Review on Adult Education in Myanmar

Introduction

Myanmar with an area of 676,553 square kilometres is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia in terms of land area. The country has common borders with Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand. Myanmar is a Union of fourteen administrative areas – *seven States* and *seven Divisions*. The largest ethnic group is *Bamar* and the seven major ethnic groups are *Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine* and *Shan*. There are also other smaller ethnic groupings.

The population of the Union of Myanmar for 2003 was estimated at 52 million. Only 26.6 percent of the total population lives in urban areas. Of the total population, the male population was 49.6 percent and the female population was 50.4 percent. It was estimated that 64.1 percent of the populations is engaged in the agricultural sectors.

Agriculture is still the main sector of the economy. However it is a country that is rich in natural resources. Since 1988, a more liberalized economic policy based on a market-oriented system has replaced a centrally planned economy. With the changes in the economic system and the emergence of economic enterprises, the need for a better-trained workforce is evident and more job opportunities for better-educated and better-trained persons have emerged.

Education has always been given high priority in Myanmar society since ancient times with the monasteries acting as the main centres of education. Because of its strong tradition of monastic education, the literacy rate has been high all along the history of Myanmar. The literacy rate in the country dropped drastically as education was given scant attention during the British colonial period. However, sustained efforts after Independence in 1948 have steadily increased the literate population and today the literacy rate has climbed to 91.8 percent in 2002.

The Ministry of Education is functionally the main sponsor of education and training; especially in the areas of basic and higher education.
The Ministry is focusing on the following educational programmes:

- development of an education system in consonant with the political, economic and social situation of the country
- increasing enrolment and retention rates at all levels of basic education
- expansion of non-formal education

In order to provide greater access and ensure equity, the education sector has undertaken far-reaching changes. In recognition of the crucial role education plays in Myanmar's effort to attain sustainable development and in preparing Myanmar society to be able to face the challenges of the Knowledge Age as a learning society, the government has laid special emphasis on the education sector and implemented the Special Four-Year Plan for Education in Fiscal Year 2000-2001. This was followed by the implementation of the 30-Year Long Term Education Development Plan in Fiscal Year 2001-2002 with which the Four-Year Plan has been integrated. The Ministry of Education is undertaking the long-term education development plan with the bold vision: To create an education system that will generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age. In keeping with this vision of education, the theory and practice of education have undergone discernible change. The whole education system has become more flexible, open and diversified, with learners being given more chance and more choice.

From the perspective of lifelong learning, learning in Myanmar can take place through informal education, formal education and non-formal education contexts. Education is provided to different age groups by different modes. Thus, adults are being offered lifelong education too.

In Myanmar, an adult is a fully grown up person who is over the age of 16. So in the context of lifelong education in Myanmar, adult education refers to all education opportunities for adults provided as continuing education through (1) non-formal education programs undertaken by the Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB), other NGOs and UN agencies and (2) formal educational institutions.

**Lifelong education**

The principle of lifelong education is to provide each individual with the means for educating himself through out his entire lifetime.

**Continuing education**

Continuing education includes all of the opportunities all people want or need outside of the basic literacy education and primary education.
Chapter 1

Building up Structures and Institutional Frameworks:
Policies, Legal Provision, Delivery System and Innovations

Vision and Mission

Our vision: 'To create an education system that will generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age'

Our motto: 'To Build a Modern Developed Country Through Education'

Our modes: Formal Education (FE), Non-formal Education (NFE), and Informal Education (IFE)

1.1 National Policies

Policies for Adult Education

- Establishing open and diversified education for all by three delivery modes of education
- Providing opportunities towards access to quality education for all citizen including adult

Policies for NFE, the Essential Mode of Education for Adult Learners

- Adult education will be provided
- Continuing education as one of the components of NFE will be a vital role in the provision adult education
- Adult education can be provided regardless of place and time
- Schools will be transformed into education and cultural centres which serve the community as a whole
- Adult education as non-institutionalized education will be encouraged
- Retraining and adult education in their various forms have become indispensable
- Adult education concept must be adapted to realities and needs of the adult
- Adequate supply of learning materials and capacity building trainings are essential for adolescents and adults

Towards a Learning Society

One of the visions of the Long-Term 30 Year Education Development Plan is the endeavour to transform Myanmar society into a learning society. This process will be undertaken using the strategy of transforming the working force into a learning force as a first step and then converting the whole society into a dynamic learning society.

Education plays a vital role in the realization of sustainable human resource development programmes of any nation. In this age of fast-paced technological change, the utilization of Information and Communication Technology is a prerequisite for development in all fields, particularly education. With the introduction of the electronic data broadcasting system and the establishment of the VSAT network in the country, Myanmar education is now in the mainstream of e-
Education and the Ministry of Education is well-prepared for the task to transform Myanmar society into a learning society and make education accessible to any region at any time.

1.2 Legal Provision, Delivery System and Innovation

EFA Programmes in Myanmar

After Jomtien Declaration of EFA in 1990, the EFA Central Co-ordinating Committee, headed by the Chairman of Myanmar Naing-Ngan Education Committee was formed to give guidelines for EFA programmes. Under this main committee, EFA Executive Committee, chaired by the Minister for Education was formed. Under this committee, there are also six sub-committees to implement EFA programmes. They are:

1. Planning and Statistics Committee,
2. Formal Education Committee,
3. Non-Formal Education Committee,
4. State and Divisions Implementation Committees,
5. Fund Raising Committee, and
6. Information Committee.

The Departments of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Education Planning and Training (DEPT) are responsible for conducting formal education programmes where as the Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB) is responsible for NFE programmes.
Myanmar initiated EFA activities by conducting conferences, workshops, and consultations. The following initial projects were launched to ready for the full-fledged implementation of EFA Programmes in Myanmar.

- Development of Non-formal Functional Literacy System in Myanmar (MERB/UNICEF)
- Expansion of skills-based Programmes for Women and Girls (MERB/UNESCO/UNDP)
Continuous Assessment and Progression System, CAPS, (DEPT/ DBE/ UNICEF)
All Children in School, (ACIS) (DEPT/ DBE/ UNICEF), Improving Access to Primary Education (DEPT/ DBE/ UNDP)
Improving Quality of Education in Primary Education (DEPT/DBE/UNDP)
After the preliminary period of 1990-95, EFA programmes has been implemented extensively under an annual plan.

Non-formal Education

Following the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All, Myanmar set its own National Programme of Action for EFA. The EFA Central Coordinating Committee has been established and the executive arm of the EFA Central Coordinating Committee is the EFA Executive Committee whose task is to supervise and monitor EFA projects.

In line with the adopted strategy of EFA, the role and commitment of EFA committee at divisional, district and township level becomes crucial. Literacy programme can be sustainable with strong will and participation of the local administrative body and the community.

Process of NFE Programme

Basic Literacy Programme

The Township and Village Non-Formal Education (NFE) Committees have launched literacy learning circles. The strong commitment of the government with the concerted effort of the administrative personnel and communities made the literacy rate increased to 91.8% in AY 2002. The activities were carried out by local voluntary teachers using basic literacy materials produced by MERB – the focal center for NFE in Myanmar. By 2002, the Basic Literacy Program (BLP) covers all the townships in Kayin State, Mon State, Rakhine State, Mandalay Division, Ayeyarwady Division, Magwe Division, Bago Division (East and West), Tanintharyi Division, and Sagaing Division. In addition, special 3-R programs have been organized in border areas. A number of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) have also been established.
Table (1-1) : Basic Literacy Programmes Organized by MERB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Implementing Township</th>
<th>Learning Circle</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Learners who become literates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6786</td>
<td>13003</td>
<td>46266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6931</td>
<td>17915</td>
<td>35007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6379</td>
<td>14128</td>
<td>32475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1355</td>
<td>1313</td>
<td>6174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8098</td>
<td>20332</td>
<td>82373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mopping)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5556</td>
<td>10641</td>
<td>52767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td>10445</td>
<td>73505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mopping)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>11097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T = Total   F = Female

In March 2000, the Myanmar Literacy Resource Center (MLRC) was established at the Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB) with a contribution from the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects for the building and from ACCU (Asia-Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO). The Government also contributed towards the MLRC project. MLRC is part of the network of sixteen Literacy Resource Centers in Asia and the Pacific. One of the functions of MLRC is the training of NFE personnel at various levels by conducting training workshops.

Literacy promotion programs in Myanmar have always been organized on the campaign basis. Previously, university students and teachers took part in summers in townships to teach 3Rs to illiterates with innovative methods of learning Myanmar alphabets. The program was evidently successful as it was rewarded with UNESCO prizes in 1971 and 1983. During the 1990s, these campaigns were expanded with the assistance of the State/Division, Townships, and Myanmar Mother and Child Welfare Association, Union Solidity and Development Association, and schoolteachers. MERB has planned to complete this program of BLP in remaining States/Divisions by 2005.

Continuing Education Through CLC
The present NFE has adopted CE as a broad concept of education which provides any kind of further learning opportunities after formal education for any citizen of the country. Currently NFE Committee with the cooperation and coordination with other agencies, associations and NGOs, tries to create and provide continuing education programmes especially post-literacy activities for the newly literates. Some CE programmes have been initiated through community learning centers.
Types of CE programmes,
- Post Literacy Programmes (PLP)
- Income-generating Programmes (IGP)
- Quality of Life Improvement Programme (QLIP)
- Equivalency Programme (EP)

Community Learning Centre (CLC)
The definition of a Community Learning Centre (CLC) is adopted from APPEAL Training Materials for Continuing Education Personnel as follows:

"Community Learning Centre (CLC) is local educational institution outside the formal education system, for villagers or urban areas, usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of people's quality of life".

"CLC" – of the community
by the community and
for the community

Every CLC is managed by a Community Learning Centre Management Committee (CLC, MC) consisting of community leaders, communities interested and committed to community development. Community volunteers are also elected from community by the community to carry out CLC activities. CLC management committee and volunteers are also trained by resource persons from MERB and UNDP/UNESCO project in order to enable to carry out their development activities.

Objectives of CLC
The more specific objectives related to CLC are:
- To provide non-formal education, continuing education and skill training programme responding to needs identified by the community.
- To provide access to information in field of interest to community.
- To work as a center for human resource development for all community
- To work as a coordinating agency between the communities and development institutions.
- To strengthen capacities of communities to carry out education programmes regarding to the improvement of the quality of their life and contributing to poverty alleviation.

Main functions and programmes implemented by CLCs
Implementation of the activities depends upon the level of community enthusiasm and participation. While project encourages CLCs to give special attention to the CLC, MC to identify its priorities. Four Main Functions which can be carried out by the CLCs are as follows:
**Education and Training**
- Basic Literacy Classes for illiterates
- Post Literacy Programme for neo-literates
- Non-formal primary education for 10-14 out-of-school youth and drop out from school
- Skill training helping community members to improve their income with particular attention to inclusion of the poorest

**Community information**
- Resource centres serving the needs of the community, including mobile libraries and village libraries
- IEC material, puppet show and video show for community awareness and mobilization

**Community development through locally relevant activities**
- Income generating activities
- Cultural activities and events
- Recreation activities and sport

**Coordination and networking**
- Establishing linkage with other communities, Government Department, UN Organization, NGOs and INGOs
- Integrating them better into the traditional village structure and plans

**CLC Activities in Myanmar**

The concept of Community Learning Centre (CLC) was first introduced in Myanmar in 1994. CLCs were established in seven townships under UNDP HDI project (Phase-1) in collaboration with MERB which is focal institution for Non-formal education in Myanmar. Now there are 71 CLCs in eleven townships under HDI Project (Phase-3).

The NFE Committee with MERB as a focal institution launched five CLCs in 1995 in Nyaung Don Township, Ayeyarwaddy Division.

There are also some CLCs organized by Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) and other NGOs and INGOs established a total number of 480 CLCs in the whole country as follows –
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>States / Divisions</th>
<th>Number of CLCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mandalay Division</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sagaing Division</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Magway Division</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bago (East) Division</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bago (West) Division</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ayeyarwaddy Division</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yangon Division</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>11 Township (Delta Dry and Shan Zone)</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>480</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Myanmar Literacy Resource Centre (MLRC)

After Jomtien declaration of EFA, under the guidance of the Myanmar Naing Ngan Education Committee, the Ministry of Education assigned Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB) as the focal institution for NFE. Since then, MERB has been working in close cooperation with Asia Pacific Cultural Centre of UNESCO (ACCU) and UNESCO-PROAP. As a result of concerted efforts made by MERB and ACCU, Myanmar Literacy Resource Centre (MLRC) was established in MERB compound in March 2000 with financial assistance of "Japanese Grant Assistance for Grass Roots Project" of the Embassy of Japan. MLRC with a newly established printing press is now served as the technical centre for NFE-EFA activities in Myanmar.

**Three main functions**

1. Material development (booklet, video)
2. Capacity building workshop (National/ Township/ Village level)
3. Networking: mainly with ACCU, UNESCO-PROAP (now Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education), LRC in Asia Pacific, Local CLCs, UNHCR, UNDCP, UNDP, other GOs and NGOs.
Some activities of MLRC: The following activities are implemented by MLRC.

- Dissemination of CE ideas through mass media
- Celebrating International Literacy Day with various activities
- Expansion of new CLCs
- Providing instructor course for literacy and NFPE
- Providing Capacity Building Workshop for fresh CLC by a mobile training team
- Implementing literacy and CE programmes
- Translation and distribution of Tokyo Statement, Handbooks on NFE and various types of learning material
- Setting up LAN system in MLRC and MERB
- Conducting National Training Workshops
- Development of NFE Material Database and NFE-GIS
- Networking with various related GOs and NGOs

1.3 Adult Education for Special Border Areas

Myanmar is a country where various ethnic groups live together. Equity and access to education for all these groups is provided in all parts of the country. However in border areas there live some ethnic groups who have more learning needs than those who live in other areas. Various training and education programmes for people of different age groups in border areas are offered by different ministries and departments. 3Rs programmes for adult of border areas are provided especially for over school age population. These 3Rs classes are opened in summer as short courses.

The first 3Rs classes in four regions border areas started in 1996 with 1124 learners and 117 facilitators. From 2000 to 2002, 3Rs classes were held in each summer for about 50 days. As seen in the table, numbers of regions, townships and literates have been increased in 3Rs programme for border areas in 2002.
Table (1-3): 3Rs Programme for Border Areas in 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Learning Centre</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Literate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kachin special region (1)</td>
<td>Wine Maw</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kachin special region (2)</td>
<td>Ba Maw</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mansi</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moe Mouk</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kachin north-east region</td>
<td>Ku Khine</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lashio</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ka-haw valley region</td>
<td>Tama</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Taninthary region</td>
<td>Ye Phyu</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kyaing Tong(east) region</td>
<td>Tachileik(east)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maing Suk</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rakhine region</td>
<td>Buthitaung</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yathetaung</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>3192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>385</strong></td>
<td><strong>599</strong></td>
<td><strong>9772</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a follow-up programme of 1996, 3Rs special programme for border areas, an initiative was made for an ethnic group called 'Wa'. In order to enhance their learning of the Myanmar language by the bi-lingual approach, a booklet and audiotape on Wa-Myanmar spoken were developed by MERB with the cooperation of local experts.

Salient Points in Formal Education

- Open and diversified education system (more chance and more choice to promote lifelong and continuing education and produce highly qualified human resource needed by the nation and the community)
- Shift from rigidity to flexibility to reduce constraints to provide more educational opportunities and choices
- Improvement of access to and quality of FE together with NFE mode as required
- Multidisciplinary approach at the higher education level
- Curriculum to be relevant and modern based on the local resources and needs, meeting the challenges of the Knowledge Age
- Expansion of tertiary education by distance education mode utilizing e-education
- Human resource development centres providing job-related education programmes
- Financial support for tertiary education mainly by government and for primary and secondary education by government and community participation
- Improving access to technology-enabling distant modalities, open learning and other flexible systems to facilitate lifelong education opportunities
- Increasing cooperation between Myanmar higher education institutions and Southeast Asian education organizations and Southeast Asian and international universities, eg. AUN, SEAMEO
- Pre-school education to prepare young children to be ready for school
- Observing School Enrolment Day for getting all school going age children in schools
- Innovation post-primary school programme to enable those who have completed their primary school to continue their secondary school education in the same school with less cost
- Using credit system in assessment of higher education institutions and establishing credit bank for accumulation of credit

**The Long-Term 30-Year Education Development Plan for the Higher Education Sector**

The Long-Term 30-Year Education Development Plan for the higher education sector upholds the following visions.

(a) **Human Resource Development Section (4)**
   1. To create human resource capable of constructing a peaceful and modern state
   2. To construct Myanmar education with all nationals upholding the belief that a high level of education, knowledge and social skills are sources that guarantee a sound future
   3. For Myanmar education system to be the main resource of the whole of Myanmar society and for Myanmar education system to utilize Myanmar society as its resource
   4. To nurture and increase the highly qualified human resource needed by the nation and the human resource needed regionally

(b) **Utilization of Technology Section (1)**
   5. To create an academic environment that is endowed with dynamic knowledge and utilizing the technology that will emerge according to the times

(c) **Research Section (1)**
   6. To conduct international standard research not only in the education sector but also in other sectors needed in the construction of a peaceful and modern state

(d) **Life Long Learning Society Section (3)**
   7. To realize the transformation of the working force into a learning force
   8. To transform Myanmar society into a knowledge dominated society
   9. To strive for Myanmar society to become a learning society

(e) **Promotion of Quality of Education Section (2)**
   10. To strive for the promotion of education and make arrangements for the utilization of private investment in parallel with the growth in GDP
   11. For Myanmar education to attain international standard
(f) Preservation of National Identity and National Values Section (1)

(12) However much globalization spreads, to counter the degeneration and disappearance of devotion to the union, national well-being, national values and identity

Distance Education in Formal Education Sector

In Myanmar distance education was started in 1970-71 as a correspondence course for in-service teachers at the Institute of Education. Correspondence courses with radio lessons for teachers of various levels are still provided at different teacher education institutions.

Under the University of Yangon, distance education was started as University Correspondence Courses in 1975-76. In 1992, the University of Distance Education (UDE) was established as a separate institution. As enrollment was increasing, two Universities existed in 1998 for more effective teaching and management. These two universities are Yangon UDE (for lower Myanmar) and Mandalay UDE (for upper Myanmar).

The aims of UDE are as follows –

- To provide learning opportunities of higher education to individual without leaving their homes or work places
- To extend higher education opportunities to the whole country including the border areas
- To confer degrees, equivalent to those conferred by the conventional higher institutions
- To enable the section of a labour force to improve their knowledge and skills

The courses offered at the UDE are 3 or 4 year courses in arts subjects, science subjects, economics and law. Some multidisciplinary subjects such as Asean Studies, Myanmar Studies and Environmental Studies have been recently introduced.

The following delivery systems are used in the UDEs.

- Self learning printed modules with the aids of study guides
- Radio lessons, cassette tapes and television programmes
- Weekly practical classes (for science subjects) and contact sessions at the distance education sub-centres
- Lessons through e-education system at the learning centres
- Intensive courses at various distance education sub-centres of higher education before semester end examination.

The Ministry of Education had launched 544 e-Education Learning Centres that utilize data broadcasting system to deliver education materials anytime, anywhere. The electronic data broadcasting system was launched on January 1, 2001. This facilitates learning regardless of place or time and provide every citizen with the opportunities for lifelong and on-going learning and skill acquisition while promoting the development of a learning society. The Centres offer a wide range of training programmes and courses that are flexible and self-placed with expert-led instruction conducted in an interactive environment.

Qualitative and Quantitative Developments in Higher Education

With the implementation of education promotion plans, the higher education institutions under the Ministry of Education have undertaken vast reforms in all areas, be it
curricula, facilities, administration, faculty or research. To promote equitable educational development and access among the various regions in Myanmar, the number of higher education institutions increased from 32 in 1988 to 154 in 2003. Today every state and division in Myanmar has a minimum of 3 tertiary level institutions to cater to the higher education needs of the region.

In striving for qualitative transformation of higher education breadth of learning is being substituted with depth and breadth of learning. Disciplines such as micro technology that are more attuned to the needs of the times have been introduced. Cross disciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches are being encouraged to be adopted in higher education institutions and multidisciplinary courses such as Myanmar Studies, Biotechnology, Environmental Studies, English for Occupational Purposes, Behavioural Studies, Public Policy, and Engineering Chemistry have been introduced at both undergraduate and postgraduate level to give students more choices and opportunities to equip themselves with the skills and knowledge needed for a more competitive environment. To overcome the rigidity of traditional university education and to contribute to the establishment of a learning society, part time morning and evening courses such as the Master's level course in Business Administration and Public Administration are being offered to suit the convenience of knowledge seekers. Another development strategy being adopted by higher education institutions is increasing their participation in the development of the local communities in order to contribute to regional human resource development. It is now required for every higher education institution to provide courses that would cater to local needs based on local resources.

Teaching methodologies such as problem based learning that encourage the development of creativity, critical thinking, analytical and research skills are being promoted. The assessment system has also been reviewed and replaced with the credit system to be in line with international practices and to give students the opportunity to accumulate credits to facilitate entry and reentry to higher education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three main functions of University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Teaching and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Community development by economic growth and social progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To produce outstanding specialists in the country, Yangon University introduced doctorate courses in the 1994-95 AY, Mandalay University and Yangon Institute of Economics in 1998-99 AY and Yangon Institute of Education in 2001-2002 AY and 860 students are now enrolled as doctorate candidates at these four universities. Distinguished professors from reputable foreign universities are invited to act as external examiners or referees to the doctorate candidates to promote quality assurance.
Research of international standard not only relevant to the education sector but also to other sectors needed in the construction of a peaceful and modern state is being expanded. Collaborative research with foreign institutions is also being encouraged and large numbers of foreign scholars visit Myanmar higher education institutions on joint research projects.

The One Campus Multi-System Strategy

As a response to the demands of a modernizing economy for a more skilled human resource, higher education institutions have initiated the human resource development programme. This programme represents a more flexible and varied form of post school education and job oriented training, increases access to higher education and provides greater choice. The National Centre for Human Resource Development (NCHRD) based at the Department of Higher Education (Lower Myanmar) was established by the Ministry of Education in 1998 in order to spearhead this programme. The main aims of NCHRD are:

- To establish a parallel education system which will aid the formal system to nurture the required number of technicians and intellectuals needed by the country
- To prevent education wastage by enabling those who have not completed their higher education to do so at their own pace and during their free time
- To widen the scope of choices and to increase education, re-education, training, re-training and upskilling opportunities

Under the NCHRD are Centres for Human Resource Development (CHRDs) located at higher education institutions under the Ministry of Education. These centres offer a wide range of full time and part time certificate, and diploma courses in such diverse fields as business law, teaching, foreign language studies, computer science, computer engineering, multimedia arts, accounting studies, business management, environmental studies, gemology, and cosmetic technology. The number of courses total 131 in 2002-2003 AY. Since 2001 the centres have begun offering degree level courses not offered by the formal system. The income-generating HRD courses enable the institution concerned to provide welfare for its staff. This arrangement of holding HRD income-generating courses in parallel with regular courses has come to be known as the one campus-multi-system arrangement.

Table (1-4 ) : Number of HRD Trainees between 28/5/98 and 31/7/2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>No. of Trainees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>5346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Undergraduate Diploma</td>
<td>3289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>48995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>58598</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Role of the Private Sector in Education

Since the introduction of market oriented economy in the country, the private sector has increased its participation in education activities particularly in the spheres of ICT, language education, business education and tutoring services. Some of the private enterprises
have formed partnerships with the Human Resource Development Centres of higher education institutions to provide technological education. These are also instances of foreign institutions joining hands with local higher education institutions such as the TOPA 21st Language School of Japan which have forged partnership with the Centre for Human Resource Development of Yangon University of Foreign Language to conduct Japanese language courses. Most of the private institutions providing language education concentrate on the development of English language skills but there are also many that teach Chinese, Japanese, Korean, French, and German and other languages. Some of these language schools are managed and taught by native speakers. Most private institutions specializing in technological education focus on computer related courses such as word processing, graphic design, desktop publishing and programming. Private institutions related to business education teach such subjects as accounting, business management and marketing. There are also over 600 private tutoring schools located all over the country with over 28000 students.

**Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science: Disseminating Knowledge for the Age of Lifelong Learning**

The Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science was established on 16 August 1999 with 717 members and an Executive Committee of 24 members.

By means of cooperation via national and international networks, the Academy enhances the updating and dissemination of knowledge required for this Age of Learning.

The Academy has been established with the following five objectives.

- To help in the building of a peaceful, modern and developed nation by means of the expertise and the knowledge of the members of the Academy;
- To undertake research which will be beneficial to the nation as well as provide guidelines for research activities;
- To create new generations of academicians and technocrats who will benefit the nation;
- To establish a firm foundation for the pursuit of the arts and science which are deemed essential for the development of the nation; and
- To undertake programmes and measures for improving the educational aspirations, training and expertise of all those citizens who are actively involved in the development of their own nation.

The First Meeting of the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science was held on 30th April 2001, and the Second Meeting on 30th August 2002 at Diamond Jubilee Hall, Yangon.

The First Research Conference sponsored by the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science was held from 5-6 February 2001, and the Second Research Conference on 1 October 2002 at Diamond Jubilee Hall, Yangon.

The Academy also holds regular talks and seminars led by leading academicians in Myanmar and attended by faculty members of higher education institutions and interested persons.

**Resource Centres for 21st Century Learners and Researchers**

To further promote continuing and further education, the New Century Resource Centre (NCRC) and the Resource Centre for Ancient Myanmar Manuscripts (RCAMM) were opened in Yangon on 29 December 2000 and similar centres were opened in Mandalay on 10 April 2001 enabling researchers from both Upper and Lower Myanmar to conduct research.
conveniently. A New Century Resource Centre has also been established at Monywa University, Upper Myanmar. The establishment of the two centres at the same time signifies Myanmar’s balanced approach to ICT and the preservation of national identity.

**The New Century Resource Centre (NCRC)**

The New Century Resource Centres with e-education learning centres, e-education resource centres, computer training centres, language labs and shops selling electronic books and equipment are providing the general public with access to e-education facilities similar to the ones established at higher education institutions and provide them the opportunity to attend a broad range of ICT related courses such as software engineering, hardware engineering, network engineering, Postgraduate Diploma in Multimedia Arts, power windows 2000, computerized accounting, Diploma in IT.

The objectives of establishing the New Century Resource Centre are:

- To help in the building of a peaceful and developed nation by nurturing highly qualified human resource
- To implement regional human resource development programmes
- To create a lifelong learning society in Myanmar
- To provide advanced knowledge at the least expense in the form of publications, video and audio tapes, CDs for learners from primary level to researcher level
- To provide document delivery system by which learners can get personal copy on their own interest
- To give learners opportunities to get knowledge of modern technologies such as hardware, software and accessories
- To provide IT service and IT Consultancy Service
- To hold IT seminars and exhibition for the public

**Resource Centre for Ancient Myanmar Manuscripts (RCAMM)**

Located close to the New Century Resource Centre is the Resource Centre for Ancient Myanmar Manuscripts (RCAMM) that contain a fine collection of ancient Myanmar paper and palm leaf manuscripts as well as rubbings of Myanmar stone inscriptions.

The objectives of the Resource Centre for Ancient Myanmar Manuscripts are:
To collect journals, magazines, newspapers and other publications written in English and Myanmar as well as ancient manuscripts and stone inscriptions

To provide opportunities for researchers to study Myanmar culture and literature, and make them known to the world

The multimedia room in the centre is installed with a web page server of the centre, web page mirror server of the Universities’ Central Library and 10 workstations for researchers. From these workstations, researchers can browse the catalogues of rare books in English and Myanmar, magazines, journals, newspapers, digitized paintings and ancient manuscripts. The centre also provides services for the preservation of books and manuscripts.

Courses offered at the Resources Centre are Basic Library Science Courses and Basic Documentation and Management Course.