

Terminal Report  
January 1998 – December 2000

*Project Operation Resource Support*

undertaken by

M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation  
Chennai – 600 113 India

with the support of

Bernard van Leer Foundation  
The Netherlands

April 2001

**Cover Photos**

Upper : MSSRF Collection  
Lower : Jeanette Parry

This report has been compiled by the following :

Ms. A. Christina, Project Co-ordinator  
Ms. Rama Narayanan, formerly Fellow and Project In Charge  
Ms. J. Jayanthi Rani Christiana, formerly Project Associate  
Ms. Sheela Pankaj, Sr. Secretary  
Ms. J. Boomadevi, Secretary

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**Part I Project Framework**

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# 1. Project Outline

The project **Operation Research Support** (January 1998 – December 2000) grew out of an earlier project, **Children on the Agenda** (referred to as COTA) undertaken by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation from July 1993 – December 1997 and funded by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. ORS is not a continuation of COTA, but draws on the lessons learnt from it and was framed within that context.

The major goal of COTA was expressed as the strengthening of child care services in Tamil Nadu, and one of the specific objectives of COTA was to develop, co-ordinate and strengthen the network called TN-FORCES to effectively lobby, advocate and address child care issues in Tamil Nadu. By the end of 1997, this objective had been achieved to the extent of enabling a smooth transition to a new Convenor of the network, selected by democratic process. It was hence dedicated to develop the new project along different lines, keeping in mind the presence of the network as a powerful tool for advocacy. Project ORS has hence worked to focus on addressing issues from the complementary perspective of strengthening capacity.

## Issues

The following six main themes were identified as focus issues for ORS.

- Quality of child care services offered by both NGOs and Government, with special reference to Early Childhood Education
- Linkage between women's multiple roles and child care as a support service
- Discrimination against the girl child at all age-levels
- People's participation and alternative structures for child care services
- Care and development of children belonging to the most vulnerable age-group, that is, 0-2
- Needs of young children in urban disadvantaged environments

The rationale for this choice, based on experience, was as follows. Earlier experience has revealed many gaps and unaddressed issues in the area of child care services in Tamil Nadu. All these issues were linked in that they deal with the support needed for a working mother, particularly in disadvantaged environments and in the unorganised sector, to care for her young child. Quality of child care services has been a major concern where durable and sustainable mechanisms and alternative structures to ensure quality needed to be explored,

apart from increasing the capacity of child care service providers - both Government and NGOs. The needs of young children in urban disadvantaged environments, particularly in terms of child care during the younger years and services for them also needed attention. Very little information was available on this.

The need to recognise the multiple roles of women in relation to breastfeeding and other child care responsibilities was also only slowly dawning on the various interest groups. This needed to be consolidated and further reinforced for appropriate action to emerge. Another closely connected issue was that of gender-based discrimination, particularly at younger ages, which has implications for child care. This issue needed to be addressed in a campaign mode to generate awareness and to precipitate action. Approaches to the care and development of very young children (0-2yrs) was yet another grey area as far as information and action are concerned. Several of these issues needed clarification, consolidation of information, wide dissemination with follow-up support.

Addressing these issues effectively both at the macro (policy) and micro level warranted the implementation of a wide range of activities in the domains of research, documentation, training capacity (of institutions and of persons) and training and communication materials.

ACCESS was well placed to take up these activities, because of the strengths and expertise already built-up. The constant stream of requests for training and materials from a variety of users including NGOs, women's organisations, Government departments, academic and training institutions, media, specialised professional groups and more recently, local governments were a strong indicators of the demand for such services.

## **Objectives**

The overall goals of the Project ORS were defined as :

1. To strengthen the capacity of existing institutions working in these areas, both Government and voluntary, through training and development of training modules.
2. To develop communication materials to support advocacy, training and capacity building.
3. To undertake research on selected childcare issues of immediate priority the findings of which could be used for advocacy and policy formulation.
4. To maintain and develop a database on the issues of childcare

## **Strategies**

These goals were to be reached by two interlinked strategies

- A. Resource support in the form of training, resource materials and communication
- B. Need-based research and dissemination and providing databases

*A Resource support in the form of capacity building, resource materials and communication*

The specific objectives of this component of the project were:

1. To develop and undertake programmes of training, orientation, sensitisation and trainers, training for different specialised groups and categories of persons, at both NGO and Government levels
2. To develop appropriate training materials, modules, resource materials, learning-teaching aids etc. in both print and electronic media
3. To assist in building the training capacity of institutions working in the concerned areas and to provide the necessary resource support
4. To develop and disseminate communication materials related to the various themes, activities, training programmes, campaigns etc.
5. To liaise with media and other specialist groups and undertake awareness - creation activities jointly with them

*B. Need-based research and documentation and providing database*

The specific objectives of this component were:

1. To develop a research base including empirical data and insights regarding child care that would be useful inputs into policy, planning and programming.
2. To document, through both print and electronic media, programmes, experiments, activities, innovations, events, experiences etc. related to the main theme
3. To disseminate widely the findings of such research and documentation and other related information
4. To develop and maintain a data base of resource expertise and materials

The research topics to be taken up for study would be:

1. Development and validation of tools for assessment of quality of ECCE in different types of child care situations and contexts
2. Cost benefit studies of different programmes of child care
3. Class, caste and gender in relation to child rearing (with reference to children 0-2 years)

Research would feed into the following :

1. Publication
2. Distribution to select list (including policy makers)
3. Dissemination through fliers, notices, to wider mailing list
4. Reviews, short notices etc. in journals

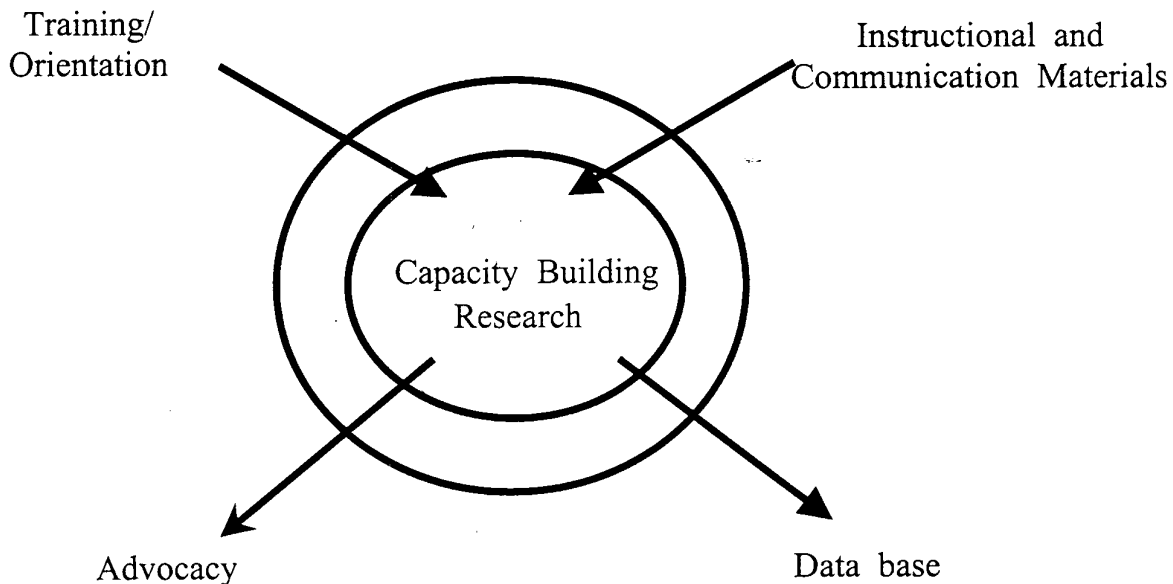
5. Presentation at selected professional Conferences and meetings and distribution to participants
6. Presentation of video briefs for dissemination of key findings to general public
7. Campaign materials for presentation to key groups (e.g. legislators)
8. Seminars involving policy makers

The project would continue to build and update the database on resource persons and resource and instructional materials.

### Structure and Process

The project would be carried out by a competent team headed by a Project Coordinator, under the overall guidance of the Hon. Director of Project ACCESS. Overall work plans would be developed for each year as well as for each quarter which would facilitate monitoring and evaluation. A Technical Advisory Committee consisting of distinguished specialists representing various stakeholders provides support, guidance and critical feedback.

### Activities and Process



## 2. Technical Advisory Committee

The following persons are members of the Technical Advisory Committee

1. Thiru N.S. Palaniappan, I.A.S.  
Director  
Directorate of Social Welfare & Noon Meal Programme  
Ezhilagam Chepauk  
Chennai - 600 005
2. Mr. Jnani  
Sr. Journalist  
22, Journalist Colony  
Thiruvanmiyur Chennai - 600 041
3. Dr. L. S. Saraswathi  
Educational Consultant  
118, Usman Road  
T.Nagar Chennai 600 017
4. Ms. Isabelle Austin  
State Representative- UNICEF  
20, Chittaranjan Dass Road  
Teynampet Chennai - 600 018
5. Ms. E.V.Shantha  
Consultant  
4B Rajagopalan Street  
Valmiki Nagar  
Thiruvanmiyur 600 041
6. Dr. K.Shanmugavelayutham  
Convenor TN FORCES  
Dept. of Social Work  
Loyola College Nungambakkam  
Chennai - 600 034

Four meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee were held during the project period as follows :

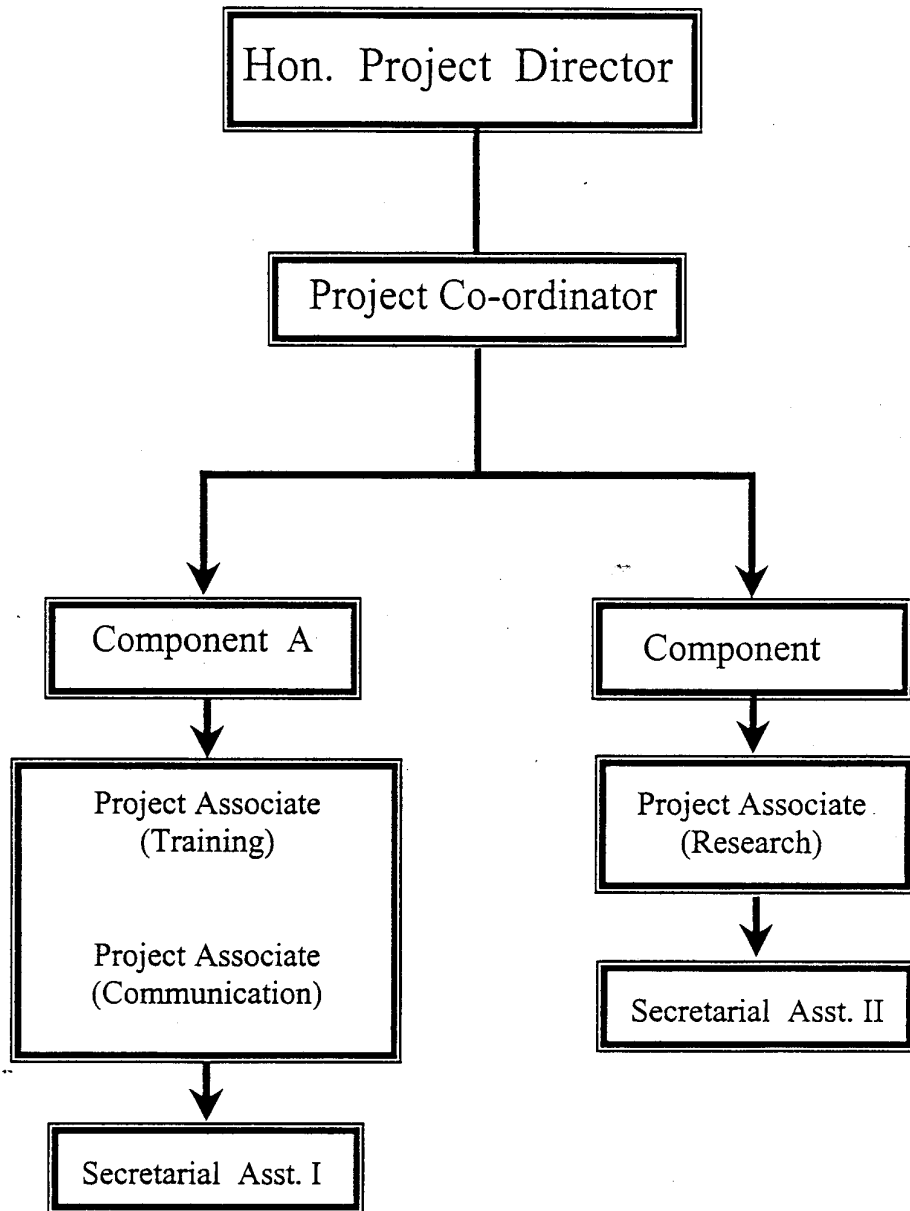
- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. March 14, 1998   | c. August 02, 1999   |
| b. January 30, 1999 | d. November 10, 2000 |

### 3. Staff List

The following were the staff members of the project during the period January 1998 – December 2000

1. Ms. Mina Swaminathan  
Hon. Director
2. Mr. Raja Samuel  
Project Coordinator (01.01.1998 – 31.09.1998)
3. Ms. Rama Narayanan  
Fellow (01.01.1998 – 31.09.1998)  
  
Fellow & Project Incharge (01.10.1998 – 31.12.2000)
4. Ms. J. Jayanthi Rani Christiana (03.02.1998 - 31.01.2001)  
Project Associate
5. Ms. B. Lakshmi Priya (23.03.1998 – 19.02.2000)  
Project Associate
6. Ms. M. Bhuvanewari (05.02.1999 -18.11.2000)  
Project Associate
7. Ms. A. Christina  
Project Associate (01.05.1999 - 31.12.2000)
8. Ms. V. Vijaya (01.03.2000 – 11.12.2000)  
Project Associate
9. Ms. V. Gayathri (10.12.1997 - 10.06.2000)  
Secretary
10. Ms. S. Chitra (01.04.1998 - 07.07.2000)  
Secretary
11. Mr. U. Imran (01.07.1998 - 30.11.1998)  
Secretary

# Project Structure

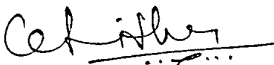


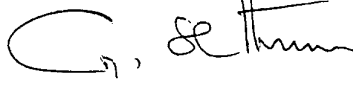
## 4. Financial Statement


M.S.SWAMINATHAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION  
Third Cross Road  
Taramani institutional area  
Chennai 600 113


Project Title : **Operation Resource Support**

Contribution receipts details	1998	1999	2000	Total
<i>Ist Instalment dated 19.01.1998</i>	950,025			950,025
<i>II nd Instalment dated 22.07.1998</i>	847,290	577,725		1,425,015
<i>III rd Instalment 20.04.1999</i>		947,998		947,998
<i>IV Instalment</i>		354,655	593,443	948,098
Total Contribution receipts	1,797,315	1,880,378	593,443	4,271,136
<i>Add : Interest receipts</i>	39,247	94,828	91,431	225,506
Total Receipts	1,836,562	1,975,206	684,874	4,496,642
Less : Expenses as per details	985,143	1,781,318	1,318,854	4,085,315
Balance in hand as on 31.12.2000				411,327

  
SRIVIDHAR GOPALASAMY  
Manager (Budget & Accounts)

  
G.SETHURAMAN  
Chief Manager

  
P.C.KESAVAN  
Executive Director

  
MINA SWAMINATHAN  
Project Director

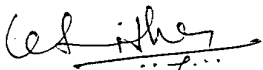

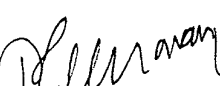
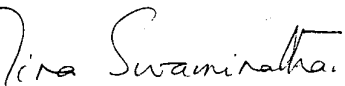
Place : Chennai  
Date : 10th March 2001



M.S.SWAMINATHAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION  
 Third Cross Road  
 Taramani institutional area  
 Chennai 600 113

Project Title : **Operation Resource Support**

Particulars	Expenses			Total Expenses
	1998	1999	2000	
<i>Staffing</i>				
Staff Salaries	275,075	378,641	406,233	1,059,949
Staff Recruitment	7,641	300		7,941
Staff Development	6,977	0	1,973	8,950
<i>Establishment</i>				
Office Accommodation, Electricity	72,000	116,254		188,254
Journals & books	2,390	3,543		5,933
Travel expenses	38,721	65,633	58,703	163,057
Computer, hardware & Software	65,622	97,488		163,110
<i>Stationery &amp; Communication</i>	91,044	119,703	95,705	306,452
Meetings	19,861	56,132	83,664	159,657
Workshops	114,923	443,938	47,616	606,477
Consultancies	142,800	275,550	201,250	619,600
Products	148,089	224,136	368,934	741,159
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>985,143</b>	<b>1,781,318</b>	<b>1,318,854</b>	<b>4,085,315</b>

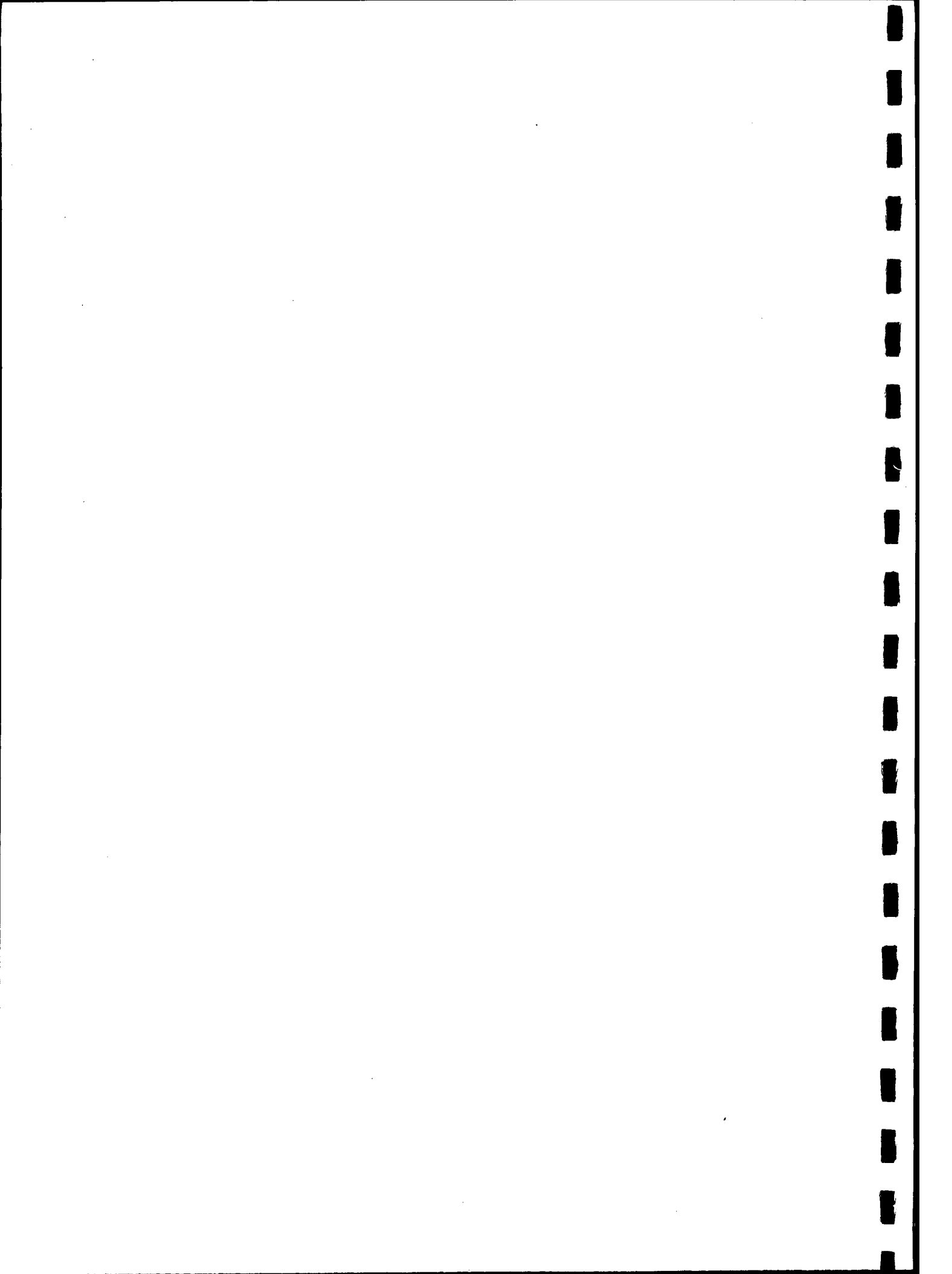





SRIDHAR GOPALASAMY      G. SETHURAMAN      P. KESAVAN      MINA SWAMINATHAN  
 Manager (Budget & Accounts)      Chief Manager      Executive Director      Project Director

Place : Chennai  
 Date : 10th March 2001



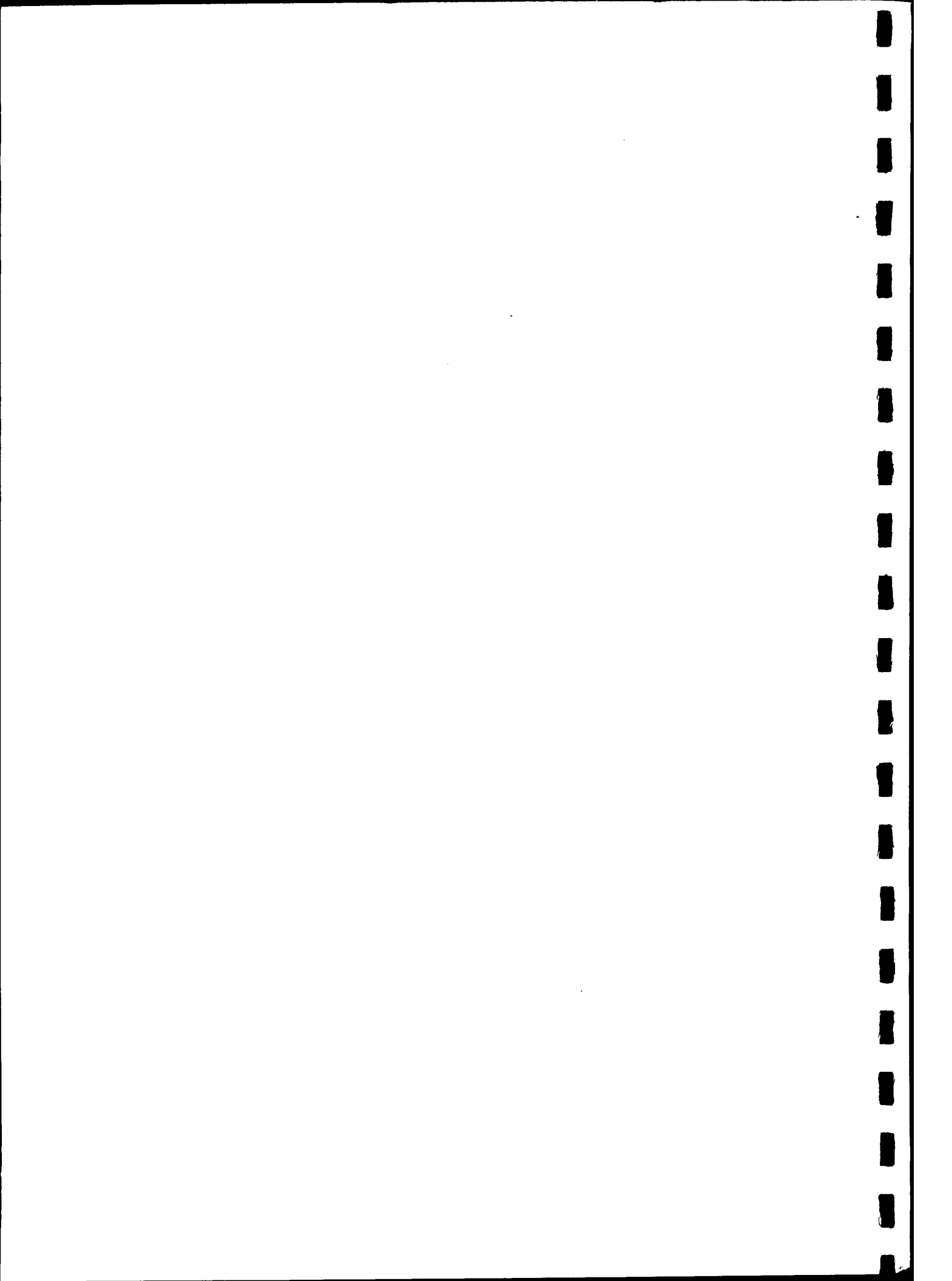




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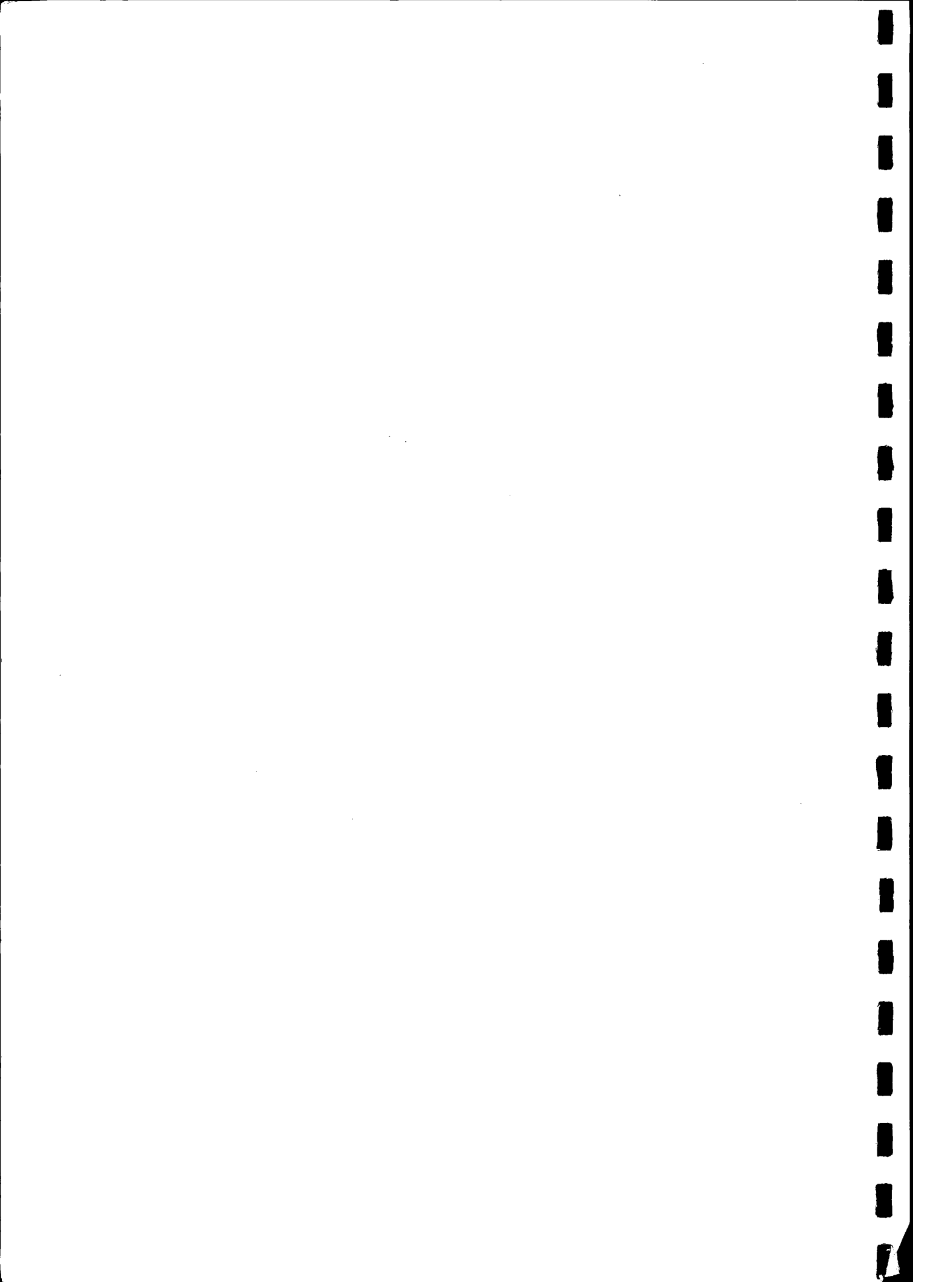
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## 1. January – June 1998

### 401.2 Project Operation Resource Support

This project, as the name suggests, focusses on providing resource support to action aimed at a wide range of issues related to the young child, because at the end of the earlier project entitled "Children on the Agenda", it was felt that consolidating the impact was essential.

#### *Mission*

This project aims to explore, raise, address and support the following issues of child care with a gender perspective

- Quality of child care services offered by both NGOs and Government
- Linkage between women's multiple roles and child care as a support service
- Discrimination against the girl child at all age-levels
- People's participation and alternative structures for child care services

- Care and development of children belonging to the most vulnerable age group(0-2 yrs)
- Needs of young children in urban disadvantaged environments

#### *Objectives*

The goals of the project are :

- To strengthen the capacity of existing institutions working in these areas both Government and voluntary, through training and development of training modules
- To develop communication materials to support advocacy, training and capacity building
- To undertake research on selected child care issues of immediate priority, the findings of which could be used for advocacy and policy formulation
- To maintain and develop a database on the issues of child care

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### *The Process*

The project is oriented towards meeting the demand arising from various sectors such as Government, media, NGOs, academics, professionals, panchayat members etc. (Figure 4.1). The objectives are to be reached through three inter-linked strategies – communication, training and research. The core methodologies would be production and dissemination of resource materials, and activities such as meetings and workshops.

These would lead to a better understanding of the issues by the various stakeholders and fulfil the demand for capacity building arising out of the process.

Training would focus on developing and undertaking programmes of orientation, sensitisation and capacity building for different specialised groups in addition to developing appropriate training materials, modules, resource materials, learning-teaching aids etc. in both the print and electronic media. Communication activities would focus on production of resource materials in print, video and audio forms to support sensitisation and capacity building activities, capturing space in the media and communicating messages through the various media, apart from activities such as panel discussions, seminars, competitions, special issues in popular magazines, debate through newspapers etc. Research would consist of developing an empirical database and insights regarding child care that would be useful inputs for policy, planning and programming. The following topics have been identified for research:

- Development and validation of tools

for assessment of quality of ECCE in different types of child care situations and contexts

- Cost benefit studies of different programmes of child care
- Child rearing practices and growth and development of young children

A Technical Advisory Committee consisting of experts and important stakeholders would as usual guide the project. The Committee met in March 98 and provided several valuable suggestions to fine-tune the activities. A sizeable part of the time was spent in preparing work plans for the whole year. The following section presents the activities carried out from January to May 1998.

### *Building up Capabilities*

Activities under this broad area of work started with a workshop on Training Methodology with ECCE as the focus, in January, for participants from NGO training institutions. This was held with the objective of preparing the participants to run the summer refresher course in ECE, and train a core group of experienced ECCE professional trainers in ECE in Tamil Nadu. The participants were introduced to experiential methods and participatory training in a theoretical perspective with many opportunities for practical sessions. A key input was teaching strategies which can be used as substitutes in situations where practical work with children is not feasible. Particular attention was directed to analyzing the process from the trainer's viewpoint, 'mirroring' exercises and the processes of shared learning. An important out-come of the workshop is a group of trainers skilled in methodology,

# Operation Resource Support

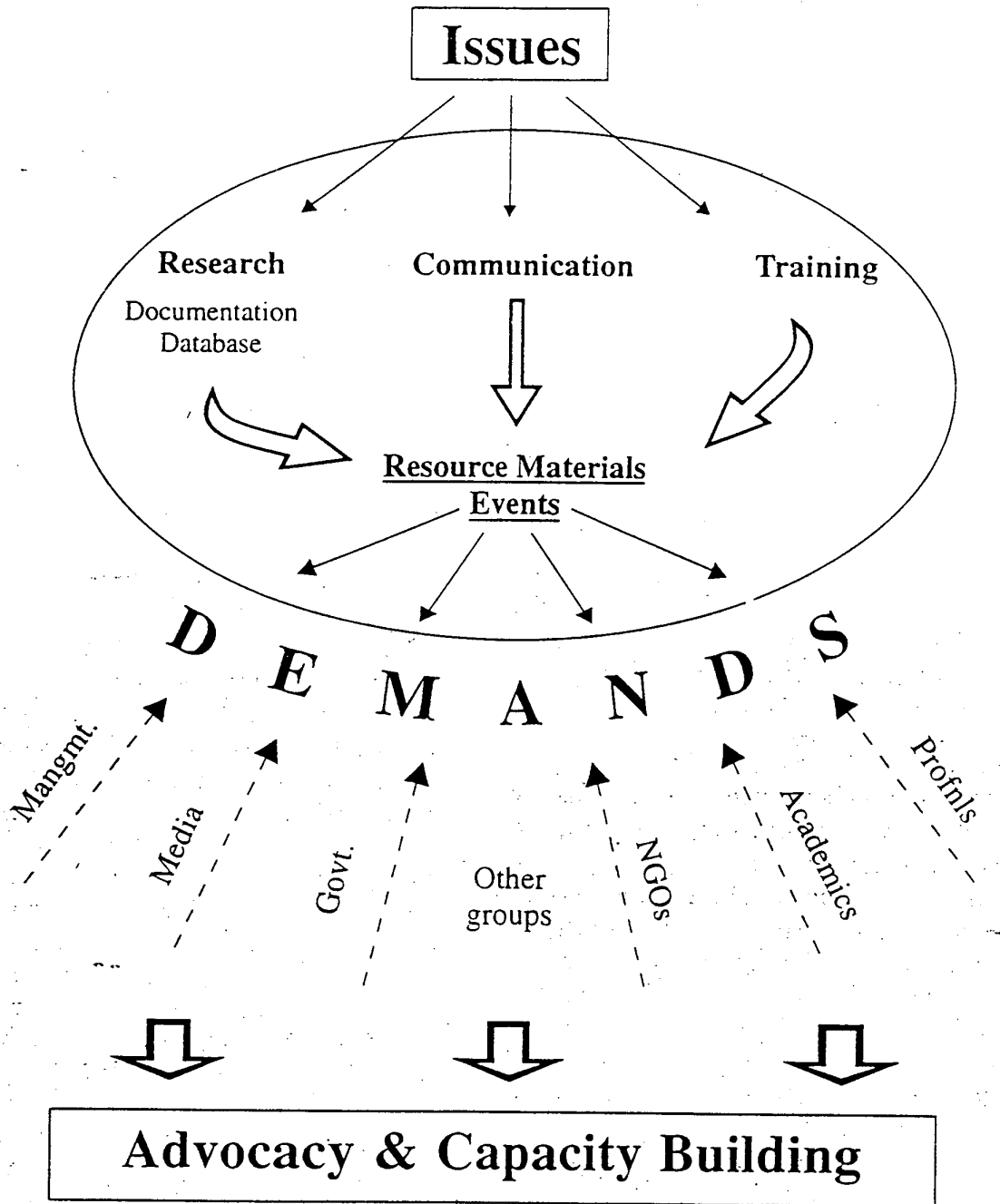


Figure 4.1

## Annual Report 1997-98

while another is the formulation of different models of ECE training curriculum that could suit different training needs. An in-service training programme, spread over one year and starting with a two-week orientation, has already been launched in Neyveli, based on one of the models prepared.

In continuation of last year's efforts at promoting the use of low-cost soft dolls in Government -run child care centres, a training programme was conducted in February for master cutters of the Government -run tailoring societies with the collaboration of the Department of Social Welfare. The objective was to equip the societies to produce low-cost soft dolls out of the scrap material abundantly available with them, and supply them to child care centres in their district. It is expected that the Government would shortly place orders for these dolls.

As a result of the sustained campaign for activity-based education over the last two years several stakeholders have realised the importance of the issue and have started to act on it. The District Institutes for Education and Training under the Directorate of Education, Research and Training initiated a series of orientation programmes for school teachers and managements all over the State, on the importance of burden-less education. The project facilitated the orientations held in Chennai in March. The project staff planned the sessions, and handled three key sessions. Similarly, an NGO is being helped to plan a major conference on ECCE.

### *Messages that Move*

The strategic importance of involving pae-

diatricians as major associates in working with issues related to young children has long been felt. Efforts to reach them have already been made through Citadel Pharmaceuticals, whose marketing executives regularly meet paediatricians all over the State. Two audio cassettes containing songs on activity based education and development of the young child and a manual on empowering women to breastfeed have been disseminated to the paediatricians through these executives. In April 98, a meeting was held with all the marketing executives of the company, to consolidate earlier achievements and to explore the next course of action. It was a unique experience to understand the thinking of the corporate sector on these issues and to gauge the level to which they would commit themselves to work for these issues. It was suggested that posters and information pamphlets would be more effective and could be easily used by the paediatricians. The company has come forward to sponsor the posters and distribute them to paediatricians for dissemination.

In continuation of the work in preparing and producing communication materials on the development of the young child (0-3 yrs), a major communication workshop is being planned to prepare communication material for the different media and consolidate them in the form of a module. A proposal has been prepared for conducting the workshop in collaboration with the Communication and Training Centre of the Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project.

Action has also been initiated to conduct a photo contest in collaboration with *Dinamani*, a leading Tamil daily, on 'Women

workers in Agriculture' in connection with May Day. The objective is to focus attention on the needs of women agricultural workers such as maternity benefits, support for breastfeeding and the need for child care support. An article highlighting these issues was also published in the same vernacular daily on May 1.

### *Research Priorities*

Preliminary work has been initiated on the three studies proposed to be taken up during the project period. The proposal for the study on the "Impact of ECE on Children's Learning" has been prepared and submitted to the Dept. of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, for possible collaboration. The primary objective of the study is to determine the extent to which the prevailing models of child care influence children's learning and to identify factors unique to various models that contribute to their respective effectiveness.

Similarly for the study on "Cost-benefit Analysis of Different Models of ECE", a preliminary note has been prepared, raising several questions regarding costing. It is being circulated among experts for their opinion. The objective of this study is to explore ways of costing inputs that go into child care services and the benefits that accrue and compare within and between the existing models of child care in the State.

Regarding the third study, "Caregiving Behaviour and its Relationship to the Growth and Development of Infants in Slums of Chennai", the Advisory Group met in April, and has helped to refine the objectives and methodology. This study

will look into the variables that influence caregiving behaviour, relationship between caregiving practices and the growth and development of infants, support services available to the mothers for child care along with programme options that enhance the capacity of families and empower mothers to improve existing care practices and to create a more conducive environment for the optimal development of the young child. The first phase, a cross-sectional study of 250 mother-infant dyads in slums will begin in June. The second phase would consist of an in-depth study of selected cases.

### *Support to TN-FORCES*

The project staff were actively involved in offering support to the Secretariat of TN-FORCES in many of its key activities. An important contribution was the project's inputs into a proposed intervention in some slums of Chennai City for very young children, with the collaboration of NGOs and the Slum Clearance Board. An orientation was provided to NGO personnel and the officials of the Board on the needs of young children and their mothers. This was followed by preparation of a tool for a need-assessment study in the slums for which an orientation was also provided to NGO personnel. Apart from this, support was provided in terms of planning for sub-group meetings, identifying issues and resource persons and refining memorandums.

### **401.3 Resource support for Child Rights**

#### *Tackling Female Infanticide*

The Foundation has been addressing the issue of female infanticide through devel-

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oping and promoting communication strategies and documentation. In 1996, *Pachamannu*, a street-play on the theme was produced and performed in over 40 places all over Tamil Nadu. In 1997, two research reports entitled "Death by Social Causes" and "Watering the Neighbour's Plant", were published and widely disseminated. The reports probe the various dimensions of the problem and the responses of the media, Government and NGOs. It has been found that the crux of the problem is one of attitude rather than the other obvious factors often cited as causes. Hence communication strategies would be more fundamental in tackling attitudes, with large-scale campaigning as the core strategy. It was felt that a network of NGOs working on these issues would be in a stronger position to initiate sustained campaigning and to share strategies to bring about attitudinal changes, rather than sporadic and isolated activities. With the objective of facilitating the formation of such a network, a meeting was held in December 97, at Madurai, in collaboration with Indian Council for Child Welfare - Tamil Nadu (ICCW-TN) for senior representatives of NGOs concerned with the issue of female infanticide in Salem and Madurai regions.

About 30 persons representing 20 organisations participated in the meeting. To begin with, the participants were helped to focus on the attitudes that indirectly precipitate the problem and to take a fresh look at the strategies they currently adopt. After discussing current communication efforts, the key role of effective communication, campaigning and networking was emphasised by resource persons. At the end of the meeting, partici-

pants came up with possible short term and long-term goals and decided to network among themselves. "Alternatives for India Development" and ICCW-TN came forward to organise the follow-up meetings in the Salem and Madurai districts respectively.

The two follow-up meetings were held in April, to consolidate progress made at the earlier larger meeting and prepare a tentative plan for networking. About 60 per cent of those invited participated in these meetings. There were a few doubts and questions regarding networking, which had to be clarified before the participants settled down to prepare a plan of action. The plan consisted of meetings to share strategies, inter-agency collaboration and large-scale joint activities focussing on communication with various groups in the community. The constituents have now decided to hold meetings once in three months on a cost-sharing basis and initiate inter-agency collaboration to begin with.

A dialogue with other agencies at a wider level is being planned in June to consolidate the regional plans and explore possibilities of expanding them with the collaboration of other partners. A workshop on communication is also planned with the intention of developing and preparing some materials in different media.

### *Towards a Child-Friendly Urban Environment*

In response to a request from the National Institute for Urban Affairs, a process documentation on the ECD (Early Childhood Development) needs of the urban disadvantaged young child (0-6 years)

and responses to the need was undertaken in seven major cities of India, four of them metropolitan and three Class I cities. The study, which was designed and carried out by a panel of specialists, used qualitative methods on a carefully drawn sample, and was coordinated by Mina Swaminathan, who also undertook the study at Trivandrum.

The findings for Trivandrum showed that as far as coverage of ECD needs was concerned, it was excellent in certain respects (mainly relating to maternal and child health services) but inadequate in both quantity and quality in relation to aspects like preschool education, day-care services and maternity entitlements. An outstanding feature was the involvement and contribution to child care of CDS (Community Development Society) an autonomous self-help organisation of poor women, which is supported by the Municipal authority. Besides identifying gaps between needs and services, the study examined the quality of services and factors influencing them; vertical and horizontal linkages with an impact on quality; and issues of resource mobilisation and sustainability. The conclusions, presented in a SWOT analysis, summarising strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, helped to crystallise the recommendations.

The process of advocacy and follow-up has been started with a workshop in Trivandrum, the objectives of which were to provide feedback to the informants and stakeholders and to initiate the process of participatory planning by them as well as to establish some procedures for that purpose. Among the out-comes of

the meeting was a proposal to set up an Advisory Committee on Child Care to help improve the quality of services and look into problems at the field level. A second meeting is expected to follow soon to take the planning process a step further and begin to institutionalise it. It is also expected that similar initiatives will be taken in the other six cities (Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bangalore, Kanpur, Nasik and Patna). A national-level policy workshop to evolve new strategies to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged children of all, those in the urban slums, is expected to take place later in the year.

## 2. July 1998 – June 1999

### Reaching the Unreached

#### Sub Programme Area 401

#### Project ACCESS

The activities were related to project Operation Resource Support, sponsored by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, on the following issues of child care:

- quality of child care services offered by both NGOs and Government
  - linkage between women's multiple roles and child care as a support service
  - discrimination against the girl child at all age levels
  - people's participation and alternative structures for child care services
  - care and development of children in the most vulnerable age group (0-2 yrs)
- needs of young children in disadvantaged urban environments.

The major objectives of the project are:

- strengthening the capacity of existing institutions working in these areas, both Government and voluntary, through training and development of training modules
- developing project support communication materials which could also be used for advocacy purposes
- undertaking research studies, the findings of which could be used for advocacy and policy formulation
- developing and maintaining a database on child care issues.

The two major activities (Figure 4.1) are, on the one hand, capacity building, through the processes of training, orientation, skill-building and production of instructional, commu-

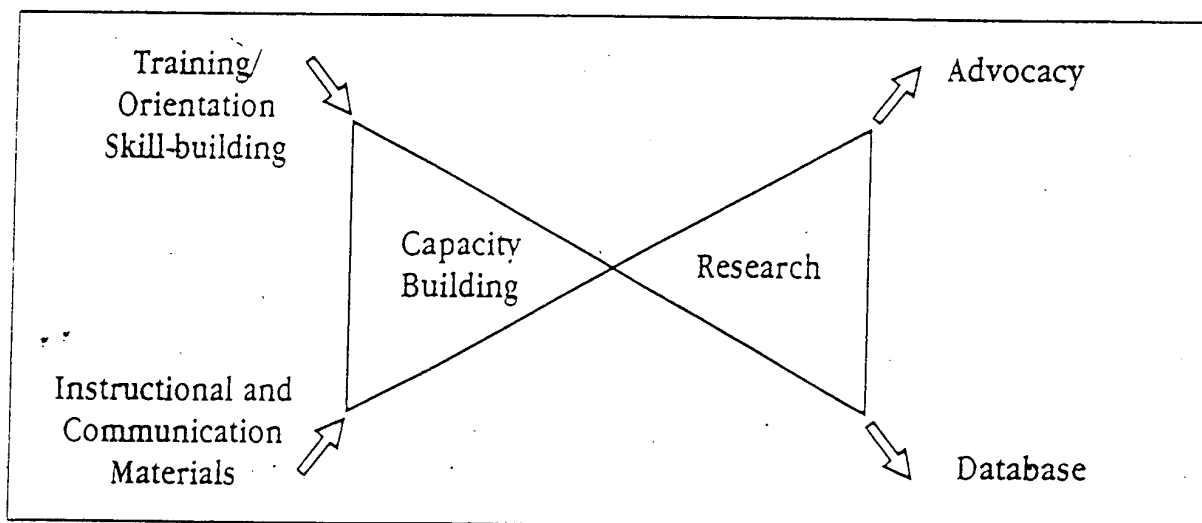


Figure 4.1 : Project processes



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nication and resource materials and on the other hand, research on selected issues, leading to advocacy and development of a database. The activities are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 : *Activities - June '98 to May '99*

Month	Event	Participants	Objectives	Outcome
Jun '98	Networking meeting	NGOs	To facilitate networking among NGOs working on survival of girl child	Articulation of need for building skills in specific areas
Sep '98	Communication workshop	TINP staff, communication and training specialists	To develop communication material on children below three for child care functionaries	10 sets of materials such as counselling cards, songs, charts developed in outline
Nov '98	Methodology workshop in ECCE	Trainers from NGO training institutions	To review the use of training methods and strengthen skills	Preparation of plan for one year internship model training in ECCE
Dec '98	Media workshop	NGOs working on survival of girl child	To help understand the print medium and AIR and learn to work with them	Jingles prepared for radio and manual on working with media bring prepared
Mar '99	Workshop for Panchayat leaders	Elected leaders of the Panchayats	To sensitise them to women & children issues and To help develop an action plan for improving the quality of child care services	Action plan drawn up by the participants Photo archive of existing state of balwadis
Apr '99	Advocacy workshop	NGOs, Govt., donors and others	To highlight the situation of the child care worker in the voluntary sector	Recommendations for improving status of child care worker and plan for recasting of schemes
Mar - Jun '99	20 - session training course	Child care workers of foundling home	To orient them to child development and developmental care of infants and help work out a holistic work plan & programmes	Action plans being prepared

### 401.1 Capacity Building

The main activities are described in this section.

#### *Training methodology*

A trainers' training course was conducted in January '98 for NGO training institutions, to enable them to run summer refresher courses in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) more effectively and to improve the quality of child care services. The usefulness of this course to trainers in planning and implementing training programmes was reviewed in June '98. It was reported by trainers that they had utilised several of the strategies learnt in the course and that these had elicited a good response. Some problems, such as the need for skills and the future course of action, were also reviewed.

In the light of the issues raised by the trainers, a workshop to review training methodologies and strengthen skills was organised in November '98. One of the outcomes of this meet, resulting from the shared experience of the trainers, was that the one-time summer refresher course had to be recast as an extended in-service course in the "internship" mode. Short one-day sessions at periodic intervals throughout the year, along with attention to and guidance for practical problems of implementation, were needed in order to bring about improvement in skills. The cooperation of schools - NGO managements was also required to make the training effective. The trainers also began to be appreciative of the process of training besides the

content orientation, evident in their demand for future training courses that would equip them as professional trainers.

#### *Communication*

Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project (TINP) has been working intensively on improving the overall status of children below three years in Tamil Nadu, with emphasis on combating malnutrition and improving nutritional status. However, lack of suitable materials has been identified as a handicap in aiming for a more holistic and development-oriented programme for the under-threes, especially in reaching out to mothers. A five-day workshop was held jointly with the TINP for their communication and training officers. The objective of the workshop was to develop a package of communication materials on the development of 0-3 year old children for the use of child care workers in the field, and prepare an action plan for field testing and mass reproducing it.

Through a series of discussions between ACCESS and TINP it was decided that about 10 products would be developed to begin with. Participants were given three types of pre-course assignments in advance, namely reading exercises, collection of folk songs, riddles etc., and observation of children below three years of age. Background material was collected on the various stages of development.

In the course of the workshop, 41 messages considered to be important and worthy of dissemination were drawn up. A set of about 10 materials was developed in draft form,

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including a series of 20 counselling cards on various developmental domains, a calendar, posters, charts, songs, plays, skits, and a number of short messages in traditional Tamil forms such as proverbs, riddles, *athi-choodi*, *patti-manram* etc. The materials have yet to be finalised for field testing.

### *Skills in developmental care*

An NGO which runs a foundling home for destitute and abandoned children approached Project ACCESS with a request for a training programme for its child care workers handling infants. The need for such a training was felt by the management as the children in the home, though healthy and well nourished, often fail to reach the age-appropriate developmental milestones. The Home serves as a transit home for the children till they are placed for adoption, with an age-range from new-born to an upper age limit of approximately twelve months. The objective of the programme was to enable the workers to offer more stimulating developmental care to infants in their care.

It was decided that a series of weekly workshop sessions would be held on various issues related to both content and process, with emphasis on the holistic nature of child development. A multi-disciplinary training team consisting of child development specialists, paediatricians, process trainers, nutritionists, psychologists, creche supervisors and teachers were brought together.

Prior to the training programme a needs assessment exercise was undertaken by some of the resource persons through observation

of the daily routines, child care practices and adult-child interactions. A twenty-session course, including aspects such as perceptions of self and attitude towards children and work, interpersonal relations, prenatal development, domains of development, preparation of simple toys, games, songs and lullabies, developmental testing, methods of feeding, physical environment and daily routines was conducted. Field trips to some other institutions were also organised.

Based on observations and interaction with the trainees, it was found that in addition to training inputs, a review of personnel policies and revised work schedules would have to be attempted by the management, to bring about practical implementation of the training and further improvement in the functioning of the centre. A series of meetings with the management is also being held to integrate these two aspects and facilitate change.

### *Working with media*

In yet another capacity-building exercise, a two-day workshop was organised for NGOs working on the problem of female infanticide and foeticide. This was a direct outcome of the networking meeting organised in June '98 by the concerned NGOs to share a common platform for exchange of ideas and experiences. Skills in working with media had been identified as an important area which needed strengthening. This workshop focused on how to approach, understand and work with the print media and with All India Radio (AIR).

Resource persons from both the print medium and AIR participated in the workshop. Exercises such as critiquing journalistic writings, writing press releases, mock press conference, role play, identifying appropriate time slots in radio and preparation of jingles and fillers were undertaken. The major conclusions at the end of the workshop were that it was important to understand how journals/newspapers operated, and help publish information offering the right perspective.

The role of NGOs is not to provide scoops or event-based coverage to the newspapers, but to relate to the medium continuously on the issue. With regard to working with AIR, it was pointed out that the girl child issue should be touched upon by all programmes, and not restricted to those dealing with women and children. The participants took a decision to work more closely with the local press, with a better understanding of the limitations and characteristics of the medium. The group also expressed the need to hold another workshop on street theatre and cultural forms, which can effectively reach the people.

### *People's participation in child care services*

With the advent of the Panchayati Raj system of local self governance, which requires one-third representation of women members, decentralisation of child care services to include people's participation in service delivery is an important route to improving the quality of services. In this context, a

two-day workshop for Panchayat leaders of Athur Block was held at Gandhigram in March 1999 in collaboration with the Gandhigram Trust. The objective of this exercise was to sensitise the leaders about the importance of child care and the role of child care centres in providing holistic development to the young child, to help them evolve an action plan for improving the services at the centres within their area of jurisdiction.

A vertical participation from all levels of the hierarchy was solicited. On the first day all the women ward and block members were included, while on the second day only the Block Chairperson (a woman) and both men & women village Panchayat Presidents and district representatives participated. On both the days resource persons introduced the themes, reviewed the available services, elicited the existing lacuna and helped the participants to draw up an action plan for improving services at the centres. This included improvement in infrastructure facilities, such as toilets, water supply, repair of buildings and playgrounds; provision of play materials and nutritious food, including development of kitchen gardens; and regular supply of fruits and vegetables. Periodic monitoring and support in implementation is being offered to the leaders jointly by the two institutions, Gandhigram Trust and MSSRF.

The key materials developed during this period to support capacity building and advocacy are presented in Table 4.2.

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Table 4.2 : *Products - June '98 to May '99 \**

Month	Name	Content	Audience	Outcome
Jun '98	Poster	Messages on development of child below 2 in four main domains	Parents:through paediatricians, health workers, schools, public spaces, ICDS and TINP centres, NGOs, members of TN-FORCES	640 copies distributed through all channels, with multiple copies to institutions, associations and groups.
Aug '98	Pamphlets/ fact sheets (English and Tamil)	Maternity entitlements/ Survival of girl child/ Parenting the under-threes	Professionals, parents, NGOs, educational institutions women's organisations, colleges	450 copies distributed at meetings/workshops, through institutions, associations and groups
Jul - Oct '98	Video spots <i>Enna Pannikkittirundhe?</i> (What were you doing?) <i>Yaar Karanam?</i> (Who is the cause?) <i>Enna Pidikkum?</i> (What does baby like?)	Messages on rural women's multiple roles and burdens/ How sex of child is determined and value of female child/ Young child's need for stimulation	Doordarshan for telecast and as video to NGOs, educational institutions, women's organisations, colleges for discussion	Occasional broadcast on Doordarshan Channel-I 28 copies of video distributed Used in meetings about 2-3 times a month
Dec '98	Audio spots	Two jingles on survival of girl child	For use in radio broadcast	Submitted to AIR for broadcast
Dec '98	<i>Aadipaadi</i> With Song and Dance	Manual of play activities categorised for each domain of development, richly illustrated	Preschool teachers, creche and balwadi workers, all those working directly with children aged 3+	475 copies distributed to TINP and DSW NGOs, schools, members of TN-FORCES
April '99	Overview of Child Care Services in Tamil Nadu <i>Tamizhnattil Thai-sey Urimai Oru Parwai</i>	Briefing document on laws, schemes and services relating to child care with a special 4 page pull-out for legislators	Members of Legislative Assembly and others	500 copies to TN-FORCES for distribution to Tamil Nadu MLAs, MPs, members of TN-FORCES, NGOs, Panchayat leaders

\* Language of all products exclusively Tamil except where indicated.

#### 401.2 Research

The child care worker holds the key to providing an effective programme for the child's development. Though there is a large body of literature on infrastructure facilities and quality of programme delivery at the centres, very little attention has been paid to the situation of the worker herself, her motivation, attitudes and perceptions. Data collected on these aspects from 267 child care workers at a convention sponsored by Tamil Nadu Forum for Creche and Child Care Services (TN-FORCES) at Gandhigram in 1994 was analysed and published as a report entitled "The First Teacher". The report, which describes the different aspects of the child care workers' situation in eight chapters, highlights the fact that with increase in service, the motivation level of the worker decreases.

Of the three new research studies carried out during the project period, one pertains to the situation and needs of the community, the second analyses the effectiveness of service delivery and the third addresses policy issues. The first, "Care giving behaviour of mothers and the growth and development of infants in urban slums", attempts to look at the relationship between child care practices of mothers and the development of infants. The study is being conducted in two phases: phase 1 is a broadbased survey of 350 infants; phase 2, which is to include in-depth case studies, will be based on this. The questionnaire developed for the survey was field tested and refined. Thirteen slums were selected through random sampling and data was collected by the principal investigator,

assisted by a second investigator, from 362 mother and child dyads, over a period of four months. Data entry has been completed and analysis begun. The report of phase 1 is expected to be ready soon.

The second study seeks to assess the impact of various models of existing ECCE programmes on children's learning outcomes. Four ECCE programmes operational in Tamil Nadu, namely ICDS, TINP, private nursery schools, and creches and balwādis run by NGOs are being studied, covering both urban and rural areas. A consultant with vast experience in child development as well as a statistical advisor were identified. Through a series of meetings the necessary tools for the study have been developed, based on national and international tools that were already available. The tools would assess the infrastructure facilities in the centre, the activities carried out during the working hours and the child's learning outcomes. The field study will begin in July.

#### *Advocacy, communication and orientation to special groups*

A study of the situation of child care workers in Tamil Nadu was conducted by Project ACCESS. Based on the findings of this study and that of a major study by National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPPCD) on the functioning of creches, a one-day advocacy workshop was jointly organised by ACCESS and TN-FORCES in April '99 to discuss the status of child care workers and recommend measures for improving their situation and the quality of service delivery.

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Table 4.3 : *Orientation activities for various stakeholders*  
*June '98 to May '99*

Month	Stakeholder	Issues	Collaborator
July '98	Creche teachers	ECCE	Vivekananda Kendra
July '98	Paediatricians	Maternity entitlements, breastfeeding and survival of the girl child	IAP-TN
August 98	Preschool teachers	Parent teacher cooperation	IAPE
September 98	Panchayat women representatives	Quality of child care services, maternity and breastfeeding	Sathyamurthi Centre for Democratic Studies
November '98	Medical practitioners	0-3 child development, survival rights of the girl child, breastfeeding and burden on the preschool child	Citadel Pharma
April '99	Paediatricians	Breastfeeding and burden on the preschool child	IAP-TN

The participants in the workshop were NGOs, government functionaries from the Directorate of Social Welfare and TINP, and other stakeholders such as donors, academics, women's organisations and trade unions. It was inaugurated by the Chairperson of the Central Social Welfare Board and presided over by the Chairperson of the State Social Welfare Board. The recommendations of the workshop were placed before the Minister for Social Welfare, Tamil Nadu, in the Valdictory Session.

The following conclusions were reached:

The child care worker should be considered a full-time worker and not honorary or part time; the remuneration should be enhanced to equal that of the anganwadi worker and gradually increased to that of the primary school teacher; the creche scheme should focus on young children of poor working mothers. The need for follow up action and continuous lobbying by TN-FORCES was also stressed by the participants.

Advocacy and orientation sessions for various stakeholders were held as indicated in Table 4.3.

***Collaboration with TN-FORCES***

Collaboration with TN-FORCES, as a member and founder of the network, is an important area of work, especially in terms of resource support. Four major activities were undertaken jointly during the year:

A Training Methodology Workshop was conducted in January '98 to support the summer refresher courses in ECCE and developed into a professional support programme for training institutions. Four summer courses were planned for the summer of 1998 but only one could be held, and one internship course was experimentally launched. This year, all the groups planned one-year internship model courses and three have been launched in April-May '99.

At its meeting in October '98, the preschool sub-group of TN-FORCES decided that in order to lobby effectively with the government for legislation on the content and process of ECCE, it was essential to develop and prepare a basic play-based developmentally-appropriate core curriculum, acceptable to all and capable of adaptation in diverse settings. IAPE took the lead in offering to develop such a curriculum with resource support from Project ACCESS. Through a series of meetings with experienced ECCE specialists and members of TN-FORCES, and utilising earlier materials developed by NCERT and others, the curriculum has been framed in both English and Tamil and is likely to be formally launched soon.

With a view to orienting legislators and policy makers at all three levels (national, state and

local) a briefing document has been prepared for TN-FORCES on the current state of child care services in Tamil Nadu, giving details about current laws and existing schemes for the young child, along with brief critiques of these. The document also contains a special four-page pull-out indicating what legislators can do at the level of the constituency and at the level of the Assembly/Parliament.

Initiating advocacy for the child care worker in the voluntary sector in Tamil Nadu, a workshop was jointly organised with TN-FORCES on the theme. This is expected to be the beginning of a follow-up campaign.

***Collaboration with National FORCES***

Being a founding member of FORCES, Project ACCESS continues to play an active role at the national level. This year, support was given in the form of a concept paper on "Maternity and Child Care Code" which was the basis for discussion at the policy committee meet held in Delhi in April '98. This was subsequently critiqued, developed and refined by other groups and accepted as the FORCES policy stand at the January '99 meeting, at which also ACCESS played an active role.

The series of video spots entitled "Messages that Move" prepared by Project ACCESS have been dubbed in Hindi by national FORCES, for telecast by Doordarshan if possible, and for use by interested groups.



### 3. July 1999 – June 2000

#### Sub Programme Area 401

#### Project ACCESS

Research, capacity building and compilation of information on selected issues concerning the girl child were the areas of focus under the project Operation Resource Support, sponsored by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation.

#### 401.1 Research

Of the three research studies, one was completed and two are nearing completion, details of which are summarised in Table 4.1.

by infants were also recorded. The first draft of the report was critiqued by the Advisory Committee (for the research study) in December '99. Based on the suggestions of the Committee, further consultations have been held with a nutritionist and statistician to finalise the plan of analysis. The report is expected to be ready by August 2000.

#### *Impact of ECE on children*

The second study analysed the relationship between the various components of Early Childhood Education (ECE) programmes run by the Government, NGOs and private nursery schools in Tamil Nadu and the learning competencies of four-year-old children. Two

Table 4.1 : *Research Activities from June 1999 to May 2000*

Theme	Activity	Outcome
Child care practices of mothers and the growth and development of infants in urban slums	Preliminary presentation of results to Advisory Committee	First draft of report
Impact of ECE environment on children's learning competencies	Report completed and presented for critique. Final report being prepared	Research report
Analysis of costs and benefits of ECCD programmes	Workshop on methodology. Study ongoing	Workshop Report Study of costs of ICDS undertaken

The first study concentrated on analysing the results of a survey of 350 infant-mother dyads in thirteen slums of Chennai. Child care practices of mothers with regard to breastfeeding, supplementary feeding, management of illnesses etc. were elicited with the help of a prevalidated questionnaire. Anthropometrical measurements included the height and weight of infants. Developmental milestones achieved

tools, one for assessment of centres and another to assess children's competencies, were developed. The former, known as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) developed by Harms and Clifford was modified suitably for the Tamil Nadu situation. The tool, now named TECERS (Tamil Nadu Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) has been validated by experts, as well as

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through the study, and will be published later. Other tools were used to elicit information from teachers and parents. Two teams of trained investigators, for rural and urban areas respectively, were involved in data collection from August to October in Chennai and Dindigul. A five-day review meeting was convened in January 2000 to discuss the preliminary findings and test the data with in-depth statistical analysis. Experts from National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), Oxford University, U.K. and Gandhigram Rural University attended this meeting and enriched the analysis process. The report entitled "*Quality Matters!*" was prepared in April and a first meeting for critiquing and dissemination of results was held on 28 April. The study found a significant positive relationship between the quality of ECE centres and children's learning competencies.

### ***Costs and benefits of ECCD***

The study on developing a costing framework for Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programmes started with the preparation of a discussion paper. Resource materials available within and outside the country were compiled as references. A brainstorming on "Developing indicators for analysing costs and benefits of Early Childhood Care and Development programmes" served as a platform to fine-tune many of the concepts and methodologies to be adopted for developing a costing framework. Around 25 delegates representing the Government, national and international donor agencies, NGOs and academic

institutions attended this workshop. Inputs were also received from national and international experts in the field. Sessions on child-related indicators, women, family, community and other stakeholder-related indicators, monetising costs and benefits and an open forum on implications for policy deliberated on the various qualitative and quantitative, direct, indirect and hidden costs and benefits of ECCD programmes.

One of the main outcomes of this brainstorming was the decision to undertake the development of a framework for cost analysis of ECCD programme using Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) as a model in Tamil Nadu. As a first step, permission was obtained from the Government of Tamil Nadu to make the cost data available. Data collection and analysis are ongoing and the report is expected to be ready by August 2000.

### **401.2 Capacity Building**

The major activities, as presented in Table 4.2 have been training and skills development. As a result it has been possible to develop training courses, theatre productions and videos.

#### ***Training methodology***

Since January '98, a small group of ECE professionals have been meeting twice a year to develop training programmes. With their support, the in-service summer refresher courses for teachers started in 1997 by the TN-FORCES network have gradually evolved into extended in-service training courses.

Table 4.2 : *Activities in capacity building*

Activities	Target group	Content	Period	Outcome
Training methodology in ECE	ECE trainers	Review, problem solving and future planning	September 1999 and February 2000	Summer course and a full year schedule planned. New methodologies of working identified
Skills development in communication	NGOs	Theatre skills to address the issue of female infanticide	June 1999	A theme-song, three plays and video documentation of the workshop

At the first meeting, the group reviewed the achievements and drawbacks of the 1999 courses and worked on a SWOT exercise. It was found that the main problems were lack of follow-up action and implementation in schools. The need to gain skills in supervision and handling external factors was discussed. During the meeting, the participants devised supervisory strategies with the help of video simulations and role play. They also had the opportunity to study, try out and refine the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, which can be used as a tool for advocacy, training, supervision, research, evaluation and accreditation.

The second meeting, which also started with a review, led to further insights about the need for simultaneous efforts at the two levels of institutions and advocacy. The need to deal with the problems of individual trainees and make a breakthrough in successful ECE training was stressed. A series of strategies at both levels was planned. At the same time, it was decided that the coming year's extended course would be developed as a package containing some of these elements, and used to convince the managements of the participating institu-

tions even before launching the course. Three institutions will participate in the extended in-service course this summer, while a fourth is planning to work on another innovative approach, namely, 'tutoring' or 'mentoring' individual schools on a one-to-one basis.

#### *Skills development in street theatre*

A week-long skill development workshop was organised in Chennai in July '99 for NGOs addressing the issue of female infanticide in Salem and Dharmapuri districts of Tamil Nadu as an exercise in capacity building. Analysing and documenting the experiences of 70 NGOs who participated in a similar exercise earlier, it was observed that only changes in attitudes and perceptions about the girl child would bring about a permanent change in the situation of women. Therefore ACCESS took up the task of helping the NGOs to move towards this goal by strengthening their capabilities.

Street theatre being a communication strategy used by NGOs in dealing with the practice of female infanticide, the objective of the workshop was to concentrate on various elements of theatre. Music, movement and voice training were explored as different means of communi-

cating powerfully with the audience and evolving newer ways of touching the audience in such a way as to stimulate their participation.

The two distinct features of the workshop were the process and the product. The former enabled participants to develop ideas by drawing upon their own knowledge and experiences and to gain skills in technical areas such as body and voice culture, folk music, movement in space, the link between emotions and movements and transformation of the issues into visuals. As regards the product, the workshop helped the participants to compose a song collectively. They also made three short thematic presentations in three groups, working on three different approaches. The presentations were made before an invited audience who critiqued the performances for both content and skill. The participants plan to put this experience to use in their organisational work. The proceedings of the workshop were video documented and distributed to the participating organisations who might be able to use them as a training device in improving communication skills.

### **401.3 Action Research - People's Participation in Child Care Services**

The role of Panchayat leaders in improving the quality of child care services is of great significance in moving towards decentralisation of child care services at the grassroot level. In this context an action research was undertaken jointly by MSSRF and Gandhigram Trust to orient, motivate and support Panchayat leaders in improving the quality of child care services in Athoor Block. The processes are summarised in Fig. 4.1.

A preliminary workshop was held for Panchayat leaders and women ward members in

March '99 in which the importance of the period of early childhood was stressed. A review of available services helped to identify the lacunae. Participants drew up an action plan for improving services.

Over the next few months, after a couple of monitoring visits to gain feedback on activities carried out by the leaders, it was found that while leaders could improve infrastructure to some extent by activities such as whitewashing, installation of electrical connections and providing water supply, mats etc., very little was done to improve the quality of services and obtain community participation, as it involved recurring expenditure for which there was no direct allotment to the Panchayats. The leaders could not perceive their role in improving the government-run centres in the absence of specific directives or funding from the government.

A second workshop was held in December '99 to discuss these observations and to provide orientation with respect to their powers in improving child care services, methods of mobilizing financial resources and raising child care issues in Gram Sabha meetings. A link between the leaders and the District Project Nutrition Officer (DPNO) was also established to help them to work together to attract community participation.

It was found that even with all the inputs received, the leaders were unable to mobilise funds or to liaise with the DPNO to initiate welfare projects. Further, the issue of child care was not raised in any of the Gram Sabha meetings. It was very clear at this stage that advocacy for decentralisation of child care services through Panchayat leaders may not be a realistic goal unless there are specific instructions

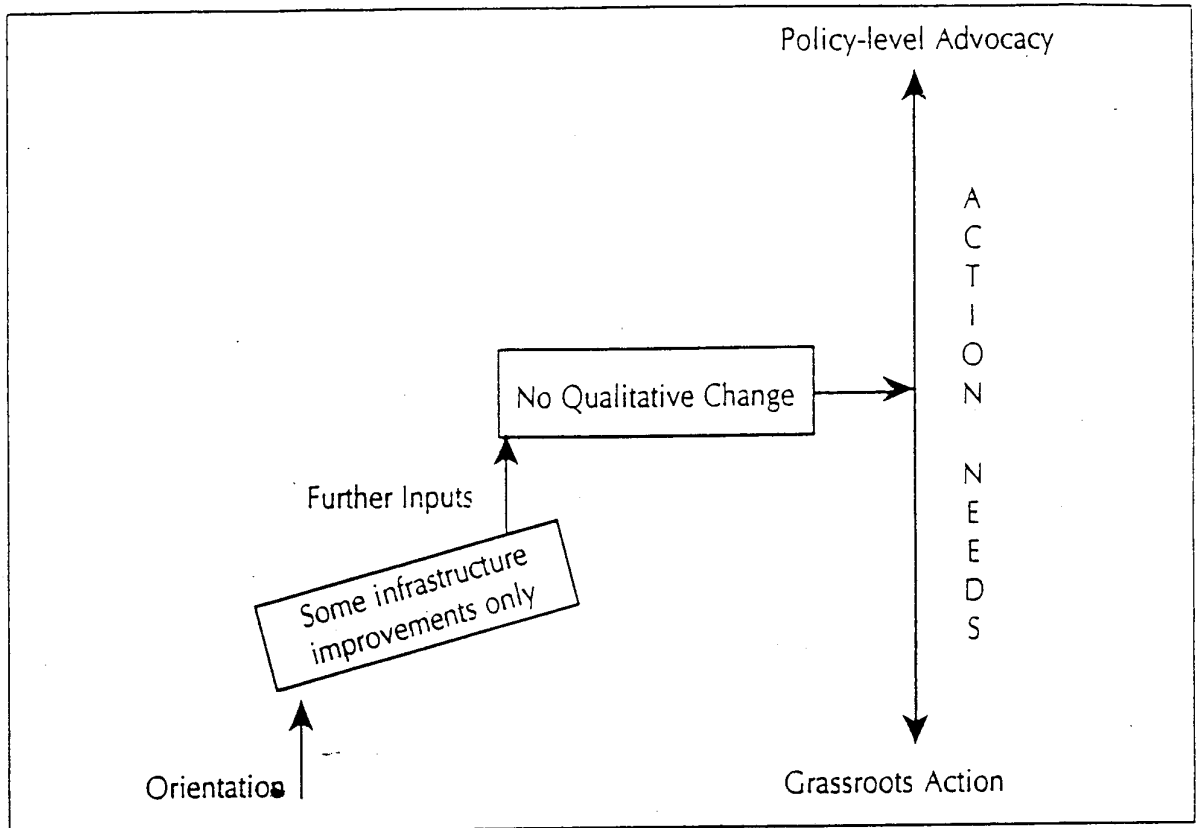


Fig. 4.1 : *Intervention with panchayat leaders and outcome*

or GOs from the Government, making the involvement of the leaders mandatory and providing funds clearly earmarked for the purpose.

The final strategy arrived at by the end of this exercise was to motivate people's groups such as women's self-help groups and youth clubs to raise the issue of improving delivery of child care services at the Gram Sabha meetings.

#### 401.4 Information Base on Young Children

Developing a photo archive on children below three years of age and compilation of information on the issue of the girl child were undertaken. As a first step in this direction a

photo competition was planned and announced in *Dinamani*, a popular Tamil daily. Entries were solicited on three themes, namely, the role of family members in child care, spontaneous activities of young children and the expression of diverse socio-cultural-economic settings in child care. One hundred and forty nine (149) photos were received from thirty-six participants from all over Tamil Nadu. Twenty five photos were short-listed, and a team of three judges comprising a senior photographer, a media representative and an ECCD expert selected the five best photographs on the basis of relevance to the theme and degree of excellence. The selected entries were published in *Dinamani Kathir*, a popular Tamil weekly.

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An information base on gender-desegregated data for 0-3 year old children is being developed on the following issues:

- Sex ratio at birth, and at different age levels
- Infant Mortality Rates by gender at different ages
- Health and nutritional status of children by gender
- Gender socialisation

Information on district-wise sex ratio at birth, as also the health and nutritional status has already been collected. Abstracting and indexing of available material within ACCESS has also been completed. The abstract gives details about the title, author, format in which the information is available, length and issues addressed in the material, along with key words, for easy electronic retrieval. A similar exercise is in progress for Tamil materials.

### 401.5 Other Activities / Events / Participation

Details about participation in other activities are presented in Table 4.3

#### *Collaboration with TN - FORCES*

As a member of the Tamil Nadu Forum for Creche and Child Care Services (TN-FORCES) network it was possible to play a major role in the development of an alternative ECE curriculum, described as "activity-based developmentally appropriate and child centred", through a group process led by IAPE (Indian Association for Preschool Education) last year. The Tamil version, formally released in January 2000, was submitted to the Government of Tamil Nadu as a resource for developing preschool curriculum in Government, voluntary and private institutions. The English version was released at the Regional Conference of the IAPE in April 2000, targeting an all-India audience. An effective tool for advocacy has thus been provided in two languages, which the TN-FORCES network is now ex-

Table 4.3 : *Participation in other events*

Events	Partner	Activity / Theme	Time frame
Faculty Development Seminar	M.S. University of Baroda, Dept. of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS)	Resource support to staff members on the theme "Theory, research, practice: the feedback loop"	September 1999
Regional Seminar	UNICEF	Paper on Innovations in ECCD	November 1999
Policy Committee Meeting	National Forum for Crèche and Child Care Services (FORCES)	Development of model legislation on Maternity Entitlements, Child Care Fund and Early Childhood Education	May 2000

pected to disseminate actively in the private and voluntary sectors, as part of its campaign for regulation of ECE in all sectors to strengthen the rights of the young child.

### *Action strategies*

Based on the study of the situation of child care workers in Tamil Nadu, an advocacy workshop was held in April '99, following which a Task Force consisting of network members of the TN-FORCES, trade unions, donors and NGOs was constituted. An action plan was developed by a group of 10 institutional members of TN-FORCES in July '99, on the following issues:

- Crèche fund - sources of funding, structure and criteria for funding
- Alternative scheme for crèches and non-institutional alternatives for child care
- Wages and working conditions of child care workers
- Consultation for child care workers

This brief record of activities in sharing and collaboration points to the rich storehouse of experiences and materials now available at ACCESS, and its growing role as a resource centre on issues related to the young child.

### *Demand for resource materials*

There continues to be a regular demand from various sectors for products and resource materials developed by ACCESS. In addition, this year the following materials (Table 4.4) were reproduced by UNICEF and supplied to the Director of Social Welfare at their request for use by the Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project (TINP).

In June 2000, UNICEF communicated the request of the Director of Rural Development for 15,000 copies of the Tamil booklet *Rights of the mother and child in Tamil Nadu - an overview* for distribution to Panchayat leaders. UNICEF will be responsible for reprinting and supplying the booklet.

Table 4.4 : Materials supplied by ACCESS

Materials	No. of copies
Aadippaadi (Tamil Manual)	12,200
Empowering women to breastfeed (Tamil manual)	2,000
First three years (Tamil Manual)	1,500
Can the girl child survive? (brochure)	1,500
Thayum seyam (audio cassette)	450
Messages that move (video cassette)	150

## 4. July - December 2000

Sub Programme Area 401

Project ACCESS

In the final phase of the project between July and December 2000 the focus was to complete the ongoing tasks that had been proposed in the annual workplan. Only two new activities that had not been mentioned in the workplan were taken up. One the activities is presented in Table 1

was a communication workshop for NGOs and the other, a small case study to explore the possibility of using sex ratio as a tool for detecting the existence of female foeticide if any using reported data about live births. An overview of all

Table 1. Summary of activities carried out between July and December 2000

Capacity building	Research	Production of Communication materials
Communication workshop for NGOs	Costing framework for ECE programme	Dissemination of the book "Media Uravugal"
	Case study on the use sex ratio at birth as a tool for detecting female foeticide	Video film on characteristics of a good childcare centre
Meeting with the members of the training methodology network	Exploratory analysis about childcare in Tamil cultural forms	Video on TECERS (Tamil Nadu Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale)
	Childcare study draft report	Preparation of a supplement for Panchayat Raj leaders

### Capacity building

A request was made by TNVHA (Tamil Nadu Voluntary Health Association) to conduct a training

programme in communication for some of its member NGOs who were implementing a project in Reproductive and Child Health in four districts in Tamil Nadu. While the NGOs



were well trained in the technical aspects of the issue they had expressed a desire to learn more about understanding attitudes and strategies to be adopted in communicating to people since attitudinal changes were necessary in the long run to bring about a change in behaviour. A three day workshop was organized in which thirty four participants representing twelve institutions participated.

The workshop began with an elicitation of expectations and field problems faced by the participants. During the three days the sessions dealt with various aspects such as understanding one's own attitudes and those of the others, identifying individuals and groups who had to be reached, identifying situations for communication and taking messages to various groups in various situations. The participants were also exposed to folk and literary forms of communication prevalent in our culture such as puppetry, rudiments of theatre, debate and poetry. A session on poster making helped them to make posters on specific themes using simple inexpensive materials such as newspaper, colour paper and pens. In the follow up exercise carried out by TNVHA a month after the workshop participants reported using many of the strategies learnt in the workshop and had also identified specific forms of communication suitable to their areas in which they needed more in-depth training.

A meeting was held with the trainers of the training methodology group who have been conducting innovative training programmes for ECE teachers, to discuss the future and sustainability of the network and its mode of operation. The network, a part of TN-FORCES had been functioning with the technical support of ACCESS during the past seven years to fill the void in the availability of trained ECE professionals in Tamil Nadu. The trainers hailing from both the private and voluntary sectors were helped to improve their skills and to organize short term and long term training programmes for teachers. In the meeting held in October the trainers discussed the future course of training programmes, their own roles, financial and organizational aspects of the network and other areas in which they needed to develop their skills such as advocacy, communication and human resource mobilization.

## Research

With the completion of data collection for the study on cost analysis of ICDS programme it was realized that what was needed at first was the development of a costing framework that would include to the extent possible the various types of costs and expenditures likely to be incurred by any ECE programme. This framework could then be used for doing a cost analysis by any agency. Based on the available data a draft report consisting of two

sections was prepared. Section one introduced the framework and its rationale while section two included a sample analysis according to the framework using the available ICDS data. This was then circulated to a wide group of professionals both within and outside the Government and their critical comments were solicited. The comments and suggestions were then scrutinized and the report has been rewritten on this basis. The final report will be submitted to the Government of Tamil Nadu by end January.

As a member of the CASSA (Campaign against sex selective abortion) network, ACCESS had agreed to undertake a small case study on the use of sex ratio at birth as a tool for identifying the prevalence of female foeticide. This was based on the rationale that while the biological sex ratio at birth (number of female babies born for every thousand males) was of the order of 951 a ratio less than this would be suggestive of the practice of female foeticide in the given population. The Vital Statistical Improvement Scheme (VSIS) of the Government of Tamil Nadu with whom all the births and deaths are registered was contacted and permission was obtained to collect the data about live births from the city hospitals in Chennai. Data collection which was started in June was completed in October. In the final analysis data included information about live births in Chennai hospitals for a ten year

period, live birth in a private hospital for the current and previous year and from a Government hospital in Salem. About hundred copies of the report after in-house critiquing and modification was circulated to a wide group of professionals, NGOs, academic institutions and individuals interested in the issue of the survival of the girl child.

In view of the mandate of the ORS project to focus on the period of 0-2 years it had earlier been decided to develop a set of prototype communication material on certain specific aspects of infancy. Messages for communication had been developed based on three different sources, namely the research study on the childcare practices of urban mothers and their infants, the communication workshop on 0-3 years for the functionaries of the Government supported ICDS programme and the training course on infants (0-1 yrs) conducted in 1999 for functionaries of a founding home keeping in mind the availability of existing material developed by other NGO networks which ought not to be duplicated. At this juncture it was felt necessary to undertake an analysis of the various Tamil cultural forms on a modest scale to find out the information contained in them with regard to childcare practices in infancy. This exercise was expected to be useful in further refining the messages, as well as in identifying appropriate cultural forms and to understand if there were any conflicts in the messages shortlisted by

ACCESS and what had been said in the literature.

A consultant was identified and a search was made for books and other printed materials containing songs, lullabies, stories, essays, poetry and proverbs that dealt with the period of infancy with emphasis on folk rather than classical sources. Since the time frame for the whole project was only five months from June to October the search was limited to what could be collected during this period. The available material was then scrutinized and analysed by the consultant and the report was submitted in December. The report has thrown light on some of the cultural perceptions regarding the various developmental stages of the infant, the recognition of the importance of this period as elucidated in literature, the value attached to this period and some cultural practices undertaken for the well being of the infant. Due to the time consuming nature of this exercise and due to unforeseen circumstances which delayed the writing of the report, the development of prototype material had to be extended beyond the project period.

With regard to the study on childcare practices, in addition to the suggestions made by the advisory committee for data analysis, a discussion was held with a developmental pediatrician and a child development specialist and based on their suggestions a plan of

analysis was made. The final results of the study and the subsequent report were based on this analysis. A summary of the major findings was circulated in the final Technical Advisory Committee meeting held in November. The first draft underwent an inhouse critiquing based on which a second draft was prepared in December 2000 and the final report is now available.

### **Production of Communication Materials**

Four products were completed during this period, two print materials and two video productions. One of the print materials which addresses NGOs was a book entitled 'Relationship with the Media'. This Tamil publication gives an introduction to the various forms of mass media, their reach, target audience and discusses strategies for understanding and fostering a better working relationship with the members of the mass communication channels. Seven hundred and fifty copies were printed and disseminated to a wide variety of audience namely NGOs, womens' organizations, schools of communication, schools of social work, media persons, Government departments, writers and other communication professionals. Feedback from some of the recipients indicate that the publication is a very timely and useful source of information in Tamil to all those engaged in advocacy through popular mass media channels. Favourable reviews have

appeared in some magazines and newsletters. An English translation of the entire book has also been carried out in order to reach out to non Tamils.

The other print material, also in Tamil is a four page supplement\*<sup>1</sup> meant specifically for Panchayat leaders. The supplement provides information on the need for childcare services as a support service for mothers from disadvantaged families, the existing scenario with regard to the quality of services offered, areas of improvement, suggestions to the leaders on monitoring the services and strategies and activities that they can undertake for improving the quality of services. Ways and means for raising financial support from local and external resources, as well as ideas on budgeting for quality improvement within the existing funds at the disposal of the leaders have also been provided.

The preparation of the supplement was undertaken as a result of a request from UNICEF. In the previous year, Project ACCESS had prepared an advocacy document on the rights of women and children in Tamil Nadu targetting policy makers in response to a request from TN FORCES for the same. The document contained a centre pull out which specifically addressed legislators as to what they could do in their own constituencies as well as the issues that could be raised in the

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\* Supplement to the publication

Assembly towards improvement of services. Upon dissemination, there was a great demand for this publication from both the Government and voluntary sectors. The UNICEF office in Chennai came forward to print fifteen thousand copies to be distributed to Panchayati Raj functionaries. It requested project ACCESS to modify the centre pullout to suit the target audience and hence this activity was undertaken..

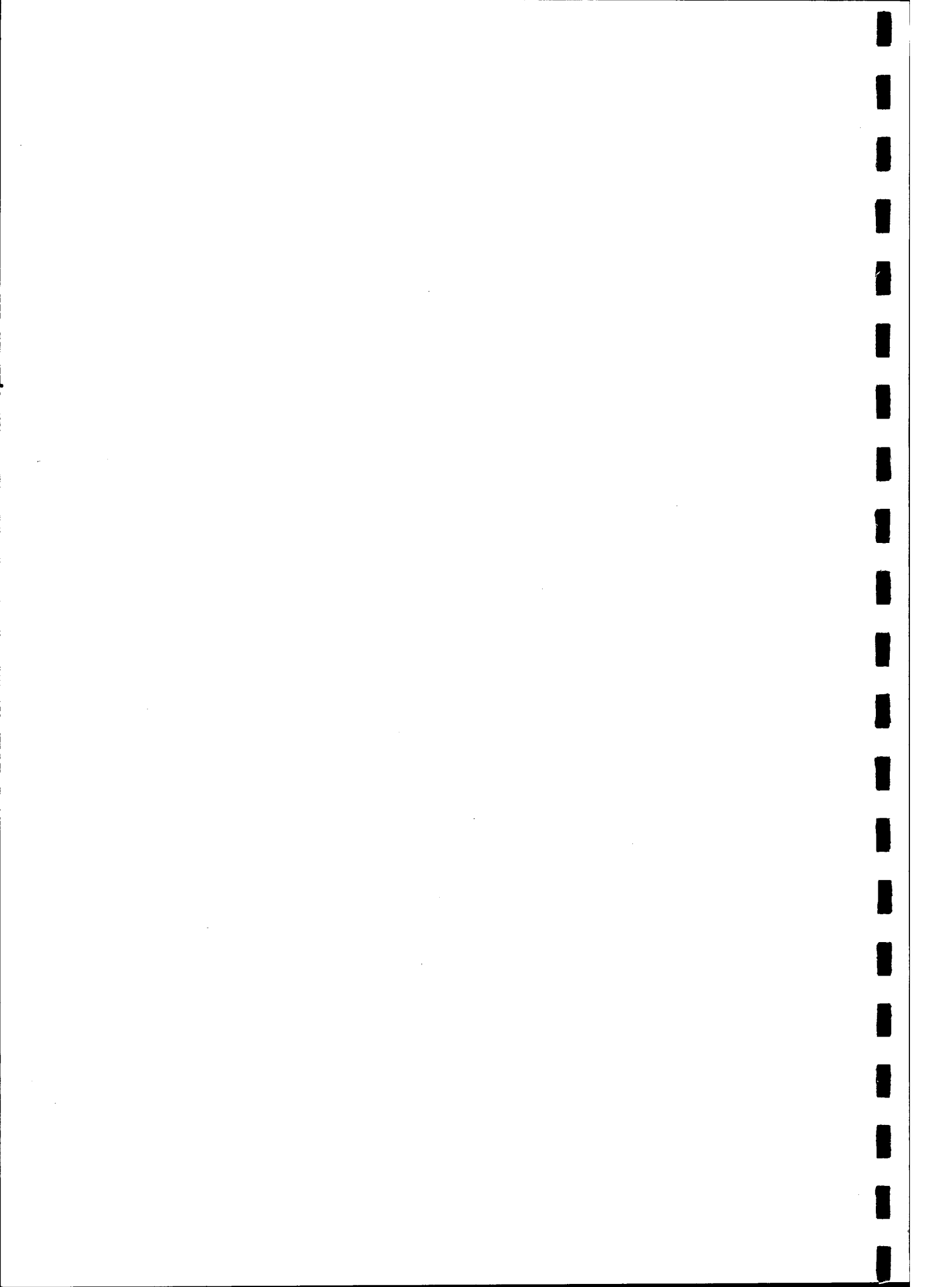
The production of the video film on the monitoring of childcare services was primarily undertaken as an exercise to create a tool in the visual medium with which awareness could be created on how a good childcare centre should function amongst various strata of users, namely parents, women's organisations, school authorities, Government functionaries, elected leaders at local level, community groups, unions and other stakeholders concerned with the quality and effectiveness of childcare services. The process began with an in-house discussion on the content, duration and approach to be adopted in the narration of the film. A draft script was then prepared by the Communication Associate which was critiqued by both content and communication specialists. At the end of this exercise there was a clear consensus about the content, its treatment and the approach to be adapted in the narration.

At this stage a film maker was identified and thoroughly oriented to the subject matter, based on which

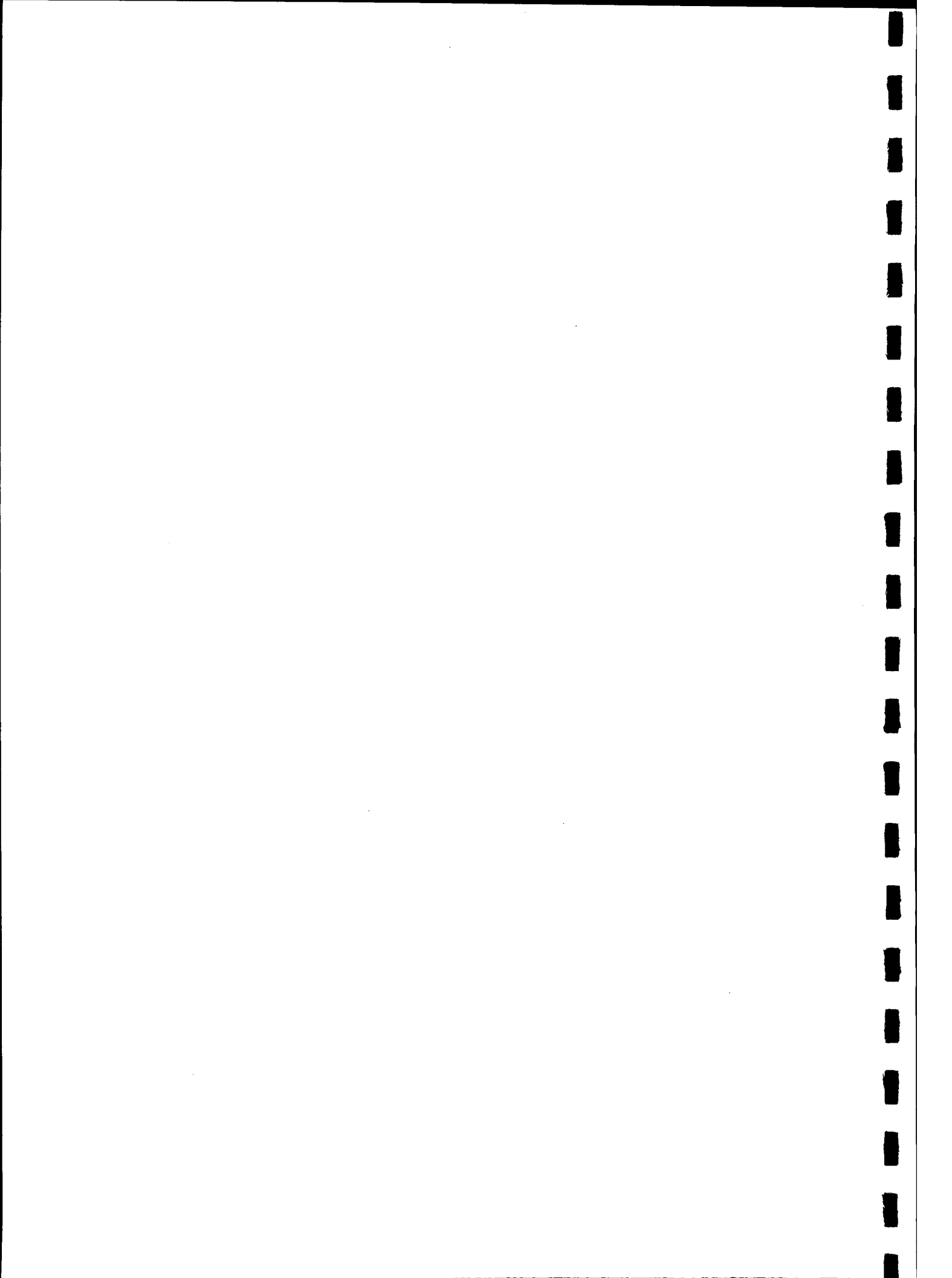
the script was rewritten and visualized in terms of shots and sequences. With the help of one of the Project Associates the film maker then visited several childcare centres in Chennai, Nagappattinam and Tirunelveli run by both Government and NGOs, to select the shooting spots for filming. Once the areas were finalized and permission obtained from the concerned authorities, shooting was commenced. Once the filming was over, a rough cut was prepared and was again subjected to a process of critiquing at two levels by a team of ECE professionals and communication experts. The film underwent a final editing based on their suggestions and the first public screening was held at MSSRF. The entire process of film making from the conceptual stage to the final product was completed within six months. The film is proposed to be widely distributed and screened to generate awareness in various strata of society including Panchayat leaders and the lay public, and the promotion and dissemination process has been initiated.

The major findings of one of the research studies on the relationship between the quality of the various components of ECE education and its outcome on children was presented at the tenth European Early Childhood Care and Education Conference (ECCERA) in London in August. The study had used an adapted and culturally appropriate version of the ECERS tool known as Tamil ECERS (TECERS). In order to illustrate better the various ECE components chosen in the study and the ratings given to them within the cultural context a video illustrating the same was prepared and shown to the international audience. The preparation of this short film more as a tool or aid for the presentation was made from existing raw shots and film footages available with the project. The film is now regularly used for presentations on the TECERS tool and its uses.

The above activities sum the project outputs during the period from June to December 2000. Some of the activities and further refining of some of the products are likely to be taken up in January 2001.









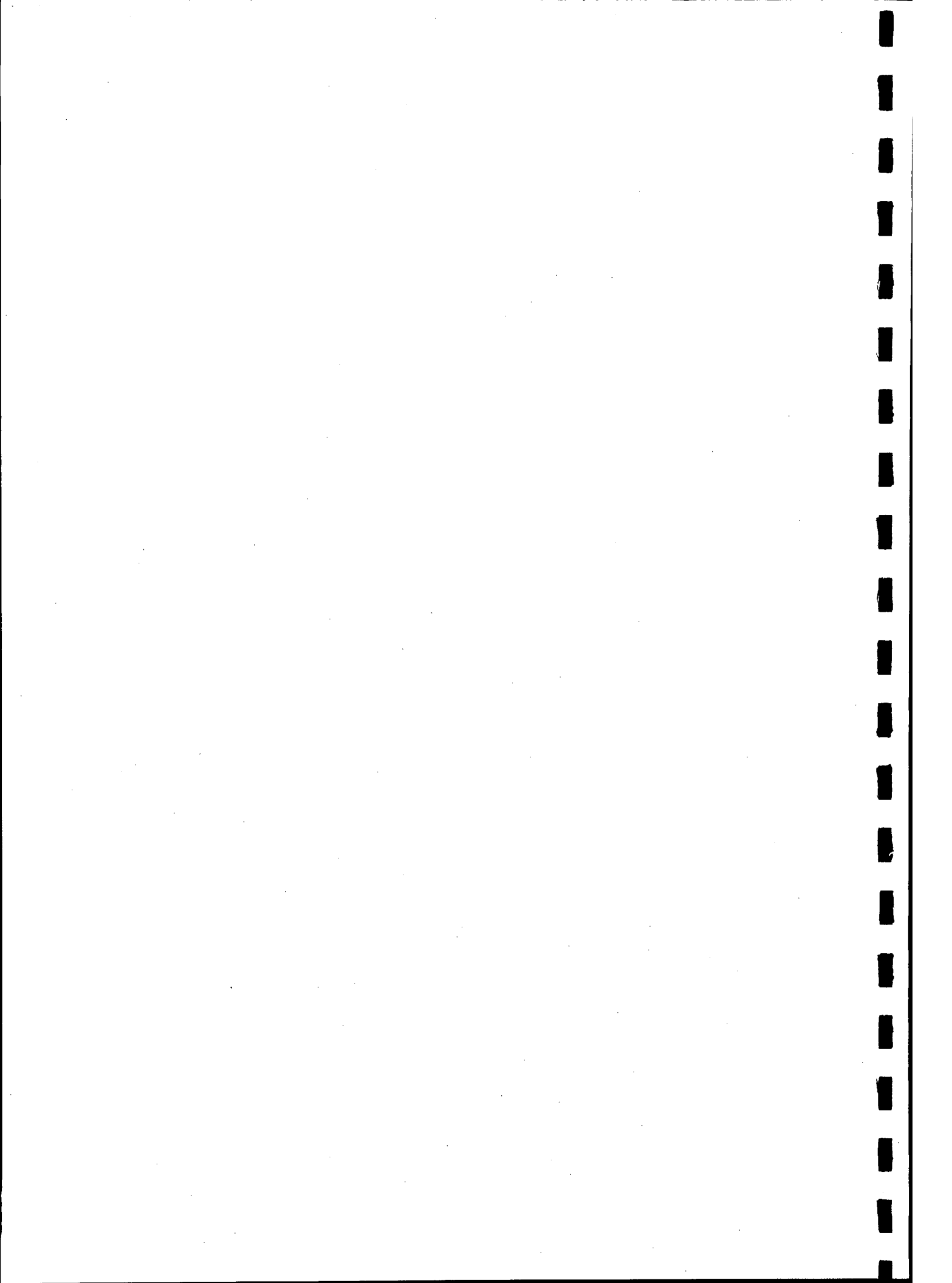
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**Part III      Process Documentation**

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# **Contents**

- 1. Research**
- 2. Communication and Resource Materials**
- 3. Capacity Building**



# 1. Research

The research component addressed child care issues with a gender perspective as outlined in the proposal. Three major research studies were undertaken. In addition, some of the activities initiated in the earlier COTA project were completed during this project phase. Two action-research studies were completed in the third year.

## Title of study

1. The First Teacher – child care workers in the voluntary sector in Tamil Nadu
2. Maternal Care and Infant Growth – child care practices of mothers and the growth and development of infants in urban slums
3. Quality Matters! Understanding the relationship between early childhood education programmes and learning competencies of children
4. Costing Child Care Services – a proposed cost framework and sample analysis with ICDS as a model in Tamil Nadu
5. Panchayat Raj and Child Care Services – an action research study
6. The Unborn Girl Child – a case study on sex ratio at birth as an indicator of female foeticide

A detailed description of the process for each of the above topics is outlined below:

**Fig. 1 Outline of Process Documentation (ORS)**

Steps in Research	Maternal care and infant growth	Quality matters!	Costing child care services
Design of the Study Tool Formulation Sample Identification	Choice of Methodology	Down Scaling	Study on Costs and Benefits
Pilot Study		Revised Sampling Plan	Brainstorming Workshop
Recruitment and Training of Field Investigators			
Data Collection Analysis Draft Report	Change in Plan of Analysis	Brainstorming for the Report	3 Stage Study CA CEA CBA
Critiquing Rewriting Final Report Dissemination Advocacy	Final Report With Causes for Delay		Change in plan and Final Report of Stage I

# 1. The First Teacher

## Childcare Workers in the Voluntary Sector in Tamil Nadu

### *Time Line*

Month/Year	Activities
1998 April - June	Internal discussions on the earlier process from 1994 to 1998 Re-processing the data collected earlier Analysis
July – Sept	References Additional data collection at the Tamil Nadu State Social Welfare Board Draft report preparation
October	Draft report – in-house critiquing Fine-tuning the draft External review
Nov – Dec	Compilation of comments Final Report
1999 Jan - March	Editing and proof-reading Printing and Dissemination (1000 copies) Planning for the advocacy workshop
April	Preparation of executive summary, background paper and programme schedule Translation of executive summary in Tamil Advocacy workshop
May	Report preparation Mailing list compilation for dissemination
June	Dissemination of 150 copies Joint discussion with TN-FORCES on the follow-up and selection of Task Force members
July	Task Force meeting Advocacy

## *The Process*

This study was carried over from Project COTA. Actual process for this study started in 1994 and the data collection was done during the Child Care Workers' Convention held at Gandhigram in 1994. This State-level convention organised by TN-FORCES had the following objectives - of recognising the important role of Child Care Workers towards the development of young children; of creating a sense of professional identity among such workers and the need to form an association to bring together the Child Care Workers on a common platform; of improving their working conditions and other social security measures through awareness building exercises with different stakeholders and of enabling them to share and exchange views on issues of common concern, upgrade their skills and work towards a network or forum for the future. As this convention was attended by 350 Child Care Workers from 94 institutions and their branch units, it was decided to take up a survey utilising an interview schedule formulated for the purpose. This purposive sampling procedure was undertaken due to convenience and ease of data collection during the convention. The collected data was then entered and coded for analysis under the COTA phase, which ended up in December 1997.

Under ORS, activities like data re-analysis, interpretation, report writing, publication and dissemination were undertaken. As the study process involved contributions from COTA staff, it was initially decided to publish it as an ACCESS publication. But due to the sensitive nature of the data on workers in the voluntary sector, approaches to analysis and report writing were strategically planned and revised quite often keeping advocacy in mind. As several individuals were involved in this process, it was then decided to acknowledge the support of all involved and a change in authorship in October 1998 determined a new course of action. A consultation organised by TN-FORCES with a few NGOs on the "Scheme of assistance to crèches for working/ailing women" raised many political issues in the report preparation. Considering the NGO dynamics as well as the nature of relationship with TN-FORCES, it was decided not to be offensive to the member NGOs and their personnel policies. The legal side of the interpretation was written carefully after due references to laws governing the sector and consultations with experienced personnel. A few vital data was collected from the Tamil Nadu State Social Welfare Board. Interviews with the Child Care Workers were also studied and anecdotal remarks selected for inclusion in the report.

The time-period between actual data collection and report preparation had become very long, apart from several changes of personnel dealing with the study. Changes in the approach also had an impact on the report. Hence was sent for a review to three external personnel, because it was felt that an external perspective would help restore the balance, if needed and check on the relationship whether there was a relationship between the original objectives, intended outcomes and the actual report. The comments of the reviewers were consolidated and included in the report. After this process, 1000 copies of the report were printed.



Dissemination of the report was then carefully planned to include categories like grant-receiving NGOs of the State Social Welfare Boards in Tamil Nadu, donors, international agencies like UNICEF, State and Central Government Departments, academicians, activists, network members of Indian Association for Pre-school Education (IAPE), Indian Association of Women's Studies (IAWS), labour departments, TN-FORCES and FORCES.

Advocacy on the issue was initiated through a workshop conducted in April 1999. There were two lead presentations – the main one by NIPCCD on an all-India evaluation of crèche services and the other by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation where the status of Child Care Workers employed under the CSWB crèche scheme and its performance in Tamil Nadu was commented upon. There were representatives from NGOs, women's organisations, trade unions, Government and colleges. A joint follow-up of the workshop with TN-FORCES was conducted through a Task Force meeting with the purpose of preparing a model budget and submitting it to the Government. The continuation of this advocacy process is since being carried out by TN-FORCES and is on going.

## 2. Maternal care and infant growth

### Childcare Practices of Mothers and the Growth and Development of Infants in Urban Slums

#### *Time Line*

<b>Month/Year</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1998 January	Collection of background information from Madras Metropolitan Development Authority
February	Draft proposal prepared Identification of steering committee members
March	Circulation of proposal to steering committee members
April	Steering committee meeting Methodology decision and interview schedule
May	Pilot study Sample identification Modification of the schedule
June – Sep.	Data collection
October – Dec.	Data verification
1999 January	Orientation on SPSS and data entry
February	Data entry
March – May	Data verification
June - July	Analysis
August – Oct.	Analysis and report preparation
November	Analysis Draft report preparation and circulation
December	Steering committee meeting Change in plan of analysis
2000 Jan - June	Reanalysis
July	Visit to Bangalore Children's Hospital and discussion with experts
July - October	Report preparation
December	Report submission

## *The Process*

Keeping in mind the inter-disciplinary nature of the study process, the first step was developing the proposal. To do this, background information was collected from the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, Madras Metropolitan Development Authority, Libraries and other Government Departments like Social Welfare. A Steering Committee consisting of experts from fields like Child Development, Nutrition, Statistics, Sociology and Economics was constituted for process and content guidance. The draft proposal was then circulated for critiquing by the Steering Committee. A meeting was also held in April 1998 to discuss concepts, methodology and the plan of analysis. A sample size of 362 mother-child dyads were selected, and due to lack of time and trained personnel, it was decided to use an interview schedule to study the relationship between child care practices and the growth and development of infants, and not to attempt direct observation or testing of infants. The interview schedule was later field tested through a pilot study conducted in two slums of Chennai. One senior investigator was also recruited at this stage to jointly undertake the exercise with the principal investigator. In order to net the child care practices throughout the geographical location of Chennai, MMDA was contacted for background data.

The actual data collection then started in thirteen slums of Chennai and it continued for a period of four months (June to September, 1998). Data entry and verification was done at the next stage for which a person was employed for this purpose. Then started the analysis with simple frequencies and bivariate. A Demographer (on a consultancy basis) then helped in the process of statistical analysis using the SPSS software. Draft reports were prepared and circulated to the Steering Committee. Committee members during a meeting held in December 1999 gave further suggestions - on avoiding bivariate analysis and taking up a slum-wise analysis to find differences between caring practices. But since it was supported that with infants the home environment influences growth and development more than the external environment, it was decided not to include the slum-wise analysis. This led to a change in the analysis and reporting process.

Re-analysis and in-house discussions with the Statistician continued in 2000. But due to the administrative workload of the principal investigator, the analysis and report writing process was delayed. The principal investigator as part of the analysis process made a trip to Bangalore Children's Hospital for discussion on the findings with leading Child Development specialists in the country. One specialist reinforced the need to look at the development data to check if macro factors had any influence and suggested a direct observation of children. But it was not possible to incorporate this suggestion due to lack of time and trained personnel. However, with insights gained through the analysis, the draft report was prepared and critiqued by in-house personnel. The fine-tuned report is now ready for dissemination.

As causes of malnutrition are complex, it was found that commonly accepted reasons are inadequate to explain the findings. Further, the nature of the tools did not permit a study on the impact of child care practices child development as direct observation as a method of study of developmental indicators was not used. Hence, to study the complex relationships between child care and development in depth, the need for culturally adapted tool was recognised during this process.

### 3. Quality matters !

#### Understanding the Relationship Between Quality of Early Childhood Programmes and Learning Competencies of Children

##### *Time Line*

<b>Month/Year</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1998 June	Communication received from Joint Secretary (DPEP), Ministry of HRD, Delhi Copy of proposal given to the Tamil Nadu State DPEP
July	Copy of DPEP letter, Minutes and background note on a proposal in phases circulated to Advisory Committee for their opinion on the alternatives
September	Request to all colleges to identify a research scholar
November	Decision to downscale
December	Consultant identified
1999 Jan	Appointment of the Consultant and Technical Adviser
Feb	Planning meet – on methodology, tools, plan of analysis, time frame, work plan and budget
March	First draft of tools (CleCT, Parent and Teacher Interview Proformas) Review meeting on tools, field investigators training/workshop
April	Revision of tools
May	TECERS first draft Review meeting
June	Preparation of training schedule Revision of TECERS Identification of field investigators Validation of tools

July	Training of field investigators (for CleCT) Identification of sample children and centres
August	Revised sampling plan Preparation of time table for data collection
September	Data collection begun
October	Completion of data collection Data coding, entry and corrections
November	Completion of data corrections Analysis of data
December	Analysis of data and preliminary report writing Preparation of draft sections of report
2000 Jan	Brainstorming on findings/results
Feb	Compilation of draft report
March	Critiquing and revision of draft report
April	Finalisation of report
May	Report editing and proof reading Preparation of synopsis
June	Report editing and proof reading Printing the synopsis Dissemination
July	Report publication and dissemination
August	Report and synopsis dissemination Presentation of TECERS at EECERA, London
Sept-Dec	Dissemination and advocacy

## ***The Process***

Background work for this study started during the COTA project in 1995 and ended in a proposal submission to the Department of Education, Government of India in 1997. The ORS project's process for this study started in 1998 by sending reminders on follow-up to the Government. Based on the discussion held with the Secretary of School Education, Government of Tamil Nadu, copies of the proposal was also sent to the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu for exploring possibilities of joint collaboration and funding. A feedback insisting on methodological changes in the proposal were received in June 1998 from Department of Education, Government of India. Subsequently a copy of the proposal was also sent to the State Department of Education.

Through intensive in-house discussions and feedback from the Steering Committee (formed as early as 1995) members, a decision was taken to retain the original proposal but downscale the study process. It was unanimously decided to continue with developing, reviewing, testing and validating tools through a micro level study with the available funds. In order to identify a consultant to undertake the study process, an outline of the intended study was prepared and circulated to academic institutions throughout the country. It was during this time that the main objective of the study was defined as being a methodological one to refine, develop and validate a tool to measure quality.

After identifying a consultant and technical advisor in December 1998, some of the background materials collected earlier were sent to them. After the meeting held with them in February 1999, a new proposal was written up. It included changes in the sample size, study regions, methodology, plan of analysis and time frame. Existing tools like the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Investigator's Observation Proforma, Teacher and Parent Interviews and Child Observation Proforma were modified and reformulated by the consultant. Review meetings were convened at Chennai and Gandhigram to look into the changes in the tools.

A third meeting for review of the tools were held in May 1999. At this stage, it was decided to recruit and train field investigators specialised in Human Development. Based on the review, changes were again incorporated and the final set of tools was sent for translation in Tamil for easy administration by the investigators at the field level.

### **Selection of Sample Children and Centres**

Three types of ECD centres exist in Chennai (urban areas), namely the ICDS centres, crèches or balwadis run by NGO's and nursery schools run by private management and four in Dindigul (rural areas) since TINP, the parallel programme to ICDS, also run by the government, which was prevailing in Tamil Nadu at the time of the study, but merged since then with ICDS, existed only in rural areas. The criteria for the selection of the centres were as follows:

1. All the three types of centres should serve the same community.
2. Each should have eight children who were four years old and who had been attending the centre for more than 50 % of the time during the previous year.

Since the study confined itself to children belonging to poor socio-economic group it was decided that the selection of the three centres serving a poor community would be made on the basis of the ICDS centres, which cater only to the poorer sections of the society living in the urban slums of Chennai.

### *In Chennai*

The list of ICDS centres in Chennai was obtained from the office of the Tamil Nadu State Social Welfare Board. Random numbers generated with the help of a random table were used in selecting ICDS centres from the list. Centres were visited to see whether eight children corresponding to the criteria were present. It had been decided earlier that if the ICDS centre were found to be having adequate number of sample children, then the search for the corresponding NGO, private centre serving the same community would be undertaken. It was decided that twelve trinities of ICDS, NGO and private centres would be selected for the study. However even in the preliminary stages it was quite evident that very few ICDS centres had eight sample children who were four years old. While analysing the reasons for the same it was found that with regard to the age profile of the children 80% who attended the centres were between two and a half and three and a half years of age. This meant that in a centre with an average enrolment of 25 children only 5 corresponding to the age could be found.

Even within these, when the criteria of enrolment and attendance were applied, only about three or four children were found to be eligible. On enquiring about the low enrolment of 4 year old children, the following reasons were given by the ICDS functionaries:

1. Parents generally enrolled their children in the ICDS centres when they were 2 1/2 or 3 years old.
2. When the children attained the age of four they were shifted to English medium nursery schools run by private managements.

It was then decided that the sample size per centre would be reduced from eight to four children. This was the second turning point of this study process. Even after this revision other difficulties in selecting the centres were encountered in both Chennai and Dindigul. In Chennai, as TINP was not functioning and as Dindigul had a limited NGO population, very few communities were found to be served by all the three types of centres. Even if all the three types of centres were present, either one or two did not have four sample children. A decision was then taken to identify "pairs" of centres rather than the trinities such that 6 pairs each consisting of ICDS, private schools and another 6 pairs consisting of ICDS, NGO centres would be chosen. Six pairs of ICDS private schools were chosen after visiting and scrutinising the records of about 62 ICDS centres

While the presence of private nursery schools was practically universal, balwadis or crèches run by NGO's were few and far between. When a given ICDS centre was chosen from the list, there was no way of knowing whether the community it served was also served by a NGO Balwadi, unless the community was visited. It was decided that the universe of NGO run crèches supported by the Central and State Social Welfare Boards would be defined and they would serve as the basis for selection of the NGO, as well as the corresponding ICDS pair. The list of Board supported crèches was then obtained from the Government. The sampling universe as per the list supplied by the Board then consisted of 179 crèches run by 18 institutions. Random samples were drawn from these and visits were made to the head office of each institution to get the permission for scrutiny of records at the centre and inclusion as samples if found satisfying all the criteria.

Out of the 18 institutions six had to be rejected after field visits since they had either closed down or had centres outside Chennai Corporation limits. The crèches of the other twelve were then visited and those of six had to be rejected since there were not enough number of eligible children, either in the crèches or in the corresponding ICDS centres. The ultimate selection of the six NGO, ICDS pairs was made after visiting 37 NGO crèches belonging to six institutions.

While it had been originally envisaged that each pair would serve the same community in reality it was not possible to achieve this. Eight communities were served by the same pairs of centres and four pairs served communities that were situated close to each other.

### *In Dindigul*

Since four types of ECE centres existed in two blocks of Dindigul – ICDS, TINP, NGO and private, it was earlier decided that 16 centres (4 of each type) in Dindigul and Nilakkotai blocks would be selected. But since there were less number of NGOs, only 10 pairs (6 Government/Private and 4 Government/NGO) were selected. The number of children selected were four in number from each centre and the criteria followed was the same as in Chennai.

Due to many of the practical difficulties involved in identifying children (both sample and control children) belonging to the required age group (four-year-olds), the research proposal had to be modified for the third time in August 1999. It was now decided to include centres where a minimum of four 'eligible' children could be found and to select only "pairs" of centres. The numbers of control children were also restricted to two per centre. The practical consequence of this decision was a doubling (almost) in the number of centres to get the same number of sample children, with consequences for the time schedule, work load and period of field work.



## Training of Field Investigators

The training of the eight CLeCT investigators and five TECERS investigators was conducted separately to avoid bias in scoring. Each was conducted by experts in human development and research methods involved in developing the tools, for the purposes already mentioned. Details of the training and tool validation have been separately reported in *Quality matters!* .

Data collection began at the end of August 1999 and continued till October 1999. The technical advisor did data entry, coding and verification. After the data entry and preliminary analysis was concluded, it was decided to have a “brainstorming” with the entire Advisory Committee to develop the plan of analysis, and this led to a change of plan. The earlier plan concentrated on an analysis according to rural-urban regions and the four centre types – ICDS, TINP, NGO and Private. Since the nature, scope and program design of these four centre types differ from each other, it was felt that generalisations across these types could not be made keeping in mind the small and unbalanced nature of the sample. Therefore, it was decided not to analyse the data on the basis of centre types and regions, but to focus on the components of quality as such, in whichever type of centre and on the relationship between these and children’s learning competencies. A considerable amount of rewriting had hence to be done to compile the final report.

A synopsis was also printed (900 copies) and disseminated widely in June 2000. One hundred and fifty copies of the final report were printed and disseminated to Government departments, NGOs, research and academic institutions, both at the national and international levels. Dissemination of the study has been widespread at both national and international levels, through the web, electronic and print distribution, conferences and personal presentations at Universities, research institutions and Government functionaries and heads of programmes. Advocacy for users of the tool in public, private and voluntary sectors is on-going.

### 3. Costing Child Care Services

#### A Proposed Cost Framework and Sample Analysis with ICDS as a Model in Tamil Nadu

##### *Time Line*

<b>Month/Year</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1998 Feb	Preparation of an in-house Discussion Paper
March	Polishing the Discussion Paper
April	Circulation of the Discussion Paper
August	Identification of consultant
October	Preparation of Discussion Paper jointly with the consultant
November	Paper submission and in-house critiquing
December	Planning meeting for developing a theoretical framework
1999 Jan	Review of literature and downloading information for the Discussion Paper
February	In-house circulation of the paper
March – May	Identification of experts from different fields
June	Decision taken to convene the brainstorming in September
July	Planning meeting for the brainstorming/Preparatory work
August	Correspondence with invitees and resource persons
September	Compilation of comments on the Discussion Paper Logistics planning Brainstorming workshop
October	Brainstorming workshop Planning meeting for report preparation

November	Report preparation
December	Decision to take up Stage I – Cost Analysis
2000 Jan	Report publication Pilot study for developing the cost framework
February	Visits to the Directorate of Social Welfare and Child Development Project offices
March	Plan preparation In-house critiquing Data collection
April - August	Data collection
September	Visits to Child Development Project Offices for filling the gaps
October	First draft of the report prepared
November	Critiquing
December	Second draft report

### *The Process*

The entire process started with preparation of an in-house discussion paper and extensive critiquing in 1998. Various approaches were discussed, and potential consultants met with. One of the members of the Technical Advisory Committee expressed interest in taking up the study, and after several meetings on concepts, study design and the process, she agreed to submit a base paper outlining the scope of the study on costs and benefits of all ECD programmes in Tamil Nadu. Experts in various fields and organisations were also identified to elicit support in the process. However during an in-house meetings and review, it was felt that the scope was too broad and it would be an unmanageable exercise and so it was decided to confine the study to Government run programmes alone.

The process was planned in two phases, the first one to develop a theoretical framework for a proposal and convene a brainstorming in 1999. The expected outcome of phase one was to compile a volume of papers consisting of concepts and contents on financial aspects, monitoring indicators, review of methodology and phase two was to be a micro level study in two blocks. It was also decided that the micro level study methodology would concentrate on data at three levels – macro, block and centre.

The first exercise to draft a discussion paper started with extensive reference work from various sources. Indicators were identified and listed in the discussion paper. With in-house discussions on the subject matter, the paper was thoroughly polished by the end of January 1999. Later it was decided in June to convene a brainstorming and preparatory work for it started in July 1999. The discussion paper was circulated to many national and international experts in the field for their comments and suggestions. Some of these experts also sent useful reference materials. The workshop was held for two days by the end of September. Preparatory work was done in terms of inviting delegates, budgeting, logistics and overall co-ordination. Around 25 delegates from all over the country participated in the brainstorming apart from those who participated electronically. This exercise provided clear insights on how to carry forward a three-stage process – cost analysis, cost effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis.

The report of the brainstorming was compiled and published in January 2000 (Taking Stock : Developing Indicators for Analysing Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Care and Development Programmes). Meanwhile based on the outcomes of the brainstorming, a decision was taken to confine the study process to the first stage of doing a cost analysis through developing a framework using ICDS as a model in Tamil Nadu. A consultant was hired in January 2000 for designing and developing the framework through a sample analysis at the macro, meso and micro levels. The consultant along with in-house personnel planned orientation visits and selected sample ICDS projects and centres in one rural and urban region. Data collection started in February and continued till May. Discussions were also held with specialists and experienced personnel. Gaps in the data were also checked. However, due to personal reasons the consultant left at this stage, and as a result there was stagnation in the process. Another consultant was identified in August and the process started again. Due to varied subject backgrounds (Econometrics and Chartered Accountancy) of both these consultants, the plan of the study underwent considerable amount of change. Data had to be collected and re-analysed. Draft report was prepared and critiqued by external members from the Government, Technical Advisory Committee external and in-house specialists. At this stage, there was a change in approach and it was decided to report the process in two parts – Part One was the theoretical model for a cost framework and Part Two a sample analysis using available data on ICDS in Tamil Nadu to illustrate the framework. Many of the comments received in the critique were incorporated and the final report was completed in January 2001.

## 5. Panchayati Raj and Child Care Services

### An Action-Research Study

Project ACCESS has for several years been working on the decentralisation of child care services, implying management to be handed over to diverse local groups. With the advent of the Panchayat Raj institutions and of the introduction of 33 percent reservation for women, there is greater likelihood of pressure and interest in child care services as a programme intimately affecting the welfare of women, children and girls. Several workshops and meetings were conducted in the past for the purpose of advocating to the government on this issue, but it was realised that the advocacy should come from elected panchayat leaders and local women leaders. In this context an action-research study was jointly undertaken by MSSRF and Gandhigram Trust to motivate and orient the Panchayat leaders and ward members in the improvement of child care services at the Athoor Block of Dindigul District.

#### Objectives

- To empower the elected panchayat leaders through orientation, resource materials, information and guidance.
- To help the leaders initiate and develop local activities to improve the quality of childcare services within the existing framework
- To help the leaders mobilise community support in all their efforts towards betterment of child care services
- To facilitate interaction and co-operation between TINP officials and local leaders with a view to improving childcare services.
- To document experiences for the purpose of advocacy

As the action-research was an open-ended and exploratory exercise, no fixed plan of action was determined at the start but the process was allowed to evolve by review and strategising at every stage. The Gandhigram Trust and M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation collaborated in this exercise. The reason for choosing Gandhigram Trust was because it is the only field based organisation of remarkable standing that could provide the necessary field level support in terms of facilitating, organising and regular monitoring of the activities at the field level.

As a first step in this venture a two days workshop was conducted on the 26-27 March, 1999 for the elected panchayat leaders and women ward members of the Athoor block of Dindigul district. The purpose was to orient and motivate the participants on the importance of child care services, help them identify the lacunae in the existing programme and enable them to draw up their own plan of action for the improvement of the centres, including improvement in the infra-structure facilities and in the quality of services, calling on people's participation and support at every point.

After a few months of joint monitoring, it was found that leaders had taken initiatives to improve infrastructure facilities at the childcare centres to some extent, but no efforts had been taken to improve quality of service delivery which demanded recurring expenditure, and no community participation was enlisted.

The lessons learnt were that the panchayat leaders and the community perceived child care services as a government programme with no room for their involvement, since they had neither the authority nor resources to do so. It gradually became clear that more information had to be shared with them on their powers and responsibilities and on mobilisation of financial resources to improve child care services.

In the meantime, Gandhigram Trust conducted several meetings along with the TINP officials in the villages. One meeting was aimed primarily at orienting and involving the Government officials to the activities carried out by the two collaborators and the need to provide maximum support to the leaders, and to seek help from them. Other meetings with the community emphasised the formation of women's groups and youth groups to improve the quality of child care services.

The functional approach used was found to be different from that understood by MSSRF. Gandhigram Trust went from the accepted strategy of working with the elected leaders to that of working with other existing people's groups like Madhar Sangams, Youth groups etc. to directly bring about immediate changes and improvements in the childcare centres.

To bridge the difference in understanding and arrive at a common approach, a formal meeting of the collaborators was held in November, 1999. The strategy was reviewed, the aims and objectives clarified and reiterated and a new strategy worked out. In addition, the roles of the partners were spelt out with reference to the functions of facilitation, empowerment, follow-up and documentation.

Based on the revised strategy, a second one day workshop was held at Gandhigram Trust in December 1999.

The purpose of workshop was:

- To learn about the work done for the last eight months, the problems faced and the strategy adopted.
- To orient them on the powers, functions and responsibilities laid down in the Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994,
- To offer know-how on accessing available funds and mobilising local resources (in both cash and kind) and
- To provide them with a thorough understanding of the TINP scheme.

Resource Persons from DRDA and TINP provided the information inputs.

The day previous to the workshop, a meeting was arranged with the DPNO and other TINP officials to orient them on the workshop, their role in it and to understand their expectations. The TINP officials showed keen interest and shared their plan for improving child care services through people's participation in all centres, with the leader's interest and co-operation.

The major outcomes were :

1. a decision to send a petition to the Collector requesting him to include childcare services in the Grama Sabha agenda and
2. six panchayat leaders volunteered to initiate TINP's scheme for improvement of childcare services through people's participation, in their own panchayats.

It is significant that such a petition was considered necessary, since the leaders are mandated to raise issues of general concern in the Grama Sabha and ordinary members are also free to do so.

The petition was submitted after considerable difficulty but no response was received. Follow-up after two months showed that neither the Panchayat leaders nor the TINP officials had approached each other to stimulate community participation on the issue.

At this stage, realising that documentation of the process and its constraints would be helpful for advocacy, a video film was prepared based on interviews with Panchayat leaders, in which they explained their difficulties. The film has subsequently been shared with DRDA and TINP officials.

At the Grama Sabha meeting held on 26 January, 2000 in all the villages, none raised the issue of child care services, except for two leaders who made a passing reference to child care. The issue was not raised by the community either.

At this stage it was decided by the two collaborators to change the strategy again. Two clear cut strategies in keeping with field realities emerged first, the need to work with the bottom rung of the democratic village institutions i.e people's organisations like the self-help groups, madhar sangams, youth groups etc. to motivate them to raise the issue of child care services in the Grama Sabha meetings and second, to strengthen links between the TINP officials and the elected panchayat leaders.

Both the strategies were entrusted to Gandhigram Trust because of their close proximity to the work area. Over a couple of months, women of the self-help groups falling within the eleven panchayats were motivated to raise the child care issue in the next Grama Sabha meeting. In order to strengthen a link between the TINP officials and the leaders a meeting was organised on the 26 April, 2000 at the DPNO's office. The second Grama Sabha meeting was attended by the staff of Gandhigram Trust. Reports received from them state

that the issue of child care was not raised in the Grama Sabha meetings held in any of the eleven panchayats. The people have yet to be made aware of the importance of child care services and to realise that Grama Sabha can provide the best platform for such vital issues to be raised.

The action-research project has come to end, pointing to the need for pressure at both ends. At the grassroots, there must be pressure from below on the elected leaders, and from the top, powers and responsibilities must be devolved by the government to the elected local bodies. Gandhigram Trust which has already been working with women's groups will continue to integrate the child care issue into their existing agenda, and facilitate links with TINP. MSSRF would continue to advocate for the decentralisation of child care services using the study, the video and other tools for this purpose.

Recent reports received from Gandhigram Trust state that the efforts taken to motivate the leaders has begun to bear fruits. Panchayat leaders have now started to raise the issue of child care services in the Grama Sabha meetings.



## 6. The unborn girl child

### A Case Study on Sex Ratio at Birth as an Indicator of Female Foeticide.

One of the issues addressed by the ORS project was the survival of the girl child. In the previous project (COTA) an analysis and documentation of the attitudes and perceptions towards female infanticide as well as the responses of the media was undertaken. An attempt was also made to bring together various NGOs and their networks to share their experiences in addressing the problem and to learn from one another. Based on this experience the role of Project ACCESS became one of technical resource support to those NGOs working on the issue of the survival of the girl child. As a result in the ORS project workshops for NGOs working on this issue were organized as a capacity building exercise to help them in improving their skills and to identify newer strategies for implementation. A pamphlet on 'Can the Girl Child Survive?' was also prepared to document the sex ratios in Tamil Nadu with pointers towards increasing numbers of foeticide in various districts of Tamil Nadu. Legal enactments like the Prevention of Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act and Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act was also quoted in this pamphlet and disseminated to a wider audience – researchers, activists, NGOs and Government.

The growing realisation that the threat to the survival of the girl child had shifted from one of female infanticide to female foeticide cutting across socio-economic class resulted in many NGOs launching a different campaign with a different focus and in reworking the basis for a concerted strategy. One of these was the State level Consultation on female foeticide organised by SIRD (Society for Integrated Rural Development) in December 1998 to which the Director of ACCESS was invited as an expert panellist. In a second consultation organised in September 1999 strategies and action plan for improving declining sex ratio were discussed. By this time the campaign against sex selective abortion (CASA) had been firmly launched with SIRD as the convenor of the network of NGOs involved in the campaign. Project ACCESS became one of the members of the network providing technical support to the campaign.

In a subsequent network meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2000 it was pointed out that with the rapidly increasing and widespread availability of modern scientific devices such as amniocentesis and now even cheaper, less obvious and hard-to-detect technology of ultra sound, there is increasing tendency to abort the female foetus selectively after ascertaining the sex of the foetus in the womb. In order to generate awareness and take steps to address the problem, it was necessary as a first step to identify and establish the prevalence of such practice if any with the support of concrete data. When it was debated as to how best this could be done it was suggested by Project ACCESS that the sex ratio at birth could be used as a tool to identify the prevalence of female foeticide. The Director of Project ACCESS also offered, as a member of the network, to undertake the task of collecting the at birth sex ratio data from hospitals in Chennai and analysing the trends, if any.

As a first step in this exercise the Directorate of Medical Services (DMS), the Directorate of Public Health and the Chennai Corporation were contacted to seek permission and to have access to the birth data. It was found that about ten teaching hospitals in Tamil Nadu were under the purview of the DMS and permission could be obtained to collect information from these hospitals. With regard to Chennai city, the Vital Statistical Improvement Scheme (VSIS) of the Chennai Corporation was the concerned body to be approached for information on births and deaths. Upon approaching the VSIS it was learnt that Chennai city was divided into ten zones and data obtained from individual hospitals was being consolidated zonewise.

It was decided that data collection would be done at two levels. The first level would consist of getting the consolidated at birth sex detail for Government hospitals in Chennai city. The second level would consist of getting the details over a period of time for the last ten years to observe any trend in the pattern of sex ratios. Since the prevalence of female foeticide was thought to be much more in vogue among the middle class, it was thought at this juncture to obtain birth data from a private hospital as well. Since private hospitals are not officially mandated to provide this information, the help of a senior paediatrician from one of the private hospitals in Chennai, who has long been professionally associated with ACCESS was sought, with an undertaking that the source of information would be kept confidential.

Several trips were made to the necessary authorities for seeking permission as well as for collecting the necessary information. The entire process, from obtaining official permission to the collection of data took about six months (i.e.) between the months of April and September 2000. The data was analysed, the preliminary draft report was critiqued in-house and the final report was ready in November. The data and the results were also shared at the CASA network meeting and it was suggested that other NGOs could take up such an exercise in their own areas. About seventy copies of the final report were disseminated to a wide audience of NGOs, academicians, professionals, institutions and policy makers.

## 2. Communication and Resource Materials

The activities were related to project operation resource support, provided by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, on the following issues of child care :

- quality of childcare services offered by both NGOs and Government
- linkage between women's multiple roles and child care as a support service
- discrimination against the girl child at all age – levels
- people's participation and alternative structure for child care services
- care and development of children belonging to the most vulnerable age group (0-2 yrs)
- needs of young children in disadvantaged urban environments

Project ORS was the fall out of a previous project called COTA (Children on the agenda) which was implemented for a period of five years in Tamil Nadu. The experiences gained in this project were largely instrumental in designing the ORS project. The major thrust of the COTA project was to raise awareness amongst the public on the issues of the young child and to strengthen professional groups working with young children. Communication through print and mass media formed the backbone of all awareness generation activities. Some of the major strategies used were placement of articles in journals and newspapers relevant to the issue, organization of writers' workshop to orient young writers about ECCE and preparation of audiovisual materials that were broadcast and telecast by AIR and Doordarshan respectively, the official mass media channels of the Government of India.

While implementing the project it was discovered that there was a dearth of print and audiovisual material, especially in Tamil on issues concerning the young child. Thus the project personnel had to perform the dual role of preparing the appropriate communication material in the suitable form before using it as a tool for raising awareness or for training. The materials thus prepared were disseminated to a wide group of users. At the end of the project period it was found that the disseminated material and the increased awareness level generated a lot of demand for more materials in all the various forms. Thus the production of communication and instructional materials was identified as a major area of action and was drawn up to be one of the objectives in the ORS project.

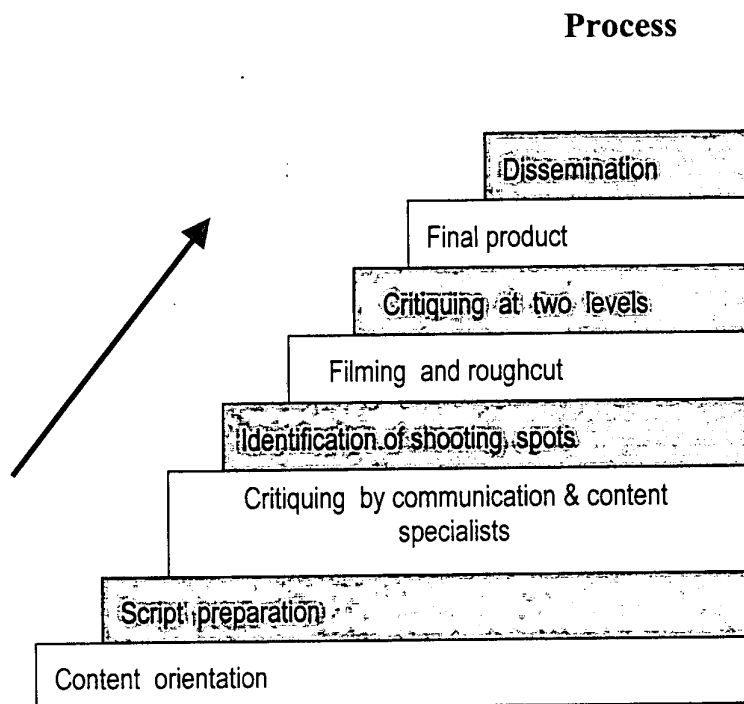
### **Approach towards development of materials**

The production of materials was based on certain guidelines which evolved out of previous experiences.

1. **For whom** : The identification of the user category was an important step towards determining the target group to meet whose needs the materials were to be made. The end users were visualized to be either parents, or the lay public, trainers, policymakers, NGO personnel etc. Besides the postal service, the distribution channels through which

dissemination could be done were also visualized such as conferences, professional groups and NGO forums who maintain direct contact with parents, teachers and trainers. This was considered to be an important step since the nature of the users determined the form in which the information was to be packaged for maximum reach.

2. **How ?** : The process by which materials were developed included a series of steps which were distinct to the different forms and user communities, (e.g.) in the preparation of manuals or instructional materials, the content was developed through several workshops with the user groups such as teachers, trainers and NGO functionaries as participants. The outline emerging from these workshops were further refined, elaborated and given shape by both inhouse and outside expertise. The second stage regarding the form of presentation involved liason with artists for illustration, layout and design. Once the first rough output was ready, it was circulated to a wide group of experts including the workshop participants for critiquing based on which alterations and corrections were made in the content.
3. **Script** : Similarly, regard to the production of videos, once the theme was identified, an inhouse script was prepared. This was then subjected to a critiquing process by ECCE and communication experts both for the content and for the style of presentation. The rough cut was previewed by the team of experts from the point of view of authenticity of the content and how successfully the information had been conveyed. After editing the final version was once more viewed inhouse and changes if necessary were carried out. The steps involved in the production of a video cassette is illustrated in Figure 1.



4. **Medium** : Practically all the products were made bilingually. While the initial production was in Tamil catering to the needs of the users in Tamil Nadu, an English translation of all the materials was also made. The English version was meant for dissemination to those outside Tamil Nadu and also for academic and professional bodies.
5. **Quantity** : Since the basic objective was to serve as a technical resource support, the production of materials was confined to prototype development with a maximum number of thousand copies if it was a print material and twenty if it was a video. This was disseminated free of cost to various levels of users for awareness action. Once the material was exhausted any further request for the same was handled on the basis of making photo copies of the print materials or copies of the video with reimbursement by the user on the incurred cost. Twice UNICEF came forward to undertake large scale production and dissemination of two of the print materials to Government functionaries.
6. **Themes** : The theme and content of all the materials produced were closely in line with the six themes already identified in the project proposal Messages for communication were also identified from the three research studies which gave a lot of information about field and policy issues and the quality of existing services.

#### **Proposed and Actual output of materials**

In the project proposal a tentative outline was given about the quantum and range of products to be developed during the three year project period. This plan was kept flexible keeping in mind the changing scenario and demands such that the production could match the emerging needs while still conforming to the overall mandate and goals. The proposed and actual output of materials is given below.

**Table 1. Proposed and Actual output of materials**

No	Type of materials	Proposed output (in nos)	Actual output (in nos)
1.	Research reports	3	7
2.	Tools	none	2
3.	Video	3	4
4.	Trg.materials or manuals	3	2
5.	Audio cassettes	3	1
6.	Campaign materials (books, posters etc)	3	5
7.	Proceedings of workshops	none	2
8.	Advocacy document	"	1
9.	Information base	not specified	1

For details see Annexure 1.

The total number of products developed exceeded the specified output in all except two cases, as is evident from the above table. In addition several extra materials unanticipated earlier had to be developed during the course of implementation of activities. Several reasons are attributable for this phenomenon.

- A few materials such as one of the training manuals entitled *Aadippadi* the research report 'First Teacher' which were scheduled to be completed during the previous project period got extended to the present project.
- As a member of several NGO networks providing technical support and with a fairly well established reputation as a resource centre in ECCE there was increasing demand for resource materials.
- Certain policy changes and issues that took place during the project period as well as the demand for timely, issue – specific materials by the network members for advocacy purposes resulted in the production of some extra materials unanticipated in the proposal.
- Video documentation of some of the activities such as the skills workshop and action research with Panchayat leaders was decided to be undertaken since it was thought that they would be useful as training and advocacy tools.

While undertaking research, it was observed that in two of the three mandated studies tools for data collection were either non existent or if available were not suitable for the Indian context and had to be extensively modified.

### **Process of development**

As mentioned earlier in this report the production of materials was within the framework of the project themes. Hence the process of development of materials has been reported along the lines of the project themes.

#### *A. Issues pertaining to the intrauterine period upto to three years (0-3 years)*

The importance of this period as well as the lack of available materials were the main reasons for including this as one of the themes of the project. The production of materials went through a series of steps and gave rise to different forms of communication materials. Based on the earlier experiences in the COTA project certain messages were short listed and brought out in the form of a poster, pamphlet and a video spot, within the first six months of the project period.

The poster contained six messages mostly in the visual form with very little of writing. Once the messages were identified an artist was identified and commissioned to draw a set of illustrations pertaining to theme. The printing was done as a collaborative activity with a pharmaceutical company with whom ACCESS had worked to reach out to pediatricians in a defined geographic area. Since the sales functionaries of the company had a well networked link with pediatricians the collaborative exercise was undertaken so that the channel could be

used as a distribution conduit for reaching individual practitioners. Later on, a kit including the poster, an audio cassette of songs and materials related to this age-group were distributed through this network to over 300 pediatricians for display and use in their clinics and for parent counselling.

A pamphlet or fact sheet on the maternity entitlements available to Indian women with specific reference to Tamil Nadu and another on the issue of parenting of under threes along with do's and don'ts was prepared for multiple uses. The utility of this product lay in the fact that it could be used as a resource material providing information on a specific aspect in a crisp and brief manner. It was a valuable non-bulky material which could be added to any kit and was completely self-sufficient as a source of information on a particular theme. It was easily passed on to several NGO workshops and forums for distribution to the participants. A video spot on the concept that children need to be given freedom and opportunities to explore the environment for development was made. Like the pamphlets, the spots which lasted for a minute or two conveyed a specific message perhaps far more powerfully since they were visual. They also proved to be very useful as discussion starters in a workshop or meeting.

ACCESS initiated and held a series of discussions with TINP (Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project). The project had been working intensively on improving the overall status of children below three years in TN and had identified lack of suitable material as a handicap in aiming for a more holistic and development-oriented programme for the under-threes especially in reaching out to the mothers. It was jointly decided to develop some products.

In the first year of the project a five-day workshop was held with the communication and training officers of the project as participants. They were given pre-course assignments in advance, namely reading exercises, collection of folk songs, riddles and observation of children below three years of age. Background material was collected on the various stages of development. During the course of the workshop 41 messages considered to be important and worthy of dissemination were drawn up. A set of about 10 materials was developed in draft form, including a series of 20 counselling cards on various developmental domains, a calendar, posters, charts, songs, plays, skits and a number of short messages in traditional Tamil forms such as proverbs, riddles, *athi-choodi* and *patti-manram*. Access was entrusted with the task of refining the materials following which they were to be field tested by TINP functionaries.

It was at this juncture that ACCESS had the opportunity to become a member of the newly initiated network called NIP (Network for Information on Parenting) in Tamil Nadu. The network was also concerned with reaching out to all those who were care-givers of 0-3 with specific messages on developmental issues of 0-3. One of the network members had already developed a calendar-cum-flip chart explaining the various domains of child development entitled the 'Delcrest Calender' which was field tested and disseminated through a workshop. This has subsequently been taken up by the government on a very large scale. In addition the network also planned a series of print materials which could be disseminated to a literate audience.

This led to a review of the materials proposed to be developed by ACCESS and it was decided that while continuing to support the network in its activities, ACCESS would avoid duplication in its own efforts and would try and fill the gaps in terms of the target group and the forms to be undertaken for development. In the meanwhile upon request from the head of a Foundling Home, ACCESS conducted a training programme for its functionaries.

The programme content had been planned based on needs assessment through observations and interaction with the functionaries. This exercise was very helpful in understanding the key messages that were needed to be communicated along with the form in which they had to be prepared. Further it also emphasised functionaries of foundling homes along with the parents with whom they interacted were another potential target group for whom practically no materials were available.

The completion of the research study on childcare practices of mothers of urban slums and the growth and development of their infants gave a very clear picture about the perceptions and practices of mothers with regard to child rearing and highlighted many important issues that needed to be addressed. Based on the research report a further twenty additional messages were developed and finalised. It was then decided that based on the field experiences, production of communication materials catering to parents and functionaries of foundling homes would be developed using folk cultural forms targeting the lay public as well as members of foundling homes.

Work then commenced in consolidating all the messages that emerged out of the various experiences. It was then perceived that while messages for communication had been shortlisted and finalised based on the needs, there was little information on the portrayal of infants and their developmental stages in traditional Tamil cultural forms. An analysis of the existing cultural forms from this point of view to find out similarities and divergence in thinking and perceptions between folk wisdom and modern thinking was thought necessary before embarking on the exercise. It was also decided that a list of foundling homes would be generated as a first step before production.

By this time barely six months of the project period was left. A consultant was identified who was supported by the Communication Associate in collecting and analysing the various Tamil cultural forms. At the end of the project period an analytical report was ready on a collection of folk songs, riddles, couplets and some – classical and semi classical literature which refer extensively to the period of infancy. Though a very exhaustive exercise could not be carried out due to lack of time, there is now some basic information on the perceptions about infancy in folk media. The form and product to emerge out of these exhaustive exercises is under consideration and would be taken up during the next six months, for which extension has been sought. Work on collecting the list of foundling homes also began but could not be completed due to lack of time.



### *B. Issues pertaining to the survival of the girl child*

At the beginning of the project period ACCESS had already been identified by other NGO's as a resource centre for providing training on communication strategies to tackle the issue of female infanticide and foeticide. While undertaking the exercise of networking the NGOs working on this issue to come together for sharing of experiences, ACCESS had identified the need for training of NGO functionaries in two areas, one in relating to and working with the media which is deeply involved in the issue partly because of its sensational nature and the other, skill development in street theatre, which is a the popular form of communication in rural areas.

Two workshops were conducted on both the issues. The first one, on learning to relate and work with the print media and AIR (All India Radio) was conducted in the first year for NGO functionaries involved in the issue of female infanticide. In this workshop the participants prepared several jingles and songs on the theme which have since then been submitted to AIR for broadcast. However, no audio cassettes were prepared during this project period since there was inadequate feedback on the utilisation of the large number of audio cassettes disseminated pertaining to the previous project period. The workshop proceedings were found so useful and unique, that the participants suggested bringing out a publication to reach a wider group of audience. Thus the idea of bringing out a manual on 'media relations' with NGOs as the primary target group was born.

The chief resource person of the workshop, an experienced journalist and communication specialist who is committed to the issue and who had already worked with NGOs on this issue was identified as the consultant who would author the manual. The manual, written in Tamil, went through the usual stages of production mentioned earlier and was completed in the third year of the project. (The dissemination details are provided elsewhere in the report). Feedback from institutions as well as more and more demand for the manual have revealed that it is found to be of use and relevance to the readers.

The participants of the first workshop suggested that a second one be organized on street theatre as a skill building exercise, since that was the commonest and most effective form of communication in rural areas. A weeklong workshop was organized in the second year of the project. Since the earlier experience in documenting the major theme of the workshop as a manual had received a very favourable reception, a video documentation of the proceedings and outcomes of the workshop was undertaken. The twenty minute crisply brought out video had two parts. Part One dealt with seven aspects of street theatre in which training is necessary namely, voice culture and training, thematic conceptualization, music, body movement, preparation of stage props etc. It gave a clear idea of not only the elements of street theatre but also the participatory manner in which to conduct a workshop. Part Two showed the outcome of the workshop (i.e) the presentation of three short plays by the participants who had evolved the play as part of process of the workshop. The video was distributed to the participant organizations. It can be used as a tool for training in any workshop on street theatre.

Database on a selected theme was already mandated to be prepared in the proposal. However in the Technical Advisory Committee, it was pointed out that it was far beyond the scope of the project since a database involved all aspects of a theme, qualitative as well as quantitative. It was suggested that one could produce an information base on a specific issue about which very little information was available and for which there was a need. Based on this suggestion a bibliographic abstract on all available material on the survival of the girl child was decided to be prepared.

As a first step all major libraries, institutions and individuals in Chennai, Madurai and Gandhigram where a lot of work had been carried out were visited and a thorough review was made of the materials available in both English and Tamil. It was found that not much by way of documentation was available in print and whatever could be found had already a place in ACCESS library. A fairly well maintained collection of newspaper articles on this issue was available with the Indian Council of Child Welfare in Chennai. ACCESS was found to be the major storehouse of print resource materials on this issue. Thus the preparation of the abstract was begun with the print materials in ACCESS library. The format for the preparation included six items, namely, the name of the material, author, a summary of the content, number of pages, form in which available such as book or proceedings and publisher. A student volunteer was identified who read through each material and prepared the abstract on the suggested format. The drafts were checked and the final product was made available in a floppy. The abstract has listed forty three materials. A flier describing the product was prepared and circulated to institutions and individuals. The floppy was then distributed based on requests. The entire exercise from conceptualization to distribution took nearly an year and was started and completed during the second year of the project.

A video spot with the message that the father is the one who determines the sex of the child through the combination of the XX chromosomes was produced during the first year of the project. A video spot with the message that the father is the one who determines the sex of the child through the combination of the XX chromosomes was produced during the first year of the project. A video spot with the message that the father is the one who determines the sex of the child through the combination of the XX chromosomes, was produced during the first year of the project. This was submitted to Doordarshan, the official Government channel for telecasting, and was broadcast occasionally in Channel 1. It was used extensively as a discussion starter in several NGO meetings and workshops.

While female infanticide received attention from several NGOs and even goaded policy makers to attend to the issue, there was growing realization amongst NGO's that threats to the survival of the girl child had taken a different form by way of female foeticide. The mushrooming of scan centres which blatantly undertook sex determination and sex selective abortion were clear enough proof of this. In order to launch an organized movement against this menace several NGOs formed the CASSA network (Campaign against Sex Selective Abortion) of which ACCESS is a member.

While formulating an action plan members discussed the problem of not being able to generate hard data on the issue of female foeticide, since it was being carried out silently and privately by the concerned persons. The idea of using the at birth sex ratio figures as a tool for identifying female foeticide was suggested by ACCESS which was then requested to undertake the exercise. It was then decided in-house that while undertaking this exercise an attempt would be made to get gender – disaggregated data on certain other selected issues such as health, nutrition and socialization of the young child.

A consultant was identified and entrusted with the task of identifying and collecting all the information possible. Further he was also requested to find out whether permission would be given by the Government to collect data about the birth information and analyse it. It was found that gender – disaggregated data was available for health and nutritional status. Not much information was available with regard to the theme of socialization. While permission was forthcoming from the Government to analyse the birth data, the information was requested to be kept confidential.

The data collection on the at birth sex ratio was collected from the VSIS(Vital Statistics Improvement Scheme) of the Chennai Corporation for ten Government hospitals in Chennai, one hospital from Salem and from one private hospital in Chennai with the help of a pediatrician. The data was analysed and the report was written as a case study on how the sex ratio at birth was used as a tool for detecting the prevalence of female foeticide if any. Due to the confidential nature of the information the report had only a limited circulation.

### *C. Quality of Childcare Services*

During the previous project data had been collected on the working conditions of childcare workers in the voluntary sector in Tamil Nadu. This was taken up for analysis during the first year of the project and the research report entitled “The First Teacher” was prepared. Though the unsatisfactory working conditions and low status of the childcare workers was quite well known for the first time concrete data was available which could be used for advocacy. This research study was presented in a workshop to discuss ways and means of improving the existing crèche scheme of the Government. The recommendations were published as proceedings of the workshop and resulted in the setting up of a Task Force to follow up on them.

One of the research studies looked at the relationship between the quality of components of care given to children in childcare centres and their learning outcomes. At the time of writing of the proposal it was decided that the ECERS tool (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) developed in the UK and standardized worldwide could be used as the primary tool for data collection. However initial field trials revealed that the tool would need considerable adaptation to suit the Indian, specially the Tamil Nadu, situation. While this not only added to the workload and had implications for the time frame set out for the research, it also gave the TECERS (Tamil ECERS) tool as a by product of the study.

The results of the study pointed to the conclusion that the learning outcomes were best in an environment where there were activity-based education which allowed the children scope to explore the environment. Since very little hard data was available to prove the point that children learnt by doing activities, it was thought very important to share the results of the study with a wide audience namely academicians, school heads and teachers, as well as professionals. An executive summary was made in both English and Tamil and circulated widely. The tool was also presented at the tenth ECCERA conference in London. Dissemination and advocacy through presentations at leading institutions is ongoing.

While Tamil Nadu was a pioneer in the implementation of childcare services with a substantial chunk of the budget earmarked for this purpose, ways of measuring the cost of delivering the services and the resultant benefit remained largely elusive owing to the lack of a satisfactory tool and the methodology for measuring and costing. At the time of the initiation of the research it was realized that the task was an enormous one and could not be undertaken in its totality within the time frame of the project and several steps were needed to be taken prior to it. A workshop on measuring costs and benefits was held and the proceedings of this were published under the title of "Taking Stock".

This was also an unanticipated exercise but very useful since the proceedings recorded and clarified many concepts, issues and methods within the context of a multi-disciplinary framework. It also gave a very realistic picture about what could be actually attempted by ACCESS with its own strengths and weaknesses. The dissemination of the report brought very positive feedback from various quarters.

Following this an attempt was made to develop a costing framework using ICDS as a model. Since the process was a very lengthy and complicated one starting with obtaining permission from the Government, to collecting data from multiple sources and owing to the time taken for identifying the consultants, one for data collection and another for analysis the report could be completed only a month after the project period. This report will also have a limited circulation since Government has yet to give permission for publication and dissemination of the study. It is expected that the framework developed in this report would also be of use to all institutions and NGOs who run childcare services.

The production of the video film on the monitoring of childcare services was primarily undertaken as an exercise to create a tool in the visual medium with which awareness could be created on how a good childcare centre should function amongst various strata of the population namely parents, women's organisations, school authorities, Government functionaries and other stakeholders involved in the delivery of childcare services. The process began with an in-house discussion on the content, duration and approach to be adopted in the narration of the film. The script was then written by the communication associate which was critiqued by both content and communication specialists. At the end of this exercise there was a clear consensus about the content, its treatment and the approach to be adapted in the narration.

In the second stage a film maker was identified and thoroughly oriented to the subject matter, based on which the script was rewritten and visualized in terms of shots and sequences. With the help of one of the project associates the film maker then visited several childcare centres in Chennai, Nagappattinam and Tirunelveli run by both Government and NGOs, to select the shooting spots for filming. Once the areas were finalized and permission obtained from the concerned authorities, shooting was commenced. Once the filming was over, a rough cut was prepared and was again subjected to a process of critiquing at two levels by a team of ECE professionals and communication experts. The film underwent a final editing based on their suggestions and the first public screening was held at MSSRF. The entire process of film making from the conceptual stage to the final product was completed within six months. The film is proposed to be widely distributed and screened to generate awareness in various strata of society including Panchayat leaders and the lay public.

#### *D. Peoples' participation in childcare services*

With the advent of the Panchayati Raj system of local self-governance, which requires one-third representation of women members, decentralisation of childcare services to include people's participation in service delivery is an important route to improving the quality of services. In this context an action research was taken up with Panchayat leaders in Gandhigram in collaboration with Gandhigram Trust. While implementing the action research, it was noticed that while many Panchayat leaders were oriented to the idea of improving childcare centres and even attempted to help in whatever way they could, it could not be sustained since they felt that they were neither clearly mandated nor given instructions to allocate funds for this purpose. They felt that unless childcare as an issue was clearly spelt out as an issue of development, they could do very little about it and that too merely out of sympathy for the cause.

Since the first step towards decentralization is devolution of powers with specific reference to the work to be taken up, it was felt necessary at this juncture to video document these experiences and use it as a tool for advocacy for inclusion of childcare as a specific issue in the Panchayat agenda with both Government and women's groups. A twenty minute advocacy film based on the project experiences was visualized. A consultant was identified who interviewed all the leaders. The actual production of the film was completed by the Communication Associate. While some sequences were shot anew, the majority were obtained from the unused rushes of previous films made by ACCESS. After an in-house critiquing the final editing took place. The production was completed within a month of its initiation in the final year of the project. The film was shown and discussed with UNICEF representative, the Managing Director of Women's Development Corporation and the Director for Rural Development, Chennai. This resulted in the Director requesting that a similar action research exercise be carried out in other areas in collaboration with the Department of Rural Development.

### *E Women's multiple work roles and support services for working women*

A two minute video spot on the multiple roles of women and the value of homework had been made during the COTA project. The spot proved highly successful in stimulating a lively discussion wherever it was shown. Since the film related to an urban middle class setting, a suggestion was made at that time to produce a similar version in a rural setting to cater to the rural audience. Accordingly the project was launched and began with the development of the script. The rural area identified was Kanchipuram, close to Chennai city. The focus was on women's multiple roles and the invisible aspect of housework.

It has been extensively distributed and screened at many places and is the most popular of all the spots, going by the demand and the impact that it causes. It was also selected as an entry in the documentary section of one of the National Film Festivals and has been dubbed in Hindi, the national language for that purpose. An article on the theme women in agriculture was placed in one of the newspapers.

By the end of the first year of the project the Gender and Development Resource Centre within the Foundation had been firmly established, and was ready to take up women-related issues. A conscious decision was taken at this point that ACCESS would focus more on child-centred issues with the role of women and mothers as peripheral issues. However it was also decided that as set out in the project mandate and according to the policy of the Foundation, all activities would be undertaken with a gender perspective, though the main focus focus would be on children.

### *F. Other Products*

As a member of TN-FORCES. Project ACCESS has provided technical resource support to all activities of TN - FORCES. In the beginning of the second year of the project a request came from the convenor of TN - FORCES to produce an advocacy document for members of the Legislative Assembly and members of Parliament which would provide an overview of all existing laws, policies and schemes, for women and children in Tamil Nadu, the actual situation and the gaps which needed to be addressed. The document was also to provide suggestions on what the members could do to address the needs. The document was meant for distribution in the then forthcoming session of the State Assembly.

The task began by first finalising the contents of the document. All the issues concerning women and children from the intrauterine period to the first year in school were considered. The range of issues covered were, lacunae in the policies on sex selective abortion, maternity benefits and policies, adoption provisions and laws, childcare centres and policy for ECE. The contents were presented in an easily readable style with a lot of illustrations. The proof was also shown to some policy makers and their comments for improving the same were also solicited.

The highlight of the production was the 4 page centre page pull – out which set out clearly two things – what the members could do in their own constituencies on these issues and the questions that they should raise in the Assembly. The detachable pullout was conceived of since it was felt that the document without the pullout could be used as a briefing document by itself on the provision of laws, policies and services in Tamil Nadu. Moreover it was felt that a similar pull – out could be made for other categories like Panchayat Leaders on their role in improving the services. This decision proved to be very vital since after all the copies (1000) were distributed. A request for reprint came from UNICEF with special focus on Panchayat Leaders. 15,000 copies of this document with a pull-out for Panchayat leaders have now been printed.

The pull out contained information on what Panchayat leaders could do in their own areas to improve childcare services and how they could mobilize resources for the same. In the Technical Advisory Committee of the project a suggestion was made to produce a similar pullout for self – help groups and the exercise has already begun. The pullouts serve as fact sheets in their own right and are useful as resource materials in workshops.

A training manual specifically targetting teachers on play way method of learning was taken up during the COTA project. The process of development of the manual has already been reported in the process documentation of the previous project. The printing, publication and dissemination of the manual was taken up and completed during the current project period. The manual has been rated as very useful and was distributed in no time. 13,000 copies have been reprinted by UNICEF and distributed to government child care workers.

### **Dissemination**

Since the purpose of any production was to generate awareness, action and serve as a resource support and guide to any individual or organization, dissemination was a major activity of the project. As mentioned earlier each prototype production consisted of a thousand copies which were sent to various user categories. When a product reached the proof or the editing stage, a dissemination list was prepared of various categories of users. This was then fine tuned and the products then sent by post in most cases or delivered by hand in a few cases. Unfortunately neither project time nor money had been estimated for this exercise and dissemination cost has proved to be a considerable chunk in the production cost. As per the Memorandum of Understanding with TN-FORCES a hundred copies of all the materials produced were given to TN FORCES. The other user groups to whom the various products were disseminated are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Products and Target Groups**

Manuals	NGO's, Women Organizations, TINP, DSW, Schools, Teachers, Training Methodology Groups, TN-FORCES and Professional Associations
Media Relations	Schools of Communication, Colleges of Social Work, NGOs, Professional Associations
Research Reports	NIPCCD, IAPE, State Councils of Child Welfare, ICCW and branches, UNICEF, TAC, Government Welfare Departments, Labour Commissioner, TINP, Departments of Women and Children, Women's Organisations, Academicians, Donors, ILO, FORCES and branches, Consultants
Poster	NGO'S, Women's Groups, ICDS centres, Pediatricians, Associations, members of TN - FORCES, Hospitals and Parents
Pamphlets & Fact Sheets	NGO'S, Women's Groups, Donors, Resource Persons and Association
Proceedings	Participants, Non - Participants, Resource Persons, Government Departments or Welfare
Advocacy Document	TN MLA's, MP's, NGO's, and Panchayat leaders, Women's Associations, Self-help Groups
Audio Spots	AIR, NGO's, Teachers, Educational Institutions, Women's Organisations
Video Spots	Doordarshan, NGO's Training Organisations, Women's Organisations used in Meeting and Workshops

Though a systematic evaluation study has not been undertaken to find how the materials were being put to use, the utility of the materials could be judged on the basis on the demand that they generated and some feedback received from the users. Requests for undertaking reproduction and bulk printing by UNICEF for some of the materials proved to be one such example of the product's utility.

### **Conclusion**

Production of communication materials formed a major part of the project activity and required the involvement of resource persons from various disciplines. The range and diversity of the products were due to the fact that they reached people in various walks of life from policy makers to professionals and the lay public which necessitated the use of various media for communication. It is hoped that the combined tasks of catering to the need and generating a need for materials through production have to some extent met the objective of filling a gap in the dearth of resource materials in ECCE.



Table 1. Proposed and Actual Output of Materials

## 1. Research Report

Proposed output	Actual output	Content
3	1. The First Teacher	Documents the working conditions of Child Care Workers in the Voluntary Sector in Tamil Nadu
	2. Quality Matters	Expresses the relationship between quality of Child Care Services and its impact on children's learning.
	3. Panchayati Raj and Child Care Services	Describes the process and outcomes of an action research in improving Child Care Services
	4. Unborn Girl Child	Case Study of the prevalence of Female Foeticide using sex ratio at birth as a tool
	5. Costing Child Care Services	Provides a framework for analyzing cost of Child Care Services
	6. Maternal Care and Infant Growth	Documents care practices of mothers and the growth and development of urban slum infants
	7. Depiction of Infants in Cultural Forms	Analyses how the period of infancy is perceived and depicted in Tamil Folk and Classical Literature

## 2. Tools

None	1. Tamil Nadu Early Child Environmental Rating Scale (TECERS)	Provides a quantifiable measure of the components of Care in Child Care Centres
	2. Framework for Measuring Costs of Child Care Services	Provides a sample of the various components of services and the approach for costing

### 3a - Video

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 3 | 1. What were you doing (Tamil)                 | Women's multiple roles and burdens<br>Father's role in sex determination                                 |
|   | 2. Who is the cause (Tamil)                    | Young Child's needs for stimulation  |
|   | 3. What does baby like (Tamil)                 | Explains what a good Balwadi should be, have and do for the overall growth and development of the child. |
|   | 4. Balwadi - Why? What? How? (English & Tamil) |  |

### 3b - Video Documentation

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | Skills Development (Theatre Workshop) (Tamil) | Documents the process and outcome of a training workshop on street theatre           |
| 2. | Community Care for the Child (Tamil)          | Documents an action research with Panchayat Leaders in improving Child Care Services |

### 4. Training Materials or Manuals

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 3 | 1. Song & Dance (Aadipadi-Tamil)           | Resource material on activity based education   |
|   | 2. Media Relations (Media Uravugal Tamil)- | Describes different forms of communication and their reach and how NGO's may work with them |

### 5. Audio

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 3 | 1. Two Jingles on Survival of Girl Child (Tamil) | Couplets in Tamil developed in a workshop |
|---|--|---|

## 6. Campaign Materials

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 3 | 1. Poster (Tamil)  | Messages on development of children under 2 yrs   |
|   | 2. Pamphlets & Fact Sheets (English & Tamil)   | Rights and Services for Pregnant  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maternity Entitlements</li><li>• Survival of the Girl Child</li><li>• Parenting the Under Threes</li></ul> | Communicating appropriate Child rearing practices   |
|   | 3. Supplements   | Points out to what the legislators and elected panchayat representative can do to improve Child Care Services |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Messages for Legislators</li><li>• Panchayat Leaders (Tamil &amp; English)</li></ul>                       |   |

## 7. Proceedings of Workshops

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| None | 1. Child Care Workers in Voluntary Sector in Tamil Nadu | Documents the proceedings of a workshop to improve the existing crèche services |
|      | 2. Taking Stock   | Defines and documents approaches to measuring cost and benefits                 |

## 8. Advocacy Document

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| None | Women and Child Rights in Tamil Nadu— an Overview | Gives an overview of the processes, laws and schemes for women and children(0-6)in Tamil Nadu |
|------|---|---|

## 9. Information Base

- |               |                                    |   |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Not specified | Bibliographic Compendium (English) | Provides an abstract of all print materials in MSSRF library on the issue of survival of girl child |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---|

### 3. Capacity Building

In January 1998, Project ORS embarked on a three year capacity building exercise in ECE in Tamil Nadu. This account attempts to document that process and its outcomes. The first part of the report gives an account of the ECE scenario, in Tamil Nadu with special reference to training, as perceived at the time. Since no formal needs assessment was done at the time, this account outlines the context for the exercise, the reasons for the decision, and the objective, strategy and approach. The second part of the report deals with the strategy of networking. The activities which made up the process are described and then the outcomes examined. In the third and final part, an attempt is made to evaluate the process in terms of the context outlined in the first part and indicate future directions.

#### Part A - The ECE Training Scenario

ECE in India has grown enormously in the last few decades and is characterised by wide spread provision under diverse auspices, varying standards, lack of a national recognition as an integral part of the educational system, and hence lack of a national policy or regulatory framework. There are three main sectors - public, voluntary and private. In the public sector, ICDS has grown in the last twenty five years to provide through its anganwadis a package of six services including "preschool education" to nearly 30 million children in the age-group 3-6 years. The voluntary or not-for profit sector, small but vibrant, through day-care centres, crèches or balwadis, operated with or without Government assistance, offers a mix of care services including preschool education for this age-group. Between half and one million children may be included in this sector. A mushrooming proliferation of centres in the private fee-paying sector (known as LKG/UKG or kindergartens, nurseries, nursery schools etc) in both recognised and unrecognised institutions, is attempting to meet the needs of the rest of the population. No organised survey has been undertaken of this sector, but one can estimate that at least another 20 million children would be found in these centres, a large number of which are of appalling quality, run contrary to basic pedagogical principles, and may at times be damaging or detrimental to children. In addition, there is a minute number of statutory crèches operating under the Mines, Factories, and Plantation Acts which cater to a negligible number of children in this age-group. All of these operate without any coordination, under different auspices, schemes, rules and frameworks, and often in total unawareness of each other.

In Tamil Nadu, there are 30,000 preschools in the government sector catering to 10 lakhs children aged 3-5 years. There may be an equal or even larger number in the private sector, since the mushrooming of private schools, through the system called Matriculation and Nursery Schools, is probably higher in Tamil Nadu than anywhere else in the country. Many

of these schools cater to and appeal to the aspiring poor in semi-urban and rural areas, not merely in the metropolitan and urban areas, because of their so-called "English medium" or instruction through English.

In recent years, Tamil Nadu has been characterised by a flight of children from ICDS to these private schools in large numbers because of the upwardly mobile parental desire for English as an avenue to success, with serious implications for the quality of both public and private preschool education. The voluntary sector is also divided into two segments one financed by govt. and the other by local and international donors.

### **ECE Training in India**

As a result of the non-recognition of ECE as a part of the basic structure of education, there is no nationally or State-regulated system of training for its teachers. The Government provides a three-month on-the-job orientation which includes a component of preschool education, but has an elaborate supervisory structure to guide and control the activities. In Tamil Nadu, ICDS has built up a series of Mobile Training Teams which offer field-based training in ECE among other subjects, while the well-organised training wing of TINP focused on health and nutrition. These two wings have been recently integrated. The NGO sector depends largely on its own informal and unrecognised trainings to staff its centres. The only recognised non-governmental training, the well-known Bal Sevika Training launched in 1961 and run for more than 35 years by the ICCW and its State branches, was closed down a few years ago. There are still a handful of institutions offering training for preprimary education but the number of trainees are very few in relation to need and demand. The vast number of private pre-school centres are staffed by untrained (and underpaid) workers, or by teachers with inappropriate training; supervision by the managements is also not informed by an understanding of ECE. In the circumstances, all child care workers, whose skills are unrecognised, are very poorly paid, sometimes below the wage of unskilled workers.

It is also significant, that hardly any major academic institutions or departments have grown up around this sub-discipline or wing of pedagogy, and that the body of available research, curriculum, courses, and the group of researchers, curriculum builders and educators at the level of higher education is limited in size and marginal in impact., while regulatory frameworks are totally absent. The Distance Education module in ECE offered by IGNOU has not only been a ray of sunlight in this otherwise depressing training scenario, but represents a strong initiative to link the higher education sector with grassroots training.

### **Status of ECE training in Tamil Nadu**

Earlier in the century, Tamil Nadu, a pioneer in ECE, had provided a nurturing climate for several good schools of ECE training, variously practising and offering training according to the educational and pedagogical philosophies and tenets of Montessori, Froebel, Gandhi and others. These training schools, though few, were outstanding in terms of quality. With the expansion of the public sector in the last twenty years, a system of training for child care workers in that sector (ICDS, TINP and NMS) was put in place, and a cadre of trainers

built up. However, the lack of interest and support from the State for the private and voluntary sectors, led to a gradual withering away of these institutions. On the one hand, the growth of private schools during the same period, on a purely commercial basis, characterised by low quality, untrained and poorly paid staff, and no theoretical underpinnings, coupled with total lack of interest or regulation from the State, resulted in little or no demand for training from the users in the private sector. The public sector, with its in-service "job training" approach to its own child care workers provided merely an uncertificated and unrecognized training which does not encourage or help them to move into other sectors. The small voluntary sector managed without any training, or by making its own informal arrangements, except for the Bal Sevika Training run by ICCW. The lack of recognition, coupled with the associated lack of suitable wages, implied that there was no desire for training on the part of potential teachers either. Though large and growing numbers of teachers are found in the private sector, the lack of demand for training had a negative impact on supply. In this situation, by the mid-nineties, most of the training institutions had been forced to close down, including the BST course. The tiny handful that remained struggled to survive, and these mostly catered to the upper income end of the scale, servicing a small minority of schools for this sector.

In the earlier project period (COTA 1993-97) the project made a strong effort to build capacity among trainers in the public sector. The reason for this choice was the perception that the public sector was not only the largest but the most significant for the lower and lowest income groups, and the most influential in terms of policy, content and process. It was therefore felt important to tackle the quality issue by making an impact on training. A series of training courses and orientation programmes were held, and resource materials of various types produced, including the trainers' manual, PLAYING TO LEARN. By 1997, all the master trainers of ICDS, (members of the Mobile Training Teams) a good many of the supervisory and training cadres of TINP, as well as one staff member from each of the 21 District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS) in the State had been covered. It was not possible to conduct a training outcome assessment of this process and strengthen training in this sector. However, there appeared to be little further demand and no further interest from Government in continuing training for this group of trainers. Capacity, it appeared, had been built to the level it could be used, and beyond.

It was during this period that the full extent and nature of the growth of the private sector and its implications was realised and the first attempt to address this was through the campaign on 'Burden on the Preschool Child' Not only was wide public awareness built up, but a great need, if not yet demand in monetary terms, for training, began to become apparent. TN-FORCES played a major role in uncovering these needs.

It was therefore decided that in the next project period (ORS 1998-2000) the focus would be on the hitherto neglected voluntary and private sector. In keeping with the larger goals of the project. Only those segments of the latter, which cater to the poor and underprivileged sections of society, rather than the upper-income elite sector, would be included.

The first step in this direction was the launching of the self-financed Summer Refresher. In-service Course in ECE in the summer of 1997, as an experiment coordinated by COTA on

behalf of TN-FORCES. Four institutions in different parts of Tamil Nadu took up the courses, working to a hastily drafted common curriculum, and drawing in and sharing Resource Persons from several institutions. The response was most encouraging, underlining the hidden demand for this type of training. Since the course was experimental, no attempts were made to look for funding, and the courses were entirely financed by the contributions of the participating teachers/ institutions/schools. While this procedure guaranteed autonomy and freedom to experiment, it also made the financial base very fragile, and heavily dependent on the voluntarism of professionals, with hidden costs being borne by the trainers who gave their time during the summer vacations without any monetary recompense. While the success of the courses, as judged by the response of the trainees, was most encouraging and led to plans to repeat it in the following year, it at the same time drew attention to the unpreparedness of the trainers and training institutions in terms of a dismal lack of training skills, curriculum, methodology and personnel. It was from this realization that the decision to build capacity for training in ECE originated and developed in and through the trainers' network.

### Part B - The Network

Over the three-year period, a total of six meetings, two a year, of the network have been held. The objectives, and outcomes of each meeting are summarized below, and then the trends, various outcomes and developments are examined one by one, in two sections, relating to personal growth on the one hand and the growth of the training content and process itself on the other.

**January 1998 :** The first meeting was a six-day workshop for trainers on experiential methods and participatory training strategies to help them to develop the needed skills to teach a course without any practical component and to prepare for the summer course of 1998. 20 institutions were canvassed to send participants. 19 participants from 10 institutions attended the course. Of these, 10 were classroom teachers, five were University lecturers and four were teacher trainers. This mixture was expected to enrich participants by drawing on each others' strengths. However, the lack of homogeneity created its own problems. Some of the participants, the classroom teachers and the University lecturers, later dropped out of the network soon after the first meeting, perhaps realising that they were unable by circumstances or background to contribute effectively. The chief gains were a marked improvement in the self-confidence and personal growth of the participants as professionals, familiarity with a wide variety of class room training strategies, and the development of a more coherent and orderly plan of work for the 1998 courses, which were subsequently undertaken by three centres.

**November 1998 :** Only 9 participants from 7 institutions attended the second meeting, a two-day workshop. The objective was to review the experience of the summer courses of 1998, recording innovations and attempts and addressing practical problems, and to plan for an extended training course for the future. Several members said that they had utilized and practised skills and strategies learnt through the network in their ongoing work, even though

they had not been able to conduct the refresher training courses. Time was also devoted to preparing, practising and critiquing training skills and strategies at the classroom level. At the time of the meeting, one institution had already launched the first internship model extended in-service course, and the others, frustrated by the inadequacies of the 30-day summer course, also decided to take it up from the following year. This course was visualized as a series of blocks of training (10-15 days in the summer) followed by 1-3 day sessions at regular intervals throughout the year, which would add up to 30 days of classroom work over the year, linked by practical field work and assignments to be carried out in the trainees' own base centres.

**February 1999 :** The third meeting was planned as a business meeting for one day, to finalise a common pattern for the proposed extended one-year in-service course already discussed, and to review the curriculum, budget, methodology and plan of action for each course. 9 participants from 7 institutions attended this course. After intensive work, for the first time a common curriculum and plan emerged for the course, but with sufficient flexibility built in for each institution. The course was later conducted by three institutions. The importance of practical field work between sessions was explicitly recognized and provided for by a plan of regular assignments to be carried out by each trainee in her own institution, with reporting and review at the next training session. By now, several people had dropped out of the network, while others expressed their inability because of circumstances to effectively use what they had learnt. All however emphasised their personal learnings.

**September 1999 :** The fourth meeting was a two-day workshop with the special guest participation of Prof Kathy Sylva of Oxford University as a Resource Persons. 10 participants from 6 institutions participated. The aim was to review the strategies and problems arising out of the ongoing extended courses in three centres, and to develop and practise innovative strategies to overcome the limitations experienced. A strongly felt insight by all was the importance of field and practical training, the weakness of this component in the model being used, the meaning of the concept of supervision and the need for supervised teaching practice. These insights were reinforced by exposure to the systems of "mentoring and field supervision practised in the UK. A second important insight was the gradual but strong realization of the importance of the external environment and wider context of ECE training and the need for advocacy and demand creation with parents, community, school managements and Government to support training. Time was also found to review, learn, practise, evaluate and modify the TECERS tool for rating of classroom environments in ECE. The group began to think in a long-term perspective to strengthen training and develop a variety of training programmes, linked by a common approach, but adapted to the strengths of each institution. It was at this meeting that the concept of an evolving and self-sustaining network was born.

**February 2000 :** The fifth meeting was again a one-day review and planning session attended by 12 persons from nine institutions. After a status review of the three ongoing extended courses, a clear picture emerged of common problems at the individual, institutional and external levels. As a result, an understanding emerged that it was necessary to work at two level – institutional and advocacy, and the action plan that emerged focused on strategies to



work with parents and managements on the one hand and with TN-FORCES on the other for advocacy in the larger environment. Detailed plans were made for the next extended course (subsequently taken up in three centres) with renewed emphasis on strengthening direct field supervision by trainers, and on including both supervised and unsupervised assignments by trainees. This led to understanding of the need for a training package, including financial aspects, which could be offered to managements right at the beginning so that they would appreciate all the implications of the course, especially the supervisory aspects. The value of peer sharing among trainers and their continuing availability to each other both for curriculum development and as Resource Persons led to the emergence of the idea of mini-networks at the regional level.

**October 2000:** The sixth meeting, a one-day review, evaluation and planning session, was the last in the series started in January 1998 and held during the project period of ORS. 12 persons from nine institutions attended the meeting. The review of experience of the three centres conducting the training courses led to appreciation of

- the impact on demand creation of the new strategies and efforts related to advocacy;
- the challenging and difficult tasks of working with managements;
- the need to seek at least partial funding from external sources;
- the emergence of three strong regional clusters at Chennai, Coimbatore and Cuddalore District respectively;
- and the need to balance the conflicting dimensions of quantity and quality in the future.

The evaluation of the network process over the last three years was presented as a statement condensing the responses of the participants to the guidelines sent out earlier on the development and impact of the network at different levels (Annexure 1). Presentations were also made on the strategies for demand creation, the use of the TECERS tool for training and evaluation and on the effectiveness, approaches and styles of networking. It was unanimously felt that the network should continue to evolve as a self-sustaining and autonomous one and all participants committed themselves to working towards this goal. One of the participants volunteered to be the sub-coordinator for this network under the umbrella of TN-FORCES.

It was decided to strengthen the three regional resource teams with IAPE branches as the base to provide the necessary professional inputs. It was also decided to expand the network by inducting new resource persons as members, and to make efforts to secure some external financial support for the training programmes.

### **Personal and Professional growth**

**Participant profile:** The profile of the network members at the end of 2000, is somewhat different from the original group of January 1998. Some of the original 19 participants have dropped out, while a few new members have joined later. The core group of persons committed to sustaining the network and working through it are mostly trainers (10) drawn from six institutions, with a strong professional and personal commitment to training. One or two teachers remain from the original group, but play more of a supportive role, and it

should be noted that at this level approach, other talented teachers can also be drawn in as advisory teachers, mentors and group leaders at the field level. One University group dropped out immediately after the first workshop. Representatives of two other Universities continue to participate mostly out of personal interest, but have had little or no success in initiating, leave alone sustaining, activity of this nature at their Universities. Perhaps the mandate, structure, mode of functioning, and emphasis on formal pre-service preparation of the traditional Universities do not easily permit the flexibility and innovativeness needed to reach out to new target groups. On the other hand, the link with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and its approaches and materials in the distance education mode, has proved worthwhile and may be helpful to pursue in the future.

**Personal growth:** The responses to the questionnaire on the network process were revealing in delineating the self-perception of participants regarding personal growth and fulfillment attained through the network, as well as other issues. (Annexure 2) The responses were categorized under five heads: skills learnt, awareness, problems, alternative approaches and suggestions on strengthening the network.

- Important skills learnt were participatory methodology, experiential training, team work, flexibility, systematic approach, team teaching and self-confidence.
- Expanded awareness and understanding had developed about the impact of external circumstances and the role of government, media, parents, associations etc.
- Problems and issues related to working with other agencies and need for more skills to tackle external circumstances were identified.
- Innovative and alternative approaches to training had developed.
- Several suggestions for strengthening and sustaining the network were made.

This deep awareness of the enriching nature of the network process and the value of peer sharing and interaction is at the base of the commitment to continuing and strengthening the network in the future.

**Group identity:** The process of peer sharing has given the individual participants greater self-confidence and freedom, and enabled them to perceive other members as supportive rather than competitive, and as friends rather than rivals or threats. This has strengthened group solidarity and cohesiveness, as individual and institutional autonomy is not threatened by this form of association. Those who have not been able to share in this process, for either personal or institutional reasons, and have found it threatening or uncomfortable, have dropped out or become peripheral members. The group is now strong enough to recruit new members and help them also to grow through the same process. This gives basis for the hope that the network may be enlarged in both size and nature, and become able to take on more work in course of time without sacrificing quality. However, this will be a long and slow process, as other trainers of this calibre are not visible at this stage.

## Growth of the methodology

Capacity building can also be seen in another dimension, besides the personal and professional growth of the trainers and the strengthening of their institutional base. It also relates to the gradual evolution of the methodology itself, in terms of training content, process and outcomes in relation to target-oriented context-specific "products". In the course of this process, the trainers have also become designers of courses, rather than mere trainers.

The concept of the course itself has undergone profound change, in several directions.

- To begin with, the target group. The first summer course, which was conceptualized as a refresher course, assumed that those who joined would have had some kind of initial training, and only needed "refresher" training. This assumption was proved wrong very rapidly, as it soon became evident that the vast majority of teachers in service who wanted training, in both the voluntary and private sectors, had very little or no previous exposure to training of any kind. In other words, it was quickly revealed that the course had to perform the function of basic initial orientation towards understanding of ECE and only then go on to provide skills to a raw and untrained group of people who found themselves in the classroom with no preparation. The focus now changed to developing skills, and the course was renamed as Skill Development Course.
- The second change was towards making it, from an intensive thirty day affair without practical component, into thirty days spread over a year, and with large chunks of practical work between the various theoretical sessions, which could be used to try out and practice skills. The course was renamed as an extended one-year in-service course. It was expected that the trainees would function like interns in their own schools, gaining experience and skills.
- However, in the absence of supervision, it was soon found that skill development was difficult and often did not take place, nor could it be ensured that relevant practical experience was available to trainees. This realization led to two kinds of changes - on the one hand, greater efforts to involve managements, seek their cooperation, explain what was needed, and persuade them to implement change and supervise teachers at their own level. On the other hand, simultaneously, an effort began, at a very simple level, to introduce supervision by the trainers themselves. A mixture of supervised and unsupervised practical work began to emerge as a realistic foundation. In the present stage, the group is trying slowly, to increase the quantity and quality of supervision through convincing managements, raising funds and drawing on the time of Resource Persons. The acquisition of supervisory skills has become the next main target for the trainers' own professional growth.

- While the early focus was on classroom-oriented training skills and strategies, another big change was the understanding of the importance of the external environment and the need for advocacy skills to deal with various categories of stakeholders. The use of the Conference or Convention as a tool for advocacy and to create a supportive climate was a major breakthrough in this direction in 2000. The perception that successful training included working simultaneously at both levels, internal and external, has altered the nature of strategic planning. Course design now includes all these elements—tackling parents, managements, unions, associations, Government, and other groups. The course has now evolved and become a multi-level and sophisticated approach to ECE and not merely confined to the classroom level.
- Another important change in the nature of the courses is the diversity in design to address different needs and 14th confidence with which these experiments are being tried out.
- One group is trying out a one-to-one “tutorial” or “role model” approach with single schools, though yet in a somewhat haphazard manner with insufficient theoretical input;
- Another group is introducing some of the innovative training elements into their ongoing six-month pre-service course;
- Another group is trying out a distance education approach, again without sufficient practical component;
- Another group is trying an extension approach, traveling to the schools to work with them on the spot;
- Some group are trying to mix participants from voluntary and private sectors who have different expectations and needs.

Though some of these attempts are in danger of becoming superficial and failing to attain goals, what is healthy and interesting is the free sharing about these experiments and the welcoming attitudes to feedback, intended to help each other solve problems and improve quality. It is evident that there is now a clear perception of the concept of “custom-made” training courses, based on needs assessment of each target group. At the same time the skills and the self-confidence to design such need-based courses has also grown.

- Another important development is the appreciation of the need for documentation. A plan has emerged to develop case studies and examples from field practice, to document these, and ultimately to utilize these documented materials for preparing a manual of handbook of training, replete with examples that can make teaching (of teachers) easy.

## Part C - An Assessment

The network has two solid achievements to its credit. First, it has grown into a **small but committed group of peer professionals**, dedicated to participatory and experimental methods of learning and professional growth through shared experience. The members can broadly be found in three strong regional clusters in Tamil Nadu each with a core team supported by a more extended group of resource persons. This is an achievement in capacity building.

Second, it has involved, through a process of trial and error or learning by doing, a **model of extended in-service training with a strong practical foundation**, using innovative strategies such as field supervision by trainers and mentoring by skilled teachers as role models, and working towards greater involvement from managements. Several such courses are run every year by the members in different locations with the support of their institutions. This has been achieved in spite of the limitations of the present negative climate and lack of financial resources. Financial support at this stage will enable them to go forward.

### Achievements

In more detail, the achievements can be summed up as follows:

- Output of training courses conducted so far is limited in quantity, though strong, and growing in strength in terms of quality. The numbers trained over four years are approximately 500. Three teams have been operating each year (different combinations).

1997	-	200	}	
98-99	-	100	}	
99-00	-	100	}	500
00-01	-	100	}	

- The training offered by them is characterised by the following elements.
- Flexible, responsive and need-based.
- Balance of theoretical foundation together with practical experience.
- In-service, with geographical spread and mobility of trainers.
- Strong component of field supervision.
- Close links with managements
- Partially self-financing and sustainable
- Variety of specialized courses to meet special needs
- Innovative training strategies
- Resource materials back up
- Networked under umbrella of TN-FORCES
- Links with academic institutions and universities but autonomous
- Links with professional associations

- There are some indications of change at the ground level in the areas where they are working, taken geographically or sector-wise. Monitoring visits and anecdotal evidence indicate concrete changes in the classroom, while managements and teachers report positive feedback from parents. There is more awareness and demand from managements for resource materials, play equipment, ongoing workshops, follow-up contacts, professional associations – signs of awakening. Some kinds of negative feedback also measure success e.g. dubious advertisements of alternative “quick-fix” courses, threats to teachers, negative propaganda. These are all indications of growing awareness among the groups contacted, of the importance of training and the lack of it in the existing situation.
- Again in a limited area, there is evidence of growing perception of the need for training, though this is still only weakly translated into monetary demand. Examples:
  - institutions who were earlier reluctant to pay for training are now willing and eager to do so;
  - emergence of a small group among the more affluent institutions who are willing to pay;
  - increasing requests from schools, NGOs, other geographical areas, other States etc. which the network is unable to meet;
  - requests for training and resource materials;
  - emergence of small support groups of committed individuals and institutions in some areas
  - and new members of the network

## Conclusions

The most significant outcome is the spontaneous and self-directed decision to strengthen and sustain the network through the participants own efforts, to seek and obtain the necessary funding, both for the training courses and for network management, rather than to depend on someone to procure it for them and to continue the trajectory of professional growth. This is a sign that they have “learnt how to learn” which is the most fundamental and permanent skill required in development. There is thus hope for the future, and at the same time, satisfaction that the process of capacity has been set on a spiraling upward path road to development.

## ECE Trainers' Network - Guidelines for Members' Evaluation

(The questions that follow are only intended to help you to write an evaluative report. You don't have to answer each one, or all of them. Just use them to get your own thinking process started. You can add comments on topics not touched here. But do try to cluster your comments as indicated -- that would be helpful)

**Personal data:** When did you join the group? Can you remember the first meeting? How many meetings have you attended? If you missed any, why? If you have dropped out, why?

**Skills:** What have been the gains in terms of your own knowledge, skills and practice in the three areas of working with children, with from whom (peers, experts etc) and how (observation, trial and error, sharing, reading, teachers, and with trainees, lectures, demonstrations etc) In which areas do you still need to learn more?

Have you been able to practise what you have learnt? If yes, why? If no, why? Can you comment on any other gains you have experienced, -- new contacts and friends, exposure, self-confidence, opportunity to innovate etc)

**Awareness:** Has your awareness and understanding of the role of "outside" elements in ECE (managements, parents, Government, unions, media) increased? Has only awareness increased or have you developed skills to handle these issues? If yes, what helped you to do so? What other skills or knowledge do you think you need to increase your professional competence in this area?

**Problems:** What have been the obstacles and stumbling blocks? Your own lack of time or professional preparation? Lack of interest or indifference on the part of the institution? If the latter, what efforts have you made to change attitudes? What skills do you still need to do that more effectively? What else do you think is needed?

**Alternatives:** Has your own approach to teaching and training changed? How and why? Has your practice changed? How and why? Describe the process by which you evolved your own training model to suit your specific situation. What success have you had? What obstacles did you overcome, and how?

**Future Prospects:** Where do we go from here? Is there a role for this network in future? If yes, what? What form and structure should it take? What should be its tasks and objectives? Can it expand-- who and how? Who will support it? Who will organise it? What can you do?

## Skills in working with children, teachers, trainees

### Skills gained

- Participatory methodology
- Experiential training strategies
- Self-confidence
- **Flexibility**
- Systematic approach

### How learnt

- Peer sharing
- Experiential methods
- Inputs from RPs

Opportunity to practice - in all but a few cases

### Other gains

- New personal and professional contacts and resources
- Team teaching
- Use of the rating scale
- Sharing of experiences

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### Awareness

about "outside-the-classroom" issues

- Role of**
- government
  - media
  - managements
  - parents
  - forums and unions

- Skills still needed**
- advocacy
  - working with parents and managements
  - involving allies
  - confronting hostile environments



## Problems

- Lack of time
  - Institutional indifference (lack of freedom, support, funds)
  - Resistance to change (lack of rapport) from managements
  - Lack of basic amenities
  - Drop-outs by teachers
  - Lack of peer support
- 

## Alternative Approaches

- Have become more participatory and experiential in approach
  - Take holistic and systematic view of training
  - Have learnt to take help of allies
  - Learnt value of team teaching
  - Evolved new training model
  - Changed own teaching / training style
  - Professional self-development
- 

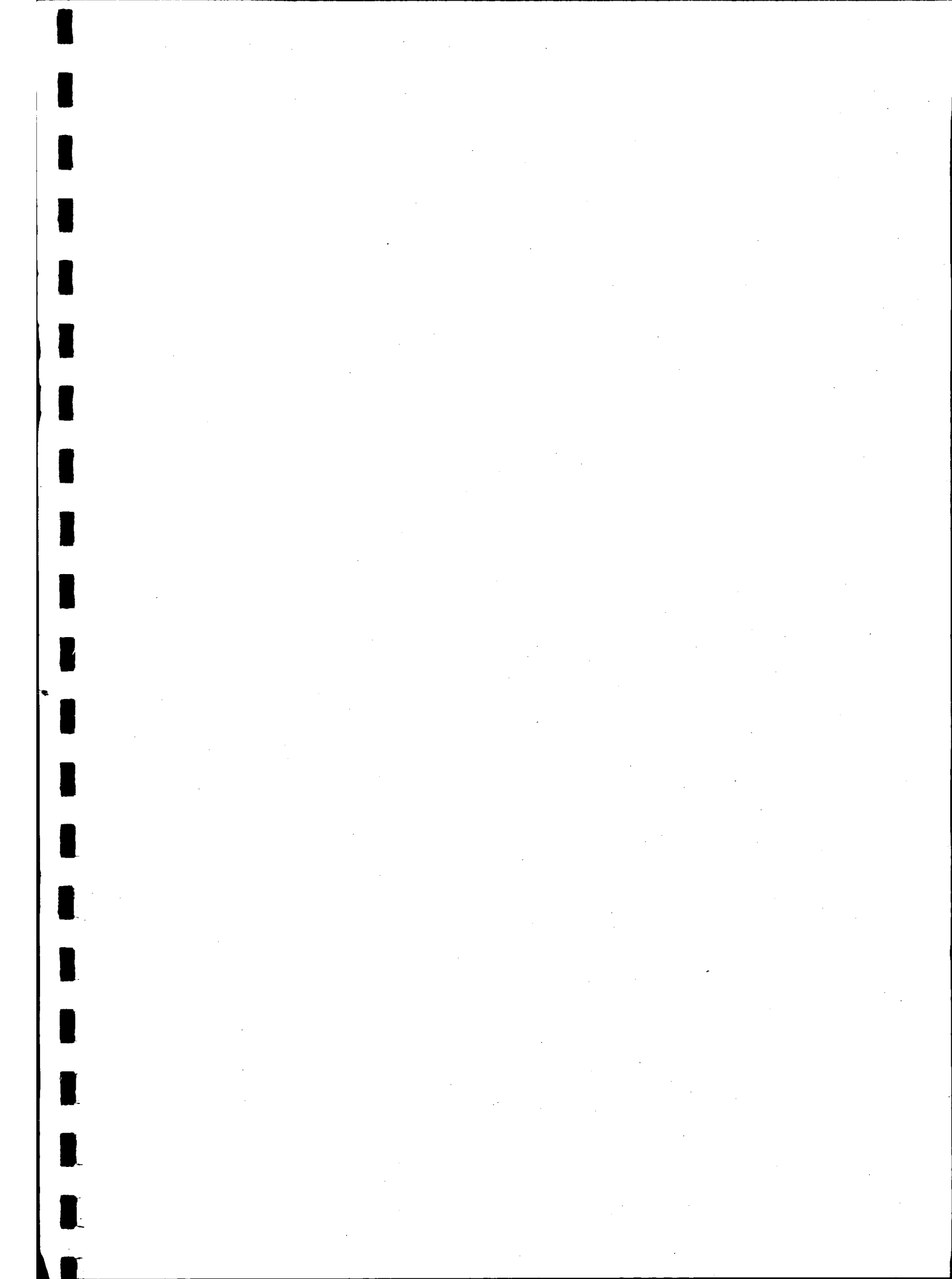
## The future

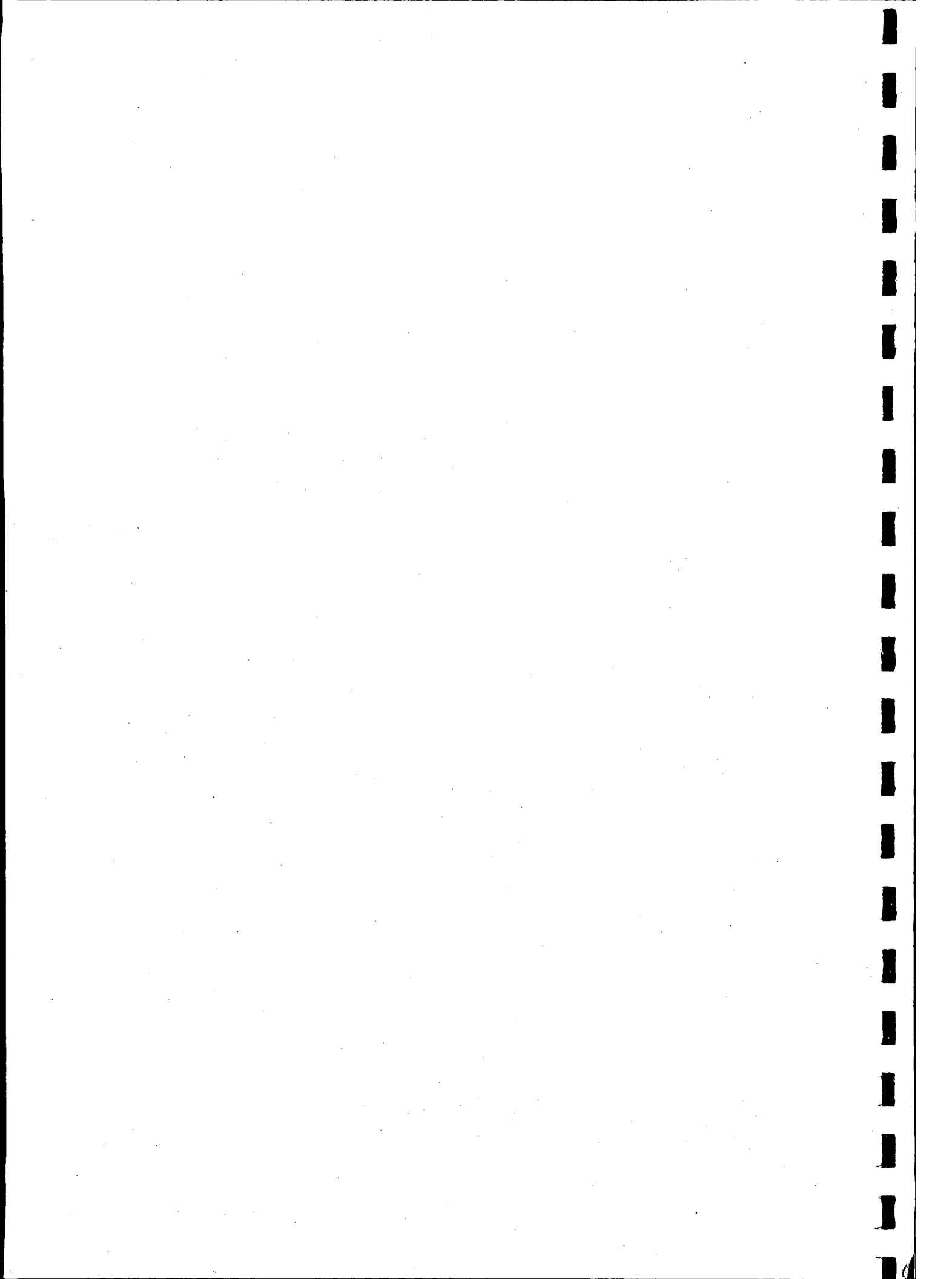
Network must continue - unanimous

Suggestions for sustaining the network

- Involve participating schools
- Build local groups at district or city level and develop more trainers
- Expand members
- Continue under umbrella of TN-FORCES and IAPE
- Bring out a trainers' manual
- Work to get finances
- Develop common syllabi for all training schools
- Personal commitment of each member







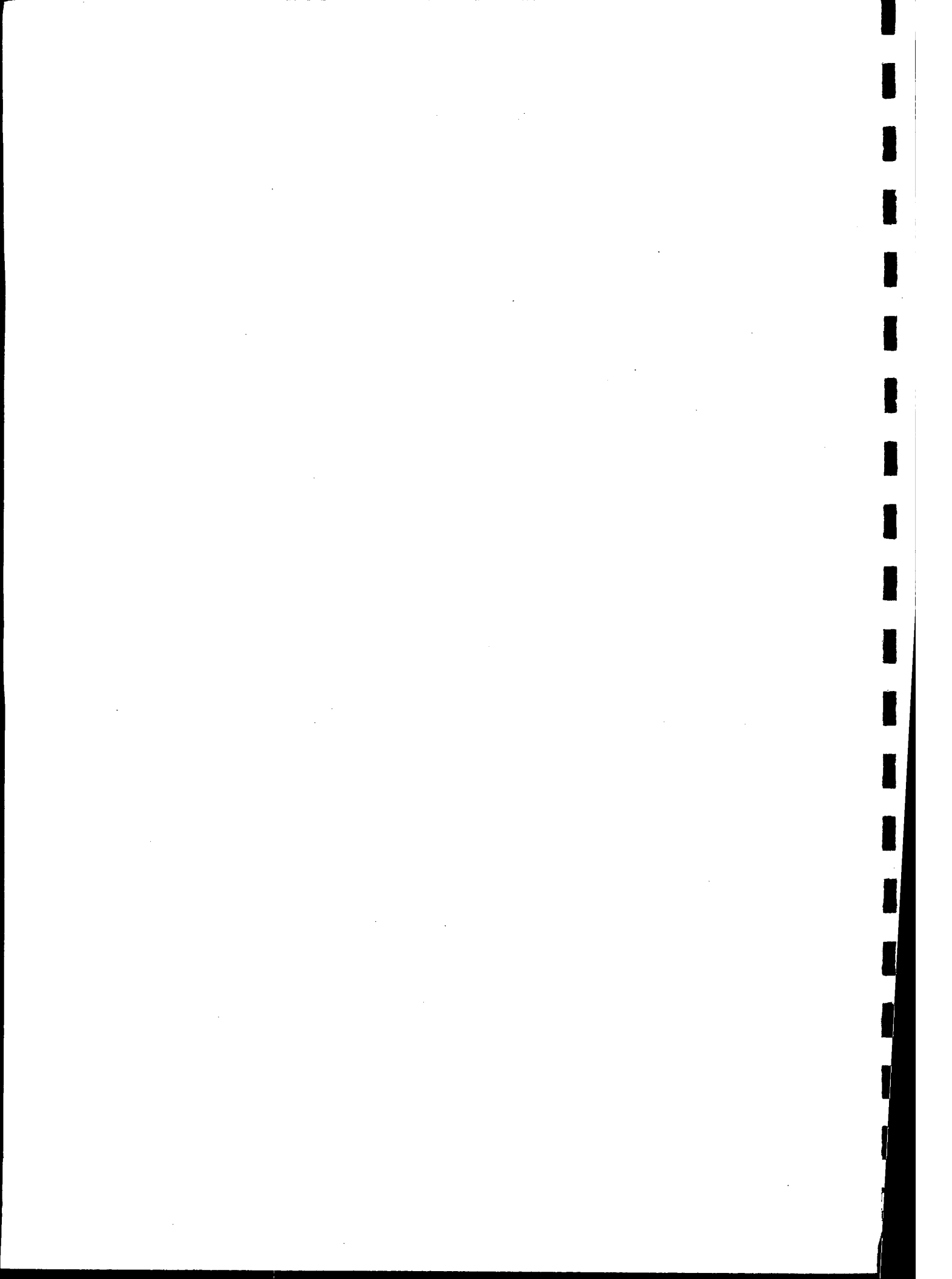
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**Part IV    Products**

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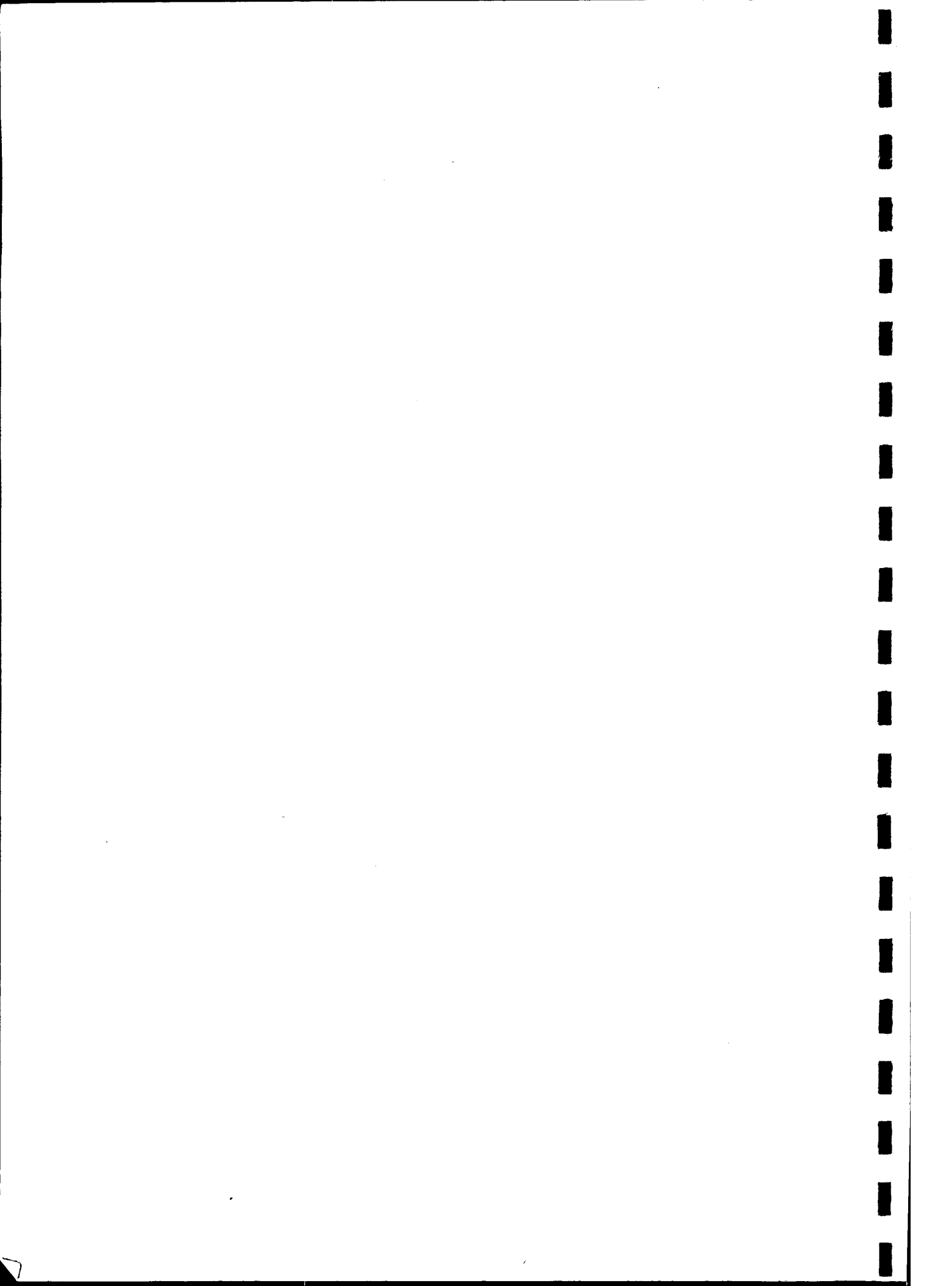
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**1 Print Materials**

**2. Audio - Visual Materials**





# 1. Print Materials

## Research Studies

1. *The First Teacher* - childcare workers in the voluntary sector in Tamil Nadu. Jayanthi Rani Christiana. March 1999
2. *Quality Matters!* - understanding the relationship between quality of early childhood education and learning competencies of children MSSRF June 2000.
3. *Panchayati Raj and Child Care Services - an action-research study.* A.Christina August 2000
4. *The Unborn Girl Child* - a case study on sex ratio at birth as an indicator of female foeticide. M. Bhuvanewari. November 2000
5. *Costing Child Care Services* - a proposed cost framework and sample analysis with ICDS as a model in Tamil Nadu. J.Jayanthi Rani Christiana and T.R.L.Narasimhan. January 2001( not yet ready for circulation)
6. *Maternal Care and Infant Growth* - child care practices of mothers and the growth and development of infants in urban slums. Rama Narayanan. February 2001.(not yet ready for circulation)
7. *Depiction of Infants in Cultural Forms* - perception and depiction of infancy in Tamil folk and classical literature.Tamil. L.S.Saraswathi. February 2001.

## Manuals

1. *Playing To Learn* - a training manual for early childhood education. Asha Singh and Mina Swaminathan. July 1995 Reprinted January 1998
2. *Muthal Munru Varudangal* (First Three Years) - guidebook on the psycho-social development of the young child (0-3 years) intended for child care workers and also parents. Mina Swaminathan. December 1998
3. *Aadippadi* (Lets Sing and Dance) - a hundred and seventy three play activities for children between 3-6 years compiled from various sources and classified according to each domain of development. I.Glory. November 1998
4. *Tamil Nattil Thai Sey Urimai - Oru Paarvai* ( Rights of the Mother and Child in Tamil Nadu - An Overview) - unique feature of the document is a four-page centre -pull-out of useful hints for legislators and panchayat leaders. Murali Shanmugavelan. April 1999 (English translation is available).
5. *Media Uravugal* (Media Relations) - a handbook for NGOs on working with the media. Gnani. August 2000. (English translation is available)

## Miscellaneous

### Proceedings

1. *Child Care Workers in the Voluntary Sector in Tamil Nadu* - proceedings of the workshop at Chennai. Jointly organised by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and Tamil Nadu Forum for Creche and Child Care Services. April 22 1999. Proceedings No.31.MSSRF. Report May 1999
2. *Taking Stock. - Developing Indicators for Analysing Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Care and Development Programmes* - proceedings of the workshop at Chennai, September 30 and 1 October 1999. Proceedings No.35. MSSRF. Report January 2000

### Tools

1. *Tamil Nadu Early Child Environmental Rating Scale (TECERS)* Barbara.J.Isely. October 2000.(Tamil translation is available).
8. *Framework for Measuring Costs of Child Care Services.* J. Jayanthi Rani Christiana and T.R.L.Narasimhan. January 2001.

### Data Base

1. *Bibliographic Compendium* - on the print materials available on the issue of Girl Child Survival. May 2000.

## Campaign Materials

### Poster

Messages on development of children under two years. Tamil. January 1998

### Pamphlets & Fact Sheets

1. *Maternity Entitlements* - rights and services for pregnant women. Tamil / English. August 1998
2. *Can the Girl Child Survive?* - on survival of the girl child. Tamil / English. August 1998
3. *Parenting the Under Threes* - communicating appropriate child rearing practices. Tamil / English. August 1998

### Supplements

(to the briefing document *Thai Sey Urimai-Oru Paarvai* (Women and Child Rights in Tamil Nadu-An Overview))

1. *Do You Know/What You Can Do*- prepared for Members of the Legislative Assembly (Tamil). April 1999. (English translation is available).
2. *Do You Know/What You Can Do*- prepared for Panchayat Leaders in Tamil Nadu. (Tamil). December 2000. (English translation is available).

## 2. Audio - Visual Materials

### Video Film

1. *Balwadi - Why? What? How?* Tamil / English. Duration 25 / 21 mins. December 2000

The film shows what a good balwadi should be, have and do to enable the child's overall development in terms of growth, health, care, protection, and education. The aim is to create awareness on the do's and don'ts which can lead to monitoring of the balwadi by all sections of the community.

### Video Documentation

1. *Pen Kuzhandaiyin Vazhum Urimai* (Survival of the Girl Child) - a theatre workshop. Tamil. Duration 90 mins. July 1999

This video documentation is in two parts. The first part contains brief extracts from sessions on various skills like voice and breath, culture, movement, mime, music, stage properties and on different approaches to expressing concepts in theatrical forms. The second part on products records the performances on the last day of the workshop of three short plays evolved by the participants through group work. Each of the three plays uses a different theatrical approach, demonstrating that "Street Theatre" is not a single style on genre.

2. *Pennungal Oor Pillaigalai* (Community Care for the Child). Tamil. Duration 19 mins. June 2000

The film focusses on the importance of child care services and the involvement of the elected Panchayat Leaders in the improvement of these services. The first half poses the problems and constraints faced by the Panchayat Leaders and the second half gives solutions and means to sustainability.

### Short Video Messages

1. *Enna Pannikittirundhe?* (What were you doing?) - women's multiple roles and burdens. Tamil. Duration 3.08 mins. October 1998
2. *Yaar Karanam?* (Who is the cause?) - father's role in sex determination. Tamil Duration 1.00 mins. October 1998
3. *Enna Pidikkum?* (What does child like?) - young Child's needs for stimulation. Tamil Duration 1.74 mins. October 1998