrated their conviction, that improvement of female literacy at all levels as an integral part of a life-long education is necessary as an introductory means of ensuring equality between sexes. Ways must be found, leading to the

creation of justice and equity for both men and women in a context of general national development.

All governments should work towards ensuring equality of access for girls and women in educational activities in its entire range. Training for areas and responsibilities so far only reserved for men, should be provided also for women.

All efforts should be made in order to remove all obstacles, preventing girls and women from participation in literacy and development activities. After having participated in a literacy programme, women should be stimulated to work actively in developmental tasks at various levels (Hussain, chapter 3).

Integration of literacy activities for women into development projects of various kinds is a common feature in many Third World countries. Such approaches are indeed justified by generally accepted pedagogical principles. The literacy learners may easier realize the practical need of good reading and writing skills in a context, where these abilities immediately come to use.
Literacy programmes in interaction with other meaningful activities may undoubtedly play an important role in creating a motivation and an increased interest in continued learning (Tsosane and Marks, chapter 10; Hussain, chapter 3; Zúñiga, chapter 12).

A warning though: An approach of this kind often implies, that literacy instruction becomes neglected, when the participating female learner is expected to be involved in too many other activities at one and the same time.

> The expansion carried out without the corresponding necessary means has brought about the worst working conditions for school teaching; inadequate premises, lack of equipment, low pay (mainly for 1st to 4th grade teachers), absence of incentive for updating or for professional improvement, unsuitable professional training. It can thus be said that expansion of basic schooling - besides being insufficient - has been carried out at the expenses of a deterioration in teachers' working conditions. And, schoolteachers in Brazil are women. (Rosemberg, chapter 13)

The experiences of the participants in this seminar clearly demonstrate, that the success of literacy programmes is exceedingly dependent of strong political determination, commitment and support.

The role of the government in the strivings for universal literacy is crucial. Governmental commitment and support is highly desirable but not enough. If a literacy programme is to succeed in a real sense, the individual

members of a village must feel, that they themselves have made substantial contributions into its planning and implementation.

There might be negative consequences of too much of centralization in planning and implementation of literacy programmes. A proper balance between community and state influences is recommended by our authors. The suitable proportions of "power" in combined efforts of this kind may of course vary within nations and between nations from case to case.

The need for Third World countries to focus on literacy and female participation in development activities at all levels has often been stressed and also accepted by political authorities.
But when it comes to action, for various reasons, failures and shortcomings are often registered.
Therefore the current implementation strategies should be reorganized to keep pace with the changing societal expectations. Some suggestions of changes are made in this respect (Motlotle, chapter 7).

Individuals as well as groups of women should be involved in decision making at all levels of the literacy learning process - identification of needs, development, implementation and evaluation of programmes.

A good rapport should be established with the male population of the area. Efforts should be made to convince men, that education will result in a considerably increased efficiency of their wives, daughters, and sisters in the performance of their duties in the family and in the community.

Investments in education of parents (and future parents), especially the mothers, might be very profitable - both for the adults and their children, and the society at large.

Relations between the female learner and the male or female teacher should be established on a basis of mutual respect and dedicated cooperation in attempts to reach commonly elaborated goals.

The objectives and goals of literacy activities should be incorporated in all development plans of a social, economic, political and cultural kind at the community level as well as at the national level.

The village primary school must take a more active role in community development programmes. It should open the doors for adult illiterates. The buildings and the teaching aids should be utilized outside school hours much more than actually is the case in many areas. The primary school should be developed as some kind of learning centre for adults after regular school hours.

Village centres should be established for training of village women. There they could be given an opportunity to learn literacy along with some vocational skill. In some rural areas women are not expected to leave their homes for some kind of schooling. Literacy centres could therefore be initiated in their own and nearby homes or other acceptable places.

The needs of rural and urban areas should be handled with sensitivity. Rural primary education is basically urban-based and often to a large extent irrelevant to rural life. Special attention should be given to the illiterate women in rural areas as a means of attacking poverty, where it is most apparent (Hussain, chapter 3; Gamal-El-Din, chapter 6).

> Literacy of an ideal kind should lead to the elimination of poverty and gross inequality. The vicious circle of poverty can only be broken by critical understanding of social reality and by action to bring about social change. (Moore, chapter 5)
> Illiteracy cannot be eradicated, unless there is established a much wider struggle to eliminate poverty, exploitation and grave inequities in society. (Dighe, chapter 2)

Illiteracy in the rural areas should be given more attention, and at the same time used as a means of attacking poverty in the areas, where it is most apparent.
"My children have nothing to eat. How can I go to a literacy class?" (Rusimbi, chapter 8).

Governments of developing countries should be re-directing development policies to make direct attacks on poverty among the most deprived, and be ready to give top priority in the process of development to meeting basic needs, for example, food, housing, health and employment (Gamal El-Din, chapter 6; Veloso, chapter 9; Novelo Oppenheim, chapter 11; Zúñiga, chapter 12).

> Women are rarely regarded as partners in the process of development. The emphasis is always on men and their roles in bringing about development. Men have the monopoly over economic, political and scientific fields. (Gamal El-Din, chapter 6)

A shift of focus from development on men's conditions to a development based on equal rights of the two sexes ought to be self-evident and natural.

Despite current legislation in some countries providing equal access to land for women and men, the majority of rural women in a number of Third World countries do not enjoy the full benefit of rights of this kind. They are still manifestly discriminated as regards ownership of the land they cultivate (Rusimbi, chapter 8).

> In order to formulate responsive and adaptive strategies at national and operational levels, there is a need for an effective system to

> continuously assess the literacy situation and monitor the progress. The definition of literacy and the method of assessment should be periodically reviewed to ensure their functionality. Gender analysis should be applied to accurately determine the impact and the participation of women (Varavarn, chapter 4).

Female activist groups may be powerful sources of pressure in the strivings towards improvement of the status of women. They may also make governments and the public aware of the need for females to participate in developmental activities at all levels and exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of equal value as men (Hussain, chapter 3).

The need of powerful pressure groups to bring about changes in the negative attitudes, formed by tradition, against female literacy and the advancement of women in the society as a whole, is generally recognized.

Some of our authors state, however, that women's groups in a number of Third World countries are not enough sensitive to ordinary women's problems. They mostly address themselves to middle class women in the cities, and they forget the issues of poor rural women (Rusimbi, chapter 8).

> Feminist groups have not assigned priority to women's literacy. Their action has been concentrated on the enlargement of civil rights, denouncing sex discrimination in the labour market, revindication of preschool, and struggling for women's rights. Feminists' unconcern for women's illiteracy may be linked to middle-class origin of most feminist groups... (Rosemberg, chapter 13)

Initial basic literacy programmes are not sufficient. They should always be followed by post-literacy programmes and continuing education, arranged in a systematic way, otherwise both girls and women run great risks of relapsing into illiteracy. It is indeed urgently necessary to forcefully stop the fatal phenomenon of reversal into illiteracy - a wastage of invaluable human potential.

Women as well as men need more than a rudimentary literacy as a means to developmental change. They need a greatly improved general education and a critical, powerful and creative literacy of a high order.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of literacy programmes should be an ongoing component in the plans and strategies for literacy improvement. The effects in relation to costs should also continuously be reviewed.

Learning strategies should be elaborated, appropriately adopted to the special needs and interests of women, and flexible enough to be easily adjusted to the actual conditions of everyday life, the local circumstances and personal choices.

The post-literacy programmes should aim at facilitation of retention of literacy skills. They should form a starting point for continued adequate education, hopefully leading to needed functional abilities.

Efforts for improvement of women's education should more than hitherto be based on and directed towards opportunities of employment and skills needed in different professions.

Just as education in general, literacy skills of various kinds are not the only tools to be used for the promotion of local and national development. But they must be considered as highly essential instruments for change in a positive direction as regards i.a., social and cultural conditions, economy, democratization and individual self-fulfillment.

8.   Some final remarks and recommendations

In spite of encouraging progress towards equal access to education in certain regions, women in Third World countries continue on the whole to show higher illiteracy rates, lower progression rate to secondary education and are given far inferior opportunities to higher education than men. Modern technology is nowadays reaching even the remotest village, and as a consequence demands are everywhere raised of considerably improved functional literacy skills. The rate of participation in courses preparing for work in advanced fields related to modern technology is, however, just as before much lower for women than for men.
Women do still not enjoy equal status with men in many areas of the world.

U.N.-agencies, and especially UNESCO SHOULD

1)   continue to focus world wide public attention to the existence of multiple deprivation and gender inequalities in many areas of the world;

2)   explain to all governments of member states of U.N. with greatest possible force and clarity the magnitude and causes of illiteracy among women and its fatal implications for themselves, their families, and for national development at all levels;

3)   make a powerful and convincing appeal to the government of each country, belonging to United Nations

   a)   to renew their efforts *to create equal opportunities for both sexes to education at all levels* in accordance with the U.N. Charter of Human Rights in 1948, the Declaration of Women's Rights in 1967 and the Education for All document in 1990;

b) to establish *priorities as regards allocation of even scarce resources to the expansion of enrolment of girls in the schools* through purposeful searching activities and retention through proper guidance and economic support to girls from poor families;

c) to carry out *surveys of the literacy level* within various geographical areas of the country, within various social, linguistic and ethnic groups, within various age groups and involving both sexes. Where are the pockets of female illiteracy? Identification of needs is a necessary starting point for action;

d) to investigate the possibilities *to increase the resources for female literacy development at all levels* - basic formal and informal education, post-literacy activities and specialized vocational training - and make more efficient use of already available resources (e.g. economic and personal resources, TV, radio, press, etc.).

4) Available documentation clearly demonstrates, that the success of literacy programmes in the first hand is dependent on strong political determination and commitment at the national level, and that local resources as well as national ones are mobilized for planning and execution in all its developmental phases. But in the present situation of enormous debt burdens and other economic constraints in many Third World countries there is an immense and inevitable need also for supplementary international assistance.

Without increased financial support to many of the least developed countries the problem of female literacy will remain unsolved for the next decades.

UNESCO might wish to appoint a high-level marketing body with the special task

a) to attempt to directly *involve international donor agencies in intensified and repeated information campaigns* to focus worldwide attention on the scope and seriousness of the problem of illiteracy among girls and women and its implications for the individual, the family and the society at large.

b) to establish a necessary *synchronization of international aid* of various kinds to literacy campaigns and connected follow-up activities for social and economic equality for women in selected Third World countries.

5) The exchange of literacy-related information requires increased attention, whether it be the results of research or news about on-going projects, availability of experienced trainers, planned or ongoing workshops, seminars and the like for education of personnel for literacy work, production of literacy learning material etc. How can existing networks be better equipped to continuously transfer the right kind of information to the right kind of people at the right time?

So much useful and valuable material is often hidden behind bureaucracy files.

Are new literacy centres or sub-networks needed? At what level? And where? An international clearing house? Many national ones? What practical steps can be taken to increase cash resources for literacy work?

There are some few literacy centres established in various parts of the world, mostly in industrialized countries. But the international cooperation is rather limited. UNESCO might wish to take the initiative in getting a *highly needed co-ordination body and a number of literacy-related Clearing Houses established.*

May UNESCO Regional Offices and some of existing Regional and International Adult Education Bodies be persuaded to undertake responsibilities of this kind?

6) Within the field of reading research we find very little of the available resources devoted to the study of adult literacy.

An international research centre should be established in a Third World country to promote national, and international research into the literacy learning process, literacy programmes and literacy policies, with high priority on the special issues and needs of women. UNESCO could take the initiative. Cooperation should of course be sought with national and local governing authorities in question as well as with international agencies and financing bodies.

*   *   *

The Third World countries featured in this publication vary greatly in needs, resources, level of development, languages, religions and educational structure. But they have many developmental traits in common. Based on their analyses of the female literacy situation in their respective countries the contributors to this handbook have presented a range of information on the major issues and problems in connection with women's literacy acquisition *as a basis for further intensified action*, for example, women's status, economic difficulties, poverty, population explosion, family planning, shortages of educational facilities, lack of qualified teachers, languages of instruction, programmes, methodological approaches etc.

The reviews and suggestions presented here might have some motivating and inspiring effect on those organizations, leaders and other key persons in a variety of capacities, who tirelessly strive to improve the literacy situation of girls and women in Third World countries.

Because of the great magnitude of the problem of female illiteracy in the world of today we should not grow weary to repeatedly call for vigorous *action* through the joint efforts of local and national authorities, supplemented by the support of international agencies of various kinds.

We have ahead of us an exciting venture, full of challenges and promises, hopefully leading to some release of so much hitherto wasted human potential among girls and women all around the world.

WRITING GUIDE

for authors of chapters for a volume on "Women and Literacy Development - Constraints and Prospects".

The written material from each author should not exceed 30 typewritten pages (single-spaced). Writing should be clear, well organized, lively and informative. Use anecdotes and examples, when possible.
Remember, part of the purpose of the report is to inspire governments, non-governmental organizations, politicians, literacy workers, teacher-trainers etc to action. To save time translating, all authors are asked to write in English, if possible, or in French, Spanish, Portuguese, or German, as necessary.
Working language at the International Seminar in Linköping, Sweden, will be English only.

I. REGIONAL OVERVIEW (engage, inspire, inform)

A. The literacy situation in the region. Evaluative description.

B. Past experiences - failures and successes.

1. Identification of unserved or underserved pockets of female illiteracy, Where to look?

2. Motivational factors. Participation in literacy courses. More women than men? As for instance in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Kenya (85 to 90 % women). How about drop-out rate among women? High? If so, try to explain the reasons. Give examples about common motivations for women to participate in literacy courses. Other motivational factors than for men?

3. Local employment needs of those with literacy handicaps.

4. Materials available; materials needed. Primers and teacher manuals. Reading materials for adults at a suitable reading interest and difficulty level.

5. Agencies and organizations with programs in operation in the region.

6. Governmental, community and family attitudes, political will, restrictions, assistance and priorities.

II. SPECIFIC WAYS, in which ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, RESEARCHERS, TEACHERS etc CAN HELP.

A. Identifying the Target Population; methods, examples.

B. Needs assessment. Methods, examples.

C. Practical options for assistance or pedagogical support.

1. Connecting with or stimulating existing literacy programs.

2. Developing new literacy programs.

D. Record keeping: Useful data to maintain.

E. Providing related assistance: communication, transportation employment, childcare etc

F. Follow-up activities, post-literacy; linked with continuing non-formal literacy education? linked with formal education? linked with a series of vocational training sessions?

G. Literacy and change of the society as regards economy and social and cultural conditions.
A small scale selective programe (functionality)?
Mass campaigns? Series of campaigns? Which kind of strategies have been tested? Failures? Successes? Literacy programs of a relatively·large scale for purposes of improvement of social, cultural and political factors? Examples and evaluation.

H. How to mobilize available resources for the improvement of literacy? (community, regional, state organizations, ideological organizations, teacher-trainers, teachers, administrators, mass media, TV, radio, press etc)

I. Cautions - what not to do.

III. APPENDIX

A. Facts and figures concerning female literacy needs in the region.

B. Sources: Names and addresses of programs and networks currently active in the region.

C. Sources: Materials available or needed.

D. Sources: Services and training centres available and needed in the region.

E. Sources: Employment opportunities existing and needed in the region.

F. Sources: Relevant literature.

G. Sources: Names of experts knowledgeable about the region.

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Women
and Literacy Development
in the Third World

Eve Malmquist (ed.)

Sixty-five per cent of the illiterates in the Third World countries, and maybe even more, are women. The discrimination against women in the field of education continues, and the gap between men and women as to educational opportunities has been steadily *widened* during the last few decades.

U.N. Agencies, and especially UNESCO, should according to recommendations made in this publication

a) continue to focus world-wide attention to the existence of multiple depriva-
   tion and gender inequalities in many areas of the world;

b) explain with greatest possible force and clarity for all governments of
   member states of U.N. the magnitude and causes of illiteracy among women,
   and its fatal implications for them as individuals, for their families, and for
   national development at all levels, and

c) to make a powerful and convincing appeal to the government of each
   country belonging to U.N., to renew its efforts to create equal opportunities
   for both sexes to education at all levels in conformity with the U.N. Charter
   of Human Rights in 1948, the Declaration of Women's Rights in 1967, and
   the Education for All-document in 1990.

The reviews and suggestions presented in this report might have some motivating and inspiring effect on those organizations, leaders and other key persons in a variety of capacities, who tirelessly strive to improve the literacy situation of girls and women in Third World countries.

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The editor of this volume, Eve Malmquist, is professor emeritus of Linköping University, Sweden. He is an expert of world-wide renown within the field of reading research and methodology and has been bestowed many international awards and citations of merit.