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## **Promotion of CLCs: Analysis of different strategies practiced in Myanmar**

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### **1. Background**

#### **EFA in Myanmar**

Following the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All, Myanmar set out 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. It supervises and monitors EFA project activities. There are six working committees under the Central Coordinating Committee. These are:

- (1) Formal Education Committee
- (2) Non-formal Education Committee
- (3) EFA Planning and Statistics Committee
- (4) EFA Fund Raising Committee
- (5) EFA Information and Communication Committee, and
- (6) State and Division Level Implementing Committees.

#### **NFE Programmes**

Under the Guidance of the EFA Central Coordinating Committee, some Township and Village NFE Committees have launched the learning circles. With the support of the Government and the concerted effort of the personnel concerned, the literacy rate increased to 91.8 % in AY 2002. The activities were carried out by local voluntary teachers using basic learning materials produced by Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB) - the focal centre for NFE in Myanmar. At present, the programme covers the whole Kayin State, Mon State, Rakhine State, Mandalay Division, Ayeyarwady Division, Magwe Division, Bago Division (East and West), Tanintharyi Division, and Sagaing Division. Special 3 Rs programmes have been organized in border areas. A number of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) have also been established. Income Generation and Quality of life Improvement Programmes have also been initiated.

#### **Myanmar Literacy Resource Centre (MLRC)**

In March 2000, the **Myanmar Literacy Resource Centre (MLRC)** was established at the MERB with a contribution from the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Project at the cost of over of US \$ 70,000 with the contribution of US \$ 21,000 from ACCU. Myanmar's contribution towards the MLRC project was Kyats 14.5 million. MLRC is part of the network of seventeen Literacy Resource Centres in Asia and the Pacific. One of the functions of MLRC is the training of NFE personnel at various levels by conducting training workshops. The MERB has been working in close co-operation with Asia Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO

(ACCU), in Japan and the Japan UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok.

## 2. Community Learning Centre (CLC)

### Establishment of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in Myanmar

Reading circles normally follow right after the completion of basic literacy classes. In 1994, CLCs were first established in the 11 townships of Human Development Initiative Project (HDI: MOE/UNDP/UNESCO), with the help of the MERB. There are altogether 71 CLCs under this project. The NFE Committee with MERB as a focal institution launched five CLCs in 1995 in Nyaung Don Township, Ayeyarwady Division. These two programmes are being implemented respectively. There are also some CLCs organized by Myanmar Mother and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) and other NGOs and INGOs making a total of 480 CLCs in the whole country - 135 in Mandalay Division, 120 in Sagaing Division, 39 in Magwe Division, 50 each in Bago Division (East) and (West), 10 in Ayarwady Division and 5 in Yangon Division with 71 CLCs in UNDP project townships totaling 480 Centres in Myanmar.

**Community** *A group of associated people who have the same interest and outlook, and who can work together and make decisions for themselves on behalf of others living in that area.*

**Community Learning Centre (CLC)** *Local educational institution outside the formal education system, for villages 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.*

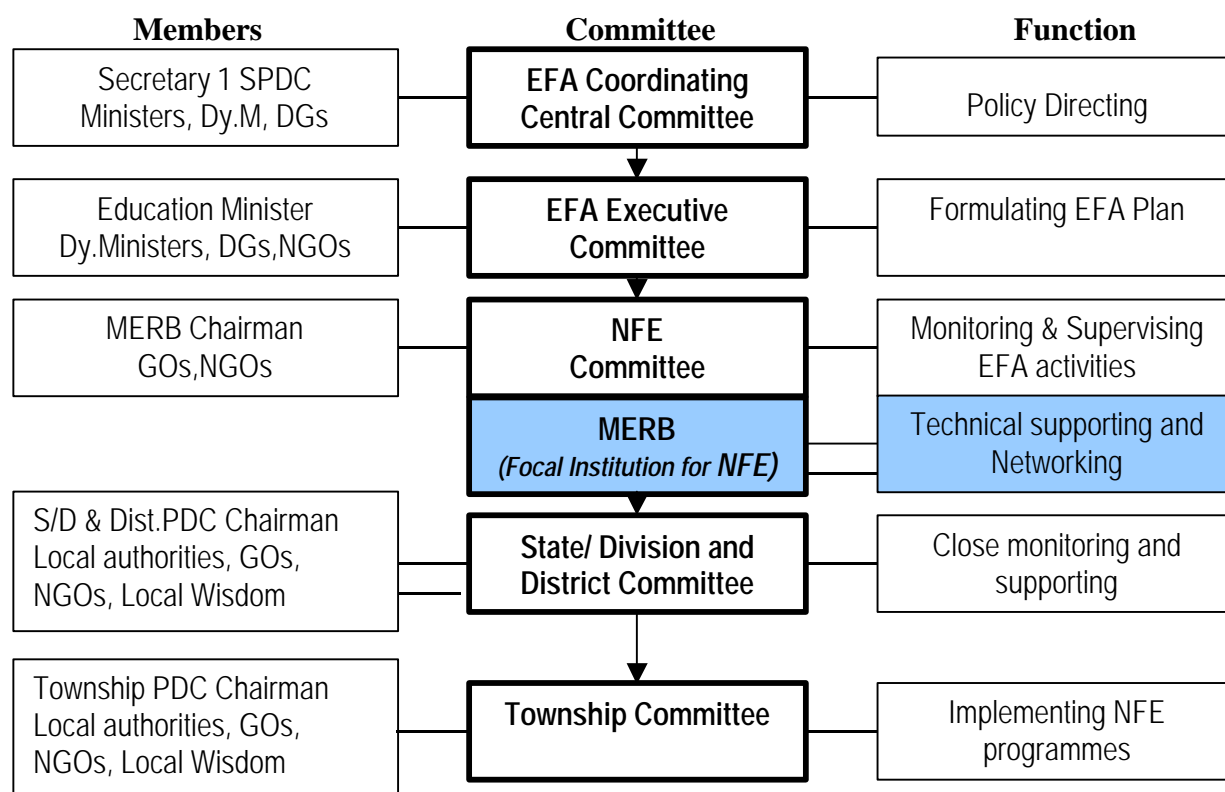
**"CLC" -of the community by the community and  
for the community**

A CLC can be (1) an information centre, (2) a vocational training centre, (3) a discussion club, (4) a reading centre, (5) a library, (6) a cultural centre and (7) an entertainment centre

### Objectives

- (1) To provide learning opportunity for all by using local researches.
- (2) To provide information of various kinds to all via training and ICT
- (3) Provide NFE, CE and skills training programme, responding to needs identified by the community
- (4) To work as a centre for human resource development for all.
- (5) To work as a coordinating agency between the villagers and development institutions

### 3. Organization of NFE Programmes



### 4. Management of CLC

**Chairman** - Chairman of Village Peace and Development Council

**Secretary** - Headmaster, Primary (or) lower secondary School

**CLC Management Committee Members** -10-15 (Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), Myanmar National Working Committee for Woman Affairs (MNCWA), Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), Red Cross Society, Fire Brigade, Teachers, Village Elders Community Members, etc

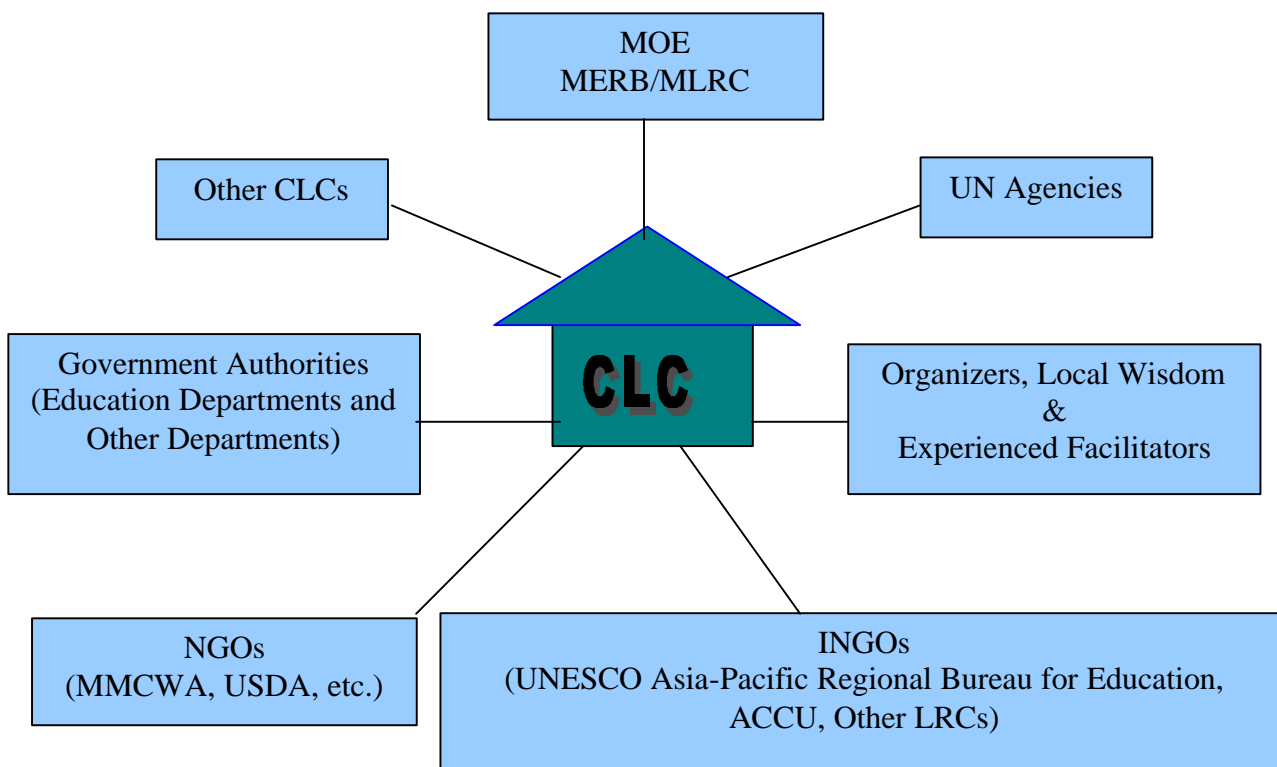
### 5. Setting up of CLCs and its Functions

- (1) Identifying the key persons
- (2) Organize target group
- (3) Plan for establishment
- (4) Establishing CLC by mobilizing local resources
- (5) Train provide training
- (6) Implement
- (7) Monitor and evaluate - by Village/Ward CLCs Committee
- (8) Monitoring and evaluation - by the central agencies concerned

### 6. Support and Supervision from the National to Grassroots Levels

- (1) MERB/MLRC are providing CLC materials and technical assistance (short-term-training)
- (2) Capacity Building Workshop etc.
- (3) UNDP provides financial and technical assistance to the CLCs in 11 UNDP project townships

### Coordination and Networking of CLCs



#### 7. Capacity Building

As MERB is the focal institution for NFE and MLRC is the Technical Resource Centre, the training of CLC personnel is a major activity of MERB and MLRC. Therefore the training needs of personnel are identified by MERB/MLRC. The CLC personnel trainings are organized where the basic literacy courses have been accomplished.

#### 8. Material Development

Materials are developed by MERB/MLRC and the types of materials are: Printed materials (books, booklets, leaflets, posters, puzzles etc.) and electronic materials (Video, audio and computer software). As an example, the Dakar framework and the Tokyo statement were translated and distributed to all concerned in time.

#### 9. Venues for CLCs

CLCs organized by MOE/UNDP project take place in separate building constructed by UNDP and the community. The venues for other CLCs are school buildings, religious buildings such as *zayat*, the monasteries, etc. and other appropriate buildings organized by the community. Ministry of education offers all levels of schools to be utilized as CLCs for the community activities.



## 10. CLCs of UNDP -HDI project

- (1) **Establishment** 1995 (HDI project)
- (2) **Location** 11 Townships (3 different socio-economic zones)
- (3) **No of CLCs** 71
- (4) **Characteristics** remoteness, isolation, unemployment, underemployment, dependency on one cash crop, high disease prevalence rate, high dropout rate, out-of-school children

## 11. CLC programmes

- (1) Basic literacy courses
- (2) Post-Literacy activities, 45 classes with 734 villagers
- (3) Income Generating Programmes
- (4) Non-formal Primary Education (NFPE)  
(12 classes with 254 learners)
- (5) Early Childhood Care (8 CLCs)
- (6) Continuing Education (CE)
  - Skills training,
  - Health or agriculture talks
  - Musical and cultural events
  - Mobile Library



## 12. Management

- 11 Community Learning Coordinators for 11 townships
- 3 zonal sector specialists
- Village Literacy Trainers (VLT)

## 13. Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE)

A new model for non-formal primary education (NFPE) in Myanmar was developed under HDI-E and HDI-3. The curriculum materials were developed by MLRC and tested by UERB. This is a primary education equivalency programme intended for out-of-school children and those who dropped out from formal primary education. Contact time is flexible, usually 2-3 hours per day over a two-year period, and adapted to the busy life schedule of the participants who often engage work to perform. Through NFPE, many learners have a second chance to complete the primary education cycle. Learners in the CLC often start with a basic literacy course, continue with post-literacy and then join the NFPE programme. Under this HDI-NFPE project there are 12 classes with 254 learners at respective CLCs.

In 2002-2003 AY, the Department of Basic Education No. 1 organized NFPE programme in 3 townships in Bago (West) Division. 213 participants who are not able to join formal schools at school hours due to their personal matter attend the NFPE classes. 45 teachers from formal schools are taking part in the programme as volunteers after attending a short training course run by NFPE organizers from MERB and YIOE (Yangon Institute of Education)

#### **14. The Strengths, problems and challenges of the current CLC programmes**

##### **The Strength**

- (1) The CLC activities are effective because of the participatory planning and management of community members.
- (2) It is successful in supporting the goals of CLC programmes of community empowerment, promoting gender equality and sustainable development.
- (3) MERB and MLRC organize capacity building programmes for CLC personnel particularly at the community level.
- (4) CE programmes are being implemented through CLCs reaching the community and grass roots level
- (5) Various UN agencies, GOs and NGOs are cooperating with MERB/MLRC in CLC activities
- (6) The CE activities help increase income and improve the quality of lives of the community members

##### **Problems and Challenges**

- (1) No regular analysis of literacy data
- (2) Lack of awareness of the literacy and CE programme by the prospective learners
- (3) Insufficient full-time staff and volunteer facilitator for literacy CE programme
- (4) Insufficient IG programme for learner who completed basic literacy
- (5) Insufficient fund and facility to develop seed money for IG beneficiary
- (6) Irregular attendance due to economic and related problems - Opportunity cost
- (7) Insufficient fund for running CLCs to provide seed money

##### **Future Plans and Suggestions**

- (1) To improve planning and management of CLCs
  - *-Conduct CBWs for CLC MC members*
  - *Improve CLCs' networking*
- (2) To improve capacity building of CLC personnel
  - *-Conduct workshops and trainings at national, district, township and community levels*
- (3) To improve the expansion and improvement of CE activities
  - *-To expand CLCs*
  - *-To expand CE programmes (especially equivalency programme)*
  - *-To emphasize IGP especially in small scale enterprises*
  - *-To provide small loan with revolving fund.*
- (4) To organize exchange of visits to the most active and successful LRCs or CLC
- (5) To distribute NFE and CE related materials to the centres regularly
- (6) To strengthen network among GOs, NGOs, and INGOs .

- (7) In accordance with the concept of CLC, '*for them, by them, with them*' the current planning and management process should be strengthened. The Capacity Building Workshops for CLC MC members should be organized regularly.
- (8) Permanent NFE personnel should be assigned.
- (9) NFE department should be established in due course.

## 15. Comments and Consideration

There are still two types of CLCs operating in Myanmar, MOE and HDI project. HDI project has implemented CLCs in 11 townships with its own mandate and approach i.e. constructing CLC buildings, providing financial assistance, paying for volunteer teachers, making direct contact with local community and establishing a report back system direct to project personnel. CLCs organized by MOE are running under the guidelines of respective committees mobilizing government officials, partner NGOs, line authorities and local community with limited financial resources. The '**Community**' is the prime mover and the promoter of CLCs based on the concept of '*for ourselves, by ourselves, with ourselves.*' For this, **sustainability** becomes an issue for both types of CLCs. Since Myanmar is planning for EFA PLAN there should be a serious consideration on this issue when HDI-4 is stepping in and EFA plan of action is on the way to be adopted. All programmes should be under the same roof of Myanmar EFA Coordinating Committee in line with EFA policy guidelines.

## 16. Conclusion

There are many areas for improvement in running CLCs in Myanmar. Based on the strength and weakness of the existing CLCs, Myanmar is now taking serious effort in preparing **National Education for ALL Action Plan** by EFA Task Force with four working groups: Access and Quality, NFE, ECCE and EMIS/Management. After the Government's approval, the plan will be distributed to lead departments and related agencies to be implemented from 2003 to 2015. Since NFE becomes essential and integral part of education, the programmes such as literacy promotion programme, non-formal primary education, continuing education, and the continual development of CLCs, are of top priority for Myanmar to create **Myanmar Learning Society** that would be able to face the challenges of this new century.