

Strategies for Post Literacy



NATIONAL LITERACY MISSION
Directorate of Adult Education
Government of India
New Delhi

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PREFACE

Literacy is globally accepted as an indispensable component of human resource development. National Literacy Mission, which aims at imparting functional literacy to 100 million non-literates in 15-35 age-group by 1999 and full literacy by 2005, is one of the most concerted efforts attempted so far for the promotion of literacy in the country. The Mission has established important milestones during the Eighth Five Year Plan by bringing over 400 districts in the country under the fold of Total Literacy Campaigns. The coverage, in terms of targetted number of non-literates, exceeds 140 million. With the successful implementation of TLCs in several districts all over the country, a very large number of non-literates have acquired basic literacy skills. Achievement of basic literacy, however, is not an end in itself. It is an entry point to the world of information and communication. On conclusion of Total Literacy Campaigns, the neo-literates need to be encouraged and motivated to reinforce the newly acquired literacy skills and apply these in their daily life situations. Effective programmes of post literacy and continuing education are, therefore, needed to help the neo-literates to reinforce their skills, continue these and apply them to solve their day-to-day problems and improve their quality of life.

With a view to providing an insight into some of the basic considerations and guiding principles underlying the right approach to formulation and designing of operational strategies for implemenation of post literacy and continuing educaiton programmes, we are publishing in this book Dr. Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture delivered in March, 1996 by Shri Bhaskar Chatterjee, Director General of National Literacy Mission. This lecture highlights some of the salient features of post-literacy strategies recommended by the National Literacy Mission and suggests possible approaches to systematic designing and implemenation of post-literacy programmes. It also throws light on future strategies for continuing education in the perspective of life long learning. The contents of this lecture, however, do not purport to be an official pronouncement of the plans and policies of the National Literacy Mission. These should be treated as generally suggestive of the alternative approaches on the subject. In the second segment of the

book, we are publishing guidelines issued by the National Literacy Mission, firstly, on implementation of Post Literacy Campaigns and secondly, on books for post literacy and continuing education. We hope that suggestions and guidelines presented in this book will help the literacy functionaries and resource persons in formulating systematic plans for successful implementation of post literacy and continuing education programmes in the country.

September 8, 1996
New Delhi

(H.O.Tewari)
Director

Strategies for Post-Literacy in the Next Decade

Bhaskar Chatterjee



The great Chinese philosopher K'uan-Tzu has said, "If you plan for a year, plant a seed. If for ten years, plant a tree. If for a hundred years, teach the people. When you sow a seed once you will reap a single harvest. When you teach the people, you will reap a hundred harvests."

The same spirit was echoed by the great educationist and humanist Dr. Zakir Husain, when he said, "Education is the life breath of our democracy. It is education that can give us a common vision of the future that we are striving to fashion, and generate in us, the intellectual and moral energy to create it. Education alone can preserve the old values worth preserving and education alone can give us the new values worth striving for."

I feel honoured and grateful to the Indian Adult Education Association for giving me this opportunity of delivering this year's Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture in this historic city of Vadodara. Dr. Zakir Husain was a great educationist and humanist who not only occupied the highest position in the country as President of India but dedicated over four decades of his life to serve the cause of spreading education among the Indian masses. He was a great visionary and always emphasized the adoption of a new perspective in relation to education and culture. He supported the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi on basic education and was committed to the cause of adult education. The high ideals for which this great man lived and dedicated his life have inspired the thoughts of many of us. I am deeply grateful to the Indian Adult Education Association for having chosen such a significant

subject as “Strategies for Post-Literacy in the Next Decade” for this year’s Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture.

When we talk of Mahatma Gandhi, we are also reminded of that great lady of literacy Dr. Welthy Honsinger Fisher, the creator of Literacy House in Lucknow. When Mrs. Fisher visited Mahatma Gandhi in 1939 after her husband’s death and sought advice from him on how best she could serve the people of India, Gandhiji advised her, “What you must do Behenji, if you really want to see your ideas at work, is to go to Jamia Millia outside of Delhi. There is a man there, putting it all

into action in an institution. His name is Husain.”



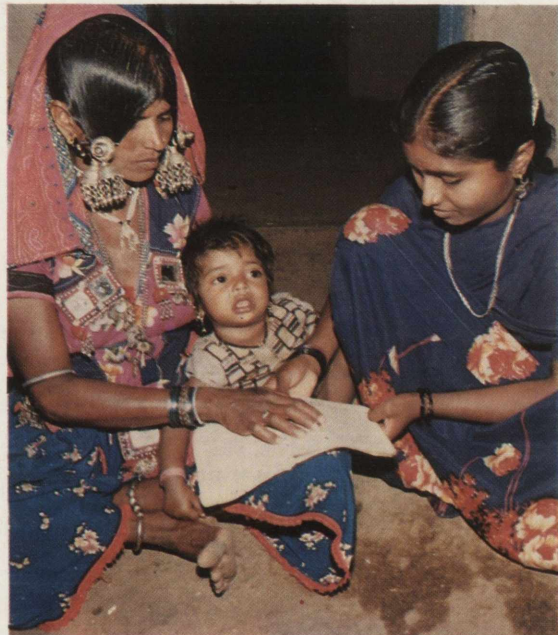
Dr. Welthy Fisher recalled that she went at Gandhi’s bidding and was warmly welcomed by the then principal of Jamia Millia, Dr. Zakir Husain. She spent two revealing days in conversation with this brilliant scholar and it was out of this interaction that she decided that as an educator she must help the Indian villagers to learn and discover the world for themselves. And, so from out of the interaction of these three leading luminaries — Gandhi, Dr. Zakir Husain and Welthy Fisher — was born what we today know as the first formal literacy campaign of India.

Why Mass Education?

The people of India have had a long and abiding commitment to literacy and learning. Unfortunately, however, India today has the dubious distinction of having the largest number of illiterates in the world. The global population of non-literates is around 900 million. One-third of them reside in India. A major problem is that while our literacy rate is increasing over time, the number of illiterates is also increasing. So enormous is the problem that it cannot be solved merely by a rapid expansion of formal schooling facilities or enrolment drives. A two-pronged approach has, therefore, been adopted: Universalisation of Elementary Education and the campaign approach to Adult Literacy. Although adult education has been

receiving attention right from the First Five Year Plan, adult literacy programmes today constitute an integral part of the strategy of human resource development as well as the overall development of the country.

Literacy is one of the most important indicators of socio-economic and political development of a society. It is a major component of human resource development and is thus basic to any programme of social and economic development. In recent years, there has been a growing realisation among policy makers and planners that development would never become self-sustaining unless it is accompanied by corresponding changes in the attitudes, values, knowledge and skills of the people as a whole. The only way this change can be accomplished is through education. A literate society can usher in progress and prosperity quickly. Adult education and development are, therefore, inextricably linked with each other.



National Literacy Mission (NLM)

Since illiteracy is a serious impediment to individual growth and the country's socio-economic progress, the Government of India have accorded highest priority to eradication of illiteracy. The launching of the National Literacy Mission (NLM) in 1988, as one of the five Technology Missions, constitutes a major landmark in our efforts to combat the evil. NLM aims at imparting functional literacy to 100 million non-literate persons in the 15-35 age-group by the end of 1997. NLM is based on the premise that literacy is an indispensable component of human resource development and an essential tool for communication and learning and for acquiring and sharing of knowledge and information. NLM also aims to harness the advances in science and technology, and of communications and pedagogical sciences for the benefit of the deprived sections of society.

NLM is a societal mission whose success rests on mobilisation of social forces on the one hand and harnessing of technology and findings of scientific research for the benefit of the deprived sections of the society on the other. After experimenting with alternative models of adult education, NLM has today finally settled down to a model which is known as TLC or campaigns for total literacy. The Total Literacy

Campaigns which started in the beginning of 1989 are rapidly gathering momentum and are also creating the desired impact. More than 370 districts in the country have been covered through total literacy campaigns and of these, as many as 160 districts have already completed the basic literacy phase and have taken up post-literacy and continuing education programme as a follow up of the TLC. TLC projects so far sanctioned by the NLM are expected to cover around 130 million illiterate persons in the age-group 9-35. Around 90 million learners have been enrolled in the teaching-learning process which is being carried out with the help of over 9 million volunteers. There is now a heightened awareness amongst the literate and the educated about their role in eradication of illiteracy on purely voluntary basis and with a sense of pride and patriotism. The concrete achievement of NLM is reflected by the number of persons made literate which exceeds 53 million. It is undeniable that this phenomenal achievement has been made possible by a combination of factors. A strong political will, total and spontaneous participation of the administrative machinery, the keen concern of the State Governments for the spread of mass education, and above all, the whole-hearted participation of people from different walks of life have contributed to this. It is not known whether any country in the world has been able to achieve so much in the sphere of literacy in such a short span of time and at such a small cost.

NLM is also fully conscious of the fact that neglect of post-literacy and follow-up programmes can be perilous. It is well-recognised that those neo-literates who acquire basic literacy skills through the literacy campaigns may face great difficulty in retaining it and unless timely follow-up measures are taken, most of them may lapse back into illiteracy. It is absolutely essential that those who once acquire basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy make them permanent by reinforcement through post-literacy programmes.

The term 'Post-Literacy' has come to have different meanings in various educational systems. In some countries the term is used loosely to include all forms of education which follow after the achievement of basic literacy. In some other countries, post-literacy is defined more narrowly to simply consolidate basic literacy skills to a level equivalent to that which would be achieved by the end of primary schooling in the formal system. In this definition, post-literacy is considered as a "bridge" between primary schooling or its equivalent or its equivalent and further study.

The definition accepted by the National Literacy Mission lies somewhere between these two extremes. As a part of continuing education, post-literacy programmes attempt to give interested learners an opportunity to harness and develop their

learning potential after completion of a course in basic literacy. This is particularly important when such neo-learners have either regressed or are in danger of regressing to partial literacy. Thus, the aim of the NLM post-literacy programme is to consolidate the basic literacy skills of speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and problem-solving, while at the same time, transforming these learners into an educated “whole person” who is a productive socio-economic asset to the community. The aim is to make such a person willing and able to participate actively and productively in our nation’s development.

The broad perspective is that whereas basic literacy programme build both technical literacy skills and functional knowledge, what people learn to read, write and calculate becomes equally as important as technical literacy skills. All continuing education seen through this definition which we have adopted is functional. Thus, in our vision, functional literacy is not just a programme, it is a concept signifying a technique of delivering knowledge so as to make learning relevant to living and working. In fact, in post-literacy, it is the functional aspect which is the main point of concern. Therefore, we have envisioned our post-literacy programme as specifically, vocationally-oriented in the knowledge that these are likely to be more successful than those that have merely an educational approach.

NLM’s Perspective of Post Literacy

The past experience in the country shows that although awareness regarding the



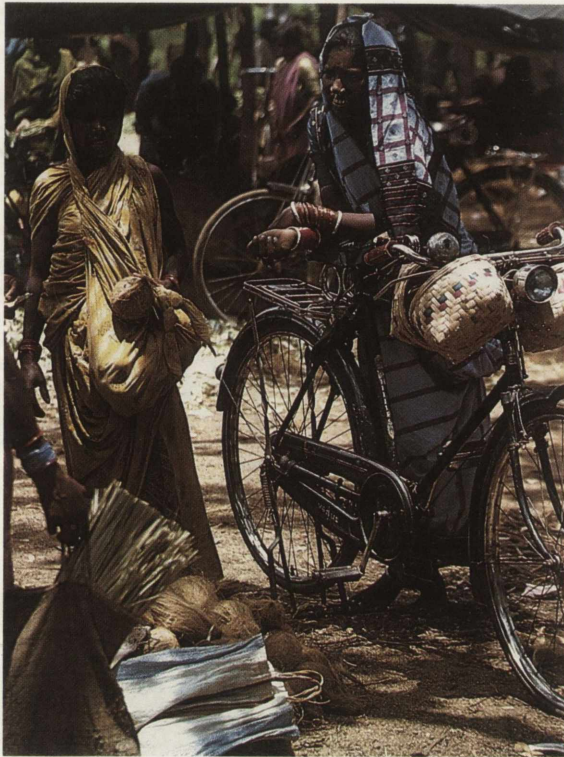
importance of post-literacy programmes was not lacking, they were seldom systematically organised. This has been one of the main reasons for the rather limited impact of adult education programmes implemented in the past. Post-literacy programmes have, therefore, necessarily to be given as much importance as regular basic literacy programmes. Here, too, the words of Dr. Zakir Husain shine like a beacon light, "Today education has become a life-long process and continuous learning has become essential even for survival." Keeping this in view, NLM has visualised PLC as an extension of TLC in the continuum of life-long education. Each TLC is to be followed by a two-year post-literacy programme to be implemented in a mission mode. After a great deal of deliberations and discussions in several meetings of the Executive Committee, NLM has formulated and circulated broad guidelines for implementation of post literacy campaigns. These guidelines envisage that the three basic elements to be kept in view while planning a programme of PL&CE are:

- (a) Identification of learning needs of neo-literates;
- (b) Provision of learning opportunities to meet the needs;
- (c) Creating a socio-economic, political and cultural ambience to sustain the learning environment.

Post-literacy programmes have been conceived by NLM, not just as remedial measures to ensure retention and stabilisation of literacy skills. NLM envisages post-literacy programmes to be developed in the context of life-long education and with the purpose of improving the quality of life of the individuals and the society at large. From this view point, post-literacy is regarded as an integrated learning process to assist neo-literates to retain, improve and apply their basic knowledge, attitude and skills for the satisfaction of their basic needs and to permit them to continue education through self-directed process for the improvement of their quality of life, both personal and societal.

NLM has permitted and encouraged a great deal of flexibility and innovation in designing and implementation of PLCs. Each PLC project has to take into account the competency levels reached by the learners in the basic literacy phase their cognitive ability, their felt needs and other area-specific and socio-cultural specific dimensions. The approach most commonly followed comprises of providing post-literacy primer/graded textual material to the learners in the first phase of post-literacy for guided study with the help of a volunteer instructor. This phase specifically aims at remediation, retention and consolidation of literacy skills. In the second phase, the learners are provided with a variety of supplementary reading materials and library





services to help them continue learning through self-directed processes.

In practice, the post-literacy strategies actually being implemented are generally a combination of different approaches, borrowing successful elements from a variety of experiences. Experience of the past few years shows that a large number of PLCs have tended to be confined to reading reinforcement or transforming post-literacy centres into Jana Shikshan Nilayams and conducting library type activities. The operational strategies adopted by PLCs have at times not succeeded in ensuring that neo-literates become adequately functionally literate. One of the major concerns that beset the post-literacy

campaigns continues to be: How to enable the neo-literate to utilise the recently acquired literacy skills for the larger processes of development. How to link literacy skills retention with other major life concerns such as health, sanitation, population issues, women's empowerment etc. Although some of the PLCs have demonstrated commendable initiative and innovation in fostering linkages with public health programmes, PLCs in general are yet to evolve a systematic approach to utilisation of post-literacy activities in disseminating information and messages related to such issues as public health, afforestation, population education. Another significant shortcoming of post-literacy strategies adopted so far has been the failure to design, develop and operationalise short duration vocational courses for development of vocational skills and diffusion of technology.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the post-literacy campaigns implemented so far have covered considerable ground and cumulative experience has yielded valuable knowledge for the promotion of post literacy programmes in general and shaping of continuing education strategies in particular. The success of post-literacy campaigns in several districts such as Nellore and West Godavari in Andhra Pradesh; Pudukkottai and Kamarajar in Tamil Nadu; Nanded and Pune in Maharashtra; Dakshina Kannada and Tumkur in Karnataka; Durg and Raisen in Madhya Pradesh; and Bardhaman and Birbhum in West Bengal, points

overwhelmingly to the conclusion that there can be no single national strategy for achieving the goals of post-literacy and continuing education. Organisational and methodological approaches, as well as curricular content have to be tailored to the particular political, social and cultural conditions prevailing. Whatever the strategies actually adopted, ways have to be found to stimulate and sustain motivation, identify priority groups of learners, make literacy functional in relation to the living conditions of the learners and of their specific goals, improve the quality of the programme offering and sustain and develop literacy skills.

Despite the vast variations in geographic, political, socio-economical and cultural conditions prevailing in different districts, there is certain commonality of challenges which each district has to face while embarking on the course to post-literacy and continuing education programmes. Each district will have to formulate and design operational strategy for implementing post-literacy programmes having regard to certain basic considerations. These would include:

- (i) Defining needs.
- (ii) Defining objectives.
- (iii) Defining the target groups.
- (iv) Initiating newer organisational process and structure.
- (v) Selecting learning methods and materials.
- (vi) Choosing content and communication media.
- (vii) Recruiting volunteer teachers/functionaries.
- (viii) Training literacy functionaries.
- (ix) Conducting evaluation and developing feed-back.

In formulating the right approach and operational strategy for post-literacy programmes, the key to success is participatory design. This implies that for designing post-literacy programmes and plan of action, the design decisions are taken democratically with all those involved e.g., learners, volunteer teachers, local leaders and project functionaries. Participatory approach encourages independent learning and motivates greater efforts. Moreover, it endows the programme with a legitimacy in the eyes of the whole community.



The detailed nature of basic needs and how best to meet them will vary over time from district to district and even within a district. In all cases, basic learning needs cannot be separate from other human needs, the definition of which must include elements that are both personal and social. The neo-literates may be interested in securing services and access to numerous anti-poverty programmes or to science or even to appropriate rural technology to improve their quality of life. Post-literacy programmes, therefore, will have to be designed keeping in view the felt needs and aspirations of the neo-literates.

As we have outlined in our definition of post-literacy, the key aim of our post-literacy programme is to ensure that participants become adequately functionally literate. Adequate functional literacy is no doubt a pre-requisite for autonomous learning and the development of a learning society.

The idea of autonomous learning is a much more sophisticated concept than the idea of simply being able and willing to learn on one's own. At an autonomous stage of personal development, we see learning as leading to productivity, self-fulfillment and awareness of values. Thus, the difference between functional literacy and autonomous learning is fairly considerable. The former deals with day-to-day basic skills of functioning in society, whereas the latter concerns itself with the view that education is valuable in itself and involves the mental, physical and spiritual development of the entire person.

The ultimate aim of our post-literacy programme is, therefore, to help participants become true autonomous learners in the broadest and best sense of that term. We are firm in our belief that only if most members of our society are autonomous learners can true democracy emerge and our society can achieve the goal of being a learning society.

Though post-literacy has these established common objectives, these are generally in the nature of broad guidelines. One has, therefore, to move specific objectives for each area and each category of learners. One has also to ensure that all key functionaries from village to district level have a full understanding of these objectives and actively participate in the process of evolving them. Since the post-literacy programmes have to be developed in the context of life-long education,

these have to fulfil four major goals, namely:

The level of achievement of neo-literates is not uniform everywhere. There are neo-literates who are yet to reach the norm laid down by NLM. One of the main aims of the post-literacy programmes should be to remedy the deficiencies of learning in the basic literacy phase and to help the neo-literates reach the desired level of achievement.

The objective is to consolidate and improve the learning skills already acquired by the neo-literates with a view to making them self-reliant not only in the sphere of reading, writing and numeracy skills but in other areas of life as well. Post-literacy is a bridge towards autonomous learning. To reach the stage of autonomous learning means that post-literacy must facilitate transition from guided learning to a self-reliant level of learning and thus create the possibility of making a neo-literate a life-long learner.

The acquired learning skills of the learners must be reflected in different areas of their life and livelihood as well. They must learn to apply their acquired skills towards improving their quality of life. Post-literacy programmes should be so designed as to help neo-literates attain the ability to use the newly acquired skills and make them adequately functionally literate. To be functionally literate implies that a person must be able to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for the effective functioning of his or her group or community and also for enabling him or her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for their own as well as the community's development.

The learner must identify himself or herself as a part of the society at large and must feel that he or she has an important role to play collectively with others in bringing about social and economic change in the country. Post-literacy programmes must help neo-literates to organise themselves for securing services under programmes related to health, family welfare, child care, nutrition, agriculture, animal husbandry etc.

Target Groups for Post Literacy

The post-literacy programmes should be open to everybody who takes reading and learning as a way to enrich life. However, post-literacy programmes should be specifically designed to serve:

- (a) neo-literates in the age-group 9-14 years who have completed the basic literacy course under TLC;
- (b) neo-literates in the age-group 15-35 years;
- (c) semi-literates/drop-outs from the basic literacy phase;
- (d) drop-outs from primary schools;
- (e) pass-outs from NFE programmes.



Organisational Strategies

As with all other important schemes and projects, the success of PL&CE programmes also depends on the setting up of a sound organisational structure for closely monitoring the implementation of the programme and for taking quick

and effective steps for overcoming difficulties or problems. The key principle is to have a three-pillared system for project management. The three main pillars are — the administration, the representative people's committees and the full-time project structure. However, at the post-literacy stage special care needs to be taken to increase the role played by academic committees or resource groups at all levels — panchayat level, block level and the district level. Another imperative at the post-literacy stage is to increasingly encourage initiative from below and facilitate community participation so that the programme may continue with community support alone.

For effective implementation of PL programmes it may be desirable to provide for the following while establishing the organisational structure:

- (i) Setting up of Saksharata Samitis at different levels — from village to the district. Two-three neo-literates should be associated with each village/gram panchayat/ward level committee.
- (ii) There should be constant dialogue, communication and co-ordination among committees at different levels.
- (iii) Functionaries of the Health Department e.g. Health Assistants/Supervisors, Panchayat Raj functionaries, Headmasters of local primary schools and local library workers must be associated with Gram Panchayat/Ward level committees.
- (iv) Representatives of different mass organisations, especially of students, youth, women and ICDS workers should be included in the Panchayat/Ward Committees.
- (v) A Monitoring Committee with the convenors of Gram Panchayat/Ward level Committees. Health Assistants, Headmasters of schools and other responsible citizens as members should be set up at each Gram Panchayat/Ward level.
- (vi) Whole-time workers may be engaged at block/district level to provide organisational and management support.

The Cluster as an Organisation

At the TLC stage, learning centres are organised on a principle of one volunteer to ten learners (1:10). In post-literacy, especially after transaction of the PL text is completed, the volunteer is primarily playing the supportive organisational role. He assists the learners to use their newly acquired skills and confidence for

continuing their learning and for improving the quality of their life. The changed role of the volunteer has a number of implications. In several districts implementing PLCs, the concept of cluster has evolved and has been found to be useful. A cluster is generally formed by grouping together three to five earlier literacy centres, Burdwan District attempted formation of cluster with even 200-300 learners. However, an optimum cluster has about 30 to 50 learners, about 3-5 volunteers and a co-ordinator. Such clustering is usually done on a geographic basis but one may also attempt to have in a large village, clusters for women and for children below the age of 14 if this is found to enhance their participation.

A cluster is not created overnight by administrative action. It emerges over time in a process of group activities. Right from the second month onward, various group activities may be planned that bring the learners and the volunteers of 3-5 centres together. As the time goes on, these activities become more regular and assume an organisational shape in the cluster. A cluster is not a substitute for learning centres. The centres, of course, co-exist and are the site of primer transaction as well as a number of other pedagogic activities. The cluster may meet at any convenient meeting place — local school, village tree, meeting square etc. The frequency of cluster meetings seldom exceeds once a week. Classes at centres in contrast may continue daily, especially, if the primers are not yet completed. The clusters must be conceived as evolving into local action groups or cultural movements in the course of time.

The cluster functions as an organisational unit for performing a number of pedagogic and mobilisation tasks. The cluster helps in the circulation of newspapers, books and other neo-literate materials. It ensures that a literate environment is maintained in the village. It conducts various group activities with the help of resource persons, for dissemination of information on various relevant aspects of life. It provides motivation and encouragement to learners to continue their learning. It acts as a forum where people discuss their problems and learn to act as a collective to improve the quality of their lives.

Post-literacy Learning Strategies

Post-literacy learning strategies as visualised by NLM envisage provision of learning opportunities both in structured and unstructured situation. Structured situation refers to organised learning where primers (PL-I) or graded textual materials are transacted to gradually achieve advanced level of competencies. The aim of post-literacy primers or graded textual materials is to ensure that every learner is systematically covered so that there is no relapse and he reaches a self-reliant



level of learning. Another invaluable element of learning strategy in a structured situation is introduction of suitably designed supplementary reading books for the neo-literates.

Unstructured situations refer to widely differing literacy abilities necessitating provision of wide range of reading materials suited to the needs and interests of neo-literates. A major learning strategy that is often effectively used in post-literacy programme is to provide along with structured courses, unstructured reading opportunities for neo-literates to practise their literacy skills, by creating an environment rich in letters. Thus, literacy walks, wall newspapers, wall writing, posters, both printed and hand-made and library facilities can make substantial difference, especially in the letter poor environment of interior villages. All this implies a competent



team at work in preparing and publishing the numerous volumes of material required. It also needs trained persons at the village who can introduce different material in the village, ensure neo-literates have access to and encourage the neo-literate to utilise and benefit from it. The habit of reading and the culture of utilising a library requires far more inputs than the mere imparting of literacy skills.

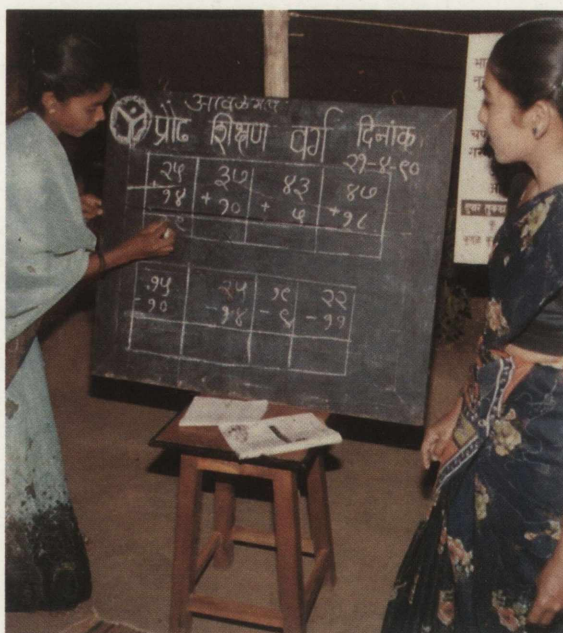
A number of methods are generally needed to provide information to the neo-literates on a wide variety of areas with the aim of creating a better awareness amongst them. Radio and television may be effectively used for this purpose. Art forms based on the local culture, theatre and songs can also be utilised. Inviting scientists, technologist, administrators and other persons with relevant expertise to talk or to interact with neo-literates is also useful for imparting information.

Slide shows, video programmes and exhibitions are also very effective media to disseminate information to neo-literates. Study tours and excursions create endless possibilities as well. One novel and successful method of imparting information is the village parliament as being experimented in Bilaspur District or Gaon Kascheri as successfully experimented in Pune District. Group discussions will also critically reflect their reality and utilise the fund of knowledge already available with them. While planning learning strategies, especially for promoting better awareness, emphasis must be given to group activities. The experience of working and learning in a group is a goal in itself.

For those children in the 9-14 age-group who have acquired basic literacy skills under TLC, a different post-literacy strategy may have to be evolved than that relevant for the adults in 15-35 age-group. In the case of children the same “fragile” literacy can quickly and completely disappear if more durable and longer duration exposure to learning experiences are not planned. For those who have attained the prescribed NLM norms, attempts should firstly be made to enable them to join the re-organised NFE course wherever available. For others, three courses, each of six months’ duration should be conducted. Materials designed by NCERT may be found suitable for them. The goal should be that the learners should ultimately reach the class IV standard. Records of progress in respect of each learning centre should be maintained properly and certificate issued to the successful learners. It is also desirable that post-literacy learning centres catering to the children must function at least 5 days or 12 hours a week.

As mentioned earlier, NLM has emphasized that post literacy programmes should be organised for a duration of two years. In the light of past experience it is considered important that districts taking up post literacy programmes must draw up a comprehensive instructional plan for the entire two-year duration. The experience of successful PLCs would suggest the following approach:

- (i) First 15-30 days should be spent for revision of lessons learnt during TLC. This would help them overcome their weakness and prepare them for studying the books prescribed for PLC.
- (ii) Two cycles, each of six months’ duration, should be planned for the structured



phase of the PLC. In the first cycle of six months, 150 hours out of the total 250 hours should be earmarked for learning of the core books/graded textual materials. The remaining 100 hours of the first cycle should be utilised for self-study, group discussions and debates on matters like remedial measures against common health hazards, use of electricity, preservation of environment etc.

- (iii) Each learning centre should function for five days a week.
- (iv) The first cycle should be followed by a package of 250 hours over

a period of six months for acquainting the learners with the nuances of functional literacy. During this period, learners be encouraged to undertake group activities in clusters, exchange experiences and ideas with one and another, participate in discussions on different socio-economic issues of common interest. Efforts should also be made during this period for kindling in them the desire for self-education and an interest for relevant vocational training.

Skill Development

In keeping with the declared objectives of New Education Policy, NLM has emphasized the integration of skill development with each programme of post-literacy and continuing education. It has been observed that post-literacy programmes have generally been less successful in sustaining the motivation of the learners than the basic literacy programmes. One of the reasons evidently is that learners do not see any apparent reward in improving literacy skills. The solution is to link together job-oriented skills and reading skills. Post-literacy workers must be able to demonstrate that the programme will contribute to economic growth and social equality which is the declared policy of the Central and State Governments. Skill development programmes should, therefore, be integrated in the post-literacy programmes preferably as soon as the first cycle of transacting textual material is over. It would be the endeavour of NLM to support post-literacy strategies for achieving the following objectives in close collaboration with other

Departments/agencies who will be requested to share specific responsibility:

- (a) Enabling the neo-literates to acquire skills for economic self-reliance, such skills also including managerial and entrepreneurial skills.
- (b) Organising vocational courses and short-duration skill development programmes with the assistance of educational institutions, technical experts from various departments. For this purpose, NLM may also support educational institutions to conduct their own vocational courses for neo-literates without the educational qualification being a condition precedent for admission in such courses.
- (c) Opening of additional Shramik Vidyapeeths in urban, semi-urban and rural areas and promotion of more agencies/institutions in the non-formal sector for the purpose of imparting vocational skill information to the neo-literates and conducting such programmes.
- (d) Creation of enabling structure for neo-literate women to help them come together to organise economic activities as a collective group. There could be several models of collective enterprise to provide worthwhile programmes of vocational education and technical skill development of women — e.g. women's cooperatives, Mahila Mandal, self-employed women's association.



What After Post Literacy?

Post-literacy campaigns are currently being implemented in only about 160 districts in the country. This means that a very large number of districts which are still implementing TLCs or which are likely to be covered through TLCs in the next one year will be taking up post-literacy programmes only during the course of 9th Five Year Plan. One crucial question is how the literacy and learning environment will be sustained once the districts taking up TLCs conclude the two-year follow-up programme of PLCs as well? While formulating strategies for post-literacy in the next decade, due consideration would have to be given to the continuing education

needs of the learners who have participated in the post-literacy programmes. The concept of life-long learning is particularly relevant to this rapidly revolving situation.

The enthusiasm and confidence generated among the learners in the districts which have successfully completed both the TLC as well as PLC phases clearly points towards the need to sustain the educational process and to provide learning opportunities on a continuing basis. Literacy is not an end in itself. It is a minimal and imperative entry point to the world of information and communication. It is the foundation for life-long learning and human development on which a country may build systematically further levels of education and training. The access to the world of letter and skills acquired by the neo-literates during the TLC and PLC phases, needs to be further carried forward to enable them to fully play the crucial role for their own social and economic upliftment and for the development of the country. This calls for creation of satisfactory arrangements for continuing education of neo-literates. Continuing education goes beyond post-literacy. It is an indispensable aspect of the strategy of human resource development and the goal of creation of a learning society. Looking to the future, it is clear there will be far less stability in the work place and in all forms of professional life. Not only are patterns of employment changing, they demand greater flexibility of individuals in the course of their working life. The current restructuring of the economy is also showing in a dramatic way the heavy burden that such changes are likely to place on skill redistribution and occupational flexibility. The planning for continuing education for the next decade will, therefore, have to be future oriented to promote human resource development on lines consistent with future needs. Continuing education programmes will have to be purposeful and life related. These should not only catch imagination of adult neo-literates but should also match their ambition and capability.

Post-literacy is both a part and a process of continuing education. Its programmes and activities are designed to prevent neo-literates and semi-literates from regressing into complete illiteracy. The programme aims to consolidate the literacy acquired during Total Literacy Campaign. Post-literacy programmes are vital in bridging the gap between the attainments of basic literacy and the development of true learning autonomy. In the post literacy phase, therefore, it is vitally important to develop higher skills of critical reading and to foster skills in independent problem-solving. Post-literacy programmes provide the point of “take off” in a continuing education system. Without it, continuing education has little meaning for neo-literates.



NLM is fully conscious of this need and has designed a scheme of Continuing Education for Neo-Literates. This Scheme has been approved by the Government of India and has come into force 1st January 1, 1996. The new scheme will replace the existing scheme of Post-Literacy and Continuing Education, also known as JSN (Jana Shikshan Nilayam) Scheme, which was launched in 1988 to meet the post-literacy and continuing needs of neo-literates emerging from centre-based adult education programmes. The new scheme has been formulated taking into account the major findings and the recommendations made in the evaluation study report of the JSN schemes as also the recommendations made in the report of the Expert Group headed by Prof. Arun Ghosh. The main objective of this Scheme is to institutionalise continuing education for neo-literates and to provide considerable flexibility in designing and implementation of diverse kind of continuing education programmes suited to the felt needs of the neo-literates. The more specific objectives of the Scheme of Continuing Education are:

- (a) Provision of facilities for retention of literacy skills and continuing education to enable the learners to continue their learning beyond basic literacy.
- (b) Creating scope for application of functional literacy for improvement of living conditions and quality of life.
- (c) Dissemination of information on development programmes and widening & improving participation of traditionally deprived sections of the society.
- (d) Creation of awareness about national concerns such as national integration, conservation and improvement of the environment, women's equality, observance of small family norms, etc. and sharing of common problems of the community.
- (e) Improvement of economic conditions and general well-being as well as improvement of productivity by organising short-duration training programmes, orientation courses for providing vocational skills and by taking up linkage activities for establishing direct linkage between continuing education and development activities.
- (f) Provision of facilities for library and reading rooms for creating an environment conducive for literacy efforts and a learning society.
- (g) Organisation of cultural and recreational activities with effective community participation.

The new scheme will be implemented throughout the Zilla Saksharata Samiti which would be expected to formulate a project proposal for establishment of a durable



infrastructure for continuing education and for taking up continuing education programmes in the District on conclusion of the post-literacy campaign. Under the scheme, ZSS has been given considerable freedom to develop its own type of programmes depending upon the prevailing socio-economic conditions, the needs of neo-literates, resources available etc. However, the scheme envisages creation of new organisational structures at the grass-root level keeping in view the need to provide institutionalised framework for implementation of CE programmes with active involvement and sharing of responsibility with Panchayat institutions, Mahila Mandals, educational institutions, NGOs etc. The scheme will be implemented in a decentralised manner. Funds for the scheme will be placed at the disposal of State Literacy Mission Authority for further disbursement to ZSS.

Establishment of continuing education centres will be the principal mode of implementing continuing education programmes. Continuing education centres will essentially be community education centres. The scheme envisages setting up of one CEC for each village to serve the population of about 1,500 which may include around 500 neo-literates, drop-outs and pass-outs from primary schools and NFE stream. CECs will be set in clusters of 8-10 with one of them being designated as nodal CEC. The principal function of the CEC would be to provide following facilities:

- (a) **Library** — A repository of learning materials
- (b) **Reading Room** — A place which encourages people to read.
- (c) **Learning Centre** — A provider of CE programmes.
- (d) **Training Centre** — For short duration training programmes to upgrade skills.
- (e) **Information Centre** — For securing information on various development programmes.
- (f) **Charcha Mandal** — Community meeting place for sharing ideas and solving problems.
- (g) **Development Centre** — For co-ordinating services of Government agencies and non-governmental organisations.
- (h) **Cultural Centre** — A place for cultural activities.
- (i) **Sports Centre** — For recreation and healthy living.

Continuing Education Programme

NLM recognises that in the areas completing post-literacy programmes, diverse kinds of continuing programmes involving alternative and innovative approaches taking into account the local conditions and resources available, would need to be promoted. The new scheme, therefore, envisages that besides establishment of continuing education centres, ZSSs will be encouraged to develop and take up implementation of target specific programmes catering to the specific needs and interests of neo-literates. Such programmes would largely be functional in the sense that these would focus on development of functional knowledge with the aim of making learning relevant to living and working. The scheme has suggested broad contents and parameters of four such types of programmes. These are:



(a) *Equivalency Programmes (EPs)*

Equivalency programmes are one type of continuing education programmes which provide an opportunity to adults and out of school children who have acquired basic literacy skills or who have completed primary education and who are willing to continue their education beyond elementary literacy for acquisition of competencies equivalent to primary or secondary levels of the formal system. EPs are, therefore, designed as alternative education programmes equivalent to existing formal education. EPs designed with sufficient flexibility and innovativeness can, however, be a cost effective alternative to enable the neo-literates and all others who dropped out of the primary formal education to continue education of their choice at their own pace.

The National Literacy Mission in collaboration with the National Open School has developed a design for implementation of an open basic education programme

for neo-literates. Under this programme, an attempt is being made to provide opportunities of continuing education to those young and adult neo-literates who are interested in pursuing learning beyond basic literacy in a non-formal mode but with the aim of acquiring recognition and qualifications equivalent to those available under the formal schooling system. Under the open basic education programme, the entire range of basic education i.e. up to Class VIII level has been divided into three levels — Level-A, Level-B, and Level-C. Level-A is for those who can just manage reading and writing (fragile literates), Level-B for those people with stable literacy and little beyond and Level-C for those whose competencies are equivalent to primary course. Within this framework, the learners would be offered a large variety of choices of learning tasks and they will be free to choose from a platter of equivalent learning tasks, e.g. language, science, environment, arithmetic and vocational. The district unit or the ZSS would be main implementation agency under the guidance and supervision of state agencies i.e. State Resource Centres and State Open Schools. The programme is proposed to be introduced to begin with in 20 districts in 4 states and later it would be extended to other States as well.

11.4.3 Income Generating Programmes (IGPs)

Income generating programmes are those vocational and technical education programmes which help participants to acquire or upgrade vocational skills and enable them to conduct income generating activities. Since vast number of people in rural areas live in acute poverty this calls for development of special strategies to provide opportunities to economically and socially disadvantaged groups to engage in economic activities through acquisition of relevant vocational, technical and entrepreneurial skills and abilities. Designing of IGPs as a component of CE involves development of a variety of innovative locally relevant, employment oriented vocational courses which may be delivered in multiple non-formal modes comprising of direct contact session, demonstration, study visits, self-learning modules, on-site training, apprentice training, distance learning or a combination of any of these.

11.4.4 Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs)

Quality of life refers to level of well-being of the society and the degree of satisfaction of a number of human needs. Quality of life improvement programmes aim to equip learners and the community with essential knowledge, attitudes, values

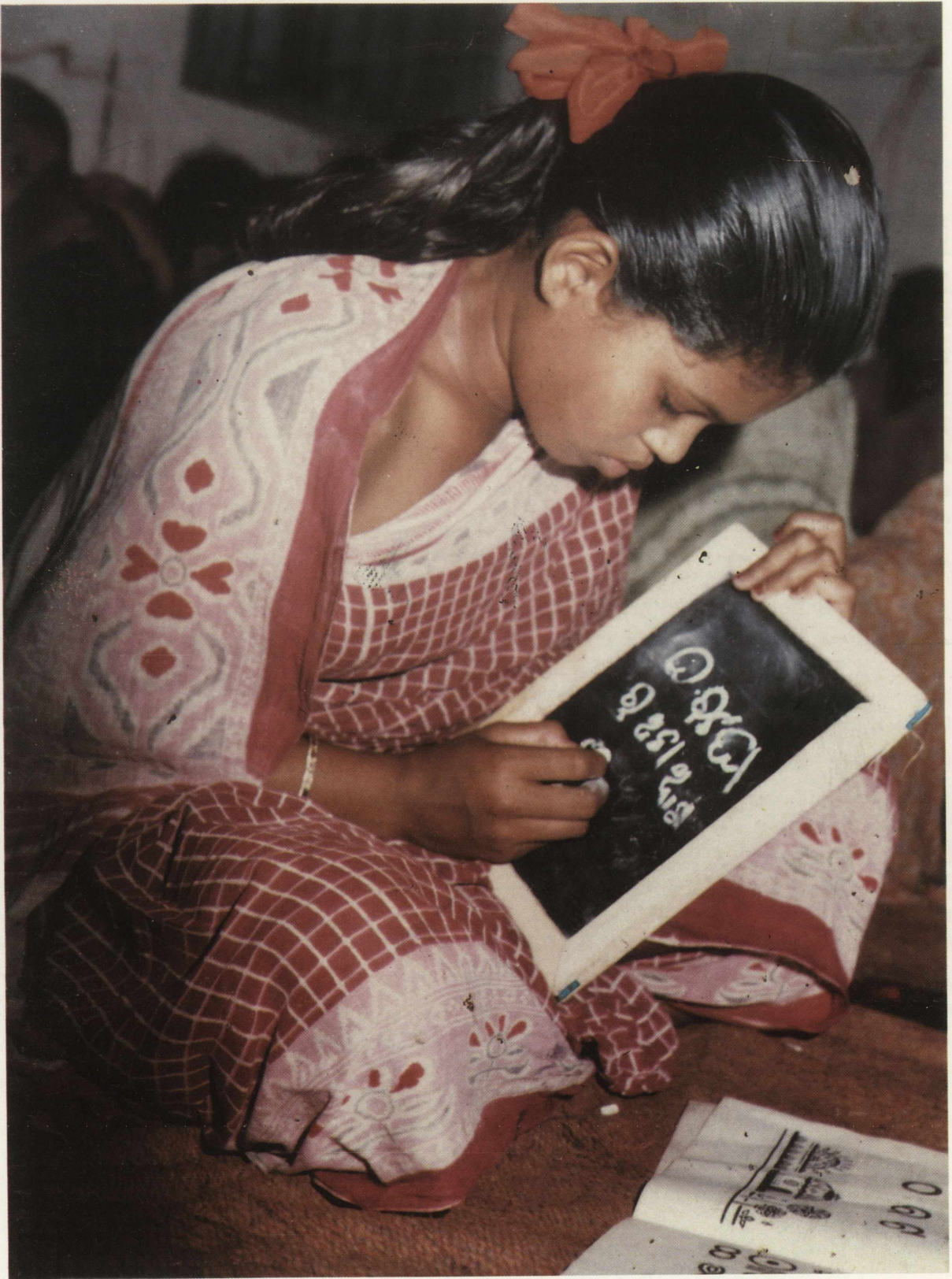
and skills to enable them to improve quality of life as individuals and as members of the community. There is a strong development focus in these programmes as these are directly concerned with helping to raise living standards and to improve life style through education.

These programmes aim to provide opportunities for individuals to participate in and learn about their chosen social, cultural spiritual, health, physical and artistic interests. The focus of IIPPs is on personal development by providing opportunities for promotion of specialised individual learning interests which may lead to improvement in the quality of human resources of the society.

Enough flexibility and freedom has, however, been granted to the ZSSs to develop their own programmes depending upon various factors such as the literacy levels of beneficiaries, needs and interests of the neo-literates, resources available, potentialities and requirements of various types of life skills, vocational and entrepreneurial skills at the grass-root level.

The Scheme of Continuing Education for Neo-Literates as visualised by NLM is an attempt to provide systematic, organised and well-coordinated mechanisms to mobilise all resources in support of continuing education in the perspective of life-long education. We have just embarked on a course which till now remains untraversed. It is, therefore, quite likely that the plan and programmes as outlined may have to be further modified and recast in the future to meet unforeseen exigencies and the demands of changing situations. We are aware that this is only a beginning. To sustain, consolidate and carry forward this movement is a more formidable task that requires unflinching commitment, dedication and perseverance on the part of all concerned and depends for its success largely on the support of those people who have contributed to the success of NLM till date. Given the commitment and effort that has been exhibited at all levels, there is every reason to hope that appropriate measures will be taken to ensure further success in future.

Before I close, let me turn again to the man who founded the Indian Adult Education Association. As we endeavour to banish the curse of illiteracy from our great country, as we strain every muscle and sinew to provide education for all, let us keep before us constantly as our goal — Dr. Zakir Husain said, “A society based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind, where men will not be afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate error so long as reason is left free to combat it.”



Guidelines for Post Literacy Campaigns



The objectives of various literacy programmes are to impart functional literacy to adults which implies:

- Achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy;
- Becoming aware of the causes of their deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their condition through organisation and participation in the process of development;
- Acquiring skills to improve their economic status and general well-being;
- Imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of environment, women's equality, observance of small family norms etc.

The PLC is, therefore, a continuation of TLC for achieving these objectives. The NLM views literacy not merely as a skill or technology. The purpose of acquisition of proficiency in the three Rs is related to a larger purpose, i.e., to create an awareness among the disadvantaged section, mostly the neo-literates, about the causes of their deprivation, and to ameliorate their condition through participation in the development process. The objectives of the PLC programme should, therefore, include consolidation of reading, writing and numeracy skills, application of these skills as problem solving tools, and to create awareness and understanding among the neo-literates about the economic and social causes of their deprivation. The Post-Literacy phase should be utilised to organise the neo-literates, to enable their meaningful participation in the

development process, and to imbibe the value of national integration, conservation of environment, women's equality, observation of small family norms. In the limited time available in TLC it is not possible to dwell on the functionality and awareness component. Therefore, during the PLC these objectives should take the centre stage.

1. Strategy of simultaneity between literacy and PL/CE

Planning for PL/CE generally begins only after the TLC phase is over. The resultant gap between acquisition of Basic literacy and the start of PL/CE programme leads to a situation where many learners who have acquired only 'fragile' literacy, quickly relapse into illiteracy, planning for PL/CE must begin with the planning for the literacy programme itself; its operationalisation should begin by the time 1/4th of the first phase of TLC learners or 50,000 learners have completed primer II.

Post-literacy and continuing education should begin only at the appropriate stage when the fragile level of literacy and guided-learning or dependence-learning syndrome of neo-literates can be replaced by a self-reliant learning syndrome. Since all learners are not uniformly endowed and their pace and level of acquisition is not uniform, we need to precisely determine the learning competencies acquired by the learners and should design an appropriate and differential strategy or responding to their divergent learning needs found at different levels of literacy and numeracy. Designing a uniform recipe or content for all the categories of learners, regardless of the variations in their receptivity and retentively as also the difference in levels reached, is likely to be counter-productive.

While providing for a common framework, the PL/CE strategy must provide choices which will take care of the aspirations of the different groups of people.

Thus, the clientele for whom post-literacy and continuing education activities need to be planned is varied in its composition and diverse in its needs.

2. Target Group

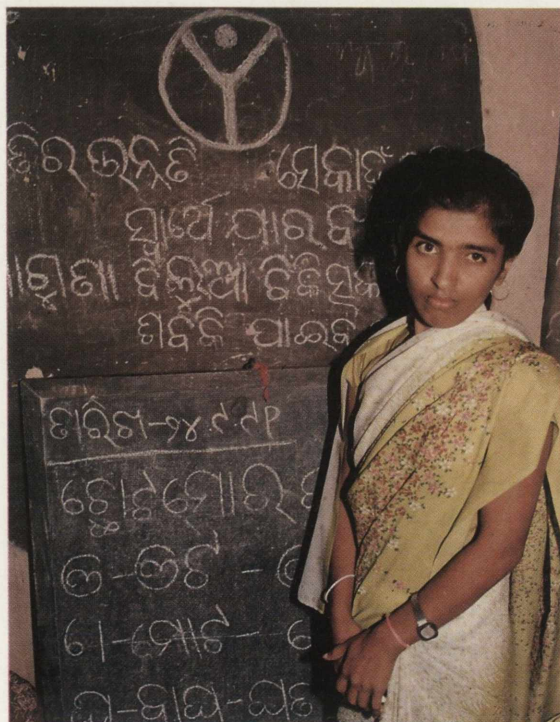
The clientele for PL/CE includes, besides neo-literates who have completed the functional literacy course, school dropouts as well as pass outs of the primary schools and NFE programmes. Each of these groups would have varying interests, aspirations and must be provided diversified choices for continuing

their learning, e.g. some persons in the younger age group may be interested in a 'second chance formal education'; youth, say in the 15-25 age group may desire vocational training for skill inculcation and upgradation. These may be others interested in work and family related courses, and still others, who are interested only in occasionally picking up a newspaper or book and reading.

For the purpose of preparing the project the number of learners who have successfully completed primer II and have started reading primer III will be taken into account. The project proposal will be considered in principle by the Executive Committee of NLMA and approved for the projected numbers of learners likely to complete primer III. The actual implementation of the PLC programme will only start on completion of primer III. The Director-General, NLMA would be empowered to extend coverage of the programme on the basis of external evaluation report for all learners who achieved NLM norms. While flexibility will be provided to the implementing agencies to include the school, NFE dropouts, total size of the project will not exceed the size of the TLC programme.

3. Needs of Neo-literates

Given the background the neo-literates would be interested in securing services and access to numerous anti-poverty programmes, science and appropriate rural technology to improve their quality of life after attaining literacy and after improving their awareness and functional and vocational skills. The awareness of Government plans, policies and programmes on the one hand and of the provisions of protective and anti-exploitative laws meant for their protection and liberation would reinforce the faith and conviction in them that literacy learning could be a very useful weapon in making them aware of the existential reality of the situation in which they have been helplessly placed, in enabling



them to grapple with the forces which are hostile to them and eventually overcoming them.

The awareness of laws, policies and programmes may lead to some empowerment of the neo-literates but may not lead to achievement of the desired results. For this, organisation of the unorganised is imperative and such organisation should be one of the major goals or objectives of the post-literacy activity. In a sense, post-literacy becomes a meaningful activity when it is preceded by systematic efforts for formation of groups of neo-literates to come together, learn together and act together. This should, however, grow and consolidate itself around worthwhile economic activities which are of direct interest and relevance to the lives of the neo-literates. Such activities should be so conducted that they eventually result in conferring of ownership rights of assets (like quarries, poultry units, food/fruit processing units, etc.) to be members of the collective.

The three basic elements to be kept in view in planning a worthwhile programme of PL & CE: are (a) identification of learning needs of neo-literates; (b) provision of learning opportunities to meet the needs; and (c) creating a socio-economic, political and cultural ambience or nuclei to sustain the learning environment. The ultimate objective of that planning strategy would be to create a learning society where literacy is valued and prized, an urge, inclination and commitment of every individual to work for and contribute to literacy promotion efforts is respected and all doubts, reservations and misgivings about literacy as an important entry point to the world of information, communication and modernisation, as a tool of individual empowerment and collective well-being are replaced by a new faith, belief and conviction that this is a worthwhile effort and is certainly possible, feasible and achievable.

4. Functions of PL/CE

The PL/CE programme must address itself to the following:

(a) **Remediation:** It is quite likely that despite best efforts, some learners could not complete all the primers at the basic literacy stage or could qualify in the test prescribed. It is also possible that some of them got enrolled initially but dropped out for a variety of reasons and situations. Their learning needs cannot be easily ignored or belittled and learning opportunities by way of remediation or mopping up operations will have to be provided to them for such duration as may be necessary to correct their learning deficiencies. Thus, keeping in view the uneven levels of achievement, it is crucial that those persons who have not achieved NLM levels of literacy in the TLC phase are enabled to achieve it.

Secondly, those persons who have not participated at all in the TLC, whether it is for reasons of migration or inaccessibility in the more remote villages, or simply because family circumstances did not permit it, should be provided opportunity for basic literacy during this phase. Post-literacy arrangements for neo-literates will thus be required to perform this remediation function.

(b) **Continuation:** This has always been the principal focus of post-literacy, which relates to retention, reinforcement, stabilisation and upgradation of literacy skills. During the basic literacy stage, certain skills (reading, writing and computational) would have been acquired by those who completed the third primer, but these may be considered fragile or rudimentary and which would need to be refined and sharpened while some other skills may have to be acquired afresh or upgraded to usable levels. Retention would be possible if the levels acquired are sufficiently high and which will not permit relapse into illiteracy. It will also be possible if guided-learning could be replaced gradually by self-learning and learner or neo-literate is encouraged to be entirely on his/her own. The textual material needed for this stage would have to keep this objective in focus.

(c) **Application:** Normally, the improvement of literacy and functional skills should lead to their application in a living and working situation, but this needs to be encouraged by positive measures. Through application of literacy, people begin to participate in the developmental process. Application essentially implies a shift from acquisition of skills to their application in getting services and also in a large sense an awareness of public policy which could lead to a qualitative improvement in working and living conditions. Skills in this context imply both reading, writing and computational skills as also communication skills, vocational and survival skills. Services imply delivery services under programmes related to health, family welfare, maternity and child health, nutrition, immunizational child care (ORT), agriculture, animal husbandry, veterinary etc. Awareness of public policy would imply an awareness of the age of marriage, age of employment, minimum wages, anti-dowry laws, un-touchability, provision of child marriage act etc. Application of literacy learning in these respects would give them confidence and a sense of awakening and liberation from social deprivation, discrimination and injustice.

(d) **Communitisation:** This refers to the process of positive socialisation and use of communication skills/articulation of individual and group assertion. It may take the shape of group action for the improvement of the environment of vitalization of community forums and population

organisations for social justice. It is the process by which individuals acquire a new identity, a feeling of empowerment, a new confidence, a new outlook towards life and living situations.

As mentioned in the foregoing portion the PLCs have to necessarily cater to a diverse target group from different age-groups with different aspirations and aims for participating in Post-Literacy Campaign which is to say that learners needs and aspirations are different. To be effective, the PLC proposals have to be tailored to the learners needs. This has to, therefore, provide for number of options for learners from different background, different age groups and different needs. Thus a straitjacket approach is neither feasible nor desirable and instead a 'cafeteria' approach providing for different options would have to be proposed.

Strategies for Operationalisation

1. Re-survey for all learners

The effective operationalization of the PL/CE programmes would require a thorough resurvey of all learners in order to (i) verify the learning levels achieved during the TLC phase, and (ii) identify left outs of the TLC. It is expected that re-survey will also (a) create in awareness of the need for PL/CE and (b) re-mobilise the organisational network into action. After the survey is done differential strategies for different groups will be necessary.

2. TLC/PLC to run concurrently

In implementing the literacy and post-literacy stage should not be mixed up. Even while initiating post-literacy programme, emphasis must continue to be given in achieving NLM level of literacy by those who have not achieved it. The project proposal should clearly spell out the strategies adopted for moping up the left out learners, improving the skills of those who have not achieved NLM norms and the post literacy project for those who achieved the NLM norms.

Post-Literacy provisions for children (9-14 age group)

As part of the Total Literacy Campaign, the younger age-group (of children) would also attain at least the same standard in literacy which the adults may acquire. However, since adults are more mature, have working responsibilities with a little bit of additional help at post-literacy stage, they may soon become

self-reliant in literacy. Therefore, for adults, a shorter phase of post-literacy using mostly textual material may suffice. In the case of children, the same 'fragile' literacy could quickly completely disappear if more durable and longer duration exposure to learning experiences are not planned. Moreover, at that tender age, the desire for learning once kindled could be carried far too long and this should be given a more enduring and lasting emphasis.



It is, therefore, proposed that the children who complete TLC cycle and reach NLM norms may join the re-organise NFE course. This course has four phases – each of 5 to 6 months, the total duration being 2 years. However, since first six months are likely to be completed in TLC, the remaining one and a half years or phase II, III, IV could constitute the post-literacy phase. Materials designed by NCERT may be found suitable for this.

Post-Literacy provisions for adults in 15+ age group

The post-literacy programme should aim at providing four basic skills, i.e., Life Skills, Survival Skills, Communication Skills; and Vocational or Entrepreneurial Skills.

Life Skills: In normal living and working situations men and women, who have

just acquired initial literacy skills would like to use these of improving their living style and may like to make use of acquiring more information on issues which reduce drudgery like use of bio-gas, repair of gadgets, smokeless chulha, conservation of food. Literacy followed by post-literacy should help in dealing with these.

Survival Skills: Literacy should in other situations help people withstand the vagaries of nature — earthquakes, floods, drought and neo-literate should acquire better control over situation leading to atrocities, exploited and be aware of ways to deal with such situations. Similar application of inexpensive technology and its use could be learnt.

Communication Skills: Though literacy one acquires an ability to articulate ones feelings and develop confidence to participate effectively in developmental tasks and processes. Even the awareness and information level about public issues such as dowry, minimum wages, prohibition laws, child marriage and its evils, atrocities on weaker sections and women goes up and better communication skills get developed.

Vocational Skills: Literacy as a tool of empowerment and as a method of poverty alleviation recognizes the need to give greater economic stability to neo-literates. Training for income generation, self-employment, income supplementation would be in the interest of neo-literates. The ambit of existing developmental programmes needs to be enlarged and short duration programmes started for them.

Organisation of Implementation Structure

Post-literacy should be a planned, structured and co-ordinated effort and should preferably be implemented in a campaign mode as in the TLC. The Saksharata Samiti at the district level and similar people's committees at the block/mandal panchayat, panchayat and village level would continue to provide leadership and direction for the post-literacy campaign as in the TLC.

District Level

The Zila Saksharta Samiti comprising the General Body and the Executive Committee should continue to be the main implementing agency. Its task specific sub-committees should also continue, though obviously with a wider gamut of functions in keeping with the post-literacy objectives.

An important point to emphasise at the district level is the development of a

group of persons for resource material production. The group may evolve out of the existing task specific sub-committees, or may be created to include creative writers, journalists, educationists and activists/trainers of the TLC phase. Such a group is essential for identification, collection and development of textual and supplementary materials through workshops in which neo-literates, volunteers, students may be encouraged to participate, or by liaising with resource agencies at the state and national level. Such a group would also co-ordinate with development departments to adapt their extension literature in form, content and typesize to a level which neo-literates can read with facility, or perhaps, even taken on the responsibility of planning audio/TV programmes with 'matching' print materials. An even more important function of the group would be to make available adequate resource inputs for neo-literate newspapers, news-magazines etc.

At the district level the District Resource Unit either existing independently or as part of District Institute of Educational Technology (DIET) level can be made responsible for providing technical and managerial support to the TLC on the advice of Zila Saksharata Samiti.

Block/Sub-block level

The participatory committees, full-time workers and government structure at this level would continue to play an important role in monitoring the programme and providing resource input. There can be a post-literacy organiser at Block level to co-ordinate the efforts of the learning clusters.

Village: It should be the endeavour of the PLC to provide an institutional framework in the form of learning centres in every village/habitation/urban slum in as decentralised and debureaucratised mode as possible. Irrespective of the form the learning centres may take, it would be ensured that the community is fully involved in planning and implementation of the post-literacy programmes, the ultimate objective being to organise the unorganised.

In each village for a group of 50 neo-literates a Shikshan Kendra (Literacy Circle) may be set up where basically a volunteer will act as a guide to help the neo-literates to complete TL-I in about 40 instructional hours. Thus, in each village there could be more than one shikshan kendra and if geographical proximity allows 50 shikshan kendras/literacy circles, neo-literate sanghas could be attached to a JSN which could be under the charge of a prerak.

Experience has shown that the cluster will be a more suitable form of interaction



for general awareness and cultural programmes and extension education. It would be a more convenient unit for ensuring actual utilisation of the facilities provided under the library and reading room system. It may also prove to be an ideal setting for activating local action groups.

The cluster will provide scope for better linkage between post-literacy programmes and other developmental programmes. For instance, a cluster of women may be organised into a co-operative for income generating activities, or representatives from a cluster selected through a process of discussion, for training under TRYSEM.

Operationalising the cluster requires a diversity of programmes, which are locally relevant. This can be ensured only if the local cluster organisers are given sufficient training, periodic academic inputs and support for planning and monitoring their programmes regularly.

In each village or habitation where the number of neo-literates is substantial and where shikshan kendra already exist, it may be useful to set up small pathagars having a reading room where the neo-literates could meet, read and discuss together and share the information, ideas and experience of developmental nature. The village youth club could take upon itself the task of organising and running the village library where a couple of newspapers, newsletters, developmental literature, supplementary books for neo-literates could be made available. Similarly at the block level, preferably in the library of the secondary or higher secondary schools, separate sections for neo-literates could be created. This support library at the block level would be expected to nurture the library at the village level and therefore it will have to be properly equipped. It could also lend books and rotate them to different villages on a weekly, fortnightly and monthly basis.

In order that these pathagars and village libraries are able to serve the neo-literates and other persons interesting in using them, a strong material production unit at the district level will have to function and this responsibility could be taken up by the ZSS which may ultimately turn itself as the District Resource Unit.

The Library/Reading Books is visualised as a centre which symbolises the importance accorded to neo-literates for continuing their learning. Its

creation for each village unit of 100 learners would be central to the organisation of all post-literacy activities.

The library/reading room would be served by one or a group of active volunteers, whose main function would be to reach out to and involve all neo-literates in its activities. It would be housed in a building/room provided by the community, or constructed out of JRY funds.

It would provide for sufficient Post-Literacy materials —50 books, daily newspapers, journals etc. — on a yearly recurring basis, as also some recreational equipment. It would be an information centre for development activities, and a centre for cultural activities giving particular importance to folk media. In addition, it would be a venue for strengthening skills of those who have not achieved NLM levels of literacy by organising volunteer or peer group teaching. It would also be the forum for organisation of group activities, such as kathavachan (story telling) sessions etc.

Training: The design of training as post-literacy workers would have to be considerably different from the training organised for literacy volunteers/instructors. At the post-literacy stage the canvas is quite wide and the range of activities is also unlimited. It is not restricted to imparting of literacy alone. Training is to really be in ways and methods of infusing confidence among the neo-literates to utilise the opportunities available, for stabilising literacy skills, for acquiring more information, knowledge and awareness about issues relating to their personal, social and economic development. Training has also to be given in proper utilization of the materials designed and available for neo-literates. Since discussion groups or charcha mandals would also constitute an important element in post-literacy phase, training in organising these and helping the neo-literates to take upon themselves such responsibility will be a necessary component of training the District Resource Unit, the ZSS and the SRCs would naturally be ideal in organising. The ZSS could also set up groups within the district for this purpose. Use of electronic media (radio, TV, video cassettes) could also be made with advantage. Library organisations will also be an important function under post-literacy set up and training for this aspect would also be essential. Since at this stage, the learner does not remain as passive as he/she used to be when he/she joined the literacy course. By now neo-literates would have become more vocal, responsive, analytical and inquisitive and therefore during the training programmes for volunteers these aspects would also required to be kept in mind. Duration of training should also be shorter than what it used to be for volunteer-teachers. But the kinds of expectations from the volunteers in post-literacy being different and the

contents of training would have to be chosen judiciously and carefully shared.

The design of training for post-literacy workers would have to be considerably different. At the post-literacy stage the canvas is wide and the range of activities unlimited. Training would have to focus on the processes for:

- instilling greater confidence among neo-literates to learn further;
- transaction of specific materials designed for neo-literates;
- enabling learners who have yet to achieve NLM norms to achieve it;
- organisation and conduct of discussion groups, charcha mandals, kathavachans;
- integration of development, social and economic programmes with post-literacy;
- identification and initiation of group action.

Integration with Development Department

Each post-literacy programme would be suitably integrated with programme of other development departments. These departments would provide facilities for location of the learning centres, imparting training to the beneficiaries of the post-literacy programme and would provide literature on activities/ programmes being undertaken by them, besides meeting and talking to the learners at the post-literacy centres to understand the existential reality of the situation in which they have been placed and to provide support services to minimise the rigour and hardship of their existence.

- Schemes/programmes of TRYSEM, DWACRA, SCYTES, etc. would be suitably interlinked with post-literacy and continuing education so that the facilities under these schemes are available to the neo-literate.
- Newspapers for neo-literates, neo-literates' newsletter, wall papers, periodicals, magazines, etc., should become a part of supportive learning strategy.
- For promoting reading habits, the learning centres would be encouraged to set up pen-friend clubs, reader clubs, etc. Book voyage will be integrated with post-literacy programme at the local, district and state levels.
- The employers, tradeunions and the government departments/ undertakings would be expected to provide facilities of reading rooms,



libraries, etc. for the neo-literates/learners, and their employees/members etc.

- State Resource Centres, voluntary agencies and the private publishers should be encouraged to bring out books of common interest to the learners at subsidised rates. The educational institutions would be persuaded to allow the neo-literates to make use of the facilities of their libraries.
- Radio, television and films would be used with creativity and innovative skills to encourage efforts in the districts covered by the total literacy campaigns to sustain literacy, particularly reading and numeracy skills. Specially designed audio-visual learning material would be prepared for use in the JSNs and post-literacy centres. Serials, particularly for the neo-literates, would be developed and shown/broadcast through TV/radio.

PLC is Contextual

Each PLC project proposal has to be different. It has to take into account the area specific, culture specific, dimension of the local, historical background of previous movements for education reform, the new upsurge created by implementation of PLC etc. Some of the innovative features are being cited below as indicators of various possibilities which can be explored:

- (a) PLC can be converted into an information window to pass on information about various development schemes and programmes of the government and also to function as a centre for discussion with development officers.
- (b) The learning centres selected one good topic of the day and discussions are held on this topic throughout the district at the level of learning centres. This enables crystalization of opinion on selected topics considered important for the district. It also provides an opportunity to the neo-literates for personality development by assuming a leadership role in their discussion.
- (c) Some districts have set up voluntary cells at the district level to ensure the participation of voluntary agencies not only in PLC, but also for all the development activities being undertaken by either voluntary agencies or government.
- (d) In order to implement PLC effectively, Mahila Mandals, Nehru Yuvak Kendra are being strengthened and involved to play an active role.



- (e) In the state of Karnataka training of elected representatives about the constitutional provisions of the 22nd and 23rd constitutional amendments are being carried out on a large scale. The Post-Literacy Centres are also being used to act as discussion forum about the provisions of these constitutional amendments and thereby helping in creating better understanding and awareness about the Panchayat Raj System and the role of women in making it functional.
- (f) PLC is also being used as strategy for strengthening of responsive administration, e.g., in Pune the concept of gaon kachari has been evolved as part of strategy for implementing PLC. It envisages that all the government/semi-government functionaries working as a given village come together once a week at a given place in a village under one roof from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. One of the functionaries who is a member of gaon kachari adopts a village for implementation and follow-up action on development schemes.
- (g) Some districts have adopted innovative strategy of collecting riddles and stories from amongst the neo-literates and compiling them in the form of small booklets. These riddles and stories are then used in other learning centres to make them interesting and lively. This will help in creation of literature which mirrors and reflects the life and experiences of the world of neo-literates.

Conclusion. It is expected that for providing post-literacy Book I, some supplementary readers, newspapers, broadsheets and for organising training programmes etc., an expenditure upto Rs. 35-40 per neo-literate may be enough. The expenditure on vocational training and for giving a developmental orientation to programmes and activities in PL & CE will hopefully come from concerned department and agencies. The details in this report are being worked separately.

Characteristics of Post-Literacy Campaigns

PLC is a transition from a structured literacy programme phase to an unstructured self-learning phase. Moreover, the projects are highly contextual depending on the specificity of project/district, achievements levels which could be acquired by the neo-literates, semi-literates during the literacy phase. The campaigns will be consisting of different target age-groups and within the age groups some will be continuing with non-formal education, some with adult night schools and some with simply self-learning. Reporting or any PLC





will thus be on the lines of the project activities. Therefore, only an elementary basic statistical pro forma has been suggested indicating completion of PL BOOK I and participation in discussion groups thereafter. It is essential that this bare statistical report is invariably supplemented by a qualitative account of coverage. Therefore, it is necessary that progress of various processes and activities in respect of the various target groups in different stages of the campaigns are reflected in the qualitative part. The pro forma of this purpose has been designed and circulated to all the TLC/PLC districts by the NLM.



Guidelines on Books for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education



With the adoption of mass campaign approach as the dominant strategy of National Literacy Mission (NLM). Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) have been launched in several districts all over the country. A situation is fast emerging whereby millions of illiterates are acquiring basic literacy skills and joining the class of neo-literates each year. To facilitate reinforcement of literacy skills acquired by the neo-literates and to provide them opportunities for upgradation of their skills so as to enable them to function more effectively in their societies, Post-Literacy Campaigns (PLCs) are launched as a follow-up phase of TLC. While PLCs cater principally to neo-literates emerging from TLCs, the beneficiaries of PLC may also include other disadvantaged groups such as school drop-outs, unemployed youth, women in rural areas, etc. During Post-Literacy & Continuing Education (PL & CE) phase, the literacy processes have to be so continued as to sustain the learning interests and motivate the neo-literates to upgrade and acquire literacy skills for improvement of their living conditions. This necessitates development, production and distribution of a wide range of reading materials suited to the needs and interests of a wide variety of clientele groups.

The Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi, had, in 1986, circulated "Guidelines on Books for Post-Literacy" to facilitate uniformity of approach in development and distribution of suitable books for the neo-literates. These guidelines had been formulated keeping in view the objectives of the Scheme of Jana Shikshan Nilayams (JSNs) which were to be established in a phased manner all over the country to cater to the PL & CE needs of neo-literates emerging from the Centre-based adult education programme. With

the rapid expansion of TLCs and phenomenal growth in the number of neo-literates having widely varying competency levels, the guidelines issued earlier have become outdated. It has, therefore, become necessary to lay down fresh guidelines keeping in view the changed literacy scenario and the new strategies propagated by NLM. In view of the vast socio-cultural diversity of our country, wide variations in the achievement levels of neo-literates and considerable flexibility provided to the agencies implementing PL & CE programmes, it is not considered either necessary or practicable to lay down comprehensive guidelines on all relevant aspects of designing, developing and distribution of materials for neo-literates. The following guidelines are, therefore, being provided as broad policy parameters to govern the approach in regard to development, production and distribution of materials for neo-literates:

(i) The first step in organising development, production and distribution of materials for neo-literates is as to establish the objectives for which these materials are required. These objectives must be consistent with the national goals. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 (as modified in 1992) has resolved that the NLM shall strive to achieve the national goals, such as alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, observance of small family norm, promotion of women's equality, basic health care etc. The NPE also calls upon the NLM to facilitate energisation of the cultural creativity of the people and their active participation in the development process. The NLM has accordingly pledged itself to the cause of eradication of illiteracy and has set for itself the target of imparting functional literacy to 100 million illiterate persons by the end of the 8th Five Year Plan i.e. 1997. The NLM document envisages the following objectives by defining 'Functional Literacy' to include:

- (a) Achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy;
- (b) Becoming aware of the causes of their deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their conditions through organisation and participation in the process of development;
- (c) Acquiring skills to improve the economic status and general well-being; and
- (d) Imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of the environmental, women's equality, observance of small family norm, etc. Primers, books and other supplementary reading materials used in PL & CE programmes must contribute to achievement of national goals and more directly the NLM objectives. There must be anything in these materials

- which is violative of NLM objectives or which may prejudice the national interests.
- (ii) Books and supplementary reading materials for the neo-literates have also to be so designed and developed as to facilitate achievement of programme specific objectives. One of the primary objectives of PL & CE programmes is to enable neo-literates to consolidate their literacy skills and to further upgrade these skills so as to become autonomous learners. The neo-literate materials should be so designed and graded that the transition from the stage of neo-literacy to that of independent learner is easily facilitated. This is important since materials are to be used in both structured as well as unstructured situations. Structured situation refers to organised learning where primers (PL-I) and supplementary reading books designed to gradually achieve the advanced levels of competencies are used. Unstructured situations refer to widely differing literacy abilities necessitating provision of a wide range of reading materials suited to the needs and interests of neo-literates. The materials developed for neo-literates should, therefore, be oriented to the genuine needs of neo-literates and should reinforce the literacy skills acquired earlier by them.
 - (iii) The materials for neo-literates should facilitate smoothly phased development of general educational competencies in terms of reading, writing, numeracy and mental skills. These should enable the neo-literates to gradually proceed to more advanced levels of learning in any area of their interest or need. General mental skills, which may sought to be promoted by these materials, should include vocabulary development, enhancement of general knowledge, ability to appreciate conceptual schemes, ability to reason critically, and ability to solve problems, especially those which concern their work and daily life.
 - (iv) Reading materials should be educationally sound, attractively produced and interesting so as to promote development of a reading habit. These should enable neo-literates to add to their knowledge as well as provide them reading pleasure.
 - (v) The content areas of books should offer a wide range of choice to the neo-literates. The content categories may comprise of (a) recreational topics/ fiction, (b) social and developmental issues, (c) civics and values, (d) culture and (e) work related knowledge and skills.

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- (vi) The books and supplementary reading materials should be useful for the neo-literates and provide them access to the new information and technology. Improvement of economic conditions of the neo-literates and other clientele groups of PL & CE programmes is an important objective in development of reading materials. These materials should, therefore, enable neo-literates to learn new skills, upgrade their old skills and acquaint them with ways and means of securing services from social and developmental programmes launched for their benefit. These should also provide them information on procedures for getting assistance from rural banks, co-operatives and other development agencies.
- (vii) Reading materials for neo-literates should make the neo-literates enjoy learning more. This calls for development and use of educational materials which contain elements of entertainment and entertaining materials which contain elements of education. Simultaneously, the materials for neo-literates should also try to develop scientific concepts and inculcate formation of rational and scientific attitudes among them. The materials used should result in development of desirable values and attitudes. These as far as possible be action oriented.
- (viii) Learning materials for neo-literates, especially for those who have not yet acquired abilities of autonomous learning, may be developed in the spoken language of the learners taking into account the dialectical specialities and cultural contexts. The materials should be so designed and graded as to enable learners to proceed from their local language to the acquisition of skills in reading and writing in the major language of the state, which may be adopted as the standard medium for PL & CE programmes. The language used should, however, be simple and should suit the learners' comprehension level.
- (ix) Production of materials for neo-literates is a very specialised and a challenging task. Several agencies such as State Resource Centre, voluntary organisations, National Book Trust and private publishers are engaged in production of diverse kind of learning materials. Considerable effort, time and financial resources may be saved if the existing materials are properly screened, adapted and utilised for PL & CE programmes. Selection and distribution of the existing materials has, however, to be systematically planned and carefully undertaken. To oversee proper selection of materials for PL & CE programmes, the State Governments shall constitute a material



Selection Committee. The constitution of this Committee may be as under:

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| 1. Education Secretary of the State Government | Chairperson |
| 2. State Director of Adult Education (who may function as chairperson in the absence of Education Secretary. | Member-Secretary |
| 3. Director, State Resource Centre | Member |
| 4. An eminent adult educationist or writer nominated by Director-General (NLM) | Member |
| 5. An eminent adult educationist or writer nominated by the State Govt | Member |
| 6. One member representing a voluntary organisation/NGO nominated by Director-General (NLM) | Member |
| 7. One member representing a voluntary organisation/NGO nominated by the State Government | Member |

- (x) The Material Selection Committee in each state/UT may evolve appropriate norms for selection of books and supplementary reading materials keeping in view the NLM objectives and other considerations enumerated above. This committee shall also be responsible for determining the broad content areas for which books should be selected and the weightage to be given to each content area keeping in view the requirements of PL & CE programmes in progress in the State. The Committee may also evolve and adopt such pricing criteria for selection of books as it may deem appropriate, keeping in view the need to maintain cost effectiveness of PL & CE programmes and to ensure reasonable economy in expenditure.
- (xi) The Material Selection Committee may also derive appropriate procedures for channelising the distribution of neo-literate materials to the project areas.
- (xii) While the NLM would continue to encourage SRCs, VAs and private publishers to undertake increased production of useful and educationally sound materials for PL & CE programmes, the State Governments may also

take appropriate measures to stress upon all development departments and agencies organising programmes for economically and socially disadvantaged sections of the society to bring out their schemes, information booklets and other materials, including forms in the language and print suited to the needs of neo-literates and to arrange their wider distribution through institutionalised mechanisms set up under the PL & CE programmes.

The above guidelines shall supercede the existing guidelines which were circulated in 1986 by the Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi. The Material Selection Committee constituted in each state/UT in accordance with the provisions of para 2. (ix) above shall be fully competent to devise and lay down supplementary guidelines and procedures on such other relevant aspects of development, production and distribution of books and other reading materials for PL & CE as are not specifically covered by the above guidelines, provided that all such guidelines, and procedures evolved by the Material Selection Committee remain in conformity with the above guidelines and should not be violative of any of the basic principles enunciated under the above guidelines.



