Co-operation among countries participating in the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) project supported by APPEAL was further strengthened at the CLC Review Meeting held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 6 to 10 November 2001. The participants met to share the experiences and outcomes of various CLC projects, including difficulties encountered, lessons learned and examples of good practice.

The overall objective of the meeting was to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of CLC activities as well as to encourage and promote the institutionalization of the CLC mechanism through the national EFA policy in each country.

There were 35 participants from the following 17 countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. Experts from UNICEF, ADB, ACCU, and NFU AJ as well as representatives from the Japanese and Norwegian embassies attended some sessions of the meeting.

In addition to sharing CLC experiences, there were field visits, thematic discussions and work on developing national action plans. During the meeting, participants made a number of important observations related to CLC projects:

- CLCs not only have an impact on literacy and post-literacy but their activities also have positive results in the areas of life skills, income generation, culture and recreation. Thus CLCs seem to make positive contributions toward improving the quality of life and building the confidence of community people.
- In some countries, CLC projects have affected government policy so that CLCs are included as part of the EFA strategies.
- Financial, material and human constraints are major problems for sustaining CLCs in the long run. While some countries report that CLC activities have been a heavy burden on community people, others report that CLCs do not enlist the genuine participation and ownership of community members.
- The lack of coordination among local development agencies has also prevented an effective implementation of activities.
- Sustainability and expansion do not depend only on continued financing but also on other factors such as human and material resource mobilization, political support, community ownership, networking, monitoring and accountability.
- The training of personnel is a key to sustaining CLCs while mobilizing political commitment and external support is one of the most important factors for expanding a small-scale project.

As a follow-up to this review meeting, action plans were elaborated for both concrete activities during 2002 and a long-term policy incorporating CLCs into an EFA effort for the entire country. The participants also discussed regional strategies for sharing experiences through meetings and study visits, information and communication technology, and training at regional and national levels. They also urged bilateral cooperation activities for promoting CLCs without waiting for support from external agencies.

During 2002, APPEAL plans to provide technical support to all CLC initiatives such as capacity building activities for personnel. APPEAL will also continue financial support to selected countries as well as initiate CLC projects in some new countries in the region.
The Asia-Pacific Regional Forum for Lifelong Learning was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, during 8-13 September 2001. It was organized jointly by UNESCO APPEAL and the Department of Non-Formal Education as a follow-up activity to the Dakar Framework for Action. The Forum took place in conjunction with the national celebrations of the International Literacy Day in Thailand and the annual meeting of the member institutions of the APPEAL Resource and Training Consortium (ARTC).

Around 130 participants attended the Forum. They included policy makers, planners, curriculum specialists, researchers and practitioners from governments, NGOs, universities, research institutions, community development organizations, international agencies and the business sector (one participant).

The matters discussed during the Forum could be organized under seven main themes:

1. Planning and programming for EFA and lifelong learning
2. Schooling for All
3. Community-based programmes and approaches for community empowerment
4. Strategies for improving the quality of non-formal education
5. Continuing education for development
6. Effective use of information and communications technologies (ICTs)
7. Regional networking to promote EFA and lifelong learning

Papers on the seven themes were presented in plenary sessions followed by questions and discussions. During concurrent sessions interested participants were provided an opportunity to discuss in greater detail and share experiences that were directly related to the plenary presentations.

Besides presentations and discussions in the Forum, the participants had a chance to observe and learn from first hand experience through visits to sites where relevant activities were taking place.

In order to undertake appropriate follow-up activities at the national and regional levels, groups of participants agreed upon future actions to meet the major challenges, problems and issues that had been identified during the course of discussion during the Forum. Group consultations were undertaken on the following topics and outcomes were reported in plenary.

- **Strengthening sub-regional mechanisms for networking to promote basic education and lifelong learning.** The representatives from the ten member institutions of the APPEAL Resource and Training Consortium (ARTC) discussed the action plan for 2002. Participants agreed that two activities would be carried out during 2002: 1) undertaking research studies on innovative income generating programmes (IGPs) for poverty alleviation through NFE, and 2) organizing with APPEAL three sub-regional training workshops for training NFE and CLC personnel in ways to plan, manage and implement literacy and CE activities through community learning centres.

- **Developing effective community-based approaches for early childhood care and education.** Participants agreed that countries in the region should effectively use existing materials, organize workshops/training for trainers/parents, conduct research projects for revising training materials, and establish day-care centres at the community level.

- **Addressing the basic education needs of disadvantaged groups including girls, ethnic minorities, disabled children.** The strategies suggested for ethnic minorities are to recruit local teachers knowing the local language/mother tongue of minorities, promote teaching of the mother tongue at the initial stage and then bridging the curriculum across both mother tongue and national language, and provide teacher training. Regarding special needs education, teachers should be trained to address the special needs of their children. Parents, communities and peer groups should be made aware of the importance of helping special needs children to learn. Special incentives should be given to girls and children of minorities. UNESCO should support pilot projects to develop inputs for policies and strategies.

- **Developing effective equivalency programmes for bridging formal and non-formal education.** The participants suggested dialogues with government officials in order to persuade ministries/departments of education to take action to bridge the three types of education: formal, non-formal and informal. All relevant organizations in both public and private sectors should follow suit. UNESCO APPEAL should include equivalency programmes on its regional agenda and organize regional conferences as well as provide for training and materials development.
Developing effective community-based income generating programmes (IGPs) for poverty alleviation. Participants recommended that the government cooperate with the private sector for promoting and selling local products. Also important are needs-based appropriate curricula and training designs focusing on entrepreneurship and skill training. Funds from community-based micro-lending institutions should also be available, along with opportunities for training local staff and trainers, appropriate multi-media products and materials, and a database of information on learners and institutional activities. To ensure sustainable development, there must be effective and relevant rural-based training packages (on-farm and off-farm) for building the capacity of local community members.

Expanding and sustaining Community Learning Centres (CLCs). Strategies for CLCs focus on linkages and networking, capacity building/leadership training among stakeholders, and identifying clear roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at all levels. At the regional level, it was suggested that UNESCO APPEAL should develop innovative materials and organize regional forums for sharing experiences and new ideas from the grassroots level.

Developing the framework for a model on the application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for improving basic education and lifelong learning. Strategies in this area include surveying ways to use ICT for EFA, holding an education software contest as a way to determine best practices in the region, supporting the localization of English-language software, providing training in ICT for GO and NGO staff, developing a network for learners across countries, applying ICT to teaching-learning, developing numeracy skill software appropriate for adults, developing software for problem-solving skills, applying ICT to CLCs, replicating or adapting the information Website for farmers in Malaysia, and developing a network for students to exchange information online.
UNESCO APPEAL, Bangkok, jointly with the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA), organized the seminar on Capacity Building for Asian NGOs on Implementing the Dakar Framework for Action. The seminar, held in Bangkok from 9 to 11 July 2001, was attended by 40 NGO members working in the field of education in the Asia-Pacific region.

The objectives of the seminar were to:

- Share information for successful partnerships.
- Share effective and innovative experiences.
- Reflect on new responsibilities and contributions of NGOs to improve dialogue with government agencies, donors and other partners.

The seminar endorsed the following statements:

- We acknowledge that quality education for all is our biggest challenge and hope.
- We strongly affirm that education must be allowed to play its vital role in promoting lasting and meaningful development.
- We recognize that our governments have the principal responsibility for ensuring the achievement of the goals set in the Dakar Framework for Action, with the active and genuine collaboration by NGOs, communities, parents and civil society.
- We all realize the need to assist, support and forge effective partnerships and alliances with all EFA stakeholders, in particular our governments, and regional and international development agencies, but more specifically the communities we serve.

The seminar participants made the following recommendations:

- UNESCO needs to negotiate with and influence our governments, as well as regional and international agencies, to give a focus and priority to the Dakar Framework for Action in all their respective institutional thrusts and plans. A concerted focus on EFA goals by all concerned will provide the synergy that we all have been dreaming about.
- UNESCO should require the UNESCO National Commissions to be actively involved in the dissemination of the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All. This means working in close partnership with NGOs and community service organizations (CSOs) to disseminate information about the Dakar Framework for Action and all follow-up EFA activities in local languages with emphasis on the role of local media.
- All international and regional networks are to be responsible for monitoring and following up their country partners’ contribution to EFA. Follow-up activities must be shared and adequately disseminated to all.
- International, regional and local development agencies should provide assistance and more support for the diverse and urgent needs of NGOs and CSOs for improving their capabilities, particularly in the areas of advocacy and lobbying, communication and IT applications, monitoring and evaluation, negotiation and conflict resolution.
- There has to be a more effective mobilization of resources, both human and material, in order to address the critical needs of all learners. We give special attention to those who are most vulnerable, disadvantaged and excluded, such as persons with different abilities, those living under violence and conflict, linguistic and ethnic minorities, rural and isolated communities.
- There must be greater cooperation and collaboration for and amongst all NGOs and CSOs in our respective countries, to unify and solidify our partnerships for a common vision and platform for EFA. The partnership should advocate strongly for its active involvement in insuring the inclusion of EFA goals in the planning, formulation and implementation of our National Development Plans.
- There should be more scope for NGOs, CSOs and especially our local communities in the monitoring and evaluation of EFA activities. A tripartite and more collaborative relationship between the government, NGOs/CSOs and our community-based partners must be developed and encouraged. Monitoring and evaluation of objective and reliable data must be made regular, continuing and sustainable.
- We appreciate the recognition given to the concrete efforts and contributions of NGOs and CSOs in working towards the achievement of the EFA goals from Jomtien to Dakar, and we accept once again the challenges to us in following up activities related to EFA beyond Dakar.
Basic Education Programmes for Social Protection of Out-of-School Children

Within the framework of the regional project, Basic Education Programmes for Social Protection of Out-of-School Children, three UNESCO offices (Bangkok, Beijing, Jakarta), in collaboration with the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and Childhope Asia, convened a workshop to review pilot projects in China, Indonesia and Thailand, and to provide further training for people involved in education for out-of-school children.

The workshop was held in Beijing on 24-31 October 2001. There was a total of 25 participants from China, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Thailand, all of them working at different levels in education for children in difficult circumstances - NGOs, local government, research institutes and other agencies. From UNESCO Bangkok, a representative from APPEAL also participated.

During the first part of the workshop, participants shared and discussed experiences and findings from the pilot projects, based on the external evaluations of each project. The following are brief summaries of the projects:

- **China** – The project supported the education of migrant children in three pilot schools, two government institutions and one private. Data were collected on these children, specifically focusing on their learning achievements, health, social adaptation and family situation. These data were used as a basis for designing training sessions for teachers and parents to provide support to these students. (During the workshop, participants had an opportunity to make a field trip to Hangzhou in order to observe the project sites.)

- **Indonesia** – The project was implemented in Bandung. Sixty working and street children participated. The major activities undertaken were 1) developing modules on life skills and vocational training; 2) establishing networks with relevant stakeholders; and 3) advocacy to increase awareness of parents and community concerning the importance of non-formal education (NFE) for out-of-school children.

- **Thailand** – The project was implemented in Nakhon Ratchasima Province. The major activities were 1) seminars for NFE workers and network agencies involved in child-centred education; 2) a study trip for NFE teachers to other community learning centres; and 3) materials development workshops for NFE teachers.

In the training session that followed, participants shared their experiences from these projects in order to learn from each other. There were intensive discussions of issues to be considered in recruiting children under difficult circumstances, conducting educational programmes and counseling sessions for these children, training teachers, and many other matters. The sessions integrated various educational methods such as role playing, dramas, puppet shows and games.

As an output of the workshop, the participants also developed follow-up country action plans and guidelines for the project management and training of teachers. The guidelines and experiences of the pilot projects will be compiled in a regional database to be developed for this biennium.
Consultative Meeting on Inclusive Education in Bangladesh

On 23-25 July 2001, APPEAL organized a consultative workshop on inclusive education (IE) in cooperation with the UNESCO Dhaka Office, Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF), the Underprivileged Children’s Education Programme (UCEP) and the Dhaka office of Save the Children.

The original objectives of this workshop were as follows:
1. to collect information about efforts to implement the IE approach in Bangladesh, and to assess them;
2. to exchange ideas and experiences between government and nongovernmental organizations; and
3. to develop a policy framework on IE and to identify programme planning and implementation strategies for IE.

During the workshop, however, it became apparent that different agencies and organizations had varied interpretations of inclusive education. Therefore, it was decided that more focus should be placed on building a consensus among the participants about the concept of inclusive education. Active in-depth discussions led to a broader and deeper understanding of inclusive education. Participants agreed that inclusive education referred to a process of transforming the education system so as to enable it to address and respond to the diverse learning needs of all learners, thereby removing barriers to quality education at all levels.

During these discussions, some participants expressed fear that society would not allow this transformation to take place. Others responded by commenting that this is why special efforts and advocacy are needed to start the process of change – the ultimate goal of inclusive education is in fact to transform the entire society, with education as the best place to start.

The workshop concluded with participants writing a description of their ideal IE pilot projects, as well as two tiny changes that they themselves could initiate to move towards IE in the immediate future.

Inclusive Education in Central Asia

Within the framework of the regional project, Capacity Building and Resource Development for the Promotion of Basic Education for Children with Special Needs, there have been a number of activities to support inclusive education in the Central Asia sub-region.

In Kazakhstan, the UNESCO Almaty Office organized a workshop to develop basic legislative and financial documents for further promotion and support of inclusive education. This workshop took place in Astana on 23rd November. Senior representatives of the Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries, as well as representatives and educators from provincial education departments, attended this meeting. The meeting also had the participation of representatives of the Kyrgyzstan government.
In Uzbekistan, the movement towards inclusive education is still at an early stage. Following a consultative meeting on inclusive education in June 2001, APPEAL and the UNESCO Tashkent Office organized a training workshop for educational administrators and NGO staff from all over the country. They met in Tashkent from 24 to 26 September 2001.

The workshop began by presenting the concepts and visions of inclusive education. This presentation was followed by small group discussions in which the participants discussed the existing barriers to inclusive education in Uzbekistan at different levels: legislation and policies, society’s beliefs and attitudes, school organization, classroom strategies, and teacher education. They then went through sessions dealing with the characteristics of teachers in inclusive education and the international framework for inclusive education. As a final activity, participants developed action plans to promote inclusive education in Uzbekistan at the different levels mentioned above. These action plans would form the basis for future activities.

Regional Seminar on Gender Equality in Basic Education

UNESCO Headquarters in collaboration with APPEAL organized a regional seminar, *Towards Gender Equality in Education: Major Challenges to Meet Dakar EFA Goals*. It was held in Kyoto from 28 to 30 November 2001.

The purpose of the seminar was to discuss issues related to gender equality in education throughout Asia, to review the situation in regard to preparing gender sensitive and responsive EFA plans, and to identify strategies for regional cooperation to achieve in particular the fifth goal of the Dakar Declaration, namely eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

The meeting gathered together 16 government representatives from South and Southeast Asia responsible for girls and women’s education, and several representatives from universities, women’s organizations, UN agencies, and donor agencies.

During the seminar, participants agreed that more attention needed to be given to qualitative issues rather than quantitative achievements. They also felt that one of the main areas of intervention was the gender sensitization of teachers and education administrators. Instead of a limited focus on girls’ education, more comprehensive educational interventions were needed. Finally, instead of merely removing sex stereotypes from textbooks, we need to analyze and understand why and how gender discrimination occurs in the classroom.

Conclusions and recommendations

Participants recognized that gender equity and equality in basic education are the key to achieving the Dakar EFA goals. With a commitment to mainstreaming gender in basic education, they agreed to the following recommendations:

- Regional cooperation needs to be strengthened.
- Better coordination is necessary among the different stakeholders at the national level.
- Gender-sensitive and responsive learning should take place at all stages of development.
- Gender should be emphasized in broader EFA efforts.
- Acknowledging diversity in the region, further efforts are needed to attain qualitative and quantitative goals.
- Ownership is the key to success in any operation.
- Regular monitoring and assessment of activities are essential.

As a follow up to the meeting, UNESCO is seeking support from various donors and development partners for carrying out regional activities aimed at sharing experiences, as well as for undertaking national level capacity building activities in regard to gender analysis, gender strategy development, and partnerships for achieving gender equality.

APPEAL is in the process of creating a Website on girls and women’s education of specific interest to Asia and the Pacific. The site will contain references to resource persons and institutions, lessons learned in girls and women’s education, examples of successful gender mainstreaming, examples of gender responsive EFA plans, and other useful information.
Environmental Education Projects for Rural Communities

UNESCO has launched the first phase of a pilot project to empower rural communities towards environmentally sustainable practices in India, Maldives and Nepal. This project was first developed during the Experts Consultation Meeting held in Kathmandu last year. The project applies principles and methods of participatory action research to help rural communities to monitor their own environment, as well as to identify and address the environmental issues that are degrading their quality of life.

As the first phase of this project, UNESCO’s partner organizations in the three countries have set up core community groups and are conducting community assessment in collaboration with these groups. The groups will assess the state of the community environment, the causes and effects of environmental problems and the training needed by community members to help them address these problems.

At the later stage of the project, training will be conducted and the communities encouraged to develop and implement community action plans. Community leaders, the community learning centre, local schools and community groups will be playing leading roles in these activities.

Environmental Education Exhibition for EMECS 2001

UNESCO participated in the Environmental Education Exhibition Fair, which was held as a special session of the International Conference for Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Areas and Seas (EMECS) 2001 in Kobe, Japan. The Exhibition took place on the 19th and 20th of last November. UNESCO’s exhibition space was included in the zone for the Environmental Education (EE) of the World and displayed various EE resources collected from UNESCO Headquarters, UNESCO Bangkok, and other field offices and partner organizations in the region.

Staff members from APPEAL and the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) were invited to set up the exhibition and also to give a series of presentations for different target groups, including a panel discussion on the future directions of EE for the 21st century.

PLANET 3 Development Meeting

APPEAL supported the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) in organizing a workshop to develop a multi-media environmental education kit, PLANET 3. The meeting took place in Bangkok during 23 -25 October 2001. Experts on environmental education from India, Thailand, and other related UN agencies and organizations joined UNESCO and ACCU staff to determine the content of PLANET 3.

ACCU has been producing the Packaged Learning Materials on the Environment (PLANET) since 1997 with UNESCO and its Member States in the region. PLANET 1, focusing on water pollution, and PLANET 2, on forest conservation, have been translated in more than 20 countries and are used in both formal and non-formal settings. Each kit consists of a video, posters and booklets.

The third of this series, PLANET 3, will focus on waste management. Participants shared their experiences in dealing with waste issues in the region. They actively discussed which issues were most relevant to potential learners in this region and what messages they needed to hear, as well as the discussions they wanted learners to be involved in.

Using the outcomes of the meeting, ACCU will produce drafts of the materials. Participants agreed that these materials would be one of the contributions to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002.

APEID Seminar on Environmental Education in Asia and the Pacific.

A UNESCO/Japan Seminar on Environmental Education in Asia and the Pacific was organized in Tokyo from 19-23 November 2001 by Tokyo Gakugei University, with the support of the Japanese Government.

Environmental educators from 13 countries in the region participated in this seminar. A representative from UNESCO
Bangkok gave a keynote address and served as a resource person. During the seminar, the participants gave presentations on environmental education (EE) in their countries with special focus on support systems. With the insights obtained from these presentations and subsequent discussions, participants were able to identify the aims, goals, hopes and future visions related to EE in the Asia and Pacific region.

The participants also agreed upon the following recommendations:

1. UNESCO Bangkok should facilitate the inclusion of EE on the agenda of regional environmental meetings, not to mention the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002.

(2) A regional EE network should be established.

3. Members of this regional network should work to set up and strengthen their respective national networks.

4. Activities of the regional/national networks should be disseminated through existing Websites or through newsletters.

5. The mutual sharing of expertise and materials should be encouraged and promoted through the clearinghouse process.

6. All governments in the Asia-Pacific region should be encouraged to develop EE policies and to allocate funds specifically for EE.

The participants also visited a model EE primary school to learn about environmental education in Japan.
The package consists of one introductory video and six module-based videos. The introduction is intended to be a motivational as well as an orientation video for NFE work. It gives an overview of the competencies required by an NFE facilitator in the context of a community’s socio-economic development. The other six videos are based on the structure of the handbook as follows:

Module 1: Community Mobilization (produced by India)
Module 2: Identification of Learning Needs (produced by Bangladesh)
Module 3: Preparing Lesson Plans (produced by Thailand)
Module 4: Participatory Learning (produced by the Philippines)
Module 5: Using Learning Aids – Developing a Village Wall Magazine – (produced by Bangladesh)
Module 6: Assessing Learning – Learning Portfolio Assessment – (produced by the Philippines)

The user’s guide for the video will explain the aims of the video, the target audience and ways to use the video most effectively. By means of the exercises provided before and after watching each video, viewers will easily find the main messages.

After watching the videos, viewers are expected to be able to:
1. Explain how NFE contributes to socio-economic/community development
2. Identify the competencies required for NFE facilitators
3. Reflect on their own capabilities as effective facilitators

APPEAL also plans to disseminate the content of the videos by means of information technology such as the Internet. The production of local versions of the handbook, as well as the video package in vernacular languages, is encouraged for wider dissemination of project materials. For further information, please contact APPEAL.

New Computer Software to Improve Literacy Skills Discussed at Technical Meeting

APPEAL in collaboration with Bangkok Information Programmes and Services (PIPS) has launched the regional initiative *Literacy Development through Computer Software and Training for Literacy Personnel*. This pilot project is taking place from 2001 to 2003 with the support of the Japanese-Funds-in-Trust.

The project, in attempting to respond to literacy needs in the Asia-Pacific region, intends to make use of the power of information and communication technology (ICT) to encourage the growth of literate environments in the region and the creation of alternative strategies for literacy development.

The project aims to develop a prototype software package for literacy and post-literacy education which will be used to train illiterates and neo-literates to consolidate and expand literacy skills. The project also aims to help community learning centres build their capacity to develop and disseminate local experiences and knowledge in literacy and non-formal education through the use of modern technology.

The partners in this project are the National Literacy Mission (NLM) from India, the Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA) located in Malaysia, the Southeast Asian Ministries of Education for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO/INNOTECH) based in the Philippines, and the Non-formal Education Department, Ministry of Education, Thailand.

In connection with this project, APPEAL organized the *Technical Working Group Meeting on Literacy Development through Computer Software and Training for Literacy Personnel* in Bangkok on 4-6 September 2001. Ten experts from the above-mentioned partner agencies in India, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand attended the workshop.

The experts accomplished the following activities:
- They shared and reviewed findings from the surveys conducted on computer hardware and NFE software in the participating countries. They found that very few software products are available in this area.
- They developed guidelines for the production of appropriate software including objectives, content, target users, media, and production strategies.
- They formulated joint action plans for software production in each country and also at the regional level.

Using the guidelines and the resource materials of the meeting, the participating countries are currently developing a prototype software, which they plan to share during the next workshop in June or July 2002.
Community Learning Centres (CLCs) News

Regional Workshop on the Capacity Building for Trainers of CLC Facilitators in Rural Areas of Asia and the Pacific

The greater the recognition of community learning centres (CLCs) as the major provider of non-formal education (NFE) services, the more demand there has been for quality materials and skilled facilitators in literacy and continuing education programmes. Qualified personnel in training and materials development at the grassroots level are urgently needed for sustainable community development and the full use of local resources.

Responding to these needs, APPEAL developed the Handbook for Non-formal Education Facilitators and, in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), the Handbook for Adult Learning Materials Development at Community Level (including Literacy Clip Art). As a first trial of these materials at regional level, APPEAL, ACCU and the Continuing Education Department, Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam (CED, MOET), jointly organized the Regional Workshop on the Capacity Building for Trainers of CLC Facilitators in Rural Areas of Asia and the Pacific.

Held from 12 to 21 November in Hanoi, the workshop was divided into two stages. During the input stage, participants shared experiences, learned about APPEAL and ACCU activities, and absorbed resource persons’ comments on the materials. During the process stage, there were needs assessments of villages in Vietnam, the design and demonstration of teaching-learning activities, and materials development and field testing of the teaching-learning methodology and materials at Vietnamese CLCs. During the workshop, 16 participants from 15 countries, along with 8 observers from NFUAJ, UNICEF Phnom Penh, and NOCEID took part in the activities.

The highlight of the workshop was a series of group work sessions on lesson plan preparation and materials development. In line with the structure of the handbook for NFE facilitators, participants practiced the whole process of promoting learning in a community. Using the results of a field survey of selected villages near Hanoi, four groups of participants identified the most crucial problems in the villages and assessed people’s needs before preparing attractive and appropriate lesson plans and materials for the target learners. Each group selected two topics (such as savings and HIV/drug prevention) and developed lesson plans. During a plenary session, these plans and materials were assessed through group discussion and demonstration. The groups then tested the outcomes in the assigned villages to evaluate whether the activities, learning content and specified objectives were practical and viable, as well to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the materials. The workshop was a good opportunity for practitioners from various countries to actually try out the handbooks for training CLC personnel.

In the final session, participants were requested to prepare national follow-up action plans for carrying out activities in their respective countries, using the two handbooks as the main resources. The action plans included the translation and adaptation of the handbooks, the training of personnel at both the national and grassroots levels, and the dissemination of the national versions of the handbooks. The national workshops in several countries will take place in 2002.
Each year, the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) organizes a planning meeting for its literacy programmes in the region within the framework of APPEAL. This year, APPEAL and ACCU agreed to organize a joint planning meeting with the following objectives:

- To review and evaluate ACCU’s activities in 2000
- To review and evaluate APPEAL’s activities in 1999-2000
- To develop ideas and recommendations for future regional Education for All (EFA) activities with particular reference to non-formal education (NFE) for adults

The meeting took place in Tokyo during June 2001. There were 21 participants from 19 countries, most of them heads of NFE departments in their respective Ministries of Education. Two resource persons from India and Japan assisted in organizing the meeting. Representatives from UNESCO Paris and APPEAL also attended.

The meeting reviewed activities of ACCU and APPEAL over the last two years including community learning centres, capacity building of NFE personnel, the MANGO (Map-base Analysis for Non-formal Education Goals and Outputs), Asia-Pacific Joint Production Programme of Literacy Materials (AJP), the Literacy Database, and PLANET (Packaged Learning Materials on the Environment). The participants also recommended and discussed plans for activities during 2001-2002 related to the above topics.

One of the main outcomes of the meeting was the Tokyo Statement on Non-formal Education, which calls for more attention to NFE in terms of programme support and budget allocations by national governments and the international community. The use of information and communication technology and the assessment of NFE programmes and achievements were also emphasized.

The meeting concluded with the following recommendations for ACCU and APPEAL:

- advocacy and fundraising for promotion of NFE;
- assistance in technical support for EFA national planning;
- more involvement of NGOs in the EFA national planning process;
- support for information and communication technology both technically and financially;
- coordination of joint research and dissemination of outcomes;
- inter-country exchange of experiences including inter-regional exchange programmes; and
- support for the effective management of community learning centres.
Functional Literacy for Indigenous Peoples

Regional Training Workshop on Functional Literacy for Indigenous Peoples

In some countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the levels of literacy, enrolment and retention for marginalized people are relatively low, especially among indigenous peoples. UNESCO has recognized that, to participate more actively in the development of society, indigenous communities need to make the transition from an oral literacy tradition to a way of life that combines oral and written literacy.

In this connection, APPEAL developed the Manual on Functional Literacy for Indigenous Peoples and organized jointly with the National Literacy Resource Centre, the second regional training workshop, held from 26 November to 1 December 2001, in Raipur, Chattisgarh State, India, using the manual as a working document. This was a fruitful meeting of 23 key people from 7 countries working in literacy programmes run either by governments or by NGOs.

The main objectives of the workshop were to

- Review the existing literacy situation and programmes for indigenous peoples in the participating countries.
- Explore and study methods for needs assessment and language learning for indigenous communities.
- Build knowledge, attitudes and skills for developing and adapting functional literacy programmes and materials for indigenous peoples, using the manual and handbooks produced by APPEAL.
- Formulate joint follow-up action plans for the development and adaptation of functional literacy programmes and materials for indigenous peoples at the local level.

The six-day workshop began with sharing information about the current situation of indigenous peoples and their communities, especially concerning access to education. The following issues were raised: 1) living conditions are relatively difficult (e.g., income, assets, access to infrastructure and health care); 2) most of the native
languages do not have scripts; 3) most of the countries have a single national language used in both formal and non-formal education; 4) there are high rates of illiteracy and drop-out among indigenous communities; 5) teaching-learning curricula and materials are not available in the mother tongues.

The participants refined their ideas and sharpened their skills during a field survey to assess the needs of the indigenous people of Chattisgarh, and through a series of group work activities on curriculum and materials development for indigenous peoples.

During the workshop, participants acknowledged the lack of credible and relevant information on the actual state of education among indigenous peoples, and agreed that action research for literacy programmes is a future priority for this project. Using the results of the project activities, the participants proposed the following follow-up activities to occur after the workshop:

- Analyze mother tongues in indigenous communities in order to use them effectively in education (e.g., new scripts, oral documents and voice databanks).
- Develop appropriate curricula and learning materials using various means (e.g., folk media, TV and radio programmes, the Internet).
- Train facilitators to use new curricula and materials or develop appropriate training manuals.
- Evaluate curricula and materials; monitor learning outcomes.

### APPEAL Meetings and Workshops Planned for January-June 2002

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Sponsors</th>
<th>Participating countries</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 sub-regional workshops on capacity building for CLC personnel in planning and management and implementation of continuing education</td>
<td>To train CLC and NFE personnel in effective planning and management of CLC activities focusing on CE content areas e.g., agriculture, ICT and gender issues</td>
<td>APPEAL in cooperation with ARTC members (DAM, INNOTECH and INRULED)</td>
<td>18 countries in which APPEAL is supporting CLC projects</td>
<td>18-23 March</td>
<td>China and Philippines</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>15-20 April</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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Members of the APPEAL Resource and Training Consortium (ARTC) attended the ARTC annual meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand, held in conjunction with the Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Lifelong Learning. Representatives from the member institutions of ARTC played important roles at the Forum and served as speakers in the plenary panel presentations and in the concurrent sessions.

The Forum provided an opportunity for ARTC members to share their experiences and identify crucial areas for promoting basic education and lifelong learning in the region, especially in regard to suggesting strategies for future action:

1. To undertake action research on innovative income generating programmes for poverty alleviation through NFE. This activity should be completed by the first quarter of 2002. APPEAL is supporting the following ARTC members who are undertaking action research in this area:
   - Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Bangladesh
   - Indian Institute of Education (IIE), Pune
   - International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED), China
   - Department of Non-Formal Education, Thailand
   - Directorate-General of Out-of-School Education, Youth and Sports, Indonesia
   - SEAMEO/INNOTECH, Philippines

2. To organize with APPEAL sub-regional training workshops for NFE and community learning centre (CLC) personnel on planning, management and implementation of literacy and continuing education programmes/activities through CLCs. Three sub-regional workshops will be organized in cooperation with three ARTC members:
   - Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Bangladesh
   - International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED), China
   - SEAMEO/INNOTECH, Philippines

APPEAL has accepted the suggestions of ARTC as inputs for the preparation of its regional strategies and work plans in the areas of literacy and continuing education.

The participants were satisfied with the outcomes of the Forum and suggested that UNESCO should organize this event regularly. If we are able to do so, the ARTC annual meeting may be organized in conjunction with the Forum to which ARTC member institutions could contribute staff and expertise.
The Asia-Pacific region, which has been a cradle of ancient civilizations, a repository of rich intellectual resources and an engine of rapid economic growth in recent times, faces a paradox in having 612 million illiterate adolescents and adults, and over 60 million out-of-school children. Their rights to education must be fulfilled in order for them to gain life skills and to live in human dignity.

We, the representatives of 19 countries, reaffirm our commitment to achieve the goals of Education for All (EFA) as enunciated in the Dakar Framework for Action. In the pursuit of these goals, it is imperative that we view non-formal education (NFE) as an equal partner of formal education. Recognizing the rich diversity and complexity of the Region, we envision non-formal and formal approaches in education as mutually reinforcing each other in establishing a knowledge-based society.

We call upon all EFA partners to recognize the pivotal role of NFE in moving towards the goals set by the Dakar Framework for Action:

- Expanding and improving early childhood care and education, especially for the most disadvantaged.
- Ensuring that by 2015 all children, especially girls, children in difficult circumstances and children from ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring the excellence of programmes so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

We note with concern that the presence of large illiterate populations and people without adequate competencies to learn effectively in an information-based society could lead to further accentuation of the digital divide and undermine all efforts to combat poverty and ignorance.

We recognize that

- A literate environment is fundamental to poverty alleviation, peace and sustainable development.
- The creation of a literate society requires building linkages among different sectors involved in social and economic development.
- The elimination of gender disparity is a vital component of the EFA initiative.
- The support of international agencies and civil society is indispensable.

We call for

- Declaring the first decade of the 21st century as the UN Literacy Decade.
- Including literacy and continuing education as an integral component of the EFA National Action Plans to be adopted by 2002.
- Building an appropriate and effective institutional arrangement for NFE as well as a system of equivalency between formal and non-formal education.
- Promoting community-based participatory learning programmes.
- Applying information and communication technology (ICT) relevant to the needs and aspirations of local communities.
- Providing renewed emphasis on the authentic assessment of progress with a focus on both quantitative and qualitative aspects.
- Significantly increasing funding for NFE from government budgets, bilateral and multilateral donors.