

2001 ACCU-APPEAL Joint Planning Meeting on Regional NFE Programmes in Asia and the Pacific

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Country Report

Sri Lanka

NFE Innovations

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1. Village Committees

Compulsory Education Regulations were enacted towards the end of 1997 and two types of committees have been formed at the village level and divisional level. School Attendance Committee comprises Grama niladari of the village, Samurdhi niyamaka of the Division, Principals of the Schools less than 5 in number and two parents from each school development societies. This committee has to identify the out of school children in their villages, make a list of them with relevant particulars and hand over it to the authorized officer in Division. The committee can visit the parents and persuade them for sending their children to schools, literacy centers or skills development centers available in the area.

The second committee is called School Attendance Monitoring Committee, which consists of Divisional Director of Education, Probation officer, a police officer and a prominent social worker of such Division. This Committee has been empowered to inquire about the children who are not attending formal schools or NFE centers and report to the provincial Directors of Education.

In 1999, 8,439 Attendance Committees and 240 Monitoring Committees were appointed in 8 provinces. This is a new addition to the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanism of NFE in the country. To get more community participation in NFE programmes these committees can render a valuable service. They can help in getting more reliable data from the grassroots levels.

2. Activity Schools

Eight activity schools have been set up in four districts on a pilot basis. In addition to the existing literacy centers, these new centers will cater to the target group of 10-18 years of age, who are not attending formal schools. Those children who are over-age for primary schools and are engaged in income generating activities could be benefited by these new NFE centers. They find it difficult to attend formal schools with rigid rules and need to be trained in more flexible environment.

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In the old literacy centers, more attention is paid only to literacy and numeracy. It is not sufficient enough for a child to lead a meaning full life today. There fore new curriculum for these activity schools have been developed by the NIE and now is being tried out at 8 activity schools.

It has been planned to extend this project to 90 educational zones next year. ILO/IPEC is funding for this pilot project.

The curricula would include the basic competencies in literacy, numeracy and life skills. Life skills would cover the areas such as health and nutrition, social skills, rights and duties of citizenship and values.