

# Strategy Of Manpower Planning—II

## A Case for Non-formal Education

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Although theoretically government has recognised the importance of non-formal education through their various plans and programmes but no such programme has taken any concrete shape till now. In the first five year plan (1973-78) documents it has been stated that the thrust for non-formal education would be in three directions: a) Provision of skills to out of school youths and adults. b) Spread of mass education and functional literacy; c) Education related to development needs through the extensive use of educational technology. But these ideas are yet to be implemented. A committee for non-formal education which was constituted by the government, has already submitted its report in 1975. But no action has yet been taken on it. A desirable first step in chalking-out a programme of non-formal education in Bangladesh will be to conduct a broad based intensive survey in order to have a better idea about the existing facilities of education, the learning needs of the people, participants and beneficiaries of the present education process, people's attitude about it etc. In other words, the survey will be a 'stock-taking' of the existing conditions of education which will provide an information base for formulating a programme of non-formal education. The survey for the purpose will be of two types viz. one will be of general type covering the whole of Bangladesh. The other will be a regional survey to identify the local problems. A thana may be selected as a unit of regional survey.

In the draft second report on a research study for UNICEF prepared by the ICED in 1974 it was stated that such stock-taking will answer five key questions (Building New-Educational Strategies: To serve rural children youth, 1974). The questions are: a) What is the scale and character of the minimum essential learning needs of rural children and youth? b) What educational provisions already exist for meeting these needs, how well are they performing, and what portion of total requirement are they already meeting? c) What arrangements exist for improving the co-ordination and mutual reinforcement of these various educational activities etc. d) What resources are now being used and what potential resources—local national and external—might be mobilised, etc. e) What are the major shortcomings in existing educational structures, programmes and processes that will clearly require drastic change to remedy what alternative solution merit serious exploration ... etc.

After the stock-taking is over a planning committee one at the national level and other at the local level may be constituted. National committee will fix the broad objectives, general framework of the programme, cost of the programme. National committee includes the representatives of ministry of agriculture, education rural development & co-operative, health family planning and social welfare and an expert in the field of non-formal education. Local committee will formulate an action programme for a thana. The local committee will be constituted with the thana level

officials of the above mentioned industries. An expertise help may be provided from time to time by the district administration whenever it will be necessary. The thana education officer will be the convener and the C.O. (Dev.) will be the secretary of the proposed committee. Local committee will prepare a programme for the thana in accordance with the findings of the regional survey and the local needs.

The items that will be incorporated in the institution subject and in the preparation of training materials will be specified by the local committee. While doing this the need of different types of clients will be kept in mind. The items that are likely to be included will be of vital local importance, that will make the learners more conscious and efficient in their respective fields. The items for the purpose may be: health; sanitation; family planning poultry farming; vegetable raising fish culture; use of agricultural inputs viz. credit seed fertilizer pesticides organisation or co-operatives; co-operative principles new agricultural technology; simple accounting; farm management; processing and marketing of agricultural products; maintenance and repair of pumps; tube-wells and other agricultural implements etc.

In the rural areas we have many institutions that will provide physical facilities to launch a programme of non-formal education. We have community centres union parishad offices primary school high school madrasa youth clubs in the rural areas. Even in some rural areas we have govt. farms, experimental research centres, ADC farms and workshops, which are not used throughout the years can be utilized for the purpose of imparting knowledge and skills to the village folk.

Next step will be the locating selecting the instructors. For this purpose we are not suggesting the recruitment of any new cadre of people. What we need is the optimum utilisation of the existing local level officials and to induce them to the programme of non-formal education. At the thana and union level we have official of different nation building departments who can act as instructors and trainers for the programme of non-formal education. The officials who are available at the local level are: Thana education, agricultural extension, family planning Co-operative livestock officers etc. Almost all these officers have their counterpart at the union level. There are also rural social welfare worker, family planning worker, health visitor etc. They can also be utilised for the purpose. Local primary and high school teachers also can act as instructors. The thana level officials may be centrally briefed and trained at the district level about the programme objective and the operational pattern. And the thana level officials can act as trainers of the union level officials school teachers etc.

Different universities, colleges (medical engineering agriculture) etc. can play an important role in supporting a massive non-formal education programme. The teachers and the students of these institutions can contribute to the programme in two ways: (1) they can act as trainers of field personnel and other workers of non-formal education.

(2) they can act as instructors and trainers of the selected target group in their respective areas during vacation. We think that utilization of University College teachers and students in a planned way will be a significant step in our nation building works. Recent experience of various voluntary works in different parts of the country encourage us in this direction.

As regards the participation of local level official, it will not be unjustified to doubt their extent of participation in such a programme. Thus official may even think it to be an added burden on them. There is also lack of co-ordination among the workers of different nation building departments at the local level. As such without a co-ordinated approach the success of the programme may be doubtful. Actually participation cannot be imposed unless it is spontaneous. The success of such a programme depends to a great extent on how far a sense of dedication can be generated among these officials. The Government should also streamline and co-ordinate the works of different nation building departments.

A programme for non-formal education should not be started at a time all throughout the country. It should be done part by part in a phased manner. For the purpose a first step may be to introduce the programme in certain selected areas of the country as a Pilot Project. Introduction of the programme as a Pilot Project will help to identify different problems of implementation and find solution thereof. The experience thus gained may be useful before it can be replicated all throughout the country.

### CONCLUSIONS

In our present paper we tried to suggest a desirable strategy for manpower planning through non-formal education examining the related issues around it. An important problem relating to manpower planning in Bangladesh is to find out an appropriate strategy in the backdrop of socio-economic reality. One important statement of the paper is that a programme of education should address itself to the need for whom it is primarily meant and then ultimately to the need of the society.

We should also see how education process is related to the given social conditions and social stratification viz. who are the recipients and beneficiary of the education process. In this respect we cannot be oblivious of the fact that we have a big base of illiterate school drop-outs and women population.

Now how to utilize and make them productive? Non-formal education which includes instruction relating to health, family planning, use marketing of agricultural products poultry farming and other day to day problems of the different categories of audience may aid a lot in this respect.

As a first step in chalking out a programme of non-formal education two types of survey, one at the national level and the other at the local level (taking thana as a unit) may be conducted. Local primary schools, high school madrasa community centres union parishad community can provide some physical facilities for the purpose. Local level officials both at the thana and

(Continued on page 6)