Learning From Innovations
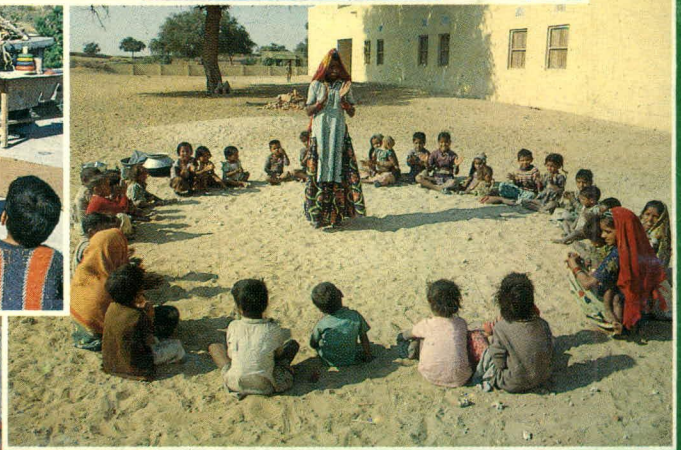
Report of a consultation on innovative approaches in early childhood care and education

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Learning From Innovation

Report of a consultation on
innovative approaches in
Early Childhood Care and Education

Jointly organised by

Ms. Swaminathan Research
Foundation,
Madras

National Institute of Public
Cooperation and Child Development,
New Delhi

at

NIPCCD,
New Delhi

December 12-13, 1995

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About the Consultation

The last two decades have witnessed phenomenal growth of child care services in India through national programmes like the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) launched by Government as an integral part of its Five Year Plans. Notwithstanding their significant achievements, these programmes have not fully met the complex and inter-related needs of women and children in the country, with its rich diversity of social, economic and cultural settings and occupational patterns. It has been observed that country-wide programmes often tend to be relatively structured, while the care of the young, by its very nature, calls for flexibility and adaptation so as to respond to the varying needs of children in diverse human situations.

There is a wealth of experience available in the voluntary sector on the implementation of micro-level programmes of child care. These programmes are not known widely enough despite valuable lessons they may have to offer for improving implementation of large scale programmes, and hence remain under-utilised. In 1993, Project ACCESS of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Madras, took up the documentation of selected experiments in the form of case studies in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) through the SURAKSHA series. The case studies contain information which would be of interest to scholars and researchers as well as policy makers and practitioners concerned with child care services. It was felt that dissemination of this information would help replicate effective and economically viable models of day care, and therefore, the insights gained from these experiments needed to be fed into programme planning by sharing these with scholars, policy makers and practitioners.

It was within this context that the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD) and MSSRF felt the need to jointly convene a consultation meet to critically analyse the important issues related to the development of child care services, as well as to make recommendations for strengthening the mainstream programmes of ECCE in the country.

The objectives of the consultation meet were:

- To draw the attention of policy makers to the multiple approaches of ECCE as presented in eight published case studies of innovative programmes of child care.
- To critically analyse and discuss important issues related to the development of child care services in the light of experiences documented.
- To recommend how the insights from these experiences can be incorporated into mainstream programmes of child care.

The consultation was unique in several respects, not only in being a genuine example of partnership between two institutions sharing the common goal of promoting child care services, but also in being based on empirical studies carried out in the field.

The discussions during the consultation were both wide ranging and critical, focusing on such important issues as replicability and sustainability of programmes; criteria for encouraging and maximising flexibility and responsiveness; indicators for determining cost effectiveness and measuring quality and relevance; participatory training approaches and development of a cadre of committed workers; decentralisation and involvement of local self-government institutions; managerial strategies to promote innovative programmes; and many others. The conclusions and recommendations of the consultation meet have far-reaching implications for policy and programme planning in the field of child care services in the country.

We would feel rewarded if this joint venture in any manner helps in dissemination of information based on empirical studies and contributes to better delivery of child care services through governmental and non-governmental agencies with greater participation of the community.

Mina Swaminathan   **D.P. Sethi**

Programme Schedule

Consultation on Innovative Programmes of Early Childhood Care and Education

Tuesday, 12 December 1995

10:00 am - 11:00 am	**Inaugural Session**
11:00 am - 11:45 am	Tea Registration
11:45 am - 1:30 pm	**Plenary Session I**

        Multiple Approaches in Early Childhood Care and Education in India - Insights from the SURAKSHA Studies
        Smt. Mina Swaminathan

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Lunch
2:30 pm - 4:00 pm	**Plenary Session II**

        Uniqueness and Replicability of ECCE Programmes
        Dr.(Smt.) Anjali Mehta
        Chair: Smt. Freny Tarapore

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	**Plenary Session III**

        Applicability and Mainstreaming of Innovative ECCE Programmes
        Moderator: Dr.(Smt.) Adarsh Sharma

Wednesday, 13 December 1995

9:00 am   -   10:00 am   **Special Presentation**

Urban Basic Services
Smt. Renu Khosla

10:00 am   -   12:30 pm   **Group Discussions**

I. Issues Relating to Quality and Evaluating Effectiveness
Chair: Prof. Girishwar Misra
Co-chair: Dr.(Smt.) Neerja Sharma
Facilitator: Dr.(Smt.) Neelam Sood

II. Issues Relating to Human Resource Development:
Training and Motivation of Personnel
Chair: Smt. Freny Tarapore
Co-Chair: Dr. Anand Prakash
Facilitator: Dr.(Smt.) Adarsh Sharma

III. Issues Relating to Sustainability and Replicability
Chair: Dr.(Smt.) Anjali Mehta
Co-Chairs: Shri. V. Sardana/Dr. Anil Sadgopal
Facilitator: Smt. Mina Swaminathan

12:30 pm   -   1:30 pm   **Preparation of Group Reports**

1:30 pm   -   2:30 pm   Lunch

2:30 pm   -   4:00 pm   **Concluding Session**

Chair: D.P. Sethi, Director, NIPCCD

Presentation of Group Reports and Recommendations
Group Leaders

Valedictory Address
Prof.A.K.Sharma, Director N.C.E.R.T

Vote of Thanks
Dr.(Smt.) Neelam Sood, Deputy Director (PSE)
NIPCCD

Inaugural Session

Mr. D.P. Sethi, Director, NIPCCD, in welcoming the gathering, referred to some of the unique characteristics of this consultation - first that it was a genuine example of partnership, being a joint activity of NIPCCD and MSSRF, and second, that it focused on empirical studies as the starting point for discussion. The objective was to arrive at conclusions and suggestions that would help improve the quality of services in ECCE and streamline implementation, involving NGOs and the community in the process. The outcomes were hence expected to be of great practical value.

Dr. (Smt.) Sarala Gopalan, Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, declared the meeting open. In her inaugural address, she said that there has now been a conscious decision on the part of government to improve the quality of services of ECCE in collaboration with the community. While there may continue to be difficulties in financing programmes, the challenge is to learn how to use limited resources in the best possible way. In this respect, the innovative programmes documented in the SURAKSHA series may set an example, as each has made a virtue of having less than optimal funding. Instead of justifying poor quality by attributing it to lack of funds, we should ask whether the available funds have been used most effectively. We also need to develop ways to measure this effectiveness.

The training of workers and the programming must also reflect this perspective. Cleanliness of the surroundings, for example, which is an essential component of a good programme for children, is not dependent on funding, but is more related to attitudes. Another indicator of quality is the extent to which children are kept engaged in creative activity which promotes their intellectual, social and emotional growth. "Joyful learning" should be the very basis of ECCE programmes, since it is at this stage that the foundations of personality development are laid, when children's aptitudes and attitudes developed. These are, no doubt, some of the aspects of "quality" which are found in the innovative programmes whose achievements need to be widely disseminated, discussed and analysed so that the secrets of their success can become more widespread.

Mr. Vijay Sardana, CEO, Aga Khan Foundation (India) spoke about the SURAKSHA series. He began by introducing the work of the Aga Khan Foundation (India) which lays emphasis on funding innovative/experimental programmes which are finding solutions to the generic problems of development. The two main thrust areas relate to the Young Child and the Family, and Improvement of the Quality of School Education. The documentation of innovative programmes of ECCE fell into the first category. Though documentation as such is not a major concern for AKF (I), this case was seen to present special opportunities. Noting that many NGOs are too preoccupied with their activities to have time, inclination or even skills for documentation, AKF (I) felt it would be worth while to fund a project with this intent in order to help others to learn the lessons and spread the message widely. Documentation, dissemination and advocacy form part of the process by which innovation leads to replication, and so the success of such efforts can be measured by the number of other funding agencies who come forward to take up the cause.

Ms. Mina Swaminathan, Director, Project ACCESS, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, in her vote of thanks, expressed her gratitude not only to all those participating in the meeting, but to all the partners and supporters who had helped to bring the SURAKSHA series into being.

Volumes 5-8 of the SURAKSHA series were released on this occasion by the distinguished persons mentioned below:

5. CHILDREN OF THE UNION
    Dr. (Smt.) Sarala Gopalan, Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development

6. MOVING UP TO SCHOOL
    Smt. Vidyaben Shah, Chairperson, Central Social Welfare Board

7. ANOTHER KIND OF CHILD CARE
    Smt. Freny Tarapore, Principal, SNDT College of Home Science, Pune

8. WORKING HAND IN HAND
    Shri D.P.Sethi, Director, NIPCCD

Valedictory Address

Prof. A.K. Sharma, Director, NCERT, began by referring to the outcomes of the consultation. The three groups which had worked on significant aspects of the programme had come out with very meaningful reports, professionally produced and well-articulated. The whole purpose of focusing on case studies is for exposure to experiences that occur in different geographical areas, different contextual realities, the efforts and the experiences of success and failure. An understanding of case studies provides a multiplicity of models. In a country like India, with such diversity and so many variations available, no single model can really work, and this is true also of the standardised model of ICDS with its well-defined components. Hence it is important to go deeper into the question whether this model can work in all areas/situations in the country. To do this, it may be worthwhile to look at the situation prevailing in other sectors of education.

In our educational scenario, the basic purpose of intervention is to ensure that the basis for growth and development for the child is laid so effectively that he or she can walk into the learning system - whether formal or non-formal - and be retained there. We have defined for ourselves the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education, as laid down in Article 45 of our Constitution, but have not been able to come to grips with the reality yet. In 1950, when we adopted our Constitution, we gave ourselves a period of 10 years for the universalisation of elementary education. However, in 1986 when the New Education Policy was formulated, we realised that the situation remained the same. But the review led to yet another resolution that by 1990, all children below 11 years would be covered by the education system, and all children under 14 years of age would be covered by 1995. Now 1995 is already here, but the goal has yet to be realised.

What are the implications? What can we do now to improve the situation? Here one can see some light — there is a shift in our thinking. We are saying - lets not talk about macro-targets any more. Out of the 450 odd districts we have, let us first identify those districts where female literacy is very low, and where the Total Literacy Campaigns for adults have generated a demand

for primary education. This is a sensible approach — try to first reduce the size of the problem in those areas where the drop-out rates are high, and then try to replicate it in other areas.

Another point is that increasing confidence is being reposed in voluntary organisations. There is a realisation that Government alone cannot handle the problems. The professional commitment, motivation and wherewithal that is available among NGOs must be put to use. Yet another major issue is the resource crunch, and it has already been decided that help must be obtained from international agencies to build up the schooling system and enable it to achieve its goals.

In this context, it is significant that the 1986 policy emphasised the role of the ECCE component, not ECE alone, but ECCD or ECCE. A few experiences from the Kendriya Vidyalaya at the NCERT Campus, which has been adopted by the Department of Pre-primary and Elementary Education, may be relevant to note here. The nursery school there has been converted into a Resource Centre where teachers can come for 5-6 months at a time to learn new approaches. Teachers are well motivated, but as soon as the resource team withdraws, gradually the teachers start bringing in the old methodology. The question is — how can the motivation in teachers be sustained. How to ensure curiosity in children?

Joyful learning experiences can be the only way. When children come to school, they should find the teacher friendly. There seems to be no way in our existing educational system to excite curiosity in the child. It is more convenient to have a teacher monologue, to read from a book - the shortest way in which a teacher can spend 35 minutes.

Motivating teachers to continue with their experiments with a different methodology implies working at their level, just as one has to love children to work with them. The teaching, the process, the methodology, and sustaining interest, were mentioned in some of the reports presented earlier and in the SURAKSHA series too. These are pointers to some very valuable ideas which should now become widely disseminated. It is only by studying and applying on a wide scale the handful of basic concepts underlying these innovations that one can hope to bring about the changes so needed in the educational scene today.

Multiple Approaches to ECCE in India

Smt. Mina Swaminathan, Hon. Director, Project ACCESS, MSSRF

This review of the eight published case-studies is arranged under nine headings, while the last section summarises some of the insights:

1. Who - The Agencies
2. For Whom - The Target Groups
3. Why
4. How
5. What, When and Where - The Programme
6. By Whom - The Worker
7. With Whom - The Community
8. With What - The Finances
9. So What - The Impact
10. The Lessons

1. WHO - THE AGENCIES

The eight organisations concerned represent different auspices. Four are NGOs in the traditional sense of voluntary agencies formed for specific purposes, one of which was set up exclusively for the purpose of providing child care. Of the remaining four, one is a trade union, one a women's organisation and one an educational institution. In the final example, no single institution is involved. Brief notes on each of the agencies summarise the history, goals and approach of each.

i. Mobile Creches (MC)
This NGO was set up in 1969 with the purpose of providing day-care services on location to the children of poor working mothers, especially migrant labourers in the construction industry. It has a network of about 50 centres at any given time in the major cities of Delhi, Bombay and Pune. Deliberately maintaining a small size, the institution focuses on quality and relevance of services.

ii. Society for Integrated Development of the Himalayas (SIDH)
This NGO was set up in 1989 by a couple who wanted to take education to the community. The balwadi and the primary school are the focal points of the programme, which also includes agricultural extension, income-generation and other development activities.

iii. Palmyrah Workers' Development Society (PWDS)
This NGO was set up in 1977 as a response to the plight of the palmyrah workers, a depressed and exploited class in a relatively affluent area in coastal Southern Tamil Nadu. Among other things, the children suffered from poor health and lack of education. The programme aims

at all-around development of participating communities. There is an emphasis on organising the scattered and isolated communities to help themselves. The institution provides support services and arranges other development activities.

iv. URMUL Trust (URMUL)

This NGO was an offshoot (1988) of the Uttari Rajasthan Milk Union, set up in 1972. It is now a development - oriented NGO operating in the desert tracts of Western Rajasthan. It started with a strong health programme, and later took up several other activities including income-generation, water and sanitation. It has now branched out into a family of linked organisations with an emphasis on activism and organisation of people for participation in development.

v. Self Employed Women's Association, (SEWA) (an union)

Set up in 1972, this women's association is exceptional among trade unions in being an union of women self-employed and casual workers. It functions mainly in the informal sector in Ahmedabad city and rural Gujarat. Starting with collective bargaining and negotiation with the authorities to improve working conditions for its members, SEWA has since entered new arenas such as banking, co-operatives, the service sector and social security. SEWA has a membership of over one lakh women.

vi. Mahila Samakhya Gujarat (MSG) (a women's organisation)

Now operating in four States, Mahila Samakhya was set up in 1987 as a government-sponsored autonomous women's organisation devoted to the empowerment of women and equality in education. Though activities are taken up in five broad areas, the organisation is process-oriented in approach and does not emphasise the running of programmes and services. The agenda is to help women find the time and space to reflect on issues of concern, organise themselves and generate their own solutions, with support from the agency.

vii. Bal Niketan Sangh (BNS) (an educational institution)

Set up in Indore nearly fifty years ago, it is one of the leading educational institutions in Madhya Pradesh, unique in its emphasis on early childhood education. Besides a group of schools, the institution runs creches for poor working women in slums and villages, and a pre-primary training centre. It has also been recognised as a training centre for field workers and supervisors of the ICDS programme.

viii. Family Day Care in Bombay (FDC)

This case study does not involve any single institution or agency, but provides a description of a number of privately run family day-care services which have sprung up in Bombay city, as a spontaneous response to the perceived needs of working mothers. Though this group

is unique in being an example of a market phenomenon, it is possible to identify some features and problems common to all the cases studies.

2. FOR WHOM - TARGET GROUPS

The target groups for child care services are given in the table below (Table 1).

3. WHY

The reasons for entry into the child care programme can broadly be classified into two types. One the one hand, five out of the eight (MC, FDC, SEWA, MSG, and PWDS) entered the arena in response to a perceived need. This may not have been part of their original plan of action or even personal life plan, as it was in the case of FDC and MC. In the other three (BNS, URMUL and SIDH) it was a planned and conscious decision taken for several reasons, the need for child care being one of them. URMUL took it up as a means of integrating and deepening its community development agenda ; BNS took it as a new challenge in its chosen field of specialisation, and for SIDH it was the outcome of a choice, pursuing certain ideals.

Table 1. Target Groups of Programmes

S.No	Agency	Target Groups
1	MC	Migrant construction workers living in transient settlements and women working in the informal sector in the slums of Delhi
2	SIDH	Women, young children and school drop-outs in a group of small rural settlements in a tribal area of the Himalayan region.
3	PWDS	Poor and underprivileged workers in rural communities, with a special focus on palmyrah workers in coastal Tamil Nadu.
4	URMUL	Small and scattered village communities in an arid zone of Western Rajasthan.
5	SEWA	Woman labourers in tobacco fields and factories in Kheda district.
6	MSG	Rural and tribal women in Baroda district in Gujarat.
7	BNS	Slums of Indore city and a tribal block in Madhya Pradesh.
8	FDC	Urban middle-class working women in Bombay.

4. HOW

The first step in the preparation of a strategy and plan of action for the any welfare or development activity is assessment of need. How did each of these go about the process of exploring needs, how much time did it require and what methods did they use?

Need assessment

For MC, the process was, right from the start, and continues to be, an intensive, face-to-face *personal exploration*, often carried out in small teams of two or three people making informal visits. They primarily rely on *oral communication*. This activity takes the form of *monitoring* after the programme is launched, and is hence a continuous process.

For SIDH, there was no formal needs assessment. The balwadis and schools were launched and then adapted in stages. This necessitated a long *process* of response to emerging needs, and required *dialogue* and interaction.

Both URMUL and BNS utilised a pre-launch *rapid survey*. This was done through a series of community meetings which established rapport, clarified objectives, set up procedures and laid the foundations for programme activities. In both cases, since the programme was fixed, and could not be modified, a survey of needs was not carried out.

SEWA began the programme as a result of *feedback* from women workers about the need for creches. Further information and support was obtained through its *linkages* with the Union and employers.

PWDS undertook a *formal research study* on the conditions of palmyrah workers. However, as the child care programme followed the other programmes, it made use of information from the *linkages* with its other projects.

MSG started with *feedback* from women members about the constraints placed on women by the burden of child care, and went on to document child care patterns through a *research study* conducted by the University.

FDC is the most difficult to make statements about, since it refers to unrelated individuals. No systematic surveys seem to have been done, and most caregivers started their programme in response to perceived needs. Since services vary widely, this approach can best be described as *trial and error* in a market-oriented setting.

In three cases (SEWA, PWDS, MSG) the programme grew out of feedback from the community, supported (in two cases) by a formal research study. In another two (BNS and URMUL) the design was fixed, while the final two (MC and SIDH) allowed the programme to evolve slowly from a predetermined launch.

Work strategies

The strategies used by each organisation can be graded along a continuum related to the nature, timing, degree of response to and assessment of needs. These can be broadly grouped under five main strategies:

• Launch programme, then inform / advertise to potential users (FDC).

• Pre-launch campaign of visits to community to inform, clarify, seek cooperation, set up procedures and guidelines for selection of workers (URMUL and BNS).

• Informal pre-launch exploration through small teams of Resource Persons. Interaction with community initiated with launch and grows afterwards. (SIDH and MC).

• In-depth involvement of community in pre-launch feedback, needs assessment planning (SEWA and MSG) decision-making, training and monitoring (MSG).

• An unique strategy used by PWDS was not only the pre-launch consultation with the community but the testing of potential workers by requiring them to run the centre without any financial support for a certain period.

5. WHAT, WHEN & WHERE - THE PROGRAMME

Quality and Cost

There is wide variety in both the nature of programme and the age-group of beneficiaries (Table 2, following page). In some cases, there even appear to be two goals, (SIDH, PWDS, BNS). It is difficult to make statements about quality without laying down criteria and making comparisons, which is not possible at this stage. It appears that six programmes are making the attempt to achieve a high standard. This may be defined in different ways, for each; however, they have succeeded to some extent. In two programmes there has been no attempt - in FDC there seems to be little awareness of the concept, while in MSG quality has been consciously assigned a lower priority.

It is equally difficult to compare costs and the cost/quality relationship, not only because of variability, but also because of the lack of precise information. All the elements of cost are not always quantified and readily available, and there has been in some cases, a reluctance to share information. There is also a heavy element of "hidden" costs which voluntary agencies are unable to spell out. These are most pronounced in the cases of URMUL and BNS.

Table 2. Programme Characteristics

	FDC	MC	SIDH	URMUL	SEWA	PWDS	MSG	BNS
Nature	Custodial	Holistic	Educational	Custodial/ Holistic	Holistic	Educational and Custodial	Custodial	Educational/ Holistic
Quality	Variable B-C	A	A	Variable B-C	A	B	C	Variable A-B
Cost/ Quality	VQ LC	HQ HC	HQ MC	VQ MC (hidden costs?)	HQ HC	MQ LC	LQ LC	VQ MC (hidden costs?)
Age Group	0-10	0-10	3-8	3-6	0-3	3-6	1-6	3-6
Most Outstanding Characteristic	Convenience to parents and timing	At the doorstep service to transients and poor	Alternative school for 3-8 years old children	Achievement limited by clash of work styles/ culture	Efforts for sustainability and women orientation	Mobilisation of resources	Childcare as tool for empower- ment of women	Quality resulting from specialised skills and extra inputs

Codes

HQ	-	High Quality	HC	-	High Cost
MQ	-	Medium Quality	MC	-	Medium Cost
LQ	-	Low Quality	LC	-	Low Cost
VQ	-	Variable Quality			

A - Excellent
B - Good
C - Average/Standardised

Strategies and outcomes

Each strategy had a different outcome, since different combinations of factors lead to different results. Hence, any attempts to categorise the agencies also lead to different outcomes. Three kinds of categorisation of strategies and outcomes are illustrated below:

Need-based	Programme-based
MC	BNS
PWDS	URMUL
SEWA	FDC
MSG	SIDH

The group on the left started out by some attempt at assessing needs while the group on the right began with a fixed programme base.

Process-oriented	Content-oriented
MSG	BNS
MC	URMUL
SIDH	FDC
	PWDS
	SEWA

The group on the left is more concerned with the *process* of development of programme while on the right the emphasis is more oriented towards *content*.

Slow growth/ Optimal size/ Small-scale	Rapid growth/ Target-oriented/ Large-scale
MC	PWDS
SIDH	URMUL
MSG	BNS
SEWA	FDC

The group on the left grows slowly and has been quick to recognise optimal size, beyond which quality constraints may outnumber advantages. The group on the right has been given targets and is more constrained. The scale of operation also differs.

However, a simple two-part typology cannot be used, since the agencies shift considerably among the categories. Thus, while MC and MSG fall on the left side for all the categories, and can be described as need-based, process-oriented, small and slow-growing, FDC, BNS and URMUL fall on the right side in all cases and can be described as programme-based, content-oriented, large-scale and fast-growing, though even such a description is not altogether fair.

The remaining three (PWDS, SEWA and SIDH) refuse to fit in so neatly and combine the characteristics in various ways. The exercise hence is intended to illustrate the complexity of programme rather than to make judgmental statements.

Organisational structure and methods

The organisational structures evolved by each agency not only suit their individual needs, but also reflect the philosophy, work style and approach of each. Again, a sliding scale reflecting tendencies to swing to one side or the other seems to better describe the situation than a simple classification. Such scales can indicate the degree of complexity, the degree of structure and the extent to which mandate/controls come from the agency or the community.

Complexity

Most simple	◄—►	Most complex
SEWA	PWDS	MC
SIDH	BNS	MSG
	URMUL	FDC*

* not applicable to FDC

Structure

Least structured	◄—►	Most structured
FDC	MSG	MC
	SIDH	
	BNS	
	SEWA	
	URMUL	
	PWDS	

Mandate /Controls

Most External	Most Internal
MC	FDC
SIDH	SEWA
PWDS	MSG
BNS	
URMUL	

6. BY WHOM - THE WORKER

The centrality of the worker to the entire programme is one of the features common to all agencies. Yet there is considerable variation among them as regards the workers' profile, selection, training, motivation, remuneration, job satisfaction and status (Table 3, facing page).

In two cases, the workers are selected by the organisation, in one by the community, and in four by a combination of the two, while in FDC obviously they are self-selected. The level of wages and the nature of the working conditions is also variable, being highest in the NGOs and lowest in the Government- dependent agencies (excepting PWDS). Yet the outcomes, as seen by the level of job satisfaction, seem to be as much linked to the extent of the community involvement in selection, (and hence status, self-esteem and accountability) as to wages and working conditions. This is seen in

Table 3. Worker Characteristics

	FDC	MC	SIDH	URMUL	SEWA	PWDS	MSG	BNS
Training								
Duration/Extent	None	Continuous	Continuous	Inital	Continuous	Initial + some	Initial + some	Continuous
Methodology	---	Process	Process	Content-oriented with innovative methods	Evolving	Content	Process	Content-oriented with skilled trainers
Curriculum	---	Localised	Localised	Standard	Localised	Evolving	Localised	Standard
Resources	---	Internal	Internal/ External	Internal	Internal/ External	Internal/ External	Internal/ External	Internal
Selection	Self	Organisation	Organisation	Community/ Organisation	Organisation/ Union	Organisation/ Community	Community	Community/ Organisation
Wages and Working Conditions	B	A	A	C	A	B	C	C
Job Satisfaction/ Motivation	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	B

Codes

A   -   Excellent
B   -   Good
C   -   Average/Standardised

the case of URMUL, BNS, MSG and PWDS. On the other hand MC, SIDH and SEWA not only offer good wages and working conditions, but also make special attempts to deal with motivation and morale as part of their training and HRD package.

The training patterns are equally variable, and five organisations have each had to develop its own unique model. (BNS and URMUL adopt a standard curriculum and FDC has none). MC and SIDH share similar approaches and have similar outcomes. BNS and URMUL have different outcomes, though the training package is the same, due to differences in skills and approaches. All are still evolving.

7. WITH WHOM - THE COMMUNITY

Levels of Community Involvement

The extent, nature and quality of community involvement can be described as a series of steps, from least to most.

1. Preliminary survey
   BNS, URMUL
   Formal research also
   PWDS, MSG

2. Inform, communicate and casually consult
   BNS, URMUL, SIDH, PWDS

3. Educate, communicate
   MC, SIDH, BNS, PWDS

4. Participate
   MC, SIDH, PWDS, BNS

5. Consult, monitor
   SEWA, MSG
   Some informal consultation
   MC, SIDH

6. Plan, strategise, take decisions
   MSG, SEWA

7. Mobilise resources
   PWDS, SEWA

The growing depth, intensity and complexity of community involvement as one travels up the scale reflects the shift from a service-delivery and implementation type of approach (most evident in the Government-sponsored programmes) to a genuinely need-responsive, participatory, and flexible one.

8. WITH WHAT - THE FINANCES

The financial situation can be examined from two angles, expenditure, or costs, and that of income. The issue of sustainability comes into play here.

The most significant element in child care is the human element, and hence the major element in cost is the human cost, which includes wages and working conditions on the one hand (which affect job satisfaction, motivation, and social

status) and training and worker development on the other. It has been effectively established by the eight case studies, as well as by numerous other examples, that the cost of material and equipment is not a significant factor in either quality or cost. All aspects of a good programme, from nutrition to play activity, can be run with low-cost, locally available equipment and materials.

The wide variability in costs, and in the quality of the programme, among the eight organisations, has been indicated in the earlier table on programme characteristics. Further analysis of each of the programmes shows that the factors underlying cost and quality are the same in several important aspects (Table 4).

The relation between costs and quality is linear, but in one direction only. Cost cannot predict quality, but quality is predictive of cost. High cost need not be accompanied by high quality, but high quality invariably leads to high costs. This relationship is often concealed by the phenomenon of "hidden costs", reflected in the so-called "free" inputs made by voluntary agencies in terms of zeal, application, motivation and personal charisma. However, if all

Table 4. Cost/Quality Relationship

S.No	High Cost/High Quality	Low Cost/Low Quality
1	High worker/child ratio	Low worker/child ratio
2	High worker salary and good working conditions, leading to satisfaction/motivation	Low salaries and poor working conditions, leading to absenteeism, apathy, poor motivation and low job satisfaction
3	High supervisor/worker ratio	Low or no supervision
4	Flexible programming	Fixed programming
5	Continuous training	No/minimal training or one-time, initial training only
6	Community involvement and structures for local initiative and decision making	Centralised decision making with little/no scope for community involvement

these were suitably allowed for, in accounting terms, the true costs would be much higher than they appear. Since the cost is borne by someone else other than the programme itself, they remain "hidden." Nevertheless, these costs exist and must be accounted for.

The supportive linkages are of considerable importance. They have the effect of reducing costs, since these are shared between several activities. Looked at from this standpoint, the agencies can be graded along a scale from those with most to least supportive linkages. The extent of these has a significant bearing on both cost and replicability.

Supportive linkages

Most	Some	Least
SEWA	BNS	MC
MSG	URMUL	FDC
PWDS	SIDH	

The organisations have different patterns of funding, and can be ranged along a continuum according to the degree of dependence on government funding or donor funding.

> *The most significant element in child care is the human element.*

Funding pattern

Govt.-dependent	Wholly self-reliant	Donor-dependent
BNS	FDC	SEWA
URMUL		SIDH
MSG		MC
		PWDS

However, not all of them are in the same position, and the degree of efforts to mobilise other resources, diversify sources of funding, and progress towards self-reliance and sustainability varies considerably. The pattern is indicated below.

Moving towards sustainability

Most	Some	Least
SEWA	SIDH	MSG
PWDS	MC	BNS
FDC		URMUL

As regards BNS and URMUL, the agencies are dipping into other resources to a great extent to sustain the programme, since they cannot run their projects on the funds made available by Govt. At the same time, they are prevented from raising funds from other sources for the programme, according to the rules laid down

by the Government. No "fees" may be charged from the children, and no regular contributions can be collected from the community. Evidently, donations will not be attracted to a fully-funded Government programme, and hence the phenomenon of "hidden costs" already mentioned. As far as MSG is concerned, the leaders have not yet thought ahead to the time when donor / Govt. funding will no longer be available or will be reduced. The rest of the agencies are all making efforts, each in its own way, to diversify sources, reduce dependence on any one agency, increase community participation and look for new sources. The most innovative, in the matter of mobilisation of resources, is undoubtedly PWDS, which seems to think of new financial schemes every day. The common thread is partnership, which seems an essential ingredient of sustainability.

9. SO WHAT - THE IMPACT

There have only been a few formal evaluations, surveys, or research studies done on the eight agencies to assess their impact. This documentation is in itself one such attempt. It tries to bring together all the available information and insights and attempts to draw some conclusions from them. Impact can be considered at four levels.

Impact on children, women, older siblings

Well-documented	Some	None yet
MC	SIDH	FDC
SEWA	MSG	BNS
	PWDS	URMUL

The importance of such studies is now well realised, and much more information of this nature may soon become available.

Impact on community and institutions

Some documentation	None
SEWA	FDC
PWDS	MC
MSG	BNS
	URMUL
	SIDH

The relation between costs and quality is linear, but in one direction only. Cost cannot predict quality, but quality is predictive of cost.

Indicators for studies of such difficult-to-measure, complex and intangible variables have still to be worked out.

Impact on training

It can be said that the Mobile Creches approach and methodology of training has had considerable influence nationally, both on the ICDS system of training itself, and on several other institutions. This has been achieved through its Extension Training work, and publications. As for the other agencies, it is too early to say, as the efforts still evolving.

Impact on policy and wider concerns

Some	A little	None
SEWA	BNS	SIDH
MC	URMUL	FDC
		MSG
		PWDS

The efforts of SEWA and MC to launch a national network that acts as a pressure group for child care services, has begun to yield results, though still on a small scale. Systematic campaigning and lobbying has led to the establishment of the National Creche Fund, and to some other achievements. With limited resources of money and human power, the agencies obviously can spare very little time and energy to put in the kind of effort that would

make a dent in policy. Much more still needs to be done. BNS and URMUL can play a significant role by sharing with a broader audience the advantages and limitations of partnership with Government, the clash of work styles and cultures, as well as their own unique ways of resolving these conflicts.

10. THE LESSONS

The insights from this review of the eight studies can be summarised under five headings:

Programme quality

Quality is related to factors such as relevance to the community, and the basis in perceived needs, which vary greatly, as well as to more stable and "objective" indicators which can be more easily measured, such as attainment of standards in health, nutrition and education. Hence flexibility, or responsiveness to need, and localisation, or adaptation to diversity, become important criteria for evaluating quality.

Centrality of the worker

The worker plays a key role in the success of the programme as well as in the attainment of standards of quality. What brings out the best in the worker? There seem to be two answers, one related to training, and the other to motivation. *As far as training is* concerned,

the *process* elements are of far greater significance, than more formal aspects like duration, type of curriculum, qualifications of trainers, which are the *content* elements.

While adequate wages and decent working conditions undoubtedly play a crucial role in helping the worker attain job satisfaction, the role of the community in selecting, sustaining and supporting the worker is equally important. This gives-the worker a sense of self-esteem and status, which in some cases is sufficient to make up for poor wages and working conditions.

Costs and quality

Not enough information is available to make an accurate determination of costs, especially as the "social costs" and "hidden" benefits have yet to be quantified and appropriate indicators developed. However, the information available suggests a linear and non-reversible relationship between quality and cost. High quality usually involves high cost, though high cost need not lead to high quality. Further, low cost is usually low quality, but low quality need not always be low cost.These relationships are important to the study of cost effectiveness.

Replicability

No model is exactly replicable. However, there are replicable elements, which can be isolated, defined and described.

Sustainability

This factor can be looked at from three angles:

a. Programme
It appears that the process-oriented, need-based evolving strategies have a higher chance of sustainability than the more programme-based and target-oriented ones. Sometimes the latter may even begin to deviate from or run counter to the community's perceived needs.

b. Organisational
The more the community is involved, and the more the sense of community "ownership" the greater the chances for sustainability, since dependence on an outside agency for decision-making, funding and other elements of continuity is reduced. It is even possible to visualise a situation where the initiating agency can hand over the programme to the community and move away.

c. Financial
The agencies which have diversified their funding sources, reduced dependence on any single source (whether Government or donor) and mobilised community resources have the best chances for sustainability.

How can these lessons be applied to the mainstream child care services in the country today?

Uniqueness and Replicability of Innovations

Dr. Anjali Mehta, Prof. of Psychology, BKIMS, Ahmedabad

Introduction

Project ACCESS: (Action for Child Care and Education Services) has published eight reports which identify multiple approaches in Early Childhood Care and Education in India. Each approach described is unique in terms of its objectives, methods, organisation of activities and strategies adopted for change. The purpose of this paper is to find out whether the programmes described there can be replicated in other parts of the country, so that others can learn from these experiences. Governmental and non-governmental donor/child welfare agencies need to get a clearer picture as to which child education programmes deserve their attention and funds.

Uniqueness of Programmes

Each programme is unique in several respects, some of which are identified below:

1. Different objectives for differently perceived needs.
Mobile Creches (MC) has been successful in retaining and working towards the objectives that it has set for itself. The main concern is the provision of holistic services for the poor, especially migrant labourers.

The study of Family Day Care (FDC) in Bombay identifies and analyses spontaneously generated private child care services. The expansion of the city into far-off suburbs has created vast distances between home and workplace. Young couples are compelled to make their homes in suburbs, and with no network of relatives, they are dependent on services from the community. The study focuses on the ways in which arrangements are made by young working couples to take care of their young children.

Society for the Integrated Development of Himalayas (SIDH) is running a "little school on the hill" to support women, young children and school drop-outs. More importantly, it is working towards an alternative school model which can be used for educational as well as community activities. Its ambitious five-year plan is to make the balwadis self-sustaining financially.

Uttari Rajasthan Milk Union Ltd (URMUL), a dairy cooperative based in Bikaner, has started

a number of anganwadi centres in remote areas of Rajasthan. It has taken up the challenge of implementing the ICDS and other government schemes to develop sound institutional linkages at the village level, based on a core of community participation.

SEWA, Ahmedabad, is running creches for women tobacco workers' children. The first thing SEWA did was convince the tobacco factory owners to set up creches in the factory premises in Kheda district. The owners agreed, and SEWA organised and managed the creches with the support of the women, the Panchayat, some of the local leaders, and the tobacco factory owners.

Palmyrah Workers' Development Society (PWDS) has organised community preschools for the rural poor. It has made kindergartens, creches and day care centres available to the young children of the rural poor.

Mahila Samakhya, Gujarat (MS) talks about "another kind of child care", for rural and tribal women in Baroda district of Gujarat. It has introduced the concept of the *Sahayoginis* (facilitators) and *Sakhis* (friends) to run child care facilities.

Bal Niketan Sangh (BNS) provides child care services to slum children in Indore and in a tribal block in Madhya Pradesh. BNS has had unique experiences in providing Early Child-hood Care and Educational services to both rural and urban children.

2. Unique leadership styles of the pioneers. The studies mention the unique personality, the leadership style and the pioneering spirit of the organisers. Shalinitai and her husband in BNS were the moving spirits behind the Jobat project. Before undertaking the project, they had detailed discussion with the local leaders, Panchayat members and government officials. For Mobile Creches in Delhi, it was Meera Mahadevan whose strong motivation and enthusiasm pioneered the programme which now boasts of more than 25 centres. SEWA of course can always count on the enthusiasm and dedication of Elaben Bhatt. SIDH was set up by Anuradha Joshi and Pawan Gupta in 1989. Anuradha had taught for several years in a Montessori school and later on worked as a primary school teacher in Calcutta. Pawan had worked as an engineer in the corporate world. No discussion on PWDS would be complete without mentioning the pioneering spirit of Dr. Samuel Amirtham - a humanitarian and concerned activist. URMUL Trust is active and alive mainly because of young people like Kashyap Mankodi - researchers, teachers and social activists. Thus, each organisation (except FDC, Bombay) mentioned in the studies is headed by unique leaders with unique life experiences. They each have different styles of running their organisations and leading them towards goal-achievement.

3. Different forms of organisaions.

No one form of organisation is found suitable to carry out ECCE activities. PWDS is a registered society formed in 1977, and so are Mobile Creches and SIDH. SEWA, established in 1972, is a trade union of self-employed women and casual workers. Its off-shoot, *Shaishav*, is a registered cooperative of child care workers. Mahila Samakhya is a state-sponsored society that incorporates both government officials and women workers on its Board. BNS is an educational institution. URMUL is a trust established in 1987 by members of a dairy cooperative based in Bikaner. Soon after becoming an autonomous body, the Trust decided to target its activities to the under privileged sections of the village, particularly women and children. The Family Day Care Services in Bombay are run in private homes with the help of family members. Many working women in Bombay have started making informal arrangements with their neighbours for day care.

> *The programmes include spontaneous private efforts as well as statutory obligations and government / non government partnerships; they are employer-funded and union- sponsored, school-based or community based.*

4. Accommodation for the activities.

Most organisations face tremendous difficulties in finding accommodation to carry out their activities. There are often problems with the rent of anganwadi centres. PWDS reports that it is difficult to find a suitable place free of cost for the school. PWDS pays a minimum rent to some schools, but the local community has often failed to provide a place in the village for their own school. For SIDH, a part of fixed costs relates to the cost of construction of buildings and huts. The decision about the construction as well as about the size of the structure, and the type of materials is left to the community. The total cost of construction for a 2-room structure comes to Rs.40,000 according to SIDH's estimates.

There are many more variables that can be studied for their uniqueness. The editor of the SURAKHSA series puts it most concisely when she writes in her introductory note, "The series of case studies represents a wide range of experiences in terms of geography, auspices and structure. The locations range from the Himalayan region to the coastal South, from industrial metropolis to rural or tribal hamlets. The programmes are run by diverse institutions and women's groups. The programmes include spontaneous private efforts as well as statutory obligations and government / non government partnerships; they are employer-funded and union- sponsored, school-based or community based".

5. Replicability of the programmes.

Replicability has three different meanings. The first refers to the expansion of the same programme over a period of time, implying that the programme can be extended to other groups. The second is whether the programme can be duplicated by the agency in different locations and in a different time-frame. Here one has in mind the geographical expansion of the programme. The third refers to the core idea of replication, the duplication of similar programmes by a different agency whose organisational culture is different from the pioneering agency. For example, could the SEWA model be transplanted to Bihar or Assam? The following discussion will use all three definitions of replication, with some examples to illustrate the point.

a. SIDH, Mussorie, has shown an excellent growth pattern in its programme. The number of children that benefit has increased from 84 in 4 centres to 250 in 12 centres. Could SIDH repeat its performance in other hilly areas? SIDH says Yes to this question, if special provision for hill areas are made, taking their geography and demographic features into account. At other places, the sponsoring agency may not have the inspiring presence of Anuradha Joshi and Pawan Gupta but the basic process of community participation will work in other hill areas, although perhaps not in densely populated urban or semi-urban areas. Having spent five years developing the

balwadis, SIDH feels that a replicable programme has been developed.

b. There is no question that Family Day Care institutions will grow in Bombay because of the rapid increase of double earners in the family. These neighbourhood child care arrangements are a spontaneous response to the growing needs of working parents. The phenomenon is so universal in our large cities that such arrangements already exist in Madras, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Banglore etc. One can only study the Bombay model more minutely and adapt it to other large cities in India. What has still not emerged is the involvement of NGOs in this activity. Also absent are cooperatives that would take care of the children while the parents are at work. If NGOs can organise cooperatives of Day Care Centres, many care givers will gain economically and better conditions for the children will emerge. It must be noted that the creche scheme of the Central Social Welfare Board already caters to 2.5 lakh children in the country, while private arrangements made by the parents for child care may be far larger.

c. The day care programme for construction workers undertaken by MC, Delhi has been successful and members are confident that the urban model could be modified to suit rural needs. One reason for this is their excellent training programme, which has created linkages with other organisations. Mobile Creches has

spread to three cities, with 24 centes in Delhi, 22 in Bombay and 8 in Pune.

d. Two studies from Gujarat are doubtful about the replicability of their programmes. The MSG study claims that the scheme is linked to several issues, while administrative and overhead costs are high. But these may go down drastically once other NGOs start learning from MSG's experience. Similarly the SEWA study states that the elements which are the outstanding characteristics of *Shaishav* are also by definition the most difficult to replicate, and asserts that SEWA's work ethos, goals and styles of working are unique. Yet for reasons that will be mentioned below, programmes like those undertaken by SEWA are not difficult to replicate.

e. Even though BNS project is facing some unique problems in tribal areas, it is hopeful of replicating the programmes that have a commitment to serve the weaker sections of society. In other words, the problems they face are generalisable.

Common Processes

In spite of the structural differences in the organisational set-up, the process aspects share many commonalties. These are commitment, participation, decision-making, communication, leadership, training and "stick-to-the-basics." These commonalties are a key to replicability.

1. Commitment.

All the studies report great commitment on the part of the organisers. Though there is no central organisation for FDC, Bombay, the commitment of the parents to the welfare of the children in the Day Care Centres needs no elaboration. SEWA had the full support of its pioneer Elaben Bhatt while PWDS has the committment from both the founder and a group of leaders. SIDH has the full backing of Anuradha Joshi and Pawan Gupta. In short, the programmes are enhanced by support of the pioneer leaders of the organisations and their committment has percolated down to all levels of workers and beneficiaries.

2. Participation.

The participation of the communities as well as the workers in the design and implementation of the programmes is quite significant. SIDH reports that "The major achievement in this period was the development of more participatory methods of training and building of a strong and confident team successfully able to impart training to others."

URMUL in its programme of child care decided that the anganwadi worker was to be elected by the village community. The location of the centre was also to be finalised in consultation with the community. MSG from the very beginning decided that the pace, form and content of all activities must be determined by women and women's collectives at the village level. PWDS held mothers' meetings every

month to discuss various topics on child psychology, health, hygiene, family planning, nutrition and budgeting. In one centre run by PWDS, the church participated by providing accommodation, furniture and other amenities free of cost. All studies mention the participation of employees, trainees, beneficiaries and the community at various levels. This is the secret of success of all programmes described, All organisations were careful in assessing the needs of their target groups, and some of them carried out need assessment surveys before starting their work.

3. Decision-making.

Participation and decision-making go together. All programmes have reported decision making from the "bottom up" rather than "top down." In some cases, the entire community participated. In designing programmes for anganwadi centres, the anganwadi workers participated fully in decisions regarding the methods and modes of conducting the work activities. Such an example can be utilised by the organisers of other programmes.

> *The core idea of replication is the duplication of similar programmes by a different agency whose whole organisational culture is different from the pioneering agency.*

4. Communication.

As there was no bureaucracy in these programmes, communication was smooth. The main emphasis was placed on the informal flow of communication. Programme employees were able to interact with the parents with minimal hindrances.

5. Leadership.

The programmes under review had outstanding leaders who followed a participatory leadership style. MC report states, "The unique quality that has kept the movement going was that we were confronted with human disparities... a cognitive dissonance, if you will. With Meera's charismatic leadership, we wanted to do something, although we had no set plan in our minds in the beginning." As it turned out, Meera's charismatic leadership style was highly permissive for her colleagues. This is also true of Elaben Bhatt of SEWA and Anuradha Joshi and Pawan Gupta of SIDH. The informal leadership style of the programme designers and managers seems to have percolated down to all levels.

6. Training.

Probably the strongest aspect of all these programmes is the preparation of trainers at all levels. In PWDS the preschool teacher was identified from the village and trained, in a modest attempt to identify and develop local leadership. SIDH organised an intensive training programme for the balwadi teachers, which

was repeated every three months . Apart from the regular training sessions, there were monthly meetings of all the balwadi teachers monitored by Anuradha or the balwadi supervisor. After identifying the anganwadi workers, URMUL organised their training at Bajju. Each such training lasted for ten days. Six training programmes were held during January to July 1992. SEWA's training programme for its creche teachers is practical and field-oriented. SEWA's *Shaishav* programme continues till today as a regular process of intensive child development training and follow-up of the trainers. MSG is probably foremost in emphasising the training function, and the empowerment process is directly facilitated through a series of training sessions that are participatory and experimental. The training at MSG comprises of field-guided learning, off-field orientation and reflection for Sakhis, Balsakhis and Sahayoginis. All training retreats are participatory in nature with heavy reliance on popular songs, games, drama, art, crafts, films and simulated exercises.

7. Stick-to-the-basics.

The organisaions under study have built core competencies in the areas of child care and education. Peters and Waterman, in their study of well-managed companies in U.S.A., have said that these companies stuck to the basics and did what they could do best. The same could be said of these organisations. What they know best is the field of child and women edu-

cation and development and they have continued in the line. Peter Drucker, the management guru, suggests that organisations that have simple forms and lean staff are likely to succeed. This is also true of the organisations under study. Modern organisation theories recommend lean staff, informal structure and free-flowing communications which these organisations already practise, because they are small. The organisation theory says, "Beyond the crystal - clear primary of the basic and simple organisational building block, the rest of the organisational structure should be deliberately kept flexible to permit response to changing environmental conditions." This is not news to many of our NGOs.

Finally, applying Mckinley's 7-S framework can help us see how it fits these organisations, and permits them to replicate their programmes.

The Mckinley 7-S Frame Work
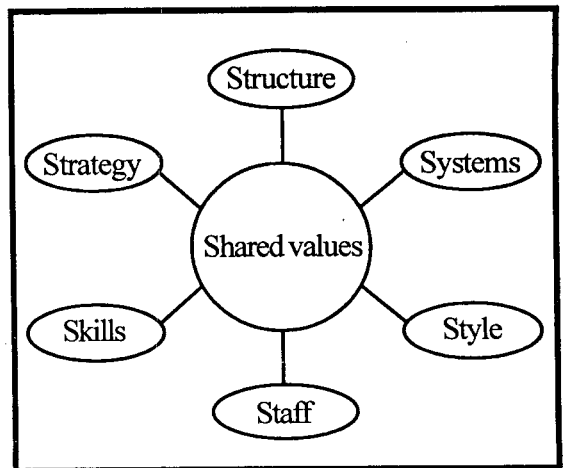
The organisational fit

1. Shared values.
There was a strong identification of employees and beneficiaries with the values of the programme in each case.

2. Staff.
Staff was mostly from the local community and was trained intensively. Also staff was lean, with grassroots orientation.

3. Style.
Managerial style was informal and participatory rather than "command and control" style.

4. Strategy.
Through a series of staff meetings, discussions and deliberations, strategy was formulated over a period of time. There is still a need to differentiate strategic elements from operational elements. Strategic ways of thinking were absent in many programmes.

5. Skills.
Skills were constantly updated and reviewed through training programmes of various durations. Training was given in the local dialect, and various pedagogical methods were used.

6. Structure.
Structure was informal, lean and bottom-heavy rather than top heavy. Communication lines were open and free-flowing.

7. Systems.
Financial and budgetary systems have not evolved to an appreciable degree. Also, programme evaluation in terms of cost-benefit analysis and performance evaluation were absent or at a very rudimentary stage. There is no solid information in any study to evaluate the outcome of the programme in terms of cost-benefit parameters. This is a big weakness in all such programmes. Their replicability will increase if a clear idea about their benefits to the target group and costs to the donors, community or the government supporting such programmes can be provided.

Financially, a professional management approach will increase the acceptability and the replicability of ECCE programmes. This expertise can be at low cost by the public service voluntary organisations. The key to their management success is the measurement of their resource inputs and quantification of their outputs, in terms of benefits to the client systems. If this could be demonstrated conclusively, many of the ECCE programmes can be replicated in other parts of the country.

Organisations that have simple forms and lean staff are likely to succeed.

The Issues for Discussion

The first part of the general discussion focused on the following main issues:

Scale and Flexibility

Flexibility in programming is generally associated with small size. However, large need not necessarily spell rigidity, nor does small size necessarily guarantee flexibility. How can the elements of flexibility be introduced and retained over time, and how can the required freedom be linked with responsibility ?

Replication and decentralisation

Replication should not refer to repeating a scheme, or even its components, but to an *approach*. Genuine replication implies adaptation of an approach to suit local requirements and circumstances rather than duplication of a prototype. Ideally then, policy should encourage many people to replicate the approach, each in their own way. Decentralisation of decision-making and authority is the key to replication.

Training for confidence/competence

To develop confidence and competence in grassroots workers, and to promote initiative and responsibility, process-oriented training is essential, since it focuses on these aspects. Much of present training tends to be short-term and target-oriented, hence internalisation of values and attitudes is weak. Process-oriented training is slow and has a long-term perspective, but is the only way to build the necessary skills and attitudes, though it may often seem as if each group is "reinventing the wheel".

Leadership building

Equally important is the development of second-line leadership. If the immense human potential available at this level is to continue, the task of consolidating and strengthening the work of the pioneering 'first-line' must get priority. Orientation and training at this level must emphasise building up the ability to take responsibility, make decisions, experiment, network, and innovate, along with the necessary freedom, rather than focus merely on supervisory skills.

Promoting innovativeness

Since much depends on promoting innovativeness, the question of training and management for innovativeness and creativity

should be considered seriously. This involves building elements like problem-solving and decision-making into the training methodology, and unlocking creative potential. It also implies providing managerial support which encourages innovation, offers freedom along with authority and responsibility, and provides "safety nets" for the process of trial and error.

Internalising values

Training of illiterate or semi-educated workers, especially on a mass scale, is a challenging and difficult task, especially for trainers who come from a background which sees training as a one-way process of giving and receiving. Trainers may hence have to change themselves first, before they can change others. "Learning from each other" is an attitude that has to be internalised by trainers in order to help trainees change their values. Training must be participatory, with emphasis on communication skills, if it is to lead to such an outcome.

Continuity and change

Flexibility implies constant innovation, watchfulness, sensitivity, responsiveness to community and attention to feedback. This is possible only when one works in the action-research mode, allowing for constant review, discussion, revision and adaptation in an "action - reflection - action" cycle. This has to be built into both training and management systems.

Community involvement

Community involvement must be understood in its broader sense, and include mobilising, utilising and strengthening of existing agencies and structures, enabling them to take over responsibility for local services. Reaching out to people and expanding services can be much quicker if this is also understood by NGOs to be an effective strategy.

Empowerment

Change involves the always painful process of " unfreeze - move - refreeze," which is especially difficult for those brought up in an authoritarian system. Empowerment for change is based on increased sensitivity, responsiveness to need, greater awareness, greater knowledge, competence based on skills, the confidence to take decisions, freedom to innovate and the willingness to take responsibility.

The second part of the general discussion explored aspect of the mainstreaming of innovation, and defined three groups of questions, which were later taken up in small groups.

Group I -   Quality and Evaluating
            Effectiveness
Group II - Human Resource
            Development:
            Training and Motivation
Group III- Sustainability and Replicability

Group I - Quality and Evaluating Effectiveness

Guidelines for discussion

1. Considering quality of programmes in terms of relevance - to community, to the cultural context, to women's multiple roles, to the family, and to men.

2. Considering the need to maintain a balance between a core programme ensuring basic minimum standards in ECCE and a flexible, need-responsive and location-specific programme.

3. Considering the importance of both quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation, and of a more participatory type of evaluation, which can also reflect the concerns and interests of the various "stakeholders," including child care workers.

4. Considering the comprehensiveness of the programme and the various age groups addressed, directly or indirectly.

5. Considering linkages with other programes as one aspect of quality.

6. Considering cost and cost-effectiveness along with indicators of quality and of impact.

Outcomes

1. Programme quality.
Some general principles were identified as:
- Community acceptance of the programme.
- Basis in need and cultural relevance.
- Involvement of community in planning, monitoring and altering the programme.
- Linkages with other community programmes.
- Services must deal with both content and process, hence monitoring of both is needed.

2. Programme relevance.
ECCE programmes must have the following specific elements for relevance and success:
- Gender sensitivity (focus on girl child).
- Age-grouping of children (flexibility).
- Feedback (constructive and continuous).
- Involvement of men in the community.
- Decentralisation of services.
- Development of capacity at grassroots.

3. Evaluation criteria.
Effectiveness can be judged by:
- Goal attainment.
- Resource utilisation.
- Satisfaction of workers/functionaries at different levels.

• Satisfaction of participants (people).

One set of criteria relate to meeting the needs of different groups, like children, women, families, community and sponsoring agency. Another set of criteria relate to relevance, which can be determined in relation to local /regional cultural context and availability of resources (human and material).

4. Age-specific programme components.

a. Birth - 3 years.

Objectives must relate to:

• Health.
• Nutrition.
• Care and stimulation.
• Early detection of "at risk" children.
• Parental involvement.

Process indicators of quality must include:

• Growth monitoring.
• Achieving milestones.
• Involvement of caregivers with children.
• Contact with mothers, fathers and others for participation and awareness.
• Safe and clean environment.
• Adequacy of infrastructure and resources including adult:child ratio.
• Appropriateness of time-schedule.

b. 3-6 years

Objectives must relate to:

• Health.
• Nutrition.
• Child development in all domains -

physical, cognitive language, social, emotional, aesthetic and communication.

Process indicators must include:

• All those mentioned in relation to 0-3 years as well as appropriateness of activities and methodologies for promoting children's overall development

c. 6-8 years

Objectives must relate to:

• Preparation for school, and literacy skills.
• Acquisition of competencies for cognitive, language and social-emotional development.

Process indicators must include:

• Attendance of children and teacher.
• Retention.
• Adult: child ratio.
• Achievement of competencies.
• Involvement of children in programme.

5. Cost/quality relationship.

Good quality inevitably implies moderate to high cost, arising from and related to:

• Infrastructure.
• Training.
• Duplication of programme.
• Indirect costs.
• Hidden costs.
• Community contributions.

Evaluation must always strive to be from within this context.

Group II - Human Resource Development: Training and Motivation

Guidelines for discussion

1. Identifying the levels, nature, content and methodology of training for ECCE, especially in terms of long-term strategies to build capacity.

2. Identifying ways in which to build the skills of trainers, especially to address open-ended, novel and unforeseen situations, by process - oriented training with new groups.

3. Balancing the need to develop skill for conducting integrated programmes, while avoiding the danger of overburdening the worker with too many tasks.

4. Using cultural strengths in training.

5. Addressing management issues and identifying the strategies needed to build up skills/qualities like motivation, innovativeness, problem-solving, commitment, leadership, and responsibility.

6. Addressing the specific training needs in the neglected sector of services for urban poor children.

Outcomes

1. Target groups.
The consensus was that ECCE training should focus on target groups of 0-3 years, 3-6 years, 6-8 years, family members and community members. Training needs to be differentiated from advocacy and conscientisation, which would be more applicable for policy and decision makers, community leaders and other relevant groups. The various levels of functionaries to be trained should include:
- Administrators and managers.
- Middle-level supervisors and facilitators.
- Grassroots workers/helpers.
- Trainers.

2. Nature of training.
It is important to lay down a minimum level of education for different functionaries, as both the building of curriculum and methodologies to be used, are affected by the educational background of the trainees. It may not be possible in several ECCE programmes to have well-qualified functionaries. This is particularly true in the case of grassroots workers, in whose case it must be emphasised that selection be made from locally available people, to ensure

closer rapport with the community, and on the basis of the presence of positive attitudes to work with children and families. In such cases, if illiterate or poorly educated workers are inducted along with others, special elements need to be added along with the regular training to bring them at par with other trainees.

Since training is an ongoing process, the role of training during the various stages of the working life of the workers must be understood. Pre-service, job training, refresher training and continuing education, each has a role to play in enabling child care workers to perform their duties in an effective manner. Drawing upon the experience of several innovative training programmes for ECCE functionaries, field training was emphasised over the institutional training normally imparted in various programmes.

3. Content of training.
The curriculum plays an important role in determining the success of the training programme. It should ideally include knowledge upgradation, practical experiences for skill development, and adequate exposure to field experience. Curriculum should also include knowledge as well as skills in self-assessment by reflection and evaluation. Details of the specific competencies required by various levels of ECCE workers are given in the annexure. Common competencies required by all functionnaries should find a place in the curriculum of ECCE workers at all levels.

4. Training methodology.
The use of innovative methodologies and appropriate teaching technology should be encouraged in imparting training to ECCE workers. These include the participatory approach, contextual experiences and process-oriented techniques. Training should be more need-based, field-based and of a continuing nature. Experimentation with the 'internship' concept which can be integrated into the training period itself should also be tried.

5. Primary concern of ECCE.
The ECCE worker should develop a strong and confident personality as a result of the training. She should have both confidence and capacity to effectively execute all the jobs related to ECCE. Functionaries also need to have the ability to interface and network with other related programmes, both in the governmental and voluntary sectors, at the local level.

Annexure to Group II

Training curriculum for developing competencies required by the various levels of ECCE workers.

1. Policy and decision makers/community/ local groups.
• Sensitisation about rights of children (as per provisions in the Convention for the Rights of the Child and National Plan of Action).
  - Survival.

- Development/protection.
- Exploitation (freedom from).
- Participation.

2. *Administrators.*
- Conviction (about values/mission).
- Understanding of community and target groups.
- Management skills.
  - Planning.
  - Organisation.
  - Execution.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Mobilisation of financial, legal and human resources.
- Team building, openmindedness, flexibility.
- Crisis/conflict management.

3. *Facilitators.*
- Coordination and integration between administration, grassroots workers and community.
- Ability to motivate, support and guide grassroots workers to achieve goals.
- Upgradation of knowledge, skills and capacity of grassroots workers/ community.
- Ability to monitor and introduce midterm corrections through participatory methods.
- Skills in mobilising local resources.
- Skill in encouraging autonomy and experimentation with innovative ideas.

4. *Grassroots workers.*
- Understanding of developmental needs of different target groups and skills to promote these.
- Use of innovative and creative approaches.
- Uninhibited interaction, spontaneity.
- Sensitivity to children with special needs.
- Enjoyment in working with children.
- Understanding play as a medium for joyful learning.
- Ability to mobilise local human and material resources.
- Cultural contextulisation.
- Knowing how to utilise mass media for education.

5. *Trainers.*
- Sound theoretical background of child development (multi-disciplinary).
- Rich field experience.
- Multi-method approach.
- Flexibility, adaptability and organisational skills.

6. *Common competencies.*
- Sensitivity to child issues
- Communication skills
- Interpersonal interaction skills
- Organisational skills
- Openness and flexibility
- Self-growth and development.

Group III - Sustainability and Replicability

Guidelines for discussion

1. Spelling out the meaning of replicability and identifying replicable elements in terms of systems, structures, skills, styles, strategies, and staff.

2. Spelling out the elements of flexibility in terms of approaches and components that can be replicated.

3. Considering ways in which the Panchayati Raj (local self-government) structure can help in the move to diversification and spread of responsibility for sustainability.

4. Considering all aspects of sustainability - financial, programmatic and organisational.

5. Considering decentralisation as a means to create opportunities for local initiative, and for institutions to respond to local needs, so that replication is small-scale but widespread.

6. Identifying the changing roles of the various partners in the process.

Outcomes

If the best in innovative programmes of ECCE is to be integrated into the mainstream, the two key elements that should be emphasised are replicability and sustainability. Certain basic conditions need to be met in order to accomplish this.

1. The process of replication.
The objective of replication is not to duplicate the content of specific programmes, but to focus on the *process* by which the programmes are built up and sustained. The elements which are included in the process need to be isolated and replicated in different contexts and geo-cultural settings.

Since experience is basic both to the learning process and internalisation of values and attitudes, each group must necessarily go through the *process* of problem-solving, even though it may sometimes seem as if they are "reinventing the wheel." This is not necessarily so, since the learning process itself involves using relevant past experience, and hence it may be better to speak of this process as " recreating the wheel."

2. Elements of replication.
Some of the elements of innovative programmes identified for replication are:
- Self-monitoring systems.
- The development of analytical thinking, problem-solving skills and attitudes in the workers at all levels.
- An organisational culture which supports the growth of leadership.
- Awareness of the need for constant change within the system.
- The capability to build on local resources and community strengths.

3. Criteria for flexibility.
An approach which is replicable and flexible should then meet the following criteria:
- Commitment.
- Participation.
- Decision-making.
- Communication.
- Leadership.
- Training.
- Stick-to-the basics.

4. Conditions for sustainability.
Meeting these basic criteria should ensure replicability. In addition, for sustainability, the programmes must meet the following criteria:
- Accountability to the local community.
- Ownership by the local community.

(The term community here includes parents as well as the wider community). Further, these criteria are applicable to all programmes, whether run by Government, NGOs, or small grassroots community structures.

5. Essentials for sustainability.
The following are essential to facilitate sustainability:
- Financial resources for ECCE programmes must come mainly from the Government, in keeping with the constitutional obligation under Article 45, which ensures free and universal education to *all* children below the age of 14. Distinctions have to be made regarding the nature and content of programmes for children in the age-groups 0-3, 3-6 and 6-14.
- Financial support must continue until such time as poor communities are able to attain self-reliance, which may be a long time into the future.

6. Allocation based on per child norms.
To promote flexibility, financial support for ECCE from Government should be offered, not in the form of prescribed packages, schemes or "models" but as a *per child* allocation, to be used flexibly by each agency. The per child norm itself can be variable, according to the:
- Geo-cultural context.
- Urban-rural setting.
- Age-group addressed.

Furthermore, the norm should be reviewed at regular intervals.

7. Freedom to mobilise additional resources.
In addition to this basic provision, groups should
be free to mobilise additional resources,
whether from parents, community, donors or
other sources. This would also help in the
gradual progression towards self-reliance, and
in the maintenance of self-respect.

*8. Changing roles of NGOs and local
governments.*
In the context of the decentralised programmes
visualised above, which imply supporting a plu-
rality of localised and diverse efforts
incorporating certain basic elements, the role
of NGOs and of Panchayati Raj institutions
becomes very significant. This role should be:
• Facilitating.
• Enabling.

• Motivating.
• Awareness-creating.
• Confidence and competence building.
• Providing exposure to available options.
• Capacity building.

9. Changing role of ICDS.
In this process, ICDS can be expected to
gradually move away from being a directly
administered programme to playing a co-
ordinating and facilitating role to the
multiplicity of local organisations, offering
training and resource expertise.

It is in this direction that replicability and
sustainabililty can be envisaged, in developing
a system which integrates innovation into the
mainstream.

> *It is only by studying and applying on a wider
> scale the handful of basic concepts underlying
> these innovations that one can hope to bring
> about the changes so needed in the
> educational scene today.*

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