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planning

28

Planning early childhood care and education in developing countries

Alastair Heron



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Fundamentals of educational planning

The booklets in this series are written primarily for two types of clientele: those engaged in—or preparing for—educational planning and administration, especially in developing countries; and others, less specialized, such as senior government officials and policy-makers who seek a more general understanding of educational planning and of how it is related to overall national development. They are devised to be of use either for private study or in formal training programmes.

Since this series was launched in 1967 the practice as well as the concept of educational planning has undergone substantial change. Many of the assumptions which underlay earlier attempts to put some rationality into the process of educational development have been abandoned or at the very least criticized. At the same time, the scope of educational planning itself has been broadened. In addition to the formal system of schools, it now includes other important educational efforts in non-formal settings and among adults. Attention to the growth and expansion of educational systems is being supplemented and sometimes even replaced by a growing concern for the distribution of educational opportunities and benefits across different regions and across social, ethnic and sex groups. The planning, implementation and evaluation of innovations and reforms in the content and substance of education is becoming at least as important a preoccupation of educational planners and administrators as the forecasting of the size of the educational system and its output. Moreover, the planning process itself is changing, giving more attention to the implementation and evaluation of plans

as well as to their design, and exploring such possibilities as integrated planning, participatory planning, and micro-planning.

One of the purposes of these booklets is to reflect this diversity by giving different authors, coming from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines, the opportunity to express their ideas and to communicate their experience on various aspects of changing theories and practices in educational planning.

Although the series has been carefully planned, no attempt has been made to avoid differences or even contradictions in the views expressed by the authors. The Institute itself does not wish to impose any official doctrine on any planner. Thus, while the views are the responsibility of the authors and may not always be shared by Unesco or the IIEP, they are believed to warrant attention in the international forum of ideas.

Since readers will vary so widely in their backgrounds, the authors have been given the difficult task of introducing their subjects from the beginning, explaining technical terms that may be commonplace to some but a mystery to others, and yet adhering to scholarly standards. This approach will have the advantage, we hope, of making the booklets optimally useful to every reader.

Preface

It is timely that in the International Year of the Child, Professor Heron should draw attention not only to the importance of early childhood care and education but to some of the practicalities involved in providing it.

As economic pressures mount in most developing countries and heart-wrenching decisions have to be made over relative priorities in education, there is a danger that early childhood education may continue to be viewed as something of a luxury. Professor Heron is convinced that such thinking is fundamentally in error. To help persuade us he cites Gilbert de Landsheere (1977) with telling effect: 'After twenty-five years of field study and observation in the developing countries and a close examination of the university students they produce, I have become profoundly convinced that each time a centre for pre-primary education, staffed by sufficiently qualified personnel, begins to operate in a developing country, a veritable nursery for talent is created... if I were the Minister for Education in a developing country, I should not rest until I had beside me a small team truly aware of the significance of pre-primary education'.

In pursuing his argument further Professor Heron frankly exposes the assumptions on which his case rests. They are that cultural change will continue to escalate, sometimes excessively, that accordingly more children will become more and more intellectually and emotionally vulnerable and that 'the principal determinants of any real 'equal opportunity'—in educational, occupational and social terms—are for most laid down in the years between birth and five or six years of age'.

On the shoulders of educational planners, who must be ever conscious of quantitative aspects as well as qualitative, frequently falls the task of weighing up the relative merits of alternative forms of action in comparison with others. For instance, in quest of a just solution to the problem of inequality of opportunity in a situation where many children do not go to school at all and others drop out prematurely, what is the best thing to do? What are the most effective means for making best use of the limited resources available? Should pre-school education be expanded, numbers at secondary school increased, the educationally disadvantaged given assistance? Or should less costly forms of education be sought to allow a more equitable distribution of education to all young people?

Professor Heron does touch on such practical problems and he considers in a concrete way organizational, administrative and pedagogical measures that could be taken to develop early childhood education. Ever practical, he sets out to consider what might therefore be done to accomplish the development of early childhood education, the organization of it and the delivery of it.

At this point in the book Professor Heron provides a fine example of how the experiences of the developed countries can be turned to good effect. Eschewing the uncritical transfer of models that have evolved in developed countries, he points out instead, how some of the errors they made (and continue to make) can be avoided and what advantage may be taken of their successes. However, Professor Heron has no illusions. His aim is to reconcile the desirable with the practicable. That he succeeds in doing so, and in such an engaging manner, will make the book easy and valuable reading for all those concerned with early childhood education and its planning.

Michel Debeauvais
Director, IIEP

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Introduction

Three questions

The contents of this short booklet are an attempt to provide straightforward answers in non-technical language to the three questions which should be asked by anyone concerned with the provision of a service. These are

- *what* is ‘early childhood education’?
- *why* should it be provided?
- *how* can the provision be organised?

The answer to the question ‘What?’ could generate a long, complex and far from non-technical booklet all to itself: instead, I shall devote the chapter on ‘Basics’ to three topics which have an inherently logical order, are essential to our overall purpose, and have sufficient universality to command the attention of readers from widely-differing cultural backgrounds. These three topics are

- the needs of the young child
- the relation between care and education
- family, community and society.

I have called the second chapter ‘Point of departure’ to indicate the origin of organised early childhood education everywhere in the roots planted and cultivated in the European tradition. The principles and methods evolved during that process have spread to all parts of the world, and must now there be re-examined. This will occur as part of the attempt to cope with the impact, in national, regional and local cultures, of very rapid political, social and technological change upon the family. At international level, as well as through the work of concerned individuals and organisations,

the interests of the young child have continued to be a focus of concern, and a broad consensus is available as a basis for future action. Thus we set our answer to 'What?' in a necessarily wide context, where the keynote is flexibility within a well-tryed framework.

Perhaps unsurprisingly in a booklet for decision-makers, planners and administrators, two chapters seemed necessary to deal at all adequately with the question 'How?'. The first of these—'Strategic considerations'—examines the 'related relationships' between demand and supply and between quantity and quality. Here we recognise that unlike provision for primary (or basic) education, where estimates of demand are likely to be as accurate as population projections will permit, the demand for pre-primary provision of various kinds between birth and the legal age of entry to primary school can and does depend on factors which, being voluntary, are exceptionally hard to estimate.

Supply strategies cannot therefore be based on simple attempts to match demand with appropriate resources, and it is at this point that we are forced to come to terms with the especial importance of the 'related relationship' between quantity and quality. The latter, as in any situation of reality, must involve criteria which cannot be absolute. But criteria there must be if planners are to have any idea of what one is talking about in terms of provision. This will lead us into questions of suitable buildings and equipment; of staff training and ratios; and the rôle of voluntary effort. The quantity-quality options will then be found to lie in the domain of social policy to an extent greater than is already recognised in planning the provision of compulsory education from the primary level upwards. This section and the chapter ends with a necessary emphasis on the problem of parent education.

In the next chapter I make a determined effort to imagine myself faced with the task of formulating policy for the provision of early childhood care and education in a country with little or no large-scale experience in this domain, yet caught up in the strong currents of technological development and social change. So its title—'Realistic tactics'—reflects an appreciation of the need to learn from the mistakes of the so-called 'developed' countries, as well as from such of their insights as are perhaps capable of being transplanted successfully in other cultures.

After opening with a ten-point summary of what has been learned

from our earlier coverage the tactics recommended are discussed under six headings:

- clear objectives, simple structure
- understanding and acceptance
- local involvement, national support
- integration and co-ordination
- parents, services and the community
- the rôle of external assistance

Of these, the first three are concerned with the task as it is in any particular country at a given point in time—and the two words deliberately placed last are ‘national support’. Big—and even potentially good—national plans cannot be brought to fruition without a great deal of local involvement, if not at first everywhere at least in enough areas to provide some models. Such local involvement will not be forthcoming unless and until there is acceptance—based on understanding—of what is intended. This acceptance of the need for something new, often involving sacrifice of attitudes by the many as well as of scant resources of time and energy by the few, is more likely to be forthcoming if the objectives of the programme are clearly stated and if the organisational structure is essentially simple. It will become apparent that this basic tactical requirement is far easier to enunciate than to achieve. The next two headings emphasise what I believe to be the essentials at the point of delivery, and endeavour to show how these are inter-related.

The final topic recognises the part that may be played by various forms of external assistance, but also provides an opportunity to note some of their limitations and to stress the especial importance of national self-reliance in this field.

We come finally to the Appendix, which also has a title—‘Examples, not models’. At various times in the main text reference is made—quite often by direct quotation from reports and other documents—to examples (of what is being discussed at that point) obtained from various countries. Many of these extracts originated in European and North American experience, or came directly or indirectly from Australian or New Zealand sources, though some are the outcome of efforts made in nations with very different historical, cultural and economic backgrounds to pioneer for themselves in this field of early childhood care and education.

But there seemed to be a strong case for including in the handbook a small selection of actual examples of what has been

attempted in various countries, often with minimal resources but maximal dedication, sometimes with outside help and sometimes without it. These are intended as sources of inspiration and of encouragement, rather than as models simply to be copied or even to be adopted with but slight modification.

In concluding this short overview, I should like to make it clear that my whole approach in the preparation of this booklet has been based on three convictions. These are: that patterns of culture and of social structure will continue to change, sometimes too much or too quickly—or both; that more children will become vulnerable emotionally and intellectually even as more become less so physically; and that the principal determinants of any real ‘equal opportunity’—in educational, occupational and social terms—are for most laid down in their years between birth and five or six years of age.

I. The basics

The needs of the young child

One of the more obvious distinguishing characteristics of our species is that we have a very long infancy: in other words, a great deal of our preparation for an independent existence is incomplete at birth. So the 'survival needs' are for protection from extremes of heat or cold; for appropriate nutriment; and for defence against physical injury and the causes of a wide spectrum of what we call 'disease'. Even at this level of consideration, we have become aware of the special vulnerability of the brain, which in the early months and years of life continues to develop at such a rapid rate as to make demands on its support systems elsewhere in the body that, all too easily, may not be adequately met.

The young human also needs affection or 'emotional support', and from about half-way through the first year of life begins to depend on getting this from a limited number of adults, of whom the natural mother (or an acceptable constant substitute) is usually the most important. During this same period there is a clear need for appropriate and varied stimulation—adequate but not excessive—and also for rest and quiet. To quote from a recent WHO report¹:

It has been well demonstrated in studies in both developing and developed nations that variations in the psycho-social development

1. "Child mental health and psychosocial development", *Technical report series*, No. 613. Geneva, World Health Organisation, 1977, pp. 21-22.

of children are strongly associated with qualities of parent-child interaction. In particular, it is known that when children are reared in homes where there is a lack of conversational interchange, where parents do not interact positively with their children, and where there is a lack of play opportunities, the development of language, intelligence and scholastic skills is likely to be impaired.

If, in terms of all the needs so far noted, the infant gets off to a good start, the emotional security can progressively be provided by a wider circle of familiar adults and older children, and the child will increasingly provide some sources of self-stimulation while actively seeking or demanding others.

So the young child has both physical and psychological needs which gradually but continuously change as the organic basis grows and develops; but the *pattern* of development can vary widely within what we can recognise and accept as 'normal limits'—and it is unique for every child. Some sources of the variation, and hence of the uniqueness, must be accepted as being within the 'genetic programme' created at the moment of conception; some were added between then and birth; and the rest result from the complex interactions between the pattern at birth and all subsequent experience. This process of interaction between the young child and every aspect of the immediate environment is of course dynamic in the historical sense: the environment is today interacting with the child that is the product of yesterday's interactions.

From this it is but a step to recognise that the experiences of the earliest years are probably more critical for satisfactory adult development than those of any later period. While remedial action by or with the aid of others, or voluntary change by the individual, *can* be effective throughout life, the evidence is massively in support of a conclusion that 'the older, the harder'. But it is much more difficult to identify with confidence what might be regarded as 'critical periods' in early development, by or within which the child should have certain needs met in specified ways, or be exposed to particular kinds of stimulation, or have learning experiences involving the use of previously-acquired skills. Until relatively recently, most developmental psychologists—myself included—would have agreed in saying that the resilience and reserve capacity of the very young child's central nervous system would make such 'critical periods' unlikely.

But there is a growing acceptance of the extreme importance

which seems to attach to the period between about 9 and 18 months of age so far as language and subsequent intellectual development are concerned. To this we must add the already well-established 'maximum risk' on the emotional side, during approximately the same period, when the young child is abruptly separated from the mother or usual mother-substitute. Allowing for the variability to which we have already referred, it now seems desirable to regard the period between about 6 months and 2 years as potentially 'critical' for most children, and therefore to take all possible steps to ensure optimal environmental conditions for them in terms of the needs we have been considering. This does *not* mean that we may in any way relax our endeavours before and after this period, only that *special* precautions appear to be necessary during it. As will be noted later, there is in fact a general tendency to extend the upper limit to 3 years. It is on such a basis that I turn now to consider the general question of nurturance in early childhood.

The relation between care and education

Elsewhere¹ I have noted that:

At least so far as the English language is concerned, the term 'care' has traditionally involved the notions of 'charge', 'oversight', of 'looking after', of 'watching over'. More recently the evolution of the social-work profession from its origins in 'charitable' activity has given rise to the term 'caring professions', in which 'care' has acquired the connotation of 'concerned assistance, advice and support'. In the context of early childhood it is apparent that the traditional and recent connotations tend to merge: 'day care' or 'child care' can imply something relatively passive or custodial, but also something relatively active or nurturant—and any blend of the two.

We shall have need to return to this last point in a later chapter, but for the moment I want to focus our attention on what must be seen as a false or artificial distinction, frequently made, between 'care' and 'education'. This may be observed not only during the pre-school years with which we are here concerned, but right up

1. *Early childhood care and education: objectives and issues*. Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1977, p. 47.

to the age of legally-recognised 'adulthood', thus covering the complete period of compulsory primary and secondary education and beyond. Having seen what has happened to the connotation of 'care', let us now do the same for the term 'education'.

Ask most literate adults what this word means and the chances are very high that you will get a reference to 'schooling' or 'going to school'. In other words, it has strong institutional associations and does not for most people involve something that takes place at home or in other settings within the community. Further, the word 'education' tends to mean for most people whatever they have personally experienced under that name. This is probably a socially significant fact which many educationists and other intellectually-trained people overlook when they are addressing themselves, in speech or writing, to non-specialist audiences or ordinary people and use the word 'education' freely. For many of those speaking or writing, it is *not* something that only happens in an institutional setting; it should, when it does so, be far less formal and more interactive an enterprise than it was in the schooldays of their audiences—and they ought to be conscious of the fact that 'care' is something also provided within a school, or that it should be.

So far as developing children and adolescents are concerned, both 'caring' and 'educative' experiences should reach them from their complete social environment—at home, in the village or the urban neighbourhood, and in any and every institutional setting where they may spend some or much of their waking hours. And we shall have laid a firm foundation for the strategy and tactics of our planning if we—the planners, the advisers, the decision-makers, the providers—recognise and accept, especially for early childhood, that we are concerned with what must be a closely-woven cloth of which the care and the education are indeed the weft and the warp.

Family, community and society

In considering the needs of the young child and ways in which these can be met by the environment in which rapid and continuous development is taking place, we noted the special importance of the mother or a familiar substitute, notably in the earliest years of life. The dwelling-place provides the immediate pattern of physical support (or hazard) and stimulation (or lack or excess of it), and those who live there similarly provide the immediate pattern of

social and emotional support and stimulation. They—collectively—are the child's first carer/educators. In the contemporary 'nuclear' family, those involved are usually the mother, father and one or more older brothers and sisters. It has rightly been stated¹ that 'as a rule the family is the care setting for socialising the child. His entire early development is a result of his experiences within the family context, though it is subject to modifications as he grows older and interacts more and more with people outside the family.' The same document goes on immediately to remind us of how, mainly in rural areas—and especially in technologically less advanced parts of the world—'the child is reared in an extended family network, including parents and relatives, often three generations living in one household, in which the mothering rôle is shared with grandparents, relatives and other children'.

The effects of urbanisation—and also of modernisation and other cultural changes even in rural areas—have almost universally been adverse to the extended family, and the trend is clearly towards the small nuclear unit. As another review² puts it neatly, 'Consequently, society itself must concern itself with the health, education and stimulation of the child of pre-school age, taking upon itself the tasks which formerly fell to the large family unit and which the nuclear family cannot cope with'.

The young child is at the centre of a series of ever-widening 'circles of influence': the family, whether extended or nuclear; the local community, whether large or small; society, whether monolithic or decentralised; and—in recent times—the whole world. As responsibility for care and education shifts outwards, it becomes more and more important for the child that communication between his immediate environment—the family—and society as the distant source of organisation and provision, be mediated through the local *activity* of the community within which the family is located. It may well be true that in small communities, often consisting mainly of extended families, 'everyone knew everyone else's business'—but from the point of view of the young child this provided a rich social environment with a network of relationships through the mesh of

1. *Children and adolescents in the second development decade: priorities for planning and action*. New York, United Nations Children's Fund, E/ICEF/627, 1973, p. 123-4.
2. *The child and his development from birth to six years old: better understanding for better child-rearing*. Paris, Unesco, 1976, p. 5.

which it was difficult to fall too disastrously. To stress this is not to romanticise, but simply to suggest that one of the 'basics' with which we are concerned in this chapter is the active rôle of the local community in any pattern of early childhood care and education which is originated centrally—or even regionally—by the responsible agencies of the larger 'society'.

Against such a background it may be easier to see why a changing Old World eventually faced the necessity of producing a method of improving the prospects of its young children: 'early childhood education' was evolved as a solution to a new set of social problems.

II. Point of departure

The 'European' tradition and practice

There is plenty of evidence that in most countries where early childhood education has been initiated, whether on a small scale by largely voluntary effort or on a larger scale involving public funding, the 'models' to be found are those which were pioneered in western Europe. In the actual examples to be encountered by any visitor, later influences resulting in modification have come mainly from North America, Australia and New Zealand. Any attempt to answer the question 'What is early childhood education?' must start therefore with this tradition: but this necessity does not in any way imply that the currently-available models arising from it are necessarily those most suitable for the countries to which they have been 'exported'.

The history of this movement goes back to 1799, when a Protestant pastor began a nursery in Alsace which was run by his maid-servant Louise Scheppler until her death in 1837. This man—Johann Friedrich Oberlin—thus became the founder of the nursery school movement. Continuing the story from the same source¹:

The experiment in that small village created much interest throughout the country. Early in the nineteenth century, a somewhat similar venture—this time for children up to four years of age—was started in Detmold, Germany, and from then on the nursery

1. Eyken, Willem van der, *The pre-school years*, Harmondsworth, England, Penguin Books, 1969, p. 63 *et seq.*

school movement began to spread throughout Europe. A Monsieur Firmin Marbeau began the first *crèche* in Paris in November 1844, again for the benefit of children whose mothers went out to work. . . . In 1869 the French government gave official recognition to the *crèche* movement and by the end of the century there were sixty-eight *crèches* in Paris itself, another 44 in the suburbs and 322 in other *départements*. The Belgians, too, adopted the idea of providing official areas where working mothers could leave their small children, and in their case called them *jardins des enfants*. Austria was more impressed with the work of Froebel, who had opened the first *kindergarten* in 1837 and had, furthermore, established the first training college for kindergarten teachers. The Austrians decided to adopt the Froebel philosophy to the extent of a decree passed by their Ministry of Education in 1872, recognising kindergartens as part of the country's education system.

After describing the early work of the sisters Rachel and Margaret McMillan in establishing a clinic and other remedial efforts in the East End of London, this author notes their opening in 1913 of an open-air nursery school and 'the proud claim of this school, substantiated by the records, that after three years in this nursery, only 7 per cent of these children, who would otherwise have been condemned to a life of ill-health and severe handicap, were still unfit for the elementary schools by the time they were five.'

It is however very relevant to our later consideration of realistic tactics, as well as to our immediate explanatory purpose, that he then quotes Margaret McMillan herself, as follows:

Is its most startling effect that every rickety child is cured within a year? No. The finest results of the open-air schools are mental, not physical. They are found in the rapid progress of alert and awakened children who learn in a few weeks what, under other conditions, they might have spent years trying to acquire. All this is undeniable. It is proved beyond dispute.

An American writer¹ noted that the greatest innovation of the Froebel kindergarten was play, which 'involved the channeling of spontaneous energies into orderly behaviour. It allowed the child

1. Lazerson, Marvin, "The historical antecedents of early childhood education", in Gordon, Ira J. (Ed.) *Early childhood education*, Chicago, The National Society for the Study of Education, 1972, p. 38 *et seq.*

to express his physical needs but, properly guided through the use of Froebel's materials, it adjusted him to peer and adult requirements'. Before going on to explain why 'the Froebelians would not have attracted much attention had their ideas not become tied to the progressive reform movement' in which 'the reformers focused on the family, the relationships between parent and child, and between youth and the street', the author emphasised how

... the kindergarten established the validity of affection and physical activity in teaching. It centered attention on the way children grew and legitimized happiness in the classroom. Children were not required to memorize and engage in parrot-like recitations. Teachers were warned to avoid the over-use of books and, indeed, kindergarten enthusiasts expected their innovations to revolutionize elementary education.

From the same source we can also gain a succinct impression of the methods and impact of the Italian pioneer Maria Montessori. As a physician she started her educational work with mentally handicapped children, and it was her success in this that caused her in 1907 to open a *Casa de Bambini* (Children's House) in a slum district of Rome.

The Montessori classroom emphasized personal hygiene and good manners. Children learned to keep themselves clean, set and serve a table, and use knives and forks. To foster this, Montessori radically altered the learning environment. She developed movable child-sized furniture, desks and wash-basins. She developed her own tools for learning—'didactic apparatus'—which presented the child with problems to be solved... Each learning material built another, presenting a clear progression of learning experiences.

Although both Froebel kindergartens and Montessori nursery schools are to be found on both sides of the Atlantic, and elsewhere, and in addition many pre-school teachers employed under other auspices are products of Froebel and Montessori training colleges, it is probably fair to say that the influence of these two 'structured' approaches has continued most strongly in the continental countries of western Europe, though in Belgium and France it is important to note also the influence of Decroly (1874-1932); in most of the English-speaking world the modal example is usually derived from

the less formal principles of the McMillans; in recent years some new structured methods have been introduced in the USA as part of the 'compensating' approach to social deprivation. In the socialist countries of eastern Europe the approach is generally of a structured type owing much to Froebel, rather less to Montessori and a considerable but variable amount to the systematic studies and theories of the early childhood institutes in the USSR. There is especial emphasis on the child's identification with the group.

As we observed earlier, it was inevitable that most initial attempts to launch early childhood care and education in a systematic way elsewhere in the world would be based on these models of European origin. Until very recently, despite the notable achievements of OMEP¹ and the reports of many useful international gatherings sponsored by UNESCO and UNICEF, no clear picture was available of the world-wide scene. To a limited extent, this deficiency has been relieved by the publication in 1976 of a summary report² based on the replies received from 67 Member States of Unesco to a questionnaire sent officially to all Member Governments, and also by OMEP to all its national committees. Of these 67 respondents one-half were in Africa (13), Asia (7) and Latin America (14). Unfortunately for our present purpose, it is usually not possible to see from this report whether and to what extent provision and practice in these 34 countries differed from that to be found in the remainder. Two exceptions to this may be cited, of which one relates to the methods used in the pre-school provisions of each responding country. The actual question unfortunately tended to pre-determine the response categories: 'Are certain teaching methods, such as those of Froebel, Montessori and Decroly, recommended or compulsorily used? Or are nursery teachers free to choose their methods? If so, can you give a general idea of the methods used?'

Of the 48 countries providing usable answers, 21 were in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Nine of these and 6 of the other 27 indicated either a 'free' approach or this together with a 'mixed' approach, not explicitly naming any of the three cited 'traditional' methods. So although the latter are obviously still in majority use

1. Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire.

2. Mialaret, Gaston, *World survey of pre-school education*, Paris, Unesco, 1976, 67 p.

around the world, the quoted figures suggest relatively greater minority preference for a more informal approach in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The author of the report notes that overall 'there is a great variety of methods in pre-school teaching—and that is a satisfactory state of affairs'.

Another exception can be found in a table which shows the entrance ages reported by 50 of the 67 responding countries; of these 50, just under half (22) were in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Only 8 of these 22 countries reported admitting children under 2 years of age, compared with 14 of the other 28 countries. The author emphasises however that 'on the basis of the information available it was not possible to assess the number of these institutions in relation to the total, or the number of children who attend them.' (This was despite the fact that the questionnaire used in the survey specifically asked 'What is the approximate percentage of the corresponding population age group represented by children admitted to these institutions?')

It is therefore perhaps not surprising that this report is more valuable for the lucid and yet scholarly way in which the author provides a systematic account of what pre-school education is, what it demands in terms of buildings, equipment, staffing, and relations between pre-schools and parents on the one hand and the community on the other, than as a source of comparative information about progress in various parts of the world. (The ready availability of this descriptive material, to which readers are referred, explains the absence of such a section from the present booklet). It may however be illuminating to cite the order in which the responding countries placed their 'stated goals' for pre-school education (based on frequency of mention and using the author's wording):

1. Providing for the all-round development of the child's personality (satisfaction of the need for intellectual and cognitive development, creative activity and independence), together with meeting the need for social relations, for company, for group and community life.
2. Preparation for primary school.
3. Physical development.
4. Child-minding functions.
5. Development of language.
6. Emotional aspects.
7. Moral and religious aspects.

On this the report comments:

The places occupied respectively by goals relating to preparation for primary school and goals relating to the child's emotional life may seem surprising. A more detailed study would be required to elucidate the relative importance attached in each country to each of these aspects. It is not possible to assess this on the basis of the replies to the questionnaire.

But I should like to go on to cite with appreciation and full support the writer's emphatic statement that '*pre-school education should be first and foremost a preparation for life... the purpose... is not to give children systematic 'knowledge' set out in a syllabus*'.

The provision of care and education appropriate to the age and needs of every young child is, in the words of the Faure Commission report,¹ '*an essential pre-condition to any educational and cultural policy*', just because it alone can maximise the probability that the next generation will be alert, curious, imaginative, stable, and flexible enough to tackle and solve the personal, familial, social and political problems which are now being generated—mainly but not solely by technological change—all over the world. And, just to bring this into a relevant and manageable perspective, there is no serious competitor in 'preparation for a life-time of problem-solving' to the normal 'work' of early childhood which we grown-ups call 'play'—provided it is task-oriented yet still pleasurable, structured yet still free, sociable yet still individual. As one contributor² to the studies for the Faure Commission put it:

The most important aim of these games (alternating with 'serious' tasks), is to stimulate the child's intelligence and to develop his learning abilities. That is why the child's environment at home and in kindergarten is planned in such a way as to allow him to be active, awaken his desire to learn, and help him discover the laws of natural and social phenomena. *Learning to read, write and cypher at too early an age does not seem to be necessary; it is far more*

1. Faure, Edgar *et al*, *Learning to be*, Paris, Unesco, 1972, p. 190.

2. Okon, Wincenty, *The evolution of the content and structure of education as a function of economic and social development and aspirations of the individual*. In Series B: *Opinions* (No. 13), International Commission on the Development of Education, Paris, Unesco, 1971, p. 5.

important that positive cognitive attitudes toward life and learning be established . . . (my emphasis)

For those countries which in the economic and technological sense are described as 'developing', the need for future generations of such problem-solvers is made especially great and urgent by the accelerating rate of cultural and social change, a topic to which we now turn.

Problems posed by rapid cultural change

The first major problems in the early childhood field arose in Europe with the Industrial Revolution and all its negative consequences which social historians have set against the benefits in the long-term perspective. Notable among these were the use of child labour (until the untiring efforts of reformers produced enforceable legislation to control it); the growth of industrial cities half-hidden in chemical pollution in the atmosphere and on the surface; and of course the separation of working mothers from their children.

In those countries now regarded as economically and technologically advanced many of these negative features of industrial development and urbanisation have been progressively eliminated or are in process of being brought under control. But as the rural areas of these countries are themselves affected by agricultural and horticultural technology, the drift to the urban areas continues. When this is combined with a falling birth-rate (where the explicit target in many countries is 'zero population growth') it eventually becomes economically difficult to keep in existence a multitude of local primary schools, and an increasing proportion of the relevant age-group in rural areas spends a significant part of each school day in a bus. The other consequence of this trend is of course the growing difficulty in maintaining the personal links between parents, community and school staff. Given the so-far continuing tendency for young mothers in such areas to have their children of pre-school age at home with them, and for grandparents and other older relatives to be near at hand, the transition for more and more of the dwindling group of young rural children will be a sudden one direct from home to a relatively distant school, unless state-supported voluntary effort on the part of the mothers makes pos-

sible a network of small local pre-school playgroups and kindergartens. This is a notable feature of the New Zealand scene.¹

Returning to the urban areas, cultural change in the industrialised countries has resulted in a growing proportion of working mothers of children below school age, as well as during the legally-compulsory years of school attendance. This development has been paralleled by greater geographical mobility, resulting in the small nuclear families frequently being too far away—even in the same large city—for grandparents and other relatives to be regularly available as child minders and potential educators.

Much of the foregoing would appear to be of little immediate relevance to many of the economically and technologically developing countries, were it not for the fact that the *rate* of social and cultural change continues to *accelerate* all over the world. What has taken a century or more to generate new needs and new problems for the countries of which I have just been writing will have become a fact of life for planners and administrators in many of those countries *before this century has ended*. It is manifestly dangerous to underestimate the consequences which *must* ensue from the urgent need of many countries to achieve economic independence, both for its own sake and as a contributory factor or pre-condition in the battle for long-term political stability. It has unhappily already become a cliché to mention the loss of precious cultural elements in this enforced 'progress', but—cliché or not—this loss is felt most keenly in the realm of human relationships, and nowhere more than in those values which have previously provided the child from birth to adulthood—and beyond—with an identity and a sense of belonging.

Once again, it is necessary to see also the other side of this coin: a raising of the overall standard of living, the provision of health care and of universal basic education where before there was little or none—all these are positive benefits for the young child. But the 'cost' in cultural change for getting them can be high, and this has increasingly been recognised by the leaders and other responsible and thoughtful people in many of the countries to whose present or future needs this booklet is addressed. I would now like

1. Barney, David, *Who gets to pre-school?*, Wellington, N.Z., Council for Educational Research, 1975, 366 p.

to turn directly to a brief survey of the extent to which this recognition has been brought to focus at an international level.

Consensus for action

The 'international charter' for early childhood care and education is without doubt *Recommendation No. 53 to the Ministries of Education concerning the organization of pre-primary education* of the Unesco International Conference on Public Education, 1961.¹ I am aware of nothing that would now put in serious question any of the basic principles underlying that Recommendation, though the results of 17 years' research and experience and also the realities of life in many countries may require us to look again at some of the detailed clauses. This being so, the first five of these clauses can serve as a basis for our present purposes. These are:

Possibilities of introducing and extending pre-primary education

1. It is important that the authorities responsible for education should encourage the introduction, extension and progress of pre-primary education, taking into account the stage reached by education in each country and the situation in different localities.
2. Whenever compulsory schooling is already provided for all children without exception, educational facilities should be offered to children of pre-primary age insofar as their numbers justify the opening of an institution or class of the corresponding type.
3. In countries where the provision of compulsory schooling for all has not yet been achieved, it is desirable, while reserving priority for the requirements of the primary school, to take steps for the development of pre-primary education facilities, particularly in industrial areas and in rural areas where women workers are widely employed.
4. It is desirable to take into account the fact that pre-primary education, while retaining its essential educational character, also meets social needs which are assuming increasing importance in a changing world; for this reason, it is indispensable to achieve very close collaboration between public and private education authorities, the medical and social services and the parents.
5. It is desirable for business concerns and institutions employing

1. Set out in full as an annexe to "Early childhood education", *Educational documentation and information* No. 192, Paris, Unesco-IBE, 1974, 90 p.

women to create and develop pre-primary education establishments in collaboration with the appropriate education authorities.

Ten years later the Faure Commission¹ charted progress (or the lack of it) towards these agreed goals by noting that

...current educational systems very frequently operate as if this phase of life were of no concern to them. Their shortcomings in this respect may obviously be explained in many countries by the inadequacy of resources available to meet the demand for education, *but they do also result from a failure to recognize the importance to individual development of educational conditions in early childhood.* (my emphasis)

Let me end this section and the chapter by stating quite simply and directly, by way of summary, that the answer to the question 'Why should early childhood care and education be provided?' is 'Because we have learned that it has become highly desirable for *all* young children and a necessity for *most* of them'. It is desirable for all because it complements positively the benefits and strengths of a favourable physical, familial and community environment; it is a necessity for most of them, all over the world, because they do not enjoy those benefits. For only a minority of children is that environment optimally favourable. What we have been addressing ourselves to may be seen as admirably summed up by a distinguished and widely-experienced Belgian colleague²:

In short, a series of problems with direct fundamental educational repercussions arise during the transition—especially if it is accelerated—from an economy essentially dominated by the primary sector, to modern industrialization and the development of services. This process exerts a dynamic influence on the whole culture, which, from being static, suddenly finds itself obliged to create new forms of adaptation and to produce flexible, creative behaviour-patterns to which it is not used.

He later says (p. 510):

1. *op. cit.*, p. 190.

2. Landsheere, Gilbert de, "Pre-school education in developing countries", *Prospects*, Vol. VIII, No. 4, Paris, Unesco, 1977, p. 508.

After twenty-five years of field study and observation in the developing countries and a close examination of the university students they produce, I have become profoundly convinced that each time a centre for pre-primary education, staffed by sufficiently qualified personnel, begins to operate in a developing country, a veritable nursery for talent is created.

And he ends his article with the words

...if I were the Minister for Education in a developing country, I should not rest until I had beside me a small team truly aware of the significance of pre-primary education.

III. Strategic considerations

Sources of 'demand'

It is very much more difficult to estimate 'demand' for a service that is in the first place not attempting to meet the needs of all members of an age group, for the simple reason that uptake is not legally compulsory. In the economically more-developed countries demand for early childhood care and education has been increasing since the end of World War II, and especially during the last ten years. But despite their more favourable circumstances in terms of census, survey and other statistics, planners and their governmental masters have not found it at all easy to anticipate the rate of growth in demand, and have also frequently fallen into the trap of oversimplifying both its nature and origins. I have endeavoured to make this clear elsewhere¹ by noting that

the principal demand source lies in the actual behaviour of women who are the mothers of children in the ECCE² age range: more and more of them are breaking away from the traditional 'stay at home' pattern . . . there are three main strands in their motivation—'pull' from the employment market; 'need', whether objective or not, for increased income; and a desire for greater equality of freedom and opportunity, both relative to men and in absolute terms. (p. 56)

and—so far as the nature of the demand is concerned—that

1. *Early childhood care and education: objectives and issues*, (op. cit.), p. 56.

2. ECCE = Early Childhood Care and Education.

Policy makers who have been persuaded, to a degree naturally varying from one country to another, to provide increased services—mostly part-time, mostly of the traditional nursery school/kindergarten type—are now finding themselves faced with evidence of fresh demands... for more full-day provision of a basically custodial type, and in respect of children from birth to school age—and even beyond, in the form of after-school and school-holiday care. (p. 15)

Now let us face the realities of the economically and technologically less-developed countries with whose needs we are here directly concerned. No words of mine could be as apposite and trenchant as those to be found in a superb 1974 UNICEF report¹ which, after demolishing the ‘romantic myths... about the attitudes and preferences of the women in the rural areas of the poorer countries’, goes on to state categorically that

The vast majority of mothers in developing countries are workers, whether they live in rural or in urban areas, work full time or part time, work seasonally or through the year, work for wages or in self-employment on crops or handicrafts... in addition to this work, the mother continues with all her childbearing, childrearing and household activities.

Modernization, while offering numerous advantages, also places increased stresses on the mother in adapting the family to new living conditions. In the towns and cities the mother in the recently-arrived family usually bears the main burden of coping with the adjustments required by urban life and a cash economy.

If to these harsh realities we add the problems that in some countries are already evident as the extended family system is eroded or replaced by the nuclear one (but with more children than is now usual in Europe and North America), we would be wise to regard the *potential* demand for ECCE services as being well beyond the economic and educational capacities of most ‘developing’ countries to supply.

This impels me to turn aside—or appear to do so—for a while, in order to look at planning strategy in general. Here again I am able to benefit from the work of UNICEF in a 1973 report² of which

1. *The young child: approaches to action in developing countries*, New York, United Nations Children’s Fund, E/ICEF/L.1303, 1974, p. 25.
2. *Children and adolescents in the second development decade* (op. cit.), p. 139 *et seq.*

the last chapter, entitled 'Children in national planning: operational tasks', deals specifically with our present concern. Here it is stressed, I believe very importantly, that

...the two aspects of plan formulation, the economic and the social, can no longer be treated separately. There has to be greater convergence of methods of analysis and of time horizons... In social development and, notably, in areas of concern to children and youth such as health, nutrition, education, training and welfare services, the objectives tend to be stated in the broadest terms. The time horizon is frequently limited to the period of individual development plans. There are few commitments which are both long-range and time-bound and are reasonably assured of the resources needed... Over the entire field of priorities for children and youth, within the sectors concerned as well as in areas of co-ordination, *it is imperative that each country should endeavour to work out its own long-range perspectives and should be prepared to support them with the requisite resources.* The perspectives required have to derive primarily from consideration of population trends and judgements reached within the country concerning the future development of its human resources and the well-being of its population in general and of its children and youth in particular. *In proceeding thus, the significance of economic growth is not diminished:* on the other hand, economical and social projections and commitments for action become inter-related, and economic growth, improvement of living standard, and the development of human resources become mutually supportive. (my emphasis)

Applying these principles to our own problem of estimating 'demand' for ECCE services, the first thing to note and remember is the emphasis on *time horizons*. While experience has taught us painfully that very long-range economic planning can produce a large desert into which a small quantity of water simply vanishes very quickly, we are here wisely counselled against the opposite danger of using present conditions as a basis for plans and provisions which are too short-term. The other point is complementary: economic and social factors must not be treated separately. It has become a major danger in planning service provision that the economic consequences of rapid social and cultural change are disastrously underestimated in respect of time scale. To put it more crudely, some things are likely to be very different very much sooner than we think: the trouble is that we do not know which they are.

Each planner or planning team must of course seek to obtain the most complete and reliable quantitative and qualitative data-base possible for the country concerned: there is simply no way in which I or anybody else can write a generally-applicable prescription which would even begin to be equally useful in, say, Bangladesh, Bolivia and Botswana. My reason for stating the obvious is to be found in the very nature of our concern: we are dealing with a topic so basic in both social and economic terms to the future stability and prosperity of a great many very different countries that it is certain to involve planners in value judgements which are matters of national policy. Perhaps paradoxically, these may prove easier to examine in our next section, on the determinants of supply.

What is clear, however, is that the pattern of *predictable* 'demand' is unlikely in many, perhaps most, 'developing' countries to pass through the full sequence of changes that has characterised the recent social history of the technologically-developed countries. It cannot, for at least the reason that the rôle of women in the two *blocs* is systematically different to start with. By and large, we can say that in one *bloc* recent change has been from a situation in which most mothers of young children were not working away from the nuclear family home, towards a new situation in which most of them are or want to be; in the other *bloc*, change must be expected in the whole complex pattern of motherhood, the nature and location of women's labour hitherto taken for granted, and the shrinking availability of traditional care-educators of the young child within the intimate networks of extended families and small communities.

Determinants of supply

These are of course no different in category terms from what they would be were we considering any other service provision: that is, they are economic and political. Of these, the former provides the absolute limits (unless external aid is injected), the latter provides the priorities within those limits. Countries with very high *per capita* incomes can enjoy a wide range of choice denied to those at the other end of the economic spectrum: they can, for example, spend a great deal on armaments and on the costs of their use at the same time as they make possible the supply and maintenance of high-quality early childhood services. Nearer the poor end, they

can have one or the other but not both—and at the very far end, they can afford neither. Political philosophies provide the value system within which priorities can be decided—and quite often also prescribe the mechanisms of decision-making. Some systems are inherently more responsive to public demand than are others, and some decision-making mechanisms make that variable response level more likely to be fully utilised than do others. To an extent significantly greater than is, for example, the case for compulsory basic and continuing education, *national and local public expenditure on early childhood care and education tends to be a political response to what are perceived as the current socially dominant values surrounding women, children and the family*. These values are in most countries in a state of flux, as we have already noted.

It is likely that provision for ECCE will be accorded a higher priority than would be expected from the formulation above if the decision-makers can be convinced that, by so doing, other socially dominant values can also be served. In other words, if expenditure on ECCE is seen as likely to result in an enhanced return on expenditure considered essential on, for example, secondary education or in a saving in expenditure on social welfare services, it will be given more resources than would otherwise have been the case. The difficulty here is that such probabilities are extremely hard to establish: this is why the share of national (or regional, or local) economic resources made available for many health, educational and social services—of which ECCE is but an example—is most usually determined on a ‘social value’ basis within the current philosophy, and in response to politically-convincing evidence of popular unsatisfied demand.

That ‘unsatisfied demand’ can however be interpreted and mediated by administrators and other officials does mean that their personal convictions about the *long-term* contribution of early childhood services can be of crucial importance in determining the amount of economic support that is made available at government level.

Quantity and quality

This short section is intended as a link between our attempt to face with realism the likelihood that the growth of demand for ECCE

will be more rapid than that of the economic capacity which is at all likely to be available to meet it, and the next section on criteria for service provision.

It will be short mainly because I want only to remind ourselves of the 'obvious' that is all-too-often not as obvious as it should be. First, in any stable economy the use of public funds for any service with potential demand *must* have a limit; second, given that necessity for a limit it follows that *quantity will be a function of quality in cost terms*, third—that being so—the way to maximise quantity without lowering quality standards must involve an optimum blend of expensive necessities (such as professional staff) with low-cost elements (such as simple buildings and equipment), voluntary effort (such as parent and community self-help involvement) and efficient administrative structures.

The planner, although operating within constraints, does have room to manoeuvre, but the amount of room at his disposal will clearly be affected by social and political determinants outside his direct control. So he has to be in a position to indicate what action by others would be effective. It will I hope become quite clear in the remainder of the main body of this booklet what that 'action by others' needs to be, and in the Appendix that there are in existence relevant examples of such actions being taken.

We turn now to examine this question of quality, which has in recent years become ever more hotly debated in the 'better-off' countries as demand—especially for full-day care—has risen rapidly, and as the world-wide economic recession has had inevitably adverse effects—even in those countries—on the amount and distribution of public spending.

Criteria for provision

We are here concerned with five main topics where the question of standards must be faced. These are (1) the physical provisions, including equipment; (2) the size of units and of groups within them; (3) the ratio of staff to children, including the ratio of trained/untrained staff; (4) the training of staff and (5) voluntary effort. In approaching this whole area of discussion it is essential to recognise from the very outset that a variety of strategies are theoretically at our disposal. One familiar to everybody is to state an ideal or target to which all long-term planning should be directed.

A second is almost the opposite: state minimally acceptable standards and insist that in *no* circumstances should provision below such minima be given recognition and financial support at all.

As in any comparable field, within education or elsewhere, the 'ideal' strategy is quite understandably the one most likely to find favour with those professionally involved—not, it must be stressed, solely or even mainly because of self-interest considerations. Anyone who has been trained to a high professional standard is likely to hold sincerely the view that 'nothing but the best will do', at least as a long-term target. The 'minimally-acceptable' strategy is likely to be supported by those whose over-riding concern is to meet the perceived need for service to the greatest possible extent as quickly as possible, while at the same time recognising the simple fact that some minimal standards must be set and achieved if the need is to be 'met' in any sense other than that of 'crisis' or 'emergency'.

If the earlier consideration of what I have called the 'related relationship' between the demand/supply and the quantity/quality issues has been at all useful, it will come as no surprise that I now largely reject both these extreme strategies. This rejection is however not to result in the advocacy of what I would myself regard as a 'weak compromise' somewhere in the middle. It seems clear to me that in a booklet which IIEP hopes will be useful to responsible people in many countries round the world, a salient characteristic must be practical realism. Such realism must involve an attempt to *combine what is desirable with what may be practicable though unsatisfactory in widely-varying circumstances*. It is this combination which will guide my approach to this question of criteria for ECCE services.

(1) *Physical provision*. This is an excellent topic with which to start because it serves at once as an illustration of what has just been said. What is required under this heading is manifestly affected by climatic conditions, with the result that relatively expensive buildings will be necessary in high-altitude settings even in the tropical and sub-tropical areas, while at lower altitudes in those same areas unit cost can be very low indeed by comparison with what is regarded as necessary in northern Europe or in most of North America. This recognised, it is worth noting that where local conditions do make relatively high-cost buildings necessary, good quality in construction and equipment, with consequently lower

maintenance costs, can be expected to lengthen the period over which the original capital input can be amortised.

So far as buildings are concerned we should direct our attention principally to design questions, and within these mainly to lay-out and the use of available interior and exterior areas. For ECCE purposes, we need to specify (a) both large and small interior units, (b) generous outside areas, and (c) plenty of storage space for equipment and materials. Large areas—both interior and exterior—are needed because healthy young children are naturally active, and because cramped conditions result in the necessity for over-control of the normally-active older ones in the interests of their less active age-mates and of younger children. The other positive reason for large areas—especially but not only those inside the building—is to provide as much flexibility as possible for the staff and helpers to work with small groups on different activities at the same time. The small interior areas are needed for quiet activities in supervised groups, for recovery when individual children are temporarily but not seriously hurt, ill or emotionally upset, and for a staff-room which can also be used for talking with parents.

In many dense urban areas it may be very difficult or even quite impossible to obtain adequate interior floor-area on one level, or to have the outdoor area large enough or even for it to be available at all on the premises. With some alterations and ingenuity on the part of the staff, a two-level building can be very serviceable, but the complete absence of an adjacent or nearby outside area poses a more serious problem, to which local solutions have to be found in terms of conducted daily 'outings' on foot to a park or other open space.

The equipment and fittings of the building will depend largely on three factors: whether the provision is of full-day care-and-education, whether it covers the under-threes as well as those between three and school age, and whether or not it is adjacent to—or part of a complex involving—other early childhood services such as health and nutrition. For example, full-day provision for the full age-range will require cooking equipment (and staff) unless such resources are readily available nearby on a shared basis. This can be contrasted with the simpler requirements of a unit offering half-day kindergarten education to over-threes only.

As we turn from such fixed equipment to the characteristically movable educational equipment we also need to be reminded of the

purpose and methods of early childhood education and the ways in which these differ from those of primary education. The *purpose*—along with the care element, whether part-day or full-day—is to complement and extend the pattern of informal education that is being provided in the domestic setting. In some social circumstances this ‘complementing and extending’ must involve also a ‘compensatory’ intention if the rapidly-developing young child is to receive overall a pattern of stimulation, appropriate both in quality and quantity, which will enable him to reach school age without serious intellectual or emotional handicap. It is *not* the purpose of early childhood education to anticipate the work and aims of the primary school by any teaching of such basic educational skills as reading, writing and the manipulation of number.

The *methods* of early childhood education are essentially informal and capable of utilising to the child’s advantage as ‘materials’ and sources of appropriate stimulation almost everything that the immediate natural and man-made environment provides without charge. This means that relatively little commercially manufactured ‘educational equipment’ is needed, provided the trained staff-members are ready to improvise and are capable of winning the practical co-operation and assistance of adults in the community with basic skills. Costs can then be reduced to those involved in the purchase of suitable raw materials. A familiar good example of this is the ‘climbing frame’—a three-dimensional framework of uprights, cross-pieces and platforms—which when stoutly constructed and suitably placed enables remarkably young children safely to develop co-ordination of their large-muscle skills and balance, and to acquire a well-founded self-confidence. Similarly, a great many of the small ‘toys’ used to stimulate and assist the development of problem-solving skills can be made locally, whether for payment or free on a helping basis, if the raw materials are provided. If financial resources permit, it is however desirable that appropriate and well-made picture and other books be purchased in adequate quantity and variety for use by staff and helpers in their work with individual children and small groups.

(2) *The size of units and groups.* Long experience on the part of trained teachers and the work of developmental psychologists has produced the strong consensus that ‘the younger the children, the smaller must be the size of group and the higher the ratio of staff

to children'. As a guideline one should aim at *group* sizes (within units) not exceeding six children under 2 years of age, twelve children for the 3-year olds, and twenty-five thereafter. The size of a *unit* will vary as a function of the number and age-mixture of groups within it in relation to the amount and distribution of available space, but it would rarely be desirable to exceed a maximum capacity of about 100-125 children even in densely-populated urban settings. In less dense urban areas or in rural settings this maximum can frequently be set at about 40, having regard to the need for ECCE units to be essentially local.

These figures may seem surprisingly low to those unfamiliar with early childhood education, but the limits are set by the necessity to maintain an informal learning atmosphere while still accepting and encouraging spontaneity and adventurousness. If the size of unit becomes too large, the proper activities of one or more groups within it can become highly distracting for those in other groups of different ages: if the size of groups is too large relative to the age-related needs and characteristics of the children within them, individual children—especially those who are quieter, less confident and less physically active—are likely to be affected adversely, or at least not to benefit from group activity.

(3) *The ratio of staff to children.* As indicated earlier in the introduction to this section on criteria, this topic involves not only the absolute number of staff desirable for a given number of children, but also the ratio within the total staff of trained to untrained. Just above, when introducing the topic of unit and group size, I quoted as a consensus judgment that 'the younger the children... the higher (must be) the ratio of staff to children.' It is at once apparent that where financial resources—for whatever reason or combination of reasons—are markedly inadequate for a service provision appropriate to the actual demand, the conflict between quantity and quality becomes acute, and that we are now looking at the most vulnerable aspect of the latter.

Without needing to identify the countries concerned, I can cite examples from the European scene which indicate the range of options currently in use. At one extreme, we have a country in which quantity is fairly vigorously subordinated to quality, at least in part-day ECCE for the over-threes. In the same country, supply bears little or no relation to known demand for full-day ECCE from

birth to school age, but in spite of the grossly inadequate quantity of provision, the quality in terms of trained staff is also far from satisfactory. In another country the solution has been adopted of insisting on closely-controlled national standards of qualification for trained staff, but then allowing the ratio of children to staff to rise so high that the informality and spontaneity so essential to early childhood education are simply not possible of achievement—the over-loaded highly-trained teacher is obliged to resort to a more formal and controlled method, in order to cope with so many young children single-handed. Against this background, what kind of ratios would be regarded as minimally acceptable if we are to continue this discussion in terms of early childhood care-and-education, rather than in terms of ‘custodial care with little or no appropriate educational content’? The short answer is *one fully-trained and one other staff member per group of children, using the age-related maximum group sizes given in (2) above*. It is of course desirable that the ‘other staff member’ should if possible have received *some* appropriate training.

Before facing the implications of this conclusion, let us look at what we mean by ‘fully-trained’ in the ECCE field.

(4) *The training of staff*. There is an unfortunate tradition in the history of the early childhood care and education movement, to which we shall have occasion to refer again in the next chapter when considering a structure for service provision. For the moment we are concerned only with one of its consequences. This involved the assumption that during the first two or even three years of life a child when in the day-care of anyone other than its natural mother (or woman relative, or neighbour) should be in the custody of a trained nurse, but that during the years remaining before entering primary school the custodian could—or even should—be a trained kindergarten teacher. This dual tradition has of course been exported to many parts of the world during the colonial era.

From what was said before (in Chapter I) about the closely-woven relationship between care and education, it will come as no surprise when I advocate—as I do now—the adoption of an essentially integrated approach to staff training in the ECCE field. Fortunately, during the past five years such an approach has been in process of active development within the framework of major changes in both Finland and Sweden. Consequent upon the passing

into law of the Finnish Child Care Act, 1973, which abolished the distinction between 'day care' and 'kindergarten education', steps were taken towards an eventual unification of the professional training required for staff in all 'day-care centres', which would in future cover the full age-range 0-6 years. The most recent information concerning this approach will be found in the Appendix, at p. 95.

If—as is likely—the reader is considering the development of ECCE services in a country which already has an established system of staff training on the dual basis, serious consideration should be given to the possibility of eventual integration. But meanwhile steps could be taken to provide short in-service courses for nurses and for kindergarten teachers in which each group would be introduced to the more important of the skills and attitudes required by the duties of the other group. The very attempt to do this would result in a re-examination of the curriculum and syllabus in each case and in a potentially fruitful exchange of experience and views.

The 'common core' of training for all those working with children in a care-and-education setting during the period from birth to compulsory school-age must be *developmental* in approach. I have indicated what this involves in the section on *The needs of the young child* in Chapter I, and I hope also made clear that good physical care, however skilled and necessary, is by itself inadequate. This is every bit as true for the 0-3 group as for the older children. Unfortunately all this has in many—perhaps most—countries around the world not yet been fully appreciated by those responsible for planning the services, or the staffs of training institutions, most of whom have never been assisted towards a change of attitude through a 'refresher course' since their own training took place many years ago. An encouraging example of progress in the European setting is to be found in the fact that the French *puericultrice*, who used to specialise in the field of infant health, now has a more comprehensive training in psychology and education, in order better to perform her task on a sectoral basis, working both with families and as the director of a group of crèches and maternity and child welfare centres.

By now, it will have become almost painfully obvious that whatever combination of part-day and full-day ECCE provision appears necessary if a particular country is to meet popular demand as it

grows, *and* progressively to improve the future educational and occupational prospects of its pre-school-aged children, is simply going to be too expensive if wholly institutionalised in day centres or units. This has been the experience even of the most educationally and socially progressive of the economically-developed countries, and most are by now wrestling with the problems of alternative forms of provision in which acceptable standards can nevertheless be maintained. The supplementary model gaining widespread recognition and support is the *supervised family day-care system*, which can be community-based or private or a mixture of both.

The essential feature of such a system is the employment—by the community or by other mothers on a private-payment basis—of a mother with her own young children whose home is capable of accommodating during the day a number of other children in the pre-school age group. The most usual limit is about five children, including her own children below school age, and it is customary to prescribe a minimum age (such as 3 years) unless it is wholly a ‘toddlers group’ (1 to 2+ years). For such a scheme to be regarded as minimally satisfactory it should involve not only a prior inspection of the home from the point of view of safety and hygiene, but the ability and willingness of the receiving mother to undergo a short part-time training course, on developmental lines but including the basic elements of home nursing and first aid; and supervision at reasonably frequent but irregularly-timed intervals by someone fully trained and experienced in care-and-education work with this age-group. It is desirable that suitable basic equipment and play materials be provided on a loan or rental basis by the community service responsible for the scheme, and essential that supervisors be not overloaded in terms of travel and/or the number of homes for which they are responsible. Community-based schemes are preferable to supervised private arrangements, not least because control of the amount charged for the service becomes possible. Among other considerations this also maximises equal opportunity among the potential users of the local scheme.

Clearly, even at its best—with all criteria reasonably well met—the family day-care scheme cannot hope except in rare instances to equal the quality of ECCE provision to be found in a properly-staffed unit. But it *can* be, though all too often it is not, a minimally-acceptable arrangement which is at least more satisfactory from the child’s point of view than is the traditional child-minder, un-

trained and unsupervised—and frequently unregistered by any community-based authority whatever.

(5) *Voluntary effort.* No serious consideration of strategy could have been complete without more than passing reference to the part that can and should be played by organised voluntary effort. This could have found a place in our examination of the determinants of supply, but it seemed better to confine that to 'official' supply using national economic resources. Now that we have faced the consequences of applying reasonable criteria for the provision of ECCE services with official support via both day units and family day-care systems, it is at once apparent that any plans to supplement such provisions through the organisation of voluntary effort will also encounter the 'criteria question'.

So far as children in the age-group with which we are dealing are concerned, one major source of 'voluntary effort' is of course mothers who are not themselves in *full-time* paid outside employment, and are therefore potentially available for participation in locally-based co-operative self-help schemes. A notable example of this is to be found in New Zealand in the playcentre movement. Such centres are operated by parents who have been trained for this work and by other parents all of whom are expected to help, on a regular part-time basis. Their remuneration, if any, is nominal and is decided locally. The necessary organisation is provided by 22 local playcentre associations which belong to the New Zealand Playcentre Federation, through which state support is channelled by the Ministry of Education. The age-range covered is 2½ years to school entry (effectively at 5 years, though the compulsory age is 6). The whole movement is covered by official detailed standards, for the observance of which the local associations are made responsible, with monitoring by the Ministry of Education's fieldworkers (who also cover all public kindergartens). An indication of these standards is the specification of one supervisor, one assistant and two mother-helpers to 30 children.

The whole ECCE situation in New Zealand is however characterised by a predominantly *part-day* demand: no playcentre mother can get more than nine hours free time per week by her child's attendance—and when she has fulfilled her own obligations as a mother-helper and in other ways, it will be considerably less. It would clearly be very much more difficult to organise, provide

financial support for, and monitor a large-scale essentially voluntary or self-help equivalent to meet demand for full-day care and education. This is recognised in New Zealand by the fact that responsibility for this type of (very limited) provision is under the Ministry of Social Welfare, with advisory assistance from the Ministry of Education.

(6) *The 'training' of parents.* No reader will have been surprised to find 'the training of staff' included among the criteria for provision, but our attempt to examine under that same general heading the possible contribution of voluntary effort has brought us to the part played by trained mothers. It has long been realised that human mothers and fathers are not usually fully equipped by natural endowment to fulfil their rôles, however impressive may be the performance of their counterparts in other species. But whereas thirty years ago any serious suggestion of education or training for parenthood or family life was greeted with scorn by most people in Europe and North America, the situation today is quite otherwise: it is very exhilarating to have been a pioneer.

In the OECD report¹ from which quotations have been taken previously, I observed that

...it becomes necessary—a necessity all too often unnoticed or evaded—to consider what happens or fails to happen in the non-institutional 'day-care' situation of *the home*. Obviously this can and does offer the full spectrum of physical care from the extremes of grossly inadequate (or worse) to pampered, and that of emotional response from negative or cold to cloying sentimentality... we must complete the picture by considering the possible variation in the nature and extent of 'educational' activity provided by the home situation. Once again the full spectrum is available...

A few pages later (p. 52) this led me directly to suggest the possibility that a breakthrough on this question may have come

...with the wide publicity accorded to the principal positive findings from evaluation studies of Project Headstart in the USA. These showed that the programmes of which the effects 'held up' into the primary school were those involving home visiting and sustained

1. *op. cit.*, p. 48.

interaction with the parents. These findings were reinforced by the success of Gordon¹ in using 'disadvantaged women' as parent educators of 'indigent mothers' of infants and young children in Florida, USA... The new developments ...signal a belated recognition of the fact that *adequate ECCE provision must include the ECCE performance of the parents*... (my present emphasis)

We shall return to this vital question later, when considering the tactics of seeking parental involvement.

1. Gordon, Ira J., "Early child stimulation through parent education", in *Readings in research in developmental psychology*, London, Scott Foresman, 1971.

IV. Realistic tactics

Introduction

It seems useful to open this chapter by summarising what we have found out so far, observing as we do so some of the policy implications, and thus laying a foundation for both objectives and approach.

We have found that:

(a). Education starts very soon after birth, and is consequently provided—at first usually unintentionally—by the ambience of the intimate family circle, and then by interaction with wider circles of family, neighbours and community.

(b). The basic needs of young children are for physical and emotional security, and for a quantity and quality of perceptual and intellectual stimulation appropriate to their age. Only rarely, even in potentially favourable circumstances, are these needs fully met in the natural milieu described.

(c). This means that efforts to maximise equality of educational opportunity at the point of entry to primary school are several years too late.

(d). The principal purpose of organised early childhood education is therefore to complement and supplement the education provided by life at home and in the community.

(e). This purpose can be achieved by part-day attendance at a centre which in respect of accommodation, equipment and adequacy of trained and other staff meets criteria which have achieved international acceptance. These criteria can if necessary all be met relatively economically in a variety of circumstances, except for the provision of trained staff in adequate numbers.

(f). Growth in the proportion of mothers of young children who, especially in urban areas, obtain full-time paid employment at a distance from the family home has in many countries created a demand for full-day care.

(g). This demand has not been fully met in most of the economically-developed countries, and to the extent that it has, involves a predominantly custodial approach with inadequate educational content of the kind described above. For the young children concerned this can and usually does result in an overall failure to meet their basic need for 'a quantity and quality of perceptual and intellectual stimulation appropriate to their age', and puts many of them at risk so far as their need for emotional security is concerned. This risk is greater for the very young children, and can be minimised by stable attachment to a very small number of caretakers, preferably only one in the age group 0-3 years.

(h). The distinction between 'care' and 'education' has been internationally recognised as artificial, since all early childhood 'care' necessarily involves an 'educational' experience for the child (even if this is negative) and all early childhood 'education' provision necessarily involves a substantial element of 'care'. It is therefore sound practice to think of—and to plan—early childhood care and education (ECCE).

(i). Given that in any stable national economy there must be an upper limit on public expenditure for ECCE, the quantity of provision available must be to a large extent a function of quality. The higher the proportion there is (in the total provision) of full-day ECCE, the more likely is it that quality will suffer in favour of quantity, because (i) full-day good quality provision in centres is expensive; (ii) it is difficult to maintain a good educational input if supervised family day-care schemes are substituted; and (iii) volun-

tary (self-help) ECCE with community supervision and support is very difficult to recruit on a full-day basis.

(j). The provision of ECCE—by whatever combination of means which involve public funding or support at any level—is *exceptionally* dependent on the prevailing social and political philosophy in each country, and on politically-convincing evidence of public demand. These will determine the priority accorded to it within the framework of economic conditions and the rates of urbanisation and industrial development.

These ten points must govern our thought and action in any realistic but worthwhile approach to ECCE planning.

Clear objectives, simple structure

Objectives. In the Introduction to this booklet, I said that in this chapter I would ‘make a determined effort to imagine myself faced with the task of formulating policy for the provision of early childhood care and education in a country with little or no large-scale experience in this domain, yet caught up in the strong currents of technological development and social change.’ This task I now attempt, conscious that in the interests of clarity I must oversimplify, yet also that planners in many countries will *not* start with a clean sheet of paper in front of them.

An illuminating historical example of the ‘clear objective’ is that given to the USA Congress by President John F. Kennedy: ‘We shall land a man on the moon within this decade’. Taking some encouragement from the fact that most of his hearers regarded such an objective as impossible of achievement, let us stay as close to that clarity and brevity as we possibly can, despite the vast differences in subject, circumstances and appeal to the imagination. So—the *overall objective* could be stated briefly

— To maximise the chances of all children that they will reach the age of entry to primary schooling physically, emotionally and intellectually fit and ready to benefit fully from it.

Serving this overall objective, the *secondary objectives* might read

— To make part-day and full-day care-and-education available to all pre-school-aged children needing such provision, and

— To ensure that the provision is of such a quality as to promote

the child's development physically, emotionally and intellectually to an extent greater than would usually be achieved by the unaided efforts of the home upbringing.

To go beyond this—or something like it—would I believe decrease the intended clarity and increase the likelihood of misperception of what the government had in mind. The details can be spelled out later, quite possibly as part of the description of various 'modes of delivery' that may be proposed.

Structure. When considering the question of staff training in the previous chapter (pp. 42-45) reference was made to a widespread tradition of dividing responsibility for ECCE provision and supervision. There are in fact three main structural models which I have described elsewhere¹ in the following terms:

The first model involves a division of responsibility between ministries which is based on *age*, though there may be some overlap. Usually the age-group from birth (or 6 weeks, or 6 months) to 2½ or 3 years is the responsibility of a ministry of health and/or social welfare: the older group—up to compulsory school age—comes under the ministry of education (and/or science, culture). In both sectors both part-time and full-time provision will be found: the former may be part-day or sessional (e.g., two days per week) and the latter may in fact be only the full school day, with or without provision for coverage before and after school hours and during lunchtime . . .

The second model also divides the responsibility between ministries, but this time on a *functional* rather than on a predominantly age basis. In this, the ministry of health and/or social welfare is responsible for full-day care from birth (or soon after) to compulsory school age, and the ministry of education for part-day, sessional or full school day provision in nursery school or kindergarten for the age group from about two or three years to compulsory school age. It is thus a partially dual system in parallel . . .

The third model is *unitary*; one ministry is responsible for all ECCE from birth to compulsory school age . . . no distinction is made between provision of 'care' and 'education' at any age, and close co-operation between ministries of health, welfare and education is provided for under the relevant law, even though for cabinet and

1. In the OECD report, op. cit., p. 39.

administrative convenience the overall responsibility is entrusted to one ministry. . .

It is my conviction that the best interests of the young child, his parents and family, and of the state are most likely to be advanced by the adoption of a unitary structure, and there is little doubt that it is the preferred model even on the economic grounds that efficient use of inevitably limited resources will be maximised. The recent (1977) report¹ of a joint working party set up by the two national associations representing local government in England had this to say:

Local government frequently finds itself unable to do what it wishes because, nationally, systems and attitudes remain too rigid and inflexible; this is particularly so with the under-fives where there is a clear division between the responsibilities of the Department (Ministry) of Education and Science (DES) and the Department (Ministry) of Health and Social Security (DHSS) and where national salary agreements and conditions of service reflect the different areas of influence of the two central departments. . .

The failure of the DES and DHSS hitherto to work together in the interests of young children is a major obstacle to changes in the pattern of service. There has been but little evidence of effective co-ordination. . .

Although, sadly, there seems little prospect in the United Kingdom of an early change to a unitary structure, readers in countries where one or other of the two 'dual' models is already in existence should not be discouraged from efforts to persuade their compatriots to think again. What can be achieved by Finland and Sweden can be achieved elsewhere in the world.

Understanding and acceptance

The reference in the first sentence of the quotation from the English report to 'attitudes' was in the context of administration and professional activity, but we would be very unwise to confine our attention to those areas, important as they are. If government in any country wishes to initiate, reform or extend ECCE provision it must win

1. *Under fives*, London, Assoc. of County Councils/Assoc. of Metropolitan Authorities, 1977, p. 11.

understanding and acceptance, of the needs and of the proposed plans for meeting them, from the community at large. After the world-wide experience of trying to deliver effective and desperately-needed services in the health and nutrition fields, this hardly requires saying. But I *am* saying it, because the needs to which ECCE provisions are directed are likely to be even less well understood by regional and local administrators, political figures and other persons of influence—or by ordinary members of the community, including in many countries the best educated and most progressive.

As a 1976 Unesco report¹ realistically noted (p. 6)

Where there are problems of over-population, insufficient food, inadequate hygiene, widespread disease, lack of basic education and limited material and human resources, it is unlikely that much attention will be directed towards improving the quality of the educational environment for the child.

The report went on later (p. 8) to put forward some very practical suggestions highly relevant to our immediate concern. These included:

- The need to convince administrators, politicians, policy-makers, health, nutrition, social service and other staff, and the general public, of the immense—indeed crucial—importance of the period of development 0-6 years;
- The need to infiltrate accurate knowledge of early child development in such existing programmes as health and welfare, adult literacy, family planning and home economics training, at school or elsewhere;
- The economic use not only of human resources such as professional, para-professional and community leaders in participant forms of activity and involvement but also the use of the social and cultural resources of the community. All these must be supported where necessary in government action;
- The importance of at least a simple training in the understanding of the needs of young children, for all workers who come into contact with families, and for in-service training of field staff. Special attention needs to be paid to the development of social skills involved in working with parents and other adults;

1. *Final report, meeting on pre-school education as the first phase of life-long education* (Ed-76) CONF.608/Col.9 (mimeo), Paris, Unesco, 1976, 9 p.

- Such training, and the information given to parents, involves two things: the development of that small but vital corpus of firm and generalisable knowledge about the development and growth tasks of young children; and its translation into a series of strategies *which work with and do not violate the local culture.* (my emphasis)

The transition to the primary school. Experience in the economically-developed countries is now unanimous in identifying a highly critical point at which ‘understanding and acceptance’ for the aims and methods of an ECCE programme must be won. This is at the point of entry to the school system at the accepted minimum or legally compulsory age in each country. We here face problems arising from what in many countries—even those that regard themselves as in educational matters ‘advanced’—is a basic conflict between the philosophy, curriculum and methods of the conventional primary school on the one hand, and those of the nursery school/kindergarten sector on the other. This conflict obviously can—and does—affect the children passing from one ‘climate’ to the other, because they find the abrupt change discouraging or even in some cases emotionally disturbing.

But in any country where there is an intention on the part of the government—at national, regional or local level—to develop ECCE services of the kind and quality we have been considering, it will be *essential to obtain in advance* the readiness of administrators, principals and teachers in the primary school system to see the advantages for *their* work of such provision. My point here is perhaps best made by recalling that, in one small-scale Swedish ‘action experiment’ at county level, the major thrust was to encourage methodological co-operation by creating a local organisational framework which could bring teachers from the two traditions together, so that they could recognise and examine their methodological differences. In this way, the experimenters sought to make possible a reduction in the discontinuities experienced by the children as they ‘crossed the bridge’.

In terms of our present approach to ‘tactics’, what is attempted and achieved mainly on behalf of the children is also necessary in terms of winning the support—even enthusiasm—of those in the primary school system for our ECCE plans in that community.

Local involvement, national support

It is perfectly possible—and has in fact been done more than once—to draft a national plan for the provision of early childhood care and education in clear outline terms, and to have it enacted by the parliament, national assembly or congress of the country concerned, leaving the details to be dealt with under that Act by means of regulations based on the work of subsequent commissions and working parties. Provided such an outline enactment makes explicit the principles which will determine the provision of central government financial commitment within the framework of the country's budgetary system, such an approach has much to recommend it.

One important feature of national planning has already been emphasised: the necessity for a commitment which is 'both long-range and time-bound and... reasonably assured of the resources needed.' For most of the countries to whose evolving requirements and possibilities of meeting them this booklet is addressed, this dictum can indeed bear repetition. But as will have long since become apparent, part of the realism which I have endeavoured to display myself, and to communicate the need for to others, concerns the special dependence, for reasons both of acceptance and of economic feasibility, which ECCE has upon *local involvement*. Given a long-range national plan, based on a unitary central structure, which specifically requires the close co-operation at national and all lower levels of the relevant ministries and departments, what must be worked out, planned co-operatively, made possible and brought to reality at community level? Let us first use a few specific factors as a way of exploring this question: there is no need to attribute any order of importance or difficulty to them for this purpose, but we can note that any or all of them could be relevant *within* a single country.

Climate. We noted earlier, when considering criteria for buildings, that climatic conditions—sometimes related to altitude—can make a considerable difference to the amount of provision that can be made for the same capital expenditure. It is obvious that this provides an excellent opportunity for the application of local knowledge and skills, including the use of designs and materials which are appropriate and economical. But here we must not overlook the impact on what is possible of another factor:

Rural or urban. In urban settings it is more likely that considerations related to health and safety will have necessitated building standards and regulations which would not be so essential in a rural setting with the same climate. So people in the rural areas will have greater freedom to improvise and to achieve relatively low-cost solutions, especially as with low population density their building target is likely to involve smaller units, but more of them, in order to keep the provision as close to the homes as possible.

Relation to other services. We come now to a factor which, while connected with both those just discussed, is of a different nature because it operates at a secondary rather than a basic level. It is not at all unusual to find two adjacent communities, whether in a rural or an urban setting, in which the pattern of response to various public services differs sharply. In one community, for example, there may be much greater readiness to accept, use and promote the extension of health and nutrition services than of educational provision: next door, so to speak, the reverse may be the case.

This means that sometimes a national plan to provide or extend what is at that level regarded as an essential service may have a greater chance of success in some areas if it 'rides on the back' of another service for which it has been established there is a good deal of local support. So in the field of early childhood services it may sometimes be locally more sensible to make the health clinic the 'horse', while in other areas the day care-and-education unit may take on that rôle with health services as the 'rider'. Such an approach would clearly be in line with the tactics advocated in a 1976 WHO report¹:

In many countries school teachers are the most numerous category of available worker at the Community level and can provide an excellent entry point for the improvement of health ... In other situations, domestic development workers, members of voluntary agencies, agricultural extension officers, women's groups or other local organizations may be used to advance community health care and health-related activities.

These suggestions underline the importance of a broad and inter-sectoral approach to community involvement and emphasize the

1. "New trends and approaches in the delivery of maternal and child care in health services", *Technical report series*, No. 600, Geneva, WHO, 1976, p. 51.

need for intersectoral training of personnel working at the community level. Efforts that have been reasonably successful reveal the importance of a national will and commitment to integrated rural development.

This brings us naturally to the whole question of integrated or very closely-co-ordinated service provision, to which the next main section of this chapter will be devoted.

But meanwhile let us continue with the question of local involvement in the development of ECCE provisions. Clearly a good deal must depend on the political and administrative structure of each country, and this in turn on the traditional and current social philosophies on which this structure is based. In some countries the current philosophy places much more emphasis on devolution of decision-making to local communities than is the case in other countries; but it has been a source of increasing comment during the past decade that even in countries with the most centralised patterns of government, questions relating to young children and the family require special treatment. For example, in a special article in *The Times* (London) of 21 May 1976 entitled 'Elevating the status of motherhood in Poland', it was reported that

... the authorities are well aware of the problem. Maternal care and family life are now officially favoured. The time is long past when it was believed that children should be cared for in state institutions, which anyway are insufficient to meet demand. Researchers have found that children who have more direct contact with their mothers in the first three or four years of life develop faster and have better health than those who spend long periods in nurseries. The party congress last December promised to "consolidate the social respect for women as mothers and homemakers" and a new course has been introduced in schools to provide instruction in how to run a household and care for children.

Acceptance and support for the national political and social philosophy may be wholehearted and enthusiastic, but there can nevertheless be passive or active resistance to centrally-initiated ECCE plans, which can be avoided or overcome only by involving parents and others at local levels of discussion. This discussion may lead to significant variations in the 'model' proposed at national level before progress in its local implementation can be achieved. Such variations may be related to perceptions of need for that

service, or to the relative scale on which component parts of it are wanted at that time. It is, for example, no use trying to provide a standard pattern of part- and full-day provision for fixed proportions of the very young (say 0-3 years) and the older age-groups. The resulting response has sometimes been unused space and equipment, side by side with overcrowding and unmet demand.

While it is thus important to avoid waste and misapplication of available national resources, it is highly likely that if ECCE is to be made generally available in many of the economically less-developed areas, a good deal will depend on state-supported self-help schemes and on the ingenious use of local resources of materials, skills and effort. One way of stimulating this is to set up 'action experiments' in various parts of the country, region or area, and then to use these as places to which potential 'activators' can be enabled to come from other places for 'training' by exposure and 'good infection'. Such 'action experiments' should not, however, be envisaged as 'models' to be copied slavishly, and it is of vital importance to ensure that they are not so perceived, either by those in charge of them or by those who visit and work in them before returning to their own areas and situations. It is with this in mind that the Appendix which follows this chapter is entitled 'Examples, not models'.

Once again we in the ECCE field can learn from the hard-won experience of colleagues in another field, and attention must be drawn to a report¹ for the 1977 UNICEF-WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy, based on case studies on community involvement in primary health care in nine countries. No less than twelve factors were there identified and discussed as having proved 'favourable to community participation': these included the following:

- Specific government policies to encourage community participation were found to enhance the extent and depth of participation;
- Maximal community participation was achieved when limited local resources were complemented by external resources, especially those provided by the government;
- Specific government programmes for rural and urban development

1. *Community involvement in primary health care: a study of the process of community motivation and continued participation*, Report JC 21/Unicef-WHO/77.2, Rev.2, Geneva, WHO, 1977, p. 50 *et seq.*

- were found to favour community involvement in primary health activities;
- Government administrative decentralization and regional planning appears to have given an impetus to community participation;
 - The ability of the community to generate activities and participate in them was dependent upon the availability of and the extent to which local resources could be mobilized (these were listed as leaders, personnel, financing and materials);
 - Projects and activities where children were the immediate beneficiaries were used as a starting-point for further community efforts.
 - Development programmes in specific sectors have served as an entry point for the introduction of comprehensive programmes, which have encouraged community participation in wider development activities;
 - Non-governmental organization provided channels for community participation.

Integration and co-ordination

We must now return to the question of 'delivery' models (to be distinguished from 'structural' models). Even with a unitary structure for ECCE at national level which provides explicitly for the contributions to be expected from various central ministries and departments, it will be necessary for effective delivery in circumstances which will inevitably vary—sometimes radically—within a single country, to provide at local level for either integration or very close co-ordination of early childhood and family services and support systems. But the variation in circumstances clearly implies that *no one model* for service delivery and support can be advocated here, and that this will continue to be the case *within* each country as well as internationally.

This question of essential coordination has been approached from the health side by WHO in the technical report (No. 613)¹ from which we quoted earlier:

In order to improve co-ordination between departments at a national level so that all needs of children, including psychosocial needs, are met it is suggested that a co-ordinating committee should be designated in every country. In countries with a federal system of

1, op cit., p. 59.

government, this committee should function at the state or provincial level... Its basic function should be to review regularly the needs of children. It would ensure that the needs of particular groups are being met... consider the need for new legislation... and assist in formulating national policies affecting children... It is desirable that such a committee should not be too large if it is to function effectively. Criteria for selecting members should be explicitly based on the needs of children rather than on different professional groups.

I am not myself optimistic about the probable impact of such co-ordinating committees, necessary though they may be, *unless they are initiated by government at cabinet level and have the full public support of the relevant ministers of state*. That is why I earlier drew attention to the fact that both the Finnish and Swedish unitary models for ECCE provision have the rôles of the various ministries involved actually specified in the Act or in regulations derived from it. Six years of quarterly meetings of a United Kingdom interdepartmental co-ordinating committee for the under-fives produced no 'striking evidence of central co-ordination between the two Departments of State'. The fragmentation, disposal, overlap and administrative duplication which characterises the provision of family and early childhood services in some economically-advanced countries is a 'luxury' that they should be encouraged to keep to themselves—or eliminate.

What must be said unequivocally is that in countries facing daunting problems of economic and technological development, the case for working out at local level—with national and regional advice and support—a viable delivery model for integrated or closely-co-ordinated ECCE and family services and support is unanswerable, in terms of scarce resources of both finance and trained personnel. This case is then positively strengthened on tactical grounds by the simple fact that such a 'delivery system' is much more likely to be fully used—in all its aspects—than is one which requires mothers and young children to deal with a variety, sometimes bewildering, of agencies and individuals. We can without reservation endorse the recommendation of a Unesco meeting of experts¹ in 1974 which read:

1. *Final report, meeting of experts on the psychological development of children and implications for the educational process*. (ED-74/CONF.623/8) (mimeo), Paris, Unesco, 1974, p. 13.

...that countries co-ordinate the services provided under their health, welfare and educational agencies. This should be done not only at the national level but it should also be implemented at the lowest political unit where possible. *At the local level, it is hoped that this co-ordination will take the form of child-parent service centres.* These centres would provide, at whatever level of assistance possible, support to the family and child during the pre-natal, post-natal and childhood years in the areas of health, welfare and education. (my emphasis)

The emphasised proposal is spelled out by a UK expert¹ of international standing, known for his highly practical approach to the problems of providing early childhood services, in a contribution to a 1976 conference on low-cost day provision for the under-fives, when he said

More generally, expansion could I believe best take place through the development of integrated nursery centres offering medical services, and education and full and part-time day care as desired by parents—with parent participation and involvement. Such centres should serve small communities. To them could be attached smaller ‘satellite’ centres of a domestic type, and perhaps day foster-homes for which they could provide advice and back-up services.

Parent, services and the community

We have been brought back, in what I trust is a reasonably logical manner, to the parents, most of whom we noted earlier to be just as subject to assessment in the rôle of care-educators as any form of ECCE made possible by private or public initiative within the community. In such an assessment the majority of parents were seen to be in need of preparation for—and help in the execution of—a task for which they are far less well endowed naturally than until relatively recently we were allowed to believe. I have argued elsewhere, and do again, that the parents are the ‘living link’ in a *complementary* relationship, now recognised to be essential, between care and education provided in the home and provided in a variety of ways by the community or state.

1. Tizard, Jack, in *Low-cost day provision for the under-fives*, London, Dept. of Health and Social Security/Dept of Educ. and Science, 1976, p. 44.

In this connection it is therefore of considerable interest to take note of a statement which appears in a volume published recently in the Soviet Union¹:

There are close relations between the child-care centre and the young family. Some naive people think that group upbringing will edge out family upbringing to a large extent, if it does not completely replace it, and that the rôle of the parents in the upbringing of their child will decrease accordingly. This of course is not true. Nothing or no one could take the place of a child's family. And in fact our nurseries and kindergartens have never set themselves such a task.

This is consistent with the words of a Russian-speaking American education writer² in a book based on two years' residence in the USSR, who concluded:

For better or worse, the Soviet state must contend with family influences as strong as those in any Western nation. The family—not the government—remains the basic instrument of child-rearing in the Soviet Union. The Russian family survived a revolution, two world wars and the terror of the Stalin years. No modern educational problem can be solved by attempts to bypass the family, and most Soviet officials would not try or desire to do so.

All this is by way of preface to considering the significant contribution that could arise in any community where, within an essentially unitary system involving integrated ECCE (and, better still, other family services), 'parent education' was both a means and a consequence of 'parent involvement'. A glimpse of what I have in mind can be obtained from part of the 'keynote speech' given in 1974³ by the Minister for Education of Guyana to a Caribbean Seminar organised by the Bernard van Leer Foundation:

...parents of pre-school children could be encouraged to play an active part in their children's education. The study of child growth and development, for example, should help parents to understand the relevance and importance of any programme of planned

1. Aksarina, N. and Smirnova, N., *Social education of pre-school children in the Soviet Union*, Moscow, Novosti Press Agency Publ. House, 1975, p. 8-9.
2. Jacoby, Susan, *Inside Soviet schools*, New York, Hill and Wang, 1974, p. 25.
3. *Innovation in early childhood education: Report of the second Caribbean Seminar*. The Hague, Bernard van Leer Foundation, 1974, p. 21.

activities. Such knowledge is likely to modify existing attitudes to play, from the widespread one of its being 'a waste of time', or a manifestation of laziness, to an understanding of its importance for the total development of the child. From this point, it should be an easy task to involve parents in making toys from waste material; activities of this nature will provide necessary learning materials at minimal cost, and useful learning experiences for parents and interested adults. . . . We in Guyana have had practical experience of such activities. . . . Another aspect of parent education which could prove of inestimable support to a pre-school programme is the provision of information on the health and nutritional needs of young children. . . .

But we are all fully aware that, in many of the real situations for which we are hoping to plan ECCE services which go at least some way towards meeting the needs of the target children *and* of their parents, it can be difficult to the point of impossibility to involve the mother, let alone the parents. One way—expensive even where possible—is by using trained home-visitors based on the day units. Another is exemplified by recent pioneering work in central London¹ which has shown that

virtually all mothers will bring their children (0-4+ years) to a child welfare clinic which provides a good service—one that is competent to deal with the child's problems and recognise any that the mothers may have. This means assessment followed by appropriate action. . . . the child welfare clinic is housed in a day care and education centre to which it can refer children with special needs knowing that these can be met, and in which it can survey and treat the children who attend. Today it is extremely rare to find parents, doctors, health visitors, psychologists, therapists, teachers and child care staff working closely together. . . .

It is indeed rare—and likely to remain so—unless and until those responsible for the decision-making about early childhood services, in London or in the capital city of an economically and technologically developing country whose leaders 'see their future in their children', initiate and sustain the necessary processes of change. Such change may unfortunately be most needed in the attitudes of

1. Tizard, Jack *et al*, *All our children*, London, Temple Smith/New Society, 1976, p. 205.

professional people, who even in circumstances of the direst need for enthusiastic team-work seem far too conscious of their professional status and interests. 'Women and children first' is more likely to be the response when taking to the boats from a sinking ship than it is when planning family and ECCE services for them.

The rôle of external assistance

This final section starts with an expectation which is probably strong enough to constitute an assumption: if what has come before has been at all successfully communicated it will occasion no surprise. I assume that every economically developing country will wish to produce and implement plans for the development of ECCE services *within the framework of its own resources*. This assumption does not however exclude the relevance and utility of various kinds of external assistance, provided these meet some down-to-earth criteria in respect of nature, timing, scale and duration. The 'pitfalls to avoid'¹ include the following:

- adopting imported models without tailoring them to local conditions;
- launching expensive long-term programmes with only a few years of external support in sight;
- depending excessively on expatriate technical assistance experts, and failing to develop competent local personnel to take over from them as quickly as possible;
- constructing, with external assistance, costly and needlessly elaborate facilities that cannot later be replicated using domestic resources alone, and—even worse—that lead to wide dissatisfaction with more modest yet adequate facilities that the country can afford.

Applying this warning to our specific area, we know already that on the material side neither buildings nor large equipment would be a useful form of assistance in the longer term. To a large extent the same is true of small equipment and educational play material: a welcome could however be waiting for a few complete sets, to be used for staff training and as a source of ideas from which indigenous analogues could be created. Picture books are rarely if ever

1. Coombs, Philip H. *et al*, *New paths to learning for rural children and youth*, New York, International Council for Educational Development, 1973, p. 87.

a suitable import, even as a gift—but samples showing what one means by ‘strongly made’ and ‘attractive to children of a particular age-group’ could be helpful.

And so we come fairly quickly to the more positive side, though still with caution and commonsense. A country with little or no previous experience in planning for ECCE services can—and should—make full use at a preliminary stage of the work that has been done in the last ten years by various international bodies, both intergovernmental and non-governmental. The quality and potential relevance of this will I hope have been made evident in the quotations forming part of this booklet: a deliberate effort has here been made to show the high degree of consensus that has been achieved on many key issues, both of principle and approach. So the first task of the ECCE planner is to ‘do his/her homework’ thoroughly, making full use of these resources available in the written word.

The next step can then be rendered possible or easier through external assistance, in the first instance at regional level (in continental terms). There may be other neighbouring countries which have gained some experience already, some of which could be of greater immediate interest and relevance than that originating from current practice in Europe or North America. We have already had occasion (p. 62) to draw on the report of the second Caribbean Seminar, organized with the help of the Bernard van Leer Foundation which (as will be evident in the Appendix) is active in many parts of the world on the ECCE front. The regional offices of Unesco, Unicef and WHO—independently and in collaboration—are all increasingly engaged in working through the outcomes of the studies and meetings from the reports of which we have quoted.

At the ‘central’ or ‘international’ level it is reasonable to anticipate a fresh readiness to respond to national initiatives during and as an outcome of the International Year of the Child in 1979, and that such responses will positively favour planning which involves integrated ECCE structures and a joint approach with other services, such as health and social welfare, to the tactics of ‘delivery’.

Training. I have no doubt whatever that this is the aspect of ECCE service development where external assistance has most relevance, both at the individual level and with the planning and launching of staff training in the countries concerned. As we have seen, the

most expensive factor in any kind of ECCE provision is staffing, including supervision of voluntary and self-help efforts and of family day-care systems, yet without properly trained staff and staff-educators the quality of provision will be at risk—and the end of that road is *custodialism*, whether institutionalized in centres or home-based in the community neighbourhoods.

External assistance with training can be applied either in the country which requires it, or elsewhere. Given the relative underdevelopment of modern ECCE concepts and practice around the world, there is likely to be only a minority of the economically and technologically developing countries which could immediately benefit from assistance with on-the-spot staff training. For the majority wishing to make a start, or to expand from an existing very small-scale provision—in many cases under private or voluntary auspices—there will be greater long-term benefit from access to training overseas, at least for those key individuals on whom the responsibility will fall for planning, organizing and leading the national staff training effort.

Here it is essential to recognize the rôle of the carefully-selected adviser in the early stages. I say 'carefully-selected' for good reason, since a fairly open request to one of the appropriate UN or other providing sources for 'an adviser in the early childhood education field' could all too easily produce the wrong person for that particular country at that particular stage of its preliminary thinking or planning. Not, I hasten to add, because the various bodies sponsoring technical assistance are careless over such matters: the problem is to find the *right* person who is *available* at the *right* time. Here I cannot forbear to draw the attention of those who read this to the quiet words of wisdom to be found in an earlier booklet (No. 8) in this series.¹

The first task of an external adviser brought in at an early stage will be of course to learn about the situation and the problems which face the government in the country concerned. That attempted within the limitations of time available, the next step will be to ensure through frank discussion that the probably unfamiliar concepts and methods of an ECCE approach are understood and ac-

1, Curle, Adam, *Educational planning: the adviser's rôle*, Paris, Unesco/International Institute for Educational Planning, 1968, 28 p. (Fundamentals of Educational Planning, No. 8).

cepted at government level as being consistent with national objectives and social philosophy. Lest I be thought to labour the obvious, an example of what is at issue may here be useful. There are already quite a number of countries, not all in the economically less-advantaged group, where any educational activity taking place prior to the age of entry to the primary school system is perceived as mainly a device to accelerate the process of basic education for what is frequently a select minority. The result is a distortion of the ECCE approach to include systematic teaching of reading, writing and number, and the danger of this happening increases with the compulsory or permitted age of entry to primary school in each country: highly likely if this is at 7 years, still possible but less likely if it is at 6 years, highly unlikely at 5.

The third stage in the advisory rôle—if reached—is the one in which I believe external assistance can be of the most use to the countries which decide to seek it for ECCE development. In this stage, there should be a two-way traffic planned and supervised jointly by the adviser and one or more senior counter-part professionals, which over a period of years both brings nationals abroad for training in ECCE principles and practice, *and* takes experienced but open-minded and innovatory practitioners to the host country to assist with the early stages of providing the new services and of establishing indigenous training facilities.

Conclusion

This chapter opened with a 10-point summary of what we had found about the 'What?', the 'Why?' and the strategic aspects of the 'How?' of early childhood care and education. It has looked at the tactical aspects of the last question from the point of view of a reader in an economically and technologically developing country for which until now anything of this kind on a national scale has understandably been 'over the far horizon', but where the rate of change is such as to make it increasingly realistic to have a thoughtful look at the whole idea.

If as a result of this endeavour the care and education of the young child has acquired a new and positive significance, especially within the framework of local community involvement in meeting the needs of a changing pattern of family life, I shall naturally be glad. But since from time to time the realities of doing anything

on a majority basis which is also educationally sound and worthwhile may have been daunting in the extreme, I hope encouragement will be found in some of the material which follows, in an Appendix which is—unusually—intended to be read.

APPENDIX

Examples, not models

Introduction

Given the manifest impossibility of making a prolonged tour of the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America to obtain first-hand information and impressions, the only way to obtain illustrative material for this booklet was to seek the help of organisations and individuals likely to be knowledgeable about or actually in touch with recent developments. It was appreciated from the outset that this effort to obtain examples of indigenous initiative, self-help and innovation in the field of early childhood care and education, from countries many of which were still struggling with the problems of providing or improving primary or basic education, might not yield a very rich haul. But it is my hope that the contents of this Appendix will at least ensure a context of reality within which the principles and approaches laid out already in the main text may be set.

Sources

Visits were made to the headquarters of the Van Leer Foundation, in The Hague; to Unesco, IIEP and the *Centre international de l'enfance*, in Paris; and to the International Bureau of Education, WHO, and the European office of Unicef, in Geneva. From all of these a considerable bulk of potentially relevant published reports were obtained; bibliographical searches were made; and lists were compiled of names and addresses of individuals all over the world to whom an approach could be made by personal letter. Meetings with two distinguished and widely-travelled past Presidents of OMEP (Madame S. Herbinière-Lebert and Professor Gaston Mia-

leret) and with Miss Margaret Roberts in London and Dr. Anne McKenna in Dublin (Editor of the OMEP Journal) contributed substantially to this last source. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing to the directors, librarians and other officers of all these organisations, to the individuals just named, and to all those in many countries who responded to my letters, my deep and most sincere appreciation for their courtesy, interest and practical assistance. To this I must add my gratitude for the voluntary collaboration, especially during the Paris work but also later in London, of Elke Kroeger who had previously worked and published with me in the field of cross-cultural developmental psychology, and had also contributed significantly to the preparation of the CERI/OECD report *Early childhood care and education: objectives and issues*, to which reference has more than once been made in the main text of the present booklet.

The material

It must be said right away that a great deal—probably the majority—of the material which came under review (a) was not recent, and even essentially historical; (b) made clear how until very recently indeed almost all initiatives in this field in the economically and technologically less-developed countries had been private—through individuals or voluntary agencies; and (c) emphasised the marginal position of pre-school educational provision and planning in the eyes of national and state or regional governments. This is usually accompanied by—and quite consistent with—a widespread tendency to enact permissive legislation, with or without annexed specification of standards of provision, curricula, etc., against the day when funds may become available to implement all this in any but token fashion. None of this comes as any surprise, but it does stress the need for—and enhance the potential value of—examples of the innovatory, self-help and locally-initiated kind.

This is probably the point at which to draw attention to the way in which progress in the early childhood *education* field seems now certain to be facilitated, in the longer term, by the almost universal pressure for *day-care* provision on a very local basis but made possible by official funding. I say 'in the longer term' because we cannot expect any reasonably rapid and at all adequate response to this pressure to include much if any of the input which would be necessary for a genuine educational element of the kind described

earlier. But in the shorter or intermediate term we can however see—and seize—a welcome opportunity to involve the education of mothers (sometimes of fathers, too) and to facilitate the integrated approach—including nutrition and health services—as the community starts from where it is, where its needs lie, and progresses in that longer term towards a full service for young children which will include the educational element which we have shown to be so essential for their full development.

The approach adopted

As a result of casting the net so widely it is possible, even after a first stage of selection in which much was perforce discarded, to base a second selection on material which relates to more than twenty countries, and to do this in such a way as to give that minimal recognition of relevant cultural differences which is represented by the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America. A few examples will be added from sources located in the European tradition, where the method or concept seems to have some potential for being utilised in other cultural settings, with or without some variation.

Where it has seemed possible to do so without distortion, I provide an account in my own words if the material in question is lengthy; otherwise, extracts from reports will be given *verbatim*, sometimes using only selected passages, sometimes in full. For each item, there will be found a reference number thus (14) to the list of sources given serially at the end of the Appendix (p. 97).

Asia

(a) *India*. Since 1975 there has been a National Policy for Children, approved by Parliament, under which operates a National Children's Board the main functions of which are to provide a focus for education and welfare, and to ensure continuous planning, review and co-ordination of all essential services. Among the resolutions of the National Policy are to be found the following (1):

- All children shall be covered by a comprehensive health programme. Programmes shall be implemented to provide nutrition services with the object of removing deficiencies in the diet of children.
- The state shall take steps to provide free and compulsory education

for all children up to the age of 14. The programme of informal education for pre-school children from the weaker sections of society will also be taken up.

- In organising services for children, efforts would be directed to strengthen family ties so that full potentialities of growth of children are realised within the normal family, neighbourhood and community environment.
- Children who are not able to take full advantage of formal school education shall be provided other forms of education suited to their requirements.
- To ensure equality of opportunity, special assistance shall be provided to all children belonging to the weaker sections of the society—such as children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and those belonging to the economically weaker sections both in urban and rural areas.
- Facilities shall be provided for special treatment, education, rehabilitation and care of children who are physically handicapped, emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded.

Difficulties in attempting to implement such a variety of desirable objectives (in the light of considerable pre-1975 experience) led to the introduction in 1976 of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme by the Department of Child Welfare of the Ministry of Education and Child Welfare. It is important to note here that the central government is not responsible for pre-school education, and that consequently its influence varies from state to state, being mediated through the Department of Social Welfare and the corresponding Social Welfare Boards at state level.

One innovation under the ICDS Scheme is the *anganwadi*, translated literally as 'courtyard play centre'. These are intended to meet the basic needs of the young children in mainly rural areas where it is difficult to provide the *balwadi* (pre-school/day centre). The *anganwadi* provides a local point to which mothers bring their children and on which the available professional services (health, nutrition, social welfare) can converge. The *anganwadi* worker herself is intended to be a trained pre-school teacher, responsible for that side of the centre's work but in many areas expected to contribute significantly to the health and nutrition work, particularly where the supply of staff trained in this is inadequate.

A very recent report (2) stresses the need for the area (or 'block') extension officers (known as *mukhya sevika*) who are responsible for upwards of 20 villages to

... promote the non-formal pre-school education at *anganwadis* (by) helping and guiding the *anganwadi* workers in developing suitable educational kits and the use of indigenous material such as flowers, leaves, sea shells, beads, tamarind seeds, pebbles, waste material, etc.

The same workshops (for *mukhya sevikas*) held during the period May-October 1977 also suggested that

... parent education should be one of the important activities of the pre-school education programme, so that they (the parents) would understand and appreciate its importance and would not equate it with formal learning alone.

Here it is important to face the reality that the training of the pre-school workers (*bal sevikas*) is very variable indeed, and also that

though the *mukhya sevika* is, in theory, a professional adviser—and her original pre-service training course will include a 'pre-school education element'—in practice she is more likely to have to spend her time checking the menus and use of food (often donated by relief organisations) against the number of children on registers... (3)

The second innovatory development in the Indian scene is the 'mobile crèche', best known for its work on construction sites. A recent description, written by the founder (the late Mrs Mahadevan) is given in full (4):

Crèches have basic equipment like cradles, mats, a crèche table to change babies' clothes, to keep medicines, etc., plates, glasses, spoons and linen. The accommodation allotted to us is usually drab. It may be housed in a basement or on the eighteenth floor of an unfinished skyscraper. With the work going on in full swing all around us and dust floating, we do our best to keep the place pleasant. To mellow down the harsh surroundings, the staff decorates the place with the children's colourful drawings. The cradles and cots of the babies have lovely mobiles hanging on them and there are many things around which could be called toys in conventional language. An average budget of 10 rupees is enough to replenish our supply of toys for a section of say fifty children.

The babies who come to us from the age of 3-4 weeks and are generally malnourished receive an initial medical examination and

are prescribed a diet by the visiting doctor. Most of the babies get milk, vitamin drops and other high-protein food according to need. Although the doctor visits a centre only once a week, the supervisors and nutritionists keep a close watch on the children's progress.

Since the child receives very little attention from the mother we try to make our crèches a home from home. Every effort is made to develop the child physically as well as emotionally, intellectually and socially. The crèches resound with the traditional songs familiar to the children. A conscious effort is made to converse with the babies in order to develop their vocabulary. Working in unhygienic surroundings without sanitation, Mobile Crèches has a gigantic task to maintain hygienic standards in its centres. We had to improvise little places which babies could use as toilets and then find methods of disposing the waste in a hygienic way. Almost everything that is undertaken in the crèche programme for the children is something that can be practised at home.

Nursery schools are considered a luxury in any poor country mainly because a conventional nursery school has elaborate equipment which is costly and out of reach for any group with limited resources. In India, even today, we have thousands of nursery schools aided by welfare departments running on most unimaginative lines for lack of equipment. Time and again people have raised doubts if such a nursery school helps a child at all or whether the child would learn more from nature if left to itself. With these hazards in our minds we skirted the pitfalls and used our imagination to have some of the cheapest indigenous material and methods to provide necessary stimulation to the child in the age group of 3-6 years. In the nursery section the material that you find is cardboard, chart paper, glazed paper, kite paper, wooden beads, scissors, blackboard, stones, leaves, flowers, potters clay to replace plastiscine, rag dolls, old saris, wooden blocks and several such local items which cost next to nothing.

All the local customs and festivals are used for story-telling and dramatizing folk songs are worked into nursery rhymes. The result is that the teacher learns to go from one experiment to another because of the cultural familiarity of the methods and is always surrounded by a group of happy children. There is nothing foreign in our nursery section for either the child or the teacher. Every scientific method is translated into Indian experience.

The attention of the reader is drawn to the whole of the article from which this extract has been cited, particularly since it contains details about the recruitment and training of staff and is realistic

about the difficulties and disappointments that have had to be faced. After nine years this pioneering effort is in a position to report in a 1978 newsletter that the original principle 'responsibility must be shared' is beginning to be met as 'expenses are shared not only by the contractors (on the work-sites) but by several government departments, international organisations and civic authorities. Voluntary agencies and business houses have also been generous with funds and assistance, and many individuals have come forward with time, money and enthusiasm'.

Finally, we can note that the emphasis on the imaginative use of cheap, simple and locally-available materials for play and stimulation, to which reference was made above (and which my colleague Elke Kroeger was able to confirm during an all-too-brief private visit to New Delhi), has its complement in the 'educational toys' project of the Centre for Educational Technology, an institute within the framework of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

(b) *Sri Lanka.* The preface to the article (5) from which our next examples are taken explains that

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is a non-political people's movement founded in Sri Lanka in 1958 and legally recognized by an Act of Parliament. It is the largest non-governmental organization in Sri Lanka, having spread its influence to more than 1200 villages.

Its activities range from local economic development to the provision of basic services for women, children and youth. The people's participation is the foundation on which the Movement originated in the past; on this factor also depends the success or failure of the Movement in the years to come.

The first extract describes the Pre-school Programme in the following terms:

The need for a pre-school education programme was appreciated by Sarvodaya as far back as 1968. When the age for entering school was raised from five to seven years by the government in 1972, the Movement hastened to start its pre-school education programme immediately.

Organization of the pre-school by the mothers' group

The Sarvodaya pre-school is also primarily the responsibility of the mothers' group in the village. The mothers' group either on

its own or after being motivated by the Sarvodaya community volunteer worker will nominate a suitable girl to be trained at a Sarvodaya Training Center. She will then follow a three months' course on child development and factors affecting development, such as nutrition, health, love and protection, educational psychology and pre-school methods, as well as the production of teaching material, and all the subjects taught in the Community Kitchen Training Programme.

After the training programme, the worker returns to her village to start a pre-school. Its organization is carried out by the mothers' group with the assistance of the youth group and the community elders.

In the great majority of villages, the pre-school and the community kitchen function as one unit to serve the same child population, and are run by the pre-school worker and the community kitchen worker with the assistance of other volunteers.

In addition to the services rendered by the community kitchen, the content of the pre-school programme is in keeping with modern principles of education. The worker is encouraged to collect her teaching aids and materials from the environment itself so as to make the programme more successful. Some of the more sophisticated play materials and equipment for the development of skills are manufactured by the Sarvodaya pre-school equipment-making department and supplied at nominal costs.

In some villages, the community contributes towards the upkeep of the pre-school and the support of the worker. In less affluent villages, the Sarvodaya Movement provides financial assistance.

Recognition of the pre-schools by the government

With the raising of the school entry age and the introduction of a modern curriculum of studies in Grade 1, a sudden demand for properly oriented pre-schools has occurred throughout the country. From among many of the schools, the government and the education authorities have accepted the Sarvodaya Pre-School Training Programme and its schools as being the best suited. Local government authorities who are anxious to have pre-schools in their areas have requested Sarvodaya to open such schools in their villages, some of which are funded by the government.

The number of Sarvodaya pre-schools in operation increased from 17 in 1972 to 147 in 1976. In the future, it is hoped to establish some 200 new pre-schools annually, for even though the demand is greater, the facilities available for training are limited.

This Movement also started a day-care centre service in 1976

for the children of working parents, at first in the plantation sector but soon also in the villages where the Movement's pre-school and community-kitchen workers have taken on this additional responsibility. Most of the funds required come from the local government authorities and the national government's Department of Probation and Child Care—a good example of useful co-operation between voluntary and official agencies.

In 1977 the Movement was engaged in change from 'a centrally-co-ordinated organisation of grass-roots initiatives towards a decentralised organisation in which the nuclei will be formed by each of the 52 Extension Centres. This will allow the people to oversee and understand the organisation in its totality, which was no longer possible with the present organisational structure.'

Noteworthy in the organisation is a research centre which 'fulfils a monitoring function... evaluating the planned activities (of all sections) every three months, in order to advise the co-ordinators on bottle-necks in the execution of their programme and provide a continuous feedback to each section concerning the quality of the work being carried out'.

(c) *Bangladesh*. From a country which has suffered so greatly, and where it could still be reported (6) in 1977 that '56 per cent of the nation's school-age children do not attend school', one does not expect exciting new developments in the ECCE field. It is therefore of particular interest to cite the following:

To overcome the difficulty of young children travelling the distance to school, an arrangement was made whereby a woman from the village brings the children to the school and remains at the center during the day, where she herself can participate in a training course. In the afternoon she is responsible for returning the children home. It is hoped that the school will be an integrated part of life for the children, enriching the natural flow of their activities and not becoming something alien from their everyday needs.

(d) *The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam*. We now present, necessarily at some length, a description of the approach to our topic of a socialist country which has only recently been able—after long years of war and unprecedented destruction, with equally unprecedented effects on its family life and on its children—to approach the question of early childhood care and education in

its own way as a new but technologically and economically less-developed nation. The responsible governmental body is the Central Committee for the Protection of the Mother and Child, and I quote *verbatim* from a working paper submitted by that body to a Unicef Special Meeting in September 1977 (7):

To bring up and educate the children in the day-care centres, constitutes theoretically and practically a science and an art. It requires an adequate material basis, so as to ensure the children enjoy an atmosphere of family life. We have been able to set up 36,000 day-care centres of various types, ranging from houses made of bamboos and palm leaves to large buildings able to shelter 500 children; from the kindergartens which receive the children per season to those which take care of the children daily, or board and lodge them weekly or monthly. Each year, various localities allocate credits of tens of millions of dong to set up more brick-and-tile day-care centres according to the plans and designs of the Central Committee for the Protection of the Mother and Child, so that these new centres may provide up-to-date methods of nursing and educating the children. Due to the shortage of iron, steel, cement etc., the tempo of building is very slow as compared with the needs of the crèches, the more so as thousands of centres had been destroyed previously by the war.

Big appropriations in the State budget have been allocated annually to the construction, supply of equipment and materials of day-care centres, as well as children's activities therein. The People's Committees of various provinces and cities devote annually important amounts and grant priority to the manufacture and sale of utensils, furniture or other things needed by kindergartens. That is why the kindergartens have more equipment than before. But the quality of equipment is not high. The reason is that we are short of workshops which produce *en masse* articles for day-care centres. They depend mostly on the available production capacities of the localities.

Children's scientific education remains a struggle between the new and the old, between progress and backwardness. The least gesture, the least movement of the nurses in front of the little children constitutes a sign, a mirror which the infants follow. The ranks of nurses comprise those who are attached daily to the crèches, who regulate all the activities therein. The nurses are those on whom depends the quality of work of taking care of, and educating the children. They rear, form and train the new generation on behalf of the family and the whole society. For several years we have selected a numerous host of 92,000 persons, half of whom being healthy and lively young girls who love their occupation and the

children, who have proven their cultural and professional abilities. The Government has made public the norms for their selection and the salaries of these educators are in the same scale as that of technicians. A Central Secondary Training School has been opened and in each province in North Viet Nam there is a primary nurse training school. In each District Committee of the Protection of Mother and Child, there is a nurse training team whose course lasts from one to three months. Over 100 students have been sent to attend Nurses Colleges abroad. The nurses' social standing is highlighted in many forms, for instance, the example of good nurses and good works are publicized over the radio or in the press. Conferences to exchange experiences between outstanding advanced nurses from district level upward, have been held, and honourable badges awarded to those nurses who have many achievements recorded in their profession.

The important thing is that children's good nursing must begin with the birth of the baby, the first three years in life being a period of the strongest development when 50 per cent of human faculties and fundamental character or nature, take shape. Bringing up and educating the infants constitute two parallel and unified processes which cannot be taken apart. They have close and mutual effects. To nourish children is regarded as an important aim in the day-care centres. The reason is that when physical strength develops well, this constitutes a good basis for all-sided development. We highly appreciate the source of animal proteins which exists in various regions such as eggs, silk-worm chrysalids, fish, shrimps, crabs, eels, frogs. Short-term courses about nutrition are based on regional economic characteristics to teach cooking techniques, in combining food products in such a way as to increase the nutrients and in a more balanced proportion.

The care of children in the crèches benefits also from notable assistance and priority from the Government, and the co-operatives and the community. It furthermore enjoys man-power from various organizations, services and groups, wide support from the mothers and the population as a whole. Many day-care centres have orchards where fruit-trees are grown and cared by aged people. Buildings and works are contributed by community's labour and money raised for the welfare of the little ones. There are some districts which boast of the drive to grow trees and give fruits to the children or to raise hens and geese the eggs of which will be offered to the crèches. Nearly 50 per cent of the kindergartens have their own plots of land grown with beans by the nurses who are eager to improve the food quality for the children.

During their stay in the crèches, the children are looked after and trained methodically. The rest of the time, they are left to

live in the love of their mothers and families. This is the combination between the first cares by the homes and society, between life among a community and the sentimental life in the family. This fact contributes to the harmony of the physical, spiritual and sentimental growth of the child, while helping the mother to alleviate her heavy and arduous burden of nourishing and caring for her little child. This further enables her to devote herself fully to her work and have more time to study and relax.

(e) *Malaysia*. As is well known, the Bernard van Leer Foundation has been—and remains—active in early childhood education, until recently with a strong emphasis on what is usually called ‘compensatory’ activities for the socially disadvantaged. Much of the work supported by the Foundation has been carried out in countries within the three continents with which we are here concerned. In Asia, one of these is Malaysia, where the Foundation sponsored in March 1977 the First Eastern Hemisphere Seminar on Early Childhood Education. From a paper (8) presented at that Seminar by the members of the Malaysian ‘Compensatory Education Project’, I have selected an example of one systematic approach to the problem of providing economically a ‘programme package’, developed and field-tested in the country concerned by its own people:

The first edition (1975) of the PECE package (Programme of Early Childhood Education) consisted of:

1. A guidebook for Kindergartens in Malaysia which contains:
 - a) principles and guidelines for the organization of a pre-school,
 - b) suggestions for a variety of curriculum materials and equipment,
 - c) suggestions for a variety of activities and how they should be organised and
 - d) practical guidenotes for teachers in different pre-schools.
2. Manipulative materials such as blocks, colour beads, a variety of sorting materials,
3. Two books of both modern and traditional songs,
4. Printed Learning materials—pictures, books and stories.

By mid-February 1975, this PECE package was distributed at a two-day workshop to 36 representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, FELDA (Federal Land Development Authority), State Education Departments, UMNO (United Malay National Organization), PERTIWI (Muslim Women’s Society), Armed Forces, the Police, Religious Bodies and the Malaysian Association of Kindergartens. The workshop was intended for introducing the PECE package to the

various organizations concerned with pre-school and to obtain feedback on the use and contents of the package. Workshop participants were in general agreement that *untrained teachers* would be unable to use the package effectively. Other feedback on the package contents indicated the need to improve the quality of the package, particularly the printed materials. Participants expressed their concern that pre-school children should have experiences with concrete materials before proceeding to symbolic learning.

The Project staff has since concentrated its efforts on the *development* and *further improvement* of the package based on feedback of its use at the 13 pilot Pre-school centres identified in mid-1975. Furthermore we are interested in identifying possible constraints at these centres in terms of organization of activities, time-table arrangements, shortage of trained personnel, availability of equipment and other resources, and to find ways to overcoming these problems. We have also explored the possibilities of more parental and community involvement in pre-school activities.

This report later notes that major changes were proposed in the Guidebook, with the intention of producing one 'that is readable (simple enough for our pre-school teachers) and sufficiently attractive (in terms of illustrations)'. Frank recognition is also given to the problem of assisting the pre-school teachers: in this connection the 'problem of supervision for outlying centres was partially solved' by the identification and training (in an intensive one-year course in ECE) of teachers in nearby primary schools, who had agreed to give one day a week to helping and advising the pre-school teacher. But apart from finding this impact less than what was needed, in a relatively short time five of these specially-trained teachers had been transferred to other posts. This example underlines the importance of priorities in any attempt to develop and improve early childhood education: if those carrying the administrative burden of decision-making about the deployment of scarce resources are not convinced about the fundamental contribution of ECE to all that comes later, problems of the kind just illustrated are inevitable.

Africa

(a) *Senegal*. In both Anglophone and Francophone Africa it is far from easy to locate examples of the kind of initiatives we here are seeking: the whole topic of early childhood care and education

tends still to be shadowed by the inherited 'colonial' models. These were naturally introduced mainly—though not solely—by and for the use of the expatriate families. When, before or after the achievement of political independence, the very limited existing facilities became available to indigenous children, these latter tended to come from the 'new élites' principally because the nursery schools were almost all private, fee-paying and run for profit. Given the problems—economic and personnel—of making universal primary education available, the national and state ministries of education could not be expected to do much in the ECCE field. So hope had to lie for the time being with the initiatives of voluntary and inter-governmental agencies, of professional workers in other disciplines—such as nutrition, health, and social welfare—and of local leaders. One example of this (9) is of a programme using almost no money:

...in an agricultural region, villagers were inspired by a rural social worker to organize day care for all of their children during the period of agricultural activity. In this mild climate, the buildings were constructed by the villagers, working in the non-agricultural seasons, with local materials, and building in the style of the local homes. The care of the children is provided by villagers who are designated by their neighbours and receive some training for their jobs by the rural social worker.

Food is provided by all of the villagers and cooked by those who do not go to the fields. With the help of the social worker, using local products, the nutrition of the children and even of the families is constantly being improved.

This project spread quickly from one village to another until there are now thousands of children attending these day care centres during the agricultural seasons with such success that parents are now trying to find a means to keep them going in the non-agricultural periods.

(b) *Nigeria*. The five members of the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research who drafted a report, submitted to Unesco through the Federal Ministry of Education (10) in September 1977, strongly endorsed in their own words and about their own country what was said above when introducing the Senegal example. They also observed 'an emerging conflict between mothers' increasing participation in gainful employment and motherhood, especially in the case of pre-school-age children.' Having noted that there are more than eighty nursery schools in Lagos, of which two are run

by voluntary organisations and the remainder by private individuals for profit, the authors pay tribute to the early initiative and still-sustained efforts of the National Council of Women's Societies.

It was this body which started (with Danish, Unicef and other help) in late 1966 the nursery/day-care centre in Ebute-Ero market to promote the welfare and development of the young children of market women. The report observes:

The nursery no doubt has since been playing a very important role in the development of pre-school age children of women trading in the market. Thus children who enter at the age of three years are taught through play to develop the body, mind and power of expression. Health visitors come to inspect the children monthly. Immunisation and other vaccinations are given when necessary.

The idea of a market nursery was an innovation and one would have thought that after eleven years of its birth it ought to have permeated the society. Unfortunately, not only has the innovation not diffused, it has not expanded from what it was in 1966.

...The school does not receive revenue from any other source besides the monthly contribution of eight naira (N8.00) paid per child by mothers. The Lagos State government through the Lagos City Council that owns the market has not come to the aid of the nursery. This is very disappointing. The nursery needs public support and encouragement since it is not a private and profit oriented establishment. Strictly speaking, it is a project started to satisfy a social need of a Nigerian market community.

In spite of lack of financial support from the government, the school maintains a staff of four. The Headmistress is the overall supervisor under whose guidance are one teacher, a typist and a cook. The nursery has a training programme for Day Nursery attendants. Two batches of four have gone through the training course and there is a third batch undergoing training at present. These trainees go to private nurseries to work after graduation.

But the National Council of Women's Societies are clearly not discouraged by the lack of response from the Lagos State Government. In March 1978 the Council's Executive resolved (11) that

1. All branches of the Council should set up Day Care Centres/Day Nurseries in its own area and that the National Headquarters will be prepared to support such Branches financially and otherwise.
2. The headquarters would like State Branches to submit as a matter of urgency, a well planned and viable proposal of the project.

One State Government in Nigeria (Bendel)

through its Community Development Division has established a small Day Care Centre at the Rural Development Training Centre, Benin City, which is to serve as nucleus for the establishment of Day Care Centres all over the State. The Centre was started in the first instance with a view to its serving as a training ground for Rural Development Organisers, and Rural Development workers-in-training. The Centre therefore attracted aid from Unicef which provided some essential equipment and play materials for use by the children.

This State has, since the success of this initial project, set itself fresh targets as made clear in the report (10) from which we quoted earlier:

The community development division of the Ministry of Local Government is very enthusiastic about the programme and has encouraged four more centres to be established in Orerokpe, Warri, Agbor and Ubiaja. Funds have been provided for five other communities in the state and work on the buildings were in progress at the time of investigation. The number of pre-school children in government sponsored day-care centres at present is eight hundred. With the provision of physical facilities, the Community Development Centre also runs training courses for nursery teachers/attendants. During the training course which lasts one year, students learn methods of teaching and handling of pre-school children. After the course, they are deployed for day-care centres in other parts of the state. With these efforts, the Bendel State government has addressed itself energetically to the problems of working mothers in relation to their children's welfare.

(c) *Cameroon*. In the western rural areas of this country, the parents in one village had the idea of grouping all the young children together in day nurseries. What happened is described (12) as follows:

A village worthy lent a house, and a boy of eighteen who had left primary school was taken on at a salary. Other people were trained subsequently (34 of them, including 4 women); in the morning there was a practical course in the kindergarten under the direction of the social welfare service; in the afternoon, accelerated training; and in the evening written work, copying from the guide for kindergarten teachers in Cameroon. This personnel also received instruction on children and their needs.

Two thousand children have benefited from this experiment. The parents have the responsibility of building suitable premises, a latrine, a surrounding fence, open air play facilities (balancing beam, swing, ladder, pole) and small bamboo chairs and tables. Local clay serves as modelling clay, raffia fibres are used for string, and bamboo is hollowed out to facilitate assembly. Wooden cubes of decreasing size are made by the local craftsmen, glue is made from cassava flour, and mixed with ochre to make paints. Brushes consist of twigs with chewed ends, and maize and other wild seeds are used as beads for threading. For musical instruments, there are small drums, cymbals, bamboo whistles, and gourds filled with seeds. Only paper and coloured pencils are not produced locally.

This is surely a challenging example of real local initiative, which is not even substantially dependent on central services or funding for its success.

(d) *Eastern Africa*. In its report (13) to the 1977 session of the Executive Board, the Unicef Regional Office for Eastern Africa indicated its growing

awareness that much that is done in (the field of day-care services for pre-school children) was primarily influenced by western practices... in a rural setting this approach often turned out to be unsuccessful and sometimes harmful to the children, their parents and the teachers. A teacher who has to work with 50 children in a mud hut or under a shelter, with almost no equipment or teaching aids, would find it impossible to implement the kind of activities she has been taught during her training...

This led to an evaluation of the Kenyan day-care services, and also to a 'workshop on the use of local material in the development of teaching aids, equipment and toys for day-care centres', held in Tanzania and attended by representatives from that country, Kenya, Mozambique, Lesotho and Ethiopia. In the recommendations of that workshop

The emphasis was on day-care programmes as a part of the total life of the community, e.g. activities and ideas had to be related to the way of life of the particular community. Furthermore, stress was placed on the need for close co-operation between day-care services and those of education, health and nutrition programmes. The role of parents was emphasized, not only as contributors to

funds and materials, but also as important partners and participants in the day-care services. It was recommended that training of teachers in self-reliance, initiative, and their ability to work with parents as well as with children, should be stressed to a much greater extent than is presently done in the training programme.

(e) *North Africa*. The first of these two items does not constitute an 'example' in the strict sense, but is eminently worth citing as an indication of the way in which understanding is increasing of the intimate relationship that exists between the 'care' and the 'education' aspects of all ECCE provision. It occurs towards the end of the 1977 official report (14) of the *Arab Republic of Egypt* to Unesco, on the rôle of working mothers in early childhood education:

The Ministry of Social Affairs should train workers in the field of child-care to develop the pedagogical methods in the child-care centres, so that their role is not restricted to nutritional and physical care only, but surpasses that by developing the awareness and capabilities of the child in order to prepare him for the school period, in addition to providing the necessary medical care in these centres.

The second is however a 'real example' and is quoted in full from the original source (15):

An outstanding example of a low-cost programme which produced teachers and day care centres simultaneously is that carried out by the American Joint Distribution Committee in North Africa and Iran with local philanthropic committees.

The original purpose was to combat the high mortality rate among children of three to six years of age through improved nutrition and medical care. It was felt that bringing children together in groups would be the most effective way of getting these services to them and would at the same time be a way of influencing families.

Since it was a matter of life or death for some malnourished children, and of sight or blindness for many of those affected with trachoma, day care centres and training programmes for local personnel were launched simultaneously. The centres often occupied makeshift quarters in the early months, and recruitment of staff was difficult because of parental attitudes toward young unmarried women working outside the home, as well as the low level of formal education achieved by the average young woman at that time. Nevertheless, from the beginning the centres were staffed with local personnel, with foreign staff acting only in a training and consultant capacity.

The training programme for the teachers was short-term and intensive: three months daily of combined theoretical study and practical work with children. As centres were opened, the students were required to be teachers of the class while studying, and directors carried on administrative duties while learning how to do so. Later, these early day care centres served as training centres for many young women throughout the years. The original short-term training formula is still in use because it continues to provide, in a short time and inexpensively, teachers (correctly speaking, teacher's aides), who function well in the specific jobs for which they are trained. Refresher and advanced training has been provided, as has some on-going supervision.

Over the years, these day care centres have become fine examples of an integrated programme which provides education as well as a high level of health care and nutrition. At times, in some centres, where homes had no running water, even baths and haircuts became part of the services. In the beginning, parents sent their children largely because of the nutrition programme, but today they are sending their children with enthusiasm for the educational and social benefits which they realize they are receiving.

Latin America

By way of background to this set of examples, it is of interest to note (in somewhat paraphrased form) the results of a regional review attempted in 1973 (16). Although the needs for ECCE were recognised as growing rapidly, lack of funds and other resources—and in some countries even of enabling legislation—were seen as major obstacles to early progress. In this general context, three trends were identified:

- (i) To carry out 'experiments' involving a shift from 'traditional' to more 'liberal' methods;
- (ii) A shift away from a centralised approach towards a recognition of different needs in various sectors of national populations;
- (iii) Growing interest in a more integrated approach (arising from the problems of population increase, urbanisation, working mothers) which would bring together the attempt to provide health, nutrition, care and education services for the pre-school group.

More recent overview comment may be found in the opening pages of the paper (17) from which we shall be drawing for our first example.

(a) *Peru*. The full organisational and cultural context from which this example is taken should be studied in the readily-available published paper (17) to which reference has just been made above. For our present purpose, it must suffice to note that in addition to the national system of 'initial teaching centres' (crèches 0-3, kindergartens 3-5), there are 'non-formal programmes for children', the responsibility for the organisation of which falls upon the executive bodies at each administrative level of regional and local government, but principally the community education centres (*nucleo educativo comunal* — NEC). At this point it is desirable to quote from the paper:

The aim in drawing up these programmes is thus to anticipate and remedy specific deficiencies revealed in the child or in its home or community background. Priority attention is paid to basic needs which must be satisfied before any teaching work can be undertaken. This is why no programme for children is planned without consideration of the problems of nutrition and other questions directly related to their intellectual, sociomoral, etc., development.

This appraisal is conducted throughout the process and at the end of each stage of the programme, which enables appropriate corrections and additional efforts to be applied in due time. Thus the programmes currently in operation offer the following basic services to children:

Recuperation services, provided in co-ordination with the health department, when deprivation has seriously affected the children.

Prevention and protection services for healthy children, provided by means of the co-ordinated action of the health and education departments, or thanks to the participation of private medical institutions or mixed teams of doctors, social workers, psychologists, nutrition specialists, etc., whose work is voluntary.

Auxiliary nutrition services, provided mainly in co-ordination with the agriculture, fishery and food departments.

Spare-time, recreational and physical education services.

Early development services for children under 3 years old, in the form of theoretical and practical guidance provided by voluntary staff in the centres or the children's own homes.

Pre-educational services, aiming to develop the use of language, to facilitate communication in general, to arouse creative expression and to stimulate aesthetic sensitivity.

Powerful support is provided in this paper for arguments put for-

ward in the main text of the present booklet; as one example of this, I cite the following passage:

Experience has shown us that the best non-formal programmes are those in which members of the communities themselves, chosen by their groups, take part as organizers and direct collaborators. They identify with their milieu, its customs, problems, aspirations and language, and are consequently in the best position to carry out efficient work, since they are trusted and respected in their communal groups; this is not so for the teachers, who are often outsiders and have difficulty in integrating in the conditions of these communities.

The auxiliaries have no interest in emigrating to other zones, since, being part of the community, they ensure the continuity and stability of the work undertaken. Having good knowledge of their own community's resources, they are better equipped to exploit this in inexpensive teaching equipment and material. They fulfil their teaching duties with the children efficiently, after receiving suitable training for this purpose, and the more they come to feel motivated, the more they wish to take advantage of the opportunities for cultural enrichment which they are given to improve their preparation. They successfully replace teachers in places where it is almost impossible to get specialized staff to come and settle permanently. Finally, they increase the return on the investment made in teaching, since even if they receive some remuneration, it is always less than a teacher's salary—not that this means they are exploited, since they have an opportunity to improve their cultural attainments and financial situation in the course of training for their duties, and taking part in the educational process which affects not only the children but also themselves.

(b) Uruguay. In a 1978 report (18) received from the national committee of OMEP, we learn that along with the extension of pre-school education has come some development of integrated services through clinics for children of pre-school age. These carry out examination, diagnosis and 'treatment'—interpreted in its widest sense—through multi-disciplinary teams. Treatment for the 0-3 years group consists mainly of early stimulation in the clinical setting—this is shifted for the 3-6 years group into kindergarten work; and all this is accompanied by community work which establishes direct relationships with the families. The report states that in ten years of operation, data collected reveal significant improvement in the majority of children involved. It is however

emphasised that most attention has so far been given (in all pre-school work) to the urban areas of the country.

(c) *Venezuela*. In this country there are state systems of both kindergartens and day-care centres. A report (19) of a study involving 181 children aged five and six years from low socio-economic backgrounds in Caracas showed that their attendance at state kindergartens (which provided meals) resulted not only in height and weight gains superior to those in a control group, but 'exerted a positive influence on all aspects of a child's development'. Also focussed on Caracas, however, was a project (20) specifically designed to increase greatly the proportion of children reached. Its organisational structure involved the setting-up of six administrative centres, each responsible for a number of 'pre-school units' (varying from 9 to 24, and totalling about 120 for the Caracas area). These 'units' were each led by a specialist teacher assisted by volunteer auxiliaries, utilised all sources of possible assistance in the local community, and served—according to its capacities—between 80 and 200 children in the 4-6 years age group. The principal official assistance to the project came from the Ministry of Education, which provided the salaries of twenty teachers and a co-ordinator to make possible the collaboration of a Catholic 'Association for the Promotion of Popular Education'.

The 'volunteer auxiliaries' were the mothers of the children and also young people from the community. By means of a large and well-planned publicity campaign—and the use of various incentives, including 'certificates, prizes, discounts in some shops, grants towards the cost of their higher education'—about one thousand 'carefully-selected' young volunteer auxiliaries were recruited.

The report notes that work in this project 'required a special kind of teacher' for the units, since her attention would need to be directed towards the children, the mother and volunteer auxiliaries, and the community.

(d) *Colombia*. Our example here (21) is specific to the topic of maternal involvement and education:

...in some areas, this education of mothers begins in the early stages of pregnancy. Confidence is established between the mother and the social worker—the latter pays her regular visits and guides her through the different stages of the child's growth, first while he is still in the

womb, then during delivery, and subsequently during the first years of life.

In other areas, a different system has been tried. Observations have shown that mothers were not inclined to confide their children to kindergartens, because they were too far away and too costly, and the activities in them did not correspond to the local culture. Mothers were more willing to confide their children to neighbours, older relatives, etc. As a result, sorts of co-operatives have come into being: mothers group themselves in teams of six, living if possible in the same quarter (though the problem of mutual confidence and friendship arises). One of them, selected by the group, agrees to remain at home and receive the other mothers' children while they are out at work (in factories, workshops, domestic service, etc.). The mothers provide financial aid for the woman who looks after their children. The mother chosen to do this must provide certain guarantees as to her personality and the cleanliness of her home. She follows an introductory practical course in child development and training, and is subjected to regular health checks. She is regularly supervised by a female educator who ensures that the group of children is getting along satisfactorily, solves any problems, evaluates progress, and widens the mother's knowledge by introducing her to new techniques of activity leadership. Each educator, helped by the nearest doctor or health centre, is responsible for several mothers.

(e) *Haiti*. This recent example, of a single nursery school in a rural area not far from the capital (Port-au-Prince), serving 50 children from poor families, is included for the light it throws on the problem of language. In the words of the responsible teacher (22) (translated by myself) here is the story:

The big problem for me has been that of language. The (Baptist) missionary (sponsors) wanted teaching to be entirely in Creole. For myself, I wished it to be mixed because these children must go on to primary school. (From November) until February, everything was done in Creole. Where was one to find songs, rhymes, in Creole for such young children?

A few translations of rhymes were made for us. But in February, the council reconsidered its decision and permitted teaching of French as a foreign language ... We can say that since the teaching was carried out in French we have truly discovered our children. One could say that the very fact of saying some things to them and requiring them to reply in French was a stimulant. They are much more open, spontaneous. Imperceptibly we are teaching them French, while retaining Creole as the principal language of our conversations.

(f) *Trinidad and Tobago.* We have already drawn more than once on the Unesco national reports prepared on the rôle of working mothers in early childhood education, and have in a different connection drawn on the experience (in Malaysia) of the Bernard van Leer Foundation. In this example these two sources are brought together as we take from the summary report of a 1977 seminar (23) in Port of Spain the statement by the co-ordinator of the SERVOL (Service Volunteer for All) pre-school programme, begun in 1972 with assistance from the Bernard van Leer Foundation:

...Servol decided to experiment with a programme which would promote both education and development on the one hand, and community awareness and involvement on the other. The vehicle for this integrated community programme would be the nursery school programme.

In September 1974 its multifaceted approach to education and Community Development began. It placed emphasis on:

- (a) The Nursery School Child
- (b) The Nursery School Teacher
- (c) Parents and other Adults
- (d) Positive Attitudes to Health and Nutrition
- (e) Integration and Fostering of Community awareness.

Consistent attempts have been made to foster community participation at every level. In developing programmes and curricula for the children, individuals and groups, events and situations of each community have been taken into account and class programmes built around these. For example, Carnival, one of the themes in the curriculum is an integral part of the child's experience. Steelbandsmen, who may be fathers, brothers, uncles and other relatives come into the class room and share their skills.

Teachers form the vital links between community and school and fill such roles as social worker, counsellor, organizer in community affairs. They live and work in their community and are encouraged to obtain background information about the children they teach. They are also given extensive and intensive training programmes.

Parent education takes many forms including information about availability and use of community services, nutrition programmes, immunization programmes and insight into the type of activity to which their children are exposed.

A Health Centre has been set up in the area and is serviced by a paediatrician who gives his services voluntarily.

Successes and failures of the project

On the minus side can be listed the initial hostile reaction by the community. Unfamiliarity with the new ideas led to fears that their children were not being properly educated. Gradually they perceived the results and were won over. However, Parent Teacher Associations do not flourish in all communities. One school had to be closed because of open hostility and lack of co-operation.

On the plus side, vandalism was reduced. Community centres, scene of social events on weekends are cleaned up in time for school on Monday mornings. The Community assists in maintenance of the buildings and making of teaching aids etc. The key to the success is the close link forged by the teachers and those few 'outsiders' who empathise with residents of the community.

(g) *Cuba. Education in Revolution* (24) is an illustrated English-language publication issued in 1975 by the Instituto Cubano del Libro, for which the text is drawn entirely from speeches made by Major Fidel Castro between 1959 and 1973, and from his book *History will absolve me*. From two speeches, the first dated 30 January 1967, the second 12 November 1971, we gain some insight into the basis on which the Cuban ECCE system has been developed:

The life of every child will be perfectly organised, perfectly attended to. They will go to nursery school in the morning—quite early—and will return to their homes late in the afternoon. And when they reach the age to attend first grade, their entire lives will be then organised around the school (p. 112).

What does it mean, to educate? It means preparing man from the birth of his awareness to fulfil his most elemental social duties, to produce the material and spiritual goods which society needs, and to produce them as an obligation equal to all (p. 120-1).

The (understandably) most-frequently cited source of detailed information about Cuban early childhood care and education is the book (25) published in 1974 by an American educationist who lived in Cuba for a year (1968-69), and made a short return visit in 1971. It is clearly impossible to provide here a satisfactory précis of a 200-page, 60,000-word volume—nor would it be a satisfactory solution to seek the formal permission of author and publisher for the use here of several substantial *verbatim* extracts. I can therefore only draw the attention of interested readers to it, while myself

indicating some of the features of the Cuban system there described which exemplify some of the strategies and tactics put forward earlier in this booklet.

Foremost among these is the adoption by Cuba of what I called the 'unitary structure' model of responsibility for the provision of ECCE to all children. In this connection, it is very important to stress the probably unique feature that this unitary approach does not involve governmental ministries, either singly or in combination: the whole enterprise has been entrusted to the Federation of Cuban Women—including the direction of the Children's Institute, responsible for scientific research and for raising the standards throughout the country of both service delivery and personnel training.

This last feature served to focus attention on what is to me the other outstanding feature of the Cuban approach from the very outset: it accepted the necessity for relying on largely para-professional staffing for its day-care centres. They are not called teachers, nor considered to be teachers; they are 'assistants', and in the large centres characteristic of urban areas with capacity for 120-150 children, there are about twenty assistants and one fully-trained teacher. All assistants (by 1974) were receiving in-service training, and by that date all new recruits had a minimal formal education level of eight years. Their selection was—and probably still is—more critically based on their apparent suitability for the work in terms of personal qualities and real interest in working with very young children.

Other potentially useful ideas

As mentioned in the introductory section, I have encountered a few examples of current practice in countries located within the 'European' ECCE framework which might prove useful in other cultural settings. These are now listed in this concluding section, some extremely briefly, others at somewhat greater length.

New Zealand. The ECCE services in this country are characteristically more part-day than full-day, and more dependent on voluntary involvement (mainly of mothers) than is usual. They are also widely dispersed over rural areas, some of which are thinly populated. A valuable feature of the existing provision has been the roving field-workers—trained and experienced advisers provided by the

Ministry of Education—and in recent years calls have become more frequent and more insistent for their numbers to be further increased (26).

Hungary. The following is taken from this country's contribution (27) to the Unesco studies on working mothers and their rôle in early childhood education:

Following preliminary experiments, since 1974 we have gradually introduced in the educational institutions of Hungary (primary and secondary schools) the subject of 'Training for Family Life'. As a matter of fact, this is not a separate subject in the curriculum, but a guided conversation and discussion whose topics are centrally set. The topics are: healthy sex life; sex hygiene and biology; the moral and social problems of love and of the choice of a partner; the modern interpretation of family contacts and rôles; modern housekeeping. Great assistance is given in this work by medical experts, such as school physicians, paediatricians and gynaecologists. In addition, the teachers may turn to psychologists and sociologists also for help. This type of assistance is often forthcoming from the Parents' Associations, which work to help the parents at large accept school instruction for sound family life.

The young people usually welcome the chance to have organized conversations on topics of this kind and are glad to receive additional information. The majority of the parents also agree about the need for sex instruction. There are, however, also reservations and a certain amount of outright anxiety in this context.

The problem is somewhat different for the educationalists. Earlier this problematology was not a part of teachers' training. The knowledge necessary for handling this type of class lesson is only now being built into the curriculum of the teachers' colleges. Therefore, for the time being, the methodology of these classes is taught to teachers at various courses and forms of further training, and different types of written material are published to prepare teachers for giving class hours in family life.

Finland. In the main text (p. 43), I stated that the most recent information concerning the evolution of staff-training policy under the Child Care Act would be found in this Appendix. As of September 1978, the proposals currently before the 'cultural committee' of Government Ministers (including two each from Education and from Social Affairs) are as follows.

There should be two categories of staff for day-homes—pre-primary teachers and day-care assistants. Both categories would have responsibility for planning and implementing care and education. The assistants would be trained (2 years) in the pre-primary teacher training institutes, from a basic level of completed ordinary secondary (comprehensive) education. Candidates who have either (a) completed the upper secondary school course with university matriculation, or (b) have already obtained the ‘assistant’ certificate, would be eligible for the (present) two-year pre-primary teacher course, either in a teacher training college or in a university education department. It is also recommended that this two-year course be extended to three years. Qualified pre-primary teachers would be able if they wished to continue their studies for a basic university degree, with one year’s remission.

USA. Attention is drawn to the kind of absolutely *basic, down-to-earth thinking* to be found in Chapter 11 of reference (28). It is concerned entirely with the ideas for developing an ‘equipment project’ among largely illiterate or semi-literate communities where efforts were being made to launch a co-operative pre-school programme.

United Kingdom. Two mature women students, one from Anglophone Cameroon, the other a Nigerian working in Zambia, who spent a year on the Child Development Course at the University of London, both saw possibilities in their experience of what is known in London as ‘The One O’Clock Clubs’. These are playgroups for under-fives, accompanied by their mothers, which are located in public parks, and are open from 1300-1630 every weekday. They are free, the finance for the playrooms, equipment and staff (play-leader and two assistants) being provided by the municipal authorities from public funds.

Both students are now back in Cameroon and in Zambia respectively, and the latter is working full-time for the city council in the capital (Lusaka) and as a consultant to the Pre-school Association of Zambia (29).

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