

**CONFINTEA V**  
**Comprehensive Mid-Term Review 2003**  
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## CONFINTEA V MTR 2003

### Acronyms

- ADB Asian Development Bank
- ASPBAE Asian South-Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, Inc
- BANBEIS Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
- BBS Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
- BIDS Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
- CAMPE Campaign for Popular Education
- CONFINTEA V Fifth International Conference on Adult Education
- DFID Department for International Development (UK)
- DNFE Directorate of Non- Formal Education
- DPC Development Planners and Consultants
- ERD Economic Relations Division
- FREPD The Foundation for Research on Educational Planning and Development
- GCE Global Campaign on Education
- GOB Government of Bangladesh
- IDB Islamic Development Bank
- IMF International Monetary Fund
- I-PRSP Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
- MOE Ministry of Education
- MOF Ministry of Finance
- NFE Non-Formal Education
- NGO Non-Governmental Organization
- NGOAB NGO Affairs Bureau
- PLCE Post Literacy and Continuing Education
- PMED Primary and Mass Education Division
- SDC Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
- UNDP United Nations Development Program
- UNESCO United Nations Educational, scientific and Cultural Organization
- WCEFA World Conference on Education for All

## **Chapter 1**

### **1.0 Building up Structures and Institutional Frameworks**

Policies, legal provisions, delivery system and innovations (accreditation of prior informal and non-formal learning; second chance courses, diversification of provision and content; decentralizing decisions regarding needs identification, content of adult learning, mobilization and use of resources, etc. Education policies integrated with economic, social, health, employment policies; information, guidance and management systems).

#### **Background**

Adult literacy activities in the territories of Bangladesh have been traced back to 1918 (Sandwip, 1987). The activities came in the form of night schools, established and managed under individual initiatives. Cooperatives joined in organizing night schools in the early 1920s. The literacy movement in Bengal adopted Frank Laubach's slogan of 'Each One Teach One' around 1939. Beginning in the late 1940s and through the decades of 1950s to 1970s individuals, NGOs and the government initiated adult literacy programs, which were limited in scope. The concept of EFA was advocated as early as 1949 when a book published in Bengali carried the title 'Education for All in Six Months'. An adult literacy center established in Dhaka in 1954 also called for eradicating illiteracy from these territories in 10 years (Jennings, 1990).

The government launched an ambitious adult literacy project, titled 'Mass Education Program' (MEP), in 1980 alongside a Universal Primary Education (UPE) program the same year. The goal was to make literate 40 million illiterate adults by 1985. However, the program was aborted in 1982 when the regimes changed and revived at a much lower scale in 1987. Following the World Conference on Education for All

(WCEFA) held at Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990 an Integrated Non-Formal Education Program (INFEP) was prepared and launched in 1991 by replacing the MEP while primary education was made compulsory partly in 1992 and fully from 1993. The government prepared the first *Education For All: National Plan of Action (NPA I), 1991-2000*, in line with the goals set in the World Declaration on EFA and Framework for Action adopted by the WCEFA. NPA I was published in 1995, though work on its implementation had already begun from fiscal year 1992-1993.

As provided in NPA I INFEP had all the NFE components: 'early childhood education and development' (ECCD), 'non-formal basic education' (NFBE) for the un-enrolled and primary school dropouts (6-10 years' age), a 'second chance' program for the post-primary age (11-14 years) adolescents, and adult education for 15-45 age group. The government created a new Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) out of the Ministry of Education in 1992 to pursue the EFA goals expeditiously and to give a high profile to primary/basic education PMED was placed under the direct charge of the Prime Minister (PM). A new Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) was created out of the INFEP structure in 1995. PMED has since been raised to a full Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) on 02 January 2003 and continues to be headed by the PM, supported by an Advisor on Primary and Mass Education (PME).

### ***Participation in CONFINTEA V***

Bangladesh had a high-profile participation in CONFINTEA V, led by then Prime Minister who was also the Keynote Speaker at the Conference and the Education Minister, elected its first Vice President. The Prime Minister stated in her keynote address "We consider education at all levels as one of the major factors of poverty alleviation. **We are committed to eradicate illiteracy from our country within the next 10 years**" (UNESCO, 1997). The country's Fifth Five Year Plan, 1997 – 2002<sup>1</sup>, and the adult literacy, and post literacy and continuing education projects drafted and launched after 1997 had all echoed this commitment and stated that illiteracy (among 11-45 year old persons) would be removed in 10 years or by 2006 (counting

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<sup>1</sup> Published in March 1998

from 1997). It appears, however, that no Hamburg follow-up plan was prepared or adopted as such as none could be found.

### ***NPA I Targets***

Since NPA I was designed to achieve the EFA goals as adopted in Jomtien and it had already set the goal for adult education for 2000 a separate Hamburg follow-up plan was perhaps not considered necessary at the time or not pursued vigorously. NPA I target was to raise adult literacy rate from 35 percent in 1991 to 62 percent by 2000. The Plan achievement exceeded the target and raised the rate to 64 percent in 2000 (DNFE, 2000). A highly placed MOPME source stated (on 23 August 2003) that the rate has been finally assessed at 62.4 percent in 2003. A civil society group, Education Watch, launched its Education Watch Report 2002<sup>2</sup> the same day, *Literacy in Bangladesh: Need for a New Vision*, based on a nationwide sample survey conducted in the later part of 2002, found the adult literacy rate at 41.4 percent, which is close to UNDP stated rate of 41 percent (UNDP, 2002) and UNESCO, 40 percent for 2000 (UNESCO, 2002).

In pursuance to the goals set in the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA) MOPME has prepared, with some consultations with the civil society and other stakeholders, a draft *EFA: National Plan of Action, 2003-2015*, (NPA II), which has set the target of raising adult literacy rate to 78 percent by 2010 and 90 percent by 2015 (reducing the present rate by half per DFA). NPA II will be implemented in three phases, 2003-2005 (July-June fiscal years), 2005-2010 and 2010-2015. The government seems likely to pursue the Hamburg Agenda for the Future more in the context of its NPA II framed in light of DFA EFA goals and strategies and the program it has proposed in the Plan for basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education, among others.

It seems to conform to the goal of common grid reporting of integrating the CONFINTEA V Agenda into the six EFA goals (of DFA) to facilitate the EFA overall monitoring and the Global Report. This report will, just to stay with the on-going system, use the term adult literacy 'conceived as the basic knowledge and skills

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<sup>2</sup> Fourth in a series from 1999, others were on different aspects of primary education

needed' within a 'framework of lifelong learning' in discussing and assessing the progress made since 1997 and plans for the future.

## **1.1 Adult Learning, Democracy, Peace and Critical Citizenship**

**Structure of Adult Learning in Bangladesh:** There are two ministries in the education sector. MOPME is charged with the responsibility of promoting and managing the government's primary and basic education programs, including basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education. The Ministry of Education (MOE) looks after secondary education and above; the University Grants Commission (UGC) and Bangladesh National Commission of UNESCO (BNCU) remain under MOE. MOPME has three directorates; Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) deals with primary education, Compulsory Primary Education Implementation and Monitoring Unit (CPEIMU) with monitoring of primary education and the Directorate of Non-formal Education (DNFE) with non-formal education as the operating arms of MOPME. A National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) and a Primary Education Wing in the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) also operate under MOPME. DNFE deals with basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education.

**NGO Participation:** NGOs have been quite active, particularly after Jomtien, in non-formal education and are also becoming engaged in formal primary education. More than 500 NGOs, in addition to running their own basic education programs, also work as implementing partners of some of the DNFE projects. Following the WCEFA and the meeting of the International Council on Adult Education held in Bangkok in 1990 some leading NGOs got together and established a coalition/forum of NGOs engaged in education activities under the name of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) in 1991. It has a membership of 425 NGOs. Though the major part of NGO education activities are focused on the un-enrolled and dropout primary school and post-primary school age children nearly 450 NGOs also engage in running basic literacy programs, some of them manage post literacy and continuing education programs as well for adolescents and adults.

**Policies and Legal Provisions:** Bangladesh Constitution recognized the fundamental right of the people to education and enjoins on the State “to adopt effective measures for ... establishing universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children ... and removing illiteracy<sup>3</sup>.” The constitution further enjoins on the State to ensure gender equity and equality in all respects, as does DFA. As participant and signatory to various relevant international conferences and declarations the country is also committed to achieving the goals of EFA, in line with the goals set at Jomtien and reaffirmed and repackaged in the six goals of DFA.

The National Education Policy 2000<sup>4</sup>, initiated after Hamburg and adopted by the Parliament in 2000, states, “The aims of adult education are to offer people the skills of literacy: reading, writing, numeracy, and to inspire them with human virtues and to raise awareness in them about health and the environment” (unofficial translation from Bengali). The Fifth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) of Bangladesh states that the “purpose of NFE besides empowering the learners with skills in literacy, numeracy and communications as well as internalizing socio-cultural traits, should extend to ... emotional and physical well-being, self-actualization, creative and aesthetic expression, basic technological skill and orientation, entrepreneurial traits and leadership skills” (GOB, 1998).

**Evolution of Adult literacy program:** The NFE and adult literacy programs have, in the recent past, grown mostly from projects taken up hurriedly to meet the goals of EFA; they lacked a vision and broader framework for reference or policy guidelines with agreed strategies (Ahmed and Lohani, 2001). NGO programs were running independently without any support or guidance from the government, particularly DNFE, which had the mandate “to handle the tasks of planning, guiding, supporting and monitoring non-formal education”(NPA I) and a Technical Support Services Unit but did not really engage in guiding and monitoring NGO NFE program for lack of adequate professional capacity or personnel. One good part was it involved the NGOs in the development of its teaching learning and training materials; it also used

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<sup>3</sup> Bangladesh Constitution, Fundamental Principles of State Policy, Part II, Clause 17

<sup>4</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Parliament, Ministry of Education, 2000

NGO training centers for training of its staff and allowed CAMPE to provide training to its staff on NFE and environment.

**National Framework:** The government has recognized the need and undertaken to develop a National Framework for Non-Formal Education. A Team of 8 consultants (of various duration, 3 foreign and 5 national), supported by the World Bank and SDC, is currently helping the MOPME to develop such a National Framework, which will provide the policy framework and strategies, a perspective plan, an equivalency framework, an advocacy and dissemination plan which would also set the parameters of basic education/literacy, post literacy and continuing education leading to a system of lifelong learning.

A legal base already exists and a policy framework with a perspective vision is being developed for NFE, which includes basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education for young adults (15-24 years) and adults (25-45 years). It all recognizes the inherent right of the people to education and importance of their participation in the process of realizing the EFA goals, in community affairs, development processes and their own self-realization.

#### **(d) Creating greater community participation**

NFE is basically an outreach program. The government recognizes and emphasizes the need for effective and meaningful participation of the community to (a) provide a conducive learning environment, (b) mobilize local resources needed for the program, (c) assess and meet the felt needs and expectations of the community, (d) establish accountability of persons involved through a participatory monitoring system, and (e) develop a sense of community ownership of the program. To ensure and enhance community participation DNFE insists on (a) deployment of local educated youth and school teachers in conducting the baseline survey at the community level, (b) participation of the community in the selection of location of learning center or get the community to donate the venue, (c) recruitment of teachers and supervisors from the community, and (d) establishing a Center Management

Committee (CMC) with persons representing local elites, guardians of learners and NGO workers.

Despite all the measures taken as counted the community participation has not reached the desired level. The CMCs remain mostly non-functional or ineffective. People's perception seems to regard the DNFE learning center as a government, and not a community, activity (ADB, 2001). NGOs generally have closer affinity with the community and when it comes to their own education programs they get better response but NGOs deployed by DNFE, with no root in the community have difficulty in organizing or managing the allotted learning centers or ensuring adequate quality of fare offered.

**(e) Encouraging greater recognition, participation and accountability of non-governmental organizations and local community groups.**

***Recognition and participation of NGOs***

Beginning with the MEP and particularly the METSLO (Mass Education Through Small Local Organizations) project, supported by UNDP in 1988, the government have recognized the flexibility and ability of NGOs to implement NFE activities more effectively because of their local presence and involvement in different development work targeted at the marginal population, who are also the target clientele of NFE. INFEP had continued the practice and so do the other projects of DNFE now, with the exception of one, the TLM project (see section 1.2 below for details). More than 500 NGOs (Project document PLCEHD-1) have worked as implementing partners of DNFE projects. A fresh batch of 323 NGOs have been selected for working on Post Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) –1 project and more will be selected for PLCE-2 project going to field operation in December 2003.

In general, the government encourages NGO participation in NFE activities. NGOs are registered under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961 and those receiving or bringing in foreign donations also have to register with the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) under the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Registration Ordinance, 1978, located in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). NGOAB gives registration to NGOs, which apply in given forms and

produces evidence of commitment of a foreign source to provide donation(s) and obtains clearance from the concerned Ministry (depending on the nature of activities) for given projects received from such NGOs and issues clearance for operation of the projects and release of funds through the central bank. MOPME clears the NFE projects. The concerned NGOs submit periodical progress report to NGOAB, which gives a copy to MOPME. They also submit annual audit reports, prepared by audit firms selected from a list approved by NGOAB. Accountability is ensured through these two reports and also monitoring done by NGOAB through the district administration, where NGOs also participate in the monthly district development review committee meetings chaired by the head of district administration (the Deputy Commissioner) and report progress of their work. The meeting also deals with and resolves coordination matters.

With the launching of the ambitious Comprehensive Non-Formal Education Programme (TLM approach) project in 1998 the government had a total of four NFE projects in operation, three of which together had a target of reaching 34.19 million illiterate adults over a period of five years covering the whole country. At this point PMED initiated a move to stop NGOs from taking up NFE activities, particularly adult literacy. CAMPE took up the matter on behalf of education NGOs and with the intervention of NGOAB the matter was amicably settled and it was agreed that NGOs would be allowed to take up pre-primary and primary education, post literacy, skills training and only innovative adult literacy projects but no regular adult literacy activities.

### ***Number of NGOs in the Country***

There are more than 25,000 NGOs in the country registered under the Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (women's NGOs only). Some 1,400 of them are registered with the NGOAB, 114 of foreign origin and the rest, national, which receive foreign funds or donations for various development programs, including non-formal education. Over the last 20 years such NGOs have received just about US\$ 2.5 billion (NGOAB, 2002). The foreign donation receiving NGOs claim to be development NGOs or Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs). The last known figure of NGOs with education programs was 518 (DNFE MIS, 2002)

and some 400 had adult literacy programs, integrated into NFE. As majority of the NGOs involved in education activities are grouped under CAMPE there are also other activity-based umbrella bodies or forums of NGOs in the areas of health, water and sanitation, urban poor, etc. Some of the NGOs, with broad range of activities, have common membership in more than one forum.

### ***Local Community Groups***

The government recognizes the local community groups or community-based organizations (CBOs) as well. DNFE implemented the TLM project through the district administration, CBOs and volunteers. In the formal primary education sub-sector CBOs organize community schools and satellite schools.

### **(f) Delivery System and Innovations**

(Accreditation of prior informal and non-formal learning; second chance courses, diversification of provision and content; decentralizing decisions regarding needs identification, content of adult learning, mobilization and use of resources, etc.)

### ***Accreditation***

There is no accreditation program in the country yet. It involves a program of equivalence. NPA II has proposed introduction of an equivalence program. As mentioned earlier, work has already started on developing a framework for equivalence under the consultancy project, National Framework, Advocacy and Dissemination, which will also devise, by May 2004, the testing procedures and mechanism for accreditation and certification.

### ***Second chance courses***

There is no second chance course for adults yet, but there is no restriction either. Any one can apply, register and take an examination under the Open University from secondary school level upwards. The primary school dropouts or never enrolled, particularly those in the age range of 11-14 years have opportunities, in fact they are persuaded, to join non-formal basic education courses under any NGO program and get back into the mainstream education. The government's INFEP project had such

a program for the 11-14 age group, which has been discontinued with completion of the project in 1997.

***DNFE approaches to and programs of adult literacy***

DNFE uses three different approaches to imparting literacy skills to illiterate adults in the age range of 11-45 years. One is the Center-Based Approach (CBA), under which the government determines the areas and number of learning centers to be established in each; then allots a certain number of centers to given NGOs selected through a competitive process and subject to meeting certain conditions; NGOs receive a pro-rata fund allocation per learner to cover the cost of accessories, training of teachers and others. The second is the Primer Distribution Approach (PDA), under which DNFE provides teaching learning materials to NGOs with literacy programs; one of the PDA objectives is to promote networking for literacy. The third is the Total Literacy Movement (TLM), a campaign-mode program of promoting literacy. It works through the district administration, which mounts district-wide campaign in two phases in favour of literacy and implementation of the program begins when it is adjudged the community is ready to receive and undertake the program. It is implemented through community-based organizations (CBOs), school and college teachers who work as volunteers and others, who receive a token compensation equivalent to US\$8.77 a month. The CBA program runs for 10 months (6 months for basic literacy and 4 months for consolidation or post literacy) and TLM runs for 9 months (6 months for basic literacy and 3 months for post literacy. TLM was intended to contribute heavily to removing illiteracy in 10 years or by 2006. The three approaches cover illiterate persons of 11-45 years' age. DNFE also runs a UNICEF-supported project (NFE project-3) for the hard-to-reach urban working children of 8-14 years covering 351,000 children in six Divisional cities. It uses the CBA approach. The project targets and achievements of the adult literacy projects of DNFE are shown in the table below by approaches used:

**Table 1.1(c):** DNFE Adult Literacy projects, age groups, targets, achievements and approaches

Project Name	Age group	Target Pop. (mln)	Achievements by 2001		Approaches used
			Number (m)	Percent	
INFEP	15-45	1.14	2.02	177.19	CBA, TLM, PDA
NFE Project-1	15-24	3.14	2.47	78.66	CBA, TLM, PDA
NFE Project-2	11-45	8.18	1.96	23.96	CBA, TLM, PDA
NFE Project-4	11-45	22.89	8.77	38.31	TLM
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>35.35</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>43.05</b>	-

**Source:** DNFE, 2000 and MOPME, 2003

It would appear from the above table that the achievement in basic adult literacy program was much less than 50 percent of the target. The government seems to have been dissatisfied with the management of the TLM project and has suspended it with effect from July 2003 though it was extended earlier through the end of 2004. The ratio of DNFE beneficiary coverage was TLM 53:CBA 47 (DNFE MIS, 2001).

### ***NGO Adult Literacy Programs***

More than 450 NGOs are involved in adult literacy programs (World Bank 2001, Proshika database, 2003) participating in DNFE program and also running their own, some quite small but the largest one (Proshika) has 10,000 centers running with 250,000 learners. It also helps more than 400 smaller and medium NGOs with technical support, training facilities and materials. Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Friends in Village Development in Bangladesh (FIVDB), Swanirvar Bangladesh (SB), ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) are among the major NGOs offering adult literacy programs. Clientele of most NGO adult literacy programs are in the age range of 15-35 years and the total number of participants adds up to about 837,000, an increase of 103,000 over 1996 figure or about 29 percent of NGO NFE clientele (CAMPE, 1996 and ADB, 2001).

Proshika figures have been obtained from its education unit database and some others have been gathered from discussion with staff members and their annual

reports where available but there is no composite figure available for all stand-alone NGO programs except for the DNFE programs implemented by NGOs. Nor is the independent NGO coverage or progress figures reflected in the national reports. CAMPE had made a survey by mail in 1995 and published a Directory based on some 300 responses it received. The number of NGOs has increased (some 600 applied for selection as implementing agencies under PLCEHD –1 project, 323 have been selected); some of them are, however, new in NFE and adult literacy areas. CAMPE has just started the process of making a fresh survey to be completed before December 2003; one of the techniques would be a direct field survey by research assistants to ensure full coverage in addition to mailed questionnaires.

The draft NPA II has proposed to tune the MIS at DNFE and setting up a new one at CAMPE to capture the NGO contribution in NFE, including adult literacy, so as to provide a composite national picture at any given point of time. It has also suggested a website for the MOPME to provide access to database and information on overall picture of primary and basic education in the country. Some individual NGOs like BRAC already have their own websites. CAMPE will open one soon.

### ***Continuing Education Program (CEP)***

INFEP established a CE program under the name of Gram Shikka Milon Kendra<sup>5</sup> with 935 centers with the objective of helping the adults to retain the learning skills gained from a short course and thereby prevent their relapse into illiteracy. The centers provide reading materials, magazines, newspaper and some indoor sports equipment. UNESCO supported this activity after completion of the INFEP project in 1997 before it was transferred to project NFE-2 of DNFE. The centers also organize some skills training programs.

Large NGOs like BRAC, DAM, Proshika have also set up CE programs under different names. BRAC CE Program “aims to stimulate interest in acquiring information and encountering new ideas in order to create an environment that is conducive to a ‘learning society’”. Under this program BRAC sets up a Reading

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<sup>5</sup> Continuing Education Center-cum-Rural Library

Center two months before a BEOC<sup>6</sup> School completes its cycle (of three years), primarily for developing reading habits among adolescent girls and women, provides books and other reading materials to read and borrow, and facilities for indoor games. BRAC also establishes Union Libraries, known as GonoKendra Pathagar (People's Center Library). These libraries, established with community support and contribution, also operate as Community Centers, serving as focal place where people can come to read and borrow books, get involved in socio-cultural activities or take advantage of textbook lending scheme for high school students of poor families. DAM CEP seeks to provide "scope for reinforcing the acquired literacy skills of participants" of its adult literacy program and establishes Gonokendra (People's Center) with community support and contribution. DAM transfers the ownership and management responsibility of the community learning centers or Ganokendras (People's Centers) to the community in course of time. The centers provide learning as well as different types of skills training programs.

Proshika organizes Study Circles (defined as organized sets of group meetings, where learners come together regularly, once a week, to read a series of booklets/materials and discuss the contents in a regular discussion format) as a way to provide post literacy education to the group members. ActionAid uses the REFLECT<sup>7</sup> 'approach to basic literacy instruction (which uses action research to identify literacy needs of learners in order to build learning activities) and individual trainers uses other PRA<sup>8</sup> (community literacy) approaches to help learners improve literacy practices'. This approach is also suitable for post literacy program.

### ***Post Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) Program***

Through an experimental one-year (from February 2000) pilot project DNFE developed a model of Post Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) for Human Development program in 2000/2001. It also had a separate study conducted on 'Beneficiary Needs, Local Demand for Skills and Available Skills Training' facilities in a region; this study further developed a strategy paper on PLCE implementation, and assessment instruments for skills training needs, market study, etc.

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<sup>6</sup> Basic Education for Older Children (age range 11-14 years, who have dropped out or never attended schools)

<sup>7</sup> Regenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques

DNFE has started implementation of a 5-year PLCEHD-1 project, which has gone into field operation from January 2003, instead of January 2001 as originally scheduled, supported by the World Bank and Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). Its basic objective is 'consolidation of literacy followed by application of literacy skills in skill training for income generation'. It will cover 1.656 million neo-literates in 230 Upazilas (sub-districts) of 32 districts (of the total of 64). A similar project, PLCEHD-II, supported by ADB and DFID, will cover 1.704 million neo-literates in 210 Upazilas of 29 districts in five years. It is preparing to go into ground level operation in December 2003. Its basic objective is 'increased literacy leading to higher income generating capacity'. A third project, 2-year PLCEHD-3 project, designed to serve 6,300 neo-literates in two Upazilas, supported by IDB is awaiting approval.

The PLCE projects focus on (a) promoting an efficient system of continuing education, (b) enhancing the planning, delivery and supervisory capacity of agencies involved in CE, and (c) implementing sustainable community-based and employment-oriented CE programs. The projects will serve successive groups of neo-literates of DNFE programs for nine months: PLCEHD –1 will provide 3-months' post literacy followed by a 6-months skills training course. PLCEHD –2 will run the PL and skills training programs concurrently, two days for PL and 4 days for CE (skills training) every week for 9-months and another 3 months for follow-up activities such as establishing linkages to micro-finance, employment, self-entrepreneurship, etc. The projects will be implemented through NGOs, selected through a competitive process. PLCEHD-1 will also have a technical team of four consultants in each of the 6 Divisions (each cover a number of the 64 districts) to provide support to implementing agencies. PLCEHD-1 employs a separate set of NGOs for monitoring the work of the implementing NGOs, beside its own Monitoring Associates (MA) who carry out regular independent monitoring. The findings of MA monitoring are discussed in monthly meetings with the NGOs and appropriate actions are decided upon. PLCEHD–2 plans to hire consulting firms or other third party entities to do the monitoring beside its own Monitoring Associates.

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<sup>8</sup> Participatory Rural Appraisal

Following the INFEP model the learning centers of the provide PLCEHD projects will also reading materials, magazines, newspapers and some indoor sports equipment. PLCEHD-1 will establish a total of 6,900 community learning centers (CLC) and PLCEHD –2, 8,500. The centers provide a three months post literacy course and 6 months' continuing education in the form of training in four types of skills: poultry and duck raising, goat and cattle fattening, milch cow rearing and tailoring. A Facilitator and a Deputy Facilitator runs the CLC and “provide assistance as needed to individual readers, rather than organized and sequenced instruction” (World Bank, 2001). Post literacy part organizes discussion on 8 general issues and 12 income-augmenting issues to be selected from a list of 94 such trades identified. The CLCs provide 100 titles of reading materials that cover life skills, fictions and others. The learners are organized into trade-based small groups in the PL phase and during CE part they receive small seed money to undertake income-earning activities in their respective selected trades.

The three PLCE projects will serve a total of 3.3663 million of the 15.22 million adult neo-literates, graduates of DNFE projects (CBA and TLM). That will leave out 11.85 million adult neo-literates; majority of them had completed the adult literacy course some years back (from 1995 onwards) and are at risk of relapsing into illiteracy, as it is not known when their turn would come to join a PLCE program. The matter and strategy of achieving literacy quickly at low cost (see section 2) through campaign mode of TLM has drawn critical reviews that questioned the efficacy and sustainability of learning skills imparted, and called for a serious review for appropriate action (CAMPE 2003, The daily New Age and others, 24 August 2003 and other dates).

### ***Post Literacy and Continuing Program of NGOs***

The programs of NGOs discussed under the Continuing Education program also serve as post literacy and continuing education programs since they also take a longer view of the programs as a means of sustaining the literacy skills gained by the participants by keeping them alive through different interesting activities.

The government and NGOs have established CE centers in their respective program areas. The question of coordination of the location and equitable distribution of such centers to make them accessible to more people and spread the benefit widely demands an urgent review and appropriate action (draft NPA II).

## **1.2 Improving Conditions and Quality of Learning**

No organized program exists for promoting adult learning at higher formal levels. Demand for illiterate adults to join adult literacy program is induced through intensive social mobilization. DNFE's mandated role of 'guiding and monitoring' has not been used in the way it was intended for lack of needed professional capacity. It has remained occupied with planning and management of NFE and adult literacy projects and as the enrollment in primary schools increased remarkably DNFE has started to engage more extensively in PLCE program (ADB, 2001 and World Bank, 2001). The review here will, therefore, touch only on the non-formal adult literacy and PLCE programs.

### ***Delivery and Content***

The DNFE adult literacy and PLCE classes are held in community learning centers organized separately for men and women at different times of the day; each literacy center takes 30 learners in each group of men and women, making 60 learners per center for 9 months. The PLCE centers take four batches of 60 learners or a total of 240 learners per CLC during the lifetime of the projects. DNFE literacy classes run for 9 months (for TLM)/10 months (for CBA program). DNFE adult literacy programs use three primers, named Chetona (consciousness or awakening) I, II and III; the first two covers initial and mid-level proficiency and the 3<sup>rd</sup> one is intended for self-learning level. The third one is considered as being too difficult for the mid-level completers. These primers have been in use for more than a decade and there is a consensus that they need to be updated and improved. It is also contended by critics that the same primers may not be suitable for children of 11-14 who are lumped together with the older people since the program age range for adult literacy covers persons of 11-45 years.

The NGO literacy programs take 33 learners (increased from the original 30) in each batch. The center is hired or donated by the community, with a floor space of 33.44m<sup>2</sup> (more or less the same size in the DNFE centers); learners sit in U-shape formation, one teacher conducts/facilitates the class from the open end and continues with the same batch to the next higher class until the course is complete. NGOs use a variety of curriculum and teaching learning materials. As they go more for innovation, somewhat compelled by government restrictions on taking up adult literacy program, 45 different types of NGO learning teaching materials for NFE and adult literacy have been identified; 20 of them were published as a compendium by CAMPE in 2000, with support from UNESCO.

Adult literacy and non-formal basic education (NFBE) programs have no standardized curriculum or set of teaching learning materials with an agreed floor level of proficiency or competence to be attained by the learners. While the variety and the open field provide scope for innovations it eludes an agreed minimum standard for the learners and recognition, usability or salability of the learning skills gained by them.

### ***Quality of Learning***

Quality in basic education, primary or non-formal, has fallen a victim to the urge of meeting the quantitative goal of EFA in a hurry. It is more so in the public sector than in the NGO domain. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) curriculum for primary schools is based on 53 competencies, only 27 of which are objectively verifiable (CAMPE, 2001). Only about 5.25 percent children completing grade V in government primary schools (36,671), which enroll 62 percent of primary school pupils, could qualify or achieve the competencies with the highest score of 45 percent mark (DPE 2001, PSPMP, 2000 and DPE/NCTB/UNICEF, 2000).

It is claimed that 90 percent of the participants in NFE and adult literacy program gets qualifying scores. But there is no general testing, each center does its own testing, which is not compared with others. It has also been reported that they can qualify only if the test is based on the materials used in their class (ADB, 2001 and CAMPE 2003). If the adult literacy course is not followed by post literacy or

continuing education or opportunity for using the gained learning skills the participants tend to relapse into illiteracy. All NGOs implementing DNFE projects are not of the same quality or efficiency and therefore the outcome of the learning centers under their management are not of even quality. Some of them have even been penalized/blacklisted for their poor performance (ADB, 2001).

Quality of education at basic as well as at higher levels is equally poor. NPA II has emphasized the need for improving the quality of both primary and non-formal education and suggested measures for it (MOPME, 2003), which include improvements in physical environment, class size and organization, teaching learning materials through updating and addition of adequate supplementary materials, treating the NFE and adult literacy as part of a process of lifelong learning rather than a second-rate solution to the problem of illiteracy, recruitment of better qualified teachers and above all providing appropriate training to teachers and supervisors, and monitoring, among others.

### ***The Scope and Limitations of MOPME and DNFE Action***

The jurisdiction of MOPME is limited to EFA-related basic education, covering formal primary (up to grade V for 6-10 year old children) and non-formal education ranging from early childhood care and education/pre-school to adult literacy for children of hardcore poor families and others who have dropped out, remained un-enrolled or missed formal primary education, the age range being 3-45 years. The formalizing of proficiency or competence gained through non-formal means can be done only by formal or recognized certifying institutions such as the Open University, which conducts examinations from Secondary School Certificate (SSC) to post-graduate level (M. Phil and Ph. D). Any one can pursue such courses subject to following an agreed number of classes in given institutions and being in possession of diploma or degree certificate required as the minimum entry-level qualification; for appearing in SSC examination one needs only be certified to have attended classes in a recognized high school.

The responsibility of giving effect to other commitments under Theme 2 fall in the domain of the Ministry of Education, which looks after secondary and higher

education that include the University Grants Commission and the Bangladesh National Commission on UNESCO (BNCU), among others.

#### **1.4 Literacy and Basic Education**

Improving the functioning capability of individuals has been the basic plank of literacy programming, both in the public and NGO sectors. This is reflected in the content of the literacy materials, in which lessons are built around sections on human rights, women rights, child rights, information on health, nutrition, and environment, etc. Additional topical reading materials such as legal rights of women (a brief review of existing laws), special periodicals on day-to-day topics and other matters are provided in simplified language related to levels of comprehension and competence of target readers published by CAMPE and other NGOs (such as BRAC, DAM, others) supplement the course contents. CAMPE and DAM have also published a series of booklets on such titles as medicinal value of vegetables, flowers (herbal medicine) and others. One hundred such booklets are being used in the post literacy and continuing education projects of DNFE as part of open curriculum. These materials come as a service from the NGOs and provide learning materials of interest to users at nominal cost to the program. There are also periodicals oriented to the interest, knowledge information, environment and recreation of adolescent girls and women attending literacy classes or NFBE program. They are also intended to make literacy classes interesting and useful and promote retention of learning skills thereby enriching the literacy environment.

#### **1.4 Promoting the Empowerment of Women**

Gender equity has already been achieved in both primary and secondary education (World Bank, 2002). In primary schools the boy: girl ratio was 50.9: 49.1<sup>9</sup> and in secondary schools, 46.8: 53.2 (DPE, 2002 and BANBEIS 2002). This was achieved through stipends provided to girl students from the government's own sources at primary and with support from development partners at secondary level. The stipend program has been introduced at higher secondary level from this year (2003) and it will soon be introduced at bachelor' level as well.

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<sup>9</sup> The sex ratio in the country is 103.8 male to 100 females (Census 2001) down from 106.1 in 1991

In the non-formal sub-sector the public programs use a ratio of 50:50 and NGOs insist on a 70 female: 30 male. More than one evaluation report of TLM program suggests that though achievement in sustainable literacy skills has been low women participants have made remarkable progress. Women have gained freedom of movement outside the home, a voice in the home and the community, engaging in small enterprises and savings, giving more attention to children's education; overall they are adopting to an improved life style (Ahmed, K S, 1996 and 2001).

In the public sector 50 percent of the learning or continuing education centers (CEC) are for women and teachers in the women's centers are generally women. CBA and TLM programs together organized 494,827 learning centers, 247,413 were for women with as many female teachers. Under the PLCEHD projects PLCEHD- 1 will set up 3,450 centers for women and PLCEHD- 2, 4,200 or a total of 7,650 centers for women. Each center will have a Senior Center Facilitator and a Junior Center Facilitator. Since the center would be the same only one set of Facilitators would work with two groups of 30 women each and, therefore, the total number of women Facilitators would be 7,650 under the two projects. Thus the total number of female practitioners of adult teaching/facilitating comes to 255,063. If the TLM project was fully implemented it would have added another 200,000.

NGOs run 27,900 adult literacy/continuing education centers, on average 70 percent of which are for women. Therefore, the female facilitators or teachers in NGO programs would be 19,530. Thus making a national total of 274,593 female facilitators of adult literacy and continuing education.

## **1.5 Adult Learning and Changing World of Work**

Until 2000 the public education program for illiterate adults was basically tuned to providing basic literacy. There is no organized adult learning or education program for the educated adults or full-time employed persons at the state level. Adult literacy programs are open to illiterate persons in the age range of 11-45 years. With the launching of the PLCE for Human Development, starting with a pilot project and

following it up with two sizeable PLCEHD projects, the need for linkages to other sectors of economy or development in order to ensure scope for using learning skills in conjunction with vocational skills and micro-finance for enhanced income was recognized. What with the concept of privatization gaining grounds and parastatal industries being privatized or employees given golden handshakes the need for retraining of such employees for re-deployment is also becoming pronounced. Some activities have started in this field but not directly related to adult learning as such.

Education is basically regarded as the basic element of human resources development and leading to human development. Five five-year development plans and two two-year development plans undertaken in the 32-year life of the country have emphasized the co-relation between education, poverty alleviation and development, all three of which were highlighted and given priority. But limited allocations failed to make the desired impact on poverty or literacy or development of human resources. NGOs have seen the values of combining literacy, micro-finance and skills training as the right approach and made it an integral part of their rural and family development programs. The clientele could see the value of literacy skills, which are required for reading, writing and maintaining accounts of their small enterprises. Dhaka Ahsania Mission is implementing an adult literacy program titled 'Each One Teach One' in cooperation with a micro-finance organization (Association for Social Advancement – ASA), which provides micro-credit to selected clientele and DAM provides family-based literacy skills through a volunteer program under the EOTO project (DAM, 2002).

## **1.6 Adult Learning, Environment, Health and Population**

Environment, health and population growth are issues that are included in the learning materials of literacy, post literacy and continuing education programs as has been seen in PLCEHD projects. Environment issues are made subjects of discussion and lessons in literacy programs. Planting of medicinal plants is being vigorously promoted by the government, which is also arranging supply of the relevant saplings. CAMPE has published a series of adult literacy and NFE materials on environment under a project titled 'Sustainable Environment Management

Program' (SEMP) in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Forest with support from UNDP.

Health, hygiene and nutrition are important elements in improving the quality of life of people. More than 96 percent people have access to potable water but only 37 percent to sanitary latrines. The government distributes reading materials on hygiene, infant mortality, nutrition and health as part of national campaigns. Information from these sources are integrated into literacy materials in the form of lessons and practical demonstrations. NPA II suggests that such materials be written and produced in simplified language for easy comprehension and practice of neo-literates and be supplied by the concerned ministries. Population grew at an average of 1.48 percent over the decade of 1990s. UNFPA is supporting a DNFE project for developing a curriculum for family life education (FLE). Supplementary materials provided in the continuing education programs of both the government and NGOs include titles on these and other life-related items.

### **1.7 Adult Learning, Media and Culture and ICTs**

Education Watch Report 2002 (CAMPE 2003) found that literacy rate was only 21.6 percent among those who had no access to any of the three mass media (radio, television and news paper); 45 percent among those having access to any one of the mass media, 72.5 with any two of the media and 98.2 with access to all three media. The PLCEHD projects are now providing one radio, one TV and two newspapers in the community learning centers beside the 100 different title and other issue-based materials provided. Group discussions are organized in both government and NGO sponsored programs on different issues and topics to create awareness and promote practice of required life skills at the family and community levels.

### **1.8 Fostering Equality and Access, Serving special groups and meeting learning needs and demands of individuals, groups and communities.**

The right of all groups of people is recognized but program coverage remains limited for financial as well as physical facilities and logistical reasons. The government

(DNFE) has started a program of literacy in prisons in cooperation with the local administrations, local prison authorities with the support of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Surveys by DNFE found in 37 of the 64 district prisons 10,680 of the 25,942 prisoners were non-literate and 391 of them females (the male: female ratio of total prisoners was 96.91: 3.09). The program had covered a total of 11,804 prisoners by 2001 that included some prisons other than those surveyed (DNFE, 2000).

Individual NGOs working with or for the disabled and National Forum of Organizations Working for the Disabled (NFOWD, a total of 113 NGOs) have been demanding access of disabled persons to normal educational institutions. Ministry of Social welfare has a number of facilities for training and rehabilitation of persons challenged with different types of disabilities. NPA II has recommended programs for the challenged persons under the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994).

### **1.9 Economics of Adult Learning: Adult Learning seen as an Investment**

The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper of the government titled 'A National Strategy for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction' (MOF, March 2003) has recognized the value of investment in adult learning as part of human resource development. Adult learning, combined with vocational skills helps enhance family income and national productivity, apart from social fallouts like promotion of children's education – enrolment, attendance and achievement, enhanced freedom and improved family affairs management (Ahmed and Lohani, 2001). These are also the reasons used in justifying the approval of plans for adult literacy and learning.

The I-PRSP provides the mechanism for integration of education policies and requirements with economic, social, health and employment policies. The skills development part of CE is also based on cooperation and coordination of activities with other sectors of the economy and development process, which include the major NGOs with skills training and micro-finance programs and the ministries of Agriculture and Livestock, Rural Development (part of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives), Social Welfare, Women and Children Affairs, Youth

and Sports for joint programs and coordination of training and literacy programs. Inter-NGO cooperation is also assuming an important feature of multi-faceted programs (skills training, micro-finance and small enterprises) of NGOs. GO-NGO cooperation is expanding.

### **1.10 Enhancing International Cooperation, Solidarity and Networking for and through Adult Learning**

DNFE has been using the ATLP model in developing materials for its different literacy and NFE programs and adult literacy materials graded as basic, medium and self-learning levels using the Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) methodology. It has also developed collaborative relations with ACCU for AJP materials and UNESCO PROAP (DNFE, 2000). NGOs apart from being in consultative status (like DAM) with UNESCO have also developed collaborative relations with ASPBAE, ICAE, GCE and others (CAMPE, DAM, others). DAM also organizes workshops and regional meets for UNESCO in Dhaka and others. Currently it is organizing a 'Dialogue on Policy Action for Lifelong Learning in Bangladesh: Getting the Global Processes Locally Satisfying' in Dhaka on behalf of the State of the World Forum Commission on Globalisation's Policy Action Group on Learning, of which it is a Co-Convener.

## **Chapter 2**

### **2.0 Increasing Investment in Adult Learning:**

#### **2.4 Level and Status of Public Investment in Adult Learning**

Beginning in 1996-97 DNFE has implemented four projects that covered illiterate persons ranging in age from 11-45 years. After revision of NFE project – 1 the total target beneficiary stood at 34.38 million in June 2002. The achievement was 15.087 million or 43.88 percent. The total planned expenditure was Taka 12,765.93 million or an equivalent of US \$ 283.68 million including the TLM project, costing US\$ 185 million from the country's own sources. After revision/modification the final allocation was Tk. 12,644.37 million (\$280.98). The GOB share was 71.26 percent and that of development partners amounted to 28.74 percent. The actual expenditure by June

2002 was Tk. 6,309.07 million or \$ 140.2 million (using prevailing rate at the time of project approval) or 49.89 percent of the allocation. The planned contribution of the government and development partners are shown in table 2.1 below:

Projects	<b>Table 2.1:</b> Contribution of the Government and Development Partners (Taka in million)							
	GOB	WB	ADB	SIDA	SDC	NORAD	UNICEF	Total
NFE 1	469.2	492.66	1,252.76	0	178.29	0	0	2,392.91
NFE 2	1600.0	0	0	900.0	0	300.0	0	2,800.0
NFE 3	25.0	0	0	0	0	0	718.06	743.06
NFE 4	6,829.96	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,829.96
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>8,924.16</b>	492.66	1,252.76	900.00	178.29	300.00	718.06	<b>12,765.93</b>

Source: DNFE 2000, Ahmed and Lohani 2001 and DNFE computer printout 11/2001

The cost of the two PLCEHD projects being implemented by the government (DNFE) is: PLCEHD-1 US \$ 71.57 million (GOB \$11.24, WB/IDA \$53.32 and SDC, \$7.0) supported by the World Bank and SDC and PLCE-II, US\$ 99.60 million (GOB \$19.82, ADB \$ 65.06, DFID \$ 12.01 and the community, \$2.69) supported by ADB and DFID (Source: PLCEHD 1 and 2 project documents and appraisal reports).

Thus the public sector total allocation for all the six projects comes to (\$280.98+ \$71.57+ \$99.6 =) \$452.00 million.

**NGO contribution:** The major NGO programs are in the areas of primary level education, generally up to grade III level and now in case of some major NGOs, up to completion of grade V and transfer to high school. BRAC is the largest NGO of the country and it also operates the largest non-formal primary education program; it runs 34,000 NFPE schools serving 1.02 million un-enrolled and dropout children of marginal families. It spends \$19.0 per child per year and has an annual budget of around \$19.38 million, which are 16.15 percent of its annual total agency budget that includes programs on health and nutrition, and rural development, including women's development.

But as indicated earlier information relating to NGO operations are not available in one place. CAMPE has just started a survey to gather information about NGO

education programs. NGOAB approval is given on the total amount committed by a given donor on the basis of a letter of commitment; it does not give the breakdown by different strands of education such as ECCE, NFPE or adult literacy. Thus getting a single picture of contributions received by NGOs for adult literacy is not possible. NGOAB has agreed to rectify this situation. CAMPE is gathering information by strands so as to facilitate accurate accounting of allocation to and expenditure on different sub-components of NFE, which should also help NGOAB in setting things in order. NGOs spend an average of Tk. 350.0 (\$6.03) on materials per adult learner, and another Tk. 400.00 per capita on average for other expenses including the remuneration of Facilitator/Teachers, some \$10.822 million per annum.

The development partners (DP) of the government in non-formal education are: ADB, DFID, IDA/ World Bank, NORAD, SIDA and UNFPA, and those supporting education programs of NGOs include: AKF, CIDA, DANIDA, DFID, DGIS, EC/EU, KFW, NOVIB, Pathfinder International, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. DP contributions go mostly to NGO programs for non-formal primary education, an average of \$15.94 million per year for BRAC NFPE alone at \$19.0 per child per year.

## **2.5 Policies and strategies that promote public investment and mobilize private sector**

It is the government commitment and consequent emphasis on undertaking programs of enhancing literacy rates and enrolment in formal institutions that have generated projects for adult literacy/learning in the non-formal sector. The strategy has been one of more a doing public good than getting the communities to take a major share of the expenditure. But at the project level it is stipulated that the communities would provide place and space for setting up and running the learning centers. Indeed the communities in many cases do provide such facilities and also take care of maintenance. Since 49 percent of the people live below the poverty line (down from 59 percent in 1991, World Bank – 2002) and the NFE clientele, particularly the illiterate adults are among this group their ability to share costs remain extremely limited. Even then there are examples, where day laborers and

such others were willing to contribute a part of their daily wage depending on the quality of learning skills offered.

## 2.6 Enlist contribution by all stakeholders.

As explained above this was not possible to do for adult literacy separately. But everyone assured that they would separate and maintain the accounts sub-heads. Once CAMPE survey is completed it should be able to establish a base and a benchmark for easy identification of receipts and expenditure by sub-heads. Public and other investment in basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education is shown in the table below.

**Table 2.3:** Investment in basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education

Stakeholder	Contribution (\$ in million) to		
	Basic Literacy	Post literacy and Continuing Education	Total
MOPME/DNFE	196.39	31.06	227.45
Development Partners	84.54	137.39	221.93
Community	0	2.69	2.69
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>280.93</b>	<b>171.14</b>	<b>452.07</b>
NGOs receive for BL&CE/annum	-	-	10.822
<b>Grand Total</b>	-	-	<b>462.892</b>

## Chapter 3

### 7.0 Increasing Participation

#### 7.1 Information on quantitative indicators of participation (persons and groups) in adult education;

It has been stated in Chapter 1 that a total of 15.22 million persons of 11-45 years of age have graduated from DNFE adult literacy programs over a period of 7 years (1995-2002) and 7 districts have been declared illiteracy free and rate of literacy has reached 62.4 percent. Independent assessments have found it difficult to confirm or validate sustainability of the literacy skills imparted. There are gaps in enrollment, attendance and successful completion of the course and lack of follow-up measures made it difficult to confirm retention of the skills gained.

NPA II has emphasized the need for developing and establishing a reliable database for both formal primary and non-formal education. Information available with its MIS is not considered fully reliable because of lapses in data gathering, reporting and data entry (ADB, 2001). NGO data are not nationally computed and therefore not recorded in government or national statistics. CAMPE Databank of June 1996 showed that out of 435 NGOs engaged in education programs 347 had adult literacy program with 734,498 participants (19.29 percent males and 80.71 percent females). Discussion with major NGO staff members suggest that there are about 450 NGOs engaged in offering adult literacy/learning programs to about 837,000 adults of varying ages, some NGOs take only 15-35 year olds, others take 15-45, still others take 15-25 and 15-19, one NGO takes 12-19 (basically adolescents) groups. Donor funding supports almost all the programs. The NGOs submit report to donors and big national NGOs that support some of the NGOs in undertaking adult literacy programs. The NGO adult literacy programs often form an adjunct to their other programs such as being a part of the generic NFE program, rural development, women's development, micro-credit or other income-generating activities (IGA) for the marginal population.

PLCEHD-1 project has opened its second batch of centers making a total of 4000 centers by end of July 2003 with 240,000 participants. Other centers will open in course of time. There are also the participants of NGO continuing education programs. All taken together it may safely be assumed that some 19.0 million adults have benefited from adult literacy and continuing education programs organized in the public and the voluntary sectors.

### **3.2 Numbers and resources for specific beneficiary or participating groups**

It has already been stated that NGOs insist on 70 percent female participation in their education programs, for adults or others. If CAMPE Databank 1996 is any guide the achievement rate may even be higher for women. DNFE insistence on 50 percent female participation has given it a success rate of 57 percent (DNFE MIS). The participating groups have come only along the line of gender division. Thus resource mobilization and utilization proved comparatively easy.

### **3.3 Measures taken (how has it been possible) to increase participation;**

In the public sector DNFE (as did the DPE for formal primary education) mounted a multi-faceted social/community mobilization campaign to inform and attract the illiterate persons to join the program and others to come forward and support the basic literacy program for adults. The widely used approaches included the following:

- (a) General approach: Use of loud speakers, posters, banners, etc.
- (b) Special approach: Bi-cycle and Torch processions
- (c) Direct contact Approach: Door-to-door contact, group discussions, seminars, etc
- (d) Cultural Approach: Wayside drama, folk song soirees, jatra (local opera/melodrama)
- (e) Participatory approach: Periodic meetings between learners, teachers, and opinion leaders of the community, and
- (f) Print and electronic media approach: Publicity campaign by using newspapers, leaflets and broadcasting/telecasting (Radio, TV) and narrow casting (audio and video cassettes).

Besides, DNFE assisted NGOs and local administration in organizing literacy fairs and competitions in observance of International Literacy Day, Adult Education Week, and other national days that are directed towards creating awareness. DNFE also facilitates, as stated earlier, participation of the community in baseline survey, selection of learning center sites and determination of class timing, recruiting teachers/facilitators from the local community, forming Center management Committee with local community representatives and involving the community in the management of PLCE centers. These measures seem to have energized the communities and enhanced participation.

## **Chapter 4**

### **8.0 Research studies in the Field of Adult Learning**

**4.1** Information on Research studies being undertaken in the Field of Adult Learning

A vigorous search on Research studies on Adult Learning has proved fruitless. The only researched study that has been found is one prepared by Dr. James Jennings (a British national), who worked in rural areas of Bangladesh in adult education programs in association with a leading NGO involved in adult literacy program along the lines of Paulo Freire tenets. He used it as a thesis to get his Ph. D from the University of London and got the University Press Limited, Bangladesh to publish it in the book form in 1990. He now works as chief of education section in UNICEF, Bangladesh.

The search covered the archive and library of DNFE, library of BNCU, BRAC, DAM and Institute of Education and Research (IER) of the University of Dhaka and discussion with the teachers there revealed no lead to any study on adult learning. The only materials available are the project appraisals or evaluation of adult literacy programs. The NFE sector review prepared for the Asian Development Bank by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada in association with two local consulting firms has only one entry in its four-page bibliography by Estrella M and Gaventa J (1998) titled: *Working Paper 70: Who counts Reality? Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: A Literature Review*. IER has opened a new unit on non-formal education, after discussion the concerned teachers felt inspired to take up some study on adult learning. A World Bank staff member undertook a *Survey of Studies Relating to NFE/Literacy Quality, Efficiency and Impact* (draft) in 1999 but did not come up with much. The Foundation for Research on Educational Planning and Development (FREPD) conducted a *Study on Development of Adult Education and Rural Development in Bangladesh* for ASPBAE in 1985, much of its contents are also covered in Jennings study.

A research study on the current adult learning scenario would be certainly of interest and urgently needed to fill the vacuum and promote quality of adult learning.

#### **4.3 Key questions addressed and how research is informing policies and practice**

In absence of substantive research adult literacy projects have been drafted on the basis of documentation that emanated from international conferences on education, consultants fielded by development partners and counterpart local consultants, like TLM and PLCEHD projects. INFEP was drafted with the help of local expertise drawing on materials that came out of Jomtien conference. As has already been stated policy is guided by the commitment of the government of the day and practice by the perception of the managers since findings of evaluation reports are not fed into the project operation (Ahmed and Lohani, 2001 and others).

## **Chapter 5**

### **9.0 Adult Educators/Facilitators' Status and Training**

- **Adult Educators/Facilitators' Status**

The teachers or facilitators of non-formal education and adult literacy, continuing education program in the public sector are recruited under different development projects, with definite life span, generally for five years or less unless extended for special reasons. All posts, teachers, supervisors or managers created under the post become extinct as soon as the project comes to its end or completed. The incumbents do no longer remain on the payroll of the employing agency. Facilitators and teachers are, as a matter of rule/practice, recruited from the local community and not treated as full-time employee since they work only for three to four hours a day; they are paid only a small lump sum amount (about \$8.77 a month) as compensation. Thus their posts do not carry a defined status or guarantee a longer-term appointment. The arrangement is same in the NGO sector, which pays the same amount of compensation, and in fact has more firing-power.

- **Adult Educators/Facilitators' Training**

DNFE provides foundation, refresher and other subject-based or special training to teachers, supervisors, master trainers, core trainers and monitoring associates. This

training is conducted under the CBA program. It follows a cascading system of training where the Core trainers train the master trainers, who in turn train the supervisors who again train the teachers. In the urban areas the supervisors and teachers are trained together by the master trainers. The training uses the Primary (Teachers') Training Institutes (PTI) of the Directorate of Primary Education and training infrastructure of some NGOs.

Under the TLM program training used to be organized by the district administrations. The program started simultaneously throughout the district, only in rare cases it went into phases. Thus the program commenced and ended simultaneously, thus relieving the teachers and others at the same time. Continuity of centers was intended but often did not last beyond the first month after completion of program (Ahmed, K S, 1996).

DNFE NFE projet-1 had a provision for establishing a National Academy for Non-Formal Education (NANFE) along the lines of National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE). The other provision of the project (supported by ADB), construction of NANFE complex, complete with hostels went ahead and is now lying half complete, as the project has been completed. Under PLCEHD-2 project (also supported by ADB) two more floors are being added to the existing two floors of the DNFE building, which has a plan for 10 floors, while NPA II has proposed completion and starting operation of NANFE.

NGOs follow the same foundation and refresher training approach; in fact they started the process. Since they also recruit the teachers from the local community and the job theoretically comes to an end with the completion of the course in the center there is no certainty of their continuing on the job. As a matter of compassion they are redeployed and continue on the job if the center continues or another center is established within a reasonable distance.

**Categories of adult educators and facilitators:** Basically, there are three categories of categories of adult educators and facilitators: the trainers, supervisors and teachers/ facilitators. As indicated above there is no given or fixed number of

any of these categories of personnel associated with adult literacy/learning. It depends on the size of project and number of centers in operation at any given point of time. The supervisor: teacher ratio is 1: 15. Thus at the time of writing this report and with the closing down of the TLM project the number of teachers and supervisors in both public and NGO programs of adult literacy and continuing education and other related matters were as below:

- **Statistics on different Categories of adult educators and facilitators (number, salaries, duration and places of training;**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Teachers</b>
DNFE	2,227	33,400
NGOs	1,860	27,900

**Duration and Places of training:**

Foundation training: 10-12 days at selected places  
 Refresher training: 1 day every month at agency level  
 Subject-based training: 3-5 days, once a year (orientation to the Learning Materials for the next level), selected places

**Salaries/Remuneration:**

Supervisors: \$ 21.05 per month  
 Teachers: \$ 08.77 per month

- **Specific activities and programmes** aimed at improving conditions of adult educators

The foundation, refreshers and subject-based training are all intended to build the capacity of adult educators, supervisors and teachers, to improve their performance. It gives them a better chance to continue in service, as new centers are opened or old ones repeated. It also widens their employment horizon since the employer and employees do not consider the remuneration given as the only source of living or a long-term job.

NGOs, which implement CBA approach projects of DNFE and those with stand-alone programs, take a more compassionate view and help the good performing teachers to continue on the job, regardless of the change in locales and centers, as long as possible. The NGOs engage in motivation work not only to attract learners to the centers but also the teachers and supervisors to do a better job and continue on the job while gaining experience. Some large NGOs with quality training programs face high turnover of teachers and other staff members as they get better opportunity elsewhere.

**Training policies:** improving quality of training through the use of new methods; professionalization and networking of adult educators.

The training policies in the public and NGO sectors are guided by the objective of providing quality education to participants of literacy classes or continuing education. Training methodologies are regularly reviewed. Large NGOs like BRAC, DAM, Proshika, VERC (Village Education Resource Center) upgrade their training materials at regular intervals since they not only train their own personnel but also that of other NGOs, and government organizations, among others. Giving a professional touch to the teachers' (and supervisors') handling of teaching and training is among the objectives of training activities.

The cascading system of DNFE training is being somewhat modified under the PLCEHD projects in that the implementing NGOs now organize the training with DNFE support.

## **Chapter 6**

### **10.0 Empowering Adult Learners**

- Rights of learners, learner-centered curriculum, development of context and culturally relevant content, and evaluation of learning outcomes and impact on socio-economic development

All motivational activities to attract learners to adult literacy programs indicate the recognition of the rights of learners to education and literacy skills. As already indicated the same curriculum and learning materials are used for persons in a wide

range of age grouping from 11-45 years in the public program. It has been recognized that Chetona primers need updating and upgrading as well as separating for different age groups such as 11-14, 15-25 and 26-45 years. The upgrading would also need to take into account the fast changing context and cultural scenario due to the impact of satellite television and other advanced communication channels. Evaluations carried of the TLM and CBA projects indicate that the adult literacy program participants, particularly women achieved remarkable progress in social and economic terms, as well as care and education of children (Ahmed and Lohani, 2001 and Ahmed, K S, 1996 and 2002)

- **Are there any (Do you have) national assessment systems to measure adult learning outcomes (literacy, numeracy, life skills, etc)**

There is no formally instituted measuring system yet. Assessment of competency gained is made at the individual center level and not comparable between outcomes of different centers, let alone nationally or at regional levels. This is the moot point where doubts have been expressed about the quality of literacy skills imparted and their sustainability (Ahmed and Lohani, 2001).

- If positive (yes) describe processes and activities in this field: Does not apply.
- What quality indicators have been developed and what are the outcomes obtained?

A draft set of quality indicators has been developed but still being reviewed and awaiting finalization.

## **Chapter 7**

### **7.0 Examples of Best Practice and Innovations:**

- Examples of real cases, good practice and innovative approaches in relation to the ten (10) CONFINTEA V themes

The best practice cases are still limited and would be difficult to find one for each of the themes. One case is the Study Centers and Reading Circles, which promote

literacy, post literacy and continuing education. Besides, they also serve as common forum for community people to meet and thus promote community cohesion.

Another example is BRAC'S reading Center-based life skills training for 15-19 year old young persons. Life skills training is also combined with vocational and occupational skills, which allow the participants to engage in income earning activities immediately on completion of the courses.

REFLECT approach is another example where the participants themselves identify what they want to learn through engaging in PRA exercises.

Insistence on 50-70 percent participation of women in adult literacy programs establishes the right of women to have access to learning as well as freedom of movement and participation in family and community affairs. It opens the way for them to engage in economic activities in and outside the home and gain economic and social status. It also helps the men to recognize these rights and extend cooperation in the process.

## **Chapter 8**

### **8.0 Future Actions Planned and Concrete Targets for 2009**

- **Future actions planned and concrete targets for 2009**

As already indicated earlier the draft EFA: NPA II incorporates the Adult Learning Agenda for the Future. Draft NPA II proposes a comprehensive adult learning program in place of the traditional adult literacy or basic literacy program. "The program will cover 16.0 million (50 percent of the remaining illiterate adults) 15-45 year-old persons in 12 years. The young adults of 15-24 years will follow both basic education and skills training program while the adults of 25-45 will follow mainly functional literacy courses while a select number (up to 25%, belonging to 25-35 age group) will also follow skills training or occupational skills upgrading courses. The program will run for 15 months for the 15-24 group and 1-year for the 25-45 groups.

The first quarter will provide basic literacy, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters will run on an integrated approach, holding literacy classes for two days and vocational skills courses for four days every week; this approach will enable tuning literacy program to needs and modules of skills training and vice versa and thereby sustaining the interest of learners in both courses. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter will be geared to promoting self-learning skills; this period will also be used for linkage activities enabling the learners to have access to wage jobs or micro-finance for self-employment; the fifth 3-month period will initiate the learners into advanced continuing education and skills training programs; and those attending only literacy course will attend CECs for nine months (3+6) and then transfer to (varied) CE program” (MOPME, 2003).

The table 8.1 below shows the number of adult illiterates targeted for comprehensive adult literacy/learning program by 2005, 2010 and 2015. The last row of the table also shows the 25-35 age group adults proposed for vocational skills training:

**Table 8.1:** Coverage and projection of Adult Literacy program by Benchmark and NPA II phases (in 000s)

Target groups (residue illiterate adults)	Benchmark 2000	Distribution of target groups by phases (in 000s)		
		2005	2010	2015
Young adults: 15-24 (50% of the illiterate group)	5197	1559	2339	1299
Adults: 25-45 (50% of the illiterate group)	10803	3241	4862	2701
<b>Total</b>	16000	4800	7200	4000
25% of 25-45 age group target	2700	810	1215	675

**Source:** Draft NPA II (2003-2015)

The table 8.1.1 below provides the goals of adult learning by 2005, 2010 and 2015 by age group and gender.

**Table 8.1.1:** NPA II EFA Goals for Adult Learning by Plan phases, gender and age group

Item	Gender	Benchmark	Achievement Goals by NPA II Phases (In percent)		
		2000	2005	2010	2015

Item	Gender	Benchmark	Achievement Goals by NPA II Phases (In percent)		
		2000	2005	2010	2015
Adult Literacy Rate (15+)	M	68	76	81	90
	F	56	64	75	90
	<b>Total</b>	62	70	78	90
Adult Education (15-24)	M	73	79	87	95
	F	58	66	79	95
	<b>Total</b>	66	73	82	95

Source: Draft NPA II (2003-2015)

- **In 2009 the 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Adult Learning is to be held; indicate to what extent the adult learning targets coincide with EFA targets of the country**

Since the two PLCE projects starting in 2003 will have covered only 3.6 million neo-literates by 2008 new PLCE projects will be needed to cover the remaining 11.62 million neo-literates from July 2008 through one or more projects. Draft NPA II proposes to cover 50% of the remaining neo-literates, 3.424 million in Phase 2 and 3 (between 2008 and 2012) and 2.386 million respectively in part of phase 3 (2012 – 2015). Thus the comprehensive adult learning and PLCE programs together will serve a total of 11.92 million adults by 2009 or by the time of the CONFINTEA VI.

- **How Millennium Development Goals and other international targets are aimed at and met through adult learning.**

Clauses 19 and 20 of the MDG are of special interest in the context of adult learning. Reducing poverty by half is the major goal of the I-PRSP, which will be finalized by December 2003. Its major thrust is on reducing poverty by half by 2015. I-PRSP target for adult literacy is to raise it to 88 percent by 2015. The draft NPA II has raised it a notch to 90 percent by the same date. The investments in adult literacy and PLCE projects are an indication of that resolve of the country.

Knowledgeable adults will make a jor contribution to enrollment and completion of primary schooling by all children. Experience and studies made of the adult literacy programs indicate that adults who have participated in adult literacy program are more proactive and keen to see their children/wards go to school and complete primary education. It also helps in health education, nutrition,

hygiene, consciousness about the use of water and sanitation. It certainly promotes gender equality and empowerment of women as has already been indicated above. A minimum of 50 percent participation of girls and women in adult literacy programs is another indication of the country to achieve the MDG in this respect. A separate program proposed for young adults (aged 15-24 years) in the draft NPA II is another indication of an effort to fulfill the MDG in clause 20. NGOs like BRAC and CMES (Center for Mass Education in Science) have opened programs for young persons of age groups 15-19 and 12-19 respectively, with at least 70 percent girls.

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#### The Ten CONFINTEA V Themes

1. Adult learning, Democracy, Peace and Critical Citizenship
2. Improving Conditions and Quality of Adult Learning
3. Literacy and Basic Education
4. Promoting the Empowerment of Women
5. Adult Learning and the Changing World of Work
6. Adult Learning, environment, Health and Population
7. Adult Learning, Media and Culture and ICTs
8. Adult Learning and Groups with Special Needs: Adult Learning for Ageing populations, Migrants, Prisoners, Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous Communities and Minorities
9. Economics of Adult Learning: Adult learning seen as an Investment
10. Enhancing International Co-operation, Solidarity and Networking for and through Adult Learning.

## CONFINTEA V MTR 2003

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