

CHAPTER - I :CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF NONFORMAL
EDUCATION PROGRAMMES LEADING TO
LIFE LONG EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

From the substantive and quantitative view points against the larger educational backdrop prevailing today, nonformal education is considered to be one of the major forces in meeting the educational goals.

1.1 IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION

Dissatisfaction with the prevalent educational system is an universal phenomenon. Despite this, there are some remarkable results achieved in the field of education all around the world and particularly in India, but according to the statements made in documents here and abroad on certain occasions, the existing educational systems have certain inherent drawbacks as stated below :

(1) The distribution of educational opportunities is quite uneven so much so that a large portion of population is

deprived of education.

(2) The problem is much more than a mere quantitative inadequacy; the rigid educational pattern is not in a position to reach all sections of the society and all categories of men and women. Real democratisation of education is hardly possible through conventional models. Under-privileged groups, working children, poor boys and girls, young people from under-privileged classes are in reality excluded from educational facilities. Even those who do receive some education, which consists of irrelevant and often unrelated knowledge. They are largely incapable of actively participating in development.

(3) They produce young people whose incomplete and ill-conceived education deviate them from their own community. This is because they acquire a little awareness of their social problems despite their education. They do not understand the means to solve these problems.

(4) The educational systems are at variance with the environment. For growing numbers, an inadequate environment provides neither employment ^{nor} creates readiness for self-employment. It creates continuing struggle in the rural environment. In the case of development, there is a contradiction between the environment and education.

1.2 CONCEPTUAL BASIS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Education seems to have run into a crisis of faith. The one common charge is that it is irrelevant to the learner, society, and even to educational goals themselves. It offers a frozen curriculum which has validity only in a frozen time frame. It claims to prepare young persons for life as if life, is static. The young man steps out of the educational system to take it up. Besides, preparation 'for life' has only a narrow connotation, for most often it only prepares for employment. Even in this objective, it falls far shorter, since the world of work is undergoing fast technological and sociological transformations. Life is much more than work, but the education system does not take notice of all those aspects : viz., the individual's own personal development, the social development and the relationship between the individual and the society.

Being divorced from life, it has cultivated an unreal set of values, and isolated youth from life issues. It has built a small class separated by chasm of non-understanding and non-communication from the common man. For inequality in education it leads to all other forms of inequalities, as much as other social contradictions. Again inequalities

strengthen the inequalities and deformation in education.

Several attempts have been made in the last three decades to correct this dichotomy, to integrate education with the people's total needs and social goals. But all these rectifications have remained fractional, occasional and peripheral. They have been neither substantial nor powerful enough to make much of a difference to the basic character, form or content of the education system as a whole. On the contrary, it has only helped to consolidate inequalities and accentuate distortions. It has fostered prosperity and power and ignored the human degradation and cultural silence.

Secondly, the existing educational system has several limitations regarding its possibilities to reach all potential learners who feel the need for learning and acquiring skills. Formal education lacks the power to reach children, adolescents and adults coming from different social backgrounds. By and large, it is the privileged groups who avail themselves of educational facilities through schools, polytechnics, colleges and universities. Due to rigidities and formalities in the school system, the working population is handicapped as compared to the non-working and to the member of middle-class and well-to-do families. Children and youngsters coming from poor rural areas or slum areas either

do not get into the system at all or leave it before they can gain anything worthwhile for their life struggle or work requirements. The formal education system is oriented towards the need of those who can afford full-time sequential education, rather than of those who are deprived. This aggravates social disparities.

This does not mean that the expansion of formal education does not open doors to social promotion. It does mean, however, that the formal system cannot be expected to achieve miracles, nor can it subdue social inequalities, economic backwardness, socio-psychological obstacles prejudices and various disparities in the country like India. If, from a quantitative point of view, formal educational institutions cannot be an omnipotent solution for all educational and learning needs of a complex society, search for alternatives is necessary and unavoidable. Non-formal education is certainly one of the major solutions; seeking ways of bringing more justice and equality into educational achievements, to restore discrepancies, create more appropriate facilities for learning, and make a step forward towards the establishment of a more diversified learning environment.

2. Need for Drastic Change

Obviously, a drastic and radical change is needed. It is also necessary to break this impasse to loosen up a system that functions through rigid structures, of educational levels corresponding to professional levels and to economic benefits. Furthermore, to democratise education, and to build a forward looking, participating, and sharing, learning society is required. Such learning has to be total, continuous, organically related to life and existential experience, and non-prescriptive. It has to be an amalgam of the formal, non-formal and informal forms of learning. It is only through such a synthesis that education will play its true role of accelerating the long awaited socio-economic transformation of society. A society in which all citizens will be sufficiently educated, informed and aware, and able to share the responsibility for, and benefits of development, to influence their own destiny, to develop their potential to the best advantage and to determine directions and priorities democratically.

Therefore, it is that the Fifth Five Year Plan's educational strategy is based on a composite view of education, with two major components: formal and non-formal, working in close correlation with informal education enveloping and permeating both.

1.3 FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

Education viewed as lifelong learning.

This is especially important because the field of non-formal education, including its relationships to formal education and to various social and economic development processes, has not been examined in the past. Hence, there is a lack of generally accepted terminology, classifications and basic assumptions.

One of the Spurs to widespread interest in non-formal education in recent years has been the growing recognition that education can no longer be viewed as a time-bound and place-bound process. The idea, and the necessity of seeing education as a lifelong process has been most recently emphasised by the International Commission on the Development of Education (1972).

Educational systems, both from the theoretical and practical aspects are in the process of particularly vivid and dynamic evolution and transformations. Non-formal education concepts have also undergone tremendous changes in recent years. They reflect the growing realisation :

- that education is not a one-time experience, but a life-long process
- that any time is good time for education in one's life.

- that education need not necessarily be continuous, but can be recurrent
- that education to be life-long and life-related can and should be combination of formal, non-formal and informal ways and approaches to learning practices
- that education helps to break down privileges, eliminate exploitations and open opportunities.

In contrast to the view that equates education with schooling and measures it by years of exposure International Council for Educational Development (ICED 1972) adopted from the outset a concept of education that equates it broadly with learning, regardless of where, when or how the learning occurs. This learning-centred view of education obliges to start the analysis with the learners and their needs before moving on to consider alternative means for meeting these needs. It is also to recognise that education by its very nature is a continuing process, starting from earliest infancy through adulthood. It necessarily entails a variety of methods and sources of learning. It is found useful to group these learning methods into the following three categories, recognising that there is overlap and high degree of interaction between them : (1) Informal education, (2) Formal education (3) Non-formal education.

Informal Education means the truly life-long process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment - from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media. Through informal education a child acquires a substantial vocabulary at home before going to school, a girl learns child care and cooking from helping and observing her mother, a boy picks up occupational skills from his father, and children and adolescents learn from their peers.

For the most part this process is relatively unorganised and unsystematic, yet it unquestionably accounts for a very high proportion of all that any person - even highly schooled one - accumulates in a life-time. As International Commission on the Development of Education (1972) noted, "... the School importance in relation to other means of education ... is not increasing, but diminishing".

It is stated in the Fifth Five Year Plan of India that educational Strategy is based on a composite view of education, with two components: formal and non-formal, working in close correlation with informal education. Informal education is used here as distinct from formal and non-formal, and stands

for the aggregate of incidental, unplanned and un-structured educational influences that consciously and unconsciously impinge on the individual and affect his attitudes and understanding. As formal and non-formal education gain in depth and dimension, they are bound to overflow into informal educational involvement as well. As a corrolary, with the environment becoming more complex and informed, informal education will also contribute to an acceleration and enrichment of formal and non-formal education.

Formal education which is, basically, an institutional activity, is uniform and subject-oriented, full-time, sequential, hierarchically structured, leading to certificates. It is also chronologically graded "educational system", running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.

According to the concept characteristic of lifelong education No.7, the institutions of education like schools, universities and training centres are of course important, but only as one of the agencies for lifelong education. They no longer enjoy the monopoly of educating the people and can no longer exist in isolation from other educative agencies in the society.

Non-formal education : It is flexible. It is life, environment and learner-oriented. It is diversified in content and method. It is non-authoritarian. It is built on learner-participation. It mobilises local resources. It enriches human and environmental potential.

For whom it is intended ? It is intended for all age-groups and sections of society - child, youth and adult; working men and women, the unemployed and leisured; illiterate, semi-literate, literate or educated; urban or rural people. It means that all categories of people if and when they need, if and when they want - will be in a position to use non-formal opportunities for learning. Even those who are in formal education or who have benefitted from it, also need non-formal education for personal fulfilment, professional growth, or deeper understanding at all stages of life.

However, in the present situation, since the benefits from formal education have been largely drawn by privileged sections, non-formal education is being oriented on a priority basis for the under-privileged: the poor, the landless, the illiterate, women, and tribals ... At the same time, its aim is also to help in a more equitable share of knowledge in the society. Therefore, other categories of the population will also be gradually offered more non-formal ways of learning.

One of the first priorities is now being given to those who have been neglected for a long time: the group of out-of-school youth, for whom practically no learning facilities are available, but their potential for the country's development is most precious and vital.

As stated in ICED report (1972), non-formal education has been defined as an organised educational activity outside the established formal system. It may be operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity, that is intended to serve identifiable learners and learning objectives.

Examples of non-formal education programme would be like pre-school day care centres and nurseries; school equivalency programmes to provide a "Second chance" for those who have missed schooling, are drop-outs; adolescents and adult literacy classes and school-based extra-curricular activities, such as boy and girl scouts, young farmers' clubs, sports and recreational groups and occupational training for adolescents in agriculture, construction, etc., carried on outside the formal school structure.

Many of the programmes defined as non-formal education, were not originally conceived of as "educational", except for the few that bear a close resemblance to formal schooling - such as literacy classes, correspondence courses and vocational

training programmes. They originally come under such rubrics as social and health services, community development and animation rurale, sports and recreation, agricultural extension and co-operatives. In other words, non-formal education embraces educational components of programmes designed to serve broad development goals, as well as more academic objectives.

Formal Vs Nonformal Education

Formal and non-formal education are alike in the sense that both are organised by societies to improve upon the informal learning process. In other words, to promote and facilitate certain valued types of learning that individuals cannot as readily or as quickly acquire through exposure to the environment. They differ mainly in their institutional arrangements and procedures and to a considerable extent in their subject matter and learning clientele. Occasionally their differences merge in "hybrid" programmes combining significant features of both, which are of great importance for the future.

In the ideal system of education, non-formal education would not be antithetic to the formal system of education. The two would constitute one integrated whole. However, until that state of perfect equilibrium is reached, one has to recognise

the limitations of the formal system as it operates now, so that it may be possible to define what forms, styles and patterns non-formal education could take. The statement attempts to show what aspects non-formal education stresses which formal education does not.

Formal Education

- is finite, limited to period of 'being taught' as against a period of life and work.
- is geared to impersonal goals of knowledge acquisition.
- is motivated by employment and status orientation
- has fixed pre-determined curricular concepts and content
- is imposed by 'giver' on the 'receiver' with little interaction between the two
- fosters an uncritical command obedience syndrome

Non-formal Education

- is lifelong with learning integrated with life, and work and life/upgraded and enriched by learning.
- is a process of understanding the individual's own needs, the environmental situation, the societal goals and mutual interrelationships.
- is motivated by individual growth, self-renewal and maximising human potential.
- has a diversified, flexible curriculum, responsive to learner and environmental needs
- is a process of sharing exploring, analysing and judging, together with full learner participation
- creates an open-ended, critical and self-reliant awareness

Formal Education

- Works towards selecting successes by weeding out failures
- nurtures the status quo and discourages deviates
- Works within a contemporaneous social frame and hence gets quickly out-of-step with social change
- prepares individuals and society for a state of being in a static social and cultural frame work.

Non-formal Education

- works on the principle of universal success (relative, evidently, but generalised) through universal learner satisfaction.
- provokes questioning, encourages healthy points of departure towards progress
- provokes questioning, encourages healthy points of departure towards progress
- anticipates and prepares for change, for the unknown future.

Nevertheless, it would be erroneous and dangerous, as well as pretentious to assume that non-formal education is an overall remedy. It has also other educational and socio-cultural patterns, its own limitations, and inherent shortcomings. Along with formal education and schooling, it is also in general biased by the overall frame imposed on all social activities, although to a lesser degree and with greater possibility for escape from certain external constraints. At the same time, what is gained in relevance may be lost in systematisation of knowledge, what is reached in flexibility and functionality may be lessened by non-retention and superficiality. Acceptance of the principle and development

of the non-formal education practice is a long way from realising its rich potential, and avoiding its traps and pitfalls.

Role Parameters :

The role of non-formal education would, therefore, be different from various points of educational transformation. On one side, it may have to play a more remedial role, correcting imbalances, lop-sided emphases, inflexibilities, and deflected goals, while on the other side, it will necessarily have to be restorative helping to recover lost focus, blurred social concerns and educational equalisation. Both these, however, would still be therapeutic, a corrective to lost educational health. At best it is a limited function, valid for a time, but soon to be out-grown.

Non-formal education has yet a third more positive, forward-looking rejuvenating and vitalising role, which places it in its own right, and gives it a permanent place in the educational universe of the future. It propels education in a new direction, maintains it in vital contact with socio-cultural and economic trends and transformations, and plays a multiple role for multiple needs and situations.

In other words, it is neither a substitute for formal education nor a parallel system to it. It strengthens and

enriches formal education, provides alternatives in content and form, precedes, accompanies or extends beyond the formal system, and provides a range of permutations and combinations with it. The relative place of formal and non-formal in any educational situation, will thus vary considerably, depending upon learners' needs and environmental circumstances. One can envisage a situation where education is entirely formal or non-formal. In a truly viable educational system, however, there will not be a total polarisation between the formal and non-formal methods at any point. If education is to be in harmony with and responsive to individual and social needs, non-formal education system by itself can be self-sufficient. There can be no 'stage' where non-formal education is applicable and where it is not - primary, middle, secondary, higher levels, between or beyond, for children, adolescents or adults, as a full-time or part-time process.

1.4 CONCEPT OF LIFE LONG EDUCATION

In a broad conceptual frame work of a "lifelong educational system" it is a system which should ultimately provide every individual with a flexible and diversified range of useful learning options throughout his or her lifetime. It may be formal, non-formal and informal education with complementary and mutually reinforcing elements.

Actually a "lifelong educational system" is not something that each country must create de novo. Every country, even the poorest, already has the beginning of such a system having formal and non-formal systems of education. The need, now, is to see all these educational activities as potential parts of an overall learning system that requires more diversification, better integration and much wider coverage of the whole population at all ages.

Earlier stages of the life-long learning serve primarily children and adolescents, but it is important to see them in the context of the system as a whole because what is learned at the early stages greatly influences the following learning. According to the concept-characteristic of life-long education No.4 "Life-long education is a comprehensive concept which includes formal, non-formal and informal learning extended throughout the life-span of an individual to attain the fullest possible development in personal, social and professional life. It seeks to view education in its totality and includes learning that occurs in the home, school, community, and workplace, through mass media and other situations and structures for acquiring and enriching enlightenment".

What is life long education ?

"Education is not what you learn, but what you become" says an old Indian saying.

The idea of life-long education is certainly not a new one. It is, in fact, quite ancient and probably one of the oldest ideas about education and learning. Thousands of year ago, Chinese and Indian sayings and scripts referred to it, at least as a necessity for scholars and elites. Muslim scripts exhorted the devotees to learn "from the cradle to the grave." Many traditional societies have had ways of practical teaching and personal development adapted to all ages and phases in life span. Continuity of education has been advocated by many illustrious minds both in remote and in more recent times. Quite suddenly, however, the idea of life-long learning has been vivified and has acquired a new significance and mass application. It has again aroused an increasing world-wide support and interest.

What is new ?

This question is particularly intriguing when educational systems are far from being built on the foundations of life-long learning. Educational philosophies, policies, strategies and structures correspond to education conceptualised as a time-bound, and spacebound sub-system, as a part of establishment, as a formalised, institutionalised set of activities aiming at "preparing human beings for life".

What is therefore, new is the attempt to identify the

the dimensions of life-long education in the present time and to find out its place in to-day's societies. It is not merely the statement of a "startling" and "promising" concept, but an effort to concretise, elaborate and implement the "global approach to education."

What is new, is the attempt to see life-long education in an overall perspective, as an organising principle embracing the whole of education: from the individual and societal view-point, and from school and out-of-school stand point.

What does the term really mean ?

The word "life" has three main dimensions or aspects : (1) a temporal dimension in the vertical or biographical sense ("life of X") ; (2) a spatial dimension in the horizontal or social sense ("family life", "private life", "college life" etc.); (3) a value dimension, namely life in a philosophical or ethical sense ("aim of human life", "joy of life" etc.) Education should aim at the integration of all these three dimensions.

The three basic terms upon which the meaning of the concept is based, are "life", "life long" and "education".

The meaning attached to these terms and interpretation

given to them largely determine the scope and meaning of life-long education.

These terms that constitute the composite term "life long education" require detail^{ed} elucidation. The terms "life" and "education" are themselves very comprehensive and multi-dimensional. The variation in the meaning of these terms in different societies and at different times results in various modelities in the operational meaning of life-long education. Also, the view held regarding the relationship between education and learning is very crucial. This determines the differences, if any, between life-long education and life-long learning. The term "life-long" is very significant and it indicates the time-span of learning. Life-long education begins with the beginning of life and ends with the end of life. It subsumes all stages and aspects of human development and varied roles that individuals have to play at each stage.

To its promoters, life-long education does not mean a set of complementary educational activities after regular schooling. The term is not equivalent to continuing education or recurrent education, or post-school education. It does not imply a life-long curriculum or a life-long schooling. It is neither a new fashioned name for adult education nor does it aim to up-grade teaching to the top-level of social and human

activities. Though all these trends are more or less present and cannot be discarded, the contemporary thinking about life-long education has much more complex overtones.

The term, "life-long education" is used in the sense of life-long learning facilities and practices. The difference between "life-long education and "life-long learning" is well explained in the following quotation from the recent OECD publication :

"In a rapidly changing society, learning is necessary throughout life, not only for the selected few but for all ... Learning is not incidental to education. Learning is an essential characteristic of the living organism, necessary for its survival and for its evolution. Man learns in all his life situations ... 'Education' is organised and structured learning, confined to an intentionally created situation, although the school represents the prototype of the intentional and formal learning situation. The learning process is not restricted to any particular situation or environment. But education, because it requires a certain absence and distance from other activities, cannot conceivably be permanent or continuous process".

The term 'life-long education policies' is applied to an overall societal action. It aims to place at the disposal of as many individuals as possible at all stages of their lives, various facilities for learning. In other words, it

can be seen in the sense of the international report.

"Life-long education is not an educational system but the principle on which the overall organisation of a system is founded and which would accordingly underline the development of each of its component parts.

Ultimately, the theoretical concept of life-long education when operationalised provides a comprehensive system of education. From an operational point of view, therefore, life-long education is conceived as a system of education. The system of life-long education draws its guidelines from its theoretical frame work. An operational frame work of the system of life-long education includes a whole complex of goals, assumptions, formal and non-formal patterns of education in the home, school and community; educational management including planning, structures, organisations, finance, etc.

The concept is no longer confined to institutionalised learning. It includes all stages, aspects and situations of personally and socially desired learning.

So formal and non-formal education should not function in water-tight isolation but as mutually reinforcing elements.

If life-long education is put into practice, continuous efforts should be taken to integrate formal and non-formal education as complementary approaches.

The concept of life-long education, in the new perspective, is not yet fully and universally operationalised and it is still in a process of evolution. In order to enhance the process of its evolution and its application, it appears essential to identify various characteristics of the concept in some what more precise terms through literature study and other techniques and then begin to visualize practical implications of the concept characteristics for different stages and aspects of education.

1.5 FUNCTIONS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Minimum essential learning needs

To size up the educational requirements of the learners in rural and urban areas and to plan provisions for meeting them, one must first have a clear and realistic conception of the minimum essential learning needs. Hence the starting question is : What educational needs should be fulfilled by one means or another for all boys and girls before they assume the full responsibilities of adulthood? Without a clear and detailed answer to this question, the assertion that every child has a "right" to an education has little practical meaning. This "right" must be translated into terms of some "minimum package" of attitudes, skills and knowledge that

every young person in a given society requires for an effective and satisfying adulthood. Many young people may achieve more than this minimum, but any society guided by democratic ideals must give a high priority to securing at least this minimum for all. To do otherwise is to create a privileged elite at the sacrifice of every one else.

This "minimum package" would doubtlessly differ considerably from one area to another (between and within countries) to allow for great variations in the factors that influence social economic and political development. It would also vary according to what overall goals each society sets for itself: the task for each individual country is to specify the ingredients in such a minimum learning package against the larger question of "education for what?"

Yet, despite the very diverse needs and environments of different societies, there would probably be agreement among most educational leaders that, in more general terms, the package should include at least the following interdependent elements, all of equal importance. These six elements are suggested as illustrative of a minimum package. Each nation and community must, of course, translate these essential learning requirements into their own precise and operationally applicable terms.

With regards to
(a) Positive attitudes, help and cooperation both are to be provided for one's family and fellowmen in their work. So also, it should be extended to national development by way of continued learning. Finally it should aim at developing ethical values in the form of concrete expression in one's daily behavioural patterns.

(b) Functional literacy and numeracy, should aim at enabling the individuals (i) to read with comprehension a national newspaper or magazine, useful agricultural, health, and other "how-to-do-it" bulletins, or manufacturers' instruction sheets, (ii) to write a legible letter to a friend or to a government bureau requesting information; and (iii) to handle important common computations - such as measurement of land and buildings, calculation of agricultural or trade and commerce input costs and revenues, interest charges on credit, and rental rates on land and the houses in which they live.

(c) A Scientific outlook and an elementary understanding of the processes of nature in the particular area, pertaining to health and sanitation, to raising crops and animals, to nutrition, food shortage and preparation, and to the environment and its protection.

(d) Functional knowledge and skills for raising a family and

operating a household, including the essential elements of protecting family health, family planning with appropriate, good child care, nutrition, and sanitation; cultural activities and recreation; care of the injured and sick; intelligent shopping and use of money; making clothes and other consumption goods, house repairs and environmental improvements; growing and preserving food for family consumption.

(e) Functional knowledge and skills for earning a living, including not only the skills required for a particular local occupation, but also a knowledge of a variety of locally useful common skills for agriculture, and other occupations and non-farm use.

(f) Functional knowledge and skills for civic participation, including some knowledge of national and local history and ideology, an understanding of one's society; awareness of government structure and functions; taxes and public expenditures; available social services, rights and obligations of individual citizens; principles, aims and functioning of co-operatives, municipalities, panchayats and of local voluntary associations.

Though, these essential learning needs are defined within a particular society, it is important that they be stated in

operational terms so as to provide a clear guide to instruction and learning and practical basis for measuring achievement.

Fortunately, countries have wide latitude in the choice of means and methods for pursuing the learning objectives listed above. Varieties and combinations of formal, non-formal and informal education can be designed and fitted to the circumstances. What is clear from this list of minimum learning needs is that no one mode or institution of education - formal, informal or non-formal - is capable by itself of meeting all the six requirements. The primary school might be counted on to answer the child's need for literacy, and growth of scientific outlook. An ideal community centre, where a severe shortage of primary schooling exists, non-formal education must endeavour to handle as much as possible of this task. But because of the young age of its pupils (and for other reasons as well) the primary school cannot assume prime responsibility for meeting learning needs relating to social attitudes and work behaviour, family life, occupational training, and community participation. The main burden for achieving these objectives must be borne by informal and non-formal education, and, where resources allow, by practical types of post-primary formal education. In many societies informal

education through the family and community plays a dominant role in responding to these needs. For precisely this reason, it too must be strengthened if the goal is modernisation and not just conservation of traditional ways of life.

The Growing-up process in transitional societies :

Another conceptual matter - the growing-up process of children in rural and urban areas - is basic to our general analysis and to the planning of the time-frame and sequence of educational services to help them grow-up more effectively.

Numerous difficulties have arisen from transplanting age-graded school systems from urban industrial societies to developing societies that have begun their transition to modernisation. The ill-fitness of such systems is especially glaring in these societies' vast rural sectors, which are still tradition-bound in their production technologies, social relationships and myths and not in the roles and responsibilities assigned to children at successive stages of their voyage from early childhood to full adulthood.

The chronological structure of most of to-day's conventional school systems, that developed in Western societies, is based on the premise that a child's route to adulthood passes through these four stages :

- (i) Infancy and early childhood (from birth to five years of age) - corresponding with provisions for nurseries, day-care centres and kindergartens.
- (ii) Childhood (6 to 12 years of age) - corresponding with provision for primary schooling.
- (iii) Adolescence (13 to 18 years of age) - corresponding with provision for the secondary schooling.
- (iv) Post-adolescence youth and young adulthood (19 to 24 years of age) - corresponding with provision for post-secondary education.

These age categories are related partly to stages of biological maturity but even more to the socio-economic circumstances in which a child grows up. This is applied to Indian situation also. David Bakan, (1971) a Canadian psychologist, has observed that the concept of adolescence as it is known to-day is less than a hundred years old and was an outgrowth of industrialisation and urbanisation in Western Societies: "Adolescence was added to childhood as a Second childhood in order to fulfill the aims of the new urban-industrial society (in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century). The adoption of child labour laws and the extension of compulsory schooling were steps in this prolongation of childhood and of postponing the time when young people assumed adult functions and responsibilities.

The educational responses by the industrializing nations to their changing social and economic conditions have now generated turbulent counter-responses by young people themselves. One of the root causes of the recent wide-spread discontent and rebellion of youth has been identified as the steady prolongation of full-time schooling and the resulting postponement of adult roles for young people.

Ironically, the advanced countries whose educational models so strongly influenced the shaping of educational forms and practices in to-day's developing countries, are now rapidly backing away from these models. They are seeking new ways to provide more flexible options to young people - options that will allow them to assume adult roles and responsibilities sooner.

At what point and at what age does a boy or girl in rural India or rural Africa pass from childhood to adulthood? If full adulthood begins for a girl (in the eyes of her community) when she marries and starts bearing children, in many rural societies would be at age 15 or earlier. The age of maturity for boys varies greatly between cultures but is mostly higher than for girls.

The basic point is that standardised classifications of young people by age brackets, based on the sociology and

and practices of industrialised nations, can be inappropriate to planning educational arrangements for meeting the minimum essential learning needs of boys and girls in relatively unmodernised areas of developing countries. Such arrangements should be fitted to the roles and responsibilities of boys and girls at different age levels as defined and practised by the particular society, particularly if the education is to avoid alienation of young people from their own families and culture. Furthermore, if education is to contribute positively to the society's modernisation and all-round development, these arrangements must also be tailored to the realistic job training patterns and career prospects of the great majority of boys and girls in that country.

For the same reasons, the concepts and models of "adult education" originating in Western nations, where adults are legally defined as those who have reached their majority (usually at about the age 21) and where most of them have already at least ten full years of schooling - need drastic redefinition to fit the needs and conditions of developing nations'. This, of course, is happening, though perhaps not fast enough.

The role of Education in rural development :

In order to talk about the role of education in rural

and urban development, one must begin with a reasonably clear conception of what the development means? What are the goals of development? What criteria and evidence are appropriate for judging its progress? How does the process of development start and unfold in rural and urban areas? What are the national priorities and resource allocations for improving rural and urban conditions? In what ways can education best contribute to this process?

The general literature on development is not very helpful in answering these questions. Scholars have written ^{too much about} ~~of~~ non-formal education to develop the nations, but they have neglected that important part of national development which takes place in rural areas. The point has been made repeatedly that most developing countries are marked by a striking economic and social dualism - dualism between the "modernised urban sector" and "traditional rural sector," which thus far has been much less affected by modernising influences. Despite the claims, sometimes made, that high priority is being accorded to rural development in national plans, the urban sector has typically received top priority in actual budgetary allocations. It is on the theory that progress in the cities would eventually "trickle" down to the rural areas. But this spread of effect has proved to be very weak. In many instances there is an evidence that the gap between the two

is growing rather than lessening.

Rural areas are not all alike. Some, in proximity to metropolitan areas, and with a high development potential and ready access to urban markets, are modernising fairly rapidly and are sharing in urban progress. Most rural areas fall somewhere in between, populated predominantly with subsistence farmers but moving gradually into a monetary economy. The social and economic differences among rural areas, even within the same country, call for different educational developmental prescriptions. There cannot be just one formula for all.

Broadly conceived, rural development means rural transformation - change not only of the methods of production and of economic institutions but of social and political infrastructures as well, and transformation of human relationships and opportunities.

Seen in this frame, the paramount goals of rural development, along with increased production and income, include the equitable distribution of income, increased employment, land reform, better health, nutrition and housing for all rural dwellers, expanded educational opportunities for all, the strengthening of local means of community self-government and co-operation, the eradication of poverty and the promotion of social justice.

These are not simply "good things" to be pursued. After economic growth has been achieved they must be pursued concomitantly.

Clearly, successful rural development requires a great variety of specialities and specialised education. For example, various dimensions of agriculture, small industry and commerce, transportation and irrigation, health, nutrition, and other aspects of family life, coöperatives and community government. But unless these specialised educational activities are fitted into a larger framework appropriate to the multifaceted development of the area, rural education is merely the accidental accretion of programmes, each going its own separate way. Finally, rural development must not be viewed in isolation from overall national development. There are many dynamic interactions between rural and urban economies in the process of healthy national development. It would be a great mistake, however, to assume that thriving urban economies will solve the "rural problem" - especially rural unemployment - by creating jobs enough to drain off surplus rural labour. In most developing nations, despite high rate of migration to cities, the rural population will continue to grow, and indeed, in some areas it will almost be doubled by the year 2000. The urgency of development in these areas can thus hardly be

overstated - including the vigorous development of rural hub-towns, those commercial, administrative and cultural centres serving nearby agricultural areas which can become major generators of new rural employment opportunities.

Task of Non-Formal Education in Industrialised nations

Non-formal education plays three main roles vis-a-vis formal education in those industrialised countries where practically all young people attend full-time school until the age of 15 or older and a large fraction continues on to higher education.

Firstly, non-formal education programmes are very useful for pre-primary education because it helps to prepare pre-school children for formal education through nursery schools, day care centres and the like.

Secondly, non-formal education parallels and complements formal schooling by providing extra-curricular learning experiences for students currently in school, through various groups, cultural and other activity groups and youth organisations.

Thirdly, this is the largest and the most diversified role of all, non-formal education follows up formal education by offering a great variety of "continuing" or "further"

educational opportunities to older youths and adults who have completed their formal schooling. In trying to meet the diverse demands for such follow-up education in these industrialised nations, the designers and operators of non-formal programmes have the great advantage of dealing with learners who already have a solid base of formal education to build upon.

Tasks of non-formal Education in developing countries

In those developing countries where economic and educational advancement has achieved a high level, the roles of non-formal education are substantially the same as in the more industrialised countries. In the great majority of developing countries, however, the scale and character of these roles differ considerably, especially in the rural areas. Because of the incomplete development of their formal educational systems, non-formal education falls here to the mammoth "Unfinished business" of the primary and secondary schools. It inherits a vast clientele of children and youth who have never been to school, or have dropped out before finishing, or have completed primary school but not gone to secondary school. And for a large portion of this clientele, non-formal education has to start virtually from scratch, by providing "the three R's".

To gauge the dimensions of the tasks for non-formal education, something must be known about the number and educational background of these out of schoolers (who constitute the vast majority of all children and youth). Yet in most countries neither ministries of education nor government statistical bureaus keep track of this large group. Education ministries are preoccupied with the in-schoolers, and in most countries no agency or organisation has overall responsibility for attending to the educational needs of the out-of-schoolers. Government is not very much active in implementing non-formal programmes.

It is also necessary to know something about the potentialities of informal education in each area for meeting some of the minimum learning needs of the learner, in order to ascertain what learning tasks will not need to be borne by non-formal or formal education. Here again, however, trustworthy information is very scarce.

The Unfinished business of the schools

The out-of-school group - particularly that portion of it requiring primary school equivalency education - is very much larger than the impression conveyed by official statistics on school participation. These national statistics - however, useful they may be within a particular country to show trends

in enrolments - are misleading in several respects.

According to the International Commission on the Development of Education, when over-age pupils are removed from the ratios, "... in 1968, only four out of ten primary school-age children in Africa were actually in classes. In the Arab States only half attended school. Forty-five per cent of Asia's children and 25 per cent in Latin America were similarly not enrolled.

National participation ratios conceal the great disparity that typically exists between the rates of school enrolment in urban and rural areas. Rural enrolment rates are usually substantially lower, while drop-out and repetition rates are higher.

Enrolment ratios bear little relation to completion rates. Actually, a sizeable fraction of the boys and girls included in the current enrolment statistics will drop-out prematurely and never get more than one or two or three full years of schooling - not enough to master the skills of literacy and numeracy or much else of lasting value. Unless they later get a "second chance" through non-formal education, they are headed for a life of illiteracy.

Recent studies of school "wastage" rates by UNESCO and its International Bureau of Education, and preliminary ICED

findings in a few countries provide startling clues on how great a proportion of children are not getting a basic primary education.

In some of the poorer rural areas as many as 90 per cent or more of all young people (especially girls) reach maturity without knowing how to read and write. In such situations the "Unfinished business" of the schools which is thrust upon non-formal education is far larger than what the schools themselves are currently accomplishing. In other areas there are great gaps which could conceivably be bridged by non-formal programmes and by introducing modernising elements into the learning patterns. The main point to be borne in mind is that even if it were possible for all children to receive full primary schooling, non-formal education (along with secondary schooling and informal education) would still be left with an enormous burden of following up and continuing their educational growth.

1.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF VARIOUS AGENCIES IN NONFORMAL EDUCATION

Certain clear achievements stand out from the experiences, conceptually even more than numerically.

- The place of non-formal education as an integral part of education is getting to be accepted, in principle,

if not yet in practice. This is reflected in the Five Year Plans of several states which provide for non-formal education for the age-group 6-14.

- "Functionalism" has begun to permeate non-formal education programmes. Educational component is also being integrated into major developmental activities. Non-formal education is being introduced at key points : school education, higher education, workers' improvement, youth development, developmental activities, panchayat organisations, library services, etc.
- The beginnings of environment and ecology-based curricula are visible and hold out fair promise of diversification and flexibility of programmes.
- There is a healthy trend for various agencies and at different levels to link programmes of non-formal education into an interlocking whole, setting a favourable stage for the growth of non-formal education as a continuum.

Roles and Responsibilities :

If non-formal education is to become an inherent part of the education system, if in combination with formal and informal education it is to serve as an instrument for achieving a more egalitarian, social, economic and cultural order, whose responsibility should non-formal education be?

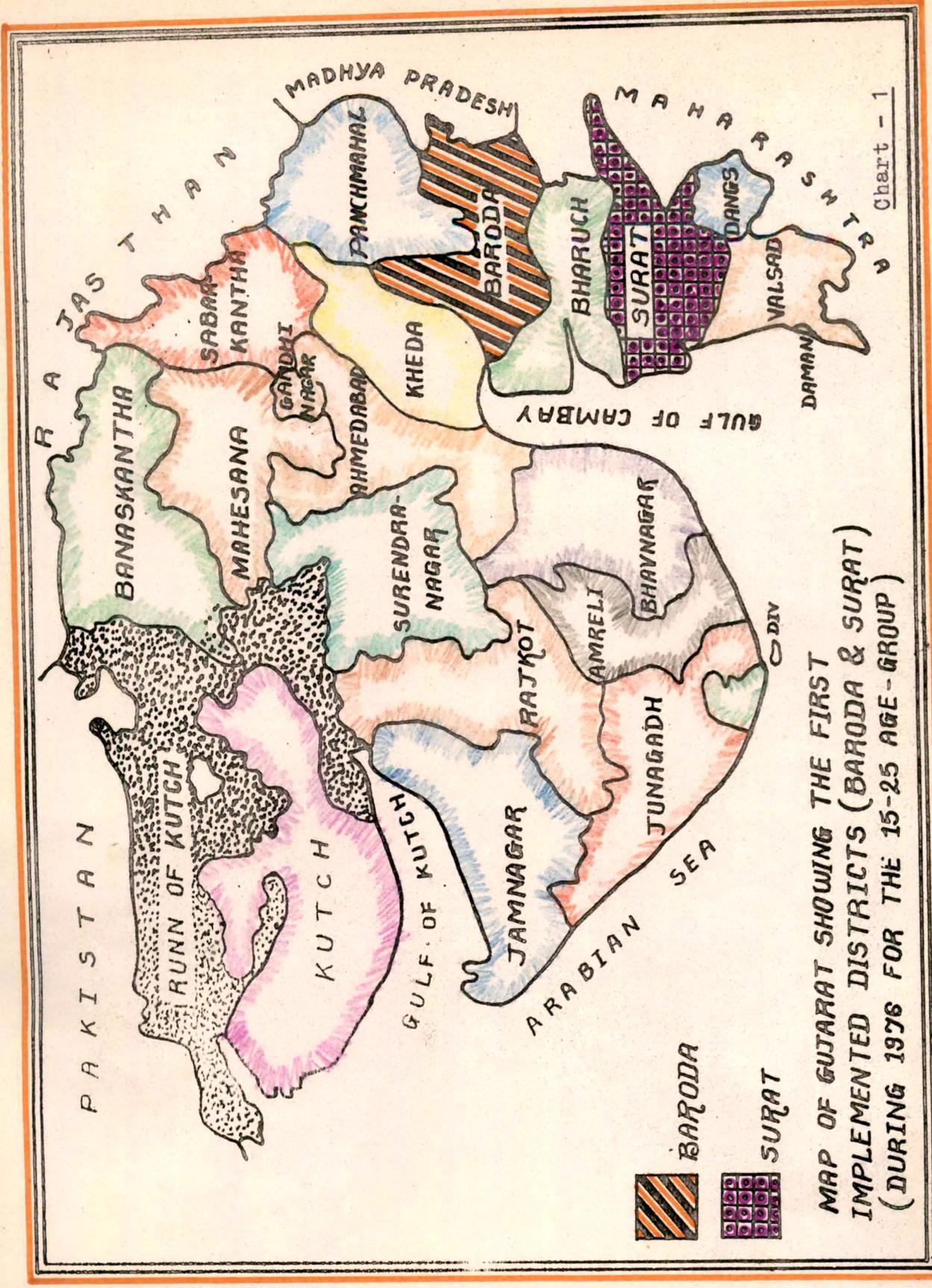
In pre-independence days, the colonial power was interested in educating only those who would serve in its governance. It was not interested in educating the masses nor in raising their consciousness. Responsibility for formal and non-formal education was, therefore, highly polarised. The later was entirely the province of voluntary agencies who were motivated by national and patriotic sentiments to awaken the people.

This division of roles continued more or less on the same pattern even after independence, largely because formal education itself absorbed all resources and most attention of the national government. But the context has changed rapidly in the last decade. Technological advances are fast outpacing people's awareness. Socio-economic goals are no nearer, the poor are increasing in number, degree of deprivation and vulnerability to exploitation; people's participation is not measuring upto development needs. All this has brought to the focus the need for total educational action matched to total socio-political and socio-economic objectives.

Roles and responsibilities have to be shared by various partners and have necessarily to undergo transformation.

Governmental responsibilities :

Government of India provides assistance towards the



MAP OF GUJARAT SHOWING THE FIRST IMPLEMENTED DISTRICTS (BARODA & SURAT) (DURING 1976 FOR THE 15-25 AGE-GROUP)

implementation of the programme in one district in every state to start with each district organising 100 classes with a total enrolment of 3,000 young people per district. The states are, however, expected to start the programme in at least one other district out of their own funds.

According to this, the first implementation of non-formal education programme in Gujarat State for the age-group 15-25 has been started in Baroda district with the financial responsibility of Central government (through NCERT). While Surat district has started the programme with the financial responsibility of Gujarat Government during 1976.

- (1) The new concept of education clearly gives a mandate that the responsibility of the total education of the people lies jointly on the society as a whole, the public bodies in general and the state in particular. All old and young men and women, forward and backward, privileged and underprivileged have to be looked after by these bodies for their education. This means that the state, while planning for education, has to take into consideration the needs of every single citizen and adopt appropriate strategies, combining formal and non-formal approaches.
- (2) The state's responsibility is, therefore, to frame policy, formulate action strategies, set long and short-term directions,

and ensure action. The state will also need to take such legislative and executive action as is necessary to meet the objectives.

(3) In this total action, the state will mobilise all resources developmental agencies, village panchayats, educational institutions, institutions of higher learning, student power and voluntary agencies.

(4) It is only the state that can bring about an integration of education with all aspects of nation's life - democratic action, civic processes, productivity and development, eradication of poverty, promotion of national consciousness, equalisation of privileges, decrease of income disparities, and sharing of wealth.

(5) It is only the state that can also bring about an inter-linking between the formal and non-formal system. Under the existing order, practically all of the administrative and professional machinery is concerned with more than 30 per cent of the population who are under formal education. The rest of the population outside it receives insignificant attention and marginal resources. This imbalance has to be quickly rectified and the only way to do so is to see the two approaches - formal and non-formal, with an interlink with incidental effects and impacts - are treated as a simultaneous and

mutually interrelated responsibility at every point of the educational system; and that educational administrators, teachers, teacher-educators, and planners deal with every educational situation through formal-cum-non-formal actions.

Voluntary organisations :

Prior to independence, voluntary organisations were practically the only agency in this field, and the dedication of their workers achieved appreciable results against heavy odds. After independence, and with the advent of planning, it became a definite governmental policy to encourage voluntary organisations playing an even larger role in this area, and encourage support to those organisations which have their root among the masses and are motivated by genuine public concern. These organisations have a special role in carrying out pilot projects, research and investigation; in literature production; in working with special groups where a high degree of dedication is called for; and in establishing liaison with the people and mobilising local support. The special need of such organisations is to build their dedicated workers into technically competent people. They also need assistance in project formulation and evaluation.

The pioneering service rendered by voluntary agencies in keeping aloof the torch of non-formal education through the

decades has already been referred to. They have been close to the learner's environment, identified themselves with it and are able to operate with considerable freedom and flexibility. They are also able to mobilise community resources and cooperation more vigorously than governmental agencies. Voluntary organisations have been functioning at All-India, State, regional and district levels and may have, in course of years, come to work in special fields like women's groups, tribal groups, library services, material production, functional education etc.

It is their silent and unflagging faith in this programme that has kept the interest of non-formal education before the public eye and conscience. The national and international awards which some of these organisations have won in the last decade are testimony of their contribution to the practice of non-formal education.

Diversification of Voluntary Initiative and Efforts

With Government assuming larger direct responsibility for non-formal education in recent times, governmental policies and programmes of voluntary agencies have been covering in a mutually supporting complementarity. Some organisations are already operating functional literacy programmes either on behalf of government or independently; some are taking up

experiments which are likely to provide new insights into the practice of non-formal education; many are giving new orientations to their programmes, objectives and learning materials, almost all of them are re-examining non-formal education concept and philosophy against larger national perspectives and international experiences.

But the present trends and new requirements regarding non-formal education are reflected in two directions: (a) the development of non-formal education requires the involvement of non-governmental voluntary organisations, agencies and associations of various types; (b) their participation should be so diversified as to correspond to the optimum potential of each of them.

Unlike in the past, when only so-called adult education associations, women's organisations and social welfare agencies took part in carrying on adult literacy and social education programmes, there is to-day ample necessity for direct and active involvement of political parties and organisations, mass movements, trade unions, professional teachers' associations, youth movements, social service agencies, religious organisations, associations of pedagogues and technicians, social welfare agencies, women and youth societies, workers' associations for cultural and social

promotion, associations of landless labourers and small farmers and so on. Without such wide participation there are meagre chances to transform educational thought and practice in the way that is implied by the introduction of non-formal education. For such introduction calls for participation of policy-makers, large masses of learners, of parents, employers, educators, learned citizens, professionals, local leaders, social workers, technicians, administrators and each category has a specific role.

It may be unreal and uneconomical to expect from all non-governmental organisations the same kind of involvement in programmes of non-formal education. On the contrary, many of them could offer a more efficient contribution in quite different ways.

If political parties and organisations could bring the discussion on related matters into legislative Assemblies and Parliament; if they could promote a public debate on rethinking and reshaping the educational system and policies; if they initiate necessary legislative measures - their potential would have been beneficially utilised in the course of non-formal education. If the trade unions and other workers' organisations, instead of carrying on directly educational and training programmes, a task for which they are not always sufficiently

equipped, concentrate on obtaining support of employers, both public and private, non-formal education would develop tremendously. If they try to include in the labour legislation and collective bargaining, incentives for workers for upgrading their knowledge and skills - they would probably be more successful in achieving their objectives.

Various women's and youth organisations could find their appropriate role, by influencing their members and encouraging them to follow nonformal practices by fighting against prejudices and constraints, etc. These and similar organisations have a particularly important task in helping parents to change their conventional, orthodox opinion about non-formal education and educational system in general.

Teachers' organisations and educators' associations have to accept a professional responsibility for elaborating content and programmes for various environments and categories of learners; the development of and experimentation with new types of learning teaching materials; promotion of innovative learning/teaching methods and their evaluation. Without the involvement of educators in devising innovative approaches, most of the educational innovations will remain extraneous and thus ineffective.

Priority Common Objectives

Similar diversified attitudes should be evolved by other types of voluntary non-governmental agencies, organisations or associations. Uniformity in their role and functioning would be harmful and lead to inefficiency. However, some common objectives and tasks could be pointed out at the present moment when society seems poised for a global educational thrust.

Building Public Opinion :

No social transformation can take place without people's participation. Similarly, the type of non-formal education that is expected and envisaged can not come into being unless all sections of population appreciate its need and play their respective role for those who have education, wealth, power, status, privileges on the one side, and those who do not have any of these on the other. This calls for a massive and campaign-like action, and the creation of necessary climate. Voluntary organisations with their contact with the people, have a tremendous responsibility to build powerful public opinion at all levels of the community and at various forums, out of which will flow both political support and executive action.