



From Bullets to Blackboards

*Education for Peace
in Latin America and Asia*

Emily Vargas-Barón
Hernando Bernal Alarcón
Editors

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*Emily Vargas-Barón
Hernando Bernal Alarcón*

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About the Sponsors of the Book

The Japan Program, established in May 1999, serves as the focal point within the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to plan, execute, and follow up on activities that strengthen links between East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. With financial support largely from the government of Japan, the Japan Program creates opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean to exchange development experience, expertise, and best practices with East Asian counterparts, and vice-versa. The Japan Program promotes partnerships in support of economic and social development, adhering to the priorities of the IDB and those expressed to the IDB by its borrowing member countries. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.iadb.org/int/jpn>.

The Institute for Reconstruction and International Security through Education (the RISE Institute) is a nongovernmental organization based in Washington, D.C. and Bogotá, Colombia dedicated to promoting international security and stability through education initiatives. It conducts research projects, training programs, and networking activities, disseminates information, and provides advisory services for policy and program development. The website of the RISE Institute is: <http://www.riseinstitute.org>.

Foreword

Nohra Rey de Marulanda
Manager, Integration and Regional Programs Department
Inter-American Development Bank

This book was prepared under an initiative on Education and Social Reconstruction in Latin America and Asia, coordinated by the Japan Program of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Institute for Reconstruction and International Security through Education (the RISE Institute).

The initiative highlights educational innovations made under fire—during and after conflicts in Latin America and East Asia. These innovations aim to help nations improve their educational systems and rebuild their societies. Exemplary education programs developed in conflict situations in Latin America and East Asia were identified, described, and analyzed, with lessons and best practices applicable to nations around the world. The resulting case studies were discussed at an inter-regional symposium held November 18 to 20, 2003 at the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C. The symposium brought together the authors from Latin America and Asia, as well as leading international specialists on educational policy planning, in order to discuss and analyze innovative ways to meet the learning and developmental needs of children and youth, as well as their families and communities, both during and after conflicts. The inter-regional dialogues identified a number of good practices and lessons learned, proposed some policy implications, prepared recommendations for international organizations, and outlined next steps for future inter-regional exchanges.

The case studies presented in this volume were selected to represent a wide range of education initiatives found in conflict and post-conflict countries. They focus on early childhood, primary, secondary, technical/vocational, or non-formal education, as well as parent education, teacher training, bilingual education, and training for ex-combatants. Some of the initiatives include special topics such as trauma healing, conflict resolution, and human rights and citizenship education. The following criteria were used to select the programs to be studied:

- Formal or non-formal education programs or policy planning processes for education during and after conflicts that are not only promising, but evidence-based

- Education programs that are integrated to some degree with programs in other sectors aimed at reconstructing society: income generation, community development, social or environmental protection, health, nutrition, strengthening civil society, local governance, and the like
- Policies and programs developed and managed by national or local organizations.

Each case study yields best practices and lessons learned about the different stages of program and policy development. These cases identify obstacles and barriers often encountered in implementing education initiatives in conflict or post-conflict environments, and indicate how these challenges have been overcome. The cases from nine countries in two regions—all at different phases of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction—demonstrate diverse routes taken for achieving effective program design, implementation, management, and evaluation. At the same time, they identify many similarities; these validate positions they hold in common. These points and lessons learned are discussed in chapter 1.

I hope this publication will contribute to achieving a better understanding of how to conduct education programs and policies in conflict or post-conflict situations, especially for those who are committed to expanding education opportunities for children, youth, and adults in conflict-afflicted societies. We believe that by sharing these and related experiences inter-regionally, the quality of education in conflict situations will be improved and education will help nations achieve greater social stability, equity, and development.



Part I Introduction

Chapter 1

Educating Children and Youth in Countries with Conflicts

Chapter 1

Educating Children and Youth in Countries with Conflicts

Emily Vargas-Barón and Hernando Bernal Alarcón

*“When I stand before thee at day’s end,
thou shalt see my scars and know that I had my wounds
but also my healing.”*

*Rabindranath Tagore
Bengali philosopher and educator
1916*

It is a dreadful irony: when nations endure civil strife or war, one of the first institutions to fail is the education system. Yet it is the education system that is key to rebuilding society—and preventing and overcoming future conflict. And relatively little is known about how best to strengthen or rehabilitate education systems in conflict situations.

The case studies in this book have dealt with this problem head on. They have done it with creativity and compassion—and often with very few resources.

The ten case studies reveal that despite great geographical distances and major cultural differences, education programs in conflict and post-conflict societies of East Asia and Latin America have faced common challenges. In response, they have developed programs with strikingly similar conceptual frameworks, strategies, processes, and methods.

This book describes the problems that practitioners in the field—on the front lines of education—have faced and the solutions they have launched during and after war and conflict. It also draws on experts from development agencies and nongovernmental organizations, who met with the authors of the case studies in an international symposium to share ideas and distill lessons.

In so doing, the book helps meet a major need for descriptions of best practices and lessons learned by successful education programs in conflict situations. It is hoped they will encourage the development of new educational policies and programs to expand and improve services for vulnerable children and youth who are suffering silently in conflict situations all around the world.

Children and Education: Casualties of Conflict

The end of the Cold War has ushered in an escalation of civil strife and regional wars around the world. As of mid-2004, over 76 nations were experiencing armed conflicts or were in post-crisis transition. When nations directly affected by conflicts are added to those housing large refugee populations and others with recurrent natural disasters or heavily afflicted by HIV/AIDS, well over half the nations of the world, at least 110 countries, are facing increasing instability, violence, resource challenges—and perhaps, chaos. Many of these countries are impoverished and have become the seedbed of revolutionaries seeking to redress inequities, as well as refuges of international terrorist groups. The world can ill afford the military, educational, social, and economic costs of escalating complex crises.

Some 90 percent of the victims of conflicts are civilians and over 80 percent of them are children and women, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Since 1990 over 2 million children have died because of armed conflicts, 6 million have been seriously injured, 1 million have been orphaned or separated from their families, and 12 million have been left homeless (UNICEF 1999, 2001a, 2003). Because of these emergencies, many nations now house large numbers of refugees and are severely strained in other ways by neighboring conflicts. Often, host nations are impoverished and must divert scarce resources from services for their own citizens to aid refugees. In addition, the impacts of natural disasters and infectious diseases such as the HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis tend to be far greater in countries that are already enduring the stresses of complex emergencies.

The list of factors that can contribute to or precipitate conflicts is long and dismal, and includes inter-ethnic frictions; major disputes relating to religion, class, income group, or caste; corruption and violence related to drug or other illicit trades; guerrilla uprisings; international or inter-community strife; military or other types of government coups; and disputes over water, land, or

other resources. Although complex emergencies develop over time, any one or several of these factors may trigger the rapid disintegration of a country and the emergence of conflict. Compounding these problems, most nations with conflicts have high levels of poverty and governments that are unable to provide their citizens with adequate governance, security, human rights, and basic education and health services.

Countries with complex internal emergencies virtually always have failing or weakened educational systems. Indeed, these education systems have often contributed directly or indirectly to the eruption of violence and to the disintegration of the state. Failed policies and programs, institutional rigidities, limitations of organizational and coordination structures, and dysfunctional traditional teaching methods and contents often are at fault. Both formal and non-formal education programs can share these problems and should be assessed for their role in promoting conflicts as well as helping ensure long-term education reform.¹

Even more fundamentally, education reflects national values and identities. Often there are cultural, religious, social, and economic dimensions of educational failures in many countries afflicted by civil strife, conflict, or war. For example, indigenous peoples, females, various ethnic groups, and others who are the most vulnerable in society are often marginalized, under-served, and receive low-quality education services. Many complex educational emergencies occur because of inter-group or inter-ethnic strife. Special and timely attention must be paid to these concerns or they will reappear to cause future friction and violence.

Schools and education systems are usually heavily damaged during periods of external invasion or internal strife, as are basic social and health services, local economies, physical infrastructure, and the environment. Unless special measures are undertaken in conflict zones, destruction brings educational and socioeconomic development to a standstill. Children trapped in such zones or left to wander on the streets or in camps for displaced persons or refugees usually become traumatized, as well as chronically ill and malnourished. They often lack early childhood stimulation and educational opportunities. While

1. In this volume, education is operationally defined to include both formal and non-formal learning systems that have central purposes, goals, and objectives; an organizational structure; teachers or learning facilitators; declared content, methods, and media; and significant population coverage.

some attention may be paid to their survival and physical needs, if children's psychological wounds and learning requirements are not attended to rapidly, children will continue to suffer and develop poorly for years. Such children could become the next generation of people propagating yet another cycle of violence. Some may become child soldiers or may be recruited by terrorist organizations.

Education: Key to Overcoming Conflict and Attaining Peace

The civil disorders and violence that characterize nations in crisis virtually always affect neighboring states. Violence and various types of illicit activities spill rapidly over borders. Neighboring countries often must host and care for vast numbers of refugees. In many instances, this "ripple effect" leads to international friction, and in extreme cases, to open conflict between nations. In recent years, many such situations have resulted in military intervention by regional and global organizations. It is clear that national crises are more than simply internal matters of countries where the state is weak; such conditions can become a threat to their neighbors and to international security. This has become apparent, as the "age of modern international terrorism" has taken center-stage.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and ensuing attacks elsewhere in the world brought these lessons vividly home to millions. Awareness has spread that not only must nations and communities be protected against immediate threats; the roots of conflict must be identified and overcome. Education has been cited as a cause of radical militarism, as a tool for indoctrination, and as a means for gaining military and tactical knowledge for carrying out violent acts. At the same time, education has proven to be a means for building inter-group respect and tolerance, for achieving the ideals of human rights, democracy, and reconciliation, and for creating systems that will achieve peaceful development. To attain these positive goals, it is essential that education become a part of the strategy to prevent as well as to overcome conflicts that threaten international security.

International development efforts have a role to play in any attempts to safeguard international security and achieve peace. A critical role is restoring and strengthening the social, educational, economic, and political fabric of

countries that are likely to experience new or renewed conflicts. Some multilateral, bilateral, and other development aid organizations are becoming aware of the need to use integrated approaches to assist countries in a timely manner to avert crises. However, many countries currently enduring conflicts still lack the educational assistance they require, to say nothing of the many states poised at the brink of new or renewed conflicts. This is a critical gap.

The ability of a society to meet its intergenerational commitment is its foundation for achieving stability and sustained socioeconomic development. Education is the essential process by which societies meet their intergenerational commitment (Vargas-Baron and McClure 1998). When a nation is unable to prepare the next generation by means of teaching its cultural values and traditions, as well as core knowledge and skills, the foundation of society is eroded. Its institutions are weakened, and ultimately destroyed. Education is more than a building block of societies; it is the cement and mortar—the process and structure that binds together the elements that compose the foundation of societies. To stabilize countries under stress, these foundational elements must be strengthened, especially by reforming the processes, structures, and content of education. For this reason and to the extent possible, planning for education reform should begin during the final phase of a conflict and the earliest stages of social reconstruction.

To overcome conflicts and achieve a durable peace, the foundation of society must be rebuilt. When education reform is used as a basic tool for societies to rebuild and sustain themselves, it involves citizens in organizing around a “common interest.” Experience has shown that in those countries where new educational systems, structures, and processes are established through the implementation of education reforms, the lessons learned can be applied rapidly to other areas of development. For example, since education often receives a large percentage of national budgets in developing nations, improvements in educational administration can help improve countries’ civil service systems. *If planning for education during and after conflicts is integrated with programming in other sectors, it can become a “flying wedge” for building the peace.*

Nation Building and Building Nationhood

With the advent of major conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, increasing emphasis has been placed upon the rather vague notion of “nation-building.” Most strategic programs for nation-building have been directed toward developing electoral processes and establishing democratic governance, training security forces, providing humanitarian assistance, building physical infrastructure (roads, building, bridges, and also schools). Nation-building strategies rarely have included a strong emphasis on the more fundamental reform of educational policies and programs.

However, educational interventions can contribute not only to “nation-building” in the political and structural sense but also to the more personal, communal, and enduring process of “building nationhood.” Loosely defined, “building nationhood” means ensuring that citizens feel that they belong to and can contribute to their country. As the case studies in this book testify, education for positive citizenship can help achieve more equitable socioeconomic development and greater social justice. It can also promote cultural maintenance and growth, intercultural understanding, respect and tolerance, and self-directed evolution for all groups within a nation. Education can help develop more resilient and durable socioeconomic systems, maintain security, and attain peace with development.

Nationhood can be built by developing formal and non-formal education systems that teach core values and basic skills, including an understanding of human rights. Education can promote balanced emotional development and build positive interpersonal relationships for citizenship, including reconciliation and healing, thereby helping to avoid cyclical violence. Education programs can provide knowledge and work-related skills for productivity, to strengthen the economy and improve people’s livelihoods.

For minority ethnic and linguistic groups, education programs that are derived from their realities and meet their educational needs can help them preserve the essence of their cultures while entering the modern world from a point of strength. Culturally derived education programs can help ethnic minorities maintain or gain a strong self-identity and participate in national life. At the same time, they can acquire the knowledge and tools they need to achieve their goals.

By including education for positive citizenship in the process of nation-building, vulnerable people can begin to resolve conflicts, gain control over their lives, and achieve reconciliation. They can overcome a sense of hopelessness in the face of violent groups that act with impunity. *Several of the case studies demonstrate that education can contribute to developing harmonious relations between groups that are diverse with respect to culture, religion, or socioeconomic level.*

Education can also be used as a proactive tool for preventing conflict within and among nations. A great deal remains to be learned about how best to do this. In countries that have already experienced conflicts, educational interventions can become a laboratory for using education to prevent future or cyclical violence elsewhere. Often violence is correlated with high levels of poverty, low levels of school enrollment and primary completion, and gender inequities. Thus developing new and effective policies and programs to correct these problems may well be of critical importance. Attention especially should be given to achieving educational equity, increasing investments in education and training, revising curricula and teaching methods, and rapidly expanding pre- and in-service teacher training.

The International Community's Commitment to Education for Nations in Conflict

The needs of the millions of children negatively affected by conflicts, and their vital requirements for education, are being increasingly addressed by the international community within the framework of global support for achieving universal basic education. In two recent summits, heads of the G-8 nations expressed their interest in supporting basic education for all, including in nations with conflicts.² The Communiqués issued by the Heads of State of the G-8 Summits in Okinawa (June 2000) and Genoa (June 2001) gave priority to the essential roles of education, health, and information technology for achieving poverty reduction and economic growth.

At the World Education Forum for Education for All (EFA) held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000, nations underscored the importance of using

2. Basic education is defined to include early childhood development, primary and secondary education, literacy for youth and adults, and teacher training.

educational policy planning and program development to help create stable and economically viable societies. Nations stated their commitment to expand and improve basic education not only to “sustainable development nations,” but also to those that are enduring conflicts. To achieve EFA goals by 2015, the Dakar Framework for Action calls for providing help with educational policy and program development in countries affected by conflicts.

The need is urgent. As noted in a study on conflict situations prepared for the World Education Forum, “Man-made and natural disasters have emerged as major barriers to the accomplishment of Education for All” (Bensalah, Sinclair, and Hadj Nacer 1999, preface). Most of the more than 135 million children who are not receiving a basic education reside in nations with conflict or post-conflict situations. Various educational specialists have affirmed that their education needs are being neglected (Sommers 2002). Unless significant assistance is provided for these children, EFA will not be attained by 2015—or even 2030.

To achieve universal basic education, a major and purposeful international effort will be required to provide quality learning opportunities to millions of children living in nations with conflicts. The Dakar Framework for Action includes a pledge to “meet the needs of education systems affected by conditions of conflict and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and help to prevent violence and conflict.” The participants also agreed to assist countries to develop national EFA plans, noting that, “countries with less developed strategies—including countries affected by conflict, countries in transition and post-crisis countries—must be given the support they need to achieve more rapid progress towards education for all.” The nations and donors declared, “For those countries with significant challenges, such as complex crises or natural disasters, special technical support will be provided by the international community” (UNESCO 2000a). To fulfill these pledges, extensive additional technical expertise will be required in this decade to help nations in crisis with participatory policy planning to develop their education systems.

The Knowledge Gap

The world can ill afford the human, military, and economic costs of conflicts in developing nations. However, the few international specialists who have the requisite knowledge and experience in education and participatory policy

planning during or after conflict often do not know one another and rarely have opportunities to meet or work together. National education specialists in conflict situations also tend to work in an isolated manner. As a result, a small group of international specialists in “emergency education” are called upon repeatedly to provide short-term, stopgap services for ongoing conflicts or immediate post-conflict assistance. Rarely are they or others funded to conduct evaluations and action research on their activities. As a result, their critically important experiences in planning and program design are largely lost. Moreover, they are in such high demand that they lack the time and support to develop effective networks, conduct evaluations, and describe their work.

Some excellent education programs can be found in conflict situations, but they are largely unknown in neighboring countries and other world regions. Even in their own countries, the personnel of education programs developed during and after conflicts rarely know about one another’s programs. They lack opportunities to share their knowledge, skills, materials, methods, and evaluations; visit other programs; develop joint training activities; and build networks. Thus it is not surprising that relatively little is generally known about how best to strengthen or rehabilitate education systems in conflict situations. Although a few studies exist on education in violent crises, the knowledge base is thin and spotty at best. Even though important conceptual work and field activities for preventing conflict and conducting educational interventions during and after crises have been initiated during the past 15 years, little of this work has been well documented or evaluated in any world area.

Why Were Latin America and East Asia Selected for This Book?

Clearly, the Latin American region is a prevailing interest of the publisher of this book, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Over the years, the Bank has studied many aspects of poverty and educational and socioeconomic development in Latin America. However, this is IDB’s first book on education in conflict situations in Latin America. Most nations in Latin America either have ongoing conflicts or are dealing with post-conflict reconstruction. These situations are a reflection of socioeconomic inequities, poverty, poor child development and educational quality, inadequate access to basic public services, and discrimination against minority ethnic and linguistic groups (Moran 2003; Buvinic 2004).

The selection of East Asia may appear to be less clear because various other regions with conflicts could have been chosen, including North and Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeastern Europe, the Middle East, or South Asia.

East Asia was selected because it experienced several community, national, and regional conflicts well ahead of the current wave of international post-Cold War strife in Latin America. Also, the Japan Program of the Inter-American Development Bank, which sponsored this project, seeks to strengthen bonds between the countries of East Asia and Latin America. It is hoped that lessons learned from education programs and policies developed in Asia can provide special insights for some of the more recent conflict situations in Latin America, and potentially other regions, as well. Moreover, because conflicts continue in several countries of East Asia, it was felt that these nations might benefit from learning about and developing exchanges with successful education programs in conflict situations in Latin America.

Several post-conflict countries of East Asia did not deal in a timely manner with the education needs of their ethnic minorities, remote rural areas, street children, and children affected by war. As a consequence, these nations experienced major problems in social development, learned from this experience, and implemented education programs with those populations only later. Currently, several Latin American nations with conflicts are at risk of not providing timely education services for minority ethnic groups, children of war, children in displaced families, ex-combatants, and remote rural peoples who lack access to quality education services. Asian experiences provide a mirror for Latin Americans to reflect on their alternatives for achieving greater social justice and educational equity.

Furthermore, some East Asian countries developed several innovative programs that have achieved high educational quality both during and after conflicts. While arguments have raged internationally about whether educational quality can be attained in conflict situations, Asian program designers have demonstrated that quality and speedy program development are not antithetical. They have shown that complete program development processes can be implemented, cultural strengths can be marshaled to provide appropriate education programs, parents can become key actors and stakeholders in educational development, and education programs can be provided from birth onward. Asians have shown the world how to develop flexible pilot programs and then scale them up to cover large numbers of

children in camps for displaced persons or refugees, conflict zones, and distant rural ethnic enclaves.

In many emergency programs sponsored by international donors, trauma-healing services are separated from education programs. Asian programs have demonstrated how to unite effectively trauma healing with education services. These experiences are germane to Latin American programs that are struggling with children and parents who have suffered from significant recurrent trauma and are dealing with issues related to conflict resolution and reconciliation.

East Asian education specialists have extensive experience dealing with education for internally displaced families and refugees. Countries such as Colombia, with over 2 million displaced persons, face a major need to develop quality education for these children in many urban and rural areas. Lessons learned in Asia could assist Colombia and other nations of Latin America that are struggling to serve displaced and refugee children who lack educational opportunities.

Some observers have posited that Asian and Latin American experiences would be so profoundly different that representatives of selected programs would be unable to find points of commonality. Others, including the editors, believed the opposite would be true: that similar conflict situations and educational responses and processes would be found. As described in this book, the similarities were compelling. During an Inter-Regional Symposium held at the Inter-American Development Bank in November 2003, the authors from both regions met and enthusiastically exchanged program strategies and models as well as ideas for the future, revealing not only their essential humanity and dedication but also plentiful points of agreement. They prepared *Recommendations for International Organizations* and a *Plan of Action* to guide future inter-regional exchange activities.³ Thus the final and perhaps most compelling reason for selecting East Asia was to begin to build a bridge between programs and specialists of the two regions who are committed to achieving the common goal of improving education for vulnerable children.

3. These documents are available on website of the RISE Institute: <http://www.riseinstitute.org>.

The Case Studies

This book seeks to assist nations, donor agencies, and nongovernmental organizations in gaining ideas for developing policies and programs, preventing chronic conflict, and designing integrated education and social reconstruction programs that are implemented by groups directly affected by conflicts. In both Latin American and Asian countries with crises, strikingly innovative policies and programs have been developed to expand and improve education and contribute to national reconstruction. These policies and programs are little known. National specialists in both regions labor courageously—but in isolation. As a result, they often “reinvent the wheel.” There is an urgent need for them and others to share educational policy planning strategies and program models, materials, media, tools, and methodologies.

The ten case studies in this book describe exemplary education programs and policies that have been successful in meeting the learning needs of vulnerable children and families affected by violence. They were selected to represent a wide array of types of programs that can be implemented in conflict situations. In each case study, best practices and lessons learned are identified.

With this rationale in mind, the following ten case studies are presented in this book, five from Latin America and five from Asia.⁴

In Latin America

COLOMBIA. Building a Laboratory for Peace

The University of Ibagué’s Social Development Program serves internally displaced families of the violence-affected region of Tolima and trains professionals and community outreach workers who help them. It includes a virtual education program that serves rural towns that are dangerous for outsiders to visit, a community college that provides basic and skills education for youth and adults, and training for teachers and professors to deal with families affected by violence and promote education for peace, democracy, and reconciliation.

4. The project goal, objectives, phases, criteria for the selection of case studies, outline for the case studies, executive summaries, and complete case studies may be found in the following websites: <http://www.riseinstitute.org> and <http://www.iadb.org/int/jpn/English/main.htm>.

EL SALVADOR. Education Policy and Reform

The national educational policy reform of El Salvador began even before the conflict ended. It featured a participatory planning process with stakeholder consultations and consensus building at all levels and regions to reformulate primary and secondary education and teacher training.

EL SALVADOR. Reintegrating Ex-Combatants into Society

This program for former members of military and guerrilla groups provided both basic education and skills training. It also included trauma healing and conflict resolution activities, as well as health education, community relations, and peace education.

GUATEMALA. Promoting Literacy and Women's Development in Mayan Communities

This integrated bilingual literacy and basic education program worked with many local NGOs to provide education to girls and women in Mayan areas. It also provided community education and training for community educators.

PERU. Training Human Rights Promoters

The Peruvian Institute of Education for Human Rights and Peace trains community educators to sensitize and empower citizens to achieve peace, democracy, and reconciliation. It stimulated the creation of a nation-wide network of community educators and promoted the development of local organizations for human rights and democratic governance.

*In Asia**CAMBODIA. Empowering Ethnic Minorities in the Cambodian Highlands*

This bilingual basic education program engages members of local ethnic groups in developing new curricula and educational materials. It trains community educators to provide literacy education and skills training for community development, environmental protection, peace, and local governance. It has had a significant impact on national educational and language policy.

INDONESIA. Early Childhood Development for Refugee Children

This program for early childhood development in camps of displaced families features culturally derived preschool curricula and methods, training for community educators, parent education and involvement, trauma assessments and services, and education for inter-religious group understanding and reconciliation.

LAO PDR. Teacher Training in Remote Areas

This nationwide in-service teacher training program seeks to provide improved educational services for children in remote rural areas long neglected after the end of conflict in and around Lao PDR. The program has led to changes in educational policy, improved primary and secondary education, and promoted parent involvement in schools and community education.

THE PHILIPPINES. Creating Schools that Heal and Teach Peace

This program in Mindanao, the Philippines, works to improve the quality of primary education. It includes teacher training, parent education and involvement, community education, and components for trauma healing, conflict resolution, and reconciliation. It has led to educational policy change in the region.

VIET NAM. Educating Hard-to-Reach Children

Long after the end of the war in Viet Nam, many children in remote areas remained unschooled or received poor quality services. Street children, abandoned in the cities, became feared juvenile delinquents. Seeking to achieve universal primary education, Viet Nam developed effective new educational policies and programs for multigrade education in rural areas and alternative basic education in informal community settings for street children.

The exemplary education programs selected for study ranged greatly in size, although most are large, serving thousands to hundreds of thousands of children, youth, and families. One program in Ambon, Indonesia is relatively small, serving only a few hundred children and their parents. However, this model has proven to be highly effective; as a result, it is being replicated rapidly in other Indonesian camps for displaced families. ASAPROSAR in El Salvador served slightly over 200 ex-combatants; however, the lessons learned from this program were used in similar programs later developed throughout the nation. Programs in Cambodia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Lao PDR, Peru, the Philippines, and Viet Nam have achieved large-scale coverage serving several thousand children, youth, and adults. Most of them are continuing to grow.

Policies or programs were initiated during conflicts in Colombia, El Salvador (the educational reform), Indonesia, and the Philippines. Each of these has been highly successful in achieving its objectives, despite its location in

conflict zones. Programs begun after the end of conflict include those in Cambodia, El Salvador (program for ex-combatants), Guatemala, Lao PDR, Peru, and Viet Nam. The Guatemalan, Peruvian, and Salvadoran programs were developed soon after conflict ended. The Cambodian, Lao, and Vietnamese programs were developed well after conflict had ended, although the impacts of the conflicts and the potential for renewed violence clearly shaped the nature of these programs.

The case studies describe salient program dimensions, including socio-cultural and historical contexts; the relationship to conflict or post-conflict conditions; program challenges; core organization, activities, and content; results; best practices; and lessons learned.⁵

Lessons Learned about Education in Conflict Situations

With the goal of helping improve education programs in conflict situations, major lessons learned across the ten exemplary education programs are discussed below (see box 1.1, page 18).

Discussions of best practices and lessons learned are presented in each case study. Thus separate program findings are not repeated here.

Ensure that education is a key component of the crisis response.

Donors and national governments should support education policies and programs that are well integrated with other services during and after conflicts.

Many institutional barriers prevent the timely and effective provision of international assistance for education in crisis situations. Some international donors and NGOs have formal or informal policies that permit the development of education programs only well after conflicts have ended,

5. An outline was drafted to guide the preparation of the case studies. The studies were not intended to be rigorous evaluations or “impact evaluations” conducted by external specialists. Rather, they were drafted by people who were instrumental in program design and development. As a result, all the authors are very knowledgeable about their programs. Clearly, they cannot be as objective as external evaluators. However, most of the programs conducted internal evaluations; several had external evaluations. The results of these evaluations were used to prepare the case studies.

when stability has been achieved. A relatively small number of them provide short-term support for education programs during or immediately after some conflicts. Very few agencies offer long-term support and/or preventive education and training programs before an impending crisis.

BOX 1.1 Education in Conflict Situations: Key Lessons Learned

- Ensure that education is a key component of the crisis response.
- Aim for educational quality during conflicts.
- Begin planning educational policies and programs during conflicts to help ensure that the critical 18-month post-conflict “window of opportunity” will not be lost.
- Promote participation.
- Expand national support for community-level programs.
- Use institutions of civil society.
- Provide adequate attention to vulnerable groups.
- Make programs responsive to local languages, cultures, and needs.
- Secure diversified and long-term funding.
- Pursue program integration.
- Use complete program development processes and an evolutionary approach.
- Establish effective organizational strategies.
- Develop culturally appropriate educational materials and methods.
- Select program staff from local communities.
- Conduct pre- and in-service training for staff, teachers, and leaders.
- Include a monitoring and evaluation system.
- Develop partnerships and networks.
- Plan to achieve scale.

Several of the case studies reveal that national institutions of civil society were able to initiate high-quality education programs during or immediately after crises. Inspired and courageous national leaders developed the programs in Colombia, El Salvador, Indonesia, Peru, and the Philippines during times of conflict.

By contrast, some nations with complex crises, such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, Liberia, and Rwanda, did not receive adequate and timely support for their institutions of civil society; those institutions deteriorated to such an extent that

later it became exceedingly difficult to achieve rapid social and economic reconstruction. It is critically important for international and national agencies to invest in weakened institutions of civil society during conflicts—not only to meet prevailing educational needs, but also to ensure that they are strengthened to help with nation-building during the immediate post-conflict period.

However, when international donors are willing to support education initiatives during or immediately after conflicts, most tend to import program models and personnel rather than identify and use nationally derived program models, institutions, and professionals. The case studies in this book reveal that competent and dedicated educational professionals usually are found in nations with conflicts. Because national planners and educators have analyzed the limitations of existing schools and non-formal education programs, they usually are interested in improving their education systems. They require both national and international support to develop the reforms they wish to pursue.

With a few notable exceptions, traditional forms of humanitarian assistance provided by international donors do not include education services integrated with social reconstruction programs at the community level. Most donor agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) continue to provide short-term humanitarian assistance that focuses mainly on meeting “survival needs,” such as emergency survival services, reconstructing infrastructures, offering microcredit, and insuring free and fair elections. The case studies in this book demonstrate the value of providing education services that are integrated with other services during and after conflicts.

Nations experiencing conflicts or dealing with the challenges of post-conflict reconstruction often request donor assistance for programs to improve and update educational policies, contents, and methods; establish civic education for democratic governance; provide skills training at secondary and community college levels; and create participatory education programs at the community level. These needs are very real. As will be demonstrated in this book, national institutions in conflict situations have developed successful programs to meet these needs. Donors willing to place their faith in civil society and public sector institutions that have positive track records and transparent management systems could support such programs.

Aim for educational quality during conflicts.

Education programs of high quality can be initiated and conducted in situations of conflict.

Some specialists in emergency education have stated that educational quality cannot be attained during or immediately after conflicts. However, several of the case studies demonstrate that in situations where a minimum of security can be attained, it is possible to develop effective education programs with communities affected by violence. In each conflict situation, it is imperative to assess the level of potential danger for teachers, children, and parents. However, the conflict itself can become an opportunity for improving educational quality and building more equitable systems. Innovative ideas can emerge during conflict situations as people are challenged to become creative and revise failed education systems. High-quality education programs developed during conflicts can form the basis of rapid post-conflict educational development.

It may be helpful to consider using approaches applied successfully in violence zones of Colombia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

In Colombia, the University of Ibagué conducts an array of outstanding education and social development programs in conflict zones. Two programs are of special note. The University's Virtual Education Program established community learning centers in rural towns that are dangerous for outsiders to visit. By providing centralized training along with on-site and distance supervision for teachers and learning facilitators, this program has been able to offer teacher training, basic education, skills training, and hope for isolated children, youth, and adults. In addition, by offering greater access to educational services, it has helped stem the tide of displaced people who are fleeing to safer places with more educational opportunities. Another program provides education and skills training for thousands of displaced persons by establishing a new form of community college that offers a wide array of educational opportunities, leading to employment and integration into local communities.

In Ambon, Indonesia, violent conflicts between religious groups continue, yet the early childhood and parent education program has been very successful in serving families living in camps for displaced persons. This effective program is being rapidly replicated in other camps for displaced persons in Indonesia.

In Mindanao, the Philippines, the primary education program “Schools that Heal and Teach Peace” has greatly improved public education services and quality during a long period of intense conflict. By basing program interventions upon parental and community decision making, this program has rehabilitated the schools, reformulated educational content, improved teaching methods, and assisted traumatized teachers, children, and parents. The methods developed by the Philippines NGO “Community of Learners” could be considered for application in other conflict situations.

Begin planning educational policies and programs during conflicts to help ensure that the critical 18-month post-conflict “window of opportunity” will not be lost.

Activities for educational policy planning should begin during conflicts to enable rapid education reform during the immediate post-conflict period.

Usually, educational policy reform occurs only well after conflicts have ended. Sometimes, reforms are not undertaken until many years thereafter. However, case studies in this book clearly demonstrate that successful education policy planning processes can and should be planned and initiated during conflicts. These processes can be expanded rapidly later by conducting widespread consultations and consensus building exercises in areas formerly struck by violence.

Planning during the conflict helps to ensure that the critical 18-month post-conflict “window of opportunity” for improving education will not be lost. Unless immediate education reforms are undertaken during this brief post-conflict period, education and other systems tend to revert to traditional and non-functional organizational methods and procedures as people seek to find “normalcy” and recreate past realities (Vargas-Baron and McClure 1998).

The case study on the education reform of El Salvador shows that educational planning can be initiated during a crisis. This reform process was begun during the last phase of the war before the peace accord was signed. It helped Salvadoran educators move forward with policy development immediately after the war. Had participatory planning not occurred during the final phase of the war, it is likely that an education reform would not have been undertaken in El Salvador until many years later, as was the case in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam.

However, most “emergency education activities,” when provided by donor agencies, tend to be regarded as short-term and ends in themselves. In contrast, education planners who are citizens of nations enduring conflicts usually develop their programs with the goal of achieving both long-term and short-term impact. Donor support of national education reform processes is essential if their investments in education are to be used to contribute to longer-term democratic and socioeconomic development. Most of the programs in this book that were initiated by national specialists during conflicts are contributing to the establishment of post-conflict educational policies.

The case studies on Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam demonstrate that if the educational needs of vulnerable populations are not met soon after a conflict ends, these needs can multiply and become major social problems. To meet these challenges, large reform programs had to be mounted at a later date at great cost and effort. Programs in Colombia, El Salvador, Indonesia, Peru, and the Philippines demonstrate that education activities can play a major positive role in social and economic development both during and after conflicts.

Promote participation.

To develop successful educational policies and programs in conflict situations, ensure that participatory processes are used that include representatives of government and civil society at all levels.

Each of the authors of the case studies emphasized the importance of building participatory systems to develop successful and sustainable programs. Participation helps establish a sense of community ownership of the programs and can improve program security in some violence zones. Participatory activities should include all stakeholders, such as formal and informal community leaders, parents, children, and youth, as well as public sector agencies, NGOs, and other institutions of civil society such as universities, community colleges, institutes, unions, and professional associations.

The study on El Salvador’s education reform policy clearly demonstrates the value of participatory planning processes. Similarly, education programs developed during conflicts in Colombia, Indonesia, and the Philippines all included a high level of parental and community leadership. This fact led the authors of these studies and others to recommend strongly that programs developed during conflicts be designed with the full participation of the people they seek to

serve. According to the case study authors, participation means that parents, community members, and teachers will take an active, decision-making role in program design, implementation, finances, evaluation, monitoring, and revision to ensure program relevancy and effectiveness.

Programs that were developed after conflicts or danger had subsided also featured a high level of participation by local communities. Cambodian ethnic minorities draft and produce educational materials and participate in the management of basic program development processes. Displaced persons in Tolima, Colombia help design and develop all the programs that serve them. As a result, they enthusiastically support these activities. Vietnamese parents, community members, and teachers serve children in multigrade classrooms and alternative basic education programs. Guatemalan communities and NGOs help to ensure that bilingual literacy programs are relevant to local needs. Community promoters are trained in Peru to work with their communities to resolve conflicts, learn and assess human rights, and build peace and democratic governance. Ex-combatants in El Salvador helped program leaders ensure that services met their psychological as well as their educational, skills training, and familial needs.

In general, participation helped maximize the use of resources in each setting, develop self-confidence, assist people to exercise a degree of control over their lives, and promote individual and family capacity to rebuild their lives. Case study authors emphasized that international and national staff members of donor agencies should be trained in concepts and methodologies for achieving effective participation during and after conflicts.

Expand national support for community-level programs.

Strong national leadership is required to ensure that the improvement and expansion of education programs at the community level become priorities of conflict and post-conflict development.

Often—but not always—conflicts are the result of a search for equity, human rights, justice, and socioeconomic development. For this reason, and for reasons of social justice and educational equity, it is critically important for education to be improved rapidly at the community level.

National and local specialists should help design education programs to ensure that they will be culturally appropriate and meet community needs. The government

or transition government should work with institutions of civil society, national NGOs, and others to support these efforts. Examples are found in the case studies on Cambodia, Colombia, El Salvador (both programs), Guatemala, Peru, the Philippines, and Viet Nam.

For nationally supported community education to occur, both top-down and bottom-up planning are required. National planners should help develop partially decentralized systems that enable community participation. Education programs begun at the community level should be able to attract national and provincial support. To maintain program quality and relevance later, the locus of control should remain at the local level, with appropriate roles and responsibilities at district, provincial, and national levels. National governments can guide, technically support, and fund local programs. However, most personnel should be obtained and managed locally.

International programs designed mainly or solely by international specialists tend to encounter major problems, from rejection by local populations to a lack of sustainability. However, systems of community-level programs developed by national educators can be enhanced through technical and financial support from international sources. The judicious selection of national programs for international support requires careful review and donor collaboration to avoid unnecessary duplication. With one exception, national specialists initiated the programs presented in this book. Virtually all of them succeeded in attracting some level of international support.

Use institutions of civil society.

Institutions of civil society can play a critically important role in initiating and participating actively in educational policy and program development in conflict situations.

Governmental institutions usually lead national educational policy and program development. However, institutions of civil society play an essential role in maintaining the fabric of society, preserving cultural values, developing education programs during and after conflicts, and improving educational quality. Civil society institutions have been critically important in initiating and implementing most of the programs presented in this book:

- Cambodia's bilingual education program was developed by national NGOs, ethnic community development organizations, and international NGOs that later succeeded in collaborating with government agencies and international donors.
- Colombia's social development program was developed and implemented by a major regional university that developed a community college and other programs in collaboration with community development organizations, national and regional agencies, institutions of the private sector, and international donors.
- El Salvador's education reform, led by the Ministry of Education, was supported to a large degree by universities and other institutions of civil society, with technical and financial support from international donors.
- El Salvador's program for ex-combatants was conducted by a national NGO, with support from an international donor and collaboration with national public sector agencies.
- Guatemala's bilingual education program was implemented by several national NGOs, with support from a national university, a ministry, a bilateral donor, and a major international NGO.
- Indonesia's early childhood and parent education program was developed by national NGOs, with support from other national NGOs. It has not yet received governmental or international support.
- The Lao PDR program for in-service teacher training is a government program but it includes a strong emphasis upon community involvement and collaboration with community development organizations and UN agencies.
- Peru's Institute of Education for Human Rights and Peace is a national NGO dedicated to promoting peace, human rights, democracy, and reconciliation with support from community organizations and international donors. It has not received governmental funding.
- The Philippines' quality education program was developed by a major national NGO in collaboration with other NGOs, a university, local educational authorities, and an international NGO.
- Viet Nam's education programs for multigrade and alternative basic education were developed by the Ministry of Education, with the strong participation of community-level organizations and groups, and technical and financial support from UN agencies.

Thus most but not all of the programs were developed from a civil society base. With the exception of the Peruvian and Indonesian programs, they have been integrated to some extent into public agencies at local, regional, or national levels. Ultimately, most of them have attracted international support.

Provide adequate attention to vulnerable groups.

Special populations should be given priority attention for education services.

Although several multilateral and bilateral donors and international NGOs have given extensive humanitarian assistance to refugees in some countries, in yet other countries, millions of internally displaced persons and other civilian groups are enduring violence without help. Frequently, in countries with conflicts, specific segments of the population are more severely affected than others. Usually they are women, children, youth, communities living in poverty, minority ethnic and linguistic groups, children with disabilities, and orphans. These groups tend to be overlooked in times of conflict. Furthermore, access to them sometimes is restricted by a series of circumstances including national policies; weak, inadequate, or unenforced international laws; and the policies of some donor nations and organizations. The needs of these vulnerable groups must be given special attention. Education and training can play a fundamental role in this respect.

UNDERSERVED CHILDREN. Understandably, national education planners seek to serve the larger population first. Some of them forget or decline to plan with and serve special populations for a variety of reasons, including political issues, lack of representation in decision-making settings, patterns of discrimination, and lack of information about their needs. Throughout the world, ethnic minorities, girls, women, and vulnerable children tend to be underserved and have high levels of illiteracy and school drop out.

In Viet Nam, because children and youth living in the streets or in remote mountain villages were not given priority attention soon after the war, many years passed without education services reaching them. Over time, street children became juvenile delinquents and inspired the wrath of the general population. Viet Nam lagged behind many other nations in achieving universal basic education. By the early 1990s, it became clear that in order to reach unserved children, new educational policies and flexible, innovative programs would have to be mounted. Had policies to serve these children been put into place soon after the war, many social and economic problems that subsequently appeared probably could have been avoided. Since changing its education policies, Viet Nam has demonstrated notable flexibility and ingenuity in developing programs that are serving its most disadvantaged populations.

MINORITY ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS. Education planners in many nations have long felt that it is impossible or exceedingly difficult to develop bilingual education programs. Some tend to fear that establishing such programs might undermine the development of national systems of governance. However, the bilingual education programs of Cambodia and Guatemala show that successful and technically sound education programs can be mounted with the full collaboration of ethnic groups previously unserved by national education systems and non-formal education programs. Methods employed to achieve culturally derived education programs in previously unwritten languages now are well understood. They can be employed relatively easily and economically in other nations.

In addition, the program in Cambodia demonstrates that bilingual education programs are helping to bring remote ethnic minorities into national life, rather than creating separate systems, as had been feared. This result has led to the formulation of a national policy promoting bilingual education and the provision of extension services in local languages. This work is encouraging other nations in Southeast Asia to learn from the bilingual education programs of Cambodia.

GENDER FOCUS. Women usually are the most underutilized resource in war zones. In addition to rearing children, they usually contribute significantly to informal economies. Girls' and women's education and empowerment are essential for stabilizing countries and achieving sustainable development. Sound international research over a ten-year period has revealed that girls' education yields high rates of return on investment. To ensure that education for girls and women is given special priority within integrated crisis response programs, purposeful design efforts are required. All the programs presented in this book place a special emphasis upon providing education and training for girls and women, especially those who are ethnic minorities or from displaced families.

The Guatemalan COMAL program focused on providing integrated literacy services to girls and women. It demonstrated that targeted programs such as COMAL can be successful in reaching many girls and women from populations that never had attended school. Major efforts to reach girls and women have been made in all the other programs. For example, most of the participants in the El Salvador ASAPROSAR program were young female ex-combatants. Many community promoters of the IPEDEHP program of Peru

were women. Girls are given special attention in the programs of Cambodia, Colombia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Viet Nam.

COMMUNITY-WIDE FOCUS. While special populations need extra support, when possible, a geographic area as a whole should be assisted, rather than limiting services only to a special population. This approach also helps overcome problems related to social injustice, poverty, and service inequity—problems that often foster continued conflict. The case study in Colombia illustrates this point. Displaced families in the department (state) of Tolima were often settling in low-income communities where everyone is similarly poor, impacted by violence, underserved by social support programs, and vulnerable to insecurity. If program services were restricted only to recently displaced families, envy and frictions soon would appear. Thus Colombian educational planners decided to provide services to all families that wanted them in the communities where displaced families had settled. The result has been to raise the development of the entire area.

Make programs responsive to local languages, cultures, and needs.

Education programs developed during and after conflicts must be responsive to local languages and cultures, as well as both immediate and evolving needs.

The case studies from Cambodia and Guatemala show that for programs for ethnic minorities to be effective, the language of initial instruction should be the local language. As abundant research has demonstrated, learning to read and write in the mother tongue serves as a good basis for gaining language and literacy skills in the national language. This approach helps linguistic minorities begin to join their nation, rather than build antipathy toward a country that excludes them. History has shown that excluded peoples will, sooner or later, fight for representation unless they are given opportunities for participating in decisions that affect their lives and communities.

In Cambodia, program participants from Ratanakiri Province, long marginalized from the Khmer culture and national life, now feel bound to the nation because programs have responded to their needs, honor their cultures and languages, and teach them the national language. The local culture in Ambon, Indonesia formed the basis of culturally derived early childhood and parent education. Educational activities for displaced families in Tolima,

Colombia have been designed with students' active assistance in order to meet their needs, prepare them for employment, and help them achieve their goals.

Secure diversified and long-term funding.

The financing of education programs during and after conflicts should be highly diversified and long-term in order to help ensure program sustainability.

Virtually all the programs in this book have attracted a wide array of in-kind support from communities, as well as funding and material support from national public and private sources. Some have gained international support from multilateral organizations such as UNICEF and UNESCO; bilateral donors such as the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) or the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); or international NGOs such as Save the Children or OXFAM. The programs were successful in maintaining careful and transparent records; developing a capacity for internal evaluation, monitoring, and reporting; and engaging funders directly in program activities to help ensure their continued interest. All received major in-kind support from the communities they serve.

Programs with the longest period of development have attracted large government and private sector contracts and grants from foundations and businesses. Apart from ministerial services, programs that have had only one or two sources of funding have tended to encounter difficulty in maintaining their services over time. Program authors believe it is critically important to ensure long-term national and international support for community-level programs that serve vulnerable populations affected by violence. This is particularly necessary in the case of ex-combatants and displaced or refugee populations. Support should be maintained until they and their communities become fully self-sufficient in order to avoid a possible loss of hope and a return to violence, as has occurred several times in Colombian history.

Pursue program integration.

Education programs in conflict settings should be well integrated with programs in other sectors. This will build community collaboration for reconstruction. It will also maximize the use of scarce human, financial, and material resources.

All the programs presented in this book were integrated in one way or another with other sectors, including health, sanitation, and nutrition services; health infrastructure development; democracy, local governance, and community development; child and family development; small enterprise and job creation; and ecological protection and natural resource management. They were developed by national specialists seeking to respond to multiple expressed needs of vulnerable populations affected by conflict. The breadth of program services tended to strengthen education programs, and helped program planners meet evolving community needs and ensure program relevance.

However, internationally supported programs in conflict situations usually focus on only one sector. They could benefit from greater integration. An example of effective inter-sectoral integration by an international agency is UNICEF's "Child Friendly Spaces," which features a highly integrated program design to provide health, nutritional, educational, and protective services for mothers, children, and youth. (UNICEF 2001b).

National policymakers and planners seeking to prevent cycles of chronic conflict increasingly are concerned that partial or "fragmented" sectoral interventions rarely yield success in the medium or longer term. Some national planners are becoming aware that integrated models and strategic alliances and partnerships are required to achieve a sufficient degree of stability to attain sustainable development.

Use complete program development processes and an evolutionary approach.

Programs in conflict situations should have complete program development processes, conduct transparent managerial procedures, and be flexible to ensure that services evolve to meet emerging needs.

This is good advice for any program design activity. However, it is mentioned here because most education programs in conflict situations manifestly lack complete program design processes. It is noteworthy that each of the programs selected for this book essentially used complete program development processes. They were designed with attention to needs and resource assessments; purposes, goals, and objectives; program organizational structure and linkages; administrative, financial, and supervisory processes; educational content, methods, materials, and media; staff, teacher, and facilitator selection; pre- and in-service training and

support; evaluation, monitoring, and reporting processes; and follow-up and program revision activities.

In addition, each program features transparent organizational and financial processes. Several programs were maintained as independent cost centers within an array of other services. Exceptions were the ministerial programs and policy development activities that fit within governmental structures. The national NGOs and other institutions of civil society developed good track records in financial management. Creating a positive institutional image is especially important in conflict settings, where corruption is often rampant. Transparency and good accounting records are essential for programs to attract and maintain external funding in conflict situations.

The programs did not develop all their components from the outset. Rather, they developed them gradually, building from success to success. They de-emphasized or discarded nonfunctional activities, and established new ones to respond to emerging needs. This evolutionary approach, most notable in the Colombian program, helped ensure that activities were responsive and improved over time. This flexible strategy contrasts with the approaches of some international programs that require that a fixed program model be implemented with established program indicators and measures that cannot be changed. Given the chaos and nature of unexpected occurrences in conflict situations, an evolutionary strategy has been functional for all of the programs presented in this book.

Establish effective organizational strategies.

For community-level programs to achieve success and go to scale, it is essential that competent coordination systems be developed.

The Lao PDR program for in-service teacher training developed a carefully structured organizational system with clearly defined roles and responsibilities at national, provincial, district, and community levels. Similar approaches were used for the educational reform in El Salvador and the Peruvian program that developed networks of community education promoters. Strong coordination systems are essential for state or provincial-level programs in conflict situations. Programs that do not develop and flexibly improve such systems tend to encounter major managerial and supervisory problems that ultimately result in damaging service quality.

For programs and projects designed to go to scale, it is important to implement monitoring and evaluation systems that will allow them to learn from their experiences and disseminate information on best practices and lessons learned. Coordination among implementing institutions, as well as networking with other agencies and groups, are also strategically important for sharing this information. These processes can enhance policy formulation by pertinent authorities. Sharing relevant and reliable information tends to enhance possibilities for going to scale and encourages funding agencies to continue their support. Building confidence and trust helps to create conditions for project growth and sustainability. This has been one of the major lessons especially from the Colombian, Philippine, and Peruvian case studies.

Develop culturally appropriate educational materials and methods.

Effective training methods and materials for use in conflict situations have been developed that could be adapted and applied in other conflict situations.

Several case studies present effective training systems. All the programs developed unique training strategies and materials. For example, the ASAPROSAR program of El Salvador developed effective methods for helping former opponents (ex-guerrillas and ex-military) learn and work together, and even become friends. Valuable approaches such as these should be shared widely in nations dealing with ex-combatants. The IPEDEHP program of Peru developed a rich array of teaching and learning materials for community promoters on topics related to human rights, democracy, and conflict resolution that could be adapted and applied in many countries. Some programs such as the one in Ambon, Indonesia developed special learning materials and games for young children. The bilingual education programs of Guatemala and Cambodia developed an array of new language education materials and methods. In Cambodia, community members learned how to use computers, and designed and published their own educational materials in their languages.

Virtually all the programs developed learner-centered, active teaching methods that included problem solving, critical thinking skills, team building, and project-oriented teaching. They created classrooms or learning spaces that became stable and protective environments. They encouraged children to learn by helping them concentrate during very difficult times. The children learned to apply lessons about cooperation, sharing, and respectful relations in their daily lives. Several programs included values education and developed inter-group

understanding and mutual respect. Most of them provided training to learn specific behaviors, such as methods of conflict resolution.

Certain programs, including those in El Salvador, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, included multigrade education. Lessons derived from multigrade education in conflict and post-conflict settings need further study, especially with regard to learning outcomes and cost-effectiveness over time.

Some programs emphasized achieving resilience and reconciliation, learning how to conduct activities to analyze and improve human rights, and identifying trauma and then provide appropriate levels of counseling and referrals for specialized attention. Several programs included parents and community members as well as children and youth in these activities. They helped promote greater parental involvement in the schools and non-formal learning programs.

The types of learning approaches developed included everything from skills workshops to special learning games, role playing, socio-dramas, puppetry, traditional children's learning games, gymnastics, personal histories with immediate psychological and social support, and the use of multimedia, including e-learning. Each of the programs stressed that local languages must be used, and all educational materials should be provided in those languages. Several programs have developed ways to use computers to produce, test, and print their materials locally. Some sites have used the Internet to share materials. This is an area that requires future development.

Most of the programs developed methods and materials for staff training on how to deal with crisis and stress, develop positive interpersonal communications, and conduct activities for conflict resolution and mediation. These approaches could be very useful for other programs serving children and youth in high-risk situations.

Select program staff from local communities.

Education programs that use community members as teachers or learning facilitators have a greater chance of developing programs that will meet community needs and achieve high levels of community involvement.

Most of the case study authors state that the success of their programs was due in part to the careful identification and selection of good candidates for program staff from local communities. Program leaders usually formally

established the criteria for the selection of personnel. Communities played an important role in the selection and review of local staff members.

Using community educators enabled several programs to keep costs low, develop local capacity, retain trained educators in the area, and promote community ownership of the program. By becoming teachers or learning facilitators, community members usually raised their social status. The use of local staff also helped several programs become self-sustaining.

Conduct pre-service and in-service training for staff, teachers, and leaders.

Attention should be given to providing not only effective pre-service staff and teacher training but also in-service training on a frequent and regular basis.

The programs developed a variety of designs for pre- and in-service training, but all ensured that continuous training programs were instituted along with strong supervisory support. Because many of the teachers and learning facilitators came from local communities affected by conflict, they required special training before service and frequent in-service training. All the programs emphasized the importance of providing experiential and participatory training so that teachers would be capable of using those same methods when teaching children, youth, and parents.

In-service teacher training was fundamental to the programs in Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Peru, the Philippines, and Viet Nam. These programs also included essential training for supervisors and administrators that focused on professional development in the areas of program management, conflict resolution, and dealing with education programming in conflict situations.

The Colombian program is based on the premise that continuous in-service training will not only help ensure quality but also adjust programs appropriately as circumstances evolve. The Guatemalan bilingual education program included continuous in-service training for its community literacy educators. The Indonesian program provides in-service training not only in early childhood and parent education skills but also for the identification of traumatized children and parents in order to serve them appropriately. Additional support is given to staff members who need it. The Lao PDR

program constituted a major national effort to provide substantial in-service training in remote mountain hamlets. The Peruvian project provided pre-service training followed by an array of in-service training and networking opportunities. Viet Nam's multigrade education and alternative basic education programs feature in-service training systems.

Each program included plans for professional development and continuous training opportunities. These training programs tend to emphasize flexibility to meet the needs of individual trainees and local communities. They seek to ensure that training programs are guided by clear sets of objectives, definitions of educators' roles and teaching methods, and instructions on how to use curricula in culturally appropriate ways. Supervisors often become in-service trainers. Training tends to be frequent, varying from weekly to biweekly, monthly or quarterly, and is used as an incentive for program enrollment. In a few instances where salaries are low or the work is voluntary, training can serve as a reward and a way to raise teachers' status in their communities. Members of teachers' communities often provide in-kind support for teachers, including preparing their fields and gardens, repairing their homes, and providing food in lieu of payment or in addition to small stipends. Future study is needed on ways to develop greater governmental support for the salaries or fees of teachers and learning facilitators during and after conflicts.

For training ex-combatants, Salvadorans discovered that it is essential to develop a national training system for them immediately upon the cessation of hostilities. Piecemeal programs are inadequate to meet their short- and longer-term needs for reintegration into communities. Ex-combatants who do not receive timely skills training, job placement, and counseling for their psychological needs are candidates for returning to violence. International donors and NGOs could help to mount these systems and provide technical support based on lessons learned in other nations.

Displaced families also require rapid assistance to meet their training, social, psychological, and economic needs. In Colombia increased national education and training efforts are required to meet the needs of millions of displaced families. Local and regional education and training programs, such as those of the University of Ibagué, Social Development Program, are capable of responding rapidly to local needs and could be replicated in other regions of Colombia and other nations with large numbers of internally displaced persons.

Include a monitoring and evaluation system.

Built-in evaluation, monitoring, and reporting should include all stakeholders and help achieve flexible program improvement.

Evaluation and monitoring systems are essential for all well-developed programs. However, it very hard to find such systems in educational programs developed during and after conflicts. In contrast, all the education programs in this book included internal evaluation and monitoring systems. Most conducted needs assessments and secured base line data at the beginning of their programs. Some had external evaluations, ranging from carefully controlled evaluations in Cambodia and Colombia to external impact evaluations in Guatemala, Lao PDR, and Peru. In addition, policy evaluations were undertaken in El Salvador, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam that have led to valuable policy adjustments over time.

Some program evaluations involved parents and staff members in review workshops and report preparation. Interestingly, all the programs viewed evaluation as a formative and motivational process rather than as a punitive process. In several programs, staff and participants helped to gather evaluation and monitoring data, in order to reduce evaluation costs and ensure that everyone felt ownership of the results. Reporting tended to be simple and frequent in order to keep the level of work manageable. All the programs used evaluation results to adjust and improve their programs in a very transparent way as well as prepare reports for national and international supporters.

Policy evaluation systems in El Salvador and Lao PDR are being strengthened because educational planners in these countries have found them to be essential for improving educational quality over time.

Develop partnerships and networks.

Education programs implemented during and after conflicts tend to develop strong networks and partnerships.

Each program profiled in this book developed partnerships and networks within their nations in order to expand their activities, provide additional services, and augment their base of financial and in-kind support. They

considered the development of partnerships and networks to be essential, but found that funding sources rarely provide support for these activities. Given the importance of building effective strategies of funding support for programs such as these during and after conflicts, special grants for inter-program coordination, partnerships and networks would appear to be a good investment.

All programs agreed that face-to-face collaboration is essential initially, followed by Internet and other forms of communication. All the programs have moved from developing partnerships to forming or joining networks of programs in their countries. If essential support is provided over time, networks that provide mutual benefits and are built on solid work in difficult circumstances have a good chance of survival.

However, case study authors stated that regional and inter-regional networking of community-based programs in conflict situations is lacking and needed. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) focuses on linking major NGOs and international donors.⁶ Either INEE should be expanded in scope or a linked network could be developed for programs led by national NGOs and public agencies.

Plan to achieve scale.

From the outset, programs should be designed to be replicated in order to meet widespread educational needs during and after conflicts.

All of the programs featured in this book have “gone to scale.” Some have attained national coverage; others have achieved scale within their region. This has occurred not only because of prevailing needs but also because they were carefully designed at the outset for expansion. They feature complete program development processes. They have designed and field-tested key elements required for going to scale, such as organizational tools, educational content, materials, media methods, teacher training systems, and evaluation and monitoring systems.

Some programs, such as those in Colombia, El Salvador (the educational reform program), Guatemala, the Lao PDR, Peru, and Viet Nam, developed careful plans for going to scale, including strategies, objectives, development phases,

6. <http://www.ineesite.org>.

coverage goals, and evaluation systems. Others have grown beyond initial expectations in response to requests for services, such as in Cambodia, El Salvador (the ex-combatant program), Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Conclusion

The eighteen lessons summarized above capture some of the common points of the ten case studies presented in this volume. Each study describes the program's background and context, program experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

Yet none fully describes the valor and courage of its program leaders and personnel. Perhaps the most amazing and moving aspect of these studies is that the authors and their colleagues achieved excellence and maintained a high level of objectivity in spite of the severe challenges and dangers they confronted—and in several cases, continue to face. May their words and their example help many similarly valiant educators who are seeking to improve the lives of children and families caught in conflict situations throughout the world.

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Part II Education Policy and Reform

Chapter 2

Educational Reform in Post-War El Salvador

Chapter 3

Training Teachers in Remote Areas of Lao PDR

Chapter 4

Educating Hard-to-Reach Children in Viet Nam

Chapter 2

Educational Reform in Post-War El Salvador

José Luis Guzmán

El Salvador, a country of 6.3 million inhabitants, faced a twelve-year civil war in the 1980s and had to recover from two devastating earthquakes that struck most of its territory in 2001. In the early 1990s, the country began a comprehensive post-conflict reconstruction effort to achieve equitable economic development, strengthen democracy, and promote sustainable peace.

Within this context, an education reform process was developed to improve educational quality and access. The reform program in El Salvador offers an example of participatory educational planning during and after a major national conflict, and it also shows that effective community participation can help expand education options for the poorest children. As a result of the reform, improvements have been made to enhance educational opportunities, although serious challenges remain.

The Conflict and Its Consequences

El Salvador's civil war plunged the nation into a profound socioeconomic crisis in the 1980s. Political forces were highly polarized, and casualties occurred on both sides and among the civilian population, leading to at least 80,000 deaths. Many people left their homes for more secure places within the country or abroad. Gross domestic product fell by almost a third. The infrastructure suffered substantial damage, and the country's institutions, including schools, were steadily weakened. National development was subordinated to the war agenda.

In addition, public investment in education diminished dramatically, and the Ministry of Education (MINED) became highly centralized, inefficient, and

politicized. As a result, serious shortcomings occurred in the supply of educational services, especially for the rural poor and other marginalized populations.

With the mediation of the United Nations, the conflict finally ended with the signing of Peace Accords between the Government and the Farabundo Martí for National Liberation Front (FMLN) in 1992. The FMLN disarmed, became a political party, and participated in elections. An Observer Mission of the United Nations (ONUSAL) was installed, defense spending was reduced—thereby benefiting investment in social sectors—and over time numerous venues for agreement and dialogue were created in different areas of society. This set a favorable stage for education reform.

The Project

History and Scope

At the beginning of the 1990s, Salvadoran education was in a state of crisis. One third of the adult population did not know how to read or write. About four out of ten people had no more than three years of primary schooling, only 70 percent of children aged 7 to 15 were enrolled in primary school, and only 18 percent of children aged 16 to 18 were in secondary school. These figures were even worse in the poorest sectors. While only half of the 7-year-olds in the poorest 20 percent of the population was enrolled in school, nine out of 10 children in the wealthiest 10 percent were in school by that age (Reimers 1995). These indicators were the dismal legacy of the conflict: namely, low investment in education; inefficiency in public administration; and serious shortcomings in terms of access and quality of education.

The educational challenges had already been identified by 1989. While the conflict was still raging, MINED began to set priorities for providing pre-school and primary education for the poorest populations, developing non-formal educational options for adults, improving curriculum quality, decentralizing administrative services, upgrading institutions, and encouraging participation of the private sector (MINED 1994). These priorities also matched the framework established by the Declaration of Education for All in Jomtien in 1990.

To broaden educational opportunities in the rural area, a program known as EDUCO (*Educación con Participación de la Comunidad*, the Community-managed Education Program) was created in 1991 in light of previous experience with community involvement in organizing educational services in areas affected by the conflict. EDUCO was fundamental to the reform process.

Another highlight of this stage was the SABE project (*Solidificación del Alcance de la Educación Básica*, or Strengthening the Achievement of Basic Education), which was financed with a donation from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It facilitated the start of curriculum changes in primary education, in-service teacher training, and the provision of textbooks.

The end of the civil war in 1992 facilitated the onset of dialogue and negotiation in the educational sector. This was expressed symbolically by the National Forum on Education and a Culture of Peace, which was organized by the government in April 1993, with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (MINED 1993). Prominent political and social leaders took part. They voiced a variety of opinions on national education, and the idea of educational reform was mentioned for the first time.

At the end of 1992, the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), under contract with USAID, conducted an original study of the educational sector. It led not only to an extensive report on the problems and challenges facing Salvadoran education, but also to an important process of debate and consultation (Reimers 1995). The HIID had, as partners, the *Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo-FEPADE* (Entrepreneurial Foundation for Educational Development), the *Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas-UCA* (José Simeón Cañas Central American University), and the Ministry of Education (MINED). The academic leadership of Harvard University; the political plurality of the partners and researchers; the open attitude of USAID and MINED, which was preparing for a change of government in 1994; the commitment and leadership displayed by the Minister of Education, who remained in her post from 1989 to 1998; and a process involving consultation and dialogue with key agents in the educational sector lent credibility to the results of the study (Reimers and McGinn 1997; Córdova 1999). This experience provided relevant inputs to articulate a series of ideas on the necessity of expanding the coverage of education, improving quality at all levels, addressing the serious problems of equity, promoting decentralization, and increasing financial investment in education.

In sum, the ideas outlined through research, the innovations encouraged by EDUCO and SABE, the process of dialogue, and the leadership displayed by MINED and key agents in civil society paved the way for a process of educational reform, as did the financial and technical support of international organizations. In June 1994, during his inaugural address, the President of the Republic announced that broad educational reform would be encouraged (MINED 1999).

A presidential commission composed of 12 prominent members of Salvadoran society, each from different professional, academic, and ideological backgrounds, was also appointed in 1994. It formulated a proposal that served as input and political backing for the reform process promoted by the government (Comisión de Educación, Ciencia y Desarrollo 1995; Guzmán 1995). Other substantial efforts were undertaken to encourage dialogue and consultation, even among teachers, students, and parents. Some of these initiatives were promoted by organizations in society; others were advanced by MINED, which declared 1995 as the “Year of Consultation” for educational reform. This included an agreement between the Ministry and the main teachers' organization—a potential source of opposition—to consult with its membership and supporters.

At the end of 1995, with input from the studies and the recommendations resulting from the process of dialogue, MINED presented to the nation the guidelines of a 10-year plan for educational reform (MINED 1995).

Philosophy

The plan was presented with a long-term vision. It indicated that, “Education should be of the highest priority and constitute a national policy, not of a party or a government administration, but of Salvadorans” (MINED 1995, p. 4). In terms of its priorities, the plan was designed to provide sufficient resources; to achieve an educational system of quality; to ensure universal, equitable, and efficient access; to broaden community participation; and to offer comprehensive learning in human, ethical, and civic values (MINED 1995).

The last of these priorities was linked directly to the post-conflict experience in El Salvador. Tolerance, responsibility, and social participation became relevant aspects of the reform plan, inasmuch as the previous stage of social polarization and mistrust within society had to be overcome. This had some influence on curriculum content and on institutional practices, which emphasized participation in four fundamental areas: involving people and key institutions in program

design and implementation; transferring responsibility for managing public services to private entities; participation of private entities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in MINED contracts, and at the local level, strengthening opportunities for school participation.

Objectives and Targets

Educational reform in El Salvador was to achieve five basic objectives: better quality schooling at all levels; greater efficiency, effectiveness, and equity in the educational system; democratization of education; the creation of new service delivery models; and reinforced instruction for human, ethical, and civic values. The plan outlined quantitative and qualitative targets for the 1995–2005 period: a reduction in illiteracy from 27 to 15 percent; an increase in the rate of pre-school education from 40 to 60 percent; and an increase in primary schooling (grades 1 to 6) from 82 to 90 percent. There were also targets for reducing the number of students per teacher and lowering the rates of over-age students, school dropout, and grade repetition. There were qualitative targets, as well; namely, involving the educational community in school administration; reducing teacher absenteeism; making more efficient the use of state resources; and offering an immediate and opportune solution to problems in schools (MINED 1995).

The Minister of Education left in 1998. Her nine years on the job allowed for unusual continuity with respect to political leadership of the reform. Elections for 1999–2004 were held the following year and ARENA, the official party, remained in office for a third period. In his inaugural address, the President of the Republic said: “As of today, we must accept the challenge of ensuring [that] the time will come when no girl or boy is left without education. This is something that cannot be postponed. Education is the only means capable of generating freer and more honest citizens. It is also the only sustainable system of compensation for social inequality...We recognize the accomplishments of educational reform and join in the process, being prepared to meet the challenge of quality” (MINED 2000, p. 5).

Based on accomplishments and shortcomings, some targets for the ten-year plan were adjusted. For example, illiteracy had already declined to 17 percent and the net rate of schooling¹ in primary education (grades 1-6) had increased

1. The net rate of schooling is the percentage of children enrolled in formal education at the expected ages out of all children with those ages in the entire population.

to 84 percent. With new available information, a more modest target was outlined for pre-school education, while a more ambitious one was defined for reducing illiteracy. The targets for primary and over-age education remained the same. Segregated targets for primary and secondary education were added as well (see table 2.1). No qualitative goals were proposed, but the definition of objectives in this new stage emphasized topics that were related to quality. Finally, the targets referring to local participation, programs for coverage, and education in values remained the same.

TABLE 2.1 Targets for the Education Sector, 2000–04 (percent)

Indicator	2000	2004
Illiteracy in the 15 to 60 age group	17.2	12.0
Net rate of schooling		
Pre-school	34.0	45.0
Primary	81.7	85.0
Grades 1–6	84.0	90.0
Grades 7–9	42.0	50.0
Secondary (grades 10–12)	26.0	30.0
Over-age students, grades 1–6 (more than 2 years)	15.0	10.0

Source: MINED (2000).

Organization

The current process of education reform differs greatly from the previous top-down style of reform, which was promoted as of 1968. Although it was technically designed and up-to-date for its time, that reform was questioned because of its imposed, authoritarian nature and the limited involvement of teachers. Furthermore, the growing socio-political crisis in the 1970s, which led to civil war in the 1980s, prevented it from being implemented successfully. Its programs and investments were diluted during the chaos of war.

During the reform of the 1990s, a number of conditions were more conducive to society-wide adoption. These included:

- A national context of dialogue and agreement made possible by the 1992 Peace Agreements
- Political will on the part of public authorities to face the educational challenges perceived at the time
- The development of innovative experiences such as EDUCO and SABE
- The existence of information, ideas, and recommendations resulting from research by key institutions
- The leadership and continuity displayed by the Minister of Education
- The receptiveness of private institutions and organizations in civil society to become involved in the discussion of policies and programs and their implementation, and
- The technical and financial support received from (or negotiated with) international agencies and governments of other countries.

The stages of the reform are outlined in table 2.2.



TABLE 2.2 Stages of the Educational Reform in El Salvador, 1989–2003	
<p>Pre-reform stage</p> <p>1989–94</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of the administration of President Alfredo Cristiani (1989) • First reform of the General Education Act (1990) • Declaration of Education for All, Jomtien (1990) • Onset of initial innovations: EDUCO and SABE (1991) • Peace Agreements and end of civil war (1992) • Start of the World Bank program, Rehabilitation of Social Sectors (1992) • Education Sector Assessment of HIID/UCA/FEPADE (1993) • Initial process of dialogue and consultation (1993-1994)
<p>Consultation and launch of the 10-year reform plan</p> <p>1994–95</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of the administration of President Armando Calderón Sol (1994) • “1995: Year of Consultation” • Proposal by the Commission for Education, Science and Development (June 1995) • 10-Year Plan for Educational Reform in Progress (November 1995) • Social Communication Programme

TABLE 2.2 Stages of the Educational Reform in El Salvador, 1989–2003 (continued)

Implementation (first phase)

- Legal reform: Reform of the Higher Education Act (December 1995); Teaching Profession Act and the second reform of the General Education Act (1996)
- Improvement in teachers' pay scale and a significant rise in wages (1997)
- Further curriculum reform (1997–99)
- Expansion of in-service training for teachers and reform of initial teacher training
- Institutional and financial assimilation of EDUCO
- 1996–99 • Creation of a School Administration Board (CDE) in every public school
- Transfer of financial resources to schools
- National test for secondary education (PAES), sample tests for primary education, and an assessment system for higher education
- Preparation and/or implementation of projects financed by international agencies: Support for Educational Reform Project (USAID, 1995–99); Modernization of Primary Education Project (IDB/World Bank, 1995–99); Secondary Education Project and Education Reform Programme (Phase I) (World Bank, 1998 to present); Educational Infrastructure Programme and Educational Technology Project (IDB, 1998 to present); Support to Technical Secondary Education (European Union, 1998)
- The minister who promoted the reform left after nine years on her position (1998).



Implementation (second phase)

- Start of the administration of President Francisco Flores (1999)
- Some readjustment of the 10-year reform plan
- Implementation of projects financed by external credits or donations: USAID, World Bank, IDB, and the European Union (1999 to present)
- Declaration of Education for All, Dakar (2000)
- 1999–2002 • Reconstruction of school facilities after the earthquakes (2001)
- Creation of the Teaching and Administrative Advisory System (2001)
- Pilot program to enhance educational at a selected group of schools: "School 10" (2001)
- New assessments by the government, international agencies, and private organizations (2002)
- Change of minister during the third year of the Flores administration.

Content

The programs for educational reform in El Salvador were designed and implemented in five areas: revision of the legal and regulatory framework; institutional change; educational coverage; educational quality; and social communication.

LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK. The reform made it possible to modify major legislation in the sector. The reforms were design in line with the objectives of the 10-Year Plan and tended to simplify, integrate, and make the legal framework more relevant. Generally speaking, the new laws had the backing of all political forces, including the FMLN and the teachers' unions, with which MINED had developed contacts and had negotiated.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE. Important measures for decentralization were promoted. The reorganization of MINED was extended by reducing the administrative staff and creating 14 departmental offices to perform operational and administrative functions. The systems for finance, administration, human resources, auditing, information, and evaluation were all strengthened, as were the systems to promote decentralization of school administration.

EDUCATIONAL COVERAGE. The EDUCO program was enlarged and intensified. Most of the funds for its initiation came from the World Bank, through a loan for social sector rehabilitation in El Salvador. But in 1995, EDUCO schools were fully financed by the national budget. Essentially, the program organized, legalized, and trained parent associations. It also provided financial resources to enable these associations to hire teachers and to create pre-school and primary education services. This initiative made it possible to offer education in 2002 to nearly 300,000 children, more than a third of the enrollment in rural areas. Because parents and teachers in rural areas were supported, the tendency to relegate the worst services in the educational system to the rural area began to be corrected. The program was gradually accepted by the community and—with less euphoria and even some mistrust—by certain sectors critical of the government. In all, EDUCO changed the paradigm for increasing coverage, addressed the needs of the poorest sectors in a direct way, formed a mechanism for decentralization that gave a leading role to the community, built and benefited from the social capital of communities, and became the foundation for subsequent processes of change in the educational sector (Reyes 2002; Lindo 2001; Meza 1997).

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. Curriculum reform at the primary level was completed, and reforms were carried out for secondary and higher education. In-service training for teachers was reinforced, as was the initial training provided by higher education institutions. Investments were made in educational materials for teachers and textbooks for students. Later, technological resources were provided for secondary education.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION was an important aspect of the reform plan. An increasingly advanced capacity to inform society about the priorities of the reform, its actions, and its initial results was developed. This fulfills an important function in terms of generating awareness within the community.

Financial and Technical Support

Educational reform in El Salvador has received financial and technical support (in the form of loans or grants) from institutions such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), USAID, the network of United Nations agencies, the European Union, and the *Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos-OEI* (Organization of Iberian-American States). The Governments of France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Mexico, and Spain have also made donations and extended technical assistance. The total cumulative investment coming from external sources during the reform period (1991–2004) comes to approximately \$481 million. This is equivalent to slightly more than MINED’s annual budget in 2001 (Centro ALFA 2002).

Monitoring and Evaluation

To some extent, the international agencies that have extended loans or made donations have generated mechanisms, instruments, and a certain institutional capacity for monitoring. However, the information has been regarded primarily as feedback for internal management, rather than for social auditing.

The MINED Evaluation and Research Office was created in 1996 as part of the educational reform process and has resulted in an increased capacity to generate educational indicators. A high point in this respect is the national test (PAES) that has been given annually to all high school graduates since 1997. It allows for monitoring students' academic achievement, but does not offer the possibility of international comparisons. Recently, MINED has conducted

studies to identify factors relating to student's learning outcomes. However, the findings have been circulated on a very limited basis, and they have not been used to provide feedback to teachers and schools.

In 2002, MINED released an assessment report on the educational reform (MINED 2002). In addition, the local office of the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) launched its annual report on human development in El Salvador (UNDP 2001). Private and nongovernmental initiatives were added to these efforts. For example, a nongovernmental organization published a stocktaking analysis on the goals of Education for All (Rivas 2002). A private firm, in association with the Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas (PREAL) published a first report card on educational progress (based on the experience in the United States and Europe) (Centro Alfa 2002), and a private foundation published an analysis of the relationship between education, poverty, and development.

The main indicators of educational progress have been monitored to a certain degree and disseminated through various means, including mass media. However, there have been complaints about the availability of good and consistent data, and an integrated model for monitoring and evaluation has yet to be developed. Some initiatives have been developed, but they have been neither coordinated nor used sufficiently.

Impact, Products, and Results

Education improved in El Salvador throughout the 1990s. Public investment in education as a percentage of the GDP rose from 1.8 percent in 1992 to 3.0 percent in 2000. Schooling rates increased at all educational levels and the growth in enrollment in rural areas was relatively significant. For example, in the 1992–2000 period, while the net rate of schooling (including pre-school, primary, and secondary levels) increased from 79 to 83 percent in urban areas, it rose from 56 to 69 percent in rural areas (Centro ALFA 2002).

There have been innovative experiences such as the EDUCO program, which has served as a model for similar initiatives in Honduras and Guatemala, and which earned an international award from the World Bank in 1997. In 1998, UNESCO acknowledged the experience of the literacy and primary education programs for adults. Likewise, a number of delegations from other countries have visited El Salvador for a firsthand look at the reform. These included

delegations from Bolivia, Brazil, Chad, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, and Senegal (MINED 1999).

However, great challenges still remain. Recent reports (Centro ALFA 2002; MINED 2002; FUSADES 2002) indicate that, in spite of important progress, educational indicators of El Salvador still reveal low educational investment and results within the international context. National tests indicate low levels of student's learning outcomes. Although there have been advances with regard to equity, poor children still face disadvantages in completing their basic education. The reform has made it possible to recover from the serious problems left by the armed conflict. However, further efforts are needed to ensure the amount and quality of education for Salvadorans to become competitive in a global context.

Best Practices

Marshall support for public policy by encouraging participation, dialogue, and consensus.

In a context of relative mistrust following a conflict, social participation is key. A reform plan drafted by central planners without relevant consultation and imposed in an authoritarian way is likely to generate so much opposition that it may not be implemented effectively and its goals may not be achieved.

Each nation has a different context for policy development. In El Salvador, opportunities were provided for dialogue among key actors who previously would not have met together to discuss reform issues. The decision to implement the reform plan was preceded by ample opportunity for consultation. The Education Reform Plan was led by MINED, which had gained increasing recognition, even from the government's major opponents. There was room for participation by key players that would be willing to either support or oppose educational changes. In addition, leading nongovernmental organizations participated in the implementation of the reform.

To conduct an effective education reform, the following need to be established: clear goals, a structure for conducting policy planning activities,

a process for consultation, a definite time frame, and a set of expectations for all involved.

If participation leads to dialogue, it is more likely that consensus will result. Common agreements and assessments can serve as support for action. However, “consensus is not synonymous with unanimity; it is a type of decision in which everyone relinquishes something, but gains something as well. The idea is not for everyone to be of the same opinion. During times of crisis, consensus is a necessary mechanism of stability, and it is of extraordinary importance to arrive at certain decisions” (Córdova 1999, p. 18).

Establish shared and long-term goals that are pertinent.

Perhaps the goals of the reform were not the best or the only ones, but they were pertinent in view of the country's needs. Available studies agreed on several basic points. The need to enroll children and youngsters who did not have the opportunity to access schooling was evident. It was also widely believed that the quality of education was extremely deficient, the system was politicized and highly inequitable, and was plagued by inefficiency and excessive centralism. The targets of the reform were outlined according to problems detected through credible studies and were reinforced by the perceptions of key agents in society.

In the Salvadoran case, an overriding argument was that no single actor or administration was sufficient by itself to solve serious national education problems. This thinking contributed to ensuring that enough support was given to the reform.

Keep the reform plan flexible.

The reform plan was presented as a blueprint, not something “carved in stone.” Hence education reform was seen as a gradual, open, and flexible process. Later, measures not originally specified in the plan were adopted. For example, the plan did not consider reducing general secondary education from three to two years. Nevertheless, this was done in 1997, based on a specific process of consultation. On the other hand, some initiatives were tested on a trial basis and then cancelled. Finally, at the beginning of the new administration in 1999, authorities expressed interest in extending the reform, by focusing on quality and equity issues. The goals were adjusted and new programs were

included as international loans and donations became available. This change process has continued to evolve in El Salvador. Recently, as the level of dialogue has diminished, concerns have been voiced about revising education policies using the same principles of widespread participation.

Promote decentralization to the school level.

Although the reform and the programs it promotes have not solved all problems concerning education quality, it has shown that effective community participation can expand education options for the poorest children. EDUCO has been a source of knowledge for the Ministry of Education and for the reform process. It served as a basis to implement, in 1997, the School Administration Boards (Consejos Educativos Escolares) in all public schools, which have encouraged parents, teachers, and students to take part in school administration. Nonetheless, important legal, institutional, and cultural conditions still limit school autonomy. Most of the resistance comes from those who feel threatened that their authority and/or jobs will be lost. However, the will of public officials, opportune financing, and especially the interest and commitment of communities, principals, and teachers, are elements that can lead to more educational autonomy in El Salvador.

Lessons from the Reform Process

The Salvadoran experience yields lessons about both the process and the content of educational reform.

Institutionalize a process of consultation to evaluate reform results.

Evaluating education policies is always challenging. Many changes in education occur slowly and may be difficult to determine. Although intensive processes were taken for consultation with key stakeholders for planning and early implementation, dialogue to monitor the reform's progress has been rather limited. The evaluation process lacked appropriate methods to obtain significant and solid information that is especially important in the early stages of a reform.

One option for evaluation might have been to create a National Reform Commission comprised of prestigious Salvadorans or institutions with a high level

of credibility. Appointed for limited periods, they could independently review the efforts of the public sector and the progress of the reform. They also could help increase awareness of the importance of social auditing as a mechanism for feedback in implementing policies and programs. Fortunately, various public and private efforts to evaluate the impact of the reform have developed since 2002.

Promote inter-sectoral coordination.

Inter-sectoral coordination is essential for developing both national and sectoral plans. The lack of such coordination may reduce the efficiency and impact of reform. In El Salvador, the educational sector has generated important changes, but these changes were not reinforced by similar processes in other government sectors. For example, in the late 1990s the National Commission for Development (Comisión Nacional de Desarrollo) developed relevant initiatives after consultations; however, these recommendations have not been incorporated into government policies. This lack of coordination has probably hampered synergy among the education sector and other sectors, and has prevented the population from perceiving educational objectives as being linked with democratic governance, national social and economic development, and national productivity and competitiveness.

Encourage inter-agency coordination.

A lack of coordination among international organizations and other external agencies can hamper a reform process. This can become a major problem as programs expand under a reform plan. Because each program has its own specific targets, funds, procedures, and requirements, local officials are pressured to respond in a different way to the requirements of each agency. This may lead to management overload and a lack of coherence. It can also have a negative effect at the school level. For instance, there is a pressure on School Administration Boards (CDEs) to administer and spend many financial transfers that arrive simultaneously from different sources.

Develop an effective policy for teachers' professional development.

Although important efforts have been made to improve teaching performance, an integrated policy is needed to link initial selection, recruitment, and in-service training with promotion, evaluation, and incentives for teachers. As a result,

teaching practices have changed less than expected. Additional mechanisms are needed to ensure that schools attract, retain, and motivate teachers with appropriate qualifications and effective teaching practices in the classrooms.

Reconsider limitations to school autonomy.

Unquestionably, the presence of parents' associations in EDUCO schools and administration boards in traditional public schools have enriched decision making and action at the local level. The transfer of responsibilities and financial resources to the schools has contributed to expanding access and to correcting some long-standing inequities.

However, various legal, institutional, and cultural limitations still impede efforts to achieve a higher degree of autonomy for public schools. On the one hand, some agents in the educational sector tend to wait passively for MINED to solve their problems. On the other hand, there is pressure from teachers' unions, under the banner of job stability and for fear of a presumed privatization of services, to prevent greater decision making on the part of principals and the school council. Although community participation has been emphasized, the importance of having school principals who exercise leadership, are appropriately recruited, have clear demands, and good administrative support, has not been dealt with adequately. More generally, a vision of school reform focused on learning outcomes needs to be strengthened.

Utilize information and evaluation as tools for change.

Information from research and monitoring systems helps to qualify knowledge and can facilitate policy dialogue and planning. Great care must be taken to ensure that good information is collected, and that its production, use, and disclosure are accomplished. The mechanisms that make the flow of information possible and facilitate its use in debate and planning by key actors must be improved.

Establish linkages between educational levels.

Decisions about relationships between levels were made in the planning stage of the education reform, but were not implemented in later stages. Mechanisms are needed to ensure good linkages among basic, secondary, and higher education, as well as between general education and the

specialized training of human resources. Education reform frameworks evolve over time, and linkages are often topics for continuing development.

Conclusion

The post-conflict situation in El Salvador during the 1990s was an opportunity to generate social consensus focused on reconciliation, reconstruction, and a shared vision of national development. In the case of education, the efforts to promote changes, under the leadership of MINED, resulted in some improvements in educational coverage, quality, and equity.

However, achieving targets especially for improving the quality of education in El Salvador remains a major challenge. In spite of improvements in educational equity, the poorest families remain severely disadvantaged. Given the change of public authorities in 2004 and the end of the 10-year Education Reform Plan in 2005, the moment has come for a new consensus to guide long-term actions. Along with the purpose of overcoming poverty and reducing educational gaps within the country, new international commitments must be considered, such the Education for All Forum of Dakar (UNESCO 2000) and the Millennium Development Goals. What is needed is not a rigid plan but a consensus and concrete targets that help Salvadorans build a world-class educational system that creates effective opportunities for the development of individuals, families, and the whole society.

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Chapter 3

Training Teachers in Remote Areas of Lao PDR

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Retaining and motivating teachers in remote areas is a challenge in many countries. A cost-effective program in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) goes "over mountains, across rivers" to upgrade untrained or under-qualified teachers in hard-to-reach locales. Teachers from remote rural villages can improve their teaching skills and qualifications and become certified without having to relocate or leave their families and teaching posts. As a result, their students—many of them ethnic minorities—are obtaining better education, and the nation is closer to attaining its education and social reconstruction goals.

The program was central to the education reconstruction efforts of Lao PDR, whose education system was decimated after decades of conflict, and which faced a severe shortage of trained personnel to provide even basic education services for its citizens. The program was implemented against a backdrop of severe economic problems and has proven appropriate for resource-poor education systems. Moreover, it laid a foundation for further education reform in the Lao PDR. It helped establish interministerial and interdepartmental cooperation and decentralization activities, and has trained a cadre of supervisory and administrative personnel needed to carry out the decentralization.

The program also has engaged local stakeholders and NGOs in bottom-up processes to meet emerging needs. Networking opportunities through the program have contributed to building national unity by engaging diverse peoples from remote and urban areas throughout the country and providing quality education services nationwide.

Overview

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is one of the poorest and least urbanized countries in the world. Landlocked and mountainous, it is strategically sandwiched between Cambodia, China, Myanmar (formerly Burma), Thailand, and Viet Nam. Approximately 40 percent of its peoples are ethnic minorities, many of whom migrated southward from China along the ridge tops, where they cultivate upland crops; by contrast, the ethnic Lao generally live in river valleys and raise paddy rice. The majority of its population depends on subsistence agriculture in landlocked and mountainous terrains.

The country is emerging from decades of conflict. Foreign domination of Laos began in the late 1800s. In 1975, after more than 25 years of conflict in which nationalist and royalist factions struggled for control, the Lao People's Democratic Republic was established as a sovereign state. In addition to its civil war, Laos was swept into the Indochina conflict in neighboring Viet Nam, despite its neutral status. Many civilian and military casualties occurred; throughout the nation, refugees fled the country. Communities were polarized as both sides recruited support for the war effort. The ethnic minorities were especially hard-hit by the civil war and the subsequent upheaval, as many of their mountain villages were located in battle zones and along supply routes. Throughout the country, human resources and infrastructure were severely impacted. Whole provinces were decimated by intensive bombing; in many parts of the country, schools needed to be rebuilt. The challenges facing reconstruction have included the legacies of feudalism and colonial rule; decades of war and dependence on foreign aid; and the "brain drain" resulting from nearly 10 percent of the population, mostly the educated middle class, leaving the country after 1975, including many teachers and Ministry of Education personnel. This depletion of skilled people constituted a great challenge to reconstructing government and education services. Some estimate that the development of the country was set back by at least one generation.

After the civil war ended in 1975, the Ministry of Education (MOE) faced another major challenge: to establish a Lao language educational system from the primary to the university level to replace the French system of instruction. Personnel were deployed to all corners of the newly unified country, which in effect had been partitioned from north to south for over two decades of conflict. Both the old regime and the nationalist revolutionary governments had established their own Ministry of Education or the equivalent for their respective geographical regions. They used completely different education systems and

materials. The old regime supported French language education services, primarily in urban centers. The revolutionary government, despite great obstacles, had developed Lao language education systems for serving remote mountainous regions, but lacked even the most basic educational materials. Throughout the country, the prolonged conflict had exacerbated the long-standing urban/rural gap in accessing educational services. Large portions of the rural population were prevented from accessing education services altogether.

The newly reorganized MOE made great gains in terms of expanding coverage, with primary schools increasing three-fold nationwide from 1975 to 1995. However, the quality of education did not keep pace, largely due to the lack of a system and materials for teacher training. Schools were largely staffed by teachers with minimal or no training.

Ten years after the revolution, a UNESCO study revealed an exceedingly low quality of education and primary completion and high repetition rates: only 14 percent of children nationwide who were enrolled in primary school actually completed the first five grades. Those who succeeded in completing primary school averaged ten years to complete the five grades (UNESCO 1985). By 1990, many rural primary teachers had abandoned their posts, complaining that they had been neglected in terms of salary and upgrading; their monthly salaries were equivalent to \$10 to \$18—insufficient to support their families.

The Lao PDR government began making important steps to address the quality of basic education toward the end of the 1980s. Since 1987, they have recognized education as key to socioeconomic development. The World Summit for Children heightened the government's commitment to primary education, and the 1990 World Conference on Education for All brought Lao educators into the mainstream of world thinking concerning educational development, after a long period of isolation. The entire education system began moving into a period of major reform, particularly in the area of primary education in relation to national development. Before then, education assistance had been limited primarily from socialist countries and the UN family of agencies such as UNICEF and UNESCO. Important missions by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank in 1989, 1990, and 1991 opened the whole system for intensive appraisal and major education reform and development programs. The needs for upgrading education management and planning, as well as providing quality education, were stressed, in addition to increasing national coverage (UNICEF 1992; GoL/UNICEF 1992). Compulsory

primary education was stipulated in the new 1991 Constitution and the country has embraced ambitious goals for development and social reconstruction, including Universal Primary Education composed of five grades by the year 2015; poverty reduction by 50 percent by 2015; and reclassification out of the “least-developed” category by 2020 (see appendix A for the country’s education priorities).

Revitalizing the System: A Comprehensive Approach

Against this backdrop, the Teacher Upgrading Program (TUP) was launched in 1992. The TUP was designed to pilot a strategy to develop a network of educational personnel that would ensure provision of basic education services to the village level. It featured a large-scale training project designed to upgrade untrained or under-qualified teachers in remote mountainous areas.

Upgrading these teachers and their schools was a priority because at that time, the majority of rural children had only one opportunity for education: completing the five years of primary school at their village school. Special focus was given to remote areas populated by ethnic minorities, where education disadvantage was the greatest. Attention focused on the basic problem of the whole education system: the capacity of primary schools to both enroll children and keep them in school long enough to learn something worthwhile. Moreover, a large percentage of the primary teachers nationwide lacked training or had only a primary education themselves—inadequate to teach primary school children.¹

TUP was originally conceived as a pilot project as part of a five-year (1992–96) cooperation agreement between the Government of Laos and UNICEF. UNICEF provided key support for project design, curriculum development, and training activities. The initial five-year agreement aimed to revitalize the entire basic education system and attain the following results:

- Sufficient numbers of schools to reach all children
- Teachers trained specifically for primary grades
- Curriculum reform

1. Unqualified teachers are defined as those who have not completed basic education and/or have not attended a teacher-training program at a provincial teacher training center. At the outset of the program, approximately 60 percent of teachers nationwide were unqualified. Ethnic minority trainees generally had less than eight years of schooling; some had completed only fifth grade.

- Provision of essential books and work materials, and preparation of teaching aids based on the curriculum content
- An effective system developed for supervision and quality control.

The program was designed to be responsive to local needs. In particular, because of the high levels of dropout, especially by girls withdrawn by their parents, the relationship of the school to the community was considered to be a key factor influencing enrollment and progression through the primary grades (UNICEF 1992). TUP developed parent-teacher activities to promote enrollment of girls and successful progression for all children.

The program stressed the development and expansion of non-formal means of bringing basic education to children in remote areas who have no access to school, especially girls. The Lao Women's Union was engaged for community mobilization and the non-formal education component. The National Library (part of the Ministry of Information and Culture) helped bring books and resources to schools and communities through a mobile library component.

TUP also aimed to lessen the administrative and financial strain on the central government's very limited resources. It thus featured interdepartmental cooperation, both in planning and implementation, overseen by the newly established Basic Education Committee (see appendix B on project structure). The Committee consisted of:

- The General Education Department: School construction, development of parent teacher associations, provision of textbooks and mobile libraries, organization of cluster schools, and local supervision through the district education bureau
- The Teacher Training Department: All aspects of teacher training delivery and content
- The Non-Formal Education Department: Strengthen the local communities, address the needs of dropouts, and develop community resource centers
- The Information Department: Radio, newsletter, and video and TV efforts.

In addition, infrastructure needs were addressed. Schools were repaired, with community assistance. Sanitation and water supply were upgraded, working with community groups. The provision of essential supplies of textbooks and materials was improved through better logistics and more effective communication between schools, communities, districts, provinces, and central education authorities.

The strong model that exists today was developed and refined during the Phase I Pilot in eight provinces. Innovations include:

- Delegation of program responsibilities to the provincial and local levels
- Interdepartmental cooperation
- Establishment of Network for Teacher Upgrading Centres (NTUCs) to train trainers, and provide locally relevant in-service teacher training by partnering with local district and provincial education services. Provincial NTUCs were launched to provide for a decentralized model of teacher training, appropriate for the specific geographic areas and their rural populations
- Launching of mobile training team to carry training into each teacher's school, classroom, and community. This not only brought training to the teachers, but established a regular monitoring system
- Teacher training through a mixed-mode of delivery, featuring short residential training during vacations followed by field assignments during the school year (see discussion below and appendix C)
- Introduction of two new teaching methodologies: student-centered teaching, to replace traditional rote learning, and multigrade teaching
- Revitalization of parent associations
- Launching of mobile libraries.

Practitioners from the field, together with MOE and UNICEF, revised NUTC training curriculum modules. NTUC trainers, together with their Provincial Education Services (PES) representatives, completed the training cycle and were subsequently key to providing feedback for program development.

Innovations and Best Practices

As it evolved and expanded, TUP launched a number of innovations.

In-service training and a mixed mode of delivery

Unlike residential teacher training programs, trainees in the TUP are able to stay in their own communities and teach at their own schools throughout the two-year course. This has proven especially effective in remote rural schools. Trainees attend short residential training sessions only during school vacations. No new training facilities need to be built because during vacations, vacant

school buildings are used. No replacement teachers are needed, as teachers do not vacate their teaching posts during the school year.

Much of the training is conducted at teachers' own schools. Trainees are given practical assignments during the school year to apply in their own classrooms. Mobile trainers spend 15 days per month in the field, providing follow-up directly in teachers' classrooms, ideally three times per semester. Teachers have ample opportunity to practice and reinforce what they are learning through a "learning cycles" strategy that features presentation, practice, and review of content. Teachers receive certification on the job. Many have been able to become full-fledged civil servants, part of the government service, and are thus entitled to more respect and better pay and benefits in the long term. The majority of alumni continue in their rural posts after graduation, rather than relocating in towns, as is a tendency for those trained through residential programs. The improved teaching techniques of TUP trainees, visible even in their first term, in turn directly improve the quality of education in the remote villages, with increased participation of students and parents in the learning process. (The full schedule of training, as it was first presented in the pilot and modified in later stages of the TUP, is presented in appendix C. The TUP curriculum appears in appendix D.)

A student-centered and multigrade teaching methodology

These methods improve student retention and strengthen ties with the community. Student-centered learning attempts to modify traditional rote, teacher-centered, top-down learning practices, making learning more effective and relevant. Multigrade teaching addresses access issues by providing the full complement of primary grades in a given village. It enables one teacher to teach children from different grade levels in the same classroom, such that one or two village teachers can cover all the primary grades. This strategy meets a priority need in remote ethnic minority villages, which have insufficient student numbers to warrant staffing each of the grades with a separate teacher. Before the introduction of multigrade teaching, children from upper primary grades were most affected, as the small villages could offer only the lower primary grades. Combining grade levels addresses the reality of the remote villages and the government's need for a cost-effective student-teacher ratio. Students can finish primary school in their home village, without being limited by constraints such as teacher shortages and the difficulty of traveling long distances to larger villages that provide instruction to all the primary grades. These methods,

introduced through TUP, are now implemented by various projects throughout the country.

Active community participation

The teachers' assignments include promoting community activities with parents to strengthen the ties between school and community. The TUP engages communities by revitalizing the system of parent-student associations. Community labor and local materials for school building are mobilized through field visits by trainers, in conjunction with the District Education Bureau.

A network for training and program feedback from central to local levels

To ensure continuing relevance to local needs and situations, feedback and revision of training modules, as well as of the program design, are conducted. The modular approach enables the TUP to readily update training content based on emerging issues, including HIV/AIDS and unexploded ordinance. Refresher courses in current issues are provided by updating individual modules. The network of support and two-way communication between the communities and stakeholders is illustrated in appendix B.

Program development process and donor coordination

The TUP is characterized by the interdepartmental cooperation and implementation overseen by the National Basic Education Committee. The flexible linkage of the provincial NTUCs, each serving a particular geographic area with its own characteristics, has enabled adaptation to local conditions. The network is characterized by strong cooperation and communication the various centers, as well as the schools. Regular review meetings organized by MOE provide opportunity for regular feedback from stakeholders at all levels. Curriculum workshops bring together key stakeholders from all levels to revise training modules to match realities in the field. Two-way communication ensures the program is adapted to local realities. The comprehensive design that established networks from local to central levels enabled the ready scaling up and expansion of the pilot to a national program. Agencies large and small wishing to expand the model geographically or strengthen technical aspects have channeled funds² or expertise to TUP through the MOE.

2. UNICEF funding (largely through Japan and Australia UNICEF Committees), NGOs, and bilateral aid.

The technical assistance has a multiplier effect, being directed at the annual “training of trainers” workshops and subsequently implemented through the various NTUCs.

Multi-level human resource development and delegation to local levels

While TUP’s express goal was to implement a training program to reach remote area teachers, capacity building at all levels has been necessary to build a comprehensive support system for the teachers in their schools. Training workshops, mentoring, and networking have been conducted at all levels, together with delegation of responsibilities, as well as decentralization of planning, management, and curriculum revision. Each province has direct responsibility for planning and budgeting, as well as implementation. A strong sense of local ownership and responsibility has resulted, along with a cadre of experienced trainers, supervisors, and managers who are a valuable resource. Many trained through the TUP’s “learning by doing” approach have subsequently received promotions, and NTUC trainers often act as resource persons for various primary teacher training projects. Provincial NTUC directors have been promoted to positions in the Provincial Education Service (PES) responsible for pedagogy province-wide, and one PES director has become the provincial governor. Numerous alumni have become heads of cluster schools and been promoted to senior District Education Bureau posts.

Based on the successful experience of the pilot (1992–96), the TUP was expanded from the original eight provinces (one district each) to the current nationwide program.³ This has occurred in two more phases.

PHASE II (1996–2002). The program was expanded to additional provinces. Other donors, including various NGOs and bilateral agencies, were enlisted to extend assistance. Curriculum and program length were revised, based on an evaluation in 1995. Increased emphasis was placed on upgrading teachers to middle school completion level, which is a pre-requisite for government teacher certification.

3. Two external evaluations, one in 1995 at the end of the Phase I pilot, and one in the middle of Phase II in 2000 (Schaeffer and others 1995; Watt and others 2000) were conducted by UNICEF, with the documents on file at the UNICEF Office in Vientiane. For some of the program modifications that followed the evaluations, see appendix C. The most significant revision following the 1995 evaluation was to shorten the training course from three years to two, triggering revisions in the training modules by combining related modules.

PHASE III (2002–06). The model is being extended nationwide. The focus on the multigrade teaching methodology is being strengthened, along with the use of cluster schools.

Among the program’s achievements: The TUP program has trained 7,796 primary teachers (including 2,723 females) and has established 17 provincial-level Networks for Teacher Upgrading Centres (NTUCs) with 138 trainers, who in turn have trained teachers in 141 districts throughout the country. Of these, 120 districts have completed training all their teachers, and 21 districts are in the process of doing so. Communities and schools consistently report that TUP teachers have stronger pedagogy than those trained through other programs. All participating government teachers in the target districts became fully qualified, and staff turnover has significantly decreased. Student dropout rates have lowered, enrollment has increased, and schools are open for full rather than half days (PES 2003).

TUP is generally acknowledged as the most successful teacher training program in the country (Chagnon 1999; Watt and others 2000; Nage, Fox, and Visaysack 2002). The success of its innovations laid a foundation for further education reform by demonstrating strategies, linkages, and procedures. These include interdepartmental initiatives, decentralized finances and decision making, delegated authority to local levels and networking and feedback systems at all levels. These reforms came at a key moment during the reconstruction period in the 1990s, a decade in which the country became signatory to international education conventions, further opened its doors to a market economy, prioritized socioeconomic development, and joined the ASEAN alliance.

The TUP has made an outstanding contribution to rebuilding the pool of trained human resources nationwide, which had been decimated during the conflict. The program has trained rural educators (who form the bulk of the civil service) from local to provincial levels, with many of them assuming leading roles in providing education services. TUP’s initial focus on the remotest mountain areas, especially in Phase I, targeted areas that were most in need of special initiatives for post-war socioeconomic reconstruction.

Many MOE programs have built on TUP innovations: the mixed-mode of delivery, the interdepartmental strategy, and using the large cadre trained from central to local levels as resource persons and trainers. Specific MOE programs using TUP achievements include the Ethnic Minority Teacher

Training Program,⁴ the Regional Primary Teacher Training Centers,⁵ and the nationwide EQUIP II Project⁶, a comprehensive program for reforming pre-service and in-service teacher training for primary and secondary levels.

Lessons Learned

Both pedagogy and basic skills development should be promoted.

A program must not only improve teaching methods but also produce teachers who are competent in the subject matter they teach. Key stakeholders at all levels recommend requiring stricter teacher entrance criteria, as well as providing additional resources, modules, and classes specifically for trainees with lower educational backgrounds. A system to upgrade the knowledge and skills of teacher trainers is also necessary. A distance training system could help teachers sustain lifelong learning.

Language of instruction is a significant issue.

Language is one of the most significant barriers to accessing education for remote ethnic minority communities. Proper program design and adequate resource allocations are needed to ensure that the special needs of the target are met and that rural-urban and linguistic gaps in accessing services are minimized. Ideally, the language of instruction for ethnic minority children should be the subject of research, discussion, and pilot studies.

The under-representation of females and ethnic minorities as students and trainers must be addressed.

Specific numerical targets should be set for ethnic minority and female participants, along with special initiatives to support their participation.

4. Lao-Australian Girls' Basic Education Project, Teacher Training Component.

5. Two regional primary teacher training centers, serving a total of eight provinces, with secondary school completion a prerequisite for enrollment.

6. Education Quality Improvement Project, Phase II, 2001–07.

A national disaggregated data collection system should be established to track gender, poverty, and ethnicity issues.

It is not clear that the project has adequately reached the poorest of the poor in the remotest districts. A national as well as a local data system should be created to ensure equity, access, quality, and to monitor results for target populations. Existing information should be systematically analyzed to ensure effective and equitable program planning.

The financial problems of poorly paid teachers should be addressed, as well as problems such as insufficient funding and shortages of facilities.

Continuing attention is needed for all the pervasive resource issues related to teacher training in order to help achieve education quality.

Primary challenges remaining include further tailoring the TUP program to meet the needs of ethnic minority teachers in very remote areas, as well as increasing the number of females participating as teachers and NTUC trainers, especially ethnic minority females. The TUP network also needs a system to upgrade both trainers and alumni: ideally, a distance training system that will support lifelong learning. The MOE's Department of Teacher Training feels that the highly motivated cadre of trainers and teachers could become beneficiaries of an effective distance education pilot in the Lao PDR, which could be extended to other segments of the population.

General challenges that continue to face the evolving education systems, noted in the ADB Country Report (Chagnon 1999), include the severe constraints of poorly paid teachers, insufficient funding, and shortages of facilities. Significant geographic, ethnic, gender, and wealth disparities exist in the distribution of educational services, along with inequalities in access and success. On the brighter side, however, capable teachers and education administrators can now be found in many schools throughout the country, and communities are actively contributing to the education process. The upgrading of both coverage and quality gives hope to the realization of national goals for Universal Primary Education. TUP's contribution to developing an educated work force has contributed to the increasingly important national priority of human resource development as the Lao PDR strives to keep pace with the socioeconomic development of other ASEAN alliance members.

APPENDIX A. Education Priorities, Government of Lao PDR

National Education Goals for 1990–2000

- Enhancement of the education law and the compulsory primary education law (1996)
- Continued expansion of primary schools in ethnic minority areas and remote rural areas
- Reinforced implementation of the decree on the salary increase for teachers who teach in ethnic minority areas and rural remote areas
- Continued implementation of the school cluster organization system
- Improved quality of the school supervision system
- Continued implementation of the progressive promotion policy and close supervision of the promotion process
- Improved ethnic minority boarding schools at all levels
- Organization of multigrade teaching in areas where the villages are small and in remote areas
- Continued implementation of the cooperation plan with UNICEF on Basic Primary Education Project.

Source: UNICEF (1996).

Education for All (EFA) Goals, 1995

- Increase educational benefits to the poorest, who are in rural areas
- Upgrade the teaching quality, especially in remote areas
- Allow flexible language policies in minority areas
- Provide incentives for teachers assigned to remote areas
- Revise the examination and evaluation system
- Link health and nutrition services
- Provide clean water supply and sanitation to schools
- Extend and improve school facilities and teaching materials
- Reform the curriculum and make it relevant
- Strengthen the role of parents and the community in education.

Source: Watt and others (2000).

APPENDIX A. Education Priorities, Government of Lao PDR (continued)

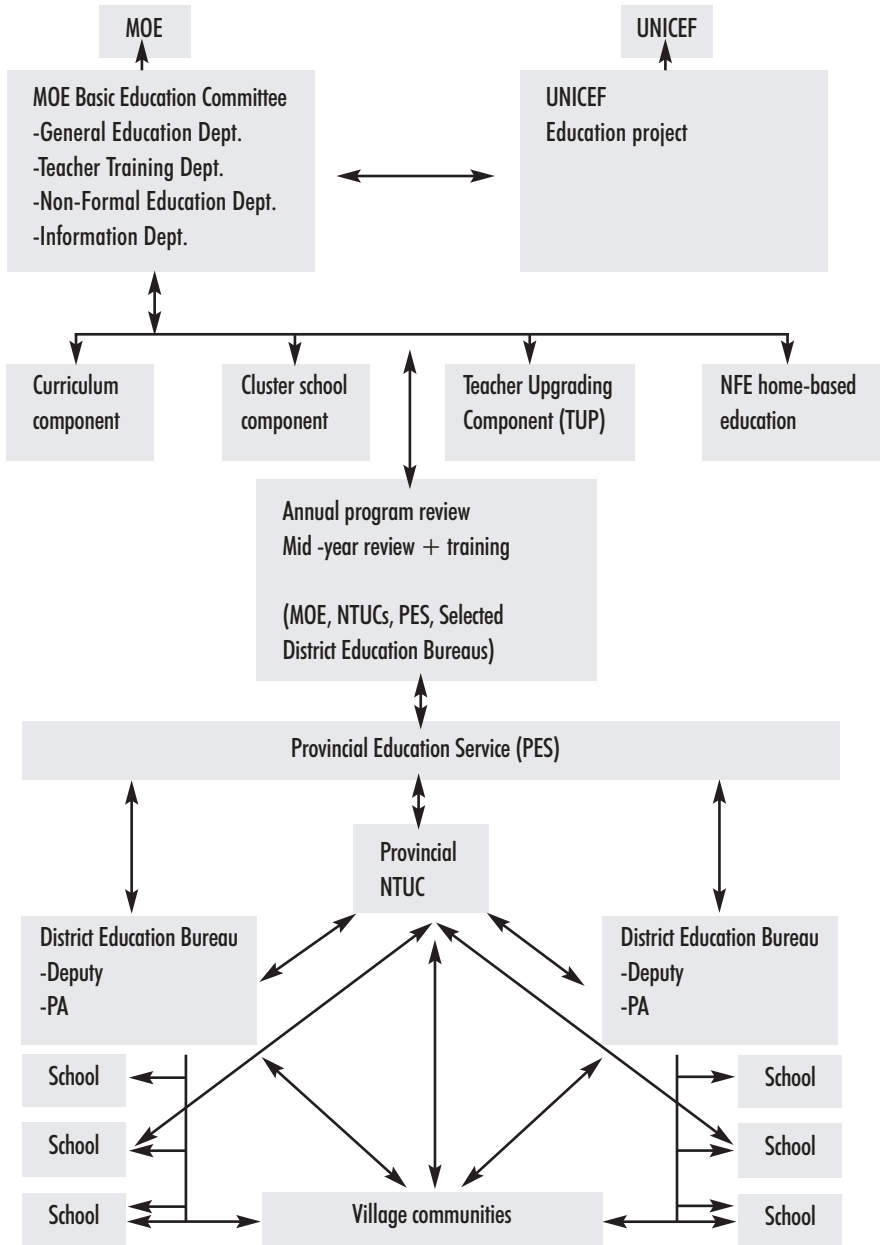
Asian Development Bank Recommendations or Pre-conditions (1999)

These should be met by the Lao PDR before any further investment in education will be made:

- **Provide higher teacher salaries and more funds to support day-to-day teaching activities**
- **Move toward universal access to primary education**
- **Delay expansion of lower and upper secondary education, focusing instead on improvements to quality**
- **Make more efficient use of teachers**
- **Lower costs and increase efficiency by reducing the number of repeaters**
- **Increase the completion rate (by reductions in the number of dropouts) in each stage of education, particularly in primary schools**
- **Make significant increase in teacher compensation a precondition before making substantial new investments in the Lao PDR education system.**

Source: Chagnon (1999).

APPENDIX B. TUP Project Structure



Source: Watt and others (2000), adapted.

APPENDIX C. Mixed-Mode of Delivery Framework		
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Curriculum for 3 years: Pilot Phase I = 24 weeks Following 1995 evaluation: 22 weeks = 16 weeks + 6 weeks for middle school completion		Year 3 curriculum (discontinued for Phases II & III)
Foundation Studies 6- week residential training (July-August) In-school exercises: Year 1, Term 1 (September-December) 2- week residential training (January) In-school exercises: Year 1, Term 2 (February-May)	Applied Curriculum Studies 6-week residential training (July-August) In-school exercises: Year 2, Term 1 (September-December) 2-week residential training (January) In-school exercises: Year 2, Term 2 (February-May) Following 1995 Evaluation: Basic Knowledge: 6 weeks Studies for those who had not completed middle school, which enabled them to get certification + a promotion in teaching rank and salary, enabling them to become government teaching staff	During Pilot Phase Advanced Studies 6-week residential training (July-August) In-school exercises Year 2, Term 1 (September-December) 2 week residential training (January) In-school exercises Year 2, Term 2 (February-May)
<p>Notes:</p> <p>a. During Phase I, only those who had completed lower secondary school were granted certificates and a promotion in their teaching rank and salary in order to become a permanent teacher. Without this certification, the Ministry of Education does not accept the teachers as permanent government staff, only as contracted teachers.</p> <p>b. Those who had only primary graduation or less upon entry could not receive the certificates, only program completion certificates.</p> <p>Revision following 1995 evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of course length from 3 years to 2 years, from 24 weeks to 16 weeks. • The lower middle school graduates received the certificates and promotions as before. However, their course was shortened with the 3 components of Foundation Studies, Applied Curriculum Studies, and Advanced Studies completed in 2 years. 		

APPENDIX C. Mixed-Mode of Delivery Framework (continued)

- Provision for intensive middle school course: additional 6-week summer course, which provides a completion certificate, the pre-requisite for government teacher certification (Phase I alumni would like this option to be available to them, a proposal which MOE endorses but which is awaiting donor funding).
- Monitoring linkage with cluster supervision system: Additional support in pilot clusters from the Dept. of General Education through training at cluster level by resource person at cluster level on topics identified through weekly meetings.
- NTUC directly under PES, rather than supervision rotated between districts.
- PES rather than the Provincial Basic Education Committee directly overseeing NTUC.

Revision following 2000 evaluation

- Add supplementary modules on emerging issues in addition to regular 2-year course. Additional funding from special initiatives from UNICEF, but not the Education Project funds.
- Special emphasis on multigrade teaching, addictive drugs, HIV/AIDS, health and hygiene, population education (growth, family planning, migration, environment).
- Provision for alumni refresher training: multigrade teaching + middle school (lower secondary) completion proposed by MOE; implementation is pending funding approval.

Subsequent developments during Phase III

- UNICEF initiates "Resource Person Pilot" in 2002 for districts completing the TUP, with special focus and concern on most remote villages.
- UNICEF begins compiling data since 2002 on TUP participants, disaggregated by gender, age, and ethnicity, in order to provide analysis and information for program planning and advocacy to ensure that the hardest-to-reach teachers, especially ethnic minorities and females, are represented proportionally.
- Continued concern on the part of both MOE and UNICEF of the low basic knowledge of alumni. Participants lacking basic knowledge upon entry to TUP are not adequately prepared to teach upper primary school grades as necessitated by multigrade strategy, even if teaching methods are strong. Strict entrance criteria for prerequisite primary school completion addresses the issue but prevents the disadvantaged teachers the project is targeting from participating.

APPENDIX C. Mixed-Mode of Delivery Framework (continued)

Phase 1. Curriculum and Objectives

Curriculum

Phase I featured three components of the training curriculum: Foundation Studies, Applied Curriculum Studies, and Advanced Studies. Revisions following the 1995 evaluation and 2000 evaluations produced supplementary modules on emerging issues, topics considered to be relevant to some localities, and topics of interest to trainees. These include multigrade teaching, HIV/AIDS, hygiene, and control of illegal drugs. In this way the training program can be readily updated, whether for changes in the national curriculum or emerging issues. A strength of the modular framework is that the curriculum is not easily outdated and continues to be relevant, despite the changing needs of the country.

Primary Objectives, Phase I Pilot

The fulfillment of the following objectives was the foundation for subsequent phases:

- Reduce the proportion of unqualified teachers in primary schools in project areas to less than 10 percent. Train 50 teachers per provincial NTUC per year, for a total of 3,200 teachers by 1996
- Provide training in teaching methodology and the production of training materials to PES and NTUC staff (6 to 8 NTUC staff per province, for a total of 96 in Phase I) so they, in turn, can upgrade untrained teachers in rural and ethnic minority areas
- Train local district supervisors (Pedagogy Assistants, or PAs) who provide local monitoring
- Prepare and produce training manuals and resource materials in Lao language for the trainers and trainees
- Upgrade the facilities of NTUCs, provide office supplies/equipment and establish libraries, and upgrade selected community schools and provide basic school supplies and reading materials
- Link selected community schools with in-classroom guidance and assistance with self-learning modules
- Provide effective project management, administration and monitoring support.

Source: Schaeffer and others (1995).

APPENDIX D. TUP Curriculum		
Curriculum for 3-year Pilot Phase: 24 weeks		
Following 1995 evaluation: Revised Phases II and III, consolidating modules and reducing theoretical lessons. 16 weeks (all participants) + optional 6 weeks for participants needing to complete middle school (22 weeks)		
Year 1: Foundational Studies	Year 2: Applied Curriculum	Year 3: Advanced Studies
		Note: Consolidated and incorporated into Year 1 and 2 curriculum following the 1995 evaluation, so that all modules can be completed in 16 weeks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil-teacher relationships • Class management and control • Relationship skills • Class management skills • Planning • Instructional skills • Teaching methods • Educational psychology • The multigrade school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching methods for grades 1-5 in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics, science • Lao language • Social science (“The World around Us”) • Health education • Physical education • Program planning • Supervisors’ guide and checklist • Assessment manual • Assessment guide, in-school activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical development • Cognitive development • Small group organization • Language development • Evaluation, testing, record keeping • Managing students’ behavior <p>Supplementary and revised modules following 1995 and 2000 evaluations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of multigrade school/classroom • Teaching and organization in the multigrade school • Education for girls: Introduction for trainers • The school and the community • Principals in isolated rural schools • Supervision visits and record keeping • Measurement, evaluation, and progression through grades at the primary level • Teacher Upgrading Course Evaluation manual (for trainers/supervisors)
Source: Schaeffer and others (1995, pp. 40–44).		

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Chapter 4

Educating Hard-to-Reach Children in Viet Nam

Duong Van Thanh

Two programs in post-war Viet Nam are moving beyond the constraints of traditional education approaches to educate hard-to-reach, disadvantaged children in urban slums and remote rural areas.

Through the Multigrade Teaching Program (MTP), primary school children from a number of grades, ages, and abilities are taught in a single classroom. The program has proven effective in serving ethnic minority children and children living in remote rural areas. By bringing the school closer to students' homes and communities, more children, especially girls, are encouraged to enter school. The approach is also less expensive than conventional single-grade schools. Multigrade teaching has been able to reduce costs while increasing primary school participation rates.

Alternative Basic Education (ABE) serves poor, marginalized, street, and working children who are unable to attend regular schools. The program's innovative and flexible methods enable working children and teenagers to complete at least the primary education cycle. It thus offers a second chance to Viet Nam's neediest children. Viet Nam's ABE program goes beyond typical programs in other countries because it is concerned with the child's total welfare.

Both programs have expanded access to education and have helped reduce dropout rates among ethnic minority children and children in difficult circumstances. The programs are visible examples of how a nation has improved education for marginalized children during its process of post-war reconstruction.

Providing Basic Education to All Children

Post-war Viet Nam faces many educational challenges. Of its population of 78 million people, 40 percent are under the age of 18 and 10 percent are under the age of five, placing a major strain on the education system. Ethnic minority groups, totaling over 10 million people, have high levels of illiteracy. They are scattered over mountainous areas that cover two-thirds of the country from northern to southern Viet Nam.

From 1945 to 1975, Viet Nam suffered from war and isolation, leaving the country riddled with poverty and causing untold hardships for many people, including children. Rural and mountainous areas were especially hard hit. In the post-war period, critical issues included alleviating poverty, improving educational quality, and spurring socioeconomic development. Poverty in urban slum settlements and remote rural areas remains the central problem for social development. As part of its modernization and search for sustainable development, the Vietnamese government has made education a major priority. Until 1975, the North and the South had different education systems; now there is a unified system. The country has made a major commitment to provide basic education for all boys and girls throughout the country. This task has been particularly challenging in rural and mountainous areas, where the costs of sending children to school compete with agricultural lifestyles. The Multigrade Teaching and Alternative Basic Education programs were introduced as significant educational strategies to overcome severe educational deficiencies, especially in basic education for children.

Addressing Barriers to Attending School

Viet Nam enacted the two programs against the backdrop of a sweeping process of economic and social liberalization launched in the late 1980s. Rising from decades of conflict and isolation, Viet Nam's socioeconomic transition over the last decade has improved the lives of children and brought about important achievements in education and gender equity.

Yet while many children have enjoyed greater access to primary and secondary education since the war, children in urban slum areas, as well as those in rural and mountainous areas, still face many barriers to attending school.

A major barrier is poverty. People living in rural remote and mountainous areas have lower wages, fewer job opportunities, and less access to education than city dwellers. It may cost too much, directly and indirectly, for a family to send its children to school. Poor families may not be able to afford school supplies, clothes, shoes, and books. Moreover, families may depend upon a child's labor for subsistence.

Another barrier is gender. Traditional views of appropriate gender roles have led to a gap in enrollment rates between boys and girls. Girls, especially from ethnic minority groups living in remote areas, are expected to serve in the role of caregiver, looking after siblings and helping with domestic chores until reaching a suitable marrying age, usually between 16 and 18 years. As they do not need to go to school to learn these skills, some parents see no value in educating girls. Many poor families that cannot afford to pay school fees for all their children choose to "invest" in their sons. For many ethnic minority girls in Viet Nam, the chance of attending school is slim.

Schools are inadequate in many rural and remote areas. Some primary schools offer only grades 1 to 2, and some lower secondary schools offer only grades 6 to 7; thus many children are unable to complete the eighth or ninth grades. Schools may be located too far from homes for children to attend school, especially if there are no pathways, roads, bridges, or canals on the way to and from school, or these passageways are in poor condition. Furthermore, the incentives, both monetary and in-kind, for teachers to continue living in remote and/or poor areas are often inadequate.

In addition, centralized school systems may not respect the needs of local communities. In ethnic minority areas, the language of textbooks and instruction may not be the language that is spoken locally. The curricula are written by ethnic Vietnamese educators whose world view is dominated by a Kinh cultural perspective rooted in lowland and wet-rice agriculture. Therefore, the curricula are not tailored to the realities of the lives of ethnic minority students and are often irrelevant.

All these problems create a vicious cycle that makes it impossible for the great majority of ethnic minority children to complete primary school and to obtain a good quality of basic education. Hence, education for ethnic minority children has been a major challenge to achieving universal basic education during the reconstruction period.

Children in urban slums face many of these problems—and others. In the city, the majority of working children are migrants from rural areas whose families are fleeing rural poverty. Working to support their families, these children usually do not have time or opportunity to attend school. Some urban children are homeless or orphans. Older siblings must work to support younger ones. Street children and youth, in particular, for years were not considered legitimate victims of wartime injustice who deserved special treatment during immediate post-war reconstruction. Rather, where they were “visible,” street children were seen as delinquents or threats to social stability—a group to be punished or eliminated.

The Declaration on Education for All (Article 3) adopted at the Jomtien Conference in 1990 states that basic education should be provided to all children and that underserved groups, such as rural and remote populations, should not suffer any discrimination in access to learning opportunities. In response to this declaration, the Vietnamese government explored different ways of increasing access to education, reducing dropout rates, and improving learning outcomes for children in Viet Nam.

The multigrade classes were launched first, and were initially created to serve ethnic minority children. These children had been unable to attend schools that were located far from their homes. Alternative basic education classes were created for children who were unable to attend regular schools, such as working children and street children. Various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Viet Nam, notably UNICEF, have supported these educational programs with technical and financial assistance. After national reunification in 1975, UNICEF was the first United Nations agency to start a program in Viet Nam. In the 1980s, UNICEF assistance progressively shifted from emergency services to development. During the 1990s, UNICEF was extensively involved in multigrade teaching and Alternative Basic Education efforts. Using financial and technical resources provided by UNICEF, and generating active community support in the form of the construction of community schools, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was able to bring the multigrade teaching and ABE programs into full operation during the last decade.

The commitment of the Vietnamese government to the education sector and the improved performance of these two programs have significantly promoted literacy and universal primary education. These two programs established the

foundation for an agreement in July 2003 between Viet Nam and the World Bank for the Primary Education Project for Disadvantaged Children. Under this agreement, the World Bank will provide Viet Nam with \$138.8 million in loans to help primary school-aged children complete the full cycle of primary schooling. The project seeks to improve the efficiency and equity of the system by eliminating waste and improving output rates. The majority of the project's resources are targeted on 189 districts in 38 provinces where approximately 70 percent of Viet Nam's educationally disadvantaged children reside. By the end of the project in 2009, 86 percent of the pupils in those districts will complete the full primary education cycle of five years. It is also expected that by 2009, national guidelines will have been developed and applied effectively to support inclusive education for disabled children of primary school age and other highly vulnerable groups, such as street and working children, minority girls, and children from fishing villages.

The Multigrade Teaching Project

Rationale

One of the most important dynamics affecting the educational situation after the Viet Nam war has been the dispersion and isolation of the remote rural population, particularly ethnic minority groups that dwell on hillsides and mountainous areas. Ethnic minorities generally live in some of the poorest and most remote parts of the country (Theis 1999; World Bank 1993). Levels of literacy and educational attainment for minority children are well below those of the majority Kinh population. There are differences between various ethnic minority groups, as well. Some groups, such as the Tay, Thai, or Muong, are culturally close to the majority Kinh and tend to have higher levels of education than the Hmong or Dao, who often live in very remote areas.

The sparse population in mountainous areas and the high dropout rate of minority children in the northern upland provinces were two primary reasons for the implementation of multigrade teaching in Viet Nam. The children living in these areas must walk a long way (from four to seven kilometers) from their homes to school, and cross rivers, streams, and forests. These difficulties result in irregular school attendance, and gradually children drop out. In a typical school in these areas, a teacher has only five to ten pupils in each grade. At the same time, Viet Nam is facing a severe shortage of teachers and capital to build more classrooms (Tran and others 1999).

A field research project undertaken in 1990 by the Vietnamese government and UNICEF revealed that many ethnic minority children did not have access to school or exposure to any kind of formal education. Participation rates were markedly lower for minority children than for children of Vietnamese/Kinh ethnicity (MOET 1992). There were many “white villages” without schools in remote areas—despite a policy of constructing a school in every Vietnamese village. Many of the schools that did exist were dilapidated and even dangerous. Schools in mountainous areas were often built of mud and branches, and they were dark, damp, and unstable. The school classrooms, with their thatched roofs and bare walls, were often cold during the winter. To cope with the cold, many schools tended to operate for less than the two and a half hours of official instruction time; students often attended school for only 60 to 90 minutes a day. Most of the classrooms were cramped and highly unsuitable for children already facing learning challenges.

Following the joint research project, multigrade teaching was created during the 1990–91 school year, initially as a pilot project in four northern mountainous provinces where many different ethnic groups live. The pilot involved an innovative combination of activities including the provision of school buildings and facilities, teaching supplies and learning materials, teacher education, and in-service teacher training (Meyenn, Squires, and Woolley 1994).

The Multigrade Teaching Project includes a bilingual dimension to teach the national common language while teaching in ethnic minority languages (the mother tongue) for the minority children (UNICEF Viet Nam/MOET 1998). The bilingual component was added to the multigrade project in 1996 and implemented in 1997.

Organization and Management

The multigrade education method builds on Viet Nam’s tradition of Confucian and Vietnamese education, where children typically participate in multigrade and multiage classes in the temple of their ancestors. The Multigrade Teaching Project was established during the 1990–91 school year to provide a model of alternative education for minority children in remote and mountainous areas in Viet Nam. After two years of implementation, the project was extended to 13 provinces. Currently, multigrade classes are widely used in ethnic minority areas, as seen in table 4.1 and figure 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 Growth in Multigrade Classes in Viet Nam, 1991 to 2001

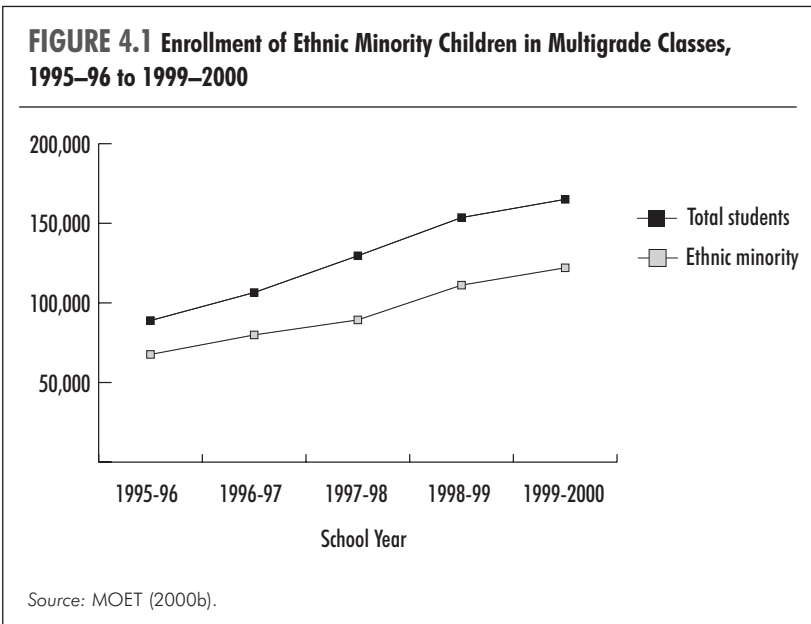
School Year	Provinces	Districts	Classes	Students
1990–91	4	12	20	506
1991–92	7	61	1,078	27,951
1992–93	13	94	2,246	59,418
1993–94	17	108	3,565	86,853
1994–95	17	117	5,600	125,000
1995–96	21	181	3,461	88,195
1996–97	29	226	4,362	106,508
1997–98	37	258	5,490	129,611
1998–99	39	289	6,832	153,594
1999–2000	39	293	7,711	165,050

Source: MOET (2000b).

The number of grade levels in a multigrade class varies from year to year according to the characteristics of the school-age population. Based on the number of children, the qualifications of potential teachers, and the existing resource base of classrooms, a multigrade class can be established in different ways. Most classes include students from two or three grades, but some include students from four or even five different grades (Hargreaves and others 2001). Class size ranges from 20 to 25 pupils. In many places, two-room schools accommodate five levels of students from six to 14 years of age. Usually, grades 1 to 3 work in one classroom, while grades 4 and 5 work in the other. One teacher usually staffs each classroom. Multigrade teachers are trained to give different lessons at the same time to pupils at different grade levels. Children sit in grade-groups facing their own blackboard, and if there are two grade-groups in the class, the blackboards are placed at either end of the classroom with children facing opposite directions. During lessons, the teacher moves frequently between the different groups. Since 1991, the project has undergone three phases of development.

PHASE 1: PILOT (1991–95). The project was launched in 20 schools in four northern provinces. Because the project provided an important solution to improving educational access, multigrade classes expanded at a faster pace than anticipated. From 1991 to 1995, pupil participation increased from 506

to 125,000, the number of teachers involved grew from 30 to 4,700, and the number of classes involved increased from 20 to 5,600 (UNICEF 1996). Importantly, during Phase 1, much of the operational foundation was built. Materials for teachers and students were designed, financial and administrative arrangements were instituted, administrators and teachers were trained, delivery systems were organized, materials were reproduced and distributed, and an initial evaluation was conducted.



PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT (1996–2000). The project extended its coverage from northern to southern provinces, growing to over 7,700 classes in 293 districts with 165,000 students (see table 4.1). At the beginning of this phase, however, enrollment in multigrade classes declined from 125,000 to 88,195 between the 1994–95 and 1995–96 school years. While there was no official explanation for this sudden decline, one explanation was the project faced numerous challenges because of its rapid development in different parts of the country. The teaching staff was not well prepared to undertake multigrade teaching. Enrollment gradually rose in subsequent years of this cycle. Training courses developed during the first phase were replicated at regional and national levels, and the teacher's manual and children's study guides were

reproduced. Revised versions of training and workbook materials for students were developed. The government adopted the multigrade teaching strategy as its policy for rural primary schooling throughout the country. A variety of sources provided significant financial support, including the Vietnamese government, UNICEF, the World Bank, JICA, and OXFAM.

PHASE 3: EXPANSION (2001 TO PRESENT). Currently, the project covers 39 provinces and features more active instruction, a stronger relationship between school and community, and a flexible promotion mechanism adapted to the lifestyles of ethnic minority and rural children.

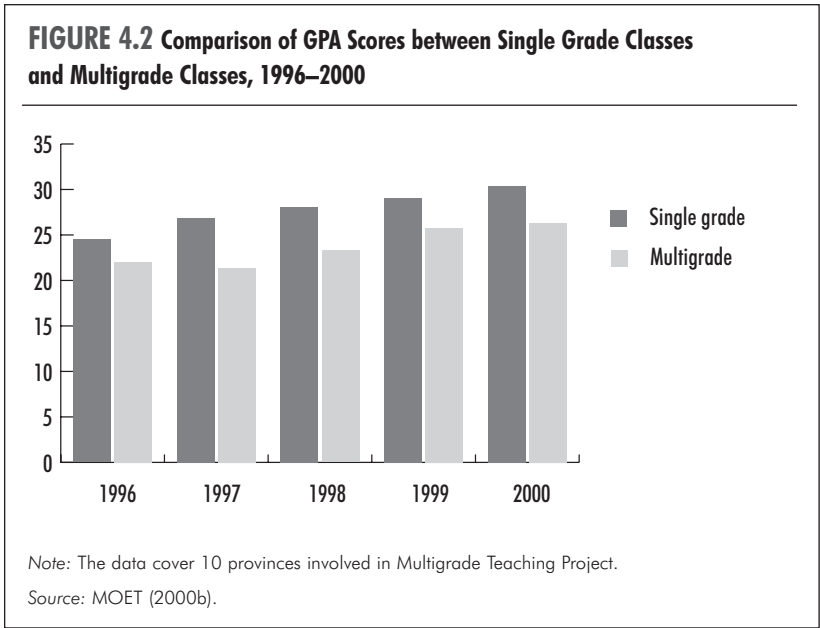
With technical assistance from UNICEF, Vietnamese educators have had extensive exchanges with researchers and teachers around the world, particularly from Australia, Britain, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Numerous workshops, field research studies, and seminars were conducted to set up a framework for the Multigrade Teaching Project. The Vietnamese core team for Multigrade Teaching includes researchers, teachers, and administrators from the National Institute of Education Science and participating provinces.

Observed Outcomes

Observed outcomes of multigrade teaching are both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative outcomes involve objective measures of learning achievement, and attempt to answer the question: “Was the project responsible for an increase in the level of learning achievement in multigrade primary schools?” By contrast, the qualitative outcomes consider personal responses, and attempt to answer the question: “How well was the project received by the teachers, the students, and the community?” The Multigrade Teaching Project can be considered successful if the quantitative level of learning achievement has increased and the people involved in the project have seen improvement in the quality of the learning environment.

LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT: A Quantitative Perspective. From 1996 to 2000, annual assessments of learning achievement in multigrade classes and single grade] classes were conducted, based on students’ grade point averages (GPAs) in 15 provinces (MOET 2000b). Results of this series for multigrade classes are shown in figure 4.2. No major difference was found in the levels of GPA scores of children in multigrade compared with single grade rural

schools. Although the GPA scores of children in single grade classes are a bit higher than those in multigrade classes, it may be inferred that multigrade classes are simply no worse and no better than single grade classes. By comparing GPA scores of the multigrade classes and single grade classes, it can be concluded that the Multigrade Teaching Project has improved student performance.



These results show an improved level of individual student performance in the classroom and a higher rate of overall learning among all students within the classroom. The Project Director stated in the 10-year project reviews that, “Since the data received by the results of GPA from multigrade classes and single grade classes, it can be said that the Multigrade Teaching had achieved its objectives” (MOET 2000b, p.10). This finding might be expected: empirical studies in other countries consistently reveal that students in multigrade situations perform at par with those in single grade teaching (Tran and others 1999). Currently, a quantitative assessment between single grade and multigrade schools is being developed to measure student performance in particular subject areas.

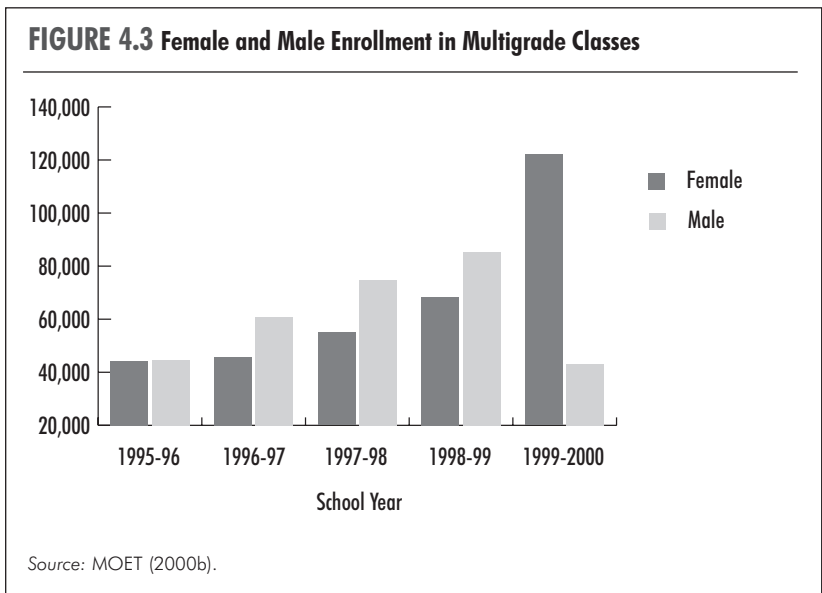
LEARNING ATTITUDES: A Qualitative Perspective. Were the individuals and groups involved in the project satisfied with its implementation? Multigrade teaching is a community project. As such, administrators, parents, teachers, students and all the members of the community must accept the project before it can succeed.

The Multigrade Teaching Project involves a shift in the perception of the importance of different types of educational delivery. Historically, many children in remote and mountainous regions have been unable to go to school and have had little time to play because they are needed to work in the fields or to look after younger siblings at home. These children, in essence, have been deprived of their childhood.

With the help of community outreach under the Multigrade Teaching Project, parents are taught the important role that education plays in the welfare and development of their children. Slowly, more children from remote and mountainous areas, including girls, want to and are allowed to attend school. Learning in multigrade classrooms becomes more active and student-centered as teachers guide their students to be open to learning and to seek out answers on their own (Tran and others 1999). When education becomes fun for children, they are more attentive and keen to learn. Hands-on activities and projects increase the entertainment level of the education process, in turn improving learning achievement within village schools (MOET 2000a). Students are encouraged to study together and help one another in the learning process. The student workbooks allow students with higher learning abilities to guide students who do not learn as quickly. This is an important change within the daily routine of multigrade classrooms. Slower students do not lose interest and fall behind; quicker students do not become bored because they are able to stay active by serving as guides or tutors. Teachers are allowed the necessary time to focus on other areas. Most importantly, as students take an active part in their own learning process, they begin to understand how much they can achieve.

Generally, learning in a multigrade situation occurs in both formal and informal ways. Given the facilitating role of the teacher in a multigrade class, s/he can allow students more time for self-study, thereby giving them greater opportunities for self-directed learning. Students also receive many opportunities for learning from students in higher grades, which can facilitate faster learning (Miller 1990). Outside the classroom, students can learn from the larger social and natural environment.

The rise of girls' enrollment in multigrade classes, as shown in figure 4.3, is an indicator of the success of multigrade teaching. Families see advantages of multigrade classes that are close to girls' homes, where they can attend classes easily. Moreover, girls have an opportunity for self-directed learning through such means as learning aids, self-learning materials, student portfolios, and learning centers in the schools. These opportunities encourage families to allow girls to finish their basic education. Teachers play critical role in their teaching methods that attract girls to multigrade classes and their participation in learning help change the old perception of their parents.



The project has led to changes for teachers. Multigrade teaching requires more preparation. From the outset, the project team acknowledged this. The time constraints of daily lesson preparation can be eased through the use of new teacher guidebooks.

The skills and behaviors required of teachers in multigrade classes may be more difficult than those for traditional classroom teachers, the project team also noted. Multigrade schools require teachers to develop a new orientation toward their work. Teachers still serve in their usual roles as mentors and educators, but more responsibility for learning is placed on students. Teachers

are reported to have become more motivated and confident in their teaching skills (MOET 2000b).

Under the project, teachers have more independent responsibility for their schools. The role of teacher has been becoming a more respected position as parents place more emphasis on education (Vu and others 2002). Teachers have begun staying longer in particular schools. Before the project began, it was not uncommon for a village teacher to serve in a school for only a year or less before transferring. Now an effort has been made to keep project teachers in the same village school for at least two years. Villagers understand the need for continuity within the education system.

Overall, multigrade teaching has been widely accepted by children, teachers, administrators, parents, and communities. From a qualitative perspective, multigrade teaching has been a success.

Project Accomplishments and Remaining Challenges

The Ten Year Project Review in December 2000 indicates the accomplishments of Multigrade Teaching (MOET 2000b, p. 1):

Multigrade education has contributed in changing the education picture in remote and isolated areas, abolishing “white villages” for education, increasing the number of girl pupils going to school and helping localities complete the task of Universal Primary Education.

Some 39 provinces had achieved Universal Primary Education. Net enrollment in project provinces is 97.3 percent. Repetition and dropout rates declined from 6.7 to 2.3 percent from 1995 to 2000 (MOET 2000b). Among other achievements, 738 training workshops were delivered to 33,049 teachers; 55 workbooks were developed; and \$2.6 million was invested in such items as, paper, workbooks, building upgrades, and furniture to support multigrade teaching (MOET 2000b).

Multigrade teaching in Viet Nam has attracted great interest from other countries and international organizations. In 1999, the Institute of Education at the University of London included multigrade teaching in Viet Nam in an international research project with Peru and Sri Lanka.

Despite these achievements, many schools in mountainous areas of Viet Nam face severe deficiencies in infrastructure. Many multigrade classrooms remain in very bad condition, with a shortage of furniture, equipment, and materials for teaching and educational support.

Teaching in multigrade schools face many constraints, including teacher isolation and the poverty and poor health of children (Aikman and Pridmore 1999). Teachers in satellite schools lack support to make creative use of resources at hand. They rarely receive support visits and are unable to meet regularly with teachers from other schools. A serious shortage of teachers exists, especially skilled teachers for multigrade teaching (Aikman and Pridmore 1999). Teacher training for multigrade classes does not meet the required standard in terms of either quality or quantity. There is a particularly severe shortage of teachers from local minority ethnic groups. Most multigrade teachers belong to the majority ethnic group known as Vietnamese or Kinh. Consequently, in remote ethnic areas, they suffer social, cultural and linguistic isolation. They often do not speak the local language, placing their students at a disadvantage (MOET 2000b).

Lessons Learned from Multigrade Teaching in Viet Nam

MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT. The multigrade teaching initiative has embarked upon a program of local curriculum design for the nation's ethnic minority children and professional development for teachers, using UNICEF funding. Materials for children from grades 1 to 5 have been developed in four basic curriculum areas: natural science, mathematics, social studies, and language. The materials adopt an approach that promotes active learning, cognitive skills, discussion, group decision making, and the development and application of skills within the local environment. The workbooks for students and guidebooks for teachers contain sequenced objectives and activities. They are used by groups of two to three children at a time, and they are a help to teachers required to work with several grades in the same classroom. The study materials reflect both the national curriculum and regional and local adaptations. The national materials and core study guides are developed and printed centrally. Teachers develop the regional and local adaptations during training courses, and they are produced using simple technologies.

By 2000, 55 series of student workbooks and teacher guides had been created, tested, revised, and implemented in multigrade primary schools.

These new education materials complement the existing curriculum and texts and are user friendly. Health and environmental safety materials have been provided as supplements to the primary education curriculum (Vu and others 2002). Guides encourage both teachers and students to design learning tools for mathematics and science using readily available recycled materials. The materials encourage students to seek answers to questions outside of the classroom, thus providing opportunities to involve parents and the community in the learning process. The classroom itself becomes an active learning center as teachers are trained to become more involved in the learning process of the students.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. In-service teacher training is an integral part of the multigrade teaching strategy. Each teacher attends regular in-service workshops over a period of one year, with a series of follow-up workshops thereafter.

The first workshop introduces the teacher to the basic concepts and methods of the project. Key topics include the purpose of involving students in school organization, the use of learning centers and group work in the organization of learning, and the mobilization of community resources for school development. All these topics are included in self-study units in a teacher training manual. Teachers follow them, engaging in active learning in exactly the same way that they will teach their students.

The second workshop is focused on the use and adaptation of children's study guides. This workshop takes place only after the school has been reorganized and the community mobilized. During the workshop, teachers study children's materials and learn how to use them for multigrade teaching. Sets of materials for children's use are delivered to the teachers during the workshop.

The third workshop focuses on the role of the school library as a complement to the study guides and learning centers. Teachers receive the books for their library at the end of the workshop.

Follow-up workshops are conducted monthly to exchange ideas, analyze problems, and discuss results. Over time, these local non-formal workshops became formalized into "microcenters": participatory experiences where teachers can evaluate, create, innovate, criticize, analyze, and carry out projects for school and community improvement (Tran and others 1999).

Demonstration schools also play an important role in training. During the initial workshops, teachers visit a school that is implementing the curriculum approach effectively and operating as a well-functioning community center. Both the learning centers and demonstration schools function as a “decentralised, in-service, low-cost mechanism to maintain quality in the process of going to scale” (Tran and others 1999, p. 20).

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. Parents are often the most difficult sector of society to influence regarding their own children. Many poor village parents do not see themselves as active participants in the formal education process. By emphasizing the importance of education for all children within the village, multigrade teaching has made parents and communities active participants in the life of the school. Through empowerment by access to information, parents and the community became more willing to accept the new education project.

Multigrade Teaching as a Force for Change

In many developing countries, it is common for instruction to be very teacher-directed and to offer students only limited opportunities to participate (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991). Three multigrade-related innovations have particular relevance for the single grade classroom: curriculum reform, instructional strategies, and classroom management (Berry 2000). The Multigrade Teaching Project in Viet Nam has developed innovations in all three areas.

First, materials development is one way to make single grade teaching more effective. Workbooks and guidebooks with modules usually recognize that children in any one classroom will be developing at different speeds. The preparation of specific materials with learning objectives, together with more flexible approaches to retention and promotion, may allow students of mixed abilities in single grade classrooms to move through the system at a pace appropriate to them and also to achieve minimum learning objectives.

Second, single grade teachers can expand their instruction strategies by using methods derived from multigrade classes. These include peer instruction, cooperative group work, and independent self-study. Groups could be formed by ability or by mixed ability, depending on the teacher's instructional purpose. Third, to manage their classes, single grade teachers could adopt methods similar to the facilitator role required in multigrade classes. This would involve

reorganizing the classroom by increasing access to self-study areas such as classroom libraries, and promoting more group work independent of the teacher. Groups could be formed by ability or by mixed ability, depending on the teacher's instructional purpose.

Alternative Basic Education

Rationale

While Multigrade Teaching serves children from minority groups and children living in remote areas, the Alternative Basic Education (ABE) project focuses on serving poor, marginalized street and working children. In the city, the majority of working children are migrants from rural areas whose families are fleeing rural poverty. Settling in urban slum settlements on the outskirts of the cities, they find work in the informal economy: selling in the markets, parks, bus terminals, or on the street; shining shoes; or guarding motor bicycles. A small number of teenagers work in the manufacturing and service sectors in factories, restaurants, or in construction. In rural areas, the majority of working children and youth work in agriculture, for substandard wages or no wages at all (MOLISA 1998).

There are at least 50,000 street children in Viet Nam, over 14,000 of whom live in Ho Chi Minh City and over 7,000 in Ha Noi. Some 231,000 children are orphans under the age of 14. Over 731,500 children under the age of 14 do not live with their biological parents (MOLISA, UNICEF, and Viet Nam Committee 2000). In large cities such as Ho Chi Minh City, Ha Noi, and Hai Phong, many of the children served by ABE are orphans and are responsible for the care of younger siblings.

Many homeless children are past the age of entry into the formal education system. Many of these children did not enroll in formal education simply because it was not relevant to their situation and needs. Generally, parents expect their children to earn a living or help at home, rather than attend school and focus on their studies. Moreover, working and marginalized children are less motivated to learn because their parents are ill equipped to support their children academically: parents usually have very low levels of education or are illiterate themselves.

To address these problems, the government of Viet Nam, assisted by UNICEF, has developed an Alternative Basic Education model in all provinces of the country. The goal of ABE is to ensure that all children, even the most

disadvantaged ones, have access to education, in fulfillment of their rights as articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Vietnamese National Plan of Action for Children. Viet Nam was the second country in the world—and the first country in Asia—to sign the International Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. Article 32 of the Convention underscores the need for governments to “recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely hazardous to or interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.” The government of Viet Nam has acted on this article through a number of legislative and regulatory measures, seeking to maintain a balance between allowing children to contribute to their own survival in times of hardship and safeguarding the right of children to physical and intellectual development.

Organization and Management

ABE classes are offered to working children during different times of the day, but mainly in the evenings so that they can conduct their economic or other activities during the day. Sometimes, classes take place outside of a school or in a setting closer to the children, such as the commune's pagoda. ABE classes now exist in communes or urban wards in all corners of Viet Nam where there are high numbers of dropouts or children who have never attended school. Wherever a professional teacher is unavailable, the community identifies a trained volunteer. Access is easy and classrooms are situated close to the children’s and teacher’s homes. Children are provided free educational materials. The program’s innovative and flexible methods enable working children and teenagers to complete at least the primary education cycle.

ABE has grown to serve about a third (30 percent) of 1 million out-of-school children, ranging in age from 6 to 17 years (MOET 1999a). The project’s implementation process has spanned three periods.

DESIGN AND TESTING. (1985-88): In the early 1980s, an educational movement for disadvantaged children was launched in many southern provinces, especially in urban areas and remote areas in the Mekong Delta. The National Institute for Education Science (NIES) was asked by the Ministry of Education and Training to develop an abbreviated curriculum for use in the Mekong Delta provinces (Vu 1994). The 100-week curriculum was prepared in response to the needs of disadvantaged and working children, and was approved in

1988.¹ This curriculum was intended to simplify the curricular content and to reduce the hours of instruction per week. Since the 1988–89 school year, the 100-week curriculum has been implemented. ABE classes were first organized in Ho Chi Minh City and several provinces of the Mekong River delta.

IMPLEMENTATION AND EXPANSION. (1989-99): With UNICEF support, ABE classes were expanded from 10 provinces in 1991 to 27 provinces in 1999. A project monitoring system was established, covering the central to the community level. The Department of Primary Education is the coordinating agency for ABE, in cooperation with other departments and units of MOET for planning and implementing project activities. Each participating province is responsible for implementing all project activities within its jurisdiction. To identify the project's strengths and weaknesses so that timely corrective measures may be made, project monitoring has been conducted twice per year. While ABE classes use the 100-week primary curriculum, the same methods and tools that are employed for evaluation in regular classes are applied to the ABE classes. Learning achievement is evaluated through annual examinations organized by regular primary schools to promote students to higher classes or retain them in the same class. At the end of the fifth year, the district education board holds a public final examination. Successful candidates are awarded a certificate that entitles them to continue their studies in lower secondary education.

CONSOLIDATION (2000 TO PRESENT): ABE is now in another phase of expansion. No longer supported by UNICEF, ABE classes still function in many places where the teachers, students, parents, and communities have identified unmet learning needs. Teachers from participating provinces receive training courses using the conceptual framework for participatory learning and life skills development that is the guiding framework for ABE classes.

Philosophy: Respecting and Empowering Working Children and Youth

Along with alternative educational models in other regions, such as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Colombia's Escuela Nueva (New School), and Guatemala's PENNAT (Educational Program for

1. The ordinary primary education curriculum was designed to extend for 165 weeks annually over a five-year period. The 100-week ABE curriculum covers three subjects: Vietnamese (64 percent), mathematics (23.6 percent), and social and natural studies (6.7 percent).

Child and Adolescents Workers), the ABE Program in Viet Nam is considered to be one type of non-formal education (NFE) that strives to reach the unserved and respond to the constraints of traditional educational systems. ABE classes offer learning opportunities that are open, flexible, and relevant to the needs of working children and youth. ABE seeks to motivate schools, communities, teachers, and children to assess, analyze, and resolve problems related to their own context. Classes are found in many places, and they provide easy access to working children. In so doing, ABE has redefined the role of schools, making education fit local learning traditions.

The ABE program goes beyond the usual non-formal education program since it is also a holistic response to concerns highlighted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The project focuses on the welfare of the child in the midst of rapidly changing family, school, and community environments. ABE is intended to provide an education program that both respects the unique circumstances of working children and youth and empowers them to become agents of their own development. It seeks to expand educational access as an important step toward achieving Universal Primary Education.

Advantages of ABE

LINKAGES WITH FORMAL BASIC EDUCATION. There are strong linkages between formal basic education and ABE. Since its inception, ABE has been considered a part of the educational and training system in Viet Nam (MOET 1999b). This suggests that ABE is a compensatory alternative for, a supplement to, and an extension of the basic education system. It is provided when children cannot attend regular classes because of poverty and other reasons. As a non-formal education system, ABE is supplementary to and does not compete with the formal education system (Vu 1994). Yet it provides an important “bridge” to entry or re-entry into the formal education system as a “second chance” for Viet Nam’s neediest children.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. An important feature of this program is community participation in ABE classes. Primary schools, local authorities, community organizations, local NGOs, and religious groups jointly organize these classes. Communities, even poor ones, make essential financial and in-kind contributions. Community members contribute labor to build shelters, make furniture, guard or repair facilities, co-teach, help with classes, serve on school management committees, and raise funds. They also enrich teaching

and learning activities. Resource persons from the communities are invited to the school to participate in staff improvement and learning development activities, and they are also asked to talk to children during classes.

Challenges

The 1999 MOET report reveals that the quality of teaching in ABE classes remains lower than in regular classes. Furthermore, children living in poor rural areas continue to drop out of classes because they must help their families during harvest time or stay home to take care of younger siblings. Overall, the quality of the Vietnamese education system could be improved if teachers received regular training to improve their teaching skills in guiding such target groups of children. Although teachers are well-trained in educating children in a fixed curriculum, they often have little training or motivation to understand what individual, family, and community conditions affect learning processes, what factors can cause learning problems, and how to correct them while also determining what positive factors can be sustained or even enhanced.

Lessons Learned from the ABE Program

Teachers and community leaders revealed what they consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of current ABE class practices in a report by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET 1999b). They felt the best approach should:

- Be integrated into on-going formal school activities to ensure sustainability
- Not put too much of a burden on teachers, who are already over-worked with both teaching and administrative duties, and
- Involve students as much as possible so they can learn, become more active in community development, and achieve their learning and leadership potential.

Experience with the ABE project has shown that the quality of basic education will increase if teachers, students, and communities are empowered. Teachers are empowered through the acquisition of active learning and teaching skills. Students are empowered through the acquisition of basic knowledge and education materials. Communities are empowered by gaining responsibility for the education process. Empowerment leads to a favorable learning environment, which, in turn leads to increased enrollment, higher attendance rates, and a higher level of learning achievement. Non-formal alternatives to primary schooling have been found to increase the motivation and

participation of teachers, students, and communities alike, thereby raising the overall quality of basic education at the village level.

Conclusion

The Multigrade Teaching and the ABE programs are visible examples of how innovations have grown from small projects into national educational programs. Several lessons have emerged from both programs:

- Strong cooperation must exist between the education sector and the community in order to meet basic learning needs.
- At the district, provincial, and village levels, key persons must be directly involved, including policy makers, teachers, parents, and students.
- Simply investing in primary education is not enough. Investments must be expanded for early childhood development, parental education, and non-formal education as preparation for primary education. These areas serve as preparation for primary education, lead parents to increase their support for children's education, and create continuous learning opportunities.
- Education needs differ in each community. Thus at the outset, needs assessments should be conducted. The community at the local level should be a part of this needs assessment, so that the local conditions are well understood before a project is implemented
- Innovative education solutions, such as distance learning methods, may need to be implemented in order to reach children inaccessible through conventional methods.
- Most importantly, rural basic education must continue to be emphasized.

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