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COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES

Country Reports from Asia



COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES

Country Report from Asia

UNESCO
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PREFACE

Community-based education programmes are not new to many countries. There have been many innovative works undertaken by government and NGOs in the region over the years. Yet, such initiatives are often time- and budget-bound projects without systematic or long-term strategies that actually link with education policy and planning.

UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) Community Learning Centre (CLC) project was started in 1998 to develop effective community-based non-formal education (NFE) delivery mechanisms. The project has attempted to institutionalize CLCs as a key Education for All programme strategy within the national education plans of various countries. In 2003, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD 2003 - 2012) highlighted the role of "community participation" as a key area of action and, thus, further encouraged the establishment of CLCs.¹ CLC experiences have also contributed to UNESCO's most recent initiative to promote literacy, the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) programme.

To further promote CLCs, it is important to present concrete evidence that demonstrates their effectiveness and that can be disseminated to EFA stakeholders for strengthening and institutionalizing CLCs under EFA national plans. Towards this aim, *Community Learning Centres: Country Reports from Asia* offers comprehensive reviews on current practice and operation from nine Asian countries: Bangladesh, China, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Lebanon, Nepal, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. Lebanon's participation in this study is, indeed, a hopeful reflection of growing interest in using CLC modalities within the Arab States region.

This publication consists of two parts. The first part is a synthesis of nine country research studies that discuss the common and unique features of CLCs based on the findings concerning policies, activities, management, achievements, and impact of CLCs in the countries. The second part features the summary reports of each of the countries researched. Each summary report provides an overview, analysis and recommendations further development of CLCs in the country. The full text of each research report is included in the CD together with references, photographs and other materials related to the research.

We wish to express our appreciation to the host country researchers who provided these very informative reports. Special thanks are extended to Dr. Prem Kasaju, who coordinated the development of the research framework and synthesized main findings from the nine studies.



Sheldon Shaeffer
Director

UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

1 Report of the Secretary General, 57th Session, United Nations General Assembly, 16 July 2002

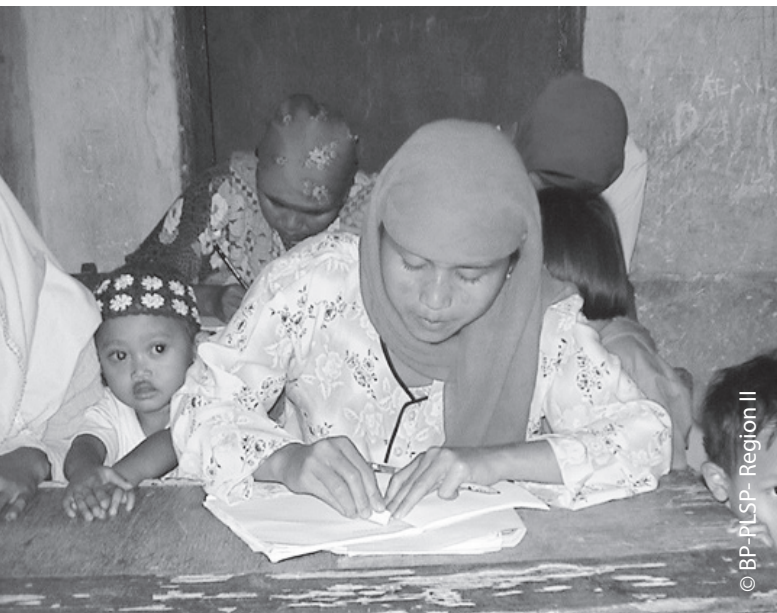
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Community Learning Centres: Country Reports from Asia (PDF)
Country Research Reports (full version)
Annex 1: Research Framework
Annex 2: Photos from Participating Countries



PART I:

SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction*

UNESCO launched its community learning centre (CLC) project in 1998 within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL). It was created to generate grassroots-based interest and participation in literacy and continuing education, especially for the disadvantaged and poor. The concept has also been extended to the Arab region, where CLCs have been set up in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco. As of September 2005, 24 Member States have established CLCs, and this number continues to grow.

Community learning centre is a local educational institution outside the formal education system, usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities. The purpose of the CLC is to promote human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community. CLCs support empowerment, social transformation and improvement of the quality of life of the people. The main functions of CLCs are to provide: i) education and training, ii) community information and resource services, iii) community development activities, and iv) co-ordination and networking.

In June 2005, research specialists from CLC participant countries, namely Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Nepal, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Viet Nam, met in Bangkok and collectively formulated a commonly accepted research framework to undertake evaluative research of CLC practices in their respective countries. It was then agreed that the proposed research would make an analysis of CLC practices, focusing on their strengths, weaknesses and future potentials.

While the resultant studies do not as a rule follow a set, uniform format, certain main parameters (such as the recipients, programme quality in terms of client satisfaction, materials, impact and linkages to macro programmes and policies) were sufficiently delineated and defined. Thus, the research highlights presented herein are not intended to be a comparable analysis, but a review of the various ways that community learning centres have emerged, with each country's unique experience and observable programme outputs and impact.

The findings of the country research reports were presented at the CLC Review Meeting, which was jointly organized by UNESCO Bangkok and the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO in Shanghai from 27 to 31 October 2005. The research teams from the nine countries presented their findings, including analyses of responses from CLC beneficiary participants regarding the overall the overall impact on communities served by the CLCs. These deliberations have also been integrated into this publication.

CLC Concept and Practice

Community learning centres are interpreted, understood and practised in the participant countries as community-driven entities that embody sustained initiative. They are principally focused on literacy and continuing education in support of Education for All (EFA). The activities organized by CLCs cover a wide range of community-based development programmes in health, agriculture, education and entrepreneurial skills for out-of-school children, youth, women, the under-privileged and the rural poor.

The CLC is increasingly seen as an important modality for socio-economic development through non-formal education and adult learning in Bangladesh. In Nepal, education and rural development initiatives have envisioned local schools as community development centres. Tackling illiteracy and promoting non-formal education for children are important aspects addressed by community learning centres in Indonesia. The Indonesian report states that CLCs serve as places for obtaining appropriate information for lifelong learning to improve people's quality of life.

Viet Nam reports a literacy rate of 94 percent. Illiteracy, therefore, is not a severe problem in this country. The areas of concern are, rather, equivalency and continuing education in order to avoid regression into illiteracy and to boost promotion of income-generating activities. The Viet Nam study states that the ultimate purpose of CLCs is to enhance its population's quality of life and to accelerate the country's pace of development. Similarly, the Lebanese study states that CLCs in Lebanon are focused on the underdeveloped rural poor areas that have hitherto not received enough attention from governmental and donor agencies.

* Written by Dr. Prem Kasaju, former Coordinator of APPEAL, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

In Thailand, the objective of CLCs is viewed not merely in terms of improving the literacy status, but also of providing learning experience about better conditions of life and society that make for a sustainable and self-sufficient community. The Thai experience encourages all members of the community—children, youth, farmers, senior citizens and others—to participate in CLC programmes and activities. CLCs target all members of a community. The underlying approach is that CLCs should aim to bring about social transformation by providing opportunities for lifelong education by focusing on improving all people's overall quality of life through active, broadly-based grassroots involvement.

In Kazakhstan, 98 percent of the population is reported to be literate. The principal focus of CLC programmes in Kazakhstan is, thus, on education. Like Thailand, its CLC programmes and activities aim to empower individuals and promote community development through lifelong education for all people. The major programmes are in vocational areas, life skills development and cultural activities that have been chosen and decided upon as per the socio-economic needs of the individual community that is being served.

The Uzbekistan study asserts that, with a literacy rate of 99 percent, universal primary education has essentially already been achieved there. However, the study cautions that emerging disparities in access to quality education are growing and will lead to wider income inequality if not tackled efficiently. For this reason, the report notes that CLCs have been of great service to those living in rural areas, who make up a significant proportion of the country's population. Programmes provide an opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills essential to gain employment, reduce poverty and contribute to the preservation of important cultural heritage of the country. Importantly, the study further recognizes that the concept of lifelong education promotes a strong sense of "community belonging."

In China, CLCs were set up in 1997-98 in the rural areas of three provinces, namely Gansu, Yunnan and the Guangxi autonomous region. CLC programmes and activities in these rural areas focus on achieving Education for All goals and lifelong learning, with an emphasis on poverty reduction through the promotion of literacy education and training in practical life skills. The CLC movement in China has served as a foundation for the establishment of a lifelong learning system in rural communities through linkages with community education (CE) programmes operating in selected urban areas.

Literacy and basic education have been the principal emphases of community learning centres in the countries researched. However, the country studies indicate that the community learning centres also organize a wide range of activities focused on community development issues pertaining essentially to health and hygiene, income generation, and equal rights for women. The main programmes as highlighted in the participant country research reports are illustrated in Table 1, on page 4-5.

CLC Organization and Management

CLCs in the participant countries have come into existence largely at the initiative and with the support of local community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), external donors and/or development agencies. In certain cases, they've been created through support from local and national government authorities. CLCs are principally managed, supervised and financed in collaboration with local, national and external support, however, their organization and management patterns in the participant countries vary considerably.

In Bangladesh, CLCs are principally initiated and supported by local communities and NGOs with assistance from aid agencies, donors and development partners. Local management and executing bodies have taken up responsibility for organizing and overseeing CLC operations with modest start-up financial contributions from local community members. In certain cases, they generate resources by organizing income-generating activities such as collecting voluntary contributions, receiving charitable funds from philanthropic sources charging CLC membership fees. CLCs that principally focus on literacy and non-formal education also sometimes receive financial assistance from the government. CLCs that are organized and supported by leading NGOs and outside agencies such as Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and Action Aid make elaborate arrangements for CLC committees, training of facilitators and support personnel. They also prepare locally-tailored materials.

Table 1: Major Programmes and Activities Organized by CLCs

Bangladesh	Indonesia	China	Nepal	Thailand	
Acting as drop-in centres for adolescents	Equivalency programmes A, B, C	Literacy education	Preservation of natural resources, environment, historical places	Sustainable agricultural development	
Helping children in acquiring basic literacy skills	Reading shelter	Training in practical skills	Health, hygiene and counseling	Growing chemical free vegetables	
Post-literacy and continuing education (literacy resource centres and library services)	Early childhood care and education, mainly in rural areas	Training focused on change of occupations	Women's rights	Fresh water culture	
Balancing general education and technical education	Functional literacy	Family education	Reproductive health	Raising traditional chicken	
Skill training for income-generating activities, savings, and credit services	Maternity clinic points, mainly rural CLCs	Social education	Tourism promotion and small enterprise development, including small hotel management	Mushroom culture	
Improving the quality of life/ standard of living	Culture, sports, and recreation, mainly urban	Leisure time engagements	Local construction skills training support	Pig farming	
Promotion of personal qualities and talents	Internship/ fee support mainly industrial CLCs		Support to conflict-affected children	Rice farming	
Development of new skills and knowledge to match future requirements	Vocation skills		Animal raising: buffalo, goats	Producing household items	
Settlement of conflicts	Entrepreneurial skills		Small businesses, conserving bio-diversity	Thai herbal traditional medicines	
Occasional health services			Vegetable farming/ agriculture	Farm produce management	
Recreation, religious, and social get-together			Human rights	Capital management	
Awareness-raising and empowerment to protect civic rights			Peace campaigns	Welfare development	
				Community economy/ enterprises	
				Public health	
				Tourism promotion	
				Learning and mental health development	
				Community forest management	
				Water management	
				Traditional healing and treatment	
				Handicrafts	
				Lanna language and sculpture	
				Integrated farming and community rituals	
				Art and culture, folk dancing, traditional music, martial arts, and painting	

	Viet Nam	Kazakhstan	Lebanon	Uzbekistan
	<p>Women's empowerment</p> <p>Reproductive health and family planning</p> <p>Safety and prevention of transportation accidents</p> <p>Personal health and hygiene</p> <p>Drug prevention/ combating prostitution</p> <p>Improved agricultural practices</p> <p>Veterinary training</p> <p>Utilization of forestry resources</p> <p>Environmental sanitation</p> <p>Preservation of cultural and historical sites</p> <p>Art, culture, dancing, and music</p> <p>National and international laws</p> <p>Disabled self support</p> <p>Economic development and enterprises</p>	<p>Vocational programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer • Sewing • Tailoring • Modeling • English • Miners • Electric welding <p>Life skills programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare life styles • Family planning • Massage lessons • Furniture and shoe repair • National crafts • Carpentry • Handicrafts • Pickle making • Patchwork • Gardening • Cheese-making <p>HIV/ AIDS</p> <p>Drug prevention</p> <p>Culinary</p> <p>Farming and agricultural practices</p> <p>Cultural activities</p> <p>Ecological activities</p> <p>Sports activities</p>	<p>Computer training</p> <p>Summer camps and non-formal education for basic learning courses</p> <p>Vocational training workshops on productive projects</p> <p>Cultural activities</p>	<p>Ecology and preservation of the environment</p> <p>Legal studies</p> <p>Maternity protection and health for children</p> <p>Profession-oriented education</p> <p>Problem of public health</p> <p>Problems of feminine emancipation</p> <p>Culture, art and public creative activities</p> <p>Tourism, business and entrepreneurship</p> <p>Social protection for families with moderate means, retirees, orphans, and marginalized population groups</p>

The Bangladesh study reports that, overall, CLCs in Bangladesh suffer from a shortage of funds, motivated personnel and lack of materials. There is also the problem of half-hearted local participation. Major problems cited are inadequate manpower (a “one man show” in many instances) staff lacking required efficiency and skill, insufficient equipment and tools, poor stock of books and reading materials, shortage of funds, inadequate and inappropriate housing facilities, stereotyped and boring activities, and ineffective management.

In Indonesia, emphasis is on community initiative, involvement and support of people at the grassroots level for organizing CLCs. The government and local district NFE offices are responsible for providing a major part of the funding requirement and for ensuring execution, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. It is noted that CLC funding is largely dependent on government allocation - as much as half the total requirement. Additional funding needs are generated by organizing bazaars, market fairs, and cultural or sports events. The CLC venues (including buildings, material support and other logistics) are considered to be the responsibility of the community and relevant district NFE offices.

Indonesia has developed elaborate provisions for advisory committees, consisting of programme co-ordinators, secretaries, treasurers, programme leaders and tutors who oversee and run CLC operations. The roles and responsibilities of these functionaries, including the specific responsibilities of the district NFE officers, are well defined. The report notes that “the important characteristic of the organizational structure is its dominant top-down administrative relationship.”

The Viet Nam study states that CLCs were launched in its four northern provinces with the support of UNESCO APPEAL in 1998-99. The study gives an analysis of five major CLC centres, and draws inferences about their state of operation based on the responses given by facilitators, managers and others linked to the management of CLC programmes. It is stated that the provision of local CLC committees and managers is in place to steer and oversee their operations. Some funds have been received from the government, and various efforts are made to supplement this income with local funds, though these are often small.

In Lebanon, CLCs are organized and looked after by NGOs and local municipalities with the participation of volunteers from the local communities. Some of these CLCs enjoy active and positive leadership, whereas others have only a few individuals running the show.

Organization and management of CLCs in Nepal appear to vary from place to place, and from one sponsor to another. Advisory and local management committees have been set up that are responsible for planning, execution and supervision of programmes in collaboration with the district education offices and NFE cells. They are organized and supported by NGOs that are principally sponsored by project funds and grants from UN bodies and development agencies dealing with issues related to children, women, the underprivileged, and human rights.

The Thailand study presents an in-depth analysis of selected CLCs that were initiated by the local communities. Researchers reported that these CLCs do not receive any direct financing or programme support from the Thai Government. The Thai study team deliberately chose to include those CLCs that have demonstrated some degree of success in attaining their intended objectives. These CLCs are managed by the local people, who organize and supervise programmes around topics that are relevant to the local people and which can be implemented by locally available human resources: teachers, artisans, intellectuals, senior citizens and the elderly who possess specialized knowledge and skills in specific areas. As necessary, they draw upon the services of district and other offices that are capable of rendering technical support. Their operations are largely locally-based and self-reliant.

CLCs in Kazakhstan are mainly in rural areas. They are seen as multi-purpose centres for community development, and they serve as an integral part of the socio-economic and cultural spheres of local community life. CLC committees in Kazakhstan consist of representatives from district education offices, health care and social protection fields; the business community; NGOs; retired individuals; and local community people. CLC facilitators and trainers are skilled community leaders, such as local school teachers, retired people with specific skills, and people from various walks of life with specialized professional and vocational backgrounds. The target groups served include unemployed youth and adults, women with many children, repatriates, school children, the physically disabled and retired people.

Programme and Policy Linkages

Effective programme and policy linkages determine the extent of a CLC's success, as well as its long-term, system-wide benefit and application. UNESCO Member States that have launched APPEAL-supported CLC projects have recognized this as the most critical condition for ensuring a CLC's contribution to the promotion of literacy and continuing education as tools for social change and transformation.

The Bangladesh study identifies networking, collaboration and co-operation as important elements for promoting effective programme and policy linkages. Linkages amongst district, divisional and national bodies are crucial. However, it is reported that linkages and co-ordination amongst the district level government offices that are responsible for education, agriculture and health are too superficial, inadequate and almost non-existent. The study states that CLC networking (particularly at the national level) in Bangladesh is sorely inadequate and poor. Likewise, the extent of sharing and exchange of experience has been very narrow and limited in scope. It is reported that certain NGOs seem to have forged linkages with government ministries and other agencies. However, the benefits have been confined to programmes organized and sponsored by specific agencies that are unable to spread across the larger system. The study suggests that co-operation between NGOs and government extension departments in the development of programmes, materials, and training, as well as in programme execution, can contribute positively to developing complementary programme linkages.

The Indonesian study stipulates that CLC stakeholders in Indonesia include the national Directorate of Non-formal Education and NFE provincial offices at the district and sub-district levels. Though specific roles are defined for them, the report points out that in practice, the operational linkages have not been satisfactorily achieved.

The Lebanon study refers to the importance of linkages between CLCs and relevant ministries. It reports that contacts have been established, but neither technical nor financial support has been received. The study alludes to the need for seeking co-operation from the dominant political groups in order to enlist and ensure their support for the success of CLC programmes.

The Nepal study dwells considerably on the critical importance of turning policy into action in reference to the country's National Tenth Five-Year Development Plan. Although this document recognizes the CLC modality as an instrumental strategy and method for reducing illiteracy, meeting basic education goals and promoting continuing education for development, tangible steps towards implementing the Plan appear to be lacking.

In Viet Nam, policy and programme linkages between CLCs and national EFA literacy policies appear to have been well visualized. The study refers to the need to promote effective networking of local CLCs to forge linkages among and between them.

The Thailand study states that the element of self-dependence promoted by CLCs based on local knowledge, wisdom and skills has already been integrated into the Thai national education policy as an important component of CLC development strategy. CLCs selected based on their merit and impact have also been showcased, and their approaches included as exemplars of CLC national development strategy in Thailand.

The Kazakhstan study states that non-formal and informal education does not surface meaningfully in either the national education legislation or in any national education policy document. The study, thus emphasizes that the experiences gained from CLCs have amply shown their potential for linking them to national and sub-national programmes that can effectively contribute towards realizing the goals of early childhood care, family and community development, and learning opportunities for vulnerable sections of the rural population. As a next important step, the study proposes maximizing effective dissemination of the findings to high level policy planning officials and specialists.

The China report states that the success of CLCs in China is due largely to the excellent policy and programme support received by the CLCs from the central, provincial and local governments along with the involvement of the people at the grassroots. The study suggests that practical and skills-based training programmes be linked to the requirements of factories, other possible employment agencies and development ministries/departments in order to more effectively accord benefits to participants and the local community.

Achievements, Outcomes and Impacts of CLCs in Participant Countries

The community learning centres have had a considerable positive impact on the promotion of literacy and continuing education across participant countries. Authorities have recognized the rich potential of CLCs in their Education for All (EFA) campaigns, literacy promotion and community development activities and, thus, consider CLCs an important part of their strategies for reducing illiteracy and attaining EFA.

Bangladesh characterizes CLCs as those owned by people, serving commonly agreed interests, directed towards meeting immediate community needs through collective action and, in many cases, designed specifically to serve people in remote and isolated rural areas. The Bangladesh report states, “The CLC programme is often hailed for its contributions to development.....raising sensitivity to gender issues at the community level, creating a supportive environment for community development, imparting literacy training particularly among women, providing access to skill training and consequent enhancement of income earning capacity, and enhancing access to development resources and services from government and other agencies.”²

The local participant beneficiaries in Bangladesh have appeared to be quite positive about CLCs since they have served as literacy centres for rural illiterate adults, with particular emphasis given to: 1) teaching out-of-school girls and women, 2) providing opportunities for local people to study and read newspapers, and 3) imparting livelihood skills in poultry/cattle-raising, sewing, embroidery, tailoring, fish culture, and vegetable cultivation/nurseries. CLC participants also reported that they have benefited from programmes that have focused on issues pertaining to human rights, such as the tragic consequences of dowry, early marriage and polygamy; prevention of child and women trafficking; and drug addiction.

The Bangladesh study reports that 89 percent of those surveyed expressed the view that their status in the family had improved as a result of the knowledge and skills they gained by participating in CLC activities. It is also reported that, of the 220 respondents, 204 indicated that there had been some improvement in their housing condition and 203 indicated that they had been able to improve their food, clothing and health care practices.

The Indonesian study reports that CLC programmes have started to demonstrate positive impacts on the learner communities. Those programmes that are particularly successful relate to literacy - with emphasis on reading and writing - which have enabled them to join industrial companies, security services, and other productive skills, including the small home industries. It is quite significant that the Indonesian National EFA Action Plan has endorsed and incorporated early childhood development, learning appropriate life skills, ensuring social equity and gender parity, ensuring indigenous people's right to basic education and attaining universal adult literacy as the principal areas that CLCs should address and cover in their sphere of activities.

The Indonesian study notes, “From national perspectives, the presence of CLC institutions with their programmes to a greater extent have brought about positive educational impacts among the Indonesian community. The programmes are capable of improving incomes, fulfilling educational aspirations, and the raising of children.”³ The Indonesian study recognizes that continued participation in educational programmes, improved income-generating skills, enhanced parental motivation to support schooling, enhanced healthy lifestyles and improved participation in local democratic activities are all positive outcomes of CLC activities. The study reports that the responses in respect to all the indicators described here ranged between 65-82% in favour of CLCs.

The Lebanon study reveals that CLC computer courses have contributed to the birth of a computer-literate generation in hitherto neglected underdeveloped areas of that country. The study further states that CLC-sponsored summer camps have also led volunteers who participate in such programmes to attend additional courses and skill-building workshops. Through participatory activities, children have also been taught about environmental conservation, sustainable development and other concepts related to

2 Bangladesh CLC Research Report, p. 51 (see original report on attached CD).

3 Indonesia CLC Research Report, pp. 40-41 (see original report on attached CD).

enhancing one's quality and perception of life, which are particularly important for children living in conflict areas. Women who attended CLC programmes reported that the handicraft skills they acquired had given them a sense of personal fulfillment, while the volunteers who attended the informative cultural seminars developed an active interest in both community activities and the operation of the centre.

The most important influence and impact of the CLC movement in Nepal is that the CLC concept has been recognized as an important programme strategy in the country's Tenth Five-Year Development Plan for reducing illiteracy and achieving EFA goals as early as possible. The Nepal study, however, laments that the government has not put in place effective measures to translate this policy into practice with adequate pro-active planning, implementation mechanisms and financial provision that are commensurate with the policy statements.

The Nepal study makes an in-depth case analysis of selected CLCs and analyzes the impact of those programmes. Analysis of CLC participant responses makes it abundantly clear that the CLC programmes have made positive impacts in participants' lives. Women participants, in particular, were quite happy about the tailoring skills they were able to develop. They noted that their family members were equally happy about their newly acquired skills, though which a large number of them generated new income.

In areas inhabited by Muslims, Nepal's CLCs have contributed significantly to empowering women and enabling them to come out, participate in educational activities and take an interest in their children's education (particularly of girls). Likewise, CLCs have taken the lead in launching literacy programmes for adults, which has resulted in a substantial increase in literacy rates among women. Finally, CLCs have worked to instill an appreciation of cultural heritage through projects that promote teamwork to protect and uphold cultural identity. People have participated in these projects with understanding and interest.

The Viet Nam study reports that the total number of CLCs at present is 5,384. A five-year comprehensive report on education in Viet Nam states that the CLC is an important tool for contributing to the stabilization of the country's political situation and for promoting socio-economic development. Through the amended Law of Education, the CLC delivery mechanism was institutionalized and officially incorporated into the Vietnamese National Education System as a continuing educational institution in January 2006.

CLCs in Viet Nam focus on a large range of areas, including state and party policies; knowledge about family and society, especially family planning; sports and competitive activities; culture and arts; health and safety measures, including prevention of HIV/AIDS, drug use and prostitution; respect for war invalids and martyrs; improvement of agricultural practices and making upper secondary education universal. The Viet Nam study reports that the CLC programmes and activities contributed significantly to transmitting useful knowledge and income-generating skills and to the empowerment of youth, women, the underprivileged and the exploited.

The analysis of CLC programmes included in the in-depth analysis of the Thailand study demonstrates that local communities have significantly benefited in re-orienting their way of living. CLC participants utilize the new skills they gain in a wide range of occupational pursuits: diversified forestry management, management of local crops and animals, revival of local cultural values and wisdom, and application of agricultural and information technology adapted to suit local conditions.

The four CLC clusters included in the Thailand study have contributed to a series of tangible outcomes that have directly benefited the CLC participant communities. These outcomes have been manifested in the form of: (a) economic reward and well-being instilled and generated by new and improved skills; (b) promoting a living culture which is in balance with nature; (c) integration of knowledge, culture and local wisdom that sustains and advances local development and well-being; and (d) enhanced quality and value of non-formal education to meet local education needs.

Kazakhstan presents an analysis of 2,417 CLC attendants based on a range of characteristics: age, gender, marital status, level of education and employment status. It is reported that 46% of participants were 30+ years, 32% between 20 and 30 years, and 22% aged up to 20 years; men 31%, women 69%; married 55%, single 34% and divorced 11%. Of these participants, 46% had completed secondary general, 29% secondary vocational and 35% higher education. About half of participants (46%) were unemployed.

The report states that non-formal education is not reflected in the Kazakhstan National Law on Education, and the emphasis on adult education is marginal. The research teams' assessment is that CLC programmes

have the potential to fill this gap in guaranteeing wide access to lifelong learning, particularly for adults, the unemployed, women, youth, repatriates, and the disabled. The report further states that, since non-formal education is not well developed in Kazakhstan, CLCs can serve as effective models for meeting people's need to acquire employable life skills that can ensure stable incomes.

The China study reports that CLC programmes and activities have demonstrated clear benefits to participants in the rural communities in terms of increased literacy skills; positive outlook; and level of increased awareness about the value of literacy and education for adults, youth and children. It is also reported that an increased number of parents who participated in CLC programmes have sent their children to school willingly. Those who move to urban areas have been found confident and well-adapted to new job situations with minimum difficulty. In respect to CLC participants in urban areas, it is reported that their quality of life and their personal happiness index have improved considerably.

Key Issues and Implications for the Future

CLCs in the participant countries have been set up so that they mainly operate in under-served rural and suburban areas. Primarily, programmes and activities pertain to literacy; basic and continuing education; training in life and vocational skills; health and sanitation; women's empowerment; protection of civic and human rights; preservation and protection of art, culture, heritage and the environment; and promotion of peace. CLCs' impact on the promotion of literacy, basic education and community development has been quite positive. The outcomes and impact described in the country research reports amply demonstrate the valuable contributions CLCs can make in helping countries attain their EFA goals.

Some of the key issues that have implications for future development of CLCs are briefly outlined below:

Funding - This is an issue apparently raised in almost all country reports. Thailand presents an analysis of those CLCs which were not initiated and supported by the government. It recommends that the government should extend financial support to those CLCs with a view to augmenting the quality and coverage of programmes. CLCs in Indonesia are set up and function with the support of NFE departments and agencies at the district and local levels. The Indonesian study observes that the present level of funding is inadequate, and it recommends that measures be taken to augment the present level of funding to improve both the quality of inputs and of their management by the existing CLCs. Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Nepal, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam have all cited funding as a major issue, whether the CLCs emanate from the local communities, the national governments, the UN and its specialized agencies, development partners, donor agencies and/or international non-governmental organizations. To harness and sustain the valuable contributions of CLCs and their future potential for reducing illiteracy and promoting basic education, effective arrangements must be made or explored to strengthen and augment the CLCs' financial base within the broader framework of country-level programme support and funding.

Linking CLCs to National Policy and Programmes - It is imperative that CLCs forge intimate operational linkages with the overall national policy and programmes, be it on literacy, adult education, education for out-of-school children and/or community programmes on health, women, youth development, income-generating skills, etc. A coherent articulation of CLC missions and objectives, as well as policy commitment backed by operational linkages in support of country programmes for the promotion of literacy and achieving EFA, would be critical to ensure CLCs' effective long-term impact. This concern is echoed in almost all country reports. It has been reported that the Nepali Government has already incorporated the CLC concept into its Tenth Five-Year Development Plan as a programme strategy for reducing illiteracy and attaining EFA goals. The studies from Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam have also emphasized the need for formal policy recognition as an important programme strategy to optimize the benefits and impact of CLCs. Thailand reports that certain aspects of CLC programme outcomes have already been reflected in national policy and programming documents. However, it argues that the purpose would be not to prescribe a uniform mode of programme operation and policy linkages, but rather, to articulate what and how CLCs would complement and support the overall campaign of literacy and EFA.

Management of CLCs - What organizational and management structure and practice for CLCs at the local level could be meaningful and practical as guidelines? The experiences of the nine countries illustrate that CLCs need to be based at the grassroots, where they are sustained and supported by local needs and capabilities. It is not necessarily creating a new building set-up, nor an elaborate new infrastructure and management system with a stream of staff and personnel, but linkages to existing local programmes, resources and management structures that need to be forged and harnessed. The CLC agenda must not be for creating separate additional educational set-ups. CLCs must develop as an inseparable and integral part of education and blend well with the development programmes of the people at the very grassroots level.

UN and Donor Agencies' Support for CLCs - Various UN and specialized agencies, donors and other development partners are engaged in a variety of community development and non-formal education programmes focused on health, skill training, and empowerment of women in the CLC participant countries. Programme and operational linkage strategies need to be developed to dovetail these community-based initiatives with CLCs.

Scope of CLC Programmes - The range of programmes and activities undertaken at present by CLCs varies widely in scope and operation modalities. Measures to delineate and systematize the scope and coverage of programme activities should be based on priority needs, availability of resources and technical expertise. CLCs must not claim to do everything, everywhere. CLCs must select and choose programmes and activities that are deemed most essential by the locals, and those that can be managed and supported by the resources available to them.

CLCs Support to Education for All (EFA) - The rate of illiteracy and the proportion of children in the Asian region who do not attend school are simply astounding. The tasks ahead are monumental! The time available is very short to meet the 2015 Dakar deadline on literacy and basic education. The present scale and magnitude of CLC support to literacy and EFA must, thus, be scaled up to match even the smallest fraction of the unfinished tasks to achieve EFA. Experience with CLCs has shown that they have abundant potential to help eliminate illiteracy and promote basic education at the grassroots level. But CLCs must be empowered and mobilized in greater numbers to cope with this challenge.

Linking Literacy and NFE to Development Programmes - Dovetailing literacy and non-formal education programmes with other programmes from development-oriented ministries continues to be a difficult and sensitive issue. The challenge remains as to how and by what methods to forge optimal programme linkages and complementarities between and among programmes that are organized and managed by various development ministries and/or departments.

According Equivalence to Literacy and NFE Programmes - Equivalency is a key issue in all participant countries. Indonesia and Thailand have introduced certain measures to promote equivalency and certification of certain literacy and non-formal education programmes. New initiatives need to be explored to address this issue and promote inter-country sharing of experiences.

Local Contributions for CLCs - The need to generate funds at the local level is another important issue. At least a token contribution from the local level should be considered. Would it be viable and sustainable and if it would, to what degree, particularly when the programmes are located and have their focus on the underprivileged, marginalized, and the poor in the remote, rural and disadvantaged areas?

Collaborative Networking - All nine countries that participated in the research study on CLCs have noted that closer collaborative working linkages and mechanisms between and among the grassroots-based NGOs/NPOs is indispensable to enhance and optimize CLC contributions to literacy and basic education. Collective programme strategies and modalities need to be formulated to promote closer co-operation and shared utilization of various resources among grassroots-based local agencies to reduce illiteracy and enhance peoples' participation in basic education. The same efforts at collaboration also must apply to the wide array of sub-national (local, district, provincial and regional) and national bodies, development ministries, international agencies, and outside non-governmental organizations. All actors need to create effective networking arrangements for sharing and converging experiences in planning and developing programmes, developing curriculum/materials, training staff and monitoring/evaluating progress.



PART II:

SUMMARIES OF CLC RESEARCH STUDY FINDINGS



BANGLADESH*

Introduction

Community learning centres (CLCs) are now drawing increasing attention in many developing countries as special institutions for adult and non-formal education. These are literacy and skills training centres that allow all those who are no longer or have never been in primary education to go through some learning process, be it literacy, livelihood trades/vocational skills training, training in primary health care, protection of civil rights, community welfare, environmental conservation, or leadership development. The present study of CLCs in Bangladesh aims to look at the activities of CLCs in the country, their management and linkage activities and their impact on the lives of their members. It has been conducted through both desk research and a field survey. The desk research comprised a review of the existing literature on CLCs in Bangladesh, followed by the processing and analysis of data generated from the field survey. This survey consisted of questionnaires distributed to a sample of CLC members, area studies, focus group discussions, case studies and interviews of a selected number of people at the grassroots level.

One of the major problems in the study was the lack of information about the number of different types of CLCs that actually operate in various locations of the country. The problem appeared more complicated when we discovered that the NGOs offering a huge range of socio-economic services, although not of the same scale and dimension in all areas and locations, experienced confusion in understanding about CLCs. CLCs in Bangladesh are almost invariably the creation of NGOs that also simultaneously carry out other activities. The local branches or field units of many NGOs in the country treat their programmes of literacy or training in income-generating activities as those of CLCs.

For the field survey work, the present study selected 25 CLCs located in different *upazilas* (literally, sub-districts that are local administrative units comprising a number of unions which are the lowest tier of local government formed with a number of villages) of the districts of Kurigram and Bogra (Rajshahi Division), Satkhira and Khulna (Khulna Division) Patuakhali (Barisal Division), Chittagong (Chittagong Division) and Dhaka, Netrokona and Jamalpur (Dhaka Division). These CLCs are sponsored by foreign NGOs such as ActionAid, national-level NGOs such as South Asia Partnership (SAP) and Nari Maitree, or local-level NGOs such as Concerned Women for Family Development (CWFD) and *Rupantar* (Transformation). The number of members at a CLC varies from 40 to 60. Ten members (distributed more or less evenly between men and women) from each selected sample CLC were randomly picked for interviews. In all sample locations, at least 10 persons representing members of the local public, such as social workers, schoolteachers, local government representatives, the business community, and workers of NGOs or voluntary organizations, were consulted. Although members of CLCs formed by the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) make up the major part of the CLC population in Bangladesh, the sample population described above did not include these members. This was because the principal investigator of the present study had recently conducted a special study on the CLCs of DAM and their impact on the lives of the rural people [Rahman, S. M. M, 2005]. The present report incorporates the findings of that study.

In the Bangladesh context, a CLC is a local institution of functional literacy outside the formal education system for disadvantaged people of rural and urban slum areas. Such centres are usually set up and managed by community people, with some funding and technical support from a local, national or international NGO. CLCs in Bangladesh usually do not use local facilities and buildings such as primary schools, mosques or temples. Instead, they operate in separate single-room structures with limited sanitation and other facilities. CLCs provide various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of the quality of life. Members of a CLC are usually homogenous in terms of their social and economic status. Within most CLCs, more than 60 percent of the members are women. CLCs are designed to function as the venue for education, information and services for improvement in the quality of life. The various CLC activities for development of the community people fall into the following areas:

- (a) **Functional literacy and continuing education:** diverse learning opportunities; remedial measures for children in difficulty; community library

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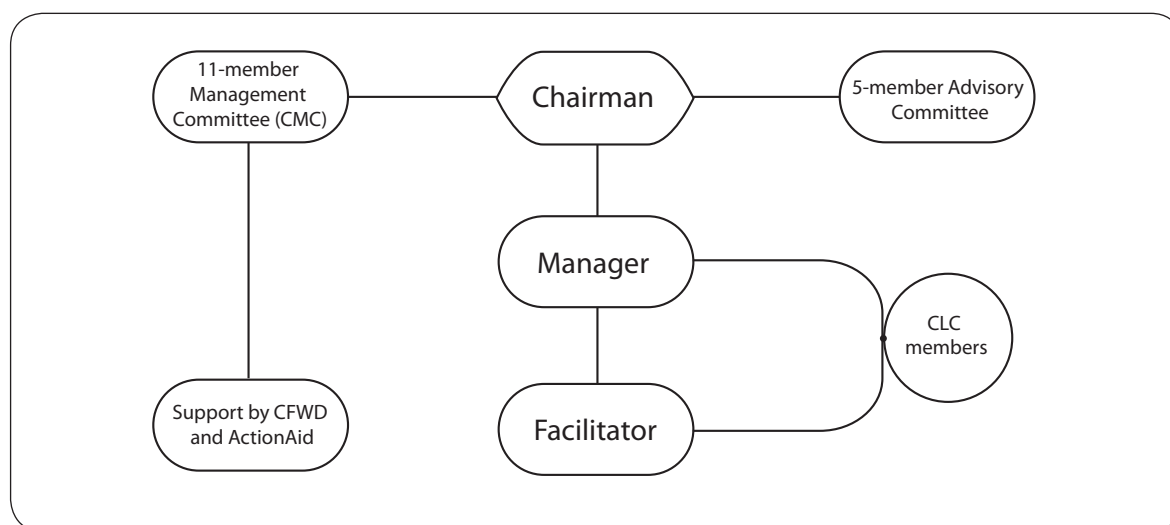
- (b) **Skill development and human resource development:** training in livelihood skills, income-generating activities (IGA) and leadership; savings and credit services; workshops; inoculation, early childhood care (ECC) and agriculture extension services
- (c) **Community development services:** exchange of ideas; activities for community development, resource mobilization; discussion of issues related to family and community; venue for extension and development service providers
- (d) **Awareness and cultural development:** raising awareness about education, health care, family planning, human rights, gender and environment; socializing and recreation

CLCs sponsored by different agencies and located at different places have some variations in programmes and mode of operation. They have a wide variety of functions, all leading to the creation of an overall environment for community development. CLCs vary in type and activities, but their main focus is more or less the same. For example, BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), a leading NGO in Bangladesh, has *Kishoree Kendra* (a CLC for adolescent girls attending regular schools and those who have never attended school or are dropouts). BRAC also has *ganokendras* (people's centres), the target population of which comprises illiterates, semi-literates, neo-literates and literates. These CLCs provide non-formal education (NFE) and continuing education services, including reading facilities and textbook lending, skill training and socio-cultural activities. CLCs sponsored by Save the Children USA are called *lokakendra* (folk schools). They serve pre-primary, secondary-level and out-of-school children with limited literacy skills and provide services such as continuing education, social awareness development, library facilities, skills development, and information dissemination. Other NGOs such as Plan Bangladesh and ActionAid Bangladesh also have CLCs of their own names that have more or less similar programmes/activities for disadvantaged out-of-school children and youth. However, the NGO that operates the largest number of CLCs in Bangladesh is the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), which calls its CLCs *ganokendra* (or GK, people's centres), that are based on village libraries and are usually established in an independent small house (almost invariably a one-room structure). GKs provide services such as literacy (adult and non-formal education), continuing education, training in life skills and IGA, awareness and leadership development, and access to information and resources. In 2004, DAM had about 1,050 CLCs in the country. DAM operated nearly 64 percent of them with local support and the remaining 36 percent in collaboration with other NGOs.

Management and Operation of CLCs

The responsibility for overall management of a CLC lies with a CLC Management Committee (CMC), which is elected for a period of two years. Members of a CMC (including its chairman) are representatives of the local community. Before 2000, according to practice in Bangladesh, CMCs had from five to seven members. At present, the CMC of a DAM-organized CLC has from seven to thirteen members. The following is the management structure of a typical CLC in the country:

Figure 1: CLC Management Structure (Monoharkhali Development Centre)



The day-to-day CLC activities are managed by a community worker (facilitator or manager), who is usually a local young woman. She is overburdened with responsibilities such as registering members, keeping the CLCs open for the use of members, teaching literates and neo-literates, collecting fees and donations, carrying out training and other programmes, keeping records (minutes of meetings, daily attendance, membership fees, training registers, financial transactions, etc.), keeping the premises and its surroundings clean, reading out and explaining stories from books and newspapers, and making home visits to ensure that CLC members attend. A community worker, thus, has problems in managing time for providing continuing education services (which is sometimes treated as a secondary function), organizing vocational training, conducting issue-based discussions, carrying out social development and awareness campaigns, and developing linkages with government agencies and NGOs. CMC members could take these responsibilities, but in reality CMCs are merely titular bodies and are practically inactive. CMC meetings are not regularly held in many places, and CMC members (which include local primary school teachers, knowledgeable farmers, community leaders, doctors or businessmen) often remain absent from CMC meetings. There is little evidence about rapport between CLCs and these groups of local people for carrying out training, awareness and motivation activities.

The responsibility for supervision of CLCs, assistance to community workers, and arranging monthly meetings, training and other programmes lies with the supervisor of the sponsor NGO. The supervisor visits CLCs two or three times a month. During these visits, the supervisor usually checks registers and discusses problems with community workers and the CLC members, the performance of CLCs and ways to improve it. He/she also consults with local community members on all these issues.

CLC Linkages and Networking

The linkage activities of CLCs are useful in many aspects, such as funding or manpower, equipment or technical support, training in income-generating activities and the registration of CLC members in enterprise development programmes. Also important are savings and/or loans/micro-credit programmes of other agencies/organizations, the marketing of products/services of CLC members, and the access of CLC members to the extension and social welfare services of various government departments.

CLC members are associated, as members or in other ways, with other local organizations. According to some estimates, more than half of the CLCs had links with micro-credit agencies such as ASA (Association for Social Advancement), BRAC or the Grameen Bank, and about 80 percent of CLCs receive support from other organizations. The support comes in the form of training, financial help and the supply of labour, construction materials, fixtures and books. Evaluation reports, however, say that the scale and magnitude of support from other organizations, especially from governmental organizations, is still very low. There is also scope for expanding the network functions with NGOs and government offices for meeting CLCs' needs.

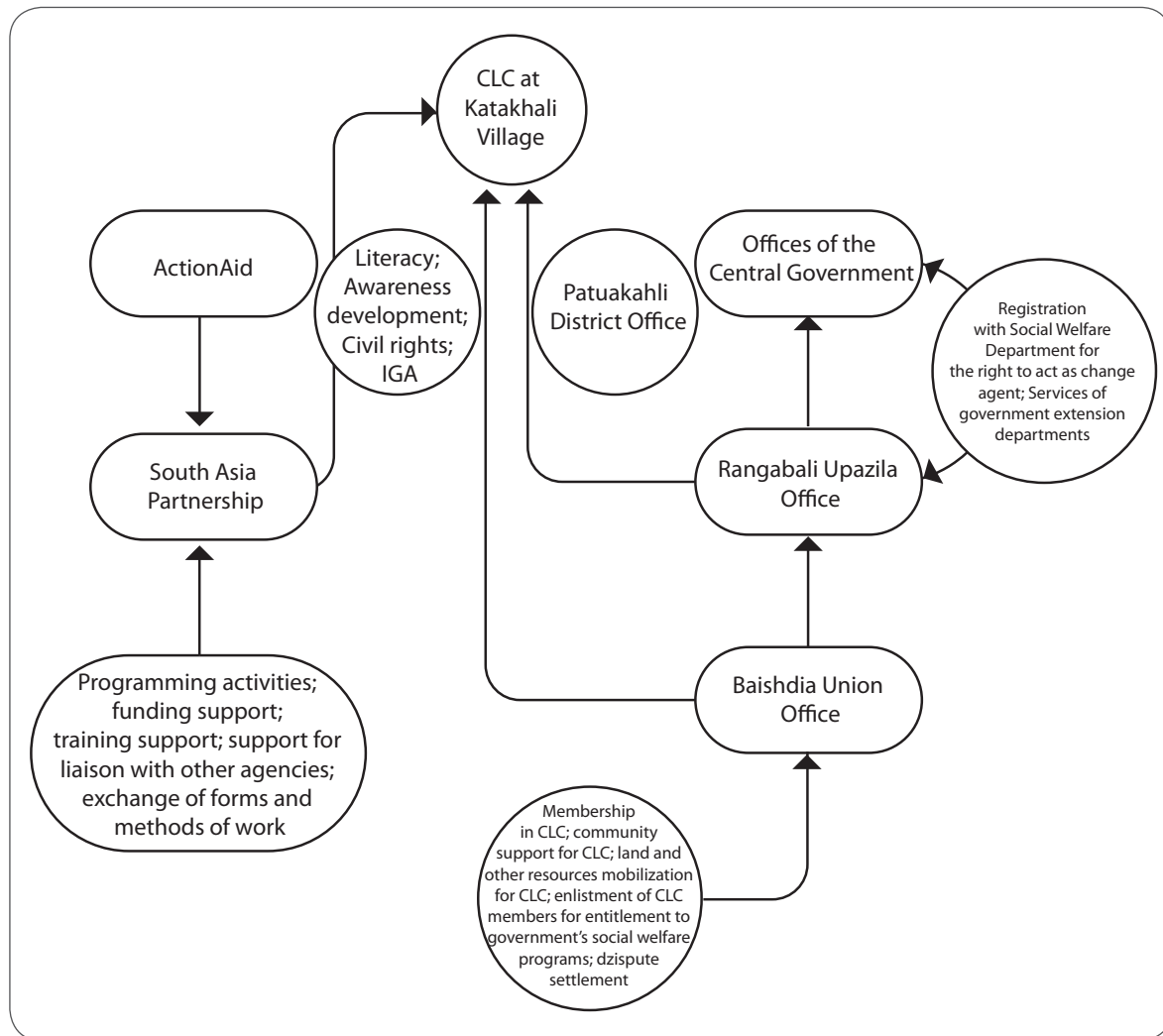
Community Participation and Ownership

Experience suggests that the participation of community people in the process of CLC operations is not always voluntary. In addition, participation does not automatically create the feeling of ownership or the sense of belongingness to CLCs. One of the main reasons is the lack of ability and confidence of community people to take certain responsibilities in the management of CLCs. The CLC members, however, have a feeling of ownership, and they justify it in many ways. For example, they say that the CLC is a forum for getting together and working together, CLCs teach them how to live better, CLCs have been formed by the members themselves, the CLC is a useful forum for discussion of their problems, CLCs teach them to earn more, or that they can learn many new things through CLCs. At the same time, CLCs have yet to earn credibility in terms of their value as service providers. In many places, people strongly lack the feeling of ownership and feel that it is not worth paying for the services they offer.

Costs, Financing and Sustainability of CLCs

The three main sources of CLC funding in Bangladesh are contributions from the headquarters of the sponsor NGO, donations by local people, organizations and institutions including local government bodies, and monthly fees paid by CLC members. However, the financial support provided by sponsor organizations

Figure 2: CLC Operational Linkages (Katakhali Village Development Centre)



is often not adequate for the proper functioning of CLCs. In addition, fees paid by members and donations by local community people are not sufficient to cover the deficits. Records relating to costs and financing of CLC programmes are not readily available in CLC offices or at the offices of their sponsor organizations. Findings from personal interviews with DAM CLC personnel suggest that DAM provides approximately one-fourth of the total cost of construction of a modest CLC house and the remaining part of the cost is met by contributions from local community people. It has been estimated that the total annual cost of operation of a CLC of the existing type in a rural location of Bangladesh is about Tk 30,000. If a CLC has about 100 members on average, the cost per member (per year) stands at Tk 300.00. This estimate is based on having a one-room CLC house on free land, with a token honorarium to a minimum number of CLC staff with minimum furniture and equipment.

The sustainability of CLCs in Bangladesh has become a major concern because of the lack of interest and commitment of the local communities in many places. People of the local community, including members of CLC management committees, are not very enthusiastic about contributing funds for CLC operations. Moreover, CLCs in the country can only expect (but not rely on) the availability of some allocations from the government budget, since CLCs have yet to get recognition from the government as useful literacy institutions. They, however, get some funding and technical assistance support from local NGOs, which are expected to continue providing this support so long as they themselves have prospects of getting funding assistance from the government or external donor agencies for their welfare activities.

One of many useful suggestions is to link the issue of CLC sustainability with improved income-generating activities for households. Better livelihood training for members and increased access to credit can create opportunities for additional income. This can motivate members to contribute more to financing CLCs. CLCs can generate resources through a system of sharing profits from trades and businesses promoted by them. For this purpose, the CLC may sign contracts with its programme beneficiaries. For the CLCs to be sustainable, they must have visible impact and be developed and treated by local communities as institutions for which they feel responsible.

Benefits from CLC Activities

The following are the major observations on the nature and extent of benefits from CLC activities:

- Benefits are not equal for all; members who regularly take part in CLC activities are benefited more than those who do not.
- NFE provided by CLCs is quick and relatively effective; the literacy training makes about one-third of the CLC members literate at Level A (Grade Five) in three years, which in a regular primary school would take five to seven years.
- Functional literacy provided by CLCs enables members to orient themselves to practical situations and the practice of learning by doing at CLCs is their training in livelihood trades (income-generating activities), as well as in managing household accounts and even the accounts of small businesses.
- CLCs develop the capacity of their members to take better care of the family and children and increase their awareness about society and the environment.
- CLCs act as a forum where members can discuss their problems and try to find out ways to solve them.
- Active participation in CLC programmes/activities empowers members to be able to solve problems at personal, household or community levels and enhances their confidence, community consciousness and social integrity.

Evidence from the field suggests that CLCs have significant impacts on the lives of the target beneficiary people:

- (a) There is an increase in community awareness about the importance of education, primary health care, sanitation, environmental conservation, civic rights and participation in community activities.
- (b) There is a re-orientation of the mindset from seeking jobs in enterprises of other people or in government offices/departments to self-employment in income-generating activities.
- (c) Poor people, especially disadvantaged women, are empowered to acquire more confidence in decision-making.
- (d) There is an increase in incomes and improvement of the quality of life through newly acquired training and livelihood skills.
- (e) The status of CLC members in their families and communities is significantly enhanced.

Members of CLCs consider that the CLC is a useful organization for them. A field survey of 220 respondents revealed a number of reasons why they think so, and the findings are presented in Table 2. However, a significant number of CLC members are not satisfied with CLC services. More than three-fourths (about 77%) of the CLC members interviewed in the survey expressed their dissatisfaction, and the proportion of dissatisfied CLC members was higher among the male members than among the female ones. The reasons for dissatisfaction include the following: CLCs do not provide adequate services; they do not give money (credit); they cannot solve all the different problems of the members; they lack skilled/trained staff and because a CLC often has only one person to look after everything, she or he cannot perform all the tasks; they do not provide the training required; members undergoing training cannot use it effectively because of problems in funding and marketing; CLCs do not work well and do not take proper care and/or organize follow-ups.

Table 2: CLC Usefulness by Skill-building and Activity

Skill		Activity	
CLCs increased:		In CLCs the members can:	
Confidence	17	Read books	41
Income	32	Watch TV	27
Savings	33	Learn from useful discussions	13
Awareness	44	Get training	10
Literacy Skills	56	Discuss problems	44
		Develop mutual understanding	3
		Enjoy gossiping	18

Source: Field survey

Note: Not all responded to the question and some respondents indicated multiple reasons.

CLCs Provide Literacy Services

CLC literacy programmes help in retaining and upgrading neo-literate literacy skills and in improving their lifestyles. However, members' irregular attendance in CLC literacy activities significantly scales down the effect and impact of programmes. Although achievements in reading, writing and accounting skills remain far from the intended results of an ideal CLC, the CLC achievements in these areas are better than those attained by learners under government-run NFE programmes. Evidence on this count from the field survey conducted for the present study is presented in Table 3. The table shows that a little more than one-fourth of the respondents did not attain any literacy skill after joining CLCs, but nearly one-third could demonstrate literacy equivalent to Grade One, about one-eighth equivalent to Grade Two and one-ninth to Grade Three. About one-tenth of the respondents reported that CLCs helped them in completing education at the secondary school certificate level or higher.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Acquired Level of Literacy/Education

Attained literacy/education of equivalent grade /certificate)	Number		
	Male	Female	Total
None (did not attain literacy/education)	17	42	59
Grade one	28	40	68
Grade two	8	19	27
Grade three	7	4	11
Grade four	3	3	6
Grade five	4	7	11
Grade seven	3	4	7
Grade eight	2	7	9
Grade nine	2	1	3
Secondary School Certificate	6	9	15
Higher	2	2	4
Total	82	138	220

Source: Field survey

CLCs Create Opportunities

Many CLCs provide training in income-generating activities, but only a few provide savings and credit services. CLC members, especially women, significantly benefit from the combination of training and loan services, which improve their livelihood. At present, the credit support by CLCs is very negligible, but CLC members can get credit from banks, cooperative societies or NGOs operating in the locality or its surrounding area. A special study on GKs belonging to DAM conducted in 2001 found that membership in CLCs could create a difference in the income of individuals: the income of CLC members at the personal level more than doubled – from Tk 319 to Tk 728. However, at the family level, the change is insignificant as Table 4 illustrates.

Table 4: Average Monthly Income of CLC Members as Compared to Others

	CLC members		Non-CLC Members	
	Current	Previous	Current	Previous
Personal level	728	319	1,066	821
Family level	3,634	2,970	3,690	2,816

Source: FREPD, 2001

CLCs Develop Social Awareness and Empowerment

The information, counseling and resource services offered by a CLC include the dissemination of information related to community development, counseling for acute problems such as contamination of water by arsenic, the observance of nationally important days, and discussions of important news or about market prices or the environment. CLCs also conduct issue-based discussions and act as forums for socialization and the development of social awareness.

CLC members think that their participation in a number of CLC activities enhances their status in the community. Evidence suggests that CLCs have some contribution to the development of people's awareness about the need for conserving the environment and creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding in the community. However, the changes in various aspects of the lives of the rural people, including the CLC members, cannot be attributed exclusively to interventions by CLCs. CLC interventions only reinforce the process, in which many other parties, such as the government, mass media and NGOs, have a substantial contribution.

In 2001, the Foundation for Research on Educational Planning and Development (FREPD) conducted a survey of CLCs. The survey revealed that the social awareness and survival skills of neo-literate CLC members were higher compared to those of non-members (see Table 5). The survey for the present study also found that CLC training had an impact on members in terms of changing their occupation. CLCs had contributed to change in the occupational status of the women, especially those who had been housewives before. Self-employment was the predominant form of new occupation for these women (see Table 6). Also, it is interesting to observe that none of the 220 respondents had any business activity before they joined the CLC, but after they joined, 17 among them got involved in business as their new occupation.

Table 5: Level of Awareness and Application of Skills by CLC Members

		% neo-literates in CLC member households	% non-CLC member households
Capability to write letters	Male	61	51
	Female	43	35
Married couples adopting family planning		73	58
Households having access to sanitary latrine		85	69
Households using soap after defecation and before meals		65	51
Membership of any organization		35	15
Female respondents to which people come to seek advice		61	43

Source: FREPD, 2001

Table 6: Incidence of Change of Profession by Gender

Profession	Number of Respondents in the Given Profession			
	Before joining CLC		At present (after joining CLC)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Job in a govt./private office	1	6	4	16
Business	14	-	18	17
Agriculture	30	1	31	2
Wage labour	16	2	15	1
Housewife/housekeeping	4	101	1	62
Self-employment (IGA)	3	2	13	51
Unemployed	10	14	0	8

Source: Field survey

An earlier evaluation of DAM-operated CLCs [Rahman, S. M. M, 2005] shows that, thanks to participation in CLC training programmes on income-generating activities (and presumably loans taken from CLCs), 23 percent of the regular CLC members could increase their monthly income by amounts up to Tk 700, 40 percent by amounts between Tk 701 and 1,000, about 27 percent between Tk 1,001 and 1,500, and 10 percent between Tk 1,500 and 2,000. These observations about the impact of CLCs in terms of their contribution to members' increased incomes have been confirmed in the survey conducted during the present study. It found that about 70 percent of the CLC members could increase their household income by amounts up to Tk 1,000 (see Table 7). The corresponding figure was estimated at 67 percent in the previous study, which also recorded that literacy, development of social and community awareness, and increase in the monthly income of CLC women members contributed to the enhancement of their status in their families. Furthermore, 204 among the 220 respondents reported improvements in their housing conditions and 203 reported improvement in their food, clothes and health care. The improvement in living conditions as indicated by the respondents was of different degrees (see Table 8), although figures show that some improvement had taken place for nearly 85 percent of the CLC members.

Table 7: Incidence of Increase in Monthly Household Income and Expenditure

Range of increase in monthly average household income	Number of households in the range (N=190)	Range of increase in monthly average household expenditure	Number of households in the range (N=172)
Less than Tk 100	11	Less than Tk 100	51
Tk 100 – Tk 200	35	Tk 100 – Tk 200	29
Tk 201 – Tk 500	68	Tk 201 – Tk 500	49
Tk 501 – Tk 1,000	37	Tk 501 – Tk 1,000	26
Tk 1,001 – Tk 1,500	16	Tk 1,001 – Tk 1,500	10
Tk 1,501 – Tk 2,000	12	Tk 1,501 – Tk 2,000	4
Tk 2,001 and above	11	Tk 2,001 and above	3

Source: Field survey

Table 8: Improvement in the Living Conditions of CLC Members

Indicator	Number of Respondents Claiming Improvement of Different Degrees								
	Male			Female			All		
	high	moderate	low	high	mod	low	high	mod	low
Housing conditions	33	30	17	55	49	20	88	79	37
Food/clothing/health care	32	41	7	61	62	10	93	103	17

Source: Field survey

Table 9 shows that CLC members are better off in terms of their children studying in schools and receiving required vaccinations. The members are also more active in practicing family planning, participating in decision-making processes and attending public meetings. The table also presents some evidence of how disadvantaged people are being gradually empowered. CLCs enable members to change their attitudes through increasing their awareness, confidence and the ability to serve their own families, as well as their communities. They now aspire to live a life with human dignity. Thus, CLCs play an important role in empowerment of the poor and of women. Table 10 shows the position of the 220 field survey respondents in this regard.

Table 9: Position of CLC Members by Awareness Indicators

Indicator	In families with member of a CLC	In families that do not have a CLC member
% of school age children enrolled in primary schools	76	46
% of children aged <6 taking all vaccines	85	50
Contraceptive prevalence rate	78	43
% of households which consult qualified doctors	100	39
% of women participating in household decision process	63	39
% of women who attend public meetings	63	35

Source: FREPD, 2001

Table 10: Empowerment of CLC Members through CLCs

Area of achievement	Number of male/female respondents by the degree of achievement							
	Very High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Increased social awareness	40	88	35	43	7	7	82	138
Enhanced status of the family	23	56	47	63	12	19	82	138
Increased self-confidence	48	99	32	35	2	4	82	138
Learning more about health care	56	96	23	39	3	3	82	138
Increased ability to participate in community development activities	22	55	52	56	8	27	82	138
Increased ability to provide assistance to wife and children	26	55	44	56	12	27	82	138

Source: Field survey

Factors that Affect CLC Performance

Although the CLC design is theoretically impressive, its management and operation in Bangladesh need improvement in many aspects, including the mobilization of human, material and financial resources, the development of skills and efficiency of the CLC personnel and effective networking with other local and regional agents of development. CLCs have many limitations and constraints:

- Women members leave CLCs due to change of address after marriage; also, elderly people prohibit women from attending CLCs for religious reasons; and women members face problems in working together with their male counterparts.
- Finding time to attend CLCs becomes difficult for many members because of their workloads at home, in the fields or at other workplaces.
- Most CLCs provide training in limited types of skills; in many cases, skills training cannot be put to use because of the shortage of money for starting income-generating activities or a lack of access to markets for the products or services.
- CLCs are poor in their stock of materials for reading and equipment for learning, games and sports.

- CLC community workers are burdened with many tasks and they often lack efficiency.
- In many places, CLCs are not very successful in becoming institutions for which the general members have a feeling of ownership. Community members often have a feeling that paying for a CLC is not worth the services it offers.
- The flow of information materials at CLCs is irregular. Also, in many places, the CLC management committees are only titular bodies, rather than properly functioning authorities for planning, resource generation, supervision, networking, monitoring, and evaluation.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

A major strength of the CLCs is the homogeneity and unity of their members. CLCs are common meeting places with equal access for all members of the community, who gain from discussions in a collective forum and addressing the problems of the community for a collective solution. The greatest weakness of CLCs is their poor resource base, i.e., poor infrastructure and lack of funds and technical and managerial staff with professional efficiency. The opportunities lie in the general recognition of CLCs as useful institutions of ANFE, functional literacy and continuing education, which has indeed resulted in a willingness among many national governments and both regional and international agencies to support the CLC movement. CLCs operate in an environment of gradually improving relationships among the members of a community and an expanding network with local government agencies and service providers of different kinds. The chance of CLCs becoming sustainable institutions is threatened by the fact that there are many NFE, adult education and continuing education programmes competing for resources from almost the same set of agencies and organizations. In addition, CLC staff have a slow learning curve, CLCs depend too much on outside funding support, conservative communities are resistant to change (particularly if the change empowers the helpless poor), and there is the possibility of funds leaking or draining away in transit.

CLCs perform multi-dimensional activities addressed to the needs and for the benefits of their members and the communities of which they are a part. They are most successful when recognized as a special type of institution for non-formal education and life skills training. CLCs are also generally recognized by neo-literate CLC members, as well as by interested members of the local public, as useful meeting places where they can read newspapers; discuss matters related to various issues of family and community life; develop their awareness about human rights, family planning, health care and the environment; get some training in skills required for income-generating activities; and receive inoculations and agricultural extension services.

The impact of CLC programmes on gender equity, poverty alleviation and environmental conservation are marginal; those on basic literacy, awareness development and sensitization are moderate; and those on awareness about primary health care and motivation of local people to send their children to school are fairly good. CLCs have contributed to enhancing participants' status within families and communities. In general, CLCs have a good impact on the lives of their members as well as on their communities, but the impact is often not as extensive as might be portrayed by the agencies that implement them.

Given regular participation in CLC literacy and NFE programmes, members attain literacy skills of different levels in a much shorter time than they would at a regular primary or high school. With the literacy level they attain, the members develop the ability to read, write and count, as well as to manage household accounts and even the accounts of the small businesses they start. Furthermore, with literacy and increased awareness about society and the environment, CLC programme participants take better care of their families and children, enjoy a better status in the family and in the community, and take a more meaningful role in the decision-making process at both levels.

That a large majority of CLC members do not regularly take part in CLC activities only demonstrates that the CLCs are not very successful in becoming institutions for which the general members have a feeling of ownership. Neither do residents of the local communities feel like owners, because both CLC members and the non-member local people are reluctant to contribute to funding CLC activities. In many places, CLC members, as well as local members of the public, have a feeling that CLCs do not provide adequate credit support for income-generating activities and entrepreneurship, and believe that the absence of an early childhood care and education programme is a problem. The flow of information materials at CLCs is irregular. In addition, in many places, members of CLC management committees do not regularly attend monthly meetings.

CLCs have little effect in terms of developing the management capacity of local people. In fact, CLC activities do not have this aspect in focus. So far, CLC members have not come up as an organized force that could take the initiative in social movements (for example, against drug addiction, child and women trafficking, terrorism or for the establishment of human rights), collectively facing natural calamities or organizing rehabilitation programmes. At the personal level, however, CLC members could develop some capacity in managing household affairs, making decisions and changing attitudes towards life.

CLCs have some linkages with local/district-level government agencies, local branches of some regional/national NGOs and a few local NGOs. However, the linkages are not institutionalized and none of the partners have any policy or plan of action to further cooperate. In view of some recent developments in the attitude of the government towards GOs and NGOs or public-private partnerships, and thanks to the personal initiatives of some CLC community workers or supervisors, CLCs can now arrange some training programmes with the help of extension service agencies and governmental departments and operate as venues for the delivery of agricultural extension, inoculation or family planning services.

CLCs in Bangladesh can claim some success in terms of their contribution to an increase in the social awareness of the poor and disadvantaged sections of the population, their empowerment through literacy, and their training in life skills and income generation. Yet CLCs also have failures, largely due to CLC members' lack of conscious participation in their programmes/activities, inadequate resource support and inefficient management. Although CLC programmes are low-cost, there is also the feeling that in their present form they are possibly not replicable nor sustainable.

Two major limitations of Bangladeshi CLCs are their poor physical set-up along with the shortage of reading/learning materials and equipment for games, sports and entertainment. Not all CLCs provide training in all types of life skills training that are locally useful, and in many cases CLCs suffer from poor management, supervision and monitoring. CLC community workers are burdened with many responsibilities, and they often find it difficult to allocate time and energy to effectively discharge all of them. CLCs do not have adequate funds for providing the micro-credit support to members who require it for income-generating activities. These constraints and limitations in CLC operations keep CLCs from having a broader and deeper impact in terms of their performance.

Recommendations

The CLC programme in Bangladesh needs improvement in many aspects to create a substantial impact in terms of spreading literacy, widening the scope of self-employment and income-generating opportunities, and reducing poverty. The full-scale implementation of the programme would require new inputs in the form of reading materials, wider training facilities, and demonstration-based orientation of CLC members in life skills training. The following are a few suggestions based on the findings of the present study, as well as on the views of CLC evaluation teams and experts:

1. Equip CLCs with necessary facilities and materials.
2. Link literacy and community development activities with CLC interventions to address the socio-economic needs of the target population.
3. Arrange wider social mobilization through innovative forms and methods (e.g., flexible modes to suit the members' schedules, interventions to match their occupational needs, integration of learning materials and learning with recreational programmes).
4. Develop a systematic framework for monitoring CLC programmes/activities.
5. Link IGP activities with the market.
6. Formalize linkages with government agencies and other NGOs operating in the locality.
7. Design programmes in terms of core and non-core activities to concentrate more on the former.
8. Help the community to learn how to find the solutions to problems instead of giving community members the solutions.
9. Improve the management skills of CLC personnel.
10. Create a multipurpose professional/technical backstopping/support system for CLCs at the community level.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that CLCs in Bangladesh have many limitations, they have evolved as models for NGO-sponsored continuing non-formal education institutions, and do not appear to have been too costly. The uniqueness of the CLC concept lies in its philosophy of raising much of its resources from voluntary community contributions at the grassroots level. Thus, the costs incurred are shared by the sponsoring NGO, by participants/members/learners and by the people of the community where the CLC operates as a centre of continuing education. The benefits, though not as promising as were theoretically set, are significant. CLCs' most notable contribution seems to be their operation as centres of learning and training for the poor and disadvantaged in basic literacy, post-literacy and continuing education. One of the preconditions for benefiting from CLC programmes and activities is regular participation, and those who regularly take part in them benefit from CLCs in many ways.

CLCs can contribute to the comprehensive development of the nation within the overall framework of Education for All (EFA) if they are included in a national action plan. CLC experiences can be used in developing community-based infrastructure for EFA and mobilizing locally available resources. The government may arrange the necessary inputs for and provide systematic support to CLCs. Inclusion of CLCs in EFA national plans would call for close linkage with the formal system, equivalency programmes for school-age children, and a mechanism of resource sharing between formal schools and CLCs.

Case Study: Yasmeen, Amtola CLC Member, Netrokona District, Bangladesh

Yasmeen is now known as the "mother of distressed women," not only in her native village Amtola, but also far beyond the borders of her own district. She is 29 and has a boy who is four years old. Her husband is a rickshaw puller. She started living in her husband's house in a different village after her marriage, but she had a difficult life. The family lived hand-to-mouth and sometimes had only one meal a day. Yasmeen started working as a part-time housemaid with a local well-to-do family. She cleaned floors and the yard, washed clothes and utensils, and prepared food for the labourers working on her master's farm. In return, she only got food and a very small amount of money that was not even enough to purchase food and clothes for her son.

Yasmeen did not have time to visit her father's house, but one day she did. Knowing about her worries, her father advised her to become a member of a local association for self-help named "The Swabalambi Unnayan Samiti" (SUS, Association for Development through Self-Help), which established a *lokakendra* (people's centre, a CLC) in Amtola village. Despite the fact that her husband and also many conservative senior people in the neighborhood did not like the idea of a 29-year-old woman joining the CLC, Yasmeen became a member of the centre. She quickly gained basic literacy skills from the training at the centre. In addition, she got ideas about poultry farming and rearing livestock. The centre helped her to get a loan from the SUS for the purchase of a cow and ten hens.

In about one year's time Yasmeen could feel that her life was changing. She started earning money from the sale of milk and eggs. The money was enough to repay her loan in weekly installments and to have some surplus for meeting her family expenses. She was happy to see that with a little skill in accounting, she could even save.

Towards the end of her second year with the centre, Yasmeen had become the owner of three cows, 33 hens and 27 ducks. She started earning more from the sale of milk, eggs and the chicks. She bought a new rickshaw for her husband, who used to pull one for rent that had been taking away a large part of his income. At present, the monthly income of the family is about Tk 5,000, which is sufficient for it to manage household expenditures and save. Yasmeen uses the savings for lending to the poor women on easy terms. She also purchased a piece of land for a new house. She takes special pride in providing some money to the centre that changed her life.

Yasmeen was helpless, but learnt how to survive. Only two years ago, she experienced negligence by her husband, who used to rebuke her on every silly ground and even beat her. But today, he is friendly, polite and, in a sense loyal to her. Yasmeen says that in her difficult days, she had wanted to commit suicide. Now she is a source of inspiration and also help for many other poor men and women. She is doing well and is serious about seeing that her centre continues to operate in the interest of her fellow community people.



Introduction

This study begins by examining the development of community learning centres and community education (CE) in China. The functions of CE and CLCs in rural areas are mainly in literacy education, health care, poverty alleviation, increase of income, retraining of the labour force, and improvements in the lives of rural people. In urban areas, the emphasis focuses on the meaning of learning, more systematic learning content, lifelong learning behaviour and a scientific learning approach.

China is a developing country with a large population and diversified economic development levels, from the least developed remote areas in the western part of China to the economically advanced areas in the eastern part. Even within a single province such as Zhejiang Province, economic development is diversified in different areas. For the purpose of showing the entire picture of CLCs in China, this study chooses three types of CLCs. The first is a CLC in rural Gansu Province, whose main functions are related to poverty alleviation through literacy education, which represents a large proportion of CLC programmes and activities in poor rural areas. The second type of a CLC is located in Zhejiang Province, which is relatively developed economically. Thus, the emphasis is on the increase of income through CLC programmes and activities. CLCs offer different training menus, mainly for local people and for people coming from other provinces who will get jobs in factories after training. The third type of CLC is in an urban area, a type that is now very popular in China. CE in Zhabei District, Shanghai, is described as the example.

The study concludes with some positive findings from the CLCs that have already been implemented, and puts forth some recommendations for further development of CLCs in China.

Positive findings are: 1) policy support from governments; 2) institution and guarantee for the implementation of CLC movements and community education; 3) training programmes and activities suited to the needs of learners and economic markets; and 4) the formation of a learning environment for the whole society.

Recommendations for the further development of CLCs are: 1) reliable funding; 2) more support from sectors other than education; 3) combination/integration of different programmes or concepts; 4) application of ICT; and 5) establishment of a national network for CLCs and CE.

Overview of CLCs in China

The functions of CE or CLCs in rural areas, in general, and remote or poor rural areas, in particular, are mainly in the areas of literacy education, health care, poverty alleviation, increase of income, retraining of the labour force, and improving the lives of rural people. In urban areas, CE or CLCs focus on popularizing consciousness of learning, more systematic learning content, lifelong learning behavior, and a scientific learning approach. The concept of the “learning city” has also been put forth, which is a concrete reflection of the development of a learning society.

Based on the UNESCO guiding ideas of education for poverty alleviation, the “Rural Community Learning Centres for Poverty Alleviation” project was first carried out in three provinces of western China (namely Gansu and Yunnan provinces and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region) in 1997. With support from local governments, education institutions and schools, CLCs were established at township or village levels according to the reality of serving local socio-economic development. As an effective measure to achieve the goal of education for all and the idea of learning to live together, CLCs in the three project provinces provide a foundation for the establishment of lifelong learning systems in rural communities. The development of CLCs in China should be understood within the framework of the following two broad movements: one is the movement of “the two basics” and the other is the CE movement.

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The Two Basics

The “two basics” are the basic universalization of nine years of compulsory education and the basic eradication of youth and adult illiteracy. In 1993, the *Outline for Reform and Development of Education* in China issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the State Council formally established the “two basics” as education goals to be met during the 1990s: universalization of 9 years compulsory education in areas with about 85 percent of the total population, and attainment of a 95 percent literacy rate for youth and adults. The Chinese Ministry of Education also issued its *National Action Framework on Education for All* in 1993, which re-emphasized the need to realize the “two basics” goal by the end of 2000. This framework was buttressed a year later when the Second National Conference on Education further determined the goal, task, strategy, policy and implementation steps of educational development in the 1990s and treated “the two basics” as “the priority of priorities” for educational development.

The CE Movement

In the late 1980s, community education was appearing in China, particularly in urban areas. This was closely related to the development of CLCs. In 1986, for example, Zhenru High School in Putuo district in Shanghai established the Community Education Commission for Zhenru High School, and in March 1988, Xinjiang Sub-district and Pengpu Sub-district in Zhabei district in Shanghai set up Community Education Commissions. Then the organizations named “Community Education” were popular in all of Zhabei district. The development of community education in Zhabei has led to the development of CE in all of Shanghai, which has later influenced all of China and finally promoted its nationwide popularization and development.

In April 2000, the Department of Vocational and Adult Education of the Ministry of Education in China issued the *Notice on the Experiment of Community Education in Some Areas*, thus starting the launch of CE nationwide. In May 2000, eight experimental areas were selected by the Ministry of Education, formally starting the CE experiment, and in November 2001, another twenty experimental areas were added. Those 28 experimental areas were considered the first group of CE experimental areas in China. By the end of 2003, such experimental areas expanded to 61 all over China. They were located at district or county levels. Since then, the CE/CLC movement has developed strongly and quickly in China, from the early rural CLCs mainly for literacy education and poverty alleviation to CLCs in urban areas that realize the ultimate aim of improving social development to achieve the success of sustainable development and make every community a better place for people to live together.

Profile of the Research Study

China is a developing country with a large population and diversified economic development levels, from the least developed remote areas in the western part of China to the economically advanced areas in the eastern part. Even within one province, such as Zhejiang Province, one can observe different levels of economic development. For the universalization of compulsory education, provinces are classified into three groups according to their level of economic development. The first group consists of nine provinces with economically advanced development, the second group is composed of 12 provinces with economic development at a medium level, and the third group is composed of nine economically less developed provinces and autonomous regions (in the west of China).

The initial CLC project named “Rural Community Learning Centres for Poverty Alleviation” was first launched in the three provinces of Gansu, Yunnan and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, located in the third group described above. The activities of CLCs in these provinces may be typical of CLCs and programmes in the least developed rural areas. In addition, researchers studied the Yushan Community Learning Centre in Pan’an County, Zhejiang Province (which is located in the mountains and focuses on becoming rich through poverty alleviation), and the Keqiao Adult Education Centre in Shaoxing County, Zhejiang Province (which emphasizes training farmers to work in factories and thereby increase their incomes). Community education in Zhabei district, Shanghai, and the community school of Pengpu Xincun Township of Zhabei district completed the study sites. They concentrate on leisure time education for improving people’s quality of life as well as offer vocational and technical skills training for the residents of urban areas and migrants from other places.

Thus, the main objective of this research was to show a complete picture of CLCs in China, not only the early rural CLCs in the western part, but also CLCs in urban areas. In particular, the study describes three kinds of CLCs or CE. It evaluates their effectiveness and describes the impact of the programmes.

The research team was composed of several professors and graduates mainly from East China Normal University, with Professor Zhao Zhongjian acting as the principal investigator.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

Programmes/Activities

There have not been any national programmes for CLCs. However, in order to realize the goal of compulsory education for all children in China, the Chinese Government has launched several important national projects or programmes, which may be summarized in the following table:

Table 11: National Educational Projects or Programmes

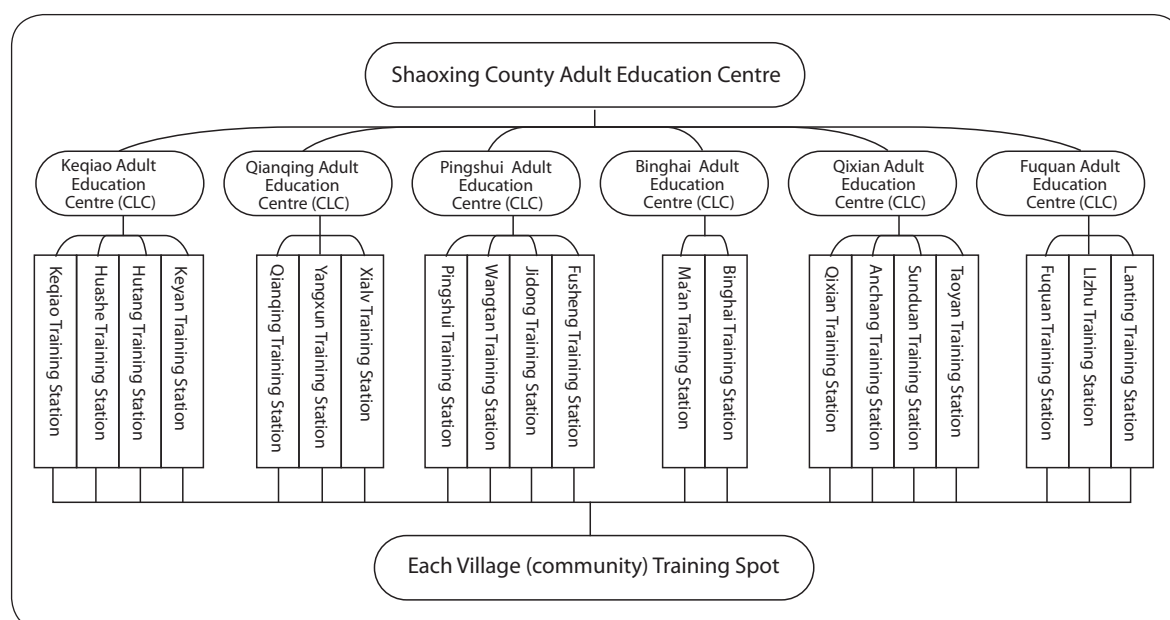
Title of the Programme	Responsible Agencies	Source of Finance	Targets and Contents
Compulsory Education Programmes in National Depressed Areas (second time)	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance	5 billion RMB from the Central Government and another 2.5 billion RMB from local government	Support 522 depressed area counties (among 462 located in west China) in order to rebuild school buildings, teacher training, purchase of books, scientific equipment, distance education and IT equipment
Schools Programme in Depressed Area supported by corresponding schools from big and middle cities in the same province (autonomous regions and directly administered cities)	The governments of various provinces, autonomous regions and directly administered cities	Funds offered by the supporting areas and schools	Send teachers, provide funds and materials
Schools Programme in West China Depressed Area supported by corresponding schools from east China	Concerned provinces, autonomous regions and directly administered cities organized by Ministry of Education and six other departments	Funds offered by the supporting areas and schools	Send teachers, provide funds and materials
Programme for Rebuilding School Buildings	Ministry of Education, Committee of National Development and Reformation, and Ministry of Finance	3 Billions RMB from the central government , 3 Billions RMB from the local govt.	Rebuild and build about 17 million sq.m. school building in 26 provinces, about 20 thousand schools
ICT Network in All Schools	Ministry of Education	Offer assistance from the nation	Schools at county-level in east China and middle-level in middle China connect to Internet in 5 years; more than 90% schools connect to Internet in 10 years
Hope Project Programme	China Youth Development Foundation	Mobilize social donations	Help children complete their studies in depressed areas, build a Hope Project primary school; organize "one help another" activities
Spring Buds Plan	National Association of Women and China Children and Teenagers' Fund	Mobilize social donations	Help dropout schoolgirls to reenter school in depressed areas
Candle Programme	China Charity Fund	Social donations	Assist teacher training in depressed areas, and honour excellent teachers with the "Candle Award"

Structure and Management

In rural areas, primary schools are often the centres of basic education as well as the learning centres of cultural and technical education for villagers. Besides conducting formal basic education, these primary schools have the responsibility and the capacity to act as centres for literacy education, technical training and cultural exchange. At the township level, CLCs are generally located in the township's vocational middle schools or technical schools for farmers. These centres are run and managed through the coordination of township government and local mass organizations. There is an inter-related preferential relationship between the learning centre and local people. The learning centre should make full use of the local education facilities and intelligent resources to make contributions to local socio-economic development through conducting literacy education and technical training. Here we look at examples of some management structures for the implementation of CLC programmes.

In early 2005, the Educational Bureau of Shaoxing County was named the lead CLC for the whole county by the National Commission for UNESCO and the China Adult Education Association. The Adult Education Centre of Shaoxing County is in charge of community learning and the various centres under its leadership. Figure 3 shows the network of adult education centres in Shaoxing:

Figure 3. Adult Education Centres Network in Shaoxing County, Zhejiang Province



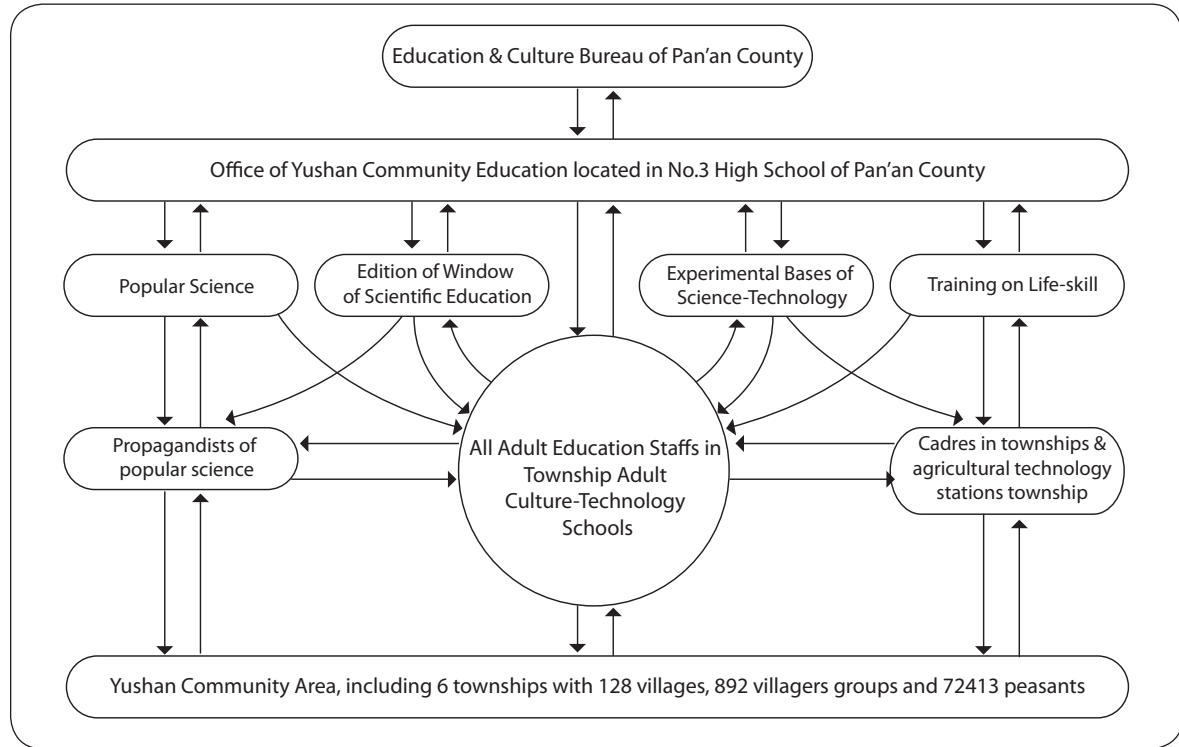
Yushan CLC in Pan'an County, Zhejiang Province, is also named the Yushan Community Centre for Education and Science and Technology, located in the No. 3 High School of Pan'an County. It is responsible for community education in six townships, including 892 village residential groups with 24,972 families. The management structure of Yushan CLC is illustrated in Figure 4.

Although the CLC names are not the same, the management models or structures are quite similar. Thus, we can describe the typical management structure in terms of the overall governmental leadership, with education authorities taking on main responsibility in cooperation with other government authorities, active support from society, autonomous activity by the community itself and broad participation by residents.

Policy Linkages

In China, the development of CLCs and CE is closely related to government policies and activities. Since participation in the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council has issued such important policies as the *Outline for Reform and Development of Education* in 1993 and the *Decision on the Further Reform of the Education System and Overall Promotion of Quality Education* in 1999. One common feature of these policies is the emphasis on the development of

Figure 4. Management Structure for Yushan Community Learning Centres in Pan'an County



community education. Particularly since the year 2000, when the World Education Forum took place in Dakar, Senegal, the Chinese Government has been active in terms of issuing policies and documents and organizing relevant conferences. The main activities may be listed as follows:

- Publicizing the Chinese Government's commitment and participation in various important international or UN conferences
- Setting up the National Forum on Education for All, based on the former National Negotiation Group of Literacy Work among Ministries
- Successfully organizing the Ministers Conference of the Nine High Population Countries in August 2001, which passed the *Beijing Declaration*
- Organizing several national government working meetings, such as the National Working Meeting on Basic Education in 2001, National Working Meeting on Vocational Education in 2002 and National Working Meeting on Education for Minority People in 2002
- Issuing separate documents or policies, such as the *Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education* by the State Council, *Decision on Greatly Promoting the Reform and Development of Vocational Education* by the State Council, *Announcement on the Perfection of the Administrative System in Compulsory Education in Rural Areas* by the Office of the State Council, and other documents such as *Guidelines for the Reform and Development of Pre-school Education*, *Guidelines for the Literacy Education during the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2000-2005)*, etc.

In terms of attaining its commitment to EFA goals, the country's Ministry of Education issued the *National Action Framework on Education for All* in 1993 after the National Conference on Education for All (March, 1993) and the *National Action Plan on Education for All (2001-2015)* (2003). These action plans pay attention to compulsory education, child care, early education, literacy education and skills training, all of which are closely related to CLC activities and programmes.

CLC Case Studies

Gansu Province is one of the first three provinces that implemented the UNESCO Regional CLC project in China. The main aim of CLC project implementation in Gansu was to assist the local social forces in facilitating

different kinds of learning opportunities so as to boost people's intelligence in poor rural areas and improve their quality of life. Because the CLC project in Gansu has been analyzed often and was featured in reports presented at various UNESCO conferences, this study pays more attention to CLCs in Zhejiang Province and community education in Shanghai.

Zhejiang Province is located in eastern China and, generally speaking, is an economically advanced province. In fact, there are still some counties in this province that are economically less developed or developing. Pan'an County may be representative of these less-developed counties.

Yushan CLC in Pan'an County

Pan'an County is a mountain county in northern Zhejiang, with 20 townships, 369 administrative villages and a population of 200,000. Economic development in Pan'an is at a lower level than average, and the county is economically less developed. The Yushan Community Education Centre was first established in March 1999, but was named the Yushan Community Learning Centre in April 2005 by the National Commission for UNESCO and the China Adult Education Association. Because Yushan is a poor, remote rural district, poverty alleviation and improving the quality of life for the local population are the urgent and main tasks of the Yushan CLC.

Yushan CLC is located in the No.3 High School of Pan'an County, with the principal Zhang Meiyao as the director of the CLC. The CLC has two full-time professionals who are responsible for the routine affairs of the centre, with teachers in the township adult education schools as the main administrators and trainers of programmes and activities of the CLC. The structure and management of Yushan CLC may be seen in Figure 4 on page 33.

Yushan CLC has carried out its work in several areas, but it has formed its own guidelines for rural community education through its practice: "peasants put forth topics, experts offer advice, the centre makes coordination, and townships and villages take application." For the purpose of serving rural people better, Yushan CLC offers diversified education and training, which may be classified as the following types:

Training in practical agricultural techniques: First, the CLC insists on its well-chosen projects, and selects agricultural products that would bring profits to the trainees. Based on the nature and situation of the rural mountain areas, the CLC attaches importance to ecology, and has chosen ten projects for various products, including non-environmentally polluted vegetables and high-quality mushrooms on high mountains, high-quality organic tea, Jiobai (a kind of Chinese vegetable grown in water), and fish. Second, the CLC tries to find those villagers who have done well and become richer after training, and invites them to become "pioneer" role models. Until the first quarter of 2005, the CLC had carried out 66 training sessions of various kinds for 13,053 trainees, among whom 1,391 came from specialized planting households.

Training for vocational skills and certificate exams: Yushan CLC makes full use of educational resources from the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Agriculture. It adopts the recommended training mode of integrating short classes with longer ones, and carries out vocational technical training for surplus labourers in the countryside and workers in enterprises. Learners receive training in mechanics (locksmith), electrical engineering, nursery teaching, accounting and computers. In the last two years, 802 learners received such training at the Pan'an No.3 High School CLC. Eighty-five percent of participants passed the training, thanks to the students' active learning and teachers' effective instruction. In the six training schools belonging to the community educational centre, there were 1,662 people taking training to pass exams, including 145 in home management, 85 in welding, and 1,432 in agriculture.

Continuing and lifelong education: Community education attaches importance to the main work of our Communist Party of China (CPC) committee and government, and various educational needs. We have held education for (the) legal system and for CPC members; we have also had family education, health, and moral education, as well as some social education for strengthening our county with ecology and tourism. We have extended our educational contents to higher education, like training for self-studying exams, distant education of electrical colleges, etc. We are gradually forming a community education system, in which we integrate the short-term training and the formal schooling, vocational technique and the social training, in which we promote the construction of material civilization, intellectual and political civilization at the same time, in which we form a lifelong education atmosphere.

Publication of a newspaper: Yushan CLC edits and publishes *The Windows of Science and Education*. This monthly newspaper prints 3,600 copies of each issue for a total of 43,000 copies every year. By now, it has published 67 issues, totaling more than 240,000 copies. It is freely distributed to villagers, and includes news of the Yushan CLC, reports on scientific and technological services, experiences exchanged in planting and cultivating, and the latest developments in science and technology related to agriculture. The villagers in Yushan consider this newspaper as “timely rain” for increasing productivity in agriculture and their profits.

CLCs in Shaoxing County

Shaoxing County was formerly a very rural area. Particularly since 2003, with the development of urbanization and industrialization, farmers do not have enough land for planting. Among 338,100 farmers, 172,200 have become city residents and are now without any land. This has created a surplus labour force who need to improve their working skills and increase their incomes. Providing them with these skills is a new task for CLCs in Shaoxing. As of 2004, the county has offered 263 training classes to 21,500 trainees, and 60 percent of them are now working in factories. There have also been 248 classes for 18,218 trainees who no longer have land, and 80 percent of them are now working in factories.

Shaoxing County has carried out a policy of integrating government promotion and market orientation since 2004, starting with the implementation of three training projects:

Transferring Training for Surplus Labour Force: This project targets those farmers whose lands were bought by the government for other uses. One hundred thousand people are to be provided with introductory training and vocational skill training from 2004 to 2006. The project also focuses on providing agricultural skill training to 30,000 people within three years. In addition, five hundred young villagers are to be trained at higher education institutions within three years, allowing 50 percent of rural young people to receive an education at the senior secondary level or above.

Pre-Vocational Training for Migrant Labour: Through this project, people coming to Shaoxing from other places could master several non-agricultural skills so as to improve their qualifications for employment. It is planned to offer introductory training and vocational skill training for 35,000 persons in all: 5,000 in 2004, 10,000 in 2005 and 20,000 in 2006, respectively.

Worker Training for Advanced Textile and Manufacturing Bases: The goal of this project is to train 23,000 skilled textile workers and administrators: 5,000 in 2004, 8,000 in 2005 and 10,000 in 2006, respectively.

The training model for villagers in Shaoxing may be called the “three menus system”. The first “menu” is designed by the training institutions, mostly adult education centres, and trainees can choose whatever they want on the menu. The second “menu” is the ordering menu by factories or companies. These ordering menus include the number of workers the factories or companies want, job requirements, basic treatment and salaries for these workers. At the same time, the factories will sign an Agreement on Employment of Oriented Training with the adult education centres, so as to guarantee the employment of the trainees.

The third “menu” is the fee menu for training paid by the government. After the training classes, the adult education centres will take the list of trainee names to the relevant government authority to request payment of the training fees. In addition to the menus, the County Bureau of Education has compiled and printed *Series of Reading Materials for Peasant Education and Training in Shaoxing County* to address the economic reality of the county. The series consists of twelve booklets covering the fields of textiles, printing and dyeing, home economics, cooking and restaurants, hotel management, health care, building construction and others. These materials contribute to the improvement of training quality.

Under the leadership of the Adult Education Centre of Shaoxing County, six adult education centres (which may also be called CLCs) have their respective training functions and programmes (see Keqiao Adult Education Centre box on page 37).

CLCs in Urban Areas of Shanghai

CLC implementation in urban areas is closely connected with the implementation of community education (CE), and the development of CE is connected with the ideas of encouraging lifelong learning, building learning organizations and developing a learning society.⁴ CE work in Zhabei district has been in the forefront of this development.

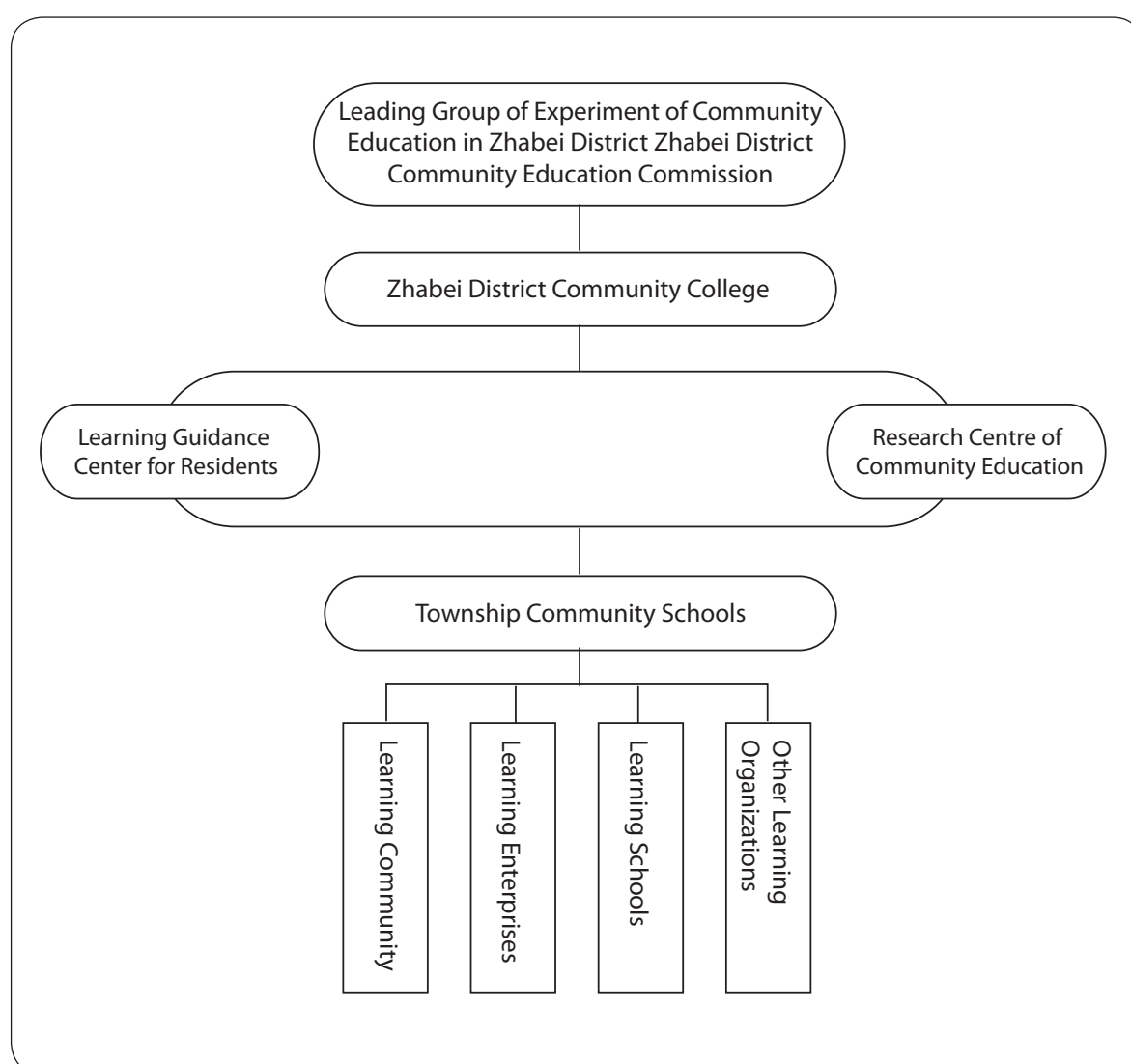
4 See “Development of Community Education in China” box on page 38 for more details

Zhabei includes nine townships with 730,000 permanent residents and 140 migrants. The district is also one of eight experimental areas of community education that were identified by the Ministry of Education in April 2000. In November of the same year, the People's Government of Zhabei District issued its first document on community education, called the *Working Programme on the Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District, Shanghai*. The document sets up the overall goal of community education as follows:

Raising the understanding and participative consciousness of building lifelong education system and formation of a learning district through the implementation of experiments in community education; building a community lifelong education system which includes formal education, non-formal education and informal education and which is multi-level, multi-dimensional and open to everyone; perfecting the administrative system and operative mechanism for the learning district and lifelong education; and finally forming a learning district with Zhabei features where everyone learns at any time and any place.

This document also determines the whole structure of community education in the district, which may also be called the management structure of CE in Zhabei, as illustrated in Figure 5 on below.

Figure 5. Network of Community Education in Zhabei District, Shanghai



Keqiao Adult Education Centre: Serving Society with Training

Keqiao Adult Education Centre, established in 1992, is a public multi-functional adult education centre, carrying out adult diploma education and vocational skill training for employment. Its service area covers four townships, with each training station in one township. Keqiao Centre is mainly financed by the county government, and partly paid by enterprises that require trained skilled workers. The centre has 20 full-time professional teachers who get their regular salaries from the government, thus ensuring the quality of training.

As to the training programme for the increase of income, Keqiao Centre has different kinds of such training programmes. Generally speaking, it designs programmes that are targeted at local villagers and migrants.

Vocational skill training for local farmers whose land was taken over: Keqiao Centre offers various kinds of skill training classes according to the model of the “three menus system,” making use of patterns of cooperation between centres, between centres and factories, and between centres and villages. Before the development of training programmes, in order to know the basic phenomenon and understand the requirements of learners, staff at the Centre visit farm families to make a field investigation. They also go deep into factories and the labour market to learn about the needs of the market. Information about the training programmes is sent directly to farm families who no longer have any land.

Up to June 2005, Keqiao Centre trained 2,241 local people whose lands were taken over, among whom 1,200 received training in computers, 160 persons in printing and dyeing of textiles, 730 in sewing, and 151 in business and trade English. In addition, 44 received training in gardening, 38 in pastry-making, 55 in auto repair, 62 in the printing and dyeing of textiles, and 160 in computers.

Vocational skill training for migrants from other places: Shaoxing County is now a county with a textile industry. With the founding of new enterprises and the expansion of existing enterprises, every year for the next five years the whole county will need an average of 20,000 migrants to work in factories. Keqiao Centre insists on its mission of “serving society with training,” carrying out the introduction of migrant labour through the implementation of the pattern of “going out, taking cooperation and coming in.”

“Going out” means the establishment of a training centre in another place. In October 2003, Keqiao Centre established its training centre in Jianli County, Hubei Province, together with Lang Sha Er Clothing Limited Corporation. Keqiao Centre is responsible for the design of training programmes and for sending trainers to Jianli. The Jianli centre, in turn, is responsible for the enrollment of local villagers and training at the centre. Finally, the Jianli centre sends the trainees to factories in Shaoxing County, not only solving the problem of worker shortages in Shaoxing, but also solving the problem of a surplus labour force in Hubei. As of June 2005, the Jianli centre had sent 562 trained individuals to work in Shaoxing.

“Taking cooperation” means jointly building human resource recruitment centres in other places. In early 2004, Keqiao Centre jointly built a human resource recruitment centre in Dangshan County, Anhui Province, with the Labor Bureau of Dangshan County. This Dangshan centre is responsible for recruiting local villagers, and Keqiao Centre is responsible for training these people. Then it sends them to factories in Shaoxing. Just after March 2004, the centre in Dangshan recruited 81 local villagers for Keqiao. As of June 2005, 691 persons had been recruited and trained for work in Shaoxing.

“Coming in” means the introduction of vocational school graduates in other places to Keqiao Centre through the local educational authority. In May 2004, Keqiao Centre assumed cooperation with the educational bureaus in Suzhou City, Anhui Province, and Laifeng County, Hubei Province. The educational authorities in these places introduced their vocational school graduates to Keqiao Centre. Keqiao Centre then provided short-term training relevant to the realities of Shaoxing (not only in regard to industrial equipment and work procedures, but also training related to local Shaoxing culture) before sending the graduates to work in Shaoxing’s factories. Up to June 2005, Keqiao Centre has expanded this cooperation to other counties in provinces such as Henan, Sichuan, Hunan, Hebei and Gansu.

It is necessary to mention that the training in Keqiao Centre is free to the trainees, who receive a 300 Chinese yuan stipend every month. The training cost is paid by the enterprises that will employ the trainees.

Development of Community Education in China

The development history of CE in China could be generally described in terms of the following three periods:

The first period extended from 1985-1991. The *Decision on the Reform of the Educational System*, issued by the Central Committee of CPC and the State Council in 1985, stipulates that “the ultimate aim of the reform of the education system is to upgrade the population qualities of the nation and foster more talented and gifted personnel.” It also points out that school education should develop itself together with education out of school and after school, and various kinds of education at different levels should actively meet the diversified needs of economic and social development. Thus, towards this aim, community education commissions were set up and CE began its development.

The years 1992-1998 were a period of growth. The Third Session of the 14th Conference of the CPC emphasized the development of a socialist market-oriented system. With the development of a market-oriented economy, the change of industrial structure, the movement of people (particularly the move of people from rural areas to urban areas, namely inner migration) and the change of occupations, the vocational training of these people became CE's new mission.

The third period could be called the perfecting period (1999 until present). In 1999, the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council issued the *Decision on the Further Reform of the Education System and Overall Promotion of the Quality of Education*. This document points out the country's education policy should prioritize implementation of quality education that stresses the development of good citizenship, innovative spirit and practical skills. The implementation of quality education should be combined with formal education, family education and social education. CE has been changed from meeting the occupational needs of people to meeting the leisure needs of people, and from a “supplemental” function to becoming a necessary component of the education system.

The Central Committee of the CPC calls for building China into a learning society, and the ideas of building a learning society, a learning city, a learning community, a learning organization and even a learning family became the consensus of the whole society. Many research projects in community education have been undertaken, many theoretical research reports on community education have been printed and/or published, and community colleges and schools have been established in nearly every rural township and urban district of China.

The district government plays an important role in promoting community education and the CLC project. First, it has issued many government documents on the implementation of CE, and included CE in the *Outline of the Tenth Five-Year Plan on Economic and Social Development of Zhabei District*, which is its most important document in the last five years. This shows the policy linkage to CLC projects or community education. Some of the main policy documents related to implementation of community education since 2000 include:

1. *Working Programme on Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District, Shanghai*, issued by the People's Government of Zhabei District, Nov. 2000
2. *Notice on the Founding of the Leading Group of Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District and Its Members*, issued by the People's Government of Zhabei District, Nov. 2000
3. *Notice on the Administration of Counselors of Learning Communities*, issued by the Educational Bureau of Zhabei District, February 2001
4. *Announcement of Working Plan of Community Education in Zhabei District in 2002*, issued by the the Leading Group of Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District and the District Community Education Commission, March 2002
5. *Announcement of the Founding of the Research Centre of Community Education and the Learning Guidance Centre for Residents*, issued by the the Leading Group of Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District and the District Community Education Commission, April 2002
6. *Announcement of Working Plan of Community Education in Zhabei District in 2003*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, March 2003

7. *Some Comments on the Further Strengthening of the Administration of Counselors of Learning Communities*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, March 2003
8. *Suggestion on the Implementation of Evaluation of the Experiment on Community Education in All Townships*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, July 2003
9. *Announcement of Working Plan of Community Education in Zhabei District in 2004*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, February 2004
10. *Announcement of the Competition of Model Schools Which Open Their Educational Resources*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, March 2004
11. *Announcement of Selection of the Second Group of Counselors of Learning Communities*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, July 2004
12. *Announcement of Working Plan of Community Education in Zhabei District in 2005*, issued by the Zhabei District Community Education Commission, March 2005
13. *Announcement of the Further Implementation Outline of Community Education in Zhabei District (2005-2007)* Developed by the District Community Education Commission, issued by the People's Government of Zhabei District, May 2005

Second, a lead group for the Experiment in Community Education was set up. Leaders of the district government and its various branches serve as group leaders and members. The Working Office for the Experiment in Community Education is located in the District Bureau of Education, and is responsible for the routine work of community education. Salaries for full-time staff in the working office as well as in the Research Centre of Community Education are covered by the district government and the Bureau of Education.

Third, the district government signed agreements with its different branches and bureaus to formalize responsibilities for promoting community education. In collaboration with the Bureau of Education, it has allocated special grants to the Experiment in Community Education for this purpose.

In order to meet its community education objectives, the Bureau of Education chose the first group of 45 teachers from 150 existing formal schools and trained them to be full-time counselors in community education. Several thousand volunteers work with them to provide community education for the whole district. The following table presents information about the personnel working in community education for the district.

Table 12. Statistics of Personnel Working in CE, Zhabei District

Personnel relevant to CE	Working Staff		Volunteers	Researchers	
	Full-time Counselors	Part-time Working Staff		Expert/Advisers	Part-time researchers
Numbers	45	1,303	4,876	15	5

A strong network of community education institutions exists in the district. Members of this network include: the Zhabei District Community College (which houses the Research Centre of Community Education and the Learning Guidance Centre for Residents), nine community schools or CLCs (one school or CLC in each township), 71 sub-campuses of community schools and 248 teaching stations. Some community schools have independent sites and buildings, and others are located in primary and/or secondary schools or in vocational and/or adult education schools.

Major Findings

Governmental Policy Support

The movement of community education, in general, and of CLCs, in particular, has developed positively in China. This has mainly been due to governmental policy and financial support at various levels. The Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council have adopted several policy decisions, restating the importance of community education and its role in improving the quality of life and social harmony. The Ministry of Education as the main government authority responsible for CE, CLCs and EFA, plays a great role

in the development of CE and CLCs. Not only in economically developed urban areas such as Zhabei district in Shanghai or Shaoxing County in Zhejiang Province, but also in economically less developed rural areas such as Gansu and Yunnan provinces, governments have supplied much policy and financial support. In this way, a strong administrative framework has been developed.

Institutional and Personnel Guarantee for CLC Implementation

Institutional and personnel guarantees are necessary to effectively implement CLCs. In China, existing formal schools and vocational education institutions have been used as CLCs, thus ensuring that CLC programmes and activities could be implemented effectively and successfully via the active participation of teachers at those existing educational institutions. Additionally, in urban areas, special community schools and colleges have been built for community education. We saw in Table 3 above, for example, that there were 45 full-time counselors and 1,303 part-time staff working in community education in Zhabei district with the support of 4,876 volunteers. .

Training Programmes Suitable to Learner Needs and Market Demands

Whether or not CLC programmes and activities are welcomed by learners and/or trainees often depends on the relevance of such programmes. Generally speaking, the CLC programmes in rural areas should be closely related to the improvement of working skills and the alleviation of poverty. In urban areas, the CLC or CE activities should not only increase the working skills and incomes of trainees, but also consider the interests of learners who have retired from their jobs and desire leisure time activities. We see such relevance in the CLCs of Zhejiang Province and community education in Zhabei district.

Formation of a Learning Environment for the Whole Society

Although the formal CLC project in China started in 1998, it is only known in places where CLC programmes are practiced and only by people involved in the project. Yet, effective implementation of the CLC movement calls for a useful learning environment for the whole society. The central Chinese government has called for the country's gradual development into a learning society. Concepts of lifelong education and lifelong learning are now very popular, and the movement of building a learning city, learning organization and learning family has been undertaken widely at different levels in China. These are promising steps towards forming a receptive environment to broaden implementation of CLCs and community education.

Recommendations

For further development and improvement of CLCs and community education in China, it is necessary to consider the following points:

Continuous Supply of Expenditure

Financial support is very important for the implementation of CLC programmes and activities. It is not difficult to find money for the start of one CLC or one training session, but lack of on-going financial support will prevent the continuous development and improvement of CLCs or training for learners. In the above cases of the Keqiao Adult Education Centre of Shaoxing County and the Yushan CLC, we see the successful training of villagers. However, when the trainees finished their first time training and then started work in factories, it was not easy for them to obtain further learning opportunities because there was a lack of financial support from the companies or factories which offered the money for the initial training. In addition, the Yushan CLC was short of money for any substantial improvement to the CLC project; it could only maintain the routine work of the project.

More Support from Sectors Outside of Education

Although we see support from governments at different levels as a positive feature of the community education in China, NGOs have not played an important role or taken an active part in the implementation of CLCs and community education. Theoretically speaking, community education should be supported

by the different sectors of government and conducted in various fields, but in practice only the Education sector assumes responsibility. Identifying ways to receive strong support and active participation from NGOs and sectors other than education is important for further development and improvement of CLCs and community education.

Integration of Different Programmes or Concepts

Perhaps in every country there are many kinds of CLC programmes or concepts. In China, we have our own examples, such as the Hope Project for assistance to poor children attending school; the Spring Bud Programme concerning the schooling of girls from poor families; and the integration of agriculture, science and education (as well as the combination of general education, vocational education and adult education) in programmes for rural areas. It is better to integrate CLCs and their activities with these already existing different programmes. Otherwise, how can we extend the number of CLCs from 20 to 2,000, or even to 200?

Best Use of ICT

ICT has become an important tool in every field of our society, and UNESCO has paid great attention to ICT and launched several projects for its application. The use of ICT in the implementation of CLCs may be a hot topic in the future, and the use of ICT in CLC programmes will greatly improve the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of CLCs and promote the realization of their overall objectives. Yushan CLC in Zhejiang Province is now participating in the UNESCO project, "Improving Productive Capacity through ICT," but the effective implementation of this project needs to be further studied.

Establishment of a National Network for CLCs and CE

Who is responsible for the effective implementation and improvement of CLCs? Where can people find information about CLCs and their programmes in China? How can researchers and people who participate in CLC projects exchange information about their experiences and lessons learnt? It is urgently necessary to establish a national network for CLCs and community education in China. Such a network would be responsible for collecting, analyzing and distributing information concerning CLCs and community education in China and throughout the world, and for setting up a website. This is a dream now, but may become a reality in the future.



INDONESIA*

Introduction

The Indonesian Government's strong commitment to providing local communities with educational services has been reflected in the growth of community learning centres since 1999. At that time, 484 centres existed; today, Indonesia has 3,064 centres distributed quite evenly throughout the country. However, the increase in numbers may not necessarily indicate improvements in people's knowledge and skills. Statistical data show that out of the 20 percent of the population who has not completed primary education, 40 percent have become casual workers and 60 percent permanent workers.

The main programmes organized through CLCs have been Functional Literacy, Early Childhood Care and Education, Education Equivalency Programmes, Vocational Skills Training, Entrepreneurship Training, Sports and Recreation, and Women's Education. Being the dominating partner, however, the Government has caused the operations of CLC programmes to be less publicly transparent. In turn, gaining community participation and support has become difficult. For instance, to be consistent with its policy, the Government tends to standardize the CLC programmes, which causes them to be less adaptable to the unique needs and resources of individual communities, as well as to the demands of local labour markets. The overall effect has been the creation of dependency on government funding under which increasing supervision then became the government's prerogative.

However, since illiteracy is strongly related to poverty, without government support the CLCs would hardly be capable of implementing their programmes. The midway solution has been to somehow comply with government policy and share CLC programme management with the Government. Understanding this situation, we see that the substance of the evaluation is very much placed on the CLC's structure and management. The research questions for evaluating CLC operations, therefore, address:

- (1) The effectiveness of CLCs,
- (2) The factors responsible for the effectiveness of CLC programmes, and
- (3) The impact of CLCs on local communities.

Taking into account the findings regarding these indicators, policies regarding sustainability and expansion can be formulated for securing the future development of CLCs.

The evaluation study was undertaken from July until August 2005 with a limited number of district samples taken from Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Nusa Tenggara islands. The limited number of samples was due to the excessively wide geographic spread of the CLC's districts, which caused time and funds to become critical constraints. Data collected were organized according to CLC institutions, CLC programmes, CLC learning experiences, and their impact. The extent of the data as such may provide a more comprehensive analysis of CLC performance regarding their successes and failures.

The significant growth in the number of CLCs in all provinces has had a positive impact in lowering student dropout rates. Through the CLC programmes, community members were provided with trained skills and knowledge so that everyone could develop an ability to work and to generate income. However, to what extent a CLC may fulfill its promise requires an evaluation of management, programmes and impacts. In a wider context, the existence of CLCs as institutions also needs to be discussed to see how they meet people's needs and improve their lives.

Profile of the Research Study

The evaluation study deals with three aspects of a CLC: its institutional basis, its programme implementation, and its impact. The first aspect deals with drawing the CLC's profile with respect to its environment and setting. The programme aspect is depicted through the analysis of performance in terms of CLC structure, management and role in instruction. The third aspect deals with the CLC's contribution in terms of the community's educational aspirations, social and economic welfare, and gender equity.

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This study focuses on seven districts/cities from various provinces in East Java, West Java, Yogyakarta, Central Java, West Nusa Tenggara, North Sumatra, and Bali. The CLCs in the cities are considered urban CLCs, whereas those in districts are considered rural CLCs. Sixteen district samples were finally selected out of a CLC population of 3,064.

Data were collected using questionnaires seeking to describe the situations faced by CLCs and to disclose the quality and the feasibilities of CLC programmes. They were documented and tabulated as data for the analyses. The data are mostly quantitative, with some qualitative data in the form of several case studies. Qualitative analysis is used for richer descriptions of the quantitative findings. Through this analysis, the effectiveness of CLCs as institutions, the effectiveness of the programmes, and their impact on the communities were then estimated.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

Long before CLCs were introduced, the Indonesian Government had started a national programme for out-of-school education, the purpose of which was to provide equal schooling opportunities. The programme is similar to non-formal education, the term used widely in CLC literature. The main component of the programme is educational equivalency with the elementary school (Package A), the junior high school (Package B), and the senior high school (Package C).

Most CLCs in Indonesia were, therefore, government-initiated because the main part of their programmes consisted of the educational equivalency packages. These packages aimed at providing more educational opportunities for less-fortunate communities. Although not formally stated, the district NFE office was responsible for the CLC programmes by exercising supervision and providing advice. This mechanism worked well with the CLC structure and management for appointing staff, teachers and field workers. At higher levels, the mechanism worked with an advisory committee through which the NFE officials exercised their authority as resource persons.

For this reason, before dealing with the research questions stated earlier, it is worthwhile to present a profile of Indonesian CLCs in the context of their target areas.

Indonesian CLCs are located in both urban and rural environments. Programmes provided are closely related to UNESCO Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All recommendations. Literacy programmes are delivered through educational equivalency packages that continually attract more learners. Table 13 presents the CLC's profile according to programme unit and the provinces/cities of a CLC's location.

From the "Total" column, conclusions regarding programme inclusion can state that:

- (1). Some programmes are common to all CLCs. These include Functional Literacy, Educational Equivalency Package B, entrepreneurship training, and Early Childhood Care and Education. These programmes represent literacy and skills for improving the lives of community members.
- (2). Programmes found at some, but not all, CLCs include Educational Equivalency Package A, Educational Equivalency Package C, and Internship and Tuition Support.
- (3). Of marginal importance are programmes or activities related to Sports and Recreation, Maternity Clinics, and Family Education.
- (4). Out of 12 programmes suggested for NFE, most CLCs normally provide five to eight of them.

Similarly, conclusions regarding programme performance can be stated as follows:

- (1) 6% of the CLCs are of *high performance*.
- (2) 75% of the CLCs are of *moderate performance*.
- (3) 19% of the CLCs are of *low performance*.

Table 13: CLC Programme by Location

Area Profile		No	Province/ Cities/CLC	Programme Unit												Total
Environment	settings			a. Equivalency Package A	b. Equivalency Package B	c. Equivalency Package C	d. Reading Shelters	e. Early Childhood Care and E	f. Functional Literacy	g. Maternity Clinics	h. Sports and Recreation	i. Internships and Tuition Supp’	j. Vocational Skill	k.Entrepreneurship Training	l. Family Education	
Urban Areas	Industrial	1	CLC Anak Bangsa N.Sumatera: Medan	x	x	x	x	x						x		6
		2	CLC Alpa West Java: Bandung	x	x			x	x			x		x		6
		3	CLC Warga Waluyo C. Java: Semarang		x	x			x			x		x		5
		4	CLC Assalafi C. Java: Semarang		x			x	x	x		x		x		6
		5	CLC Sumber Mulia C. Java: Semarang		x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x		8
		6	CLC Putra Mandiri C. Java: Semarang	x	x			x	x			x		x		6
Rural Areas	Industrial (tourism)	7	CLC Mandiri Jogjakarta: Sleman		x	x	x	x					x	x		6
		8	CLC Amrih Raharja Jogjakarta: Kulonprogo	x	x	x	x		x	x				x		7
		9	CLC Tunas Harapan Jogjakarta: Bantul	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x	9
	Industrial (Manu- facture)	10	CLC Budi Luhur East Java: Pasuruan	x	x	x		x	x			x	x	x		8
		11	CLC Harapan East Java: Mojokerto				x		x			x	x	x		5
		12	CLC Salafiah East Java: Pasuruan	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x		8
		13	CLC Bina Ilmu E. Java: Pasuruan		x	x	x		x					x		5
	Industrial (arts)	14	CLC Melati Bali: Gianyar		x	x	x	x	x				x	x		7
	Industrial and farming	15	CLC Bina Mandiri NTB: West Lombok		x		x	x	x			x	x	x		7
		16	CLC Assakinah NTB: West Lombok		x		x	x	x				x	x		6
			Total	7	15	10	11	12	13	2	1	9	8	16	1	105

Effectiveness of CLCs

As one of the services for lower income communities, CLCs provided programmes that were relevant to the community's needs. Owing to unemployment caused by the recent monetary crisis faced by the Indonesian Government, it is quite normal that at their initial stage most programmes were oriented toward income-generating skills and literacy. Programmes less directly related to economic matters remained marginal, such as maternity clinics, family education, sports and recreation. Several factors influenced the effectiveness of CLC programmes:

Learner attendance - The distribution of learners across programmes provides a measure of the extent to which CLCs were effective. Each CLC contribution was evaluated according to the average attendance of learners. Findings were as follows:

- (1). Equivalency Package B programmes were the most highly attended.
- (2). Moderately attended programmes included Equivalency Package C and Functional Literacy.
- (3). Least attended at CLCs were Equivalency Package A, Early Childhood Care and Education, Maternity Clinics, Internship and Tuition Support, Vocational Skills, Entrepreneurial Skills, and Family Education.

Social status of learners - The analysis indicates that most learners in functional literacy programmes were migrant labourers (34%), followed by farmers (29%), unemployed parents (19%) and peddlers (18%). From the gender perspective, other data show that most of the learners were women (66%). This reflects a better awareness about the value of education. Also, most of the learners had never attended school before (50%), or were dropouts from primary school (50%). The age of the learners ranged from 30 to 35 (75%), and the rest (25%) ranged from under 15 to 25 years old.

Instructors' educational backgrounds - Instructors' educational qualifications ranged from high school certificates to master's degrees, with bachelor's degree the most common and master's degree the least common. The instructors for the equivalency packages A, B and C were 57 percent male and 42 percent female. The instructors were also involved in recruiting learners, planning and implementing the learning process. This indicates that instruction at most CLCs was conducted in a more formal fashion according to the academic view.

Types of CLC buildings - The types of building used for CLCs included residences (31.25%), public or religious schools (31.25%), community meeting rooms (6.25%), community home economics buildings (6.25%), former primary school buildings (6.25%), rented buildings (6.25%), and CLC-owned buildings (12.5%).

These data show community participation in selecting the place for teaching and learning activities. Some people were pleased to let their houses be used for the CLC programmes and activities.

Structure and Management

The effectiveness of CLC programmes relies to a great extent on the administration of these programmes, which means that organizational structure is a crucial factor.

Figure 6 presents the organizational structure of most CLCs, showing a top-down structure. The management consists of the programme coordinator, secretary, treasurer, and programme heads. The presence of an advisory committee, the members of which include community leaders along with NFE officers, might redress the imbalance of a top-down structure. Such an imbalance was inevitable due to the CLCs dependence on the government's role in providing funds and maintaining the programmes.

Although quite limited in number, some CLCs were capable of supporting themselves in running their programmes. The case of CLC Alpa, Bandung, shows us an exemplary programme in which the tools or spare parts produced became commodities for transactions whose proceeds were recycled back into the centre to support training.

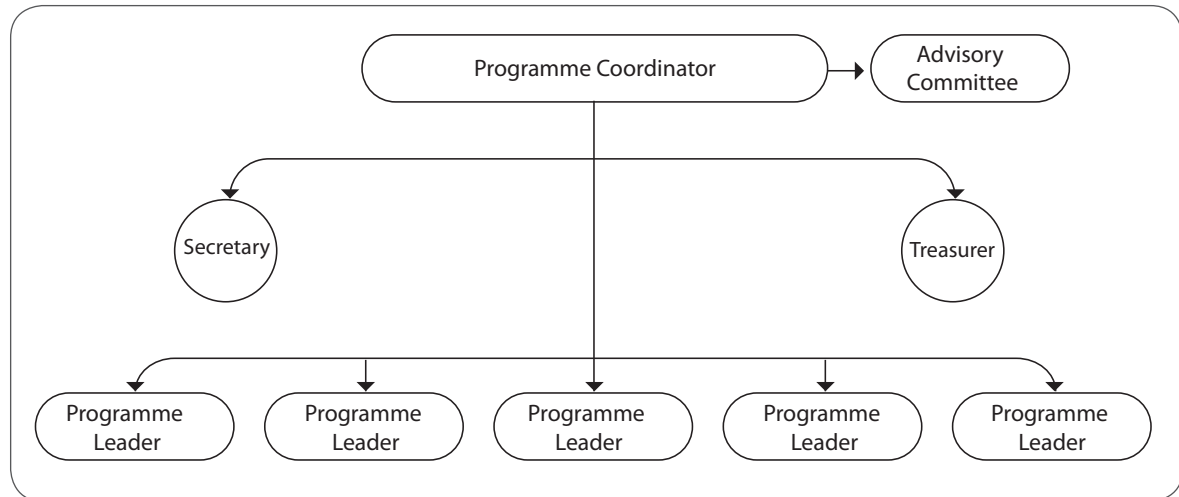
To maintain the effectiveness of programmes, instructors or district NFE officials routinely undertook monitoring/evaluation and provided advice to the CLCs as feedback. In addition, instructors were asked to motivate their learners, especially in the case of decreasing attendance.

However, government involvement may not always be seen as negatively affecting CLC programmes. In fact, it was important for maintaining the educational standards of these programmes. For example, such an involvement was necessary for legitimizing the certificates issued by CLCs. In addition, it also served to prevent any abuses of CLC functions, especially in the use of government funds.

Instructors

Most instructors are teachers hired from public schools. They work on a part-time basis to support the CLC programmes, although they are paid only US \$10 per month. Some instructors have to teach in several CLC programmes due to the limited number of instructors available. Inevitably, instructors in some particular

Figure 6: The CLC Organizational Structure



programmes are not well trained to transfer their knowledge and skills to the learner. Although these problems may limit the effectiveness of the programmes, the quality of the teaching and learning process undoubtedly also has an effect on the abilities of the graduate.

Area Coverage

Areas served by a CLC sometimes extend beyond the village boundaries to reach neighbouring villages. For example, a CLC in Lombok had to serve four villages regardless of their distance from the centre. Even though learners had to walk across mountains and along beaches, the CLC managed to maintain a high level of attendance.

Most CLCs served neighbouring villages in addition to their own, making the total number range from 4 to 20 villages. The area covered might range from 32 to 500 square kilometers. The case of a CLC in East Java, for example, is interesting in that it served two religious boarding schools in different districts.

Sustainability of the CLC

Sustainability is a critical issue not handled properly by most CLCs because either programmes or funding is very much under government control. In the long run, this situation may lead to the CLCs coming to an end. On the other hand, although very limited in number, some CLCs that were initiated by local communities possessed the capability to survive and to adapt with the changing environment.

The findings show that transparency in the structure and management is related to its sustainability. A CLC with open management, such as in the appointment of staff and instructors, may increase community participation. Similarly, the capacity for self-help, such as the ability to finance the operational activities through learners' contributions or through programme units capable of generating income, is an important determining factor for helping the sustainability of CLCs.

Impact/Outcomes

The presence of the CLC and its programmes has some positive impact on learners in the communities in that they become capable of improving their own social and economic status. Some work as groups of mechanics in shops filling business orders for spare parts. Others generate income by setting up small home industries. Literacy programmes have the most successful effect. By being able to read and write, graduates can join the work force.

Specifically, the impact of the CLC programmes on the communities can be summarized as follows:

1. Educational Equivalency Packages A, B and C, Functional Literacy, Reading Shelters, and Early Childhood Care and Education programmes have an impact on young people's opportunities to receive an education or to attend school.

2. Entrepreneurship Training, Vocational Skills, and Internship/Fee Support programmes have an impact on income-generating skills.
3. Early Childhood Care and Education programmes have an impact on parents' motivation to send their children to school.
4. Family Education and Sports and Recreation programmes have an impact on people's lives by encouraging healthy lifestyles.

From the national perspective, the presence of CLCs and their programmes to a great extent has brought positive educational impacts to Indonesian communities. The programmes are capable of improving incomes, increasing educational aspirations, and contributing to the raising of children.

Recommendations

The existence of CLCs as institutions that are capable of providing services in support of the country's commitment to Education for All indicates an awareness about the value of literacy skills. Such awareness, in turn, is expected to ease efforts to empower local communities, especially to gain new insights into how to improve their economic welfare.

However, there are also problems related to the government's historical establishment of CLCs. As an institution, a CLC is supposed to be a part of its local community; however, limited community awareness may place a CLC at risk of discontinuing its activities. The following policy recommendations are intended to minimize such a risk:

1. Motivate and encourage independence and self-sufficiency of CLCs.
2. Provide more authentic evaluation and more motivating reward systems.
3. Emphasize grassroots CLC functions and activities.
4. Continue to appeal for community participation of all kinds.
5. Increase equity in gender participation.
6. Combine monitoring and supervision.
7. Continue developmental support from the government and other agencies.

After about eight years of existence, CLCs in Indonesia have shown some successful experiences in managing their institutions and programmes. The functions of CLCs to sustain their existence are closely related to staff abilities to continuously assess the needs of the community. In developing programmes or activities, therefore, CLCs should be capable of meeting changing demands in the socio-economic life of their communities.

Managers and staff of CLCs should promote sustainability by considering it as a critical component essential for the continuity of CLCs. Therefore, CLC management should possess the capacity to create innovative programmes and use them to generate income for the CLCs and the communities they serve.

Расширение доступа к программам по развитию детей в раннем возрасте

ОКТАБРЬ

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МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЕ МЕСЯЦО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

Международное Месяц Образование

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Международное Месяц Образование

Расширение доступа к программам по развитию детей в раннем возрасте

Грамотность для всех: обновленная перспектива глобального плана действий

Инициатива ООН по расширению доступа к обучению для девочек

Обеспечение образования в чрезвычайных и кризисных ситуациях

Преподаватели и качество образования

Образование для населения с ограниченными возможностями

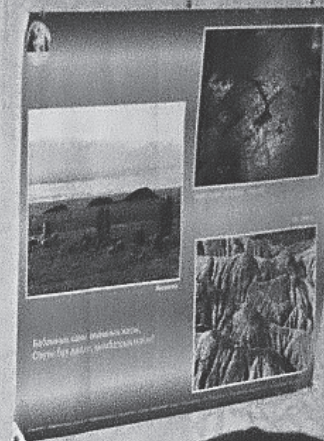
Расширение доступа к образованию для сельского населения

Инициатива по профилактике СПИД

FRESH: свежий подход к школьной гигиене



Международное Месяц Образование



KAZAKHSTAN*

Introduction

Community learning centres are local places of learning outside the formal education system. Located in both villages and urban areas, they are usually set up and managed by local people in order to provide various learning opportunities for community development and increased quality of life. A CLC doesn't necessarily require new infrastructure, but can operate from an already existing health centre, temple, mosque, primary school or other suitable venue.

The main objective of this research study was to evaluate CLC outcomes and impacts in Kazakhstan, and then disseminate these findings to EFA stakeholders for strengthening the country's existing literacy and continuing education programmes. The research was led by a group of independent experts that included educators, sociologists and experts from a business consulting centre.

A three-member advisory panel was additionally selected on the basis of: a) professional credentials, b) understanding of organizational issues, and c) expertise in key areas. The objectives of the panel were to serve as a sounding board for the design and findings of the evaluation, and to review and comment on the final synthesis of the report.⁵

Profile of the Research Study

The CLC research was intended to provide an objective assessment of activities in participating countries, with a focus on the diversity of CLC programmes and their specific needs. CLCs in Kazakhstan were analyzed in terms of their location, types of programmes, ownership and financial resources.

The study was undertaken both in urban and rural areas, encompassing: the towns of Karaganda and Jambul, the district centres in Almaty and Jambul (Karabulak and Kordaj), and the villages Amanbokter, Sortobe and Nogajbaj. It should be noted that the August period during which the research took place is vacation time in the region. This presented a degree of difficulty in obtaining interviews because most village inhabitants at this period are busy with seasonal work. Finally, the research was limited by the low number of CLCs functioning in Kazakhstan – only seven of them.

In order to identify CLC effectiveness at the micro-level, the researchers undertook field surveys and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. There were focused interviews with CLC committee members, CLC facilitators, local authorities, trainers and trainees. These were supplemented by the traditional analysis of documents, SWOT⁶ analysis, and the examination of statistical data.

Experts visited all seven CLCs. Material presented in this report was collected through conversations with CLC representatives and personal surveys.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

To assess CLC progress, it should first be stated that Kazakhstan's literacy rate is 98 percent. In comparison with other countries of the region, Kazakhstan has the most successful situation in the formal educational sector. The involvement of Kazakhstan in achieving the global goals of Education for All has led to improvements in the development of preschools and a decrease in the percentage of out-of-school, primary vocational and university training.

Nevertheless, adult education is outside the serious attention of the government, and left to international organizations and some NGOs. The idea of adult education in the country is considered only from the aspect of training registered unemployed people. The concept of training at a place of residence is not represented in legal documentation.

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5 See Kazakhstan CLC Research Report (in attached CD) for a full list of members on the research and advisory panels

6 12 SWOT stands for "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats."

From this aspect, the CLC as a socially focused project provides learning opportunities throughout life to the following target groups: members of needy and large families; women and youth, including the unemployed; children with special needs for development and their mothers; widows; repatriates; and orphans. CLCs in Kazakhstan are found mainly in remote areas or micro-districts with a prevalence of socially unprotected members of the population.

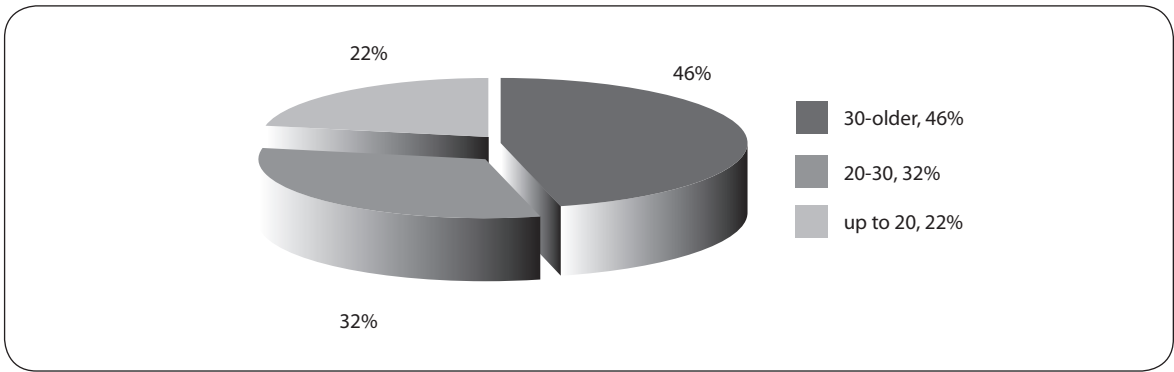
According to normative legislative documents, within the nation’s education system, non-formal education consists of additional education oriented mostly towards children and teenagers who engage in out-of school art, technical, sports and other activities.

Currently, adult access to learning at their place of residence is only supported by international organizations. The creation of necessary conditions towards equal access to educational programmes and towards the development of life skills is at an early stage of institutional development and requires a strategic approach on the part of the government.

During research, the following basic groups of CLC trainees were identified:

- unemployed (including young people 18-25 years old)

Figure 7: CLC Participants by Age



- women with many children
- repatriates
- schoolchildren and students, including the physically disabled
- retired persons

Most of the trainees were middle-aged people (46%). Added to the next largest group (youth), they constitute the majority (75%) of learners. The smallest age group of trainees is made up of children and teenagers.

As figure 8 indicates most, of the CLC learners are women. Respondents believe that this is because women are more socially vulnerable and, thus, more open to training.

Figure 8: CLC Participants by Gender

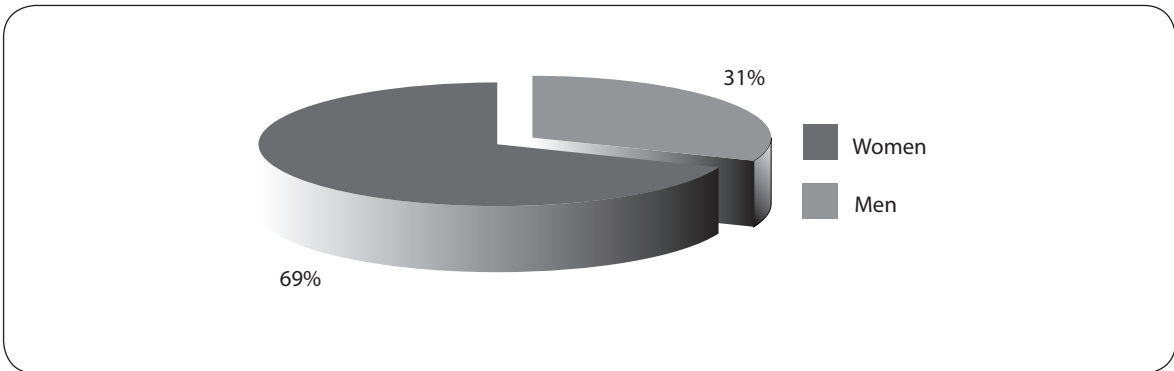
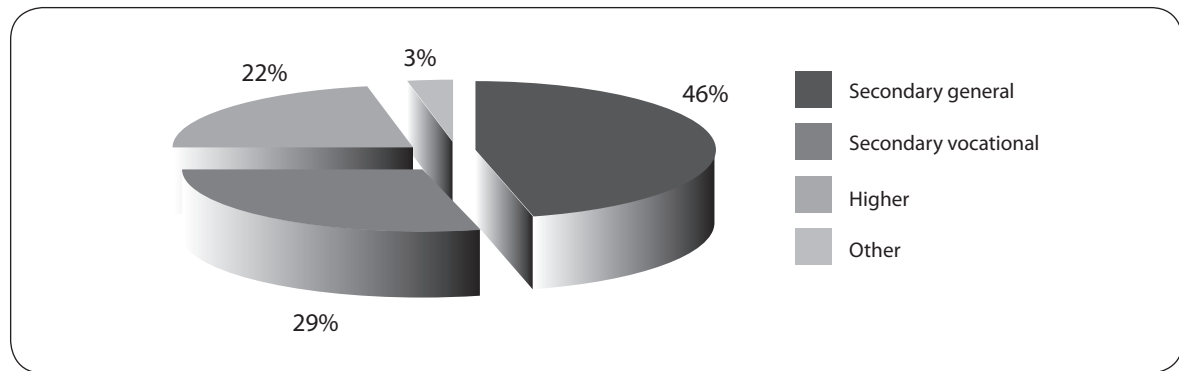


Figure 9: CLC Participant by Education Level

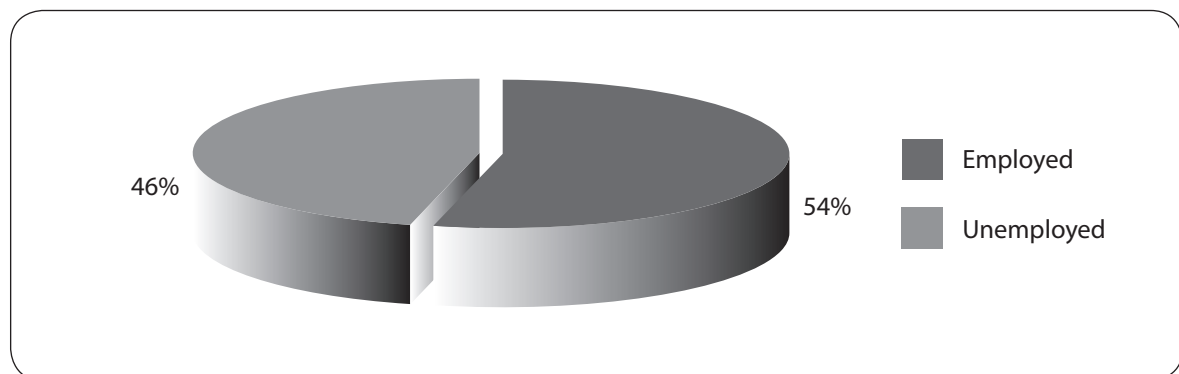


It became known that the problem of unemployment among CLC target groups is quite extensive. In fact, 50 percent of the interviewed CLC trainees have no steady occupation. This group of trainees is divided into:

- a) those not satisfied with their current occupation and seeking better positions to suit their professional skills;
- b) those seeking new opportunities to change the sphere of their professional activities; and
- c) those who are unemployed.

It should be stated that among the unemployed who participated in CLC training programmes, there were also younger people under 30 years of age.

Figure 10: CLC Participants by Employment Status



The employed respondents are workers in various fields. The fact that one of the biggest groups (20.4%) consists of workers in so-called “unqualified” occupations (technicians, merchants, etc.) demonstrates participants’ will to increase or change their own qualifications.

Programmes/Activities

Each CLC in Kazakhstan has different activities depending on the community’s needs and its socio-economic and cultural environment. The core activities of CLCs in Kazakhstan are educational. Programmes and activities generated by CLCs are identified in the following major areas.

The programmes offer training courses, organizational resources for parents, pre-professional training or so-called educational programmes “from school to job” or “from school to career,” alternative education institutions for those who are not satisfied with the formal education framework, preventive early pregnancy programmes, prevention of violence and drug abuse, care of school-age children, enrichment programmes for all members of the community; literacy programmes, foreign language study and adult education.

The main types of vocational education programmes are: computer courses, sewing, hairdressing, modeling, English language learning, electronics, and welding. Life skills programmes include: healthy lifestyle,

family planning, massage, furniture renovation, shoe repair, national crafts, carpentry, handicrafts, pickle making, patchwork, gardening, cheese making, HIV/AIDS and drug abuse prevention, cooking, agricultural processing, and other income-generating activities. Cultural activities include ecology, sports, and cultural heritage.

The programmes offered at CLCs are initiated based on the wishes of local community representatives, and are generated through community meetings and personal interviews. CLC facilitators and trainers hold community interviews on a periodic basis to find out needs and demands in regard to CLC future plans and training programmes. They take steps to activate and involve the local community in the decision-making processes.

Structure and Management

All CLCs in Kazakhstan have a similar structure and organizational set-up. The efficiency of CLC activities is built on a high degree of self-organization in the local community. Significant support from the local authorities to ensure effective CLC management is available.

Local authorities play a special role in the organizational structure of the centres. They function at different levels of organizational supervision and provide a certain competence in regard to the objectives of CLC activities and their regulation, solving a variety of issues to meet the needs of the local community. Almost every CLC committee in Kazakhstan is headed by a representative of the local governmental authority - the *akim*, or his deputy.

The CLC committee also includes representatives of district education authorities, health authorities, social protection authorities, the business community, NGOs, retired people, unions and members of local communities.

The CLC facilitator is one of the community leaders – a skilled, educated individual, willing to introduce new, useful ideas for social development.

CLC trainers consist of schoolteachers, retired people with abundant life experience, individuals from applied professions with practical experience, and other volunteers.

CLCs are established with the support of local authorities, and closely cooperate with them. This cooperation becomes the basic indicator of overall CLC performance. The teamwork is expressed in the following ways:

- Political
 - Dissemination of information on CLC activities
 - Involvement of businesses and other donor organizations in CLC activities
- Material
 - Providing premises for a CLC
 - Allocation of money in the amount of the established rate of the minimal wage
 - 7,200 Tenge from the local budget to pay the CLC's key trainers and facilitators
 - Provision of logistics for running the office: heating, electricity, security
- Social
 - Inspiring a social orientation among the membership
 - Exchanging best practices in regard to CLC management and operation

Comparing the organizational structures of CLCs in Kazakhstan and CLCs of other countries, their basic difference is the presence in Kazakhstan of local authorities.

The key person in day-to-day management and general planning for CLC development is the CLC facilitator, whose basic responsibilities are as follows:

- Development and organization of training programmes and CLC activities
- Coordination of training processes
- Information campaigns on new activities within the local community
- Involving volunteers from the local community in CLC activities
- Administrative management of the office

It should be noted that members of the local community through their representatives on the CLC committee are highly motivated to initiate new activities. As a general rule, they design their CLC framework according to the needs and demands of the local community.

One of the significant issues raised during research was the lack of clarity in regard to CLC juridical status. CLCs in Taras and Karabulak, for example, have been registered as non-governmental organizations. These CLCs have experience with fundraising to expand the spectrum of their activities. Other CLCs remain as public entities whose infrastructure is supported by local *akimat* or educational institutions and who are dependent on the political will of certain authorities.

The facilitator of the CLC in Taras stated that there are advantages and disadvantages to the NGO juridical status. First, in respect to fundraising, a CLC with NGO status is eligible to take part in state tenders on rendering direct services to the state on account of the republican budget. Later on, it might be possible to join all CLCs in an association to embody the whole democratic sector.

Otherwise, an NGO has to submit financial reports to local tax departments and pay taxes. Therefore, this status leads to a contrary version of the CLC mission and working for profit as a registered NGO.

Some facilitators suggest elaborating regulations about CLCs and its status as a public entity, which enables it to provide paid educational services on a non-commercial basis, work without profit and, hence, not be subjected to taxes.

Policy Linkages

The CLC as an education institution functions first of all within the framework of the state development programmes of the Ministry of Education and Science; the nature of CLC activities reflects the goals of Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population programming. In neither ministry, however, do CLCs obtain any real supervision, and neither ministry provides any essential support. Given that CLCs participate in social partnership programmes to implement state social decrees, cooperation with ministerial bodies needs to be strengthened.

Decision-making at the majority of CLCs starts with facilitators and trainers tabulating the needs and demands of the community, which can be identified from interviews and questionnaires. They then submit their recommendation for CLC committee consideration. After appropriate consultation, the programming schedules proceed to the regional/district level for approval. Thus, the human factor, namely the opinions and capability of members of the CLC committee and the local authorities, plays an important role during the decision-making process.

One of the main obstacles for enlarging the scope of education programmes and increasing the number of CLC trainees is the absence of state accreditation and certification. At present, only one CLC in Karaganda (due to its juridical status as an NGO) has state accreditation and is qualified to issue certificates. Such certificates are important in that they strengthen trainees' chances of hiring and, thus, people's interest in the training programmes. Hence, the increasing interest in awarding certificates to CLC graduates deserves mention, and further attention should be given to making such certificates equal to those which are issued by state education institutions. Certification of CLC education programmes would lead to further independent employment or moving on to other formal education programmes. In order to achieve this, however, CLC programmes would likely need to maintain a well qualified teaching staff in order to guarantee their educational quality.

At the local level, partnerships are established with local education, cultural, social, labour and health care institutions.

CLC facilitators have managed to establish cooperation and partnership with local and regional organizations, in particular, with teachers of high schools and colleges, libraries and also regional departments of labour. This linkage assists CLCs in mobilizing teachers as volunteers for computer courses and activities in cooking, sewing and national crafts. Women under the management of volunteers learn carpet-weaving skills through a similar linkage.

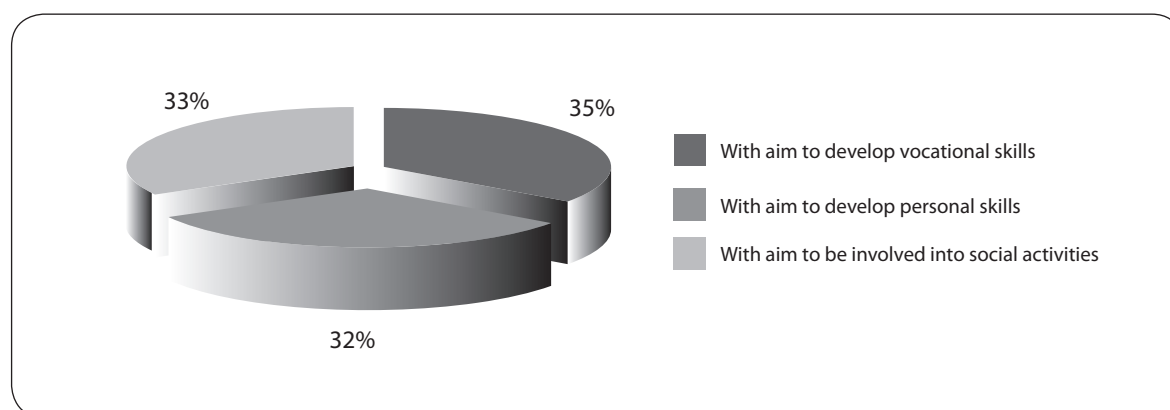
Table 14. CLC Relations with Partnering Organizations

Name of CLCs	Partnership, networking
CLC- Karaganda	akimat of Karaganda area, akimat of October area in Karaganda, School # 46, vocational school # 6, NGO, universities
CLC- Taraz	akimat of Zhambylskii area, town and district akimats of Taraz, NGO "Taras Initiative Centre", "School of Women's Leadership"
CLC- Kordaj	akimat of Kordajskii area, akimat of Kordajskii area, Kordaj Department of Labor and Social Protection, school, hospital
CLC- Sortobe	akimat of village in Sortobe, school, branch of vocational school, local museum, hospital, Association of Business Women
CLC- Nogajbaj	akimat of village Nogajbaj, college, school, polyclinics, Kordaj Department of Labor and Social Protection
CLC- Amanbokter	akimat of village Amanbokter, University of the Central Asia (UCA), Association of Initiative Schools, school, Association of Mountainous Villages
CLC- Karabulak	akimat of Karabulakskii area, akimat of village Karabulak, Department of Labor and Social Protection, college, vocational school, agricultural organizations

One of the essential problems of regional cooperation is communication. CLCs suffer from weak telephone communication, absence of electronic mailing and no availability of access to the Internet.

Impact/Outcomes

There are three reasons for local community members to participate in CLC programmes: (1) to receive concrete knowledge in concrete applied disciplines (computer literacy, modeling, sewing, welding, cheese-making, mining, etc.), (2) to develop personal life skills (learning English, gardening, health care, family planning, etc.), and (3) to be involved in social and cultural programmes (environmental protection, cultural heritage, sports, etc.).

Figure 11: CLC Participant Motivation

A high rate of return among CLC trainees to CLC programmes and activities was apparent. This often means that learners are continuing in other types of training courses or are involved with CLC social and cultural events. Obviously, student achievements show that skills learned at the CLC are important in being employed and making part-time earnings.

Among programmes which the local population would like to continue, there are three main groups: professionally-oriented courses (courses for hairdressers, auto crane operators, auto mechanics, electricians, designers, etc.); programmes training vital skills (producing milk products, health care and sports, psychological training, language courses, etc.); and skills-upgrading programmes.

Improvement in the quality of life at the present stage of CLC operations is defined by the following key indicators:

Figure 12: CLC Participant Continuity

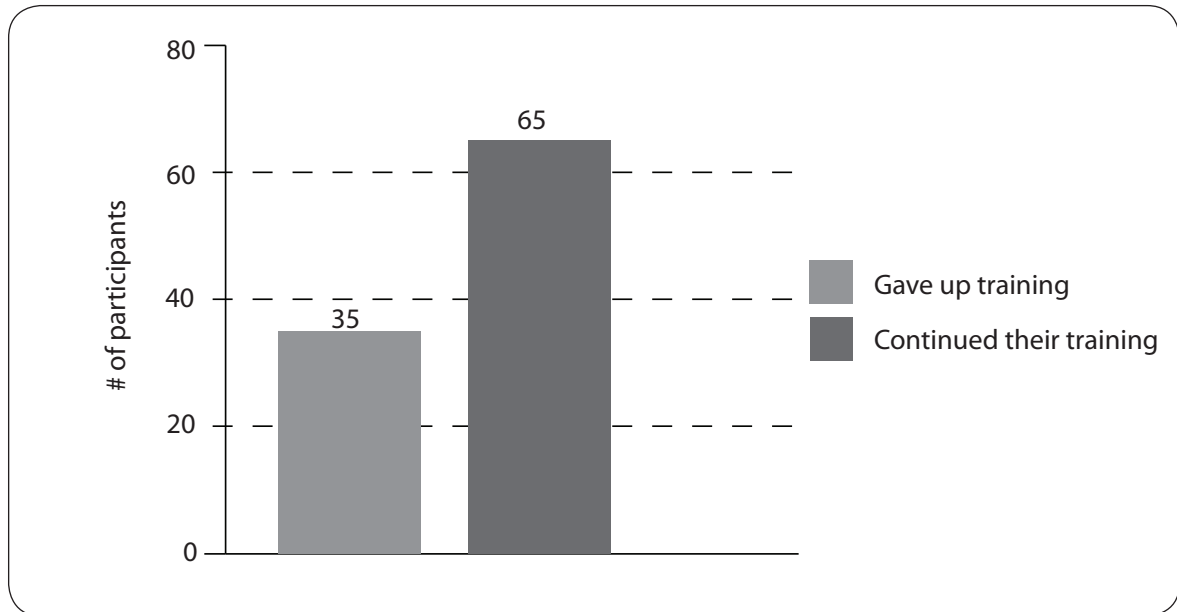
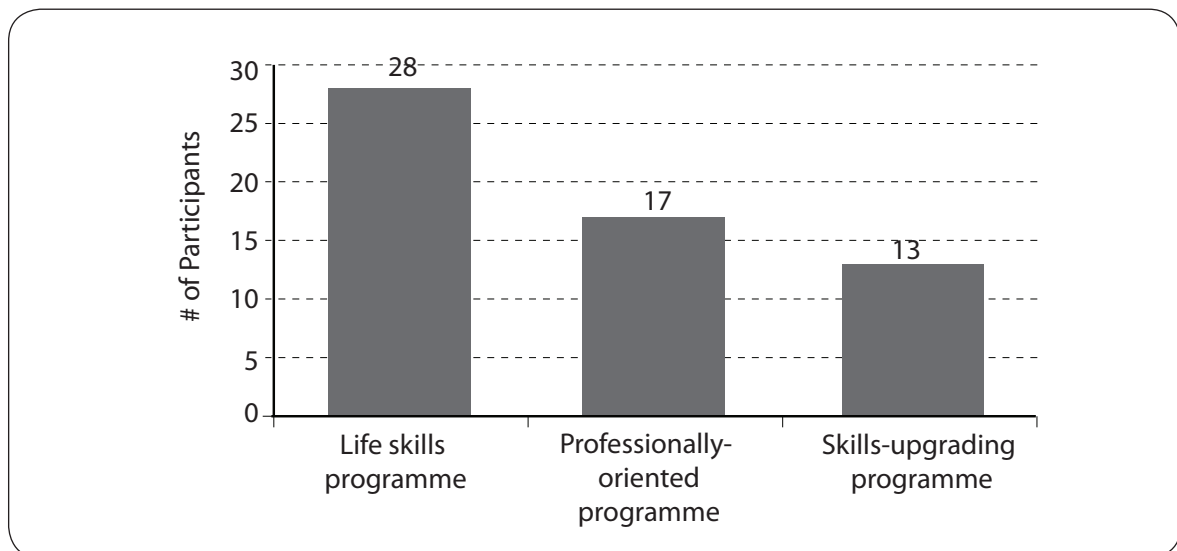


Figure 13: CLC Participation by Programme



1. Ninety-nine percent of the CLC trainees were satisfied with the quality and the contents of the education process. In personal meetings, respondents noted that attendance at CLC programmes gave them new theoretical and practical knowledge through modern information technologies. Second, most CLC trainers were experts in their relevant spheres. Moreover, they had significant teaching experience and combined their activities at the CLC with their main jobs in high schools, professional schools and institutes.

There was an increase of knowledge and learning among youth and women about health and hygiene issues, family planning, preventive measures against HIV/AIDS, smoking, drug abuse and infectious diseases.

2. Ninety-six percent of the CLC trainees were satisfied with the schedule of CLC activities and training. They appreciated the flexibility of the schedule, the individual approach of the teacher to trainees, the convenience of the times chosen for training, and the selection of occupations according to wishes of the trainees.

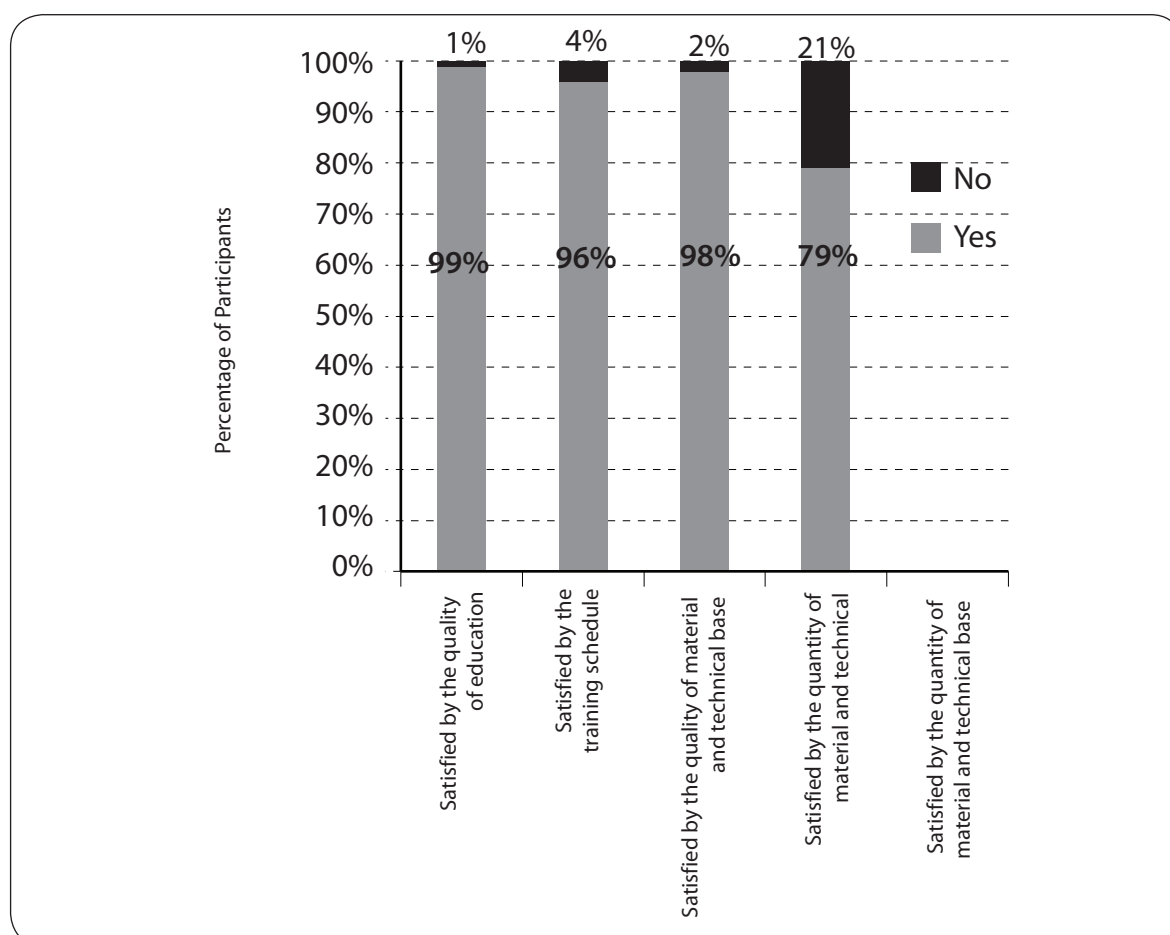
- At least 79 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the qualitative parameters of the CLC material base. Most CLC trainees and trainers emphasized the importance of training by means of new information technologies, the high quality of computers, sewing machines produced by leading foreign companies, and other modern office equipment.

It must be noted that notwithstanding considerable governmental efforts to modernize Kazakhstani schools (in comparison with other Newly Independent State (NIS) countries, Kazakhstan has the highest student-to-computer ratio at 57 pupils for every personal computer), schools (especially in rural areas) lack computers and other new information technology. Since most CLC trainees are inhabitants of rural places and adults train by means of modern information technologies at the place of their residence, ICT is of utmost value for their further self-education and self-employment.

However, among seven CLCs in Kazakhstan, only one (Karaganda) has 10 computers, compared to 5 computers at other CLCs. In personal meetings with experts, respondents noted that the demand for CLC training is very high. However, the amount of training equipment doesn't allow for increasing the number of trainees. For some training programmes, CLC facilitators keep waiting lists. For example, some respondents informed us that they have been waiting for their turn for at least four months.

- At least 20 percent of those completing CLC training courses have found employment or started their own businesses.
- The majority of CLC learners have noted skills development through social, educational and multi-cultural activities.

Figure 14: CLC Participant Satisfaction Levels



Basically, the CLC overall impact is expressed in three areas:

Upgrading the business skills of the local population. For example, the inhabitants of Amanbokter village were introduced to marketing in business courses and, after completing them, were able to solve common problems with the sale of self-made milk production. Due to low awareness of the principles of supply and

demand, the village inhabitants had suffered from heavy spoilage of milk products because the remote and mountainous place where they lived required that they wait for potential buyers to arrive. Nowadays, the villagers have learned to make cheese and sell it in the nearby regional markets at high prices.

Reduction in the number of unemployed people. CLCs have experience in partnership schemes with the local Labor Department to train enlisted unemployed people in CLC training programmes. They also offer seminars on skills to compose a resume, prepare for interviews, and self-employment.

Rise of social and educational activity among unemployed youth and housewives. Authorities note the increase in community participation in local activities. As research shows, better educational outcomes – as represented by trainees' achievements – are closely related to higher incomes in life.

The purchase of personal computers by inhabitants of Sortobe increased after completing CLC computer courses. The training process at CLCs focuses not only on the transfer of certain knowledge and skills, but also on diverse development of the individual, encouraging his creativity, abilities and such personal qualities as initiative, self-management, imagination and originality.

CLC beneficiaries have noted the moral aspects of CLC programmes that help people to enrich their lives with the following abilities:

1. **Self-confidence and willingness to adapt to the demands of society.** Experts have revealed certain psychological barriers (especially among adults), the fear of a grown-up to be trained or a reluctance to admit they do not know certain things. After attending programmes at the CLC, practically 50 percent of the trainees have overcome this barrier. Some respondents answered that they have become more willing to take initiative.
2. **Coexistence, tolerance of other nationalities, cultures and traditions.** Through the joint efforts of local representative and executive bodies, one CLC sponsor seminars on cultural heritage to encourage national pride. However, this concept hasn't become a key principle of CLC activities.
3. **Positive behavioural change of the learners in communication, critical thinking, decision-making and creativity.** Trainees defined the following CLC programmes as most effective: computer courses, health care, processing of agricultural products, massage services to disabled children, lessons for farmers, sewing, cooking, hairdressing, shoe or furniture repair, national crafts.

Major Findings

The research revealed that for CLCs better management priority must be given first and foremost to these aspects:

- strategic and operative planning, definition of mission
- maintenance of a database
- identifying the priority needs of the community
- self-evaluation

Strengths

External factors

- The CLC fills the gap of the national education system in guaranteeing wide access to lifelong learning for all, particularly unprotected categories of the population, including adults, the unemployed, women, youth, repatriates, the disabled and children of preschool age.
- In terms of the poorly developed non-formal education sector, the CLC is believed to be one of the effective models of non-formal education to satisfy the needs of youth and adults to acquire life skills and habits and to improve the quality of their lives.
- Through its concept of an individual approach, the CLC is suited to realize the tasks specified in state programmes on educational development, the struggle against poverty, social protection, the effective employment of a significant part of the able-bodied population, contributing to stable income and its increase

- CLC plays a growing role in the promotion of democratic procedures in society in decision-making at the local level as well as in the establishment of civil awareness, healthy lifestyles, social activity and gender equality.
- Open and flexible in the organization of its activities, the CLC through the mobilization of local resources, including schools and other social organizations, is able to provide vocational training by means of modern information and communication technologies.
- CLCs have already developed as multipurpose centres most needed by local communities.

Internal factors

- The mechanism of social partnership is developed and being implemented through volunteer involvement, trainers, and business contacts with interested organizations.
- Regular communication with members of the local community takes place for the purpose of needs analysis, monitoring, accountability and transparency.
- The management structure makes available at least two basic teachers with appropriate teaching qualifications and essential job experience, along with a high level of interest and activity among CLC managers and teachers.
- Vocational accelerated short-term training courses have been introduced in the specialties most required by the market economy.
- There is the positive experience of material and financial support for CLCs by local authorities.

Weaknesses

External factors

- Insufficient trust and support from the state, caused by the lack of disseminated information; poor acknowledgement by local authorities about the advantages of CLCs and possible benefits for the state.
- Institutional and financial instability, uncertainty of CLCs' legal status
- Poor material and financial support from local budgets, basically consisting of wages to facilitators and teachers, the need for a real state mechanism for financial and material stability
- Weak regional CLC networking, caused by communications problems, need for access to the Internet to overcome the remoteness of CLCs scattered across Kazakhstan
- Need for regular consultation and methodical maintenance for CLC managers, weak human resources development or none at all
- Need for state accreditation of CLC training courses to bridge higher levels of formal education and certification for further employment

Internal factors

- Lack of CLC managers for strategic planning, fund raising, self-evaluation and self-analysis skills
- Poor material and technical support. Lack of means for replacement or repair of equipment
- Inertness in CLC activity towards expansion of the spectrum of training courses

Opportunities

- International exchange of best practices and their adaptation to the national situation.
- CLC lobbying at state level, introduction into national programmes of human resources development, involving different types of national authorities
- International experts consulting and support
- Wide information campaign by means of positive publication and other mass media at a national level
- Enlargement and improvement of the quality of CLC services provided to a wide range of target groups
- Promotion of regional and international partnership

Threats

- Lack of political support, absence of interest in CLC activities from the state; poor financing may result in CLC self-liquidation
- Absence of an effective system of planning regular training for CLC managers
- Lack of opportunities for international cooperation

Another threat is the reduction of financial support from local authorities towards a total cut-down. According to the budgetary code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, financing from budgetary funds to promote NGOs, NCOs and other public (not state) organizations is outlawed, except financing through performance of the social order in terms of participation of the given organization in state competitions to carry out state orders.

Recommendations

The research has identified the need for the following:

- Political will for introducing non-formal education into national legislation and state programme development to integrate into the world educational space
- Lobbying at a national level to include CLC development in national and sub-national programmes
- Regional workshop/seminar/meeting for joint training, review, evaluation, exchange of experience
- Networking with local expert agencies, such as universities, teacher skills upgrading institutes, for technical support and supervision
- Continuing support from state and sponsors to cope with changing needs
- Whenever possible, editions of teaching materials for the support of CLC trainers and facilitators
- Capacity-building of CLC personnel with regard to planning, management, teacher training, and technical expertise



LEBANON*

Introduction

The community learning centres covered in this research are distributed in underdeveloped rural poor areas in Lebanon. They have had little attention over the years from either the state or international organizations.

The main income in the targeted villages, not to say sole, is from agriculture and public service, (mainly military and governmental education bodies). In the Palestinian refugees camps, the problem areas are of a different nature.

Under the Lebanese law, Palestinian refugees are denied more than 80 different types of work; they are not allowed to build new houses or to own ones, especially outside the refugee camps.

Most of the Palestinian refugees work in the agriculture and building sectors. Lately, and with United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) reducing their services and cutting their budget, the educational and health services have been severely hit and can no longer offer quality service.

Under these circumstances, it should be noted that the technical support provided by UNESCO's Regional Office in Beirut within the CLC project framework contributes only slightly to answering the many needs of these areas.

Most of the active NGOs in the research areas implement non-formal education activities as a main tool to raise awareness and to provide knowledge mainly for youth and children. In this sense, providing those NGOs with information technology (IT) equipment answered a need and allowed them to enlarge their scope of work.

Whether in Lebanese villages or Palestinian refugee camps, the management of community learning centres needs extensive assistance, based on feedback from managerial bodies, beneficiaries, and remarks made by the experts who used analytical and monitoring methods during their field visits to the centres.

Research Methodology

Regional research on community learning centres is crucial to help in assessing countries' educational reach, and to measure present and future impacts. CLC experience in the Arab world is rather new, and lessons learned will contribute to re-shaping projects so that they can best meet local communities' needs.

Following several discussions with APPEAL and other participants during the Regional Experts' Meeting on Community Learning Centres in June 2005, it was initially decided that the research would target the three Arab countries of Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt. After in-depth discussions with the CLC focal point at UNESCO Beirut, however, it was decided that the Egypt component be omitted because the CLC experience there has not yet been initiated and more time would be needed before research on Egypt could be started.

As for the Jordan component, the research team coordinator held several meetings both with the UNESCO Beirut focal point and with the Jordan CLC focal point in Beirut. It was agreed at these preparatory meetings to carry on the research in Jordan after receiving a suggested list of target CLCs from UNESCO Amman. A research team member made two visits to Jordan specifically to meet with relevant actors and to initiate the research process. However, the research team waited several months for feedback and a permit to

The absolute poverty line, which is defined in Lebanon as the income level at which an average family of five can meet its food requirements and other basic needs such as health, education, housing and clothing, was estimated at US\$ 618 per month at the end of 1993. In the same period, the extreme poverty line, defined as the income level at which a family of five can meet only its food requirements, was estimated at US\$ 306 per month. Given these figures, 28% of Lebanese families are estimated to live below the absolute poverty line, while, of these, 7.25% live below the extreme poverty line. This implies that around one million Lebanese live in poverty, while 250,000 of them are in extreme poverty.

Lebanese Center for Political Studies

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conduct the research. As an outcome, these issues limited the CLC research to Lebanon, and delayed its initiation. It also led to amending the contract to include only the remaining research team members, thus resulting in re-budgeting the whole assignment.

The research was based on focus group meetings and in-depth interviews with CLC personnel, beneficiaries when available, and local partners involved in the activities of CLCs ranging from municipalities to other NGOs. The interviews followed the same methods and were based on a comprehensive questionnaire that covered all research objectives.⁷ Selection of centres was done to cover all regions by studying at least one CLC from each region. Samples also needed to represent the three CLC types that operate in Lebanon: NGO, municipal and governmental. As a result, the study examined ten CLCs broken down into four NGO-sponsored, two municipal and one governmental CLC.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

Before analyzing the experiences of CLCs, it is important to note that the timing of the project was not ideal. It was almost the end of the summer, and therefore it was not always possible to appraise activities and meet with beneficiaries. To overcome that drawback, more effort was put into the interviews and in observing physical indications related to the management of the activities: photos, reports, press releases, forms and questionnaires, publications, video recordings, and so on.

Programmes/Activities

CLC activities varied from one place to another. “Computer training,” “summer camps and non-formal education activities” were the most common among all the centres. On the other hand, only the CLCs related to the Palestinian camps were part of an NGO’s comprehensive plan; all other NGOs conducted their different activities based on availability of funds and appropriate circumstances. It is a general weakness shared by CLCs in Hibarieyh, Houla, Baalbek, the Bekaa, Brital, and Blida that there is a complete absence of strategic planning.

Some of the management of these centres saw the need to develop their skills to reach a better planning capacity and a more concrete mission, while others were defensive and blind to their own flaws. The final recommendations of this report will discuss these issues in reference to each CLC studied.

Computer training conducted in the CLCs was divided into two parts: TOT (training of trainers, conducted by UNESCO for CLC volunteers) and Basic Learning Courses (conducted by TOT trainees, targeting the community). Such training has taken place in all of the CLCs that are equipped with computers (PCs), with the exception of the Blida Centre, which lacks all basic financial and physical resources (furniture, photocopy machine, telephone-fax, desks and chairs).

Summer camps and non-formal education activities, other common activities among the CLCs, were partially launched because of the UNESCO training initiative (except for the “SAWA” NGO in the Baalbak area), and there was capacity-building of volunteers to carry on the planning, organization, and implementation of activities during the summer camps.

Although many of the interviewed CLC personnel did not bring up this point, it appeared that the summer camps were the best tool for promoting the existence of the CLCs and for creating a link with communities through their children. Failing to see this point, the CLCs would miss out on further promoting their activities and building on success stories.

Despite the obvious success of the summer camps, and the increased capacity development of CLC volunteers from one year to another, the CLCs are not following up on the target groups after the end of the activity, nor attempting to engage them in future innovative activities. This reflects the need for self-empowerment among CLCs in order for them to sustain their relations with beneficiaries and create solid interaction to assess their needs and promote interest in future developmental projects.

Vocational training and workshops on productive projects were also mentioned by most CLCs, with the

⁷ See Lebanon CLC Research Report, Annex 2 (in attached CD) for questionnaire form and the interview discussion points.

exception of Hibarieyh. The funding for these activities was from different sources, mainly UNDP projects. The strength of such initiatives is the creation of an opportunity for diversified financial resources besides agriculture in the villages, and to engage the young Palestinian refugees in constructive and fruitful activities. The problem facing the management of CLCs regarding vocational training is the limited interest on the part of the beneficiaries in traditional vocations such as make-up and hair dressing, sewing, car mechanics, etc. This is restraining the communities from profiting, since there is self-sufficiency in these domains. The beneficiaries are being inflexible about their needs, probably out of resistance to new ideas. Nonetheless, it is the responsibility of CLCs to be innovative and persuasive to encourage new vocations.

Another prominent area of CLC involvement was cultural activity, which has been adopted in all CLCs to some extent – often quite creatively. Profiting from pride in local cultural heritage, the CLCs have engaged local talent to use culture as a tool to spread awareness about certain issues or raise funds. Such activities may include theatre, summer festivals, awareness seminars, and literature evenings. It seems that it is easier to mobilize communities to participate in such activities than those mentioned earlier. Yet, only the Rachidiyeh CLC and the Houla Cultural Centre are profiting from these events to promote their activities and advocate their other programmes.

The diversity and creativity of the mentioned activities, and the experience in managing them, seem to be more advanced at the CLCs that serve the Palestinian camps than those run by Lebanese NGOs. This could be due to the age of the bodies running the CLCs, the centralization of the beneficiaries, and the greater exposure of the Palestinian camps to development experiences compared to certain rural poor Lebanese villages, which were under Syrian occupation and/or neglected by central governmental plans that have concentrated its effort in the last decade or so on the Beirut area (the capital) and part of Mount Lebanon. Such villages are still ignored by national and international organizations.

Common strengths and weaknesses of CLCs in conducting their activities are listed in Table 15. Detailed information for the individual CLCs researched can be found in the Lebanon CLC Research Report on the attached CD.

Table 15: Common Strengths and Weaknesses of CLC Activities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitment of management to the success of CLCs - Engagement of volunteers on levels that differ from one CLC to another - Evolution of work with time at the levels of management and human capacities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of strategic planning to guide the planning of the activities - Focus of CLCs to carry on the activities without seeking self development - Planning irrespective of evaluation results whenever carried on - Measure of success qualitative and not quantitative - Displacement of most people during winter (to big cities) which restricts activities to the summer seasons with few exceptions

Management

All CLCs are under the direct management of each relative NGO, cultural centre or municipality, i.e. there is neither separate focal management nor tailored methods for the supervision of CLCs' activities in light of (1) the initial goal of launching those centres and (2) their special prerequisites. That being said, CLC management varies widely from one place to another, and there does not seem to be any adherence to the general common managerial framework suggested by UNESCO (planning, supervision, conflict resolution, follow up, evaluation, and monitoring).⁸

⁸ UNESCO's Beirut office is planning to train CLC staff on management skills. The research took place before this training was conducted. Still, it is important to go back at a later period of time and to measure the impact of this training. In this sense, this research can serve as a baseline for measurement.

In Their Own Words: Lebanese Youth

Lebanon, being part of the developing world, is a demographically young country. The population (adjusted for under-enumeration) numbered 3.1 million persons in 1996. The youth population numbered 585,000 and thus accounted for just under 19 percent of the total population. The number of young persons is expected to continue to increase during the next twenty years and is projected to reach 628,000 in year 2006 and 714,200 in the year 2016. The relative importance of youth is projected to gradually decrease to just below 17 percent by the year 2011 and to 17.3 percent in the year 2016.[†]

"After a year of job hunting, I finally took a job as a sales representative for a pharmaceutical company. I went through four years of college, and have a business management degree, it seems a waste!"

Amal, 24 year old

"I have a Master's of Chemistry degree, but when I graduated there were no available posts, so I started to work with my father in the family business, and it looks like I shall continue to do so."

Iyad is one example of a Lebanese youth finding employment outside of his field of study, a trend that seems to be growing among the youth.

"We really don't get any career guidance before choosing a major in school, and there is no way of telling what is in demand in the job market. We end up with a useless degree, and have to take any job that is offered,"

Marianna, a hotel management graduate now working for a supermarket chain.

[†] Source: Lebanon: Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Social Affairs (unpublished data), 1997.

One notable strength at the managerial level relates to youth involvement in the centres. Youth participation is particularly encouraged at the administrative level and within the implementation of projects. The decision-making process, however, is most usually centralized and teamwork is often lacking. A few striking examples, categorized into Group 1 and 2 below, illustrate the differences.

Group 1

CLC Ein el Helwi and Rachidiyeh: Youth are actively involved all the time and are exposed and aware of all the planning and the projects. They participate in regular meetings and their role develops as their positive contribution and commitment.

CLC Houla: The management is quite traditional, and the youth are imposing themselves and their innovative ideas through their enthusiasm and productivity. Also, there seems to be openness in attempts to assess own needs, acceptance of weaknesses, and demand for internal capacity-building.

Group 2

CLC Blida: This is a one-woman show, where board members are not involved or aware of anything, except being involved in the activity once the funding is there.

CLC Rachidiyeh: The management gives an impression of over self-confidence in managing the CLC and supervision of activities.

CLC Hibarieyh: It is a one-man show on the level of general planning. There is an absence of strategic thinking, needs assessment, programme evaluation and sharing of information related to CLC activities and recurrent problems. After two years of starting in Hibarieyh, there remains no organization chart that defines responsibilities and job description for the members. It is important to note that there are not even regular meetings to plan or evaluate activities. This said, an encouraging point is the commitment of Hibarieyh CLC's volunteers to develop the CLC even though most of them reside in the capital.

Policy Linkages

Many points were found to be common among the centres, especially the high level of enthusiasm and commitment of the management and volunteers who appreciate the opportunity offered by the CLC in the development of their communities. Unfortunately, not all the community groups share that vision, especially on the level of municipalities and dominant political parties. A remarkable example is the municipality of Hibarieyh, which signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UNESCO and the Jouzour NGO that defines the responsibility of the current council in hosting, running and supporting the CLC.

The Hibarieyh CLC is located in a municipality office, and is equipped with PCs donated by UNESCO. The main problems as described by members of Jouzour were confirmed upon a visit to the centre, and were enhanced by the lack of co-operation received. For instance, there is a restriction on entry to the room which is dedicated to the centre, since it has access to the offices of the municipality. Although this room has an independent exit/entrance, the municipality did not do the necessary blocking of the common access to give independent entry/exit to the CLC. This is greatly affecting the CLC's activities, since they have to be planned according to the municipal council agenda. Also, the credibility of the centre is affected, since sometimes the activities would be interrupted by members of the council for one reason or another. Finally, the municipality has not demonstrated a developmental vision, which has resulted in the CLC not getting enough support to play a more active role in educating the people, create cultural activities, or improve the quality of life of Habariyeh's citizens. What balances this hindrance might be the municipality's co-operation with local NGOs which are operating in Hibarieyh village.

The main policy linkages shared by CLCs is their co-operation with the Ministry of Education, which provides support once contacted. This support has thus far been restricted to providing space and facilities for activities (mainly summer camps). Similar support may come from the Ministry of Tourism, which has been the case in Hibarieyh and Houla.

Co-operation with dominant political parties, whether in the Lebanese villages or the Palestinian camps, is also a necessity for all the centres in order to mobilize support for their smooth operation. What differs is the way this issue is addressed. In Houla for instance, there is a lack of horizon for new and continuous co-operation. Their outreach, for instance, has always depended on personal contacts.

The outreach, though promoted in a very primitive way (announcing activities through public microphones), is increasing as time goes by and is granting the CLCs more experience in running their activities. Despite these efforts, however, the provision of participation allowances that some CLCs offer may have more influence on participation levels than do outreach activities.

Finally, although the CLCs could have a direct influence on the schooling systems by introducing new methods of education to the curriculum and promoting active participation and non-conventional teaching, none of the CLCs seems to be empowered at this stage to even think of it. It is important to note that the whole project has been running for only two years, and there is still a major lack in planning and identifying objectives. While some CLCs are very underdeveloped (like Blida), others are very ambitious (like Houla and Baalbak).

Impact/Outcomes

It is hard to measure the impact of activities that have been planned and conducted with a complete absence of defined objectives and institutional vision. Even if there were outcomes, their impact and profitability would be limited, short-term, and ineffective in achieving community development through educational capacity-building in the real sense of the word. Therefore, what is meant by the impact that would be discussed in this section is hardly a sustainable effect that could be accumulated to lead to actual progress. The following recommendations focus on this point, since it is a basic need for the better functioning and influence of the CLCs.

In general, and since all the CLCs conducted the computer training courses, one important outcome of CLC activity has been the development of a basic computer-literate generation in these target underdeveloped areas that have largely been disregarded by policy makers. Nonetheless, the impact is limited for many reasons:

1. The computers were not always functional in some centres, a problem that created delay in delivery of substantive education and distracted the students.
2. The continuous disruption of electricity affected the participants getting sufficient practical training.
3. Most of the computer activities were conducted during the summer, when the participants tend to travel frequently, thereby interrupting their class attendance.
4. After the courses, the students do not have access to computers for their own practice and development. The CLCs are not prepared yet to provide such an opportunity.

In regard to the summer camp activities, outcomes and impacts are noticeable. The centre volunteers attend informative courses and skill-building workshops. They then put their new skills immediately into practice through the CLC activities. Likewise, during the summer, CLC activities cater to children's participatory involvement. They learn concepts to enhance the quality and perception of their lives, and their relation to the environment. These children, who live in places that lack resources for guided educational fun, have a chance to enjoy recreation as well as education - a fact that will be essential to their growth and commitment to their own development and to that of their community. The impact of outcome will be more obvious with time. For now, it is noted that the CLCs have built a connection with the children who, as a result of these positive experiences, will be more likely to join future CLC activities.

The vocational training courses were more successful in some places than others, in terms of impact. The outcome was common: all participants learned the basis for a new vocation. Yet, since there was neither access to funding opportunities (small credits) nor a market that could absorb the trainees, the vocational training did not lead to its initial objective. In many CLCs, there was a more significant reason for the shortcoming, mainly because there was lack of creativity in promoting new vocations and a lack of effort/absence of know-how to place trainees by CLC management.

Handicraft activities created self-fulfillment for the women who attended these courses in Blida. It was a good way to engage them in the centre and increase their interest.

Internet access (19 subscribers per 1,000 population in 2000 and only just over 5,000 individual hosts) runs along lines dividing the educated from the illiterate, men from women, rich from poor, young from old, and urban from rural. ICT has created a new divide, accentuating the socio-economic one, separating the connected from the disconnected, and generating two parallel and uneven communication systems. Lebanese data concerning its internal digital divide are very limited, and the issue itself has not yet been fully addressed by the authorities.

Also, there were many cultural or informative seminars. These created a positive dynamic in the societies, especially among volunteers. They also had a good impact on increasing community members' knowledge of CLCs. In the case of Houla CLC, it was an opportunity for the people there to get involved in the centre.

The most significant direct impact recorded during the research was Ain El Helwi CLC's success in returning delinquents to their school (59 out of 105 participants). This has been done despite the attempts of some political powers to hinder these centres, such as in the cases of Blida and Ain el Helwi, where direct money is given to attend another activity and ignore the CLC.

Major Findings

Following the end of the field research and writing of the first draft, all of the CLCs visited were invited to a workshop on 20 October 2005 in Beirut, where results of the research were discussed. In brief, the following is a list of the major findings:

1. Active and enthusiastic youth participation and involvement accounts for the popularity of many CLC programmes.
2. There is an absence or shortfall in strategic planning.
3. Funding is often dependent on international NGOs and personal donations. Very few have been organizing events and lobbying to get support.
4. CLCs suffer from lack of resources (financial, expertise, office equipment).

5. Lack of fund-raising creativity and know-how is common
6. There is inadequate gender representation on the management level (except for Blida, where only women are part of the exclusive committee; nonetheless, they target men as much as women to participate in their activities. This had a good response from the people.).
7. Some activities harbor non-realistic goals (Houla).
8. CLCs increase awareness, acceptance and adoption of participatory approaches (Ain el Helwi and Baalbak).
9. Participants become volunteers in Houla and Baalkak.
10. CLCs created a group dynamic that is new and appreciated by most people once elaborated.
11. Transportation problems influence people's ability and/or willingness to come from neighbouring places, as well as their regular commitment to meetings and work during implementation of activities.
12. Engaging people on the levels of education and development.

A summary of the findings was distributed to participants and they were invited to provide their comments, which produced the following advice:

- Pay attention to the cultural differences between South-East Asia and Lebanon (and other Arab countries) when structuring CLC programming;
- Organize capacity-building training based on needs assessment and a good market study;
- Give attention to diversifying the quality and quantity of support between rural areas and cities;
- Provide support for CLCs to establish and maintain internet connectivity;
- Address availability of funding; fund-raising projects led by NGOs only cover a small part of what is needed; and
- Give assistance to establish networking among various development agencies.

Workshop participants also identified the following training needs:

- Decision-making skills and tools
- Programming/planning skills and tools
- Non-formal education skills and tools
- Vocational training
- Strategic planning and analysis
- Communication skills

At the end, participants expressed their satisfaction with the research findings and the participatory process that followed.

Recommendations

Lebanon has the lowest illiteracy rate in the region. Nevertheless, the remaining illiterates constitute a heavy burden: out of a total population of 3.2 million, 345,000 people are illiterate, of which 32,000 ranged in age from 10-24 years old in 1996. A national illiteracy eradication campaign that involves both governmental and non-governmental bodies, and which is reinforced through CLCs, would be helpful - especially in remote and disadvantaged areas.

Further recommendations focus on building CLC management capacity. This could be achieved through prioritizing the needs for each centre or for a group of centres located around an area. Once the priorities are clear and agreed upon with the centres, the following capacity-building courses are recommended for CLC managers, staff and volunteers:

- Strategic planning (needs assessment, planning, budgeting)
- Fund-raising
- Team-building skills
- Leadership and participation
- Evaluation and monitoring

- Conflict management
- Community mobilization
- Internal governance

In addition to these courses, CLCs should be provided with newly developed machines and basic tools to promote active training such as LCDs, TVs, videos and photocopy machines.

Unreliable electricity service affects the country as a whole. Yet the places where there is much poverty and underdevelopment cannot afford to waste time waiting for electricity. Either through fund-raising or sponsorship, CLCs are advised to seek the necessary funds or in-kind contribution to acquire generators or identify alternative energy resources.

An interesting method adopted by all the centres to promote their activities is the use of a public microphone, which is often employed to make announcements as CLC staff drive through the community service area. While this method offers the capacity for good local outreach, it is important to develop new ways of informing the public about CLC activities and of building a systematic way of inviting public participation.

Each centre has its own strengths and weaknesses. It is important to note that the CLCs are to be encouraged to re-consider seriously and vigorously their decision-making and decision-taking processes. Local community members and volunteers should play a major role in this process, especially during the planning phases.

As a general assessment, it is unfortunate that the centres have not been playing an effective role yet, but the young age of the centres is to their advantage. Indeed, with serious effort and access to funds for CLCs (which are already rich in human resources and commitment to developing their local communities), CLCs could play a much larger role in Lebanon's development.



Introduction

Generally, a community learning centre is perceived as a local educational institution or a learning centre outside the formal education system, which is usually established and managed by the local people in villages or in urban areas, with the aim to help deprived people bring about qualitative changes in their lives. The innovations of the CLC have, in a way, opened up a new avenue for deprived, disadvantaged and marginalized people to learn to be creative, analytical and productive, and also to follow their own choices and make their own decisions. The frontier of the CLC is progressively advancing because it is essentially oriented towards empowering individuals and fostering community development. When we speak of empowerment, we are particularly concerned with the task of redeeming downtrodden and destitute people from appalling conditions that are caused by oppression and exploitation in various spheres of life – political, social, economic and cultural. In this context, CLCs can perform a very wide range of tasks. A CLC can serve as a crucial forum to energize discourse on human rights and democracy, as a useful platform to probe into social evils, cultural domination and health hazards such as HIV/AIDS, and as a centre for conducting both formal and non-formal education activities. It can also serve as a venue for parents to discuss the ways and means of their children's education, as a workplace for productive skills training and as a community meeting place to focus on community development issues. It can also be used as a centre for mothers' groups to reflect on gender issues and women's problems and for carrying out economic activities like opening savings accounts and obtaining micro-credit. At present, we can visualize a strong drive for the qualitative and quantitative promotion of CLCs in the international arena.

In Nepal, CLCs are gradually coming into existence at the initiative of the government, NGOs and UNESCO Kathmandu. There are 91 CLCs now in operation throughout the country. They are located mostly in rural areas. Although the popularity of CLCs seems to be growing, a clear understanding of the CLC concept among the people still has not taken a firm hold.

Despite the problem of inconsistency among stakeholders in the understanding of the concept of the CLC, it is gaining wider currency in Nepal. The Tenth Plan of Nepal (2002-2007) has accepted CLCs as effective and locally sustainable institutions for continuing education. The Plan envisages using the physical facilities of local primary schools to meet the need for opening a large number of CLCs. The target is to establish 205 CLCs by 2007. The Plan also states that local bodies will be entrusted with the job of running CLCs. Similarly, the Education for All (2004-2009) Core Document has underlined the importance of CLCs as an alternative strategy for the expanded operation of learning activities for empowerment. The document also reiterates the Tenth Plan's emphasis on expanding the number of CLCs, with more impetus on promoting coordination between CLCs and various other development organizations working at the local level.

Mentioning CLCs in the Tenth Plan and in the Core Document is an indication that the Government of Nepal has recognized CLCs as an effective means of localized learning. However, government authorities have not addressed the critical need to frame a comprehensive national CLC policy. This lacuna has deprived CLCs of having a national legal framework, and stands as a major impediment to the institutionalization of CLCs.

Nevertheless, we can say that the value of CLCs is being increasingly recognized by the people. Important concerns have been pinpointed in relation to creating CLC structure and management frameworks, formulating needs-based empowering programmes and introducing learner-centred methods. Similarly, voices have been raised in favour of identifying avenues for establishing linkages and expanding networks with various development partners, stressing the crucial role of the people in the entire CLC operation and placing emphasis on mainstreaming CLCs into the development initiatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations. However, considerable efforts are needed to have these concerns and voices become a reality. Additional efforts also need to be made in order to narrow down the "impact gap" between what CLCs could have contributed and what they are contributing now.

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Profile of the Research Study

The main objective of this study was to assess the existing status of CLCs and also to examine their outcomes and impact. The results of the study are expected to contribute to further improving CLCs' operational strategies and to identifying ways for promoting institutionalization for sustaining CLCs within the framework of the EFA action plan. The specific objectives of the study were:

- To assess CLCs' standing with specific focus on their strengths, weaknesses and prospects.
- To examine the management aspects of CLCs specifically with respect to expansion, sustainability, networking and linkages with other development agencies.
- To share the initial results of the study at a regional forum in order to identify key issues and visualize effective strategies for future actions at the regional, national and even grassroots level.

In keeping with the objectives, the study was meant to assess the CLCs' place in the existing context. Basically, the intent was to highlight how effectively CLCs have been able to improve literacy and other human development skills. In addition, the entire operational system of CLCs was analyzed, specifically with a focus on programme location, types of programmes, financial resources, nature and composition of beneficiaries, sponsors, and management system.

The study covered five CLCs, four from rural areas and one in an urban area. These CLCs were selected from the four development regions of the country. (The field research team could not travel to the Far Western Development Region because of the political turbulence there.) The research tools included in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Documents were reviewed to come up with ideas relevant for streamlining the future course of CLCs in Nepal.

Researchers from the Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERID) who had exposure to CLCs in Nepal were involved in the study. A research advisory committee consisting of five members was formed. CERID's executive director presided over the committee. Of the other four members, three were from outside, one each from the Non-formal Education Centre (NEC/HMG), UNESCO Kathmandu and the National Resource Centre for Non-formal Education (NRC-NFE), respectively, and the remaining member was CERID's senior researcher, who acted as the study's coordinator.

Basically, the study was carried out using qualitative methods. Since these methods require researchers to be insightful, perceptive, interactive and inquisitive, the senior CERID researchers conducted an intensive orientation programme for field researchers with a specific focus on making them aware of the techniques that are useful for collecting qualitative data.

For the study, two CLCs from Surkhet district in the Mid-Western Region, one from Rupandehi district in the Western Region, one from Kathmandu district in the Central Region and one from Jhapa district in the Eastern Region were selected. They used in-depth interviews and focus group discussions for collecting field data. Focus group discussions were conducted by involving CLC stakeholders, particularly participants and facilitators. For this activity, researchers framed discussion triggers in tune with the objectives of the study. They also designed a questionnaire form in order to collect policy-related ideas from top-level educational administrators and from a national-level NGO's chairperson.

Since needs-based programmes are regarded as having a higher utility value, the programmes implemented in the CLC study were generally based on identified needs. Nonetheless, other programmes prescribed by the District Education Office and donors managed to find their place in CLC activities. In this way, an integration of supply-driven and demand-driven programmes was found during the study.

Basically, the programmes implemented by the study CLCs were diverse. They included activities related to adult and women's literacy, out-of-school learning, childcare programmes, environment and sanitation, traditional music, first-aid, HIV/AIDS awareness-raising, and more commonly income-generating activities such as tailoring, bee-keeping, making pickles and bags, growing vegetables, raising goats, savings and credit.

Selection of participants was based on reaching out to the neediest groups of people, such as minority ethnic groups, the economically and educationally disadvantaged, *dalits* ("untouchables") and women. The main purpose of selecting this segment of society was to help them transform themselves from a wretched reality to a more humane one.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

For the purpose of the study, data were collected from various sources. Table 16 below provides details about the collection process.

Table 16: Data Collection Strategy by Source

Types of Sources	Number	Data Collection Strategies
Director of Department of Education	1	Interview
Chief of Non-Formal Education Centre, HMG	1	Interview
Chief and Deputy of National Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education Centre, HMG	2	Interview and discussion
Rupandehi and Kapilbastu Project Coordinator	1	Interview and discussion
DEO officials of different districts	3	Interview and discussion
Facilitators	5	Interview and discussion
CLC mobilizers	7	Interview and discussion
Mgt. committee chairperson	4	Interview and discussion
Community members	56	Focus group discussion (FGD)
CLC participants	78	FGD and interview
CLC sub-committee coordinators	2	Interview and discussion
Ex VDC/ward committee members	17	Interview and discussion
Key informants	17	Interview and discussion

Basically, the management approach for the operation of CLCs was of a traditional bureaucratic nature. A hierarchical structure, rather than a horizontal one, was the most common. Consequently, personalities at the top level appeared to be prominently in charge of operations at the study CLCs. The principle that CLCs should be steered by the people and for the people was not addressed in an impressive way.

The provision of capacity-building as an important aspect of the better management of CLCs was embedded in the management framework. The CLC stakeholders were given training and were also involved in skill-based learning activities in accordance with the nature of their roles and responsibilities. For instance, those with the responsibility of playing the leadership role were given training in building leadership skills and those with the responsibility of running CLC programmes were equipped with programme operation skills and strategies. Specific capacity-building experts were involved in each programme area.

The CLCs under study seem to have taken initiative in establishing relationships with various organizations, mainly with schools. They also endeavoured to get closer to the district education office, local administrative unit, NGOs and UNESCO. CLCs' good relationships with these organizations have benefited them in mobilizing resources, advancing academic programmes and conducting development activities such as planting tree saplings. However, efforts at creating functionally effective networks for further strengthening themselves seem to be rather lukewarm.

Within the given systemic provision, the CLCs under study have attempted to institutionalize themselves by making efforts to meet the minimum infrastructural needs, to build relationships with other development partners, and to inculcate feelings of ownership among primary stakeholders. Many other requirements that make for CLC sustainability, such as ensuring a permanent source of income, firm and dependable networking and a strong feeling of ownership among all the stakeholders, need to be duly addressed.

The Tenth Plan and the EFA Core Document include references to the need for increasing the number of CLCs in the country. What is lacking is a well-defined CLC policy with clear-cut accounts of CLCs' legal status. In fact, there is the assumption that mentioning the establishment of CLCs in a government document is sufficient for addressing CLC policy concerns. In practical terms, this is not at all adequate. In fact, policy statements need to reflect the overall concerns of CLCs, including the financial aspect.

CLC Turns Youth into Reputed Artist

Subarna Man Maharjan, age 23, completed his certificate level study. He is the only son of the family. He has three sisters. His father works as a gardener and two sisters are tailors. One sister works in Khasto. These are the only sources of their family's income.

Maharjan remembered that he was very much interested in playing the flute from his early childhood. He used to listen to flute playing even when he was young and wondered when he would be able to play this instrument. When he saw a stage show, he imagined when he would be able to perform in such a show. To learn flute playing, he bought a flute and tried to play it, but he could not. One day he heard from his friend that Tamsipakha CLC was going to start a training programme in traditional musical instruments. He immediately contacted the CLC and got admitted there as a trainee. The training was started from 2000 (Jan/Feb). Along with the flute, he received training in several other traditional instruments such as Madal, Dhime Baja and so forth, but the emphasis was on flute playing.

After one year's training, Maharjan found himself able to play the flute. He organized a musical group and started to appear in stage shows. In 2001, he and his group took part in charity shows at the Royal Academic Hall and National Theater for Victims of AIDS/HIV, the reconstruction of a Buddhist monastery and other causes. He has also performed on the TV programme "Our Kathmandu." The group traveled to a few other districts such as Kaski, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur to put on stage shows. He appeared in many such shows. Since then, his group has been playing the traditional Newari music for Newari marriage ceremonies on the occasion of bringing the bride from her home to the groom's home.

Maharjan stated that the flute-playing job enabled him to supplement his family income. He made a fairly good living from it. He thought that the CLC had enabled him to live such a prestigious life. Now he is established and recognized as a reputed artist in the community. As he and his group were invited to other parts of the country, Maharjan considered himself a national artist. At first, the family members did not like his activities. But now they all support him. He acknowledged that all these events occurred with the help of the CLC. However, he has doubts that the current insurgency will enable the CLC to flourish along with all its activities.

Impact/Outcomes

In regard to the outcomes and impacts of CLCs, participants had positive opinions. They felt that they gained what they had expected from the CLC programmes.

During the focus group discussion, participants who had taken part in income-generating activities and learner-generated materials development stated that not only were they able to read simple messages and some items from the newspapers, but they could also earn something as a result of the women's income-generating programme. Consequently, they had become members of the savings and credit programme.

In addition, the CLC helped raise local community awareness of public health and environmental concerns.

Some young people who wanted to learn to play musical instruments joined a CLC in Kathmandu for about a year and a half. After completing the training course, they formed the Paleswan Cultural Group and performed in Kathmandu and Kaski. They were also invited to perform at some marriage ceremonies. These youth were very pleased to receive twin benefits: First, they were able to become musicians according to their expectations, and second, they found themselves engaged in the preservation of their (Newari) cultural heritage. These achievements, they said, changed the very stereotypical perceptions of their neighbours and friends. Now they are shown respect. They are looked upon as artists par excellence in their community. They earned some money and supplemented the incomes of their families, which obviated the need for being dependents of their parents. Further, they supported the local CLC, their alma mater, by apportioning to it 10 percent of their income.

The ladies who joined a CLC to learn tailoring were also very happy from the CLC's contribution. They believed that they gained much more than what they had expected before joining the CLC programme. They not only acquired the necessary skills, but also enjoyed the environment that always supported them in doing something useful. These ladies learned how to make school uniforms. The CLC entered into a contract with the nearby schools for making school uniforms, in which the trained ladies were duly employed. Now the ladies give 10 percent of their income to the CLC.

The ladies felt that their family members were happy when they wore the uniforms they made. Thus, they were able to save what would have been spent on tailoring charges. The ladies were also able to supplement the incomes of their families and, thus, felt that they were becoming self-reliant. They stated that they shared with their friends and neighbours the benefits they obtained, and encouraged them to join the CLC. Participants of the programme now visit their children's schools to pay fees and receive progress reports, find their way around unfamiliar buildings, and guide the children in their studies. These participants were also able to pick up some simple English. Some of them set up small shops, others joined the public service. Some of them continued their association with the CLC by taking part in skills training such as tailoring.

CLC Helps a Natuwa Child to Attend School

Pappu Natuwa, aged 11, was born in a poor family. There were 13 members in his family. No one in his family was even enrolled at school. In fact, the Natuwas (one of the indigenous peoples of Nepal) are illiterate. Not only his family, but other Natuwa families also do not send their children to school. Natuwa people own no land even if they live in the countryside. They live by begging, street dancing, and catching snakes and tortoises. They catch snakes and hold snake shows in the market. Pappu Natuwa was the first child to go to school after joining an out-of-school programme (OSP) at a CLC.

When he completed OSP II, the OSP teacher, Project Director of the R and K project, and supervisor of Madhubani CLC helped him join the school. Now he is currently studying in Grade III. He reported that he likes to study; otherwise, he would be just as other Natuwas. He does not like what other Natuwas do. He wants to be a teacher.

As the project staff encouraged him by providing a scholarship, he joined the OSP class. He stated that he liked the class because of the facilitator. His family members also realized the value of education. The family members told him "*Padhena bhane hamile jastai magera khanu parcha, teshaila timilai padhaunchhaun*". If you do not go to school, you will have to live by begging as we do. This explains why we are determined to let you get on with your studies. He continued his study even though the children of other caste groups teased and bad-mouthed him. He often felt rather shy. He also added that there were many children of the lower caste group in the community who did not attend school. They should get the opportunity to study either in OSP classes or in the primary school with all the necessary support and encouragement. The community people for the first time saw that a Natuwa was attending school. As the Natuwa children started to go to school, the community people sensed that this would certainly bring about a welcome change in their community. Now they send their children to OSP classes and subsequently on to public schools.

In one of the study CLCs outside Kathmandu, local people used to work in a brick factory as wage labourers. The CLC helped the community people to acquire skills in vegetable farming and in other income-generating activities. These people now have started their own vegetable gardens. They also learned how to use pesticides and insecticides.

Researchers also observed that the CLC helped empower Muslim women. Muslim women usually do not participate in gatherings and do not speak with outsiders. The CLC motivated them to take part in the community meetings.

Basically, women participants got some ideas about cleanliness and environmental awareness, and also tried to ban the use of alcohol in the community. They also got involved in planting, the cleanliness campaign, the construction of toilets and the regulation of stray cattle, among other activities. CLC participants encouraged dropouts to return to school. They also explored ways to obtain scholarships for the poor, developed the concept of compulsory education, and discussed the concept with the village education committee (VEC) for implementation.

Some of the groups, especially women, collected up to Rs. 75,000. A schoolteacher interviewed said that this money increased the status of the groups, and that it would eventually help them make decisions and develop a sense of self-reliance. CLCs further provided the basis of a livelihood for women and the disadvantaged. Group members received loans and took up activities such as petty trade, vegetable gardening, or goat raising. They were also able to increase their incomes. In this way, too, CLCs promoted a culture of teamwork.

Table 17: CLC Programme Achievements in Nepal

Types of Programmes	No. of Participants	Achievement(s)
Women's literacy class	240	Achieved literacy skills and some basic knowledge
Post literacy	300	Acquired reading, writing and simple numerical knowledge
Adult education	631	Achieved literacy skills and some basic knowledge
Functional literacy	15	Achieved literacy skills and knowledge of agriculture and animal husbandry
Out of school programme 1 and 2	627	Became eligible to attend formal schools
Environmental sanitation and planting	Community people	Became knowledgeable and used uncultivated land for cultivation
Quiz contest	22	Helped to boost cognitive development
Coordination meeting	Local government, NGOs, INGOs and community	Initiatives taken to work out coordination and networking mechanisms
Savings and credit	42 (groups)	Helped to generate resources and mobilize funds
Fabric painting training	15	Acquired fabric painting skills
Community library	4	Provided opportunity for continuous learning
Early childhood development	20	Focused on all-round development of children
Coaching class for 8th and 10th grade girls	60	Helped to improve their learning
Newari learning materials	Community people	Helped to conserve language and art
Publication of CLC magazine	3	Contributed to dissemination of information
Educational tour	CLC personnel and community	Gained experiences
Awareness of HIV/AIDS	120	Raised awareness
Women's empowerment, women's legal rights/advocacy	165	Raised awareness
Other short-term training on group formation, instructional materials preparation, planning, savings/credit, bee keeping, veg. farming, non-formal education, women's empowerment, solid waste mgt., mushroom farming, ECD programme, Newari script, music, TV/computer maintenance, etc.	985	Contributed to fostering knowledge and skills for having a better quality of life

Major Findings

The major findings of the study are as follows:

- The Government of Nepal, in recognition of the importance of CLCs, has laid down as a policy matter in its Tenth Plan the establishment of 205 CLCs, one each in the country's 205 constituencies. In addition,

Mrs. Rajak's Dream Turns into Reality

Mrs. Tara Rajak, who belongs to a disadvantaged community in Kathmandu valley, has been working as a security guard at the Hanuman Dhoka Museum. She has a husband and four children. The husband works as a driver. Her two daughters go to school.

She remembers now that she could not attend school as a child because her parents did not allow her to go to school even though she had a very strong will to study. When she grew up she got married. She also got a messenger's job. One day, one of the non-Nepali officers ordered her to bring a taxi, but she could not understand what the officer said. She just nodded her head as if she understood it. She failed to bring a taxi. Then the officer started to furiously throw things at her. Further, the officer dismissed her from the job. She was shocked and felt that all this was due to her poor understanding. She said that this event compelled her to study, and she joined a literacy class. But during the political events in 1990, the class was suspended and she could not continue her study. After 12 years she joined the Tamsipakha CLC to attend a literacy class.

After completing the literacy programme, she was able to identify the folio where her name was written and put her signature there. She could fill out the forms asking for leave, and she helped her friends in filling these forms. She was able to record the temperature by looking at the thermometer, she went by herself to pay the water, telephone and electricity bills, she checked the home assignments of her husband and of her office, and went to the post office for mail.

Rajak now feels fulfilled in her life. She confidently talks with others. She thinks that her capability has increased. She remembered one memorable day when the CLC arranged a study tour to the Chhauni Museum. She was declared first in the group and got a prize because she correctly read and wrote the names of the materials they saw there. She continued to attend literacy programmes and learnt some simple English. She said she was so happy that she could read the hoarding boards, bus route numbers, and other messages written in simple English. The CLC programme changed her life, she said.

the national EFA document has reiterated the plan to advance CLC activities in the country. However, a comprehensive national policy that clarifies the Government's financial commitment, the consolidated form of a CLC structure, and its legal framework has not been worked out and made public.

- CLCs have operated under a certain management structure which, in spite of the claim to be stakeholder-centred, appears to be hierarchical in nature, characterized by a maze of bureaucratic norms, and predominantly controlled by a few influential people. The principle that the management of CLCs has to evolve from the grassroots level has been followed more as an exception than as a rule. In fact, CLCs are operated mostly in terms of the cascade model and, as such, the implementation of a decentralized management system has not gained a firm hold.
- The CLC concept is not very clear among stakeholders. No strong initiatives seem to have been taken by government authorities or even by sponsors to disseminate the CLC approach extensively and with clarity. As a consequence, the stakeholders have their own way of understanding CLCs. For example, if a CLC is sponsored by UNESCO, stakeholders think it is another UNESCO office.
- Needs assessment is the major step taken to determine the type of programmes to be carried out by CLCs. However, it is not clear how needs assessments are conducted. The relevance of programmes developed on the basis of needs identified at one point in time is often questioned because it is presumed that change in time will require making corresponding changes in the programmes.
- Generally, literacy and income-generating activities have been put into operation in a traditional system. Even if these programmes have brought some economic and educational gains to the participants, they do not seem to be quite effective in bringing about social transformation in an impressive manner. Programmes that contribute to unleashing human potential to the maximum extent have yet to evolve. Interestingly, in one of the CLCs under study, the revival of the traditional orchestra has brought about promising results. For example, the trained musicians are preserving cultural heritage as well as earning more income because of people's enthusiasm for this orchestra regardless of its cost. Other CLCs have not yet come up with such a contextually relevant programme.

- For the operation of CLC activities, CLCs have involved facilitators and, in some cases, motivators and/or people skilled in social mobilization. Most of the facilitators hold secondary education-level qualifications, which seems rather inadequate considering the nature and importance of the programmes run by the CLCs.
- There is a provision made for capacity-building not only of the participants, but also of the facilitators and other personnel. However, the scope of capacity-building is limited to short-term training and orientation programmes only. Follow-up training programmes are hardly in place. The involvement of local and district-level experts and technical personnel on a regular basis to upgrade the knowledge and skills of CLC personnel does not yet appear to be accepted as a priority.
- CLCs are dependent financially on sponsors. Once funds stop coming, CLCs will cease to function. CLCs do not seem to have any plans to meet financial needs when outside support is stopped. Similarly, activities that have the potential for generating funds do not seem to have been unleashed, except in the case of Tamsipakha, where the trained orchestra players of this CLC now donate 10 percent of their earnings to the CLC.
- Envisioning CLCs as a potential development arm of village development centres (VDCs) is lacking. VDC development funds are used either through local community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs or through the VDC employees. The prospect of making financial support available to CLCs from VDCs has not been explored on a large scale.
- There are various NGOs, CBOs and other development actors at the CLC locations. The CLCs under study have established relationships with them for their support to conduct training and obtain material resources or expert services, to some extent. However, they have lagged behind in consolidating their relationships into strong bonds and expanding these linkages eventually towards building sound networks.
- The CLCs' concern for their sustainability seems to be growing by degrees. Those without necessary infrastructure have started to buy the land. Others with infrastructural facilities have moved ahead to build more functional structures and to explore essential resources. However, the key to sustainability lies in the stakeholders' feeling of ownership, which is tenuous because they have agreed to get involved in CLCs at the urging of sponsors and not because of their own feelings of affinity.

Recommendations

While the three main CLC actors – UNESCO Kathmandu, NFEC/HMG and NRC-NFE – work towards the same goal of promoting CLCs as an effective mechanism for the empowerment of deprived and destitute people, surprisingly their approaches differ distinctly. Resource-starved NFEC/HMG cannot afford to make available even a modest venue for CLC activities, whereas the resource-privileged NRC-NFE is able to construct concrete buildings to accommodate CLCs. On the other hand, UNESCO provides a handsome amount of funding to run CLCs under its jurisdiction.

This discrepancy has confused the local people regarding the concept, management and operation of CLCs. As a result, the very spirit of CLCs as community-energized institutions cannot flourish significantly. The main cause for this situation is the lack of a comprehensive national CLC policy. In the absence of such a policy, it is not possible to develop either a regulatory structure or a legal structure, and without these two critical elements it becomes difficult to streamline CLCs to get desired results. As a matter of fact, there is even confusion about the legal status of CLCs. Some CLCs are registered as NGOs, while others only function under ad hoc committees. The current disarray in the CLC system in Nepal can be ascribed to a lack of concrete CLC policy; giving incidental reference to it in the National Development Plan and in the EFA document will not suffice.

This deficiency in CLC policy should be dealt with by constituting a national-level policy coordination body with representation from the civil society, NGOs, INGOs, academic institutions, and the government development ministries. This larger body can be expected to reflect on the existing reality, envision a future course in light of emerging international trends and formulate relevant CLC policies.

Once such policies exist, the present confusing condition of CLCs can be corrected in conformity with some commonly agreed parameters. These would include a community-initiated management system, priority towards building effective networks, CLCs as VDC development arms, community-based monitoring

systems, needs-based activities, the involvement of people whose needs are genuine as CLC participants, and shared resource management. Making these parameters operational will essentially bring about a harmony in the heterogeneity of CLCs at present and strengthen them to emerge as part of an effective national programme.

The traditional bureaucratic approach, which seems to have been applied more often than not in the management of CLCs, has led local stakeholders to adopt a hierarchical system for making decisions about CLC affairs. This situation has constricted the stakeholders' role in taking free and uninhibited part in the management of CLCs. It is equally important to note that a prescriptive management approach acts as a stumbling block that restricts the free flow of ideas from the grassroots level in evolving a localized management system. Therefore, in place of an elitist-biased management approach, the local stakeholders should be given enough leeway so that they can backstop the CLC programmes with a clear conscience in the task of coming up with the management approach that best suits them.

The importance of CLCs as an instrument to empower community people has been well recognized. To activate this tool in a positive manner, the involvement of mature and qualified as well as trained persons as facilitators, change agents or critical role-players is a must. But the reality today is just the contrary. The employment of mere high school graduates as critical role-players or as facilitators from whom we expect impressive results is asking too much. This will only amount to paying scant regard to the real value of CLCs, and will essentially widen the gulf between the spirit and the actual delivery of CLCs. If CLCs are to be advanced as a national programme for empowerment, it is essential to strike a balance between what they are purported to be and what they actually do. Synchronization between CLC spirit and actions must always be ensured.

The financing of CLCs in Nepal seems to have been taken care of largely by the sponsors. However, they have not guaranteed continued financial support to the CLCs under their jurisdiction. As a result, once they stop funding, the CLCs will cease to function. There were various such instances in this study. Since financial indemnity is critical for the sustainability of CLCs, it is essential to liberate them from this dependency syndrome. It does not mean, however, that they should reject outside financial assistance in a blanket way. The need is to cultivate ways in the local context itself that can generate resources on an on-going basis. One example in this respect may be the operation of income-generating activities based on local resources and skills. In the Humla district, where medicinal herbs are plentifully found, CLC activities focused on herb processing and purifying to bring about good monetary returns. Such possibilities need to be explored in all of the varying CLC contexts.

The idea suggested above raises the concern about the types of activities that will be pertinent in a given CLC context. Usually it is claimed that the CLC activities are determined on the basis of needs assessment. Needs assessment conducted at one point of time in the past is considered complete for all time regardless of the structural changes that might be taking place. As a result, CLC activities seem stereotyped and out of sync with local requirements, and impressive results from them will simply be wishful thinking. Therefore, a critical assessment of the reality to achieve advancement of CLC programmes will be crucial in order to ensure harmony between needs and programme activities.

The potential strength of CLCs does not seem to have been realized because the importance of their association with other development partners has not been given much emphasis. In Nepal's CLC context, as is evident from the observation of CLC locations that numerous development organizations are involved in various community development activities. In fact, these organizations bring with them resources, skills and ideas. On the other hand, CLC initiatives in finding ways to utilize them are not vigorous enough to enable them to contribute enormously to community empowerment. Actually, their leisurely pace in forging linkages and eventually building networks with development organizations working in their localities has cost them their strength. Therefore, in considering the potential growth of CLC delivery capability through expanding linkages and networking, CLCs need assistance and encouragement in making the right connections with other institutions, agencies and organizations.



THAILAND*

Introduction

Since community learning centres were launched in 2000 with support from UNESCO APPEAL and the United Nations Development Programme, there have been two categories of CLCs in Thailand: centres organized and operated by local people, and centres organized and run by local people, but with some government support.

After five years of operation, CLCs have grown strongly and rapidly with different backgrounds, forms and activities. There are currently about 8,057 CLCs supported by the Office of the Non-formal Education Commission (ONFEC) in all 76 of the country's provinces (ONFEC, 2005.) These CLCs are located in six areas:

- 1,665 CLCs in the northern region
- 3,325 CLCs in the northeastern region
- 1,152 CLCs in the central region
- 1,127 CLCs in the southern region
- 490 CLCs in the western region
- 298 CLCs in metropolitan Bangkok

No data nor empirical studies on CLCs operated by local people, are available. Taked some CLCs supported by the state were originally established and run by local people, but then the state came and took over the CLCs mainly because of their limited resources.

CLCs' main activities vary according to the readiness and context of each locality. Functions are determined based on local problems and needs. The main activities are related to basic literacy and other development activities. Some activities focus on developing occupational skills and increasing knowledge of agricultural practices. Others are part of quality of life programmes, such as health promotion, HIV/AIDS prevention or preserving the local wisdom of elders and developing the relationship between the new generation and the elderly.

The main activities implemented at Thailand's CLCs are as follows:

Education and literacy: functional literacy; basic education; non-formal education focused on adult learning; and promotion of lifelong learning

Training: income-generating programmes and skills training; quality of life programme training; health and sanitation, health promotion programmes; camping for democracy training; camping for environmental conservation training; ICT training

Community and cultural development: local and traditional activities development; enhancing local wisdom and working with older persons; community development projects; poverty alleviation

Coordination and networking: coordination and building up networks among GOs, NGOs and Pos; linking human resources and social capital at the local level; learning networks between academic institutions and the community; coordination of social groups inside and outside of the community

Profiles of the Research Study

The main objective of the research study was to evaluate CLC activities and disseminate them to Education for All (EFA) stakeholders in order to strengthen existing literacy and continuing education programmes and promote institutionalization of CLCs within the framework of EFA action plans. The specific objectives of the research study were:

- 1) To carry out joint research on existing CLCs to analyze the strengths, weaknesses and potentials as effective delivery mechanisms for lifelong learning activities, particularly literacy and continuing

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education programmes, including various management aspects of CLCs as well as expansion, sustainability and linkages with other community development sectors for empowerment.

- 2) To share the initial research findings at a regional forum in order to identify key issues and explore effective strategies for future actions at the regional, national and grassroots levels, which will become inputs for finalizing the research.
- 3) To disseminate the research findings and forum outcomes to EFA stakeholders at the policy, management and practitioner levels in participating countries and also to international donor agencies, in particular, at the EFA High-Level Group (HLG) Meeting of 2005, which focused on literacy.

The research team selected exceptional CLCs as centres of best practices, and evaluated the centres by means of observation, group discussion, and interviews (both group and individual). Choosing the most efficient CLCs did not take much time. There were various standards and indicators used as criteria, such as the ability to sustain itself, full participation and a sense of ownership, and efficiency and capacity in management at the local level.

The selection process was specifically based on the following criteria:

- Each CLC represents each region of the country.
- Each CLC is widely recognized both at local and national levels as a community learning centre demonstrating best practices.
- All of the selected centres provide various activities, such as basic literacy, income generation and vocational training to enhance skills and employment rates. These activities also often help rebuild human relationships among local people, especially elders.
- Each CLC is self-reliant and tries its best to develop activities continuously.
- Participation in running and managing activities at the centres is at a high level.
- The systems and structure of the centres are more accountable, flexible and adaptable than the centres supported by the state.
- Each CLC has characteristics specific to the local conditions and demands of people in that area.

The study selected four CLCs which had demonstrated potential from each region in Thailand. Each CLC has different strengths and weaknesses:

1. School of Inherited Wisdom, Chiang Mai Province (the northern region)
2. Chalerm Phrakiat Community Learning Centre, Tambon Mai Rieng, Chavang district, Nakorn Sri Thammarat Province (the southern region)
3. Isan Community School, Satuk district, Buriram Province (the northeastern region)
4. Community Learning Centre of Phuka Sub-district, Ban Mee district, Lopburi (the central region)

Analysis of CLC Experiences

School of Inherited Wisdom, Chiang Mai Province

The School of Inherited Wisdom (SIW) is a community learning centre established by a network of people who hope to preserve the rich culture of northern Thailand for the benefit of future generations. The group was formed in response to concerns that mainstream education does not place a special value on local culture and the development of young learners, and places excessive emphasis on competition and examinations. Furthermore, they sought to intervene in order to improve the lot of children with no opportunities to access the mainstream system owing to economic constraints.

At first, the group's activities were considered marginal from the point of view of mainstream education. Their programmes were mistakenly regarded as "inferior," despite the fact that it is widely understood that having a variety of types of learning in communities is desirable and appropriate. Learning can take place through the practice of one's career, or through resource persons in the community.

The learning process stems from culture transferred from senior members in the communities. This knowledge is accumulated through practice, and tacit knowledge that is based on mutual assistance. The sharing of knowledge is based on equality between "teachers" and "learners."

The study revealed the following observation:

- The CLC worked to revive local wisdom and culture.
- People of various groups and ages were connected together through cultural activities.
- Harmony was created among people of different races and cultural groups.
- Activities integrated career development, income generation, way of life, and culture.
- There was a strengthening of networking and linkages among various models/schools of formal and non-formal education.
- A partial tuition fee strengthened economic self-sufficiency.

Chalerm Phrakiat Community Learning Centre, Tambon Mai Rieng, Chavang District, Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province

Mai Rieng community dates back over 100 years. It is known as a self-reliant community due to its way of life and farm production that is closely linked to local resources. It has continuously developed its own human resources and promoted the concept of self-reliance to nearby communities, resulting in an integrated farming network. It also played an important role in enabling the self-reliance scheme to be incorporated as a national policy. Therefore, Mai Rieng community was chosen as a case study of a self-reliant CLC.

Due to natural disasters, the reduction in the price of rubber (the main product of the community), lower income and higher debts, local people had to cope with a number of problems. The centre was established as a response. Its learning activities are deeper, stronger and extensive because of the local wisdom of the leaders and the strong connections established by community networks. The community members set up “the Mai Rieng Council of the Leaders,” and created a master plan to develop their community. The learning process developed through various activities such as innovations by farmers in regard to growing their crops. As a result, rubber produced in Mai Rieng got higher prices in the market.

The study revealed the following observation:

- Career development and income-generating activities were highly integrated through a people’s network.
- Varied curricula were designed to fit the needs of individuals, groups, families, and communities.
- The Local Leader Development Curriculum was adopted, developed, and expanded throughout the country by the Open University.
- Well-planned and good management on the part of leaders was an important element of success.
- The younger generation is now well prepared to take leadership roles in the future.
- Learning experiences were summarized, managed, and prepared for outsiders to visit and learn from.

Isan Community School, Satuk District, Buriram Province

The lives of Isan people have evolved around rivers. The level of rainfall in this area is equal to that of other regions but the loamy, sandy soil is not ideal for holding water. Many areas are short of water in the dry season. People try to enrich the arid soil by using chemical fertilizer, which results in damaged soil. Unfavourable agricultural conditions cause labour migration to Bangkok and other big cities.

Community leaders and knowledgeable people have realized the problems and have joined together to find solutions. They have tried to come up with ways to integrate farming, production networks and self-reliance schemes.

The activities are inspired by His Majesty the King’s initiative, which emphasizes self-sufficiency and courtesy. Families meet their own basic requirements while implementing soil and water conservation at the same time. Under this concept, communities can work together to establish processing activities, organize marketing systems and eventually build a vast communication network.

Other activities promote northeastern folk wisdom mainly through meetings, training and seminars facilitated by various agencies. Resource personnel must travel extensively, and their knowledge and practices require careful implementation and follow-up. These activities receive financial support from the Social Investment Fund (SIF) for improving facilities and learning materials.

The creation of learning centres in the community has aroused greater interest in learning. Community learning centres are being presented as community colleges, which are common in developed countries. Unlike mainstream educational institutions, training is offered as a natural process and the language of teaching is easily understood. The focus is on common problems in which a group leader acts as a trainer and provides moral support to learners helping them to understand how to improve their situation.

The study revealed the following observation:

- The learning process focused on the self-sufficient community, self-realization of the impact of ecology on people, and the application of knowledge to everyday life.
- The CLC modified its activities according to knowledge obtained through the leaders' network.
- Knowledge of sustainable agriculture and diversified forestry was applied to field practice to find the best recommendations for national development planning.

Community Learning Centre of Phuka Sub-district, Ban Mee District, Lopburi

The Community Learning Centre of Phuka is in the heart of the village, where it is located in Satawaew Temple at Moo 2, Satawaew Village, Ban Mee district. It is next to the sub-district administrative office of Phuka, not far from Satawaew School, where there is a nursery centre and a sports field.

The Community Learning Centre of Phuka has been operating with the cooperation of the sub-district administration of Phuka (the main agency), the village committee and the head of the sub-district (*kamnaen*) as well as the head of the village (*phu yai baan*). This cooperation aims to mutually foster community development. Local forums have also taken place at the centre to enable villagers to exchange views.

The Phuka CLC not only offers space for activities such as vocational training, reading books, and obtaining local wisdom, but also has conference rooms provided for its own management and for other organizations. The centre has become the source of local information for members of the community.

The study revealed the following observation:

- CLC activities bonded people together.
- Seniors developed pride in themselves. The activities and their participation brought back their self-respect and connected them to the younger generation.
- Career development and income generation were integrated through CLC activities.
- Local administrators have become highly involved in and supportive of the CLC.

Major Findings

- Each CLC is diversified because of different social and cultural contexts, especially the thinking process and the level of people's participation. These different factors have an impact on the relationship of management, the quality of participation and also the sustainability of the CLC.
- People's participation is the main factor for ensuring sustainable development in the long run. The area of people's participation at the present time is highly related to vocational activities that increase family income, but CLCs that are not government-supported can participate and join together in many activities at a high level.
- The sustainable CLCs often integrate multi-purpose objectives: career development, income-generating activities, community development of various kinds, which are in response to the needs of various groups of people at different levels.
- Efficient curricula integrated varied objectives in the same activities: improving community literacy; providing learning experiences; enhancing sustainability and a self-sufficient community; enriching life skills; and training new leaders.
- The CLCs operated by local people are always short of financial resources, while the CLCs supported by the state always lack continuous support and co-operation from local people.

- Support from the state is always useful. The research found that successful support is support that assists or fulfills what people lack, not support with a set purpose that compels people to follow its directions.
- The CLCs operated by local people still need the state's help in developing curricula, strengthening management and facilities, and giving them a chance to share their experiences with others throughout the country. However, the state must form a partnership with the people.
- Leaders who can build up and link networks are one of the most important factors of successful CLCs. The more resources connected, the more successful CLCs are.
- Participation in the management of CLCs is always a major element. Management by a committee seems to be better than by a single leader.
- CLCs operated by local people seem to be more flexible and adaptable than those supported by the state.

Impact/Outcomes

- The learning process from group activities helps local people to understand social problems and raises their consciousness in making community plans. The plans that come from people themselves guarantee efficient results.
- Networking and strong linkages enable people to pursue continuous education to change themselves and to develop quality products. The boundary of education extends to enhance local wisdom and understand the human dignity of older people.
- CLCs' activities that involve both older people and youth not only revive the culture of local wisdom, but also reduce the gap between generations and create harmony among different groups of people in local communities.
- The positive outcomes show that young people have more social space and can extend their roles in CLC activities and community tasks, while older people build up their self-esteem.

Recommendations

- CLCs should not be solely operated by governmental sectors and should not have the same format for all regions/communities.
- Because the learning process varies with place and cultural context, the state should facilitate a review of CLCs and revise policies and actions so that the curricula cover all relevant aspects of life and living.
- Because the state has resources and connections at the national level, the state (especially ONFEC) should help CLCs to design a learning process to meet the needs of each individual community and effectively integrate the knowledge obtained from all learning units in such communities.
- Decision-making should be more decentralized to communities and local administrative organizations. Local people should have roles in and representation on CLC committees.
- For each community, potential individuals should be sought and promoted. In addition, elderly local intellectuals and scholars should be treated with respect.
- Extend CLCs into new areas such as factories, schools, religious places or the houses of local savants. The new alternative places could reduce costs and move closer to the people in the community. It should be the strategy for practitioners to reach as near as possible to the target groups in the community.
- Establish and improve mobile CLCs for accessing the at-risk and vulnerable groups in "reach out programmes." A future challenge is to discover new alternative models to access vulnerable groups. The heart of CLCs is not in their institutional buildings, but in the relationships between human beings, trusting each other and working together in partnership.
- Recruit young people to ensure that community work will continue in the future, not only for the long life of CLCs, but for sustainable community development, too.
- Give out awards to any CLC that functions efficiently. In addition, recognize outstanding students, instructors and CLC administrators.

- Each CLC should be responsible for its own standards.
- The authority for knowledge management should be delegated to the community and local administrative organizations. The standards for accounting, management and database systems should be properly set up to upgrade the quality and legitimacy of management.

Table 18: Activities of the Selected CLCs

ISSUES	Northern region School of Inherited Wisdom	Southern region Mai Rieng CLC	North - Eastern region Isan Community School	Central region CLC of Phuka sub-district
Concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established by a network of people who want to preserve the local culture and develop the relationship between older persons and the young students in the community - preserve the local cultural values and develop the indigenous knowledge for income generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-reliant CLC - established by community leaders to study and solve the problem of the low price of rubber - improve the quality of rubber to get a better position in market - participate in community council to create and develop community learning curriculum - enhance the capacity of human resources by various training programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established by community leaders in the northeastern area to provide non-formal education activities in response to the problems and needs of people at all age groups in the community - encourage the people to form groups and think together to find the solutions to actual problems and link networks for self-sustaining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established by the community to enhance basic education, informal education with the cooperation and support from the District Informal Education Office - an agent for knowledge demonstration, short course vocational training
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge management through diversified activities held by local instructors - Exchange of knowledge between instructors and students - Target group covers youths, teenagers and seniors both inside and outside the formal education system and both inside and outside the community - Linkages between people's notions and culture on the basis of community knowledge - Harmonization of different cultural groups and people of many different races - Integration of the formal and non-formal education systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The leaders brainstormed and discussed to make a community master plan to create a learning process and activities for the people. - Mai Rieng CLC's curriculum covers basic subjects, elective subjects in supporting community occupations and management skills such as law and accounting. - Various activities in response to student's needs - Learning collaboration to solve occupation and income problems - Development and centralization of people. - Setting up curricula for local leaders, local administrators and local politicians to be able to upgrade the quality of people's life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis on activities for farmers and family leaders - Emphasis on knowledge of subsistence economy and diversified forestry - Emphasis on activities related to drought areas and ecological conservation - Encouraging the exchange of knowledge and experience - Focusing on the concept of a self-sufficient community - Balance in way of life and environment - Counting on local learning process to support youth learning activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing basic educational services to target groups both inside and outside the formal education system - CLCs covering target groups such as children, youths, females and seniors - Community training for full-time and part-time jobs

ISSUES	Northern region School of Inherited Wisdom	Southern region Mai Rieng CLC	North - Eastern region Isan Community School	Central region CLC of Phuka sub-district
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of scholar's wisdom - Working network and decentralization of authority - Promoting knowledge to society through the committee of the centre - Introducing cultural wisdom to the formal education system - Counting on its own budget by means of partial tuition fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration and management planning - Resource sharing between public and private sectors - Network of social institutions such as schools, organizations - Knowledge management and exchange of lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operation through working group - Participation and collaboration of intellectual leaders, farmers, students and instructors inside and outside the area - Activities and venues to exchange ideas among all levels of society - Plans for developing individuals through seminars and training - Strengthening I-sarn intellectual network - Evaluation of database system and real-time planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported by tambon administration organization - Local administration organization as a key operator of CLCs - Financial support for activities through non-formal education centre - Survey of community members' preferences before setting up CLC activities - The use of resources, knowledge and community wisdom to create job opportunities
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transition of knowledge and culture across generations - Integration of culture to strengthen community - Sustainable cooperation within community through social contributions of seniors - Students' skills to create their own part-time job opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficient perk systems for all classes of citizen - Ability to design sustainable production plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopting the concept of subsistence living and balance in nature - Revision of development and management processes given by the state to the community - Community wisdom and a self-sufficient community - Applying the concept of diversified forestry to environmental conservation, expanding alternative markets, complying with subsistence economy strictly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transition of knowledge and culture across generations - Integration of culture to strengthen community - Sustainable cooperation within community through social contributions of seniors - Students' skills to create their own part-time job opportunities
Policy Linkage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving curriculum content to meet the standard of the formal education system - Incorporating local knowledge of forests and Lanna culture into the curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing community master plan and policies - Turning master plan into national policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporating knowledge of sustainable agriculture and diversified forestry into curriculum and strategic plan for natural resource management - Participation of local intellectuals in provincial, regional and national development planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported by tambon administration organization - Local administration organization as a key operator of CLCs - Financial support for activities through non-formal education centre - Survey of community members' preferences before setting up CLC activities - The use of resources, knowledge and community wisdom to create job opportunities



UZBEKISTAN*

Introduction

The Republic of Uzbekistan is situated in Central Asia and has the largest population (about 25 million people) in the sub-region. About 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas. Young people under the age of 25 constitute almost 56 percent of Uzbekistan's total population. Almost 99 percent of the population is literate⁹. Although Uzbekistan has already achieved universal primary education, the goal stipulated in the Millennium Declaration, there is evidence that (as in other countries of the former Soviet Union) the access, content, processes, and organization of Uzbekistan's education system should be re-organized to better serve the needs of changing economic, social and political conditions. The potential erosion in human capital could undermine Uzbekistan's successful transition to a market economy, while emerging disparities in access to quality education will result in unequal opportunities to benefit from market reforms and exacerbate future income inequality within the country.

There are two ministries of education in Uzbekistan: the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education and the Ministry of Public Education. The Ministry of Public Education is responsible for pre-school, primary, secondary, special and out-of-school education. The Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Specialized Education is responsible for professional and higher education. There are several higher education institutions within both ministries, where there are facilities for the retraining of specialists.

There are more than 10,000 general secondary schools, 63 higher education and 539 technical vocational institutions in the Republic of Uzbekistan. To finance educational reforms in the country, the Government of Uzbekistan has provided 40 percent of the national budget, or 7.8 percent of the GDP.¹⁰ The country's educational system specifies the content of education at each level and area. Programmes are divided into general educational and vocational curricula. General educational programmes encompass pre-school, primary general education, while vocational programmes include secondary special and vocational education; higher education includes undergraduate and graduate degrees, and post-graduate and doctorate education. Academic programmes may be offered in regular, evening, and correspondence programmes, as well as in the form of non-formal education, family education, self-education, and externship.

Uzbekistan is actively participating in different international programmes in the field of education, particularly within the Action Plan of the Dakar Forum on Education for All (EFA). An EFA national working and assessment group has been created at the Ministry of Public Education. Education reforms in Uzbekistan started in 1997 with the adoption of a new "Law on Education" and the National Programme for Personnel Training (NPPT). One of the most important innovations of the reforms is the introduction of continuous and lifelong education.

Continuing education is the main basic system in personnel training to meet the priorities of the social-economic development of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It includes the following types of education:

Continuing education satisfies the economic, social, scientific-technical and cultural requirements of personality, society and state. Continuing education creates the necessary conditions for a creative, socially active, spiritually rich personality. In Uzbekistan, it occurs through three types of educational delivery mechanisms: formal, non-formal and informal.

Formal education - provides general literacy up to 100 percent (reading, writing, calculating), and also enables learners to receive corresponding education and professional qualifications. Formal education is provided through pre-school and formal schooling up to the highest level, that is, from kindergartens, high schools, to professional colleges, institutes, academies, and universities.

* Written by Prof. Erkin Imamov, Physics Department, Tashkent State Pedagogical University

9 State Committee on Statistics of Uzbekistan, 2004

10 Ibid.

Table 19: Structure of the Continuing Education System

Types of education	VI. Out of school ¹⁰				IV. Higher education		V. Post Graduate	
	I. Pre-school education	II. General Education		III. Secondary special, professional education				
		Primary	Secondary		Baccalaureate	Magistracy	Post graduate education	Post doctoral studies
Initial age of education	4 years-old	6-7 years-old	10-11 years-old	15-16 years-old	18-19 years-old	22-23 years-old	24-25 years-old	27-28 years-old
Normative period of education	3-4 years	4 years	5 years	3 years	4 years	2 years	3 years	3 years
		4+5=9 years			4+2=6 years		3+3=6 years	
		VII. Adult education (qualifications upgrading and retraining) ¹¹						

Non-formal education - provides opportunities for mastering professional skills, gives functionally guided training, and also offers additional vocational training. Non-formal education is realized through educational establishments of non-scholastic adult education and for retraining and upgrading professional skills. These organizations include CLCs.

There are many important aspects for the development of the whole society concerning non-formal education:

- 1) Political: preparedness for active participation, co-operation in decision-making, development of civil society, formation of loyalty and tolerance;
- 2) Social: supporting social coherence, creating equal possibilities to study, supporting social and cultural identity;
- 3) Economic: formation of preparedness for reasonable consumption, supporting small business enterprises, supporting economic subsistence, creating a saving lifestyle;
- 4) Cultural: preserving the national culture and learning traditions (indigenous knowledge), formation of values and norms, formation of a creative individual with cultural identity.

Therefore, the education policy of Uzbekistan in the field of non-formal education focuses on providing a favourable environment for linking literacy with life chances and life skills, creating a dynamic literate environment and networks, supporting diverse modalities of knowledge acquisition (context, languages), developing partnership links with potential stakeholders and mobilizing efforts for neglected areas.

Informal education - is indirect education pursued individually by means of independent knowledge acquisition of: published and other printed teaching materials; materials, programmes, or broadcasts prepared and distributed by the mass media; results of family education and self-training; and communication of other people, social groups, and ideologies.

In this epoch of globalization and the advanced information society, informal and non-formal forms of education are popular and are increasing rapidly. They are intended to satisfy the educational needs of different age groups and social status. Community learning centres (CLCs) can satisfy these kinds of needs.

Profile of the Research Study

Members of the research team consisted of experts from government organizations (Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Uzbekistan, Ministry of Health Care of the Republic of Uzbekistan), NGOs and universities.¹³

¹¹ CLCs are functioning in the framework of this type of education for youth.

¹² CLCs are functioning in the framework of this type of education for all age categories.

¹³ See Uzbekistan CLC Research Report, Annex 2 (in attached CD) for a list of research team members.

Research activities consisted of the following:

- Field visits to all CLCs in Uzbekistan
- Meetings and conversations with representatives of the community, local authorities, heads of partner organizations, and heads of CLCs, facilitators, women, youth, and elderly members of CLCs
- Collection of quantitative data (total number of CLC members, total reading materials, hours of service, etc.) and qualitative data (content of training, contents of materials)
- Evaluation of learning and teaching materials (textbooks, manuals, videos, video CDs and cassette tapes, etc.)
- Examination of plans and implemented programmes, study of relevant documents
- Analysis of questionnaire results (the original questionnaire was developed and administered at all CLCs)
- Through analysis of data, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of CLCs and coming up with recommendations for their further improvement

The research group organized exit checks on the activities of ten CLCs in Uzbekistan located both in urban and rural areas:

Main CLC Activities

The main activities in the CLCs studied were the following:

1. Education and Training
 - Preparing children for elementary school
 - Courses of foreign languages
 - Functional literacy (transition process from Cyrillic alphabet to Latin alphabet)
2. ICT Programmes
 - Providing basic computer courses
 - Informational technology in the system of education
 - Internet and creation of Web page
3. Life Skills Programmes
4. Health Programmes
 - Reproductive health
 - HIV/AIDS prevention
 - Healthy lifestyle
 - Drug abuse
 - Sanitation and hygiene
5. Early Childhood Care and Education
6. Ecological Programmes
7. Vocational Training
8. Culture Programmes
 - Programme on cultural heritage
 - Discussions on religion
9. Gender Programmes
10. Community Resource Centres and Libraries
 - Information and library services
 - Advisory and counseling services
 - Distribution of educational materials
 - Information from videos and audios

11. Sports and Recreation

12. Co-ordination and Networking

13. Developing Local Language Teaching-Learning Materials

The activity of the CLC depends on the allocated financial resources in order to carry out sustainable work. Reflecting the current economic difficulties in Uzbekistan that are related to the transitional period, CLCs suffer from a shortage of resources. In order to raise funds for implementation of their programmes, CLCs strive to attract outside sponsors, i.e. governmental organizations, the private sector, and international agencies. Some of these efforts have proven successful. In one municipality, for example, local authorities renovated the communication infrastructure (roads, reliable telephone lines, regular electricity) around CLCs.

Self-generated funds are primarily obtained from the sale of products (computer software, business cards, etc.), cultural shows, and sale of services (tutoring). Gifts and donations are largely received from patronage and sponsorship, volunteerism, government subsidies (providing buildings), fund-raising campaigns, and NGO support. Operational resources may also be supported through partnerships with the local government; local educational department; pedagogical, cultural and health care institutions; universities; and vocational schools.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

In 1999, the concept of lifelong education was introduced in Uzbekistan. It started with a pilot project to establish and develop CLCs. The project was supported by UNESCO within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All. At present, there are ten CLCs and one CLC Resource Centre created under the initiative of the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO. Moreover, the UNESCO Tashkent office has initiated the creation of a number of training centres (listed in Annex 1 of the attached CD) to provide essential skills training and market economy approaches for setting up small business enterprises. They were also created to preserve an important part of the country's cultural heritage, which is now in danger of being lost.

Due to the fact that most of the population lives in a rural social environment with a strong sense of community, CLCs provide opportunities for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills through structured activities and non-formal learning. The CLC environment also encourages all age groups living together in one community to make and follow their own education plans and programmes.

During the last six years, the CLC programmes in Uzbekistan have been developing, and the CLC concept has changed accordingly to suit the needs of society, particularly giving emphasis to poverty reduction and preservation of cultural heritage.

Groups that are targeted for CLC training activities include schoolchildren, youth, women, men, unemployed, pensioners and people with disabilities. CLC objectives largely focus on providing a favourable environment for linking literacy with life opportunities and life skills, creating a dynamic literate environment and network, supporting diverse modalities of knowledge acquisition (context, languages), developing partnership links with potential stakeholders, and mobilizing efforts toward alleviating the poverty situation in neglected areas.

Main CLC Activities

1. Andijan Region, Izboskan district, Poytug Village, School № 12
2. Khorezm Region, Shovot district, Ataniyazov Farm, School № 39
3. Syrdarya Region, Mirzoabad district, Dekhqonobod Farm, School № 21
4. Bukhara City, Textile district, 7/3 Pablo Neruda Street, School № 8
5. Karakalpakstan, Nukus district, Village Akmangyt, School № 21
6. Namangan City, Regional Branch of Public Education
7. Samarkand City, Syob district, 73 Jomiy Street, School № 5
8. Tashkent Region, Chirchik Town, 1 Sadovaya Street, School № 12
9. Kashkadarya Region, Shakhriyabz district, Village Chavkan, School 32
10. Fergana Region, Margilan City, 2A Jomiy Street, School № 27

Table 20: Analysis of CLC Experiences

CLC	Internal partners	Educational establishments	International organizations	NGOs
Bukhara	Local education department under the MOE, Local government, Local department of labour and social protection	Bukhara State University, Information Centre under the State University, Bukhara State Medical Institute	UNESCO, UNICEF, USAID, IREX, Peace Corps	Centre "Orzu" (children with disabilities), Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Soglom Avlod Uchun (For Healthy Generation) Foundation, Business Women Association of Uzbekistan (BWA)
Samarkand	Local education department under the MOE, Local government	Institute of Foreign Languages, Samarkand University (ICT project, capacity building for facilitators, creation of teaching/learning materials)	UNESCO, Peace Corps, Japan Embassy in Uzbekistan, CAFÉ (Central Asia Free Exchange, USA)	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Soglom Avlod Uchun (For Healthy Generation) Foundation
Namangan	Local education department under the MOE, Local government	Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages (gives every year \$4,000 for English courses and 4 teachers for training)	UNESCO, IREX	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Business Women Association of Uzbekistan
Syrdarya	Local education department under the MOE, Local government	Agricultural college, vocational school	UNESCO, IREX	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Soglom Avlod Uchun (For Healthy Generation) Foundation
Margilan	Local education department under the MOE, Local government small enterprises "Margilan-non" and "Lazzat"	Pedagogical Institute, vocational school, medical college, Republican Education Centre	UNESCO	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Soglom Avlod Uchun (For Healthy Generation) Foundation
Shakh-risyabz	Local education department under the MOE, Local government	Pedagogical Institute, agriculture college, medical college	UNESCO, IREX	BWA, Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation
Chirchik	Local education department under the MOE, Local government	Vocational school	UNESCO	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation
Khorezm	Local education department under the MOE, local government small enterprises "Mukkadas", tractor station, sanatorium	Pedagogical Institute	UNESCO	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation
Nukus	Local education department under the MOE, Local government		UNESCO, IREX	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Soglom Avlod Uchun (For Healthy Generation) Foundation
Andijan Region Izboskan	Local education department under the MOE, Local government	Pedagogical Institute, medical college	UNESCO, IREX	Kamolot (Youth foundation), Mahalla (Community) Foundation, Business Women Association of Uzbekistan

The questionnaire (Annex 3 in the attached CD) included the following sections:

1. Official information about the CLC (10 items)
2. Methodological problems (8 items)
3. Efficiency of CLC activities (24 items)
4. Partners and communications (9 items)
5. Resource maintenance (9 items)

The information gathered in the process of the study visits, the interviews, conversations, discussions and questionnaire analysis was used in the evaluation of CLC operations.

Structure of Management

The structure of personnel management of CLC centres in Uzbekistan is as follows:

1. Head of CLC
2. Educator-Instructor as a Deputy Director
3. Specialist of Computer System
4. Teachers
5. Volunteers from: enterprises, local communities (mahalla), youth committees, parents, private sectors, medical centres

Findings showed that the CLCs aimed to provide people with both formal and informal learning through organizing a variety of activities according to the needs and problems identified by community members, themselves, in the context of lifelong learning.

Major Findings

Economic reforms (in a condition of increased demand for education, in particular for professional education) have caused a growth in demand for operatively realized educational services of various kinds and for many different categories of people: youth and adults who are unemployed or temporarily unemployed, and those from marginal and other restrained (for different reasons) strata of society.

Educational services are directed toward the development of professional knowledge to master skills that will fulfill real production and methods of management, skills needed to find optimal solutions to concrete practical problems, and psychological and social-humanitarian skills for crisis management. In other words, training of people for active professional work under new conditions created as a result of information/communication development and the scientific, technical progress of society.

The most effective results from such innovational educational activity are brought about by, in the first place, the implementation of target educational programmes designed to develop concrete professional knowledge and skills, and secondly, programmes that have been provided by seed capital (or initial financial, material and technical support) from either state or non-state entities, public organizations and departments, or international organizations and funds.

Study results from the 10 CLCs in Uzbekistan show a variety of services:

1. Realization of qualitative programmes, which are innovative, diverse, accessible, and address required curriculums. There is freedom of a choice of trades, proceeding from development needs of the region, and from the desires and opportunities of trainees. There is also realization of alternative, innovational, accessible, educational programmes and a choice quality of initial vocational training (opportunity of attraction of the modern process equipment, freedom of choice of trades, proceeding from wide development needs of the region as well as desires and opportunities of trainees).
2. High methodical and didactic maintenance of training courses is possible only for those CLCs that have special arrangements with small and medium enterprises, which rely on an exchange of educational services and retraining courses for sponsorship. Such arrangements provide for high quality trainers (opportunity of attraction of the highly skilled pedagogical staff and experts) and availability of updated equipment.

3. Special preparation of trainers and constant improvement of their professional skills is necessary.
4. In order to correspond to required high professional standards, the educational programmes of all courses realized in the CLCs should be of a standard that will pass special certification and licensing in professional communities (for example, in specialized departments of high schools or their branches in educational establishments under the Centre of Secondary Specialized Education under the Ministry of High Education).
5. CLCs suffer from a critical lack of methodological literature and didactic materials intended both for trainees and trainers. In this connection it is necessary to support, under the aegis of UNESCO or within the framework of separate educational programmes, the development and distribution of relevant educational training material.
6. Uzbekistan is a country whose territory is almost completely covered with a network of radio-telecasting as well as a broad availability of modern information communication technologies. Nevertheless, there is a significant need for centres of welfare, scientific-educational dialogue, and professional study. CLCs execute this mission in close co-operation with *makhallyas* (community), the local social public administrative formations. Particularly in the countryside, in accordance with its considerably high information saturation and innovational activity, CLCs are the centres of culture, enlightenment and education, as well as the source of scientific and technical information for the population.
7. CLCs have served as places where people can satisfy their needs and try to solve the actual problems of the region through meetings, conversations, exhibitions, reviews, organization of "roundtables" and "brain storming."
8. It is necessary to note the special positive role of CLCs in the rural regions, since more than 60 percent of the country's population live in the countryside. CLCs, with their technical and intellectual resources, allow rural populations to achieve professional skills, gain more knowledge, and be better informed.
9. There are many positive factors that illustrate the successful functioning of CLCs in Uzbekistan. However, the study of only 10 CLCs does not give a proper basis for a serious conclusion about the efficiency of all CLCs in the country. From the results of the research, it is possible to say only that they are expedient and there is an urgent need for expansion of the CLC network throughout Uzbekistan. As there are only 10 CLCs in the republic, the opening of other CLCs or their branches in adjoining regions is an actual and necessary problem.
10. CLCs in Uzbekistan are open, basically, at secondary schools of general education which have rather limited (poor) legal opportunities and low public status. The results of the research study and almost six years' experience in operating CLCs (particularly in rural regions) show that it is difficult for CLCs to broaden their delivery areas and target populations. It is, thus, expedient to open new CLCs at educational establishments of the Centre of Secondary Specialized Education under the Ministry of High Education (the academic lyceums and professional colleges) and in residential areas, departments of national education, and branches of non-governmental organizations. The educational establishments of the Centre of Secondary Specialized Education would offer, for example, a rich material base, uniform distribution over all the regions of the country (about 900 academic lyceums and professional colleges), information and communication resources, technological opportunities, and a highly skilled teaching staff.
11. CLCs can react effectively to the needs of individual regions and market conditions. The wide assortment of educational services rendered by CLCs can promote fast development of a region, opening of new manufactures and workplaces, and solutions to many social, ecological, gender and other problems.
12. It is obvious that within the framework of CLC curricula, it is much easier to realize and organize selective training of youth in order to develop their professional, social, cultural and personal skills. This is seen, in particular, with training to support national creativity, ethnic traditions, work skills, and information communication technologies.
13. Control and monitoring of CLC activity via the National Commission for UNESCO in Uzbekistan should continue to feature:

- Organization of regular trainings for CLC chiefs, their branches, tutors of training courses and teaching staff;
 - Organization of experience exchanges between adjoining CLCs and other educational establishments that carry out vocational training and lifelong learning activities;
 - Development, editing and distribution of the methodological teaching literature and didactic materials on the organization of training, curriculum enrichment that integrates new scientific achievements in this area;
 - Organization of seminars on discussion of realized and planned educational programmes and teaching materials;
 - Promotion of educational programme licensing by proper establishments;
 - Publicity campaigns on the concept of lifelong education; and
 - Activities to extend training to all members of the population.
14. The issue of organizing lifelong learning programmes through CLCs is an important consideration for Uzbekistan. The main financial source for establishing such CLC programmes should be the national education budget. However, for countries with transitional economies such as Uzbekistan, it is difficult to guarantee that adequate resources are available without the certain financial help and support of international organizations. In this connection, we consider it as an important noble step to continue and expand the efforts of UNESCO that are directed toward the prolongation of CLC programme activities for the following term. These actions of goodwill can strengthen considerably the authority of UNESCO and strengthen its influence in the modern world.
 15. There is an insufficient development of legislative support for non-formal education establishments (and CLCs), including equivalency of their certificates.
 16. The CLC monitoring group in the Republican Education Centre under the Ministry of Public Education has few opportunities to effectively co-ordinate educational, organizational and methodological activities at CLCs.
 17. There is insufficient public awareness of the opportunities offered through non-formal education and CLCs in Uzbekistan.
 18. Insufficient partnership.

Recommendations

1. It is crucial to develop strategies for policy and legislative support in order to institutionalize CLCs in Uzbekistan. For this purpose, it is necessary:
 - to include adult education centres by organizing lifelong training programmes;
 - that local governments should promulgate legal acts to support CLCs and their activities in the sphere of non-formal education;
 - for authorities to work to define the role and position of CLCs in the framework of existing continuing education in Uzbekistan.
2. Patronage and more effective (than now) attention from the state party and educational ministries is required in matters of educational programme certification, legalization of documents on education, material assistance to training courses, and moral-methodological support of CLCs.
3. It is necessary to create a guardianship council comprised of representatives from local communities, universities, colleges, schools, learning centres, international organizations, business ventures, funding agencies, etc. There should be a maintenance group of related branches for preparation, retraining, and improvement of professional skills for corresponding staff.

Professional guardian boards (or associations) can include representatives of large enterprises, corresponding manufacturing enterprises, public and international donor organizations, and educational establishments at all levels.

Education programmes at CLCs should be licensed by appropriate higher education establishments under the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, and should be appropriate, useful, comprehensive, and needs-oriented.

5. There is a need to train facilitators in the sphere of non-formal education and upgrade their qualifications regularly (through Republican 'Iste'dod' Foundation - foundation to enhance the professional skills of prospective young pedagogues and scientific personnel).
6. Training courses such as "Features of Informal Education," "Methodology of Informal Education" and "Androgogics" should be included at professional colleges as part of the bachelor's degree curriculum for engineering-pedagogical education programmes.
7. Organize high-quality training in CLCs by the way of:
 - licensing of educational programmes,
 - arrangement of regular methodical and information provision,
 - training and retraining of pedagogical personnel,
 - rendering sponsor's assistance in material and information support, and
 - expansion of professional contacts with special and/or vocational educational establishments in the region.
8. It is essential to expand the number of CLCs in Uzbekistan and their branches. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the material/technical and intellectual resources of both higher and professional education establishments that are already available.
9. Education activities at CLCs should be co-ordinated with the education policies of regional and local governmental bodies (*mahallas*). Special attention should be paid to co-operation with the organizations and ventures situated in the same territory where the CLCs are located.
10. Activities at CLCs should include education and training programmes related to national crafts, traditions and the historical heritage of Uzbekistan.
11. CLCs should regularly acquire information, teaching-learning materials, and scientific and cultural literature to turn themselves into popular places of enrichment, knowledge and skills acquisition for community members.
12. While monitoring activities at CLCs, special attention should be given to informational and methodological aspects, the elaboration of new learning materials, and the quality of education.
13. It is advisable to organize a CLC mobile training team in co-operation with the Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Secondary Specialized Education and the Republican 'Iste'dod' Foundation, equipped with modern technologies, methodologies and teaching-learning materials.



Introduction

The ultimate purpose of CLCs is to enhance the quality of people's lives and contribute to development of the country, hence leading to the stability and prosperity of the region as well as of the world. This study was an objective assessment implemented by a research team that included educators from research institutes, universities and NGOs. The purpose of the research was to evaluate the actual situation of Vietnamese CLCs in terms of impact and effectiveness, as well as weaknesses, difficulties and areas that need improvement in order to make recommendations for the future development of CLCs in Viet Nam. At the same time, the research was also aimed at disseminating the results to EFA stakeholders for strengthening and promoting EFA programmes and to promote the institutionalization of CLCs within the framework of EFA action plans.

The five target areas,¹⁴ all of them with different geographical and socio-economic characteristics, do not represent the whole picture of CLCs in Viet Nam. Nevertheless, the conclusions drawn from the field study, together with recommendations and suggestions from the research team, local people and CLC managers, can help policy makers, management personnel, practitioners and international donor agencies obtain further understanding of the actual situation in Viet Nam. As a result, they will be able to formulate the proper policies and programmes for achieving EFA goals and the Millenium Development Goals -- targets that can benefit the people of low-income countries like Viet Nam the most.

Analysis of CLC Experiences

Viet Nam's CLCs have developed mainly in the rural areas to serve rural communities. In the city, most CLCs are in suburban areas. Most CLCs are created by local communities, not by the government or NGOs, or other international organizations. Local CLC committees and managers steer and oversee CLC operations. Some government funds have been received and various local efforts have occurred to supplement the income with local funds, although they are often small and modest.

During 1998-1999, a pilot study of CLCs in Viet Nam was undertaken by the Research Centre for Literacy and Continuing Education under the National Institute of Education Science (now the Research Centre for Non-Formal Education Strategy and Curriculum Development under the National Institute of Education Strategy and Curriculum Development [NIESAC]). This project, "Promotion of CLCs in Viet Nam", was supported through the UNESCO APPEAL framework and with financial assistance from Japan and Norway.

There were four CLCs in the following communes:

- Cao Son (Hoa Binh province)
- Pu Nhung (Lai Chao province)
- Viet Thuan (Thai Binh province)
- An Lap (Bac Giang province)

All were in the north of Viet Nam.

After the pilot period with its positive outcomes, at the beginning of 1999, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) expanded the CLC model to other provinces and cities, such as Ha Noi, Lao Cai, Vinh Phu and Tien Giang. Assisted by Japan UNESCO (NFUAJ), the MOET has guided the establishment of 40 CLCs in Tua Chua and Phong Tho Districts of Lai Chau Province.

* Written by Ms. Do Thi Binh, Expert in Education, National Institute for Education Strategies and Curriculum Development

14 The target areas selected by our team represent the different regions and characteristics: near the city (Tan Trieu CLC – Ha Noi, Hoa Tien CLC – Da Nang province), rural areas, delta areas (An Dong, Dong Duong CLCs – Thai Binh province), mountainous, remote, difficult areas with ethnic minority people in target provinces (La Hien, Dinh Ca CLCs – Thai Nguyen, Thuong Long, Thuong Nhat CLCs – Hue province). Besides, another criteria for selecting are CLC in a province considered to have best practice in CLC (An Dong CLC – Thai Binh and Tan Cuong CLC – Thai Nguyen) and a newly established CLC in a difficult area for comparison. All these CLCs are generated by local communities, not any one and are not supported by NGOs/ other agencies, or local/national governments.

Records show that the 15 centres existing in 1999 grew to 78 centres in 2001, and only a year later, 680 CLCs were counted (mostly in the North)! By As of February 2005, the whole country (64 provinces) had 4,783 CLCs serving 10,765 communes, urban precincts and district towns. More recently, this number has risen to nearly 6,000¹⁵.

There are nine provinces having 100 percent CLCs (Thai Binh, Ninh Binh, Phu Tho, Bac Ninh, Nam Dinh, Vinh Phu, Da Nang, Hai Duong, Dong Thap). Only one province (Binh Duong) has not yet established any CLC.

The MOET has acquired assistance from the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ) and UNESCO Hanoi to establish CLCs in some provinces, and to develop training courses to better organize, manage and operate CLC activities. Hanoi UNESCO has conducted a project for assisting Tay Nguyen and Binh Phuoc provinces in building CLCs and training CLC management personnel. Japan UNESCO has helped Lao Cai Province establish 40 CLCs and has established CLCs in eight northern mountainous provinces (Son La, Bac Can, Lao Cai, Yen Bai, Cao Bang, Ha Gang, Lang Son and Tuyen Quang). In addition, it has printed and disseminated materials related to building and developing CLCs.

The Party and the State have policies that promote CLC development as part of realizing the country's EFA programme goals and strive towards a learning society. In 2003, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 06/2003/QĐ-TTg on the Action Plan of the Government: "The MOET, in coordination with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Viet Nam Learning Encouragement Association, the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, and People's Committees of provinces is assigned the task of developing a project for the expansion of CLCs."¹⁶

At present, according to the Amended Law of Education, CLCs are officially included in the Vietnamese national education system as continuing education institutions. Thus, the CLC approach is now officially institutionalized in Viet Nam.

Apart from the role of the MOET, the active contribution of the Viet Nam Learning Encouragement Association should be taken into account. Though having limited funds, the Central Learning Encouragement Association has developed and published five books to help provinces in training, propaganda and steering the development of CLCs. Two of the most useful are *Widespread Development of CLCs – Necessary Tools for Building a Learning Society from the Grassroots Level* (2003) and *Questions and Answers on the Widespread and Sustainable Development of CLCs* (2003).

Social organizations at the central level such as the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and its members (Elders Association, Veterans Association, Peasants Association, Women's Association, Youth Unions, Trade Unions, Joint Association of Viet Nam Scientific and Technical Association) also made initial contributions to the establishment and development of CLCs.

Conclusions of the *Five-Year Summary Report* affirmed that CLCs are an important tool contributing to the stabilization of the political situation, the promotion of renovation and socio-economic development. CLCs have been becoming the school of the working people, an important basis for building a learning society from the grassroots level. It also affirmed that apart from the results achieved, there are still many difficulties, weaknesses and constraints in the process of building and developing CLCs.

In Viet Nam, the literacy rate is 94 percent,¹⁷ so illiteracy is not a severe problem, but other programmes such as equivalency, continuing education and income generation do need attention. The ultimate purpose of the CLC is to enhance the people's quality of life and to accelerate the pace of development in the country. Thus, CLC programme activities are generally classed into these types:

Programmes/Activities

Equivalency programmes complementary classes providing lower and upper secondary education for out-of-school adults and youth

¹⁵ Based on a September 2005 count.

¹⁶ Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Office of the Prime Minister. Decision No. 26/2003/QĐ-TTg of February 17, 2003 Approving the National Target Programme on Education and Training until 2005. Art. 1, Item 4 (a-b) and Art. 2.

¹⁷ Continuing Education Department - MOET statistics

In Thier Words: Women in Viet Nam

“Community” (the way they refer to the CLC) helps us understand each other better, our production is better, like our fish breeding, much easier, only have to boil bran... This is the method taught by the class. Recently, we have caught black carp and grass carp, very big... weighed 3-4 kg, we grilled it... oh, very delicious ... The new technique is very useful.

Khang, age 70

An Dong CLC, Thai Binh Province

“Since I came here to learn embroidery, I find that the teacher is very dedicated, and helps me understand the methods, explains all my queries. CLC managers are also very good, pay attention to us and sometimes discuss with us... We have applied new methods in cultivating fruit trees and rice to have high productivity... We would like authorities of different levels to help us have sustainable jobs (embroidery) to get permanent income...”

Woman, age, 25, Thuong Nhat CLC, Hue Province.

“At first I did not understand what life skills are. Why ‘skill’? Gradually, when explained, I understood and found it very interesting. It helps me communicate effectively... I know how to behave more properly...”

Nguyen Thi Thanh, age 36, member of Commune Women’s Association, Tan Cuong CLC, Thai Nguyen Province

Income-generating programmes for enhancing the quality of life

- Improved agricultural practices: cultivation, husbandry, veterinary training
- Utilization of forestry resources
- Economic development and enterprises
- Development of traditional handicrafts
- Loans, savings, small credit
- Household accounting
- Law and policies of the Party and State
- Women’s empowerment
- Reproductive health and family planning
- Care and protection of mothers and children
- Personal health and hygiene
- Prevention of drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, combating prostitution
- Environmental sanitation and protection
- Preservation of cultural and historical sites
- Entertainment: art, culture and sports, dancing and music
- Social activities: respecting war invalids and martyrs, disabled self-support groups; blood donation
- Safety and prevention of traffic accidents

Programmes responding to individual needs

- Foreign languages, informatics classes, talks on national and international current news and events, vocational training, etc.
- Programmes for community development (establishing a fund for seniors or veterans, building improvements in the commune or village, etc.)

Major Findings

- The CLC is a form of lifelong learning and non-formal education that is very suitable to developing countries such as Viet Nam with low incomes and a high proportion of people living in rural areas, “where the lower the education level of the people is, the stronger the impact shows” (in the words of a Department of Education and Training official in Thua Thien Hue Province).

- Evaluating its impact on the lives of the people,¹⁸ we find that as an education institution reaching disadvantaged people at the grassroots level – those considered the “unreached” in the community – the CLC has an essential value in all areas of community life.
- CLC programmes and activities contribute significantly to transmitting useful knowledge and income-generating skills and to empowering youth, women, the underprivileged and the disadvantaged. Thus, CLCs do make and will make important contributions to the attainment of EFA and Millenium Development Goals.
- There is a big gap between CLCs not only in terms of infrastructure, but also in terms of quality of operation. In places where there is strong support, concern and regular monitoring and supervision at all levels (provincial, district, local authorities and other sectors and organizations), CLCs tend to have better quality.
- In general, the infrastructure is still poor and needs improvement.

The contents of activities and programmes are in general adequate and diversified, yet do not respond adequately to the needs and interests of the people. Some important and necessary content is still lacking, such as: human rights, peaceful resolution of conflicts and promotion of tolerance and co-existence, a full range of life skills and other necessary contents. Due to limitations in education level, the people do not know everything that is necessary and helpful for their lives. The higher level personnel in charge should study and provide what is missing.

- All CLCs do not have the necessary daily or weekly newspapers for people, especially women. Available books are often only concerned with politics, techniques or laws; although necessary, they do not attract people and sometimes are difficult to read. Newspapers provide them with updated knowledge and strengthen reading skills to prevent regression into illiteracy.
- The participation of the people, in general, varies according to the activities/programmes organized. However, they do not attend regularly, and are mostly beneficiaries, seldom owners and contributors. This may be due to propaganda about the roles and functions of CLCs.
- Most managers and facilitators do not receive adequate training (or even any training) in CLC management.
- Internal as well as external evaluation, monitoring and supervision are not regularly conducted (if at all).
- Policy linkages are established in a limited way. There are no clear-cut policy guidelines and mechanisms for the operation of CLCs, as well as for managers. This also affects the quality and effectiveness of CLC operations.

Recommendations

- There should be a nationwide survey to review all CLCs in the country to understand their actual situations for ensuring growth not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively.
- There should be policies and mechanisms for the recruitment and training of CLC teachers and managers, especially directors.
- Full-time staff are essential. (Reality shows that those CLCs with full-time management will have better operations. The manager of Hoa Tien has 14 roles to play and finds them too heavy for him.)
- All CLCs require financial and technical support from the government and other sectors, including international donors for sustainable development.
- “Poverty alleviation” programmes should receive priority at CLCs, especially where the poverty rate is high. The Grameen Bank model for the poor of Bangladesh, offering interest free loans, micro credit and savings, is very necessary and suitable for CLCs in Viet Nam.

18 As in the case of Tan Cuong CLC, per capita income is nearly twice increased, from 4.5 million VND in 2002 to 8.5 million VND in 2005 (according to a survey conducted for the whole commune in May /2005).

- Facilities such as a bookcase with books and especially daily/weekly newspapers like *Viet Nam Women*, *Science and Life*, or *Agricultural Development* should be provided for every CLC so that readers have an opportunity to exercise literacy skills and participate in “reading culture” – a tool for lifelong learning.
- Monitoring, evaluation and supervision should be strengthened.

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