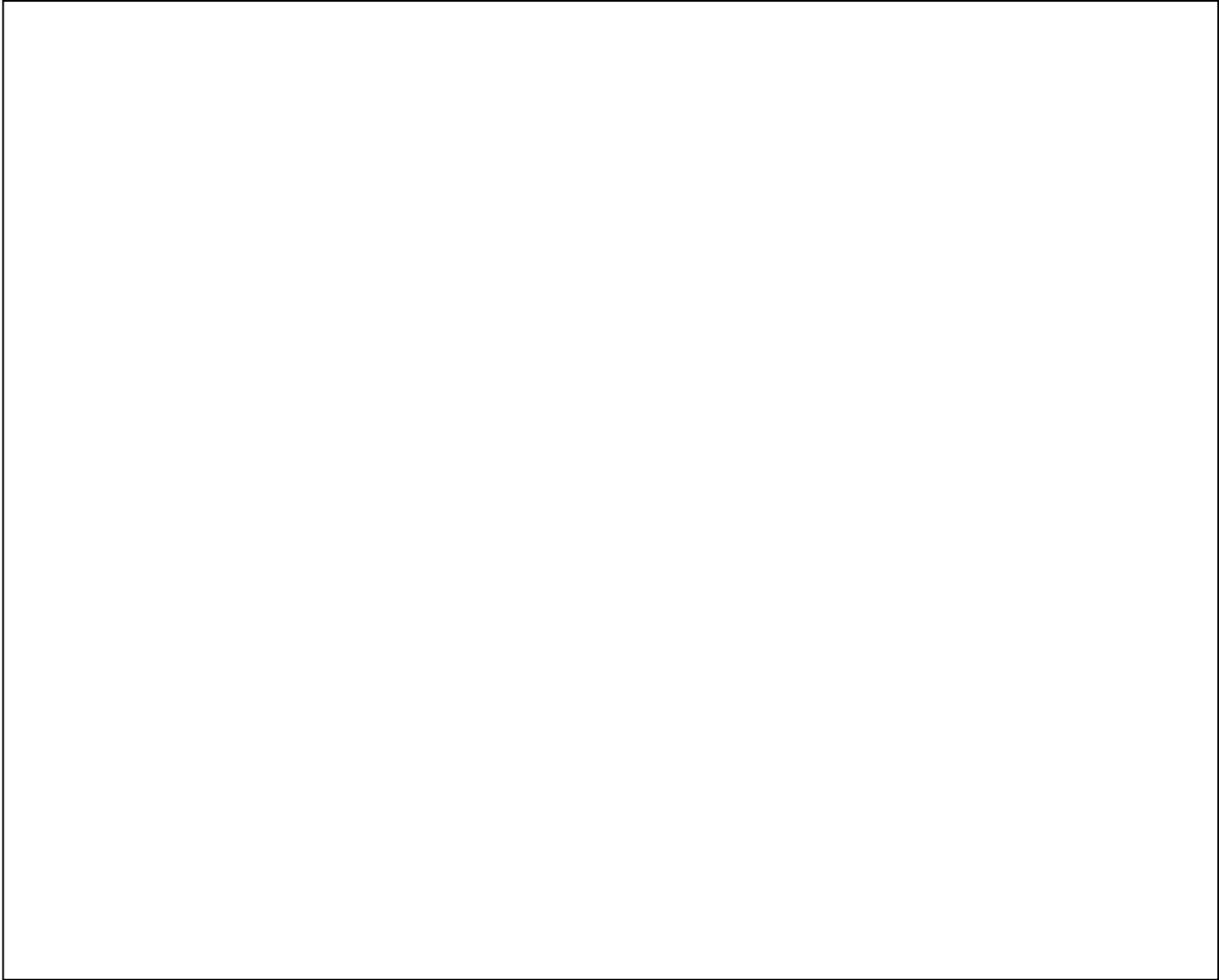


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LITERACY WATCH COMMITTEE OF NEPAL
BULLETIN NO. 6
Special Issue on
Relation between Formal and Non-Formal Education
1998 September



Editor-in-Chief: Mr. T. M. Sakya

International Literacy Day September 1998

The International Literacy Day 8 September 1998 was celebrated in Nepal with a special program jointly by following organizations:

1. National Council for NFE, HMG Nepal
2. National Resource Center for Non Formal Education, Nepal
3. Rotary Clubs- Yala Patan
4. Literacy Watch Committee, Nepal

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Editorial

Traditional educationists in general and education authorities in Nepal in particular usually equate education with schooling. Schools have indeed been the main agencies in providing education in all countries. The Government raises millions of Rupees in taxes from the people to finance school education in Nepal. Similarly, donors also provide millions of US dollars for school education.

But as in other developing countries, schools in Nepal can provide education to only a limited number of children and youth. In this country, about 9.4 million children, youth and adults (6 yrs. and above) are illiterate. That means half the working population is deprived of schooling.

Besides schools, the Formal education method, there are alternative means of providing an education. Such methods fall under the category of Non-Formal Education. It is high time that the education and development authorities of Nepal and donor agencies in education realize that both the Formal and Non-Formal methods are two legs of the total education system.

The education system in Nepal will only be able to function properly if both legs of this system are moving in sync. If the Formal Education leg moves by itself leaving the Non-Formal leg standing still, the education system of Nepal becomes lame. Through the school education system alone, Nepal will never reach the goal of Education for All and thus, this country will also have difficulty reaching its Human Development Goals.

Keeping these factors in mind, this issue of the "Literacy Watch Bulletin" has tried to focus on the relationship between Formal and Non-Formal Education, their relative strengths and weaknesses.

I hope this issue will remind the major players in Nepal's education system to carefully develop both legs of the total education system.

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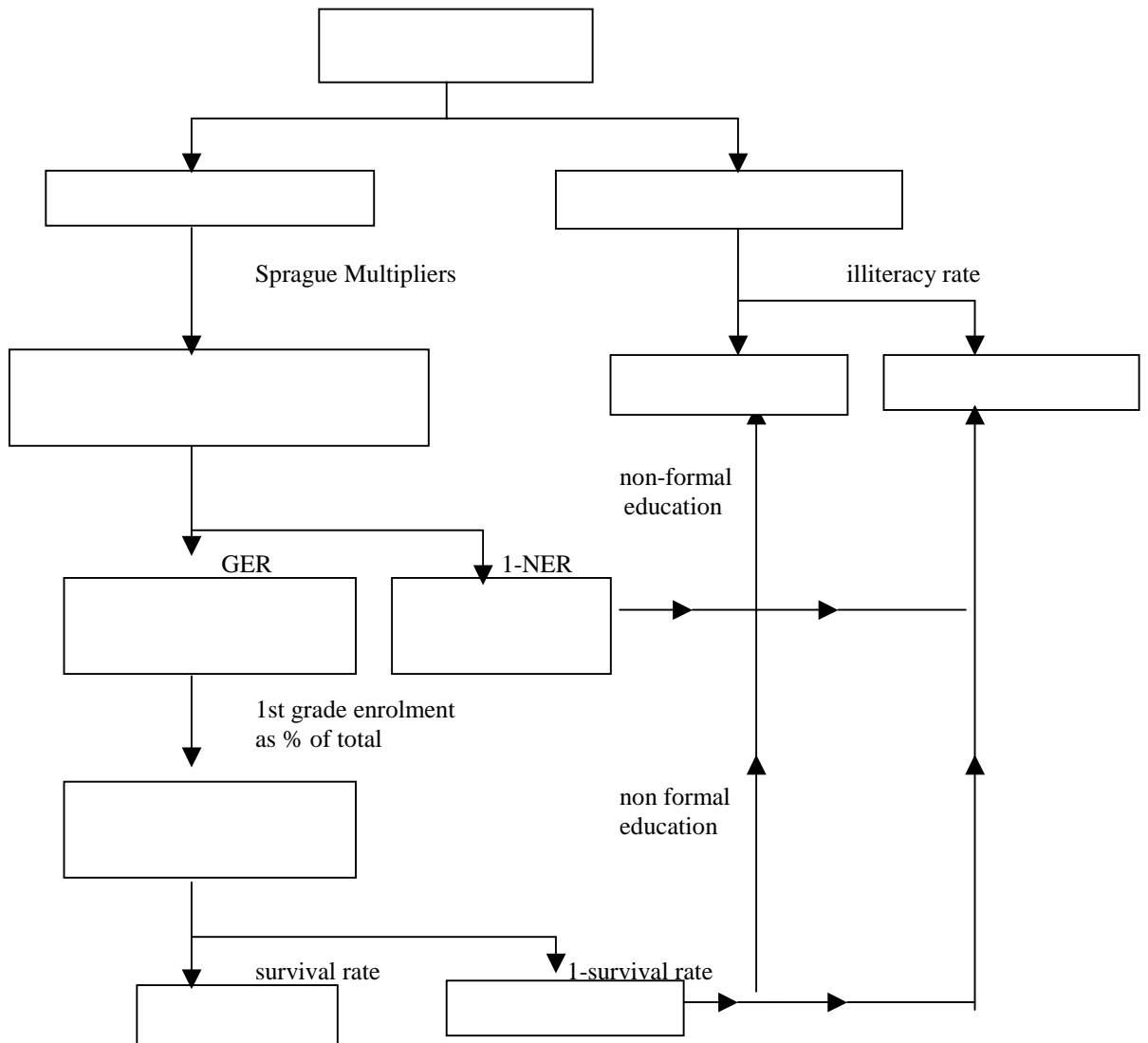
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The Relationship between Formal and Non-Formal Education.

The following figure shows the relationship between Formal and Non-Formal Education and how non-enrollees and dropouts from formal school join the growing pool of illiterates. To remedy the situation, an alternative education program called Non-Formal Education should be organized. Otherwise the problem of illiteracy will only become more and more severe.

Integrated Diagnostic Model for Education for All
(Fig. 1.1)



For explanation see the Note. (Fig 1.2)

Note: the number of persons in each figure in the chart is given below:

S.N.		1991-92	1994-95
1.	Population	18491097	20362000
2.	Population 0+14	7840771	8639845
3.	Population 15+	10650326	11722155
4.	Primary school age population	2672000	2960000
5.	Primary enrollment	2884275(Gross)(106%) 1790240	3263050(114%) 1915530(67%)
6.	1st grade enrollment	1153710 (40%)	1323000
7.	Out of school aged population	881760	1044470
8.	Dropouts	403000	461000
9.	Literate (6+ population)	5907720	6943860
10.	Illiterates	9240280	9589140
11.	Not enrolled	1332000	928000

**Source: BPEP Master Plan 1997
Statistical Year Book 1997**

The statistical data in Figure 1.2 shows that the number of children enrolled in Primary schools increased from 2,884,275 in 1991-2 to 3,263,050 in 1994-5. But at the same time there were still 928,000 children out of school. Similarly, the number of dropouts increased from 403,000 to 461,000. As a consequence the number of illiterates increased from 9,240,280 in 1991-2 to 9,589,140 in 1994-5. Although the percentage of illiterates is on the decline, the pool of illiterate people continues to rise.

Thus, if we depend only on formal education, the problem of illiteracy will never be solved. If we can organize literacy as both formal educations hand-in-hand with non-formal education for those who do not enroll in school and dropouts, the number of illiterates would decrease significantly.

The basic message of Figure 1.1: “Integrated Diagnostic Model for Education for All” is that every developing country needs to plan and implement both formal and non-formal education together. They are the two sides of the same coin, not separate things.

Too Much talk, too little understanding

These days it is fashionable to manipulate qualifiers into literacy terms, such as: Functional Literacy, Critical Literacy, Work Place Literacy, Task Specific Literacy, Family Literacy, Community Literacy, Scientific Literacy, Cultural Literacy and Legal Literacy.

The proliferation of these types of literacy terms is confusing to many people. If it can confuse educated people, it will certainly create a great problem for illiterates in rural areas. Therefore, it is urgent that we shed some light on the matter.

There are three fundamental principles of Literacy / Non-Formal Education (NFE) programs.

We have to answer the following three questions:

1. Literacy for what purpose?
2. Literacy to be imparted at what level?
3. Literacy in which language to allow learners to be active participants?

Most educationists agree on following points:

1. Literacy should be an integrated program of reading, writing and computation skills that incorporate functional knowledge and skills.
2. It should be participatory.
3. It should help learners become capable of critical inquiry.
4. It should be in the learner's own language.
5. Teachers are process helpers not masters.
6. It should be based on the needs of the learners. (There are many methods of finding needs.)

There is still controversy over the following points:

1. Which method should be used to teach the 3 Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic) alphabetic method, word method, sentence method, etc. (phonetic approach, whole language approach, etc.)
2. Threshold level of literacy skill. (What level of literacy is enough to be considered literate?)
3. How to declare equivalency of literacy achievements with that of formal school grades.
4. How to evaluate learners' achievement. (standardized tests, teacher-made test, observation, etc.)
5. What type of planning, administrator's supervision and co-ordination is required?
6. What are the roles of the Government, NGOs, INGOs and Local Government?

Those who are in key positions to promote literacy should come together and make concrete decisions on these matters, then only can we avoid confusion and help in the promotion of literacy in Nepal. We hope the educationists who are working for literacy programs will try to clarify the matter.

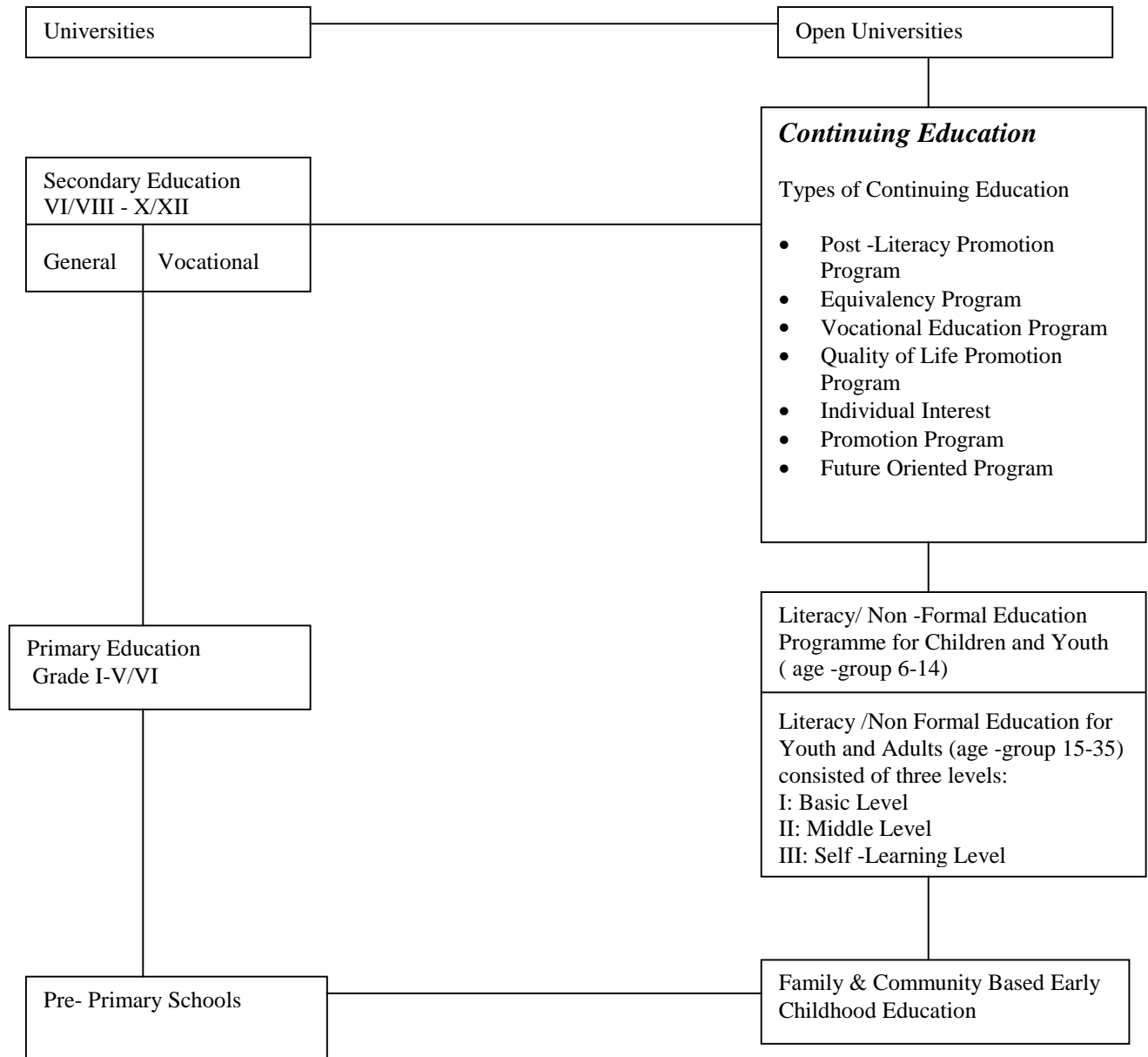
Difference between Formal and Non-Formal Education

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN	
FORMAL EDUCATION	AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION
PURPOSES	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Long-term and general</i> 2. <i>Credential- based (diploma oriented)</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Short-term and specific</i> 2. <i>Not credential-based</i>
TIMING	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long cycle 2. Preparatory (<i>provides the basis for future participation in society and economy</i>) 3. Full-time 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short cycle 2. Recurrent (<i>depends on the immediate learning needs arising from the individual's roles and stage of life</i>) 3. Part-time
CONTENT	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Subject-centered & standardized (a well defined package of cognitive knowledge (knowing) with limited emphasis on psychomotor (doing) or affective (feeling) considerations and designed to cover needs across large groups of learners)</i> 2. <i>Academic</i> 3. <i>Clientele determined by entry requirements (Tests)</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Problem-centered & Individualized (task or skill centered , discrete units which may be related to the what individual participants or small groups may want to learn)</i> 2. <i>Practical</i> 3. <i>Entry requirements determined by the clientele</i>
DELIVERY SYSTEM	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Institution-based (highly visible and expensive)</i> 2. <i>Isolated (from socio-economic environment)</i> 3. <i>Rigidly structured</i> 4. <i>Teacher-centered</i> 5. <i>Resource-intensive</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Environment -based (minimal local facilities with low cost)</i> 2. <i>Community-related</i> 3. <i>Flexibly structured</i> 4. <i>Learner-centered</i> 5. <i>Resource Saving</i>
CONTROL	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Externally controlled (curricula and standards are externally determined)</i> 2. <i>Hierarchical (internal control is based on role-defined relations among teachers and between teachers and learners)</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Self-governing autonomy at program and local levels, with an emphasis on local initiative, self-help and innovation)</i> 2. <i>Democratic (substantial control is vested in participants and local community)</i>

(An adaptation of Tim Simkins as found in Mullinix, Gillespie, McCurry and Graybill, Non-formal Education Manual, 1989.)

Though there are differences between Formal and Non-Formal Education, the objective of both programs is to make the people aware and literate. Therefore, it is not enough to think of Formal School and Non Formal Education as separate programs. The following figure demonstrates the relationship between Formal and Non Formal Education.

Educational System



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What is Non-Formal Education (NFE)?

The day after Chris arrived in Togo to begin pre-service training, he and a half dozen others who weren't suffering too acutely from jet lag piled into a taxi and headed to the Grand March, the huge, jam-packed African market. Peace Corps staff had just given them their first assignment in cross-cultural training: Go to the market, buy something, and see what you can learn.

His pockets full of new currency, his head spinning with the unfamiliar smells of spicy street food and the sudden, sharp cries of market vendors, Chris looked around excitedly for something to buy.

His eyes fell on a table-full of small daggers with leather handles, inlaid with sparkling crystal. "Glass, probably," he thought to himself. Still, they were nicely made, and certainly unusual. "How much?" he asked, straining to remember his few words of college French.

The old street vendor eyed him, a half-smile on his face. "Seven thousand," he said in French. Chris looked confused. Had he said "thousand" or "hundred?" Now seven hundred would be, let's see ... well, less than three dollars anyway. But thousand...?

"Seven," the old man repeated again, holding up seven fingers and grinning at Chris.

"Yes, yes, seven," said Chris, nodding vigorously. "I understand the seven," he said in English. "It's the hundred ... or thousand ..."

The old man eyed Chris's backpack, his khaki bush shorts, his new canteen. "Peace Corps?" he asked, sympathetically.

"Yes, yes!" nodded Chris, delighted to have made a friend so quickly.

"I say seven," the old man said in English, "You say five." "Then I say, no, no. That's how is the African market."

Chris grinned. "OK, five," he said.

The old man laughed, delighted. "No, no!" he said in mock protest. "This knife is good quality. You insult me. Seven is my lowest price."

"Six then," said Chris, forgetting completely, by now, about his confusion between hundreds and thousands.

"Since you're my first customer, six it is," said the old man, helping a startled Chris count out twenty dollars worth of new currency.

As he handed Chris the small dagger wrapped in newspaper, the old man beckoned him to come closer. "Next time," he whispered conspiratorially, "next time you cut the price in half when you make your first offer."

Chris has just learned something rather differently than he was used to learning in school. He was the loser in the bargaining, yes, but if he listens to the old man's advice, he will save himself a lot more money in the weeks ahead than the few dollars he lost on this little transaction. His learning is likely to stick, because finding out how to bargain was a real-life need, something he learned at the moment...or almost the moment...he needed to know it.

While the old man had his own interests at heart, he also had a lively sense of the interests of his customer. He could have easily pocketed Chris's seven thousand and gone away laughing at the gullibility of American youth.

But he didn't do this, nor did he go out of his way to make sure Chris got the best price, the way he might have treated a child or perhaps someone whose intelligence he did not respect.

Ironically, the new, formal school systems, designed to bring the population quickly into the modern age, often have little to teach people about how to solve the most pressing problems of daily life. Schoolroom geography, for example, is of vital importance in teaching children about the world outside the village, but gives them no advice about what to do when the desert creeps closer and they must trudge further and further each day after school to find firewood.

Neither traditional education nor "book learning" can effectively meet the educational needs of developing nations. What people need now is a new method of learning that speaks to their real problems in a world that seems turned upside down.

While far from being a panacea, NFE has potential for helping people face these new challenges. For modern NFE is different from both formal education and traditional learning systems in several important ways:

As the world changes more and more rapidly, creative problem-solving works better than memorizing facts and learning rituals that no longer serve their purpose. This does not necessarily mean discarding or belittling important traditional knowledge. Some of the most creative solutions come from using traditional techniques and knowledge in new ways.

Traditional systems are often based on strict hierarchies of age, sex, caste, class, inheritance; the have and the have-nots, the knowledgeable and the ignorant. When the world was more stable, hierarchies were often important in ensuring that ancient knowledge and traditional decision-making systems did not get lost.

But in a changing world where people must think creatively and cooperate in new ways, where learners must take charge of their own learning, the teacher-learner dichotomy has been replaced by a more equitable arrangement, where participants and facilitator plan and carry out activities together.

Characteristics of Non-Formal Education

- * Non-formal education (NFE) is out-of school
- * Learning that is planned and agreed upon by both facilitator and participants.
- * Participants are active; they solve problems, work with their hands, think creatively
- * The learning is practical, flexible, and based on the real needs of the participants
- * The purpose of NFE is to improve the life of the individual or community, rather than to teach isolated skills or knowledge
- * NFE emphasizes trust and respect while encouraging questioning and reflection
- * NFE helps people generate creative, new solutions to real-life problems.
- * NFE is carried out in an atmosphere of mutual respect and equality between teacher and learner.
- * NFE comes from the people, rather than being taken to them.

Source : Prepared for Peace Corps by
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