THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

This Chapter presents a brief history of the development of adult education in various countries including India. Focus is on the same in Kerala also.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Since the end of Second World War, most countries experience an explosion of adult education programmes carried out by governmental, non-governmental and international organisations. At the same time there have been international efforts developed by national governments to elaborate common agendas for the sector. Today, adult education has grown into a major concern of policy for economic, human, and sustainable development. The World Bank officially declared that no growth could be possible without basic education. Report of UNDP on human development has declared basic education as an indicator of a country’s development. Findings on citizenship and democracy have pointed out that contemporary society cannot function effectively without adult basic education. Basic education is a priority to ensure equity for all. It stressed to take into account complementary policies for adult learning, basic education for children and school leavers. Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in 1997 (CONFINTEA V) in Hamburg emphasised the need of guaranteeing the right to basic education for all. Whatever their age, have an opportunity, individually and collectively, to realise their potential, not only a right, but also a responsibility to others and
to the society as a whole. The effective participation of men and women in every field of life is desirable to meet the challenges of the future. Adult education thus becomes more than a right; it is a key to the twenty-first century. It is both a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society (UNESCO, 1997). In many countries, the first step in adult education is fundamentally stressed on imparting basic literacy skills. More than literacy adult education encompasses reading, writing and numeracy, and also includes the competencies, knowledge and expertise required to improve living and working conditions to meet collective needs of the local community.

Adult literacy activities vary from one country to another. This is chiefly due to the diversity of organisations, associations, agencies and departments dealing with different forms of adult education. In some countries adult education programmes were imposed from above and focus on what the Government considered necessary. Students and educated persons are carrying out the adult education programme in some of the countries by and large on a voluntary basis. The rapid changes now occurring in all the countries require knowledge and skills to be updated continuously. The very concept of adult basic education is reconsidered as an important component of lifelong education in many countries. Very often in practice adult education remained outside educational policy and budget and has not been given the necessary priority in these developing countries. Growth in the number of illiterates and their proportion and the world population is due mainly to the rapid expansion of formal education and especially primary schooling in most of the developing countries.
The principal organizers of many successful literacy campaigns in developing countries are non-governmental organizations, most of which operate on a small scale. But many countries do not take sufficient advantage and support of non-governmental organisations. The roles of non-governmental organisation cause a concern in some countries. Many countries after the Jomtien Conference explored channels for extra resources for education and to set up permanent infrastructure. There is one most striking aspects of adult education in many countries which is its relative isolation from other domain within and beyond the broad field of education. There must be improved connections between those working in adult education and those in other sectors of formal and non-formal education. In some countries spectacular results have been achieved because of political will and commitment and real national priority. In Bangladesh Primary and Mass Education Division was created in 1993 primarily to promote primary and mass education effectively throughout the country.

The developing countries differ from each other with regard to co-ordination and implementation, policies and plans of adult education. In some countries adult education is recognised as integral part of the total education system. Adult education is not differentiated as a separate component of the education sector in some of those countries. In some of the countries the role of adult education/non-formal education body assumes some major responsibility for offering adult education programmes. In India, Pakistan and Bangladesh massive education campaigns have been launched and the role of the Government agency is essentially that of coordinating the various
activities. The countries where central planning is strong and where national campaigns have been launched tend to centralise administration, curriculum and materials development, training and so forth. Decentralisation is seen mostly in those countries that are relying on voluntary adult education agencies.

In almost all developing countries major thrust was given towards the rural people and less to the urban poor. The acquisition of literacy skills appears as a major programme area for several countries. Each country has a different approach but common features are development of literacy skills. Functional literacy like agricultural techniques, health care etc. aimed at development, creation of civic awareness among the poor, and vocational oriented programmes are significant components in Bangladesh, Nepal and in some of the countries. In many countries mass approaches, emphasising mobilisation and participation are common key strategies although the particular approaches vary from country to country. Political commitment plays a key role in some countries. The role of women as both learners and teachers, their effective access to adult education opportunities, and balance between leisure and work oriented adult education were questions of concern to all countries.

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living and working conditions to meet collective needs of the local community.

**Algeria** has taken adult education as priority, since 1962 enshrined as a right in the Constitution. National Center for Literacy and Adult Education drew up the country’s long term strategy for adult literacy, concentrates on quality education. Literacy rates for women and men in Algeria stood 51 and 75 percent respectively in 1999-2000. The programme run by the Centre National d’Alphabetisation, has integrated health education, environmental education, agricultural know-how, economics, social values and life skills into adult literacy. Another literacy programme in Algeria run by Iqraa’ and Association National de Planification Familial, achieved an increase in the literacy rate in rural areas, and of women and girls in particular Iqraa’ established many centres across the country to educate school dropouts. The programmes offered are to provide formal education in order to re-integrate them into the system. Iqraa’ also set up literacy and adult education centers exclusively for women (UNESCO, 2003).

In **Bahrain** the Ministry of Education put together a plan for illiteracy eradication targeting the over 10 years of age. The purpose, in addition to eradicating illiteracy, is to provide them with the skills necessary for personal and professional development, including human and citizenship rights education. Part of the plan’s orientation is the development of an integrated educational system for adults that combines formal and non-formal educational curricula aimed at enhancing the quality and relevance of adult education programmes closely linking them to social and economic
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development needs. The Government is also directing its efforts towards women by facilitating their enrolment in flexible programmes offered in the afternoons and evenings for those who cannot attend daytime classes. This measure was instrumental in curbing the numbers of women dropping out of literacy courses. Additional conveniences for women include supervised childcare facilities within literacy centres. Health, nutrition, family life skills, child care awareness programmes are also part of literacy curricula for women (UNESCO, 2002; 2003).

In Bangladesh, the role of non-formal education in national development and goals of individual self-realisation point to factors such as operational and management lessons of programme experience including objectives and scope of non-formal concept of basic literacy, post-literacy and continuing education; criteria of internal efficiency, external effectiveness and relevance. Two continuing education (PLCE) projects are designed to serve 3.2 million completers of the Total Literacy Movement supported by the International Development Association (IDA) and Swiss Development Co-operation (SDC), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Department for International Development (DFID). The objective of PLCE-I (supported by IDA/SDC) is consolidation of literacy followed by application of literacy skills in skill training for income generation for 1.6 million neo-literates, who completed the basic literacy course, in 230 upazilas. The NGOs or other service providers have made training at 6,900 centres in upazilas. Similarly PLCE-II (supported by ADB/DFID) project was launched with an objective to
increase literacy leading to higher income generating capacity (Ahmed and Lohani, 2001)

Adult education in **Bhutan** has been conceived as an important part of the religious life. Government is committed to adult education in order to enable the increasing participation of the population in the country’s development activities and to strengthen the country’s culture. The broad objectives of education sector are in line with national development objectives of improving the quality of life, developing human resources and facilitating meaningful participation. The country envisaged using community school for adult literacy and non-formal educational programmes (Royal Government of Bhutan, Planning Commission, 1991)

**In Brazil**, the illiteracy issue has mobilized Brazilian intellectual leaders since the Republic was established. Laws have been passed and campaigns have been launched to deal with the problem. Since the end of the nineteenth century, educators, politicians and journalists have been decrying the high illiteracy rates prevailing in the country as a national shame and demanding strong actions from the Government to eradicate this evil from the Brazilian society. Hence the programmes for youth and adult education, the so-called EJA, have been promoted. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, several studies stressed the need for EJA to become part of a specific policy devised and planned around the universe of young people and working adults. The government has expanded programs for the education of youths and adults, in order to provide educational opportunities to all individuals who had no access to the school system at the proper age. Actions focused on eradicating
illiteracy, such as the Solidarity in Literacy Actions Program, are part of a set of policies aimed at increasing the availability of special primary education opportunities through the expansion of professional education programs. It is a huge joint effort being made at all governmental levels and by non-governmental organizations, businesspersons and unions. The Brazilian Literacy Movement for Youths and Adults, in 1985, and since then had been responsible for establishing pedagogic guidelines for EJA on a national scale. In 1990, the government proposed the National Literacy and Citizenship Programme (PNAC), for rooting out illiteracy and making regular primary education universal than on EJA policies. Another initiative was to offer the award “Education for Quality in Work” in 1996, with the aim of recognizing the value of, and lending a society dimension to, successful experiences carried out by the business sector and by governmental and non-governmental organizations. Government attention to EJA was consolidated in 1997 with the following publications 1) A Proposed Curriculum for Youth and Adult Education 2) Elements for a Diagnostic Evaluation of the Situation and Contents of Adult Literacy 3) Manual for the Implementation of the Youth and Adult Primary Education Program, to form support material for EJA students and teachers (Hilaire 2001)

Similarly, Education Strategic Plan (ESP) of Cambodia envisages an easily accessible and high quality service, which is available to all as a means of enabling economic growth, improved employment prospects and income-generating opportunities. The Plan identifies education as necessary to improve family wealth and nutrition, family planning, and to ‘engendering
democratic traditions’. The need to make education more available, and the education system more inclusive, is indisputable (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports MoEYS, 2001)

China’s Guidelines for the Reform and Development of Education in China, specified that by the year 2000 illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults should be eradicated, with illiteracy rates reduced to less than 5 percent. Moreover, rural adult education should be energetically developed through cultural and technical schools for adults so as to raise the quality of the rural work force. In a more detailed suggestion for implementing the guidelines it was stipulated that in urban and rural areas, there should be a proportion of gainfully employed people receiving job-related training of diverse forms in each year. The policy further clarified that by the year 2000, the peasants' cultural and technical schools should be set up and operate year-round in most townships and villages. In 1994, National Conference on Education decided universalisation of 9-year compulsory schooling for eradicating illiteracy among adults. State Education Commission set the target that by the year 2000, a three tier network of cultural and technical schools for peasants should be established in all towns and in 85 percent of the villages. The Education Law of the People's Republic of China promulgated in 1995 stated that people's governments at various levels, grassroots autonomous mass organisations, enterprises and institutions should take all possible measures to carry out literacy education programs. The State Education Commission also formulated the regulations on Demonstrative Township Cultural and Technical Schools for adults. In 1999 Deepening Education
Reforms and Promoting Essential-Qualities-Oriented (EQO) Education in a holistic way was promulgated and the Ministry of Education drew up the Action Scheme for Invigorating Education towards the 21st Century. An integrated approach was adopted for development of primary education, literacy education, post-literacy and continuing education. Efforts were made to bring the content of rural adult education in line with the needs of the learners in their production work and daily life to help the rural people to become prosperous and serve the needs of local economic and social development. In the 1990s, literacy education and rural adult education have made big strides in China with significant achievements. According to available data, in the period from 1990 to 1998, 45,030,000 people became neo-literate. The adult illiteracy rate was reduced from 22.27 to 14.5 percent, and the illiteracy rate among the age group 15-50 was reduced from 10.38 to 5.5 percent. However China ranks second in the world in total number of illiterates, and according to the United Nations is one of the nine big developing countries with the largest illiterate populations. Therefore, China bears the responsibility to eradicate illiteracy as a priority task (Wang & Zhang, 1999)

In Egypt General Organization of Literacy and Adult Education has been established during 1992. The Organization started carrying out various planning responsibilities as well as the executive, educational and coordinating efforts among different institutions involved in the implementation of the National Plan of Literacy and Adult Education scheduled for the decade (1992-2001) through its branches in 26 governorates
in 251 educational *idaras*, covering 1,047 main villages and 20,945 hamlets. In 1989 President Mubarak declared the 1990s a National Decade for Literacy and Adult Education. Ministry of Education, in addition to the General Organization of Literacy, is making major efforts to eradicate illiteracy in rural areas and the places deprived of educational services. According to the 1996’s population figures, the national illiteracy rate stands at 38.6 per cent. The gender disparity was very pronounced, with a female illiteracy rate of 50.2 per cent, as compared to 29 per cent for males. In 1999, the illiteracy rates were reduced to 45 per cent for females and 24 percent for males, maintaining an unchanged gender gap of about 21 percentage points. The main objectives of literacy in Egypt are to provide illiterates with the basic skills of reading; writing and arithmetic that enable them cope with the professional levels of the various institutions and participate in the different fields of comprehensive development. In addition, they are provided with necessary skills and experiences for vocational fields as well as the basic knowledge included in the different subjects of primary education. Among other objectives of literacy are reviving and emphasizing the traditional social trends of the Egyptians and intensifying their application through various every day life activities, while formulating sound attitudes towards continuing education and self-learning skills. Illiterates are supposed to reach the level of primary education certificates as a compulsory stage from where they can proceed to the higher educational stages. The National Plan of Literacy targeted illiterates aged 15 to 35 years up to December 1998. Illiterates who are above 35 years old are left free to choose either to be educated or not, while giving priorities to the most deprived categories.
The programme of voluntary literacy through free contracts has been executed lately with 5,000 contractors helping 100,000 persons become literates. The programme included the following. Organization of mobile educational caravans for villages and remote areas in which thinkers and intellectuals participate to raise awareness on the importance of literacy and encourage illiterates to join the classes. 400 caravans were sent to villages and hamlets. Inviting businessmen to combat illiteracy of the citizens of their villages, through establishment of a complex including educational, vocational, cultural, health and sport centers, as a kind of social investment in their societies. Use of the television channels and broadcasting as a teaching aid for distance education, through the introduction of literacy lessons and educational drama, thus covering all governorates at various periods to enable illiterates follow them, regardless of time or place. Preparation for receiving the transmission of the thematic Nile Sat literacy educational channel (Egyptian Nile-Sat). Supporting and generalizing the pilot experiences of NGOs in literacy and adult education fields, to maximize the role played by community participation in literacy fields. Encouraging self-learning through recording literacy lessons on tapes and distributing them free with literacy books. Printing Braille literacy books to serve blind illiterates. The establishment of multi-purpose centres for literacy, vocational training, library, kindergarten and health care. Opening literacy classes in prisons, orphanages, health units, women clubs, accommodation institutions, worship institutions, youth centers, public clubs and even in homes. Study is conducted at times suitable for the students. Teachers were provided. Notebooks and educational aids were distributed freely. Preparation and
qualification of 121,758 literacy class teachers during the period 1993-99; the
total number of supervisors and inspectors amounted to 7,630 trainees. Using
new encouraging catch words such as the “educated village” and the
“educated family” to encourage self-learning. Pioneer women, as well as the
educated women, and agricultural and health care guides were asked to help
eradicate the illiteracy of rural women. Other innovative actions have also
been undertaken in the fields of curricula development, of evaluation and
assessment of performance, of co-operation and co-ordination between the
Organization and the various institutions participating in the efforts of literacy
and adult education. In order to enhance linkages between literacy
programmes and vocational training to provide illiterates with vocational
skills, the Organization provides them with training for some handicrafts,
according to their individual abilities and desires, with the aim of increasing
production and improving the living standard of the families (Hilaire, 2001).

In Indonesia, the People’s Consultative Assembly of Indonesia has
stressed for improving work productivity, generation of employment
opportunities and development programmes in field of education to bridge the
gap between the haves and the have-nots. These new efforts intended to
abolish ignorance of the Indonesian national language and to raise the level of
basic education. This is one of the reasons why literacy education in
Indonesia has been successful in reducing the estimated number of 21 million
illiterates in 1977 to less than 4 million by the mid-1990s. The main
programme is Learning Kejar Packet Programme for illiterates or primary
school dropouts. Learning Kejar Packet A have not only to catch up in terms
of literacy, but should also form a learning group and learn together and earn a living while utilising their leisure time to learn. The success of the programme is the integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes in content, graded material, learning by doing, a delivery system tuned to daily habits and situations of learners, openness and flexibility, and mutual assistance social system - or the system of volunteerism. Learners are, first motivated under the pre-literacy programme and then learning packet A-1 is introduced until the learners master up to A-20 of the literacy programme. The materials from A-21 to A-100 come under the post-literacy programme. Packet 'A' consists of 100 booklets structured into 22 levels of difficulties. The contents, knowledge, skills and attitudes are very closely linked to real life situation while reading, writing and arithmetic are integrated. The knowledge, attitude and skills introduced in Packet A are not just to be known and understood but also to be utilised and practiced for quality of life improvement viz. dress making, vegetable growing, fish breeding, chicken- raising etc. A unique feature of the programme is that it opens the learners to new ideas such as motivating the members of the armed forces to participate both as tutors as well as facilitators of the Learning. Successful completion of Kejar Pakat A is considered equivalent to elementary education. Kejar Usaha is the name for Income Generating Learning groups. These groups consist of three to ten members and typically function at the village level. Those who have completed Kejar Pakat A are admitted to this programme (Bhola, 1994; Handa, 1997).
Investment in education and the strong political will have paid off well in **Jordan**. Between 1960 and 2000, pro-education government policies raised the literacy rate from 33 to 95 per cent for men and 85.4 percent for women. Although there remains a gender gap, policies and programmes have been put in place to close the gap by the year 2010. Additionally, Jordan remains committed to the complete eradication of illiteracy and is working through national literacy programmes focusing in particular on women and rural areas. Evening classes, home study programmes and summer courses have been organized to provide post-literacy or continuing education for the newly literate. These programmes were being run through various ministries and a number of NGOs and civil society organizations. These programmes are characterized by their flexibility and their ability to respond to the life and professional needs of learners (UNESCO, 2003).

In **Korea**, the expansion of regular colleges and universities, the introduction of distance education systems and the continuing practice of college entrance examinations have resulted in a situation where applicants outnumber available places - by 200,000 every year. In order to overcome this, the Bachelor's Degree Examination Programme for the Self-Educated (BDEPS) was created after a law by the same name enacted in 1990. BDEPS not only contributes to the psychological happiness of adult learners but also helps the economic and social status of non-degree holders by conferring on them an academic degree. Applicants are expected to pass the 4-stage examination system to acquire a Bachelor's Degree. The first examination is the Qualifying Examination for Liberal Arts, which evaluates the liberal arts
and science knowledge required in regular college. The 2nd stage, Qualifying Examination for Major-Basic, evaluates common knowledge and skills on the major area required for scholarly research. In the 3rd stage of Qualifying Examination for Major-Advanced, a more sophisticated evaluation on the major area knowledge and skills is conducted. Lastly, the Comprehensive Examination is the 4th stage, which evaluates general & subject area knowledge and professional skills (Baik, 1999). Similarly, Credit Bank System (CBS) is an open educational system, which recognises diverse learning experiences. When the learner accumulates the necessary CBS approved credits, he/she can be awarded a degree from Credit Bank. Credit Bank System, as a central agency for continuing education, aims to provide all citizens with greater access to a variety of educational opportunities and to foster a lifelong learning society. The Credit Bank System accredits a variety of educational programmes, with the goal of guaranteeing open and flexible access to quality continuing education. CBS also grants recognition to learners' diverse learning experiences, including prior course credits and other diverse forms of learning. Credits are acquired primarily through educational and job training institutions, part-time enrollment, certificate acquisition, and subjects passed by the Bachelor's Degree Exam. Under Accreditation of Educational Programme, Non-formal educational institutions are formally evaluated on the basis of instructors, facilities and curriculum. Examples of conditions that must be met include the following: Instructors must possess at least the same qualifications as a fulltime professor at a junior college. There must be a sufficient number of instructors and the total teaching hours per instructor should not exceed 18 hours a week. Classrooms should be larger
than 1.0 m² per student and additional facilities should include a laboratory, administrative office, counseling office, and library. Other provisions may apply, as dictated by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MOE). Programmes must comply with the standardised curriculum for each subject, as defined by Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI). Credit Bank System is equipped with a comprehensive information service system. This computer-based system provides learners with access to their personal record and CBS credit history.

**Kuwait** has one of the highest literacy rates in the Arab world at 74%. This is primarily due to the fact that all education, including formal and non-formal education, is free. However, access to these programmes does not extend to the large contingent of foreign workers in the country (UNESCO, 2003).

The **Lebanon**, the country developed a comprehensive three-year plan (2000-2003) for illiteracy eradication. The plan included: Developing and strengthening the capacity of civil society and non-governmental organizations, in order to increase their effectiveness and allow them a greater role in illiteracy eradication, articulating and developing a national educational programme for adults, developing new educational materials for illiterate people, which would help them in conducting their daily lives, developing a proposal for the production of new books that would include exercises dealing with daily, practical, useable life skills, a plan for better and more effective coordination between the Ministry and other concerned organization and ministries. Association for human development and literacy
(ALPHA) as well as University Students for Literacy have taken up various programmes to give basic knowledge of health, environment issues (UNESCO, 2003).

Home schooling and family education in Libya were used as effective means to provide basic education to out-of-school children and literacy to parents. Use of radio and television were the most effective means of reaching these populations. The programme was a concerted cooperative effort by the ministries of education, culture, information, social affairs, health, and agriculture, as well as the collaboration of civil and international organizations. By 2000 there were 28,435 individuals registered in the home schooling programme and being monitored by education experts. The programme was deemed successful and is being continued with the same attention. Another important initiative was “free collaborative education and training programme”, which incorporates the goals of Education for All and non-formal, self-directed adult education for life-long learning (UNESCO, 2000; 2003).

The need for adult learning in Malaysia began to be realised in the 1970s as seen from the emphasis given by the New Economic Policy (1971-1990) and the 5-Year Malaysian plans. Private firms and Government agencies established training institutions. Adult learning is provided in industrial, agricultural and community development sectors for the rural poor. To realise the vision of productivity-oriented economy, private sector participation in adult leaning was taken up through strategies including the setting up of the Human Resources Development Fund in 1993. A special
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programme was formulated to develop and train *bumiputera*, who are indigenous Malay communities of the country. The stress is given to assist the entry of *bumiputera* entrepreneurs into business as well as developing a viable competitive and resilient small and medium entrepreneur group. Private sector participation in training programmes for their employees was promoted and facilitated in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s the government took measures to improve accessibility in order to increase participation in educating through distance-learning programme as stipulated in the Seventh Malaysia Plan. Second-chance education has materialised in the country to provide opportunities for advanced education and career enrichment for the adults who missed opportunities through the initial education system. Distance education supported by instructional technology to particularly address the challenge of providing access for adult learning, especially among the people in the rural areas, neglected areas in the city, women and disadvantaged groups was provided. Government regulations such as the Human Resource Development Fund influence the participation of the employees of many organisations. The focus of contemporary adult education is related to personal growth and development and occupational and career related education. The providers in education and training from all sectors have aligned initiatives with the national agenda set by the Government (Muhamad 2001a). The main thrust of adult education was to improve productivity and income of the small holder through extension programmes and farmers' training. Many training centres were built in the early 1970s in the area of fisheries and management of land development. The other aspect of adult learning in the agricultural extension services is the transfer of agricultural
technologies to farmers. Many agencies are involved in providing extension services to farmers based on commodity specialisation. With the introduction of the National Agricultural Policy (1984-2000) and the new National Agricultural Policy (1992-2010) launched in 1992, focus was given to the development of entrepreneurs among the farmers (Muhamad, 2001b).

The latest statistics issued by the government of Mauritania in 2002, clearly illustrate the wide discrepancy between urban and rural literacy for both genders. Literacy for men in urban areas stands at 82.8% while rural men’s literacy stands at 52.4%. The same is true of women, who enjoy a literacy rate of 71.7% and 41.2% in urban and rural areas respectively. In this context, Mauritania is working on raising awareness of the importance of education and literacy among rural communities (UNESCO, 2003).

The Programme for Educational Development of Mexico laid down that basic education for adults would be guided towards the acquisition and the revitalization of knowledge and fundamental abilities. This implies the acquisition of useful knowledge, such as elementary principles of health and hygiene, prevention of illness and household problem; it should encourage diverse forms of skills training and the development of aptitudes needed to carry out a productive activity; and the promotion of values for the full exercise of human rights and participation in a democratic life. Adult and non-formal education consists of special programmes for illiterates and for adults who have not completed their basic education; particular attention is given to initial education activities and ethnic groups are specifically targeted. There are also open and semi-formal systems for technical education and
post-lower-secondary schooling. The National Training Council for the Life and the Work (CONEYT) was created as an alternative education system with the aim of responding effectively to the needs of in-service training expressed by different socio-economic sectors. The Council plays the role of an inter-sectoral committee to ensure the educational guidance for youths and adults who were deprived of formal education. In 1981, different agencies involved in adult education were combined into the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA), which is responsible for the organization and coordination of the different programmes of literacy and basic education for adults. The activities of the institute are based on the 1975 National Law for Adult Education. The institute aims to ensure the relevancy of the literacy process for the beneficiaries and to create a productive relationship between learning and their personal and family development. The literacy and non-formal education programmes aim at reducing illiteracy among the population and to offer alternatives for the completion of primary and secondary education among the adult population. The programmes are formulated by the federal government, but each state may adapt the programme to its own specific requirements. These literacy actions permitted the provision of basic education and skills training to 2.6 million adults in 1998. A distance education for adults programme was started in 1997 to put into action the constitutional commitment making secondary education compulsory. Business enterprises and social organizations offered necessary resources to ensure that the workers and other members of the community finish their secondary education. Several literacy programmes directed to youth and adult populations, developed by the federal government over the past 6 years such
as Alfabetización en español: aims at helping youths and adults to develop their skills in basic mathematics, reading and writing. Alfabetización a grupos indígenas: aims to provide youths and adults from the indigenous population with writing skills in indigenous language and in Spanish. Primaria para jóvenes 10-14: offers the contents of the primary education to children and youths aged 10 to 14 years who did not enroll to the formal education system or who dropped out from schools, Secundaria para adultos: aims at providing the contents of the secondary education to youths and adults who have completed primary education. Modelo de Educación para la Vida, Instituto Nacional de Educación de Adultos: developed for youths and adults who have not completed a basic education programme; it covers initial literacy and basic education. Educación a Distancia para Adultos, Secretaria de Educación Publica, Direccion General de Materiales y Métodos: targets the youth and adult population that has certified 6 years of basic education and that wants to accredit the 7-9 segment. Posprimaria Comunitaria Rural: aimed at the rural population that has completed primary education and offers an open curriculum that develops both academic abilities and locally needed capacities for everyday life (Hilaire, 2001).

To develop non-formal education in Mongolia, the National Non-formal Education Development Programme has made strategies such as increase the literacy education rate; improve the general level of education; implement equivalency programmes; provide vocational education and skills; enhance and promote creativity; and contribute to the development of self-learning. Non-formal Education Centre was started in 1997 to implement the
programme nation-wide. The Centre has the task of implementing government policies on Non-formal Education, improving the curricula, developing handbooks, teaching-learning materials and aids, as well as mobilising material resources, improving skills of the personnel, organising workshops and introducing distance learning. Government implemented the National Distance Education Programme as an important step in developing adult lifelong learning. The programme has a mission of improving efficiency, quality and effectiveness in formal and non-formal education delivery services. It also supports people in getting opportunities for lifelong learning through the national distance education system. This includes coordination of policy and management system, mechanisms for service and activities, capacity building, sufficient, qualitative, effective technical and information infrastructure as well as appropriate media, research, content and methodology. Equivalency programmes for primary school are provided for children, youth, and adults who have never studied at school, basic education to children, young, and adults who have already obtained primary education. Teaching is conducted in secondary schools through face-to-face meetings with teachers and through self-learning (ACCU and APPAL, 2001a).

In Morocco, where roughly 50% of the population is illiterate, the government has been collaborating with both the private sector and NGOs with a target of reducing the illiteracy rate of the 16 and above population by half by the year 2010. The government of Morocco has also signed a Learning and Innovation Loan agreement with the World Bank aimed at supporting the NGO literacy initiatives which have had, according to the world Bank, the
highest levels of enrollment and which target the most marginalized groups in society such as the poor and women in rural area (UNESCO, 2003).

In Myanmar, a national literacy policy, has been adopted in order to reduce the adult illiteracy rate by half, from 22 to at least 11 percent in the 1990s, the programme is organized through non-formal education. In the context of Myanmar, non-formal education refers to any organised educational activity outside the structure and routine of the formal school system to provide selected types of learning to sub-groups in population, especially out of school youth and adults. Programmes of non-formal education cover the activities such as: literacy; training for tackling common socio-economic problem; occupational skills for raising productivity in agricultural and industrial sector; supplementing formal education or providing an alternative to it; and entrepreneurship. The target groups for non-formal education include the rural population, school dropouts and out-of-school youths, unemployed, under-employed and under-privileged youths, and handicapped persons. While the Departments of Basic Education and the Department of Education Planning and Training are responsible for conducting formal education programmes, the Myanmar Education Research Bureau (MERB) is responsible for NFE programmes to create community-based literacy groups, which are self-sustaining and linked by a nation-wide network. The local authority and community have carried out the programmes and mobilised local resources. Local literacy committees at the ward and village level served as focal points to organize learning centres. The Non-formal Education Committee is Township Committees, technical team and the
information team. Further, the fund-raising team collected donations and other sources of funding. The programmes included in Education for All and Non-formal Education which are basic literacy, post literacy, functional literacy, income generation programmes and quality of life improvement programmes. Continuing programmes formed had given priority for future development by governments and NGOs, various UN agencies, private sectors. Myanmar educationists, and experts from UNESCO and financed by UNDP, initiated Non-formal Primary Education Programme (NFPE) in 1998 to improve access, quality, and equity in education and started some project areas in 2000-2001. The project aimed to produce a literate and numerate population that can deal with problems at home and at work; and to serve as a foundation upon which further education can be built. NFPE’s aim is to achieve EFA goals by offering a second chance for education to the younger age group (10-14 years) who missed the opportunity to complete formal primary education. The Myanmar concept of continuing education is adopted as a broad concept of education, which includes all forms of lifelong learning. The starting point of continuing education is the place where formal education ceases to be in a position to provide time for further learning opportunities for citizen in the country. Post Literacy, Income Generation and Quality of Life Improvement Programmes have been carried out in Community Learning Centres (CLCs). Future Oriented Programmes and Equivalency Programmes are under preparation. Continuing education via CLCs includes: mobilising local resources with ‘for them, with them, by them’ concept; ensuring sustainability of programme through strong will and community participation; basing programmes on the realities and needs of the community; and networking
between governmental, non-governmental, and international organisations. There are 135 CLCs in the Mandalay Division. Income generation activities entail cash loans through revolving funds and various types of skill-based training. Many families in low socio-economic groups shift to the middle economic group. Future plans include increasing the quantity of CLCs and promoting the quality of activities. The literacy rate is currently 94.69 percent. The factors for success include choosing the right key persons; relevant approaches (sometimes IGP first, literacy second and vice versa); strong partnership between local authorities, central government, NGOs, the private business sector and communities; sufficient financial and technical support and finally encouragement and support of local authorities and leaders, and a strong commitment by NFE personnel. The Century Resource Centre and Resource Centre for Ancient Manuscripts were opened in Yangton and Mandalay in 2000 and 2001 respectively to further promote continuing and further education. They can enable researchers from both Upper and Lower Myanmar to conveniently conduct research. The New Century Resource Centres with e-Education learning centres, e-Education resource centres, computer training centres, language labs and shops that sell computer related books and equipment are providing access to the general public to e-Education giving them the opportunity to attend a broad range of ICT related courses (Tin Nyo, 1999; ACCU and APPEAL, 2001a).

Adult education in Nepal consists of a basic literacy programme, a functional literacy programme and a non-formal education programme of the same duration. Two kinds of approaches to offering adult education were
adopted in Nepal. First, a functional approach in which high schools with a vocational basis were selected to provide functional literacy classes and skills training in agriculture, health, family planning, home science and crafts. Secondly, a less structured and less formal approach was taken in providing adult education in workplaces with the help of interdisciplinary resource teams. An ‘integrated’ non-formal education approach has also been developed as a part of rural development programmes. The whole programme is oriented toward increasing functional literacy. In Nepal many of the skill training programmes come under non-formal education. The Ninth Five-Year Plan was completed at the end of the year 2002. This plan aimed to increase the literacy rate to 70 percent among the population above 6 years of age. Nepal has also set a goal of *eradicating illiteracy* by the end of the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012-2017). This has given emphasis to strengthening the organisational structure of NFE, training of NFE human resources, material development, mobilisation of local resource and support, improvement in programme delivery approach, and the creation of linkages and expansion of agencies that implement NFE programmes. Apart from the Ministry of Education as the supreme body, the policy formulation for non-formal education takes place through the National NFE Council. The Council established the Non-Formal Education Centre (NFEC) to carry out NFE programmes for children, youth and adults who have been deprived of access to any non-formal educational activity due to various socio-economic reasons. The government of Nepal has committed to improve the literacy situation in the country in accordance with the targets set by EFA – to achieve a literacy rate of 90 percent by 2015. The current literacy rates show steady
improvement. It could be now assumed that the problem of illiteracy lies more on the current population. Since enrolment in schools has improved, a higher proportion of upcoming adults is likely to be literate.

The literacy and micro-finance programme in Nepal offers micro-credit small scale lending - combining literacy teaching which is enabling participants to establish and operate their own village-level banks. The learning strategy propagates that women's groups first learn literacy and then use workbooks to teach themselves to set up local village banks. These in turn make loans to local enterprises run by women in the group, all the while keeping loan dividends within the group. The process starts with the formation of a women's literacy group. Once the group achieves literacy, it moves on to a second workbook, ‘Forming Our Village Bank’, which leads the women through step-by-step process of establishing their own bank as in the example of the village of Thakali Chowk. The groups learn to use the full range of record keeping forms and tools used by banks everywhere, from individual savings passbooks to accounting ledgers. Other workbooks teach the women how to set up small businesses. A third element of the programme, beyond literacy and banking, is to encourage social action by the groups. Separate funding and support from the Asia Foundation has enabled the establishment of legal rights, responsibilities and advocacy components to the programme. This programme has helped literacy participants in three years (1998-2000) to initiate local social campaigns against problems like alcohol abuse, domestic violence, child labour and trafficking of young girls (Bahai International Community, 2001).
In Nigeria, mass literacy, adult and non-formal education encompasses all forms of functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school system, such as functional literacy, remedial education and vocational education. Adult education activities have started informally in Nigeria by Islamic scholars and traders, the Christian missions and the freed slaves from Freetown, Sierra Leone since the eleventh century. The British colonial office recognized these efforts in its Memorandum on Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, published in 1925, which recommended the implementation of an adult education programme in the African continent. In 1930, the colonial government in Nigeria accepted the recommendation and, in 1943, published a document on the subject. Actual implementation started in 1944, although with great limitations. The training of professional adult educators started in 1965 at the University of Ibadan with the establishment of the African Adult Education Unit. Today, over twenty tertiary institutions offer degree, diploma or certificate programmes in adult education. Nine states of the Federation have also established institutes where frontline workers in the field of adult education and community service are trained. In March 1971, the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) was formed to foster the development of adult education. The council, which is made up of adult educators from public and private agencies, was largely instrumental to the establishment of an adult education section in the Federal Ministry of Education in 1974. It promoted the establishment of Adult Education Divisions in all state Ministries of Education and recommended a ten-year mass literacy campaign for Nigeria, covering the period during 1982-92. In order to facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the ten-year literacy
campaign, it was directed that each state of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja should establish an agency for mass education. Two agencies of the Federal Government – the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures and the Directorate for Social Mobilization were directed to assist the state agencies in implementing the national campaign. The establishment of the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education was partly Nigeria’s reply to the international initiative on EFA. The mandate of the Commission includes to monitor and coordinate activities of National Mass Literacy campaign, to monitor and coordinate the implementation of all activities for the eradication of illiteracy in Africa and ensure the collection and dissemination of information on literacy implementation in the continent; to conduct research in various fields such as curriculum development, learning and teaching methodologies, appropriate education technologies, motivation of learners and instructors, and needs assessments; and to commission special research programmes and pilot projects in mass literacy adult and non-formal education in Nigeria. According to the National Policy on Education, the goals of mass literacy, adult and non-formal education are to provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education, including nomads, migrant families, the disabled and other categories or groups; to provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education; to provide education for categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills; to provide in-service, on-the-job, vocational
and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills and to give the adult citizens of the country the necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment (Hilaire, 2001).

The magnitude of the problem of illiteracy in the region often blinds us to the success stories in Oman the concentration since 1999 has been on closing the literacy gender gap and the geographic disparities. In the area of girls’ and women’s education, where customs and traditions form one of the main barriers, the inclusion of such topics as health, nutrition, family education, life skills, child care and motherhood, have been successful in changing popular attitudes and have secured public acceptance for literacy and education for girls and women. Graduates from literacy programmes are awarded books, dealing with health, civic education, environment, agriculture, history and heritage and other relevant subjects that will allow them to continue learning. The Government has developed a comprehensive, specialized training programme for literacy instructors and a programme of revising, re-writing, adapting and developing books, literacy materials and teaching methods. Collaboration between the government, higher education and civil society has been considered one of the many contributing factors to the success of the project (UNESCO, 2003).

Though adult education had a promising beginning in Pakistan in the Village AID programme initiated in 1954, it was only after the formulation of the 1970 and 1972 educational plans that adult education and literacy activities became more common. Evidence indicates that these plans,
including the 1979 National Education Policy, have had a relatively small impact on the overall literacy rate. The policy has accorded priority to educating out-of-school children and youth through non-formal and participatory methods of education. The policy targeted to raise the literacy rate from the 39 to 55 percent by 2003 and 70 percent by 2010. The salient objectives and policy provisions are: (1) Provision of massive NFE programme on war footing basis to the out-of-school children (5-6) and youth (10-14) to enable them to complete primary education (first five years) cycle in a reduced time of 2-3 years; (2) Provide lasting functional literacy and income generation skills for rural women in the 15-25 age groups; (3) Provide literacy, social, and occupational skill training programmes with appropriate income generating skills for adults and; (4) Expand the facilities and service of middle level education through community involvement and non-formal means. In its policies the Government of Pakistan also emphasises the links between literacy and poverty alleviation. The main features are: (1) The recognition that ‘any attempt to reduce poverty must address illiteracy’ and a commitment to ‘ensuring improved access to education, vocational skills training – that help the poor become productive employees and make them capable of starting their own business ventures on a small scale; (2) Recognition in the Government of Pakistan’s planned reforms 2000, that literacy is a priority, with proposals to use non-formal education to improve literacy at post-school levels, particularly for females; (3) To provide 18 months of training for upto 1.5 million adults, of which two thirds would be female, comprising 12 months of literacy and 6 months of skill training,
through government literacy agencies and NGOs (Bines and Morris, 2000; APPEAL, 2001).

Community schools for girls established in rural areas of Pakistan suggests that involvement by mothers in Village Education Committees first develops the demand for education to be more effective members in those committees, and secondly encourages women to consider their own education, both to support their daughters and develop their own self-esteem and empowerment. Only then does demand arise for education linked to enterprise development. Equally however, a focus on education alone inhibits additional developments which could support school sustainability, including the money available for community contributions to financing school education. For women the main issue in Pakistan is the restriction on entering the open labour market, and the concomitant need to focus on home working and local enterprises. Adult education and vocational skill programmes at the local level also need to be linked to comprehensive national policies on adult education and lifelong learning (Bines and Morris, 2000). The National Literacy Programme, which started in 1983, aimed at reaching 40 million illiterates, achieving a literacy rate of 74 percent by 1993. Pakistan plans to use broadcast education extensively. Accordingly, a formal functional literacy project of the Pakistan television corporation runs a large number of community viewing centres. Important agencies involved in adult education and literacy in Pakistan include the Allama Iqbal Open University, the National Literacy and Mass Education Commission along with the Provincial Councils, the Standing Committee on Adult and Special Education, the
Pakistan Women’s Association, television and radio companies, and the Department of Local Government and Rural Development. Governmental and non-governmental organisations are thus actively involved in promoting adult education and literacy work (Jandhyala and Tilak, 1996).

In Palestine, there was no national programme specific to adult education until 1999, although there is a National Illiteracy Reduction programme. However, adult education is an integral part of the Palestine Education for All National Plan. Policies concerning adult education have not been unified or centralized, but are part of the Ministry of Education and Higher Learning’s priorities. Before 1997 there were very few adult education efforts apart from literacy, which was handled by civil society and non-governmental education. The development of specific programmes and curricula for adult learners was started in 1999. Adult Education in Palestine is a social responsibility and the need to collaborative action is considered of utmost importance. The National Illiteracy Reduction Programme priorities include basic education, literacy, women’s education, and information technology for adults and target refugees, people with special needs, and people in rural areas (UNESCO, 2003).

In pursuit of global development and lifelong learning opportunities, the government of Philippines has developed a blueprint for action known as ‘Education for All: A Philippine Plan of Action’ (EFA-PPA) with fundamental ideas and issues raised in the local and international literacy and continuing education conferences in order to reinforce the concept that education is a never ceasing process, a never-ending lifetime commitment,
hence it is for life and takes place throughout life. This pushes for a learning system that goes beyond the structures and strictures of formal schooling, wherein the world is viewed as a classroom with lifelong learning providing the tools for people’s empowerment. In recognition of the fact that education has increasingly become a lifelong process, the task of providing lifelong learning in Philippines becomes a shared responsibility of both the public and private sectors. One of the features is the institutionalization of the participation of civil society as partners in the implementation and management of non-formal education programmes. The Philippine Constitution provides that the state shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society. Non-formal, informal, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programmes will be encouraged particularly those that respond to community needs. Adult citizens, the disabled, and out-of-school youth shall be provided with training in civics, vocational efficiency, and other skills (Guzman, 2001).

Philippines Mobile Tent School (MTS) offers alternative schooling to groups of ethnic communities in the remotest, oppressed and deprived areas. The Mobile Tent School is an alternative system of schooling adapted to the culture and lifestyle of the ethnic communities. As a condition to preparing a curriculum for them, an ethnographic profile is drawn for each of the seven ethnic tribes under study. A collection of indigenous teaching materials is also a component of the project. Other studies involve identification of the training needs of teachers in deprived areas and the identification of policies that
conflict with the culture of the hill-tribes. The local community collaborates with various government departments in mobilising people and resources on an experimental basis. The mobile tent school project significantly marked the growing interest and concern of the Philippines government to provide opportunities for the ethnic groups through a schooling system to raise their consciousness to knowledge, skills and manpower on which they can build a better life. The Non-Formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) System is a new national NFE equivalency programme of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, which provides an alternative means of learning and certification for basically literate Filipinos and foreigners aged 15 years and above, who are unable to avail of the formal school system or who have dropped out of formal elementary or secondary education. The NFE A&E System was developed with funding assistance from the Asian Development Bank as a component of the Philippines Non-Formal Education Project. The flexible approach to learning gives the learners as much control and choice as possible regarding content and sequence. The NFE A&E System uses also a range of alternative delivery modes in order to maximise the flexibility of the programme. The NFE A&E System specifically targets out-of school youth and adults who are basically literate. The NFE A&E is clearly defined as a second chance education for those who either were unable to avail of the educational services of formal school system, or dropouts (Lasam, 1990).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has number of policies and strategies for adult education both in accordance with international trends and to meet national priorities; emphasis given on women’s education and literacy for the
15 years and over population. Saudi Arabia began to encourage civil society, charitable organizations to play a more prominent role in those two areas, at the same time encouraging the private sector to play an active role in professional skills training and upgrading. The National Literacy Programme of Saudi Arabia is estimated to reach 102,411 people a year of the over 15 population. The ultimate goal of the ten-year plan is to make the Kingdom virtually illiteracy-free by 2013—which coincides with the United Nations Literacy Decade. Parallel, equivalency programmes for literacy programme graduates and for school dropouts are offered in night schools throughout Saudi Arabia. Post-literacy including vocational and technical training programmes are organized. No age limit has been imposed on those who wish to take advantage of literacy classes offered. The certificate for graduates to continue their education in the formal education system in special night classes for men and day classes for women introduced. Radio, television, mosques and community centres are also being used to deliver literacy in Saudi Arabia (UNESCO, 2003).

Adult and non-formal education has been recognised as effective strategies to combat illiteracy and bring about human resource development and social justice in Sri Lanka. Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (1978) has upheld the right of all persons to universal and equal access to education at all levels. The policy lays equal emphasis on elementary and adult education, as both are crucial for eliminating illiteracy. The government has also emphasised extending opportunities for school dropouts and unemployed youth in the community. One of the striking
features of Sri Lankan adult education policy is the inclusion of agricultural extension and co-operative development programmes. Apart from the state institutions, several non-governmental organisations viz. Sarvodya Movement, Sri Lanka Technical Institute, Lanka Mahila Samiti Organisation and Red Cross Society are also actively involved in the operationalisation of adult education policy and programmes, mainly through life-skill and leadership training programmes, husbandry, farming, trade and crafts (Peeris, 2001).

Sudanese Open Learning Organization’s (SOLO) Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) approach on literacy, is primarily targeting refugees in Kesla. The approach involves community members in the development of the literacy lesson through activities related to their development needs. The REFLECT approach uses a combination of the theory of Paulo Freire and the group methods of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to combine the literacy process and the empowering process through people-centred grass roots development. The Distance Education post-literacy programme in Sudan has been described as “one of its kind”. It has been in effect since 1999. “The Distance Education infrastructure is being used to deliver a participatory post literacy programme in Sudan. In 1998 the International Extension College (IEC) formed a partnership with the Sudan Open learning Organisation (SOLO), to develop, raise funds for and implement an ambitious post literacy programme. The aim of the project is to provide educational services to refugees and displaced
people in Sudan. The geographical spread of the programme is enormous (UNESCO, 2003).

**Syria** has an impressive record in combating illiteracy. In the early 1980s, according to Syrian Ministry of Education sources, the illiteracy rate in Syria was close to 58%. By 2000, literacy among the 15 years old and over had reached an estimated 80%. This success is attributed to the implementation of a government policy aimed at “binding the educational process to global development issues in order to meet the challenges”. The approach emphasized technical and scientific skills training along with basic literacy. Based on this policy, a ten-year plan was prepared. At the legislative level, the Syrian government is being very strict about enforcing the compulsory basic education laws and in ensuring that as few as possible students drop out of the formal education system. In the early 1990s, the Syrian Ministries of Education and of Culture redefined the aim of adult education as more than the achievement of basic literacy, but as a first step toward each individual’s opportunity to participate in social and economic growth. A new strategy was developed to include a component of vocational education within the literacy and basic education curriculum for adults, both male and female, as well as a component of science and technology. Literacy programmes were thus revised in 1998. The qualitative development of adult literacy and post-literacy courses has turned towards the linking of reading and writing skills with vocational issues and culture, in order to achieve better results (UNESCO, 2003).
Thailand has explored non-formal education and informal education as a complement to formal education and places it within the overall holistic and integrated lifelong learning framework. The concept has been found very fruitful for Thai citizens. In 1999, the Thai Government passed The National Education Act. Under the Act, ‘Education’ means the learning process for personal and social development through imparting of knowledge; practice; training; transmission of culture; enhancement of academic progress; building knowledge by creating a learning environment and society with factors available conducive to continuous lifelong learning. The Act also states that ‘Credits accumulated by learners shall be transferable within the same type or between different types of education, regardless of whether the credits have been accumulated from the same or from different educational institutions, including learning from non-formal or informal education, vocational training, or from work experience’. These statements show the willingness of the education system in Thailand to open the opportunity to all and consider it as a lifelong learning process. According to the Educational Act, which is in response to the concept of lifelong education, the Thai Government considered the time for Educational Reform. The government emphasized that the education provision shall be based on the principles such as, lifelong education for all; participation of all segments of society in the provision of education; and constant development of the bodies, knowledge and learning process. Further, in organising the system, structure, and process of education, the principles such as, unity in policy and diversify in implementation; decentralisation of authority to educational services areas, educational institutions, and local administration organisations; mobilisation of resources
from different sources for provision of education; partnerships with individuals, families, communities, local administration, private organisations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises and other social institutions are followed (National Education Commission, 1999). Provisions were made to provide early childhood and basic education in early childhood development institutions namely, child care centres, preschool child development centres of religious institutions, initial care centres for disabled children or those with special needs. Basic education also provided learning centres organised by non-formal education agencies, individuals, families, communities, private organisations, religious institutions, enterprises, and other social institutions.

The Department of Non-Formal Education provides the out-of-school and underprivileged population with opportunities to study and improve their occupations and living conditions. The Department's services are organised through the five Regional NFE Centres, 76 provincial NFE centres, 2 vocational training and development centres and 4 Bangkok NFE centres. Courses are offered through these centres to tackle illiteracy and meet vocational training needs in addition to their role in researching, planning and coordinating with other non-formal education agencies. The Department of Non-formal Education has 3 principal missions as follows: 1. Organisation of non-formal education activities and/or services for populations who have missed the chance to pursue their learning in the formal education system and for those populations who are disadvantaged for one reason or another. 2. Providing support and encouragement to programmes and activities
conducted in formal education sector in order to enable them to achieve curriculum goals and objectives. 3. Providing support and encouragement to the population in their pursuits of learning through informal modes in order to help them achieve their learning goals from sources such as families, communities, societies as well as other educational resources that exist in the environment in which they live. The prominent services of non-formal education can be categorized into 3 components: Basic knowledge for subsistence: The activity to be organised under this category are functional literacy programme, the education for special target group, the curriculum of elementary education for hill-tribe inhabitants and the general non-formal education programmes at primary level, lower secondary level and upper secondary level through classroom teaching, distance education and self-instruction. Current news and information services: After being endowed with basic knowledge it is necessary for the people to further acquire up-to-date information regularly in order to improve their life. The activities conducted in this category cover the provision of village reading centre public library, science museum, planetarium, mobile audio-visual education, mobile museum, mobile boat library, etc. Augmentation of knowledge and skills on vocational education: This type of non-formal education activities deals with interest group learning, vocational training of short and long-term, as well as disseminating vocational knowledge through mass media (Department of Non-formal Education and Ministry of Education, 1995)

Integral to the Thai policy on adult education, especially with the functional literacy programme, is the Khitpen approach. It is based on the
philosophy of being in harmony with one's environment. This postulate forms the basis of the different possible courses of action and knowledge in different contexts. Three types of knowledge viz., knowledge about the self, knowledge about the environment - social and physical environment, and technical skill or technical knowledge are crucial. This philosophy has been applied to the Functional Literacy Programme. Didactic materials designed for functional literacy often begin with problems likely to be encountered by the adult in the rural community. Dialogue then ensues among the learners, under the teachers' guidance. Key words are then identified and used as the basis for literacy learning. This humanistic approach to learning uses the dialogical method, which gives each individual the freedom to make a decision after weighing the pros and cons of each solution to the problem. It also follows the andragogical methodology as proposed by Malcolm Knowles. It utilises the experience of the learners in the problem-solving process, as well as focusing on the specific problem likely to be encountered in the rural environment of the learners. However, what distinguishes the Khitpen approach since Thai in the worldview implied in the concept of happiness, belief in the harmony of social realities (Tunsiri, 1989).

The Quality of Life Promotion Project introduced 1980s to meet basic minimum needs of learners. The learning process is based on the Delsilife approach i.e., self-reliance through the organisation of villagers into problem solving groups. Villagers are grouped into different learning groups led by the village education volunteers. The department officials help to train the village education volunteers and later act as facilitators and advisors to the groups.
The promising feature of Delsilife is that these two categories are integrated as necessary elements for the social and economic development of the village community for self-reliance. Such a network of community-based learning needs to be continually maintained and promoted so that they serve as the connecting link between the three sub-systems of the basic education information facilities and vocational courses. The sustainability of the group process is important for acknowledging the learning needs of the community for which the sub-systems need to be designed and provided (Tunsiri, 1989).

There is a special national policy concerning adult education, which is based on a legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In accordance with the Law on Labour of the Republic of Uzbekistan: (a) An employer is obliged to provide the necessary conditions for combining work with training. (b) People who take training courses while continuing to work have the right to additional vacation paid by their employer and a shortened working week. When annual vacation is provided, an employer is obliged, in accordance with the wishes of those people who take training courses, to guarantee vacations to take necessary examinations. (c) For employees who are taking training courses at secondary schools without giving up their work, the working week is shortened by one day. For employees in village secondary school, the working week is shortened by two days. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, it is only the governmental structures that deal with adult learning activities. According to the Education Law, the Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan regulates the development of networks with local executive authorities, provides the technical equipment, designs and recommends
curricula, programmes and textbooks, and carries out the training of teachers. Attempts are being made to widen relations with other countries. Since people study only in governmental schools and institutions, non-formal institutions are not developed in Uzbekistan. The demand on non-formal education will be further increased due to trends in the development of market relations. There is a special legislation, which guarantees equal rights for adults for availing of education independent of origin, sex, language, age, race, nationality, religion, social status, occupation etc. Programmes in adult education in evening secondary schools are the same as in the regular secondary schools, but they are shortened. Regarding methodology of teaching, although every teacher has his own method and approach to teaching, he or she may not deviate from definite limits. The Government subsidies to education are increasing every year. While there are not yet non-governmental sources of financing, every educational institution is entitled to obtain non-budgetary funds by renting out premises for the additional training of trainees (Ikramov, 2001).

In Vietnam Government sees education and training as a state policy of prime importance, is the driving force and a fundamental condition for the achievement of socio-economic goals. There is a clear policy of ensuring the complementarities between primary education, literacy and continuing education. Within the broad goals of promoting literacy and education for all, there is a plan for each age group according to its characteristics and proportion in the population. In order to prevent illiteracy, it is necessary to eliminate illiteracy among children. There are children who either have no
access to school or are dropouts. Therefore, effective measures are being taken to mobilise children of six years of age to attend first grade classes, as well as to reduce the incidence of repetition, reduce the number of dropouts, and raise the efficiency of primary education. The enhancement of literacy among women has proved to be useful in reducing the number of out-of-school children and dropouts. At the same-time, it is necessary for all adults to be literate, to better attend to their children and all other aspects of life. Literate mothers, especially, are in a better position to take care of their children and encourage them to attend school. Finally, once adults are made literate, continuing education is essential for retention and consolidation, and to promote lifelong learning. Adult literacy, especially the literacy of women constitutes an important element of Vietnam’s education and training policy.

The National Commission for Literacy and Universalisation of Primary Education co-ordinates the activities of the various governmental institutions and the non-governmental organisations in Vietnam who are active in the domain of literacy. Vietnam has specified certain norms in the attainment of literacy among adults. At present, the norms of literacy for adults are equivalent to the 3rd year of primary education with 3 levels and 3 corresponding sets of textbooks. The introduction of functional knowledge into literacy textbooks constituted an initial step towards the making of a literate society, and the improvement of the literacy levels of girls and women. With the assistance of UNESCO, Bangkok, Vietnam introduced into the contents of the books functional knowledge concerning the improvement of the quality of life of the learners and the requirements of the economic development of the locality. This includes instruction on family life,
household economy incomes, the fundamentals of farming techniques, health protection, population and environment, and civic education. Apart from the 3 sets of textbooks, some localities have produced supplementary materials in accordance with their local conditions. In quite a few localities, literacy has been conducted together with job training of women and girls with the aim of enabling them to increase their incomes. Other steps include simplifying the methods of teaching the national language. Today, in the disadvantaged areas, boarding schools are maintained to enroll girls and young women for literacy, with the aim of making them good community managers, in the place of the responsibilities school, which were opened for women during the war. Each mountain or island district has built such a school for women, where the learners are provided with a government scholarship. Two fairly special forms of education of women in Vietnam are: ‘Charitable Classes’ and ‘Special Classes’. While the former are meant for both boys and girls, ‘Special Classes’ are designed for prostitutes and drug abusers. Follow-up education in Vietnam is meant chiefly for the farmers to maintain and develop the achievements of literacy, prevent relapse into illiteracy and create favourable conditions for continuing education. The follow-up curricula are associated with the programme for building up a new countryside with the aim of stabilising and developing the rural economy. Functional contents, approach of participation and methods of teaching the national language based on the achievement of linguistics are a novelty for literacy teachers. Therefore great attention has been paid to training and re-training literacy teachers. Literacy teachers include primary school teachers, mostly women, pensioners, secondary school boys and girls and college students. In the border areas,
border guards also take an active part in the eradication of illiteracy (Due Van, 1993).

In 1990, Vietnam launched literacy and post-literacy programme. The former was structured in three levels, with a total of 150 lessons, each of which lasted 100 minutes. Level 1 focused on language (letters and words), while levels 2 and 3 combine language with knowledge and practice skills. The post-literacy curriculum consisted of two levels and 96 lessons. It served to consolidate the learners’ knowledge as well as practice skills, and helped them find ways of supplementing their income. At the same time, the literacy curriculum aimed at increasing awareness of health care and family planning. The need for regular literacy programmes persists in several disadvantaged areas despite completion of the literacy campaigns. The literacy programmes for women have focused on the following gender issues: Promoting literacy among women and girls in the rural and mountainous areas; Understanding women’s roles and responsibilities in the family, community and society; Imparting literacy skills and functional knowledge to women; and Understanding the learning needs of women and girls to devise an appropriate strategy for educating them. Literacy surveys conducted in 21 provinces show that in general, women learners and illiterate women are interested in literacy skills that are integrated with functional knowledge in the areas of family education, economics and income, health education, agricultural production, civic consciousness and gender education, and that women are aware of the importance of learning. The National Literacy Curriculum included topics related to the functional areas such as, family life, health, economy and
income and civic consciousness. The approach and contents of the curriculum have been developed on criteria based on logical development from concept to concept; progressive development of literacy skills; enabling learners to re-examine the main areas for the functional content and attain deeper levels of understanding, using steadily improving literacy skills and catering to the needs of certain groups of learners. In keeping with the suggestion of UNESCO, the literacy materials have been developed on the basis of the systems approach. According to this approach, learning sequences are seen as a chain of input, process and output, known as the IPO cycle. The methods used for imparting literacy are based on the teaching methods used for adults, which take into account the characteristics of adult learners (Due Van, 1993).

**Yemen** developed a five-year plan (2000-2005) based on a national strategy for eradicating the illiteracy of 4,450 million Yemeni citizens. The plan included developing a new curricula and books dealing with Islamic studies, Arabic language, mathematics, and general education. The Adult Education and Literacy organization of the Yemeni government was established in 1992 with the primary responsibility for the eradication of illiteracy. It came to define adult education in broader terms after CONFINTEA 1997, to include all aspects of cultural, social, Non-Formal for Girls in the Arab Region. The organization drew up long-term national strategy for adult education. Although there has been considerable expansion in education over the past decade, the educational system still suffers from shortfalls in enrolment, absorption and retention of students, and favours males and urban areas to females and rural and agricultural areas. Yemen has
the lowest enrolment rate in the Middle East and North Africa. Although UNESCO found that the pool of teachers available is not adequate to service the population, there are less than 20% female teachers which is an important consideration when sending girls to school in a traditional conservative society, particularly in rural areas (UNESCO, 2003).

**HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA**

The National Policy on Education (NPE) formulated in 1986 emphasised the role of adult education in reducing economic, social and gender disparities. The policy emphasised the nation as a whole to take the responsibility for providing resource support. Viewing lifelong education, which presupposes universal literacy, opportunities have been provided to the youth, housewives, agricultural and industrial workers and professionals to continue the education of their choice, at a place suited to them, and the potential of open and distance learning is to be explored for this. The NPE ensured priority to the education for women's equality through provision of special support services, setting of time targets, and effective monitoring. It has opened Mother and Child Care Centres (Anganwadi) and Non-formal and Adult Education centres in areas largely inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes. The adult education, including adult literacy, is accepted as a main instrument for learning and liberation from ignorance and oppression. Participation by beneficiaries in the development programmes has been crucial in the adult education policy. Systematic programmes of adult education were organised, strengthened and revised. These are linked with national goals such as alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation,
energisation of the cultural creativity of the people, observance of small family norms, promotion of women's equality, universalisation of primary education, basic healthcare etc. The eradication of illiteracy, particularly in the 15-35 age group, was a national initiative. The Central and State Governments, political parties, mass media and educational institutions committed themselves to mass literacy programmes of diverse natures. It has involved on a large-scale teachers, students, youth, voluntary agencies and employers. Concrete efforts were made to harness various research agencies to improve the academic aspects of adult literacy. The mass literacy programme included, functional knowledge and skills and also awareness among learners about the socio-economic reality and the possibility to change it. NPE acknowledges that a programme as vast as the adult and continuing learning programme needs to be implemented through various ways and channels, including establishment of centres in rural areas for continuing education, workers' education through the employers, trade unions and concerned agencies of government, post-secondary education institutions, wider promotion of books, libraries and reading rooms, use of radio, TV and films, as mass and group learning media, creation of learners' groups and organisations, programmes of distance learning, organising assistance in self-learning, and organising need and interest based vocational training programmes (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2001).

In order to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate persons in 15-35 age group - 30 million by 1990 and additional 50 million by 1995, the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988. NLM mainly
focused on rural areas, particularly women and people of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The NLM contains detailed strategies for motivation and securing people’s participation. Through media and communication, efforts are made to secure people's participation, creation of local level participatory structures, taking out of processions, training of youth, etc. These efforts aimed to create a suitable environment for learning. Various methods are adopted for identification of appropriate voluntary agencies, procedures of financial assistance streamlined, and voluntary agencies involved on a massive scale for spread of the programme, and for training, technical resource development, experimentation, and innovation. Besides continuing existing programmes, these are improved in quality through proven science and technology inputs, improved supervision, suitable training, and pedagogical innovations. The Mass Programme of Functional Literacy (MPFL) was expanded, strengthened and a mass movement for literacy launched by involving educational institutions, teachers, students, youth, military and paramilitary personnel, housewives, ex-servicemen, employers and trade unions. Mechanisms for post-literacy and continuing education, has been created throughout the country, particularly through establishment of Jana Shikshan Nilayams. The structure of technical resource development at the national, state as well as district levels ensured that material of good quality is widely available and conforms to the objectives of the Mission. By 1990, facilities for literacy learning, continuing education and vocational training were extended to all parts of the country. The NLM included development, transfer and application of technical and pedagogic inputs in several districts, backed by an effective Mission Management
System to ensure achievement of the mission objectives. This included mechanisms for suitable staff selection and development, collection, flow and utilisation of information, systematic monitoring and mid-course corrections and impact evaluation (National Literacy Mission, 2000).

The Total Literacy Campaign model has been the dominant strategy for eradication of adult illiteracy in India since 1990s. These campaigns are area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome oriented. The thrust was given to attain functional literacy through prescribed forms of literacy and numeracy. The learner is the focal point in the entire process and measurement of learning outcome is continuous, informal and participative. The campaign is implemented in eight stages, which may be overlapping at times. 1) The initiation of a total literacy campaign begins with a process of consultation and consensus, involving political parties, teachers, students and cultural groups. A core team is identified and the project is formulated. 2) The campaigns are implemented through district-level literacy committees, which are registered as independent and autonomous bodies to provide a unified umbrella under which a number of individuals and organisation work together. Leadership is provided by the District Collector, Chief Secretary and the District Council (Zila Parishad). All sections of society are given due representation in planning and implementation of the programme. The structure rested on three pillars - participatory people's committees, full-time functionaries and area coordinators - and a support system provided by government officials. It formed an interactive and a communicative process of management and implementation. The campaign is
delivered through volunteers without any expectation of reward or incentive.

3) A detailed survey is conducted in the district to enumerate and identify the non-literate people. The process of the survey also provided opportunities for personal contacts and interaction. During the survey, volunteer teachers and master trainers are also identified. 4) Environment building as an extremely important part of the total literacy campaign, where mass mobilisation takes place through a multifaceted communication strategy, which created the right environment and enthusiasm for teaching-learning activities. The basic objective of the environment building stage was to generate a demand for literacy. It included mobilising public opinion, creating community participation, sensitising educated sections of the community and recruiting them as volunteers, and mobilising and motivating non-literate people to become literate. Several media are utilised for environment building. Effective results have been obtained by using folk art forms, *jathas* (procession), *nukkad nataks* (street plays), *bhajans* and *kirtans* (divine singing), *padyatras* (foot march), literacy walls, etc. 5) Development of Teaching-Learning Materials to make the materials relevant, while keeping the larger national canvas and its concerns in view. The materials are based on an innovative pedagogy called Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) that incorporates motivation oriented teaching-learning materials. Books especially suited for neo-literates and adults have been prepared. A three-grade primer is used with each grade corresponding to a different level of literacy. The primer contains exercises, tests and space for practice to achieve the objective of imparting literacy in 200 hours. 6) Training of the Task Force is conducted through key resource persons and master trainers -
one master trainer for every 25 to 30 volunteer teachers, and one key resource person for every 25-30 master trainers. First the key resource persons are trained, who in turn trained the master trainers. The master trainers in batches then trained volunteer teachers. 7) In Actual Learning Process there are three progressive sets of primers. Each primer is an integrated one, in the sense that it combines workbook, exercise book, tools of evaluation of learning outcome, certification etc. The entire process is based on the principle of self-evaluation. The tests are simple and participative. Every learner is free to attain the desired level according to his/her convenience. It is, however, expected that a learner should be able to complete all the three primers within the overall duration of 200 hours spread over six to eight months. 8) Monitoring and supervision of total literacy campaigns is done through a periodic system of reporting, and visits of the officials of the National Literacy Mission, State Directorates of Adult Education and the State Resource Centres. The management information system in a campaign is based on the twin principles of participation and correction. It has to be accountable, credible and instead of being enrolment oriented, it has to be outcome-oriented. Though the total literacy campaign is meant to impart functional literacy, it also disseminates other messages such as enrolment and retention of children in schools; immunisation; propagation of small family norms; promotion of maternity and childcare; women's equality; and empowerment, peace and communal harmony (National Literacy Mission, 2000).
The National Literacy Mission designed a programme of continuing education for neo-literates, which came into force in 1996 and a scheme of Continuing Education Centres (CEC) was launched. The main objective of the programme is to institutionalise continuing education for neo-literates and to ensure flexibility in design and implementation in order to cater to the needs of the neo-literates. More specific objectives include the provision of facilities for retention and reinforcement of literacy skills; application of functional literacy for quality of life improvement; dissemination of information for participation in development programmes; creation of awareness on national concerns; training in vocational skills; provision of library; and organisation of cultural and recreational activities. The responsibility for the implementation of the scheme rests with the district committee, the Zilla Saksharta Samiti (ZSS). The National Literacy Mission (NLM) has identified four broad programme areas such as *Equivalency Programmes* (EPs) designed as alternative education programmes equivalent to existing formal, general or vocational education; *Income Generating Programmes* (IGPs) designed for acquisition or upgradation of vocational skills for income generating activities; *Quality of Life Improvement Programmes* (QLIPs) designed to equip the learners with essential knowledge, attitudes, values and skills, both as individuals and members of the community; and *Individual Interest Promotion Programmes* (IIPPs) designed to provide opportunities for individuals to participate in and learn about their own chosen social, cultural, spiritual, health, physical, and artistic interests (Daswani, 2000).
Mahila Samakhya (MS) programme was launched in 1988 to fulfill the commitment of positive action in support of women's education mandated in the National Policy on Education. As a programme dealing with women's education and empowerment, Mahila Samakhya endeavors to create a learning environment where women can collectively affirm their potential, gain the strength to demand information and knowledge, and move forward to change and take charge of their lives. Education in Mahila Samakhya is understood as an ongoing process of learning and empowerment that transcends the mere quest to become literate. The programme, which is not constrained by the present agenda or predetermined targets responds to and designs interventions to meet the articulated need of the poor women in rural areas. The Sangha (village level women's collective) is the nodal point around which the programme revolves. The Mahila Sanghas actively assist and monitor educational activities in the villages - including the primary school, adult education and NFE centres and facilities for continuing education. They assist women and adolescent girls with the necessary support structure, and an informal learning environment to create opportunities for education. Every component and activity within the project created an environment for learning, help women to experience and affirm their strengths, create time and space for reflection and respect individual uniqueness and variation. Women and women's groups at the village level set the pace, priorities, form and content of all project activities. Planning, decision-making and evaluation processes, as well as all levels of personnel remain accountable to the collective at the village level. A participatory selection process followed to ensure that project functionaries at all levels is committed to work among
poor women and are free from caste/community prejudices. Management structures are decentralised, with participative decision-making and devolution of powers and responsibilities to district, block and village levels. The process of mobilising and organising women is facilitated by a Sahayogini' (cluster coordinator in charge of 10 villages). She is a crucial link between the village Sangha and the district implementation unit of the programme. The Sanghas address a wide range of issues, which relate to the livelihood, education and health of women, as well as accessing resources among others. The Sanghas have taken an active lead in enrolling children, especially girls, in the village schools. Monitoring the functioning of schools and encouraging parents to send their children to schools is high on the Sangha's agenda. Using campaigns, meals, festivals, participatory rural appraisals, the Sangha has tried to shed light on issues connected with girl's education. This has resulted in the concomitant mobilisation and organisation of adolescent girls along with women. Non-formal education centres for school dropouts or illiterate girls have increased in number bearing testimony to the growing importance of girl child education with the Sanghas. The Mahila Shikshan Kendras (Women's Training Centre) are a unique residential learning opportunity for adolescent girls and young women. An important and growing indicator of Sangha empowerment has been the confidence with which Sangha women have been addressing issues of violence, child marriages, and played a prominent role in stopping the initiation of girls as devadasis (temple dancers) at temples. Women's Courts have emerged as vocal and effective informal courts that have gained community respect and
Learning without Frontiers (LWF), a UNESCO sponsored programme, aims to create educational opportunities for those sections of society who are unable to take advantage of the regular programmes of education because of barriers of space, time, gender, age and economic circumstances. It propagates a view of human resource development in which access to education for these disadvantaged and un-reached sections of the society is perceived to be a critical input for achieving the goals of Education For All (EFA). Learning without Frontiers goes beyond the goals of EFA, which is rooted in the concept of basic primary education or its equivalent. LWF locates the narrow concept of education within the large concept of learning, in which human resource development includes global concerns such as equality, democracy, peace and lifelong learning, and their translation into programmes of environment awareness and protection, health education, population education, poverty alleviation and empowerment of the weaker sections of society. In brief, LWF focuses on the individual in his/her socio-economic and cultural context by providing realistic options for lifelong learning. The LWF emphasises the need to look at learning needs in a community in totality. It addresses the educational needs of school children as well as those who are out of school, or young adults who wish to find opportunities for continuing their education, as well as the neo-literates and semi-literates who are seeking newer possibilities for personal and economic development through education. It also addresses the needs of girls and
women who are often unable to take advantage of available educational opportunities on account of social and cultural barriers and of tribal populations who are bounded by both traditional inhibitions as well as economic under development (UNESCO, 1996).

Presently the TLC phase is officially over. The NLM is now providing funding only to the post literacy and continuing education programmes.

**Continuing Education**

The structure of the continuing education programme, launched in 1995 as a fully funded centrally-sponsored scheme. A continuing education center is meant for a population of 2,000-2,500 so that it can cater to the need for at least 500-1000 neo-literates. A nodal continuing education serves for a cluster of 1015 continuing education centers.

The function of imparting basic literacy and transaction of literacy primers would be continued in the continuing education phase. The activity of teaching learning for basic literacy would be available not only for dropouts and left-outs but also to new illiterate entrants in the age group 15-35.

The scheme also envisages convergence with the programmes of Nehru Yuvak Kendras, National Service Scheme, National Service Volunteer scheme, etc., at the grassroot level.

**Decentralisation of Financial and Administrative Powers**

The present approach is towards decentralization of financial and administrative powers to the State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMAs).
The SLMAs state level registered societies have a 2 layer structure viz. Governing Council and Executive Council. The State Directorate of Adult Education serves as secretariat. The guidelines regarding the delegation of powers to the State Literacy Missions have already been issued, and have sanctioned some projects for continuing education. About 22 States/ UTs have set up SLMAs so far.

Revamped Programme for Imparting Literacy to Non Literate Adults

A revamped strategy to impart functional literacy to non-literate adults in the 15-35 age group, proposed to be implemented during the XIth plan is given below:

The National Literacy Mission was launched in 1988 with the objective of imparting functional literacy to adult non-literates for 15-35 age group in the country. The main programmes of the NLM were the Total Literacy Campaign to impart basic literacy to the adult non-literates followed by Post Literacy Programme to reinforce the literacy skills of the neo-literate and the Continuing Education Programme to provide facilities like rural library and reading room for the neo-literate and other sections of the community. In addition, vocational training is also provided to the neo-literates and other disadvantaged sections of the society through the Jan Shikshan Sansthans to fulfill the objectives of NLM to provide functional literacy.

Impact of NLM

The NLM has so far been able to cover 597 districts in the country under various literacy programmes and nearly 124 million people are reported
to become literate so far. The literacy rate of the country has also increased from 52.21% in 1991 to 64.84% in 2001, registering one of the highest decadal growths in literacy so far. However, despite these gains, nearly 34% of the non-literate of above 15 age group of the world are in India. The gender, regional and social disparities continue to be worrying. Apart from this, the campaign mode of NLM based on voluntarism and mass mobilisation has lost its fervor and has gone down in the scale of priority of the state governments. Most importantly, based on the existing monitoring and evaluation system, it is not possible to estimate accurately the impact made by NLM on the literacy rate in terms of the objective it had set out for itself.

Dimensions of the problem

According to 2001 Census, there were 304 million non-literate in the country. Nearly 100 million of these non-literate are in the 15-35 age group and another 159 million non-literate are in the 35+ age group. About 150 districts, which have the lowest literacy rate, alone account for 86.80 million non-literate in above 15 age group, out of which nearly 38.40 million are in 15-35 age group. In addition, 47 districts of the country have female literacy rate below 30%. The low literacy rates of SC, ST and minorities and especially of women also call for immediate redressal. The number of non-literate in the 15-35 age group among scheduled castes is 21.47 million and amongst scheduled tribes is 13.15 million. Further, out of the 88 Muslim concentration districts, 69 districts have a literacy rate below the national average.

Goals for the XI\textsuperscript{th} Plan

The target for the XI\textsuperscript{th} Plan is to achieve 80% literacy rate by 2012. The
gender gap is to be reduced by 10%. The regional, social and gender disparities are also to be brought down. The non-literate in the above 35-age group are also to be covered.

Revamped Strategy of NLM

The main components of the revamped strategy of the National Literacy Mission during the XIth Plan are:

- The National Literacy Mission would strive to impart basic literacy to adult non-literates in the 15-35 age group in the first year of the campaign.

- Instructors of the literacy centres would be paid suitable remuneration with incentives for good performance.

- A certificate of equivalence with the primary level will be awarded to learners who pass the examination conducted by a local school immediately after completion of the prescribed primers.

- The continuing education programme would be re-structured and merged with this programme to provide follow-up to the neo-literates through library and reading room facilities in the 2nd and 3rd year of the campaign. The panchayati raj institutions would be approached to provide accommodation and other support.

- Convergence with other development programmes will be attempted to make literacy visibly linked to issues affecting the daily needs of life of a non-literate and aid in enrolment and retention.
• NGOs with a good track record would be involved in taking up innovative projects, vocational training, academic and technical resource support for the Mission.

**Jan Shiksha Abhiyaan**

As the primary objective of the National Literacy Mission is to raise the literacy levels in the country, a nation wide campaign known as Jan Shiksha Abhiyaan would be launched to impart functional literacy to adult non-literates, in the 15-35 age group depending on the availability of resources. Though the ultimate objective is to achieve universalisation of adult education but due to shortage of funds it appears a distant goal now. Therefore, strategically priority would be given to adult non-literates in the age group of 15-35 living in low literacy districts and belonging to the disadvantaged sections of the society. It would be a time bound campaign implemented in distinct phases.

(i) **Planning and preparatory phase**

This phase starting in April would be spread over three months and would involve undertaking the following preparatory activities before the actual start of the teaching learning process.

(a) **Survey**

A comprehensive door-to-door survey would be taken up in the first instance to identify, enlist and enumerate the actual number of non-literates. The survey would be got conducted on a proforma by the Village Education
Committee of the Gram Panchayat under the supervision of Zilla Sakshartha Samiti. The Gram Panchayat would give adequate publicity and constitute teams before the start of the survey. Wherever such a survey has already been undertaken recently and all relevant data required being collected and is already available, no fresh survey would be taken and the available data would be utilised. During the survey, an effort will also be made to identify such school students who are willing to teach one or two non-literate members from their own household.

Based on the information collected through the survey, a comprehensive database of the non-literates would be compiled at the Block level with the infrastructure support of the Block Resource Centre of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan. This information would also be posted on the NLM website.

(b) Selection of Instructors

In order to identify eligible and willing instructors a centralized advertisement would be issued at the District level in the local vernacular daily. The Gram Panchayat would also make a local announcement through various means at its disposal. Those interested would submit their applications to the Village Education Committee (VEC). There will be one instructor for a group of 15 non-literates. Immediately after the survey, the matching and batching will be done by the VEC in such a manner, that the group so formed and the instructor identified for this group is culturally, socially and economically homogenous to the extent possible. Women instructors would be engaged where majority of the learners are women.
The VEC will draw up a panel of instructors, which will be submitted to a Block level Committee to be constituted by the District Collector for ratification.

While preparing the panel of instructors, the VEC would give preference to the following in the descending order:

(i) A person who has worked as literacy volunteers with a good track record in the earlier literacy programmes.

(ii) Retired teachers not above 65 years of age.

(iii) Facilitator or work supervisor (working for the Rural Development Department), Asha worker (Health Department) etc., who are interacting with the non-literate group for the promotion of schemes of various departments.

(iv) 10th class passed person with social commitment.

The Block level Committee shall consist of representatives from the BRC, ZSS, Block level Panchayat and the SDM as Chairman. This Committee would scrutinize the list to ensure that the guidelines have been followed by the VEC in the selection of instructors and ratify the same. In case the guidelines have not been followed, the Committee will return the panel to the VEC for resubmitting the panel, which would be in conformity with the guidelines.

(c) Training

The selected instructors would be given training and orientation with specific inputs on how to teach adults. The training programme would be
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primer specific. As far as possible, the training would be a residential programme at the Block level. The instructors would be trained by Master Trainers, who in turn would have been given orientation by Key Resource Persons. During the training, emphasis would also be given on different types of information useful for adults relating to health, sanitation, and vocational skills, various developmental and social welfare programmes. In particular, the instructor would be encouraged to form a group from amongst the learners who could be enrolled as beneficiaries under programmes like SGSY etc., Besides, facilitators of SGSY etc., would also be given training for imparting literacy to their beneficiaries who are non-literates.

(d) Location of Literacy Centre

The literacy centre would be located in the local school, Panchayat building or any other government building and if these are not available, the centre may be allowed to function in the residence of the instructor, for which prior permission will be obtained from the Block organiser on a case to case basis.

(e) Teaching Learning Material

The State Literacy Mission Authority and ZSS would coordinate with the SRC to ensure timely preparation, procurement and distribution of teaching learning materials, which would include literacy kit and the instructor’s manual. The Zilla Sakshartha Samiti will simultaneously take steps to procure complete set of primers and stationery for distribution to the literacy centres in one go before the teaching learning phase begins. Sufficient number of Primers and stationery would be provided to each of the VEC of
the Gram Panchayat for distribution to the Instructor/ Prerak of the literacy centres. These will be distributed to the learner on the 1st of July at the learning centre in presence of the at least one member of the VEC or the Gram Panchayat.

(ii) Teaching and Learning Phase

After all the preparatory activities have been completed, the teaching and learning process would start on a fixed date viz. 1st July of the year. Teaching would be transacted six days a week for at least two hours daily. The timing of the Centre would be left to the convenience of the learners/instructor, which would be clearly displayed on the board. The teaching process would continue for a period of six months and would conclude by the end of December. It would be ensured that at least 240 hours of teaching would be completed by the end of the Programme. Every literacy centre will have an attendance register and inspection register in which the supervisors will record their inspection notes.

Wherever this literacy campaign is to be made a part of the Mahila Samakhya or Self Help Group or any other activity of the other departments or organisations this time frame and teaching-learning methodology need not be followed. Attempt should be made be impart literacy through their route. However, evaluation of the neo literate will be done to ascertain the outcome of the exercise.

(iii) Evaluation and Certification

The progress made by the learners would be assessed at different stages through an inbuilt system of internal evaluation at the centre level. The
instructor would take tests built in the Primers at regular intervals to assess the progress made by the individual learners. After the completion of all the Primers, an examination would be conducted under the auspices of the local school in respect of all the learners enrolled at the centre. This exam would be conducted in the first week of January, immediately after the completion of the teaching–learning phase. The method of testing and model question paper would be developed by the NLM. Those who are declared successful would be awarded a certificate equivalent to Class V signed by appropriate authority at a function to be held in the school on 26th January by the Pradhan of the Gram Panchayat. Further, to encourage and motivate the Pradhans to actively participate in this programme, the best performing Pradhans would be honored on the occasion of the International Literacy Day function held at the district state/national level.

(iv) Mopping up unsuccessful learner

Instructors will continue teaching such persons who could not pass the exam conducted by the local school in a special mopping up operation to be taken up immediately after the result of the written exam is declared.

(v) Continuing Education Phase

After the completion of the teaching learning phase opportunity would be given to the learner to consolidate his learning on a continuing basis. This would require library facility with interesting and useful reading material within their reach.
For this purpose a library would be set up in every Gram Panchayat for which the Gram Panchayat will provide accommodation. The existing continuing education centres that were opened for a population of 2500 would be relocated in a manner that every panchayat has one such centre, which will function as a library and information centre. These centres would be known as Jan Pustakalaya. The books and other materials provided to these centres earlier will be transferred to this relocated centre. This centre would act as a single Information Window and disseminate details of various development programmes to the beneficiaries. In the selection of books for the library, the Gram Panchayat would have a choice in the purchase of books depending on the local preference. An instructor who has made the largest number of adults literate will man Jan Pustakalaya. A recurring and non-recurring grant of Rs.25, 000/-each and 10% as administrative costs for three years would be provided. Existing CE centres will be supported till they have received three years of assistance. Thereafter it will be transferred to the Gram/ Nagar Panchayat. If a district has already completed three years before the start of the scheme, then it will be provided Prerak to run the library and information centre for three years. The Prerak in charge of this centre will also be responsible for mopping up the remaining non-literates.

(vi) Involvement of NGOs

NGOs with a good track record may also be involved by the ZSS in this programme. They may be given a compact and contiguous area for implementing this programme. In addition, the NGOs may also be involved in conducting training programmes, developing teaching learning materials,
survey, creating awareness, monitoring, providing vocational skills and such other activities as may be found appropriate at the district level. If an NGO has worked earlier under the literacy programme such as the Accelerated Female Literacy Programme, Special Female Literacy Programme etc., with more than 75% success and are still active in the district, then their experience and expertise should be utilised. It will give ZSS good support and insight for addressing literacy related issues in sustainable manner.

(vii) Honorarium and Incentives

The instructors of the literacy centre would be provided honorarium at the rate of Rs.1000/- per month. This honorarium will be paid for a period of six months, which is the duration of the teaching-learning phase. As an added incentive, the instructor will also be paid Rs.200/- per person made literate. Further, for every person made literate the instructor will obtain 1 incentive mark and for every person, who was not successful in completing the basic literacy programme, 1/2 mark would be deducted. Subsequently, if the instructor is able to make literate this particular person also during the mopping up programme, he would regain 1.5 marks which means that the negative effect of the learner not passing in first attempt will be annulled. Based on the net marks obtained in this programme, the States would be asked to give them due weightage for appointment as a para teacher under SSA provided he/she fulfills the eligibility criteria. School students up to Class IX who participate in the literacy programmes for teaching upto 2 adult non-literates would be given some incentive marks, which may be decided
by the concerned state government. The student would however get the monetary award at the rate of Rs.200 per person made literate.

(viii) Monitoring

Supervision and monitoring on a continuous basis will be one of the key features of the Jan Sakshartha Abhiyaan. Monitoring structures would be built at all levels to ensure that the programme is implemented as per schedule. At the grass root level the Village Education Committee would be responsible to ensure that the literacy centres are functioning properly and regularly. Attendance and inspection registers will be maintained at all literacy centres. The next monitoring structure would be at the Sub Block or the Nyaya Panchayat level. Provision would be made for appointing full time personnel who would visit the centres regularly collect information about the progress and submit periodical report in prescribed proforma and to the Block level functionary for compilation, guidance and onward transmission. At the Block level the meetings of the Sub Block level officers would be held at regular intervals for orientation and to assess the progress made. Finally at the district, the ZSS would be responsible for the overall monitoring and coordination. The states would be given the flexibility to adapt the monitoring structures in accordance with the existing administrative structures in their districts. Monthly progress report would be transmitted electronically as well as by routine post to the NLM by the 15th of every month.

(ix) Coordination between ZSS and JSS

In order to make learning more attractive to the neo-literates, they will be provided opportunity for self-employment through vocational training at the
Jan Shikshan Sansthan. JSS will use the database of the NLM/ZSS to design training courses suitable to the needs of the new literates. JSS will also conduct skill based literacy courses for the non literates. Various types of training imparted by the JSS to the neo literates would be monitored closely in the monthly coordination meeting of the ZSS and the JSS.

(x) Convergence with other departments

Apart from imparting basic literacy, it is also necessary that the adult learner is apprised of the various development programmes of the Government. It is an essential ingredient of imparting functional literacy. For this purpose, convergence would be established with other departments so that on the one hand the beneficiaries are apprised of the salient features of these programmes and on the other hand steps are initiated to ensure that they avail of the fruits of these programmes. Simultaneously, the facilitators of the development programmes would also be sensitized and suitably oriented to ensure that the illiterate members of their group are also imparted literacy.

The facilitators of the self help groups established under SGSY or the Mahila Samakhyia would identify the non-literate members of their group. These facilitators can impart literacy for which purpose the ZSS would provide training to them and make available teaching learning material. On successfully making an adult literate, they would be eligible for the incentives being provided to the literacy instructors. There would be no time frame for completion of literacy outcome and the effort would be to build in the literacy activity along with their regular activities. Similarly for the labor engaged under NREGA, literacy would be imparted at the worksite during their leisure
or spare time. The instructors of the literacy centres would also form a group of eligible beneficiaries, particularly those from the BPL group, and get them enrolled for the services under the rural development programme. Such an instructor would be eligible to become a facilitator under that rural development programme also. An effort in collaboration with the panchayati raj institutions would also be made for making the non-literate office bearers of the PRI literate. The mechanism of such a convergence would be worked out in consultation with the concerned departments at all levels.

(xi) Funding and Coverage

The cost per learner for the basic literacy programme is estimated to be Rs.762. The estimated cost of the programme with an average adult non-literate population of 1.85 lakhs is estimated to be 14.00 crores. The cost will be shared between the central and state government will be in the ratio of 80:20. The central government share per district would be around Rs.11.20 crores. The funding for the continuing education programme would continue at the same rate of Rs.25,000/- each for recurring and non-recurring with 10% additional cost for administrative purposes. The sharing for this programme would also be in the ratio of 80:20. The annual recurring grant for the State Literacy Mission Authority would be in the range of Rs.15.00 to Rs.25.00 lakhs. The funding for northeastern states would however be in the ratio of 90:10.

Keeping in view the allocation of resources and the cost estimates as worked out above, it is estimated that 80 districts covering 1.47 crore adult
non-literates can be covered each year. The total coverage for the remaining Plan period would be 320 districts and 5.88 crores adult non-literates.

(xii) Modalities of Transition to the new strategy

With the adoption of the revamped strategy, henceforth there would be only one programme viz Jan Sakshartha Abhiyaan. Those districts implementing PLP projects would be directed to close down the projects as on 31.3.2008. As the new strategy is proposed to be adopted from 1st April 2008, the existing Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) and the Project for Residual Illiteracy (PRI) may continue with their teaching learning activities but will have to submit fresh proposals indicating the remaining activities, balance fund available with them and additional fund required as per new norms. In other words, the teaching learning process, if underway, in these projects would continue as before with the proviso that honorarium and incentives will be paid as per the new norms after the system of examination and certification are duly complied with. The SLMA and ZSS would be asked to close and finalise the accounts of these projects as on this date and begin afresh with the new programme. The modalities of settlement of accounts of these old projects and transfer of funds to the new scheme would be worked out separately.

The old CECs/ NCECs will be reorganized in a manner that every Panchayat has one such centre called Jan Pustakalaya. Stocks including books of all other centres located in the Gram Panchayat will be transferred to this centre.
HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION IN KERALA

In Kerala, Adult and Non-formal Education activities started when Kerala Gandhasala Sangham (Kerala State Library Council) was formed by 47 rural libraries during 1945. Afterwards, the number of libraries has increased to 6000 and they acted as community centers by organizing discussion, seminars, symposia etc. In 1970, Kerala Grandhasala Sangham made a proposal to the Government of India to open 7000 Literacy Centres in the State. The Government of India in turn approved a pilot project to start with 20 centres in two districts which later spread to 20 more centres of other two districts. Many voluntary agencies formed and came forward during this period, Kerala Association for non-formal Education and Development (KANFED) was the primary one in the field of Non-formal and Adult Education. Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP) was started in Trivandrum, Alappuzha, Thissur, Palakkad and Kannur districts in 1982-83. The Programme was implemented at the block level and managed by Assistant Development Commissioners. This was then extended to 11 districts. Universities of Kerala and Calicut started centres for Adult Education and Extension and they also had literacy centres. National Service Scheme Volunteers had also taken part in the activities of Adult Education.

The People's Education and Literacy Campaign, Kottayam (PELCK) was started in Kottayam to make the town fully literate within a period of 100 days, the venture made with the help of NSS Volunteers of Mahatma Gandhi University. A proposal for campaign for total literacy in Ernakulam, was approved by NLM and entrusted the District administration to implement it
with the co-operation of Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) during January 1989 and District Literacy council was registered. The achievement gave momentum to expand the campaign all over the state. The total Literacy Programme was formally inaugurated on 4th February 1990, Kerala Saksharatha Samithy (KSS) sponsored by the Government of Kerala steered the programme. The Project was duly endorsed by the NLM. By using all available infrastructures with the cooperation of people and the administrative machinery, Kerala was declared as a totally literate State on April 18, 1991.

The TLC was successful and produced over 12 lakhs neo-literate. The Post Literacy Campaign, which had aimed at consolidating the gains of TLC and sustaining the achievements of literacy. Out of the target group of 12.2 lakhs neo-literate, 4.16 lakhs neo-literate dropped out in the first phase itself. Viewing the low pace of post literacy activities, the Government ordered to hand over District Saksharatha Samiti to the elected District Panchayaths which were already in position in 1996.

During January 1997, project for Continuing Education was framed taking into account of the changed attitudes and expectations of the community. Continuing Education has been designed as a major Human Resource Development initiative, covering all sections of the society such as neo-literate, rural artisans, women and dropout children. Besides, the implementation of the programme followed a highly decentralised model, utilising the 3-tier Panchayaths.

The National Policy of Education 1986, which was updated in 1992, is considered to be a landmark in education, because the policy envisages a dual
track approach designed to promote simultaneously adult literacy and primary
education with a focus on girls and other disadvantaged groups. There is a
pronounced policy shift from equal education opportunity to 'education for
gender equality'. It enjoins that the education system should play a positive
interventionist role in the empowerment of women, foster the development of
new values through revised curriculum and textbooks, provide systematic
training and orientation to teachers, decision makers and administrators, all
through the active involvement of educational institutions.

Therefore high priority has been given for education and literacy,
particularly for female education in Kerala during the post-independence
period. Consequently the female literacy rate went up to 86.9 percent in
Kerala by 1991 as against only 39.4 at the All India level. Also, the disparity
in the literacy rates of males and females narrowed down to just 7.6, the male
literacy rate being 94.5 percent in 1991, while there is a gap of 24.5 percent
between the literacy rates of males and females in the country as a whole.

The mid-seventies witnessed the emergence of several women's groups
and organisations, which have taken up feminist issues from a new
perspective. Their activities were not restricted merely to assert women's
rights but also made serious attempts to articulate their thoughts on the roots
of oppression of women. Moreover, any political leader or party did not guide
these groups. Young educated women took the initiative to form autonomous
women's groups. These organisations generated feminist cultural groups and
as a result of their strenuous efforts, they could get favourable amendments in
the laws relating to women. The Muslim and Christian women have come out
challenging their respective personal laws based on religions. More than that, their attention has been turned to the problems of women, social customs, responsibilities of housework and patronising attitude of male trade union leaders. The high literacy and education level of women is mainly the driving force behind all these developments related to women.

With the continuous efforts of several agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, the state’s stride towards cent percent literacy has come to a success by 1991. Today not only in the matter of female literacy that Kerala is in the forefront, but also in the case of enrolment of girls in educational institutions. Kerala has the highest percentage of girls enrolled in educational institutions at all level. In the primary level for example it was 48.7 percent in 1989-90 as against 40.7 at the all India levels. Kerala's development is characterised by several features, and the one single most important and fundamental factor that contributed to these features has been the high literacy and education level without much gender differences. The achievement in health and family welfare programme has been almost at par with the level achieved in developed countries. Among the Indian states Kerala has the highest life expectancy at birth, the lowest birth rate and death rate, the lowest infant mortality rate and the highest Human Resource Development Index (HRDI). This impressive progress in health, social amenities, agrarian relations, distributive justice, equality of life etc., contributed to significant improvement in the living conditions and status of the people, especially of women and the rural poor. All these are achieved only due to the high literacy and education level in the state.
State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMA)

Each State has been asked to set up a literacy mission as registered bodies under the Societies Registration Act. These missions will be empowered to sanction literacy, post literacy and continuing education projects. Details of the status of TLC and PLP are given below:

Sanction status of TLC/PLP

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<tr>
<td>PLP</td>
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Progress made: TLC/PLP (Figures in lakh)

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<td></td>
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Status of CEP (if sanctioned)

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Progress made so far in CEP---Centres allotted

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Progress made so far in CEP---Centres opened

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Financial Status

a) TLC/PLP (in Lakhs)

TLC – Approved amount

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Sanctioned

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<tr>
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Expenditure 392.15

PLP – Approved amount

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Sanctioned

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Expenditure 215.60

b) CLP (in lakhs)

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<td>Amount released by NLM</td>
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<td>Expenditure</td>
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Literacy Classes

One of the objectives of the Continuing Education Programme is to make non-literates literates, and upgrade the level of literacy and numeracy of neo-literates/semi-literates. Literacy Classes are conducted for illiterates exclusively. The beneficiaries of the literacy classes are those neo-
literates/semi-literates who wish to retain and enhance their literacy stack. All those non-literates who have not attained the National Literacy Mission literacy norm are also the beneficiaries. Literacy classes are organised by Assistant Preraks.

**Neighbourhood Family Circles**

The Neighbourhood Family Circle is a unique concept conceived and developed by the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority. The philosophy behind this concept is that the development of an individual cannot be achieved in isolation. An individual is part of the family and as such his/her overall development depends on the well being of the family as a whole.
Under the Neighbourhood Family Circle there are separate circles (groups) for each and every member of a family. There are Children’s Circle, Adolescent Boys and Girls Circles, Circles for Men and Women and Elders. These Circles also serve as the community structure for implementing the Continuing Education Programmes in the State. A community circle would include all the members of a family except children below 5 years. These circles shall serve as the community structure for implementing the Continuing Education Programme in the State. Separate circles would be formed for each category of members such as Children, Adolescents, Women, Men, and Seniors. All the families in a neighbourhood, who are associated with Community Circles, would be brought together under the Neighbourhood Family Circle.

**Continuing Education & Equivalency Programme**

The programmes carried out through the Continuing Education centres are identified by the NLM as falling within the following categories.

1. Equivalency Programme
2. Income Generating Programmes
3. Quality of life improvement programmes and
4. Individual Interest Promotion Programmes

All except the Equivalency Programme depend to a large extent on the local resources and hence are unlimited in variety and scope. They also defy systematisation and centralisation.
The Equivalency Programme stands apart as the only one which has an academic and educational content needing a curriculum, which limits its content by compartmentalising it into courses, a systematic structure, and a centralised approach.

Equivalency Programme

National Literacy Mission defined The Equivalency Programme as an alternate educational programme, which is equivalent to the existing formal, general or vocational education.

Equivalency Programme under the Continuing Education Programme of the KSLMA was inaugurated on January 26, 2000 and the classes started from February 99. This programme is being carried out under the supervision of the local panchayath Saksharatha Samithies. On an experimental basis, in the first year, 15 NCE/CE centres were chosen in each district for the purpose. The Preraks with the help of the Ward Saksharatha Samithies coordinated the classes.

Target Group

The target group was the people above the age of 15 were either the products of the TLC/PLC or dropouts from the formal system. They were to possess a level of competency equivalent to that of the Class 2 of the formal system to gain entry into the programme.

Courses offered

Initially the centres offered a level I course equivalent to class 3 and 4
of the formal system. Subsequently level 2 & level 3 courses will be offered for passing standards 7 and 10.

**Duration**

The duration of the course of level I was 300 hours of which 200 hours were contact hours. The approach was interactive and life related.

**Curriculum**

The curriculum for level I included four subjects, namely, Mother tongue, Basic Mathematics, Environmental Studies and a Vocational Subject.

**Examination**

KSLMA conducted examination in IVth standard on 2nd October 2000. This is the first venture of its kind in the country. Altogether 2600 learners were registered for the Examination, out of which only 1630 turned up for the examination. All the learners appeared for the examination came out successful. Percentage of passing was 66.5%. If all learners who registered for the Examination had appeared for the exam, the percentage would have shown a better profile. The details are given below.

**Evaluation and Certification**

It was planned to conduct internal assessment as well as a final external evaluation of the course. Response sheets were given to the learners based on which internal assessment took place. The total marks out of 400 for the four subjects qualified or disqualified a learner. The KSLMA gave the certificate for the learner who passed Level I as being equivalent to having the level of the 4th standard of the formal system.
From this year onwards English as a Second Language is also introduced in the curriculum for Standard IV and the learners for 7th standard have been recruited for the first time in the country. For this second phase of Equivalency, English, Malayalam and Hindi are the languages identified. Maths, Science, Social Studies are the other subjects along with practical skill in one or two vocations.

A state level core team has been formed to plan and implement the equivalency programme in the state. KSLMA has so far completed the preparation of textbooks and handbooks for Standard IV and Standard VII and has conducted State Level Training of Equivalency Key Resource Persons (ERPs) and Instructors in all the districts.

**Income Generating Programmes**

Illiteracy is intrinsically linked with poverty. Therefore, any programme that aims at removal of illiteracy should harp on poverty eradication too. Since low income is the basic cause of poverty, income-generating activities are to be made part of the CE Programme. Formation of Self Help Groups, thrift and credit operation and micro-credit come under the purview of this activity.

**Quality of life improvement Programmes**

Quality of life refers to the level of well being of the society and the degree of satisfaction of the number of human needs. Quality of life improvement programmes aims to equip learners and the community with that
essential knowledge, attitudes, values and skills that enable them to improve the quality of life as individuals and as members of the community.

**Individual Interest Promotion Programmes (IIPPs)**

The objective of the individual interest promotion programmes is to provide individuals the opportunity to participate in social, cultural, spiritual, health, physical and artistic interest of their choice. Activities under IIPP's can be identified as those that are largely meant for spending leisure time, especially hobbies.

In addition to the above, literacy classes are also organised to remove residual illiteracy. Assistant Preraks are specially appointed for this purpose.

**PROFILE OF MALAPPURAM DISTRICT**

Malappuram as the tenth District of the Kerala State came into existence on the 16th day of June 1969 as a result of the reorganization of the districts of Palghat and Kozhikode into three new districts of Palghat, Malappuram and Kozhikode.

The newly formed Malappuram district is bordered on the north by Kozhikode district, on the east by Nilgiris district of Tamilnadu, where as on the south by Palghat and Trichur districts and on the west by Arabian Sea. It is situated between North Latitudes 10°41` and 11°32` and last longitude 75°50` and 76°32``.

The District comprises of 6 Taluks viz. Eranad, Tirur, Perinthalmanna, Ponnani, Nilambur and Tirurangadi. Malappuram is divided into 6

Location and Area

The total geographical area of Malappuram district is 3550 sq. kms which is roughly about 10% of the total area. Comparing with other districts of Kerala, Malappuram ranks fifth in respect of area.

Malappuram is the center of administration of the district. The head quarters and various department offices of the district are functioning here except the judiciary and district hospital, which are at Manjeri, about 10km away from the district head quarters.

Topography and physical event

Malappuram as the Name indicates in Malayalam is a land full of hills and villages intersected by numerous rivers and streams. It represents a topography that is so typical of the Kerala State, Starting from the hilltops covered with thick forests on the east along with the Nilgiris, it gradually slopes down to the valleys and the small hills, before finally ending on the luxuriant coconut groves in the west. Nearly thick evergreen forests cover 30% of the area of the district.

a) Climate and Rainfall

The district is endowed with agro-climate features favourable for a broad based agriculture. The temperature in the districts in moderately hot and
humid that is conducive for cultivation of paddy, coconut, tapioca, arecanut etc. The district is free from very hot as well as extreme cold due to its proximity to the sea. Temperature begins to rise from January-February. March-April is the hottest months in the year with the setting in of the southwest monsoon, temperature drops down. The nights of November-January are coldest in the year. The temperature ranges from 20°C to 30°C. The average annual rainfall of the district is 2900 mm.

b) Rivers

The important rivers of the district consist of Barathapuzha, Chaliyar, Kadalundipuzha, Tirur-Ponnani puzha and Thoothapuzha. Of these Chaliar is the longest one with a total length of 169 kms. Due to the peculiarities of its flow, Kadalundi river is more prone to cause flood damages.

c) Flora and Fauna

The district has a total forest area of 1,03,417 hectares ie., 28.47% of total geographical area. The major forest area is concentrated in Nilambur and Wandoor blocks and Melattur in the western ghats of the forests, 80% is deciduous and the rest is evergreen. Teak, Rosewood, Venteak, Choropin, Mahogoni etc., are the important trees. Elephants, deers, tigers, blue monkies, bears, rabbits etc., are found in the forests along with a variety of birds and reptiles.

Population

The total population of the district as per 2001 census is 36,25,421 of which 17,54,576 are males and 18,70,895 females. The density of population
has increased from 381 persons in 1961 to 677 in 1981, which again rose to 871 in 1991 and 1021 in 2001 census. The sex ratio of the district over the years shows an increasing trend from 1901 to 1941 and thereafter a fluctuating trend from decade to decade. In the year 2001 the sex ratio of the district is 1066 females per 1000 males.

**Religious composition**

All the people in the district are affiliated to one or the other religion and that religion has deep rooted in their lives influencing their socio-economic conditions and cultural habits. Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are the major religions practiced in the district.

**Socio-Educational background of the district**

The level of education is an important parameter used to measure the Socio-economic development of any area. It may be noted that Malappuram with the largest number of teachers and schools in the state, is the most educationally backward district. The reason for such a paradox lies in the historical background of the district.

The conservative attitude of the Mapilas (Mapilas or Moplhs as defined by the census report of 1871 are the hybrid Muslim Community of Malabar.) toward secular education was the major stumbling block in the march towards progress and prosperity of the district. This may be one of the reasons for the underdeveloped nature of the district. Miller (1971) after studying Mapila life styles observed that higher education, particularly college education, was considered a danger point by the conservative
leadership. Secular college education was thoroughly discouraged and the education of girls of older age was forbidden. The conservative leadership had blocked their progress, retarded the community economically and created a public image of backwardness.

**Literacy rate**

The number of literates in the erstwhile Malabar in 1921 was 3,93,020 amounting to about 13% of the population. While the Mapila-Hindu population ratio was 1:2, the ratio of literacy was 1:6. The literates in English were negligible in number and they came mostly from land owning classes (Panikkar, 1982). The overall literacy rate in Malappuram increased from 34.29% in 1961 to 59.10% in 1981. This shows a growth rate of 7.09%. The respective figures for the state were 48.8% in 1961 and 69.17% in 1981, with a growth rate of 41.74%. As per the 1991 census the percentage of literates in the district was 72 and the literacy rate is 89.6 as per the 2001 census.

Muslim population in the district remained in the utter darkness of illiteracy, almost all of them could read Quran and write Arabic, their religious language. This was primarily because that Maplas as observed by Panikkar generally attended Madrassas attached to the Mosque where the education was primarily religious in nature.

**Educational infrastructure of the district**

Malappuram district has the largest number of schools in the state. In the years 1989-90, the total number of schools in the district stood in at 1323 ie., 10% of the state total. The infrastructure in the district for school

**Higher Education**

College education in the district is only a recent phenomenon. The first college in the area was started in 1965. There are at present 12 arts and science colleges including one women’s college started in 1992 at Manjeri and 6 Arabic colleges in the district-all affiliated to the University of Calicut. The seat of University of Calicut is Tenjhipalam in Malappuram District, which was established in 1968. Besides, the district has 21 professional colleges.

**Cultural heritage**

The temples and mosques of this district are well known for their spectacular festivals. This place is worth visiting because of many factors, as for examples, historic monuments and diverse natural attractions besides a range of cultural and ritual art forms, etc.

**Different departments of Malapuram district**

Malapuram district is consisting of two Revenue Division, six taluks, and 135 villages. Some of the important functions of revenue department are revenue recovery, building tax, assignment of Government land, assignment of surplus land, lease, citizenship registration, explosive license and magisterial powers, election, etc.
Agricultural activities

The Agriculture Department in Malappuram District is taking sincere effort for carving out a dynamic and vibrant agriculture sector. This is responsive to the needs of local farming community. The role and responsibility of Krishi Bhavan the basic contact point of the farming community is very significant in planning, formulation and execution of viable and need based programmes. Krishi Bhavan also acts as an effective transfer of technology agent in the agricultural sector.

Fisheries

The Malappuram district has 70 km of seacoast. It extends from Kadalundi Nagaram in the north of Palappetty in the south. The coastal belt is in many places. The main fishing centres are at Ponnani, Koottayi, Parappanangadi, and Tanur. Out of these centres Ponnani is the major fisheries port with about 350 mechanized boats. High sea fish catching operations are centred in Ponnani and Parappanangadi. There are Fisheries guide lights at Ponnani and Tanur to help night fishing is also there.

There are various schemes to provide fishing equipment, houses, latrines and other amenities to fishermen. There are also educational assistance schemes, financial assistance for the benefits of fishermen during off-season. A Fish Farmer Development Agency (FFDA) to promote inland fishing.

Animal husbandry

The functioning of animal husbandry can be classified into seven
groups. Artificial insemination, treatment facilities, remedial measures for resisting diseases schemes and production centres are some of them.

**Health services**

A good network of health care units is functioning under the Government sector. Modern medicines (125), Ayurveda (76) and Homeopathy (41) services are also available.

**Co-operative societies**

The district has a good network of Co-operative societies. All types of Co-operative activities ranging from ration shops to hospitals are undertaken under Co-operatives.

**Scheduled caste development**

The district has a scheduled caste population of 25,573. Some of the main communities are Pulaya, Paraya, Kanakka, Panan, Mannaan, Perumannaan, Kalladi, Cheruma, etc. In some of the developmental programmes education is given priority for the Scheduled Castes.

The scheduled caste development department undertake various social welfare measures like house construction, providing land and house to the landless and houseless people, thatching and filing grants, sanitation latrine construction, lump sum grant and stipend of scheduled caste students etc. This department also gives educational assistance to other backward communities, other eligible communities and financially backward students of forward communities.
National Informatics Center (NIC)

The organizational structure of NIC comprehends its headquarters at Delhi; Regional center at Pune, Bubaneshwar and Hyderabad; State units in all the state capitals and Union Territory Headquarters; and offices in overall districts of the country respectively.

Transportation of Malapuram District

Malappuram is connected to different cities with its many possible means and there are 4 Head Post Offices, 141 Sub Post Offices, and 287 Extra Department Branch Post Offices. The two postal divisions are situated at Manjeri and Tirur.

Mass communication

Malayala Manorama published from Malappuram, Mathrubhumi published from Kottakkal and Madyamam published from Perinthalmanna are the three newspapers published from the district. A few periodicals, monthlies, fortnightlies and weeklies, are also published. Since 1981 a capsule cultural monthly magazine 'Innu' is being published from Malappuram. All the important daily newspapers published from other districts also have wide circulation in Malappuram district.

Malappuram, India’s first e-literate district

The Muslim- populated and once the most backward Malappuram district in the Malabar region of Kerala has now emerged as a frontrunner in the fast-paced world of information technology. Incredible it may sound, but
it is a fact today that Malappuram district has been declared as India’s first computer-literate district, where 0.65 million families have been linked to 615 Akshaya e-centers under the aegis of the Kerala Information Technology in January 2004. High-speed broadband internet connectivity has become a reality of life in this district. The primary task of these centers has been e-educating one member of every family in the district. The language is not a deterrent, since the Kerala-based Centre For Development of Imaging Technology has developed Malayalam software.

Malappuram is part of a hilly region, and its terrain posed a stumbling block of the use of land-based telephones of nearly half the population. The fiber-optic cables laid down along the national and state highways in Kerala could not be extended to Malappuram due to its terrain and related logistic hassles. After testing a variety of technology options, the state harnessed a nascent wireless technology of WipLL (Wireless internet protocol in Local Loop). This technology enabled 615 fully functional Akshaya centers to link with internet at a bandwidth between 4 and 8 mega bites per second (MBPS), astoundingly faster that the conventional dial-up connection through telephones. This system uses radio frequencies to carry voice, video and data, covering distances of 2 to 3kms with a simple antenna, and up to 25kms using a network of repeaters.

The Akshaya scheme has covered 0.55 million people and amazingly more than 60 percent are women. The total cost of imparting the 15-hour course per student is only rupees 140. Local administrative bodies such as Grama and District Panchayats chip in with rupees 120. Under the Akshaya
Project a student has to pay only rupees 20. The project also generates employment for computer literates. Since 1.3 million Malabaris are employed in the Gulf, the neo-entrepreneurs in the Akshaya project are able to reap reasonable profits from and through their Gulf relatives.

**Total Primary Education**

A Kerala Village has become the first in the country where the entire Population is educated at least till class IV. Nilambur Panchayat (Village council) in Malappuram district north Kerala is the first Village to have achieved the feat under Kerala State Literacy Mission Programme called Jyothirgamaya, aimed at spreading non-formal education in the state. In January 2007, the mission conducted a survey and found out that nearly 1,608 people in the village out of a population of 39000 had not passed class 4. Of these nearly 900 were illiterates. After the Jyothirgamaya campaign the learners underwent examination equivalent to class 4 conducted by SLM. After two rounds of external evaluation, in January 8, 2008, Kerala Governor R.L Bhatia declared that the Panchayath had achieved total primary education.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter has traced the history of Adult Education starting from different countries, going through the condition in India, stressing on the situation in Kerala, and ending up in the present attempts of the same in Malappuram district, which is the focus of the study. The earlier studies available in the area are explored in the following chapter.