SUMMARY DOCUMENTS

OF THE

EDUCATION PROGRAM REVIEW

1984

1. Education Program Review
   by Sheldon Schaeffer
   IDRC
   October 1984

2. IDRC Education Program Review
   Meeting of the International Review Team
   by Kazim Bacchus
   July 25-27, 1984

These reports were presented to the Board of Governors for discussion at
the March 1985 Board meeting. They present a summary of discussions of
the main issues raised during a series of review activities which explored
various aspects of the Social Sciences Division's Education Program.

Education Program Review

Response of the Program to the Report of the
International Review Team

IDRC has supported projects in the field of education since 1974; in
the past 10 years, some 173 projects have been funded in 43 countries
at a total cost of some $14 million, approximately 4.6% of the
Centre's budget. These projects have examined a range of issues as
wide as the definition of education itself, but in recent years have
tended to focus on problems of educational quality at all levels of
the educational system, on the relationship between education and
work, and on the role of education in the process of social, economic,
and political development. In funding these projects the Program has
taken as a general objective the support of research and research
training which enable developing world researchers: (1) to identify,
describe, and analyze educational problems; (2) to experiment with and
evaluate possible solutions to these problems which may lead to the
satisfaction of basic educational needs and to better educational
policy and practice; and (3) to examine the role of education in
development.

In 1984, the Board of Governors asked the Centre to undertake an
evaluation of the Education Program's activities. As part of this
effort, an International Review Team, chaired by Prof. Kazim Bacchus
of the University of Alberta, met in Ottawa from July 25-27, 1984, to
examine, assess, and advise upon the Program's current and future
directions and strategies of work. The Team's deliberations were
based upon discussions with Program and Divisional staff and documents
prepared as part of the Review exercise, including the Program's own
statement of activities, achievements, and future plans. A list of
these documents is attached. The recommendations of the Review Team

and the Program's reactions to them are summarized below. With some
exceptions, the Program generally agreed with the recommendations and
has since taken steps to integrate them more completely into the
Program's work.

A. <u>General focus of the Education Program</u>: The Team strongly urged
that the Program's future activities be particularly guided by the
part of the IDRC Act which stresses the need "to assist the developing
regions to build up the research capabilities, the innovative skills.
and the institutions required to solve their problems." The Program
was therefore encouraged to focus its efforts on "helping to build up
and strengthen the capacity of Third World countries themselves
to...carryout, on an on-going basis, their own educational research."
Recommendations 6, 8, and 19 directly relate to this objective, urging
that training and Cooperative Program activities developed by the
Education Program, as well as its project funding, should relate
directly to enhancing the capacity of Third World researchers in
educational research.

This set of recommendations is largely consistent with present
practice. Many projects and DAPs funded by the Program, as well as
several funded through the Fellowships and Awards Division (FAD), have
capacity-building as an explicit goal, whether it be in relatively
traditional methods, such as in a West African graduate program in
education being funded in Togo, or in alternative, action research
methods as in the Indonesian project on the docket at this meeting.
Some projects, in fact, are designed so that the process of doing
research is as important as its eventual product. There is often
provision in such projects for the development of more junior staff
through collaboration with senior researchers, formal training,
workshops and seminars, and travel to other projects. This is
particularly the case for projects funded in a Latin American

research network which is examining the quality of primary school
teaching and learning.

Sometimes in collaboration with the Fellowships and Awards Division,
grants have also been provided for training workshops or to individual
researchers for graduate programs and fieldwork. Workshops have
funded recently in the Caribbean, Chile, Colombia, and Kenya.
Individual awards often include support for dissertation research in
the fellow's own country so that the selected topic is directly
relevant to that country's needs. Exposure to or formal attachment
with research projects elsewhere in both the North and the South is
also encouraged; the leader of an evaluation of the Ethiopian literacy
campaign, for example, visited scholars and literary projects in
Africa, Central America, Europe, and Canada. Wherever possible,
education projects being funded through the Cooperative Program also
contain a training component, either formal or informal. This is the
case in a recent project which links the University of Montreal, the
University of Antilles-Guyane, and the Ministry of Education in Haiti.

B. Regional autonomy and decision-making: The Review Team
recommended that regional offices be granted greater autonomy, that
experienced regional researchers be engaged to help develop research
proposals, and that formal Advisory Boards advise the Program on
research priorities and approve applications for funding
(recommendations 7 and 10). The formal delegation of Centre
decision-making to such Boards is not within the Program's authority.
Informally, however, it has been the practice of the Education Program
to seek the advice of local researchers about funding priorities and
research activities. The development of national research
associations in Western and Southern Africa and a regional Research
and Advisory Group in Southeast Asia has also been encouraged; these
are supported, however, because they serve the needs and demands of

local research communities rather than those of the Program.

The Program is also exploring ways to permit regional program officers greater autonomy in the development and funding of projects and DAPs, within the general framework of the annual Program of Work and Budget and existing Centre policies. A new project in West Africa, for example, allows the regional officer there in collaboration with Ottawa staff to make funding available for regional travel and seminars related to the development of education projects and the strengthening of particular research institutions. The Program finds that such activities permit it, as the Review Team suggested, to respond more effectively to local research initiatives and to encourage greater South-South collaboration and the utilization of local scholars in the development and evaluation of projects.

C. Research and Funding Priorities: In several recommendations (11, 12, and 20), the Review Team suggested specific themes and topics for further support. First, it recommended that the proportion of the budget allocated for research on school efficiency (i.e., the quality of education provided) not be increased beyond its present 50%. This was largely achieved in the last fiscal year (54%), and research supported by the Program in this area of work included experiments with new educational practices (such as self-instructional learning in Indonesia) and evaluations of ongoing reforms (such as a study of rural teacher training programs in Sierra Leone). Secondly, the team suggested that greater emphasis be placed on research directed at increasing the effectiveness of what is taught in schools (i.e., the relevance of educational content to the world outside of school). This is to some extent being achieved as further research is now being developed in areas such as the match between formal education and the

skill and knowledge requirements of the workplace, the effectiveness of combining productive activities with education, and the impact of literacy on the daily lives of the newly literate. The first of these areas was particularly important in a recent Cooperative project examining the usefulness of skills learned in Kenyan primary schools, and in a project now being developed which will evaluate several kinds of technical training in Indonesia.

Thirdly, the Team recommended further funding of research on the relationship among education, society, and the state with a broadening of focus to include research outside of Latin America. This research examines the role of education in the process of social, economic, and political development; plans are to extend it, assuming demand exists, to other regions of the world making use of experience from Latin America. Recent studies in Jamaica and Kenya, which are looking at the distribution of secondary education across geographic regions and the socio-economic background of school entrants and graduates, are examples of this kind of research. Fourthly, the Team suggested more funding in the area of non-formal education. This is a very broad recommendation, and the Program therefore proposes to focus its support more narrowly on studies of literacy programs and their effects, the use of traditional communications and modern media in non-formal education (such as popular theatre in the Cameroon), and adult education directed at various disadvantaged social groups including urban women and peasant communities.

Finally, in addition to these areas of greater emphasis, the report recommended that further consideration be given to funding research on language and national development and on private tutoring. Though these are becoming increasingly important questions in educational planning and development, the demand from researchers to examine these issues has not yet been large.

D. The Selection of Recipients: In several recommendations (13-16),
the Review Team commented on the selection of researchers and
institutions for Program funding. It suggested that priority be
given to young researchers and educational practitioners; new,
inexperienced, but potentially promising institutions;
non-governmental organizations; and researchers in government agencies
able to influence both policy and practice.

To some extent the Program is supporting the work of young
researchers, particularly in its support of various small grants
programs developed in East and West Africa. Three in particular, in
Kenya, the BOLESWA countries, and the eastern African region (for
issues of technology, education, and employment), encourage
applications from practitioners as well as young professional
researchers.

Support to young researchers can also be achieved through grants to
small, but potentially influential, institutions. Such support is an
explicit policy of the Program in West Africa where a long series of
individual grants, group training programs, consultancies, support for
national research associations, and national and regional meetings is
leading now to the development of broadly based projects to research
centres in Mali, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. Similarly, recent work in
Latin America, where the Program has long had a strong focus on
program support to established institutions, has begun to emphasize
the need to balance this with project support for smaller centres.
Many of these are looking at critical issues regarding women's roles
in development and education for marginal peasant populations.

Another set of recipients to which the Program would like to give more
attention in the future--in line with the Review Team's

recommendation--is non-government organizations (NGO's). Based on pilot projects with NGO's in India and Thailand and on meetings held last year in Southeast Asia and South Asia as part of the Review process, the Program anticipates more funding of NGO's when it will strengthen the ability of such organizations to evaluate and make more effective their extensive work in development activities. The first of such grants, to a network on NGO's in Indonesia, is on the project docket at this meeting. Assuming approval by the Board and successful commencement of this project, similar projects to assist NGO's elsewhere in Southeast Asia may be proposed. Despite this exploration with NGO's, the Program will continue also to cooperate with selected government research centres, especially, as the Review Team advised, when the results of their IDRC-funded research might be used in the development of new policies and programs. This appears to be the case, for example, in a recent project on literacy funded through Kenya's Department of Adult Education.

The selection of which individuals and institutions to support is never an easy one and, as the above indicates, requires somewhat different strategies for different regions of the world. Budget limitations in the near future will make such choices more difficult.

E. Regional allocations: The Review Team recommended (17) that the Program continue to make efforts to reduce disparities in its present allocation of research funds. In the fiscal year just completed, the trend toward more equitable funding across regions has been marked. Relative percentages in FY 84/85 were 31% for Africa, 27% for Asia, and 41% for the Caribbean and Latin America. Given current circumstances in these various parts of the world and the demand for research funding arising from these regions, we anticipate that future

allocations will not differ widely from these percentages. Changes in demand or in research environments across the developing world, however, may make some adjustments in these general allocations necessary in years to come.

F. Dissemination of Research Results: The Review Team recommended (9 and 18) more active participation of IDRC in the dissemination of educational research results. Related to this is the suggestion that more studies (such as recent ones in Botswana and Sri Lanka) be funded on how research findings in education enter into the policy-making process and influence the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. The Program has now begun to allocate more time to the review and dissemination of research results. This includes committing more DAP funds for these reviews (e.g., an upcoming state-of-the-art paper on microcomputers in education), continuing the periodic updating of the Program's mailing list to include practitioners as well as researchers and policy-makers, and cooperating further with the Communications Division to publish research more extensively through Third World publishers and journals.

Documents Prepared for the International Review Team

Seminar Report on Southeast Asian Non-Government Organizations: Research Practice and Potential (by Anne Bernard)

Education Program Review: Notes from Asia (by Dean Nielsen)

The Conceptualization and Diffusion of an Experiment in Low-Cost Education: A Six-Nation Study (by William Cummings)

The Latin American Qualitative Research Network: Context, Process, and Products (by Elsie Rockwell)

Understanding the Relationship Between Education and Development: The Case of Latin America (by Nelly Stromquist, based on papers by Juan Carlos Tedesco, José Joaquin Brunner, and Juan Eduardo Garcia-Huidobro and Gonzalo Gutierrez)

Meeting Report on Education Research in West Africa

Education Program Review (by Sheldon Shaeffer and Program staff)

IDRC EDUCATION PROGRAM REVIEW

MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW TEAM

JULY 25-27, 1984

INTRODUCTION

The members of the international team assisting in the review of the Education Program of IDRC's Social Sciences Division met in Ottawa from Wednesday July 25th to Friday July 27th (inclusive). The participation by two members of IDRC's Board of Governors in the team proved invaluable to the group since they helped to throw light on a number of substantive issues such as the Centre's overall policies and objectives and some of the current concerns of the Board. A third member of the Board who was to join the team was unfortunately unable to attend. A list of the panel members appears in Appendix A.

The international team had been supplied in advance with a draft of the Education Program Review and other documents that described, reviewed, analyzed, and evaluated activities and programs in which IDRC's Education Sector had been involved during the past ten years. The IDRC staff who attended the first four meetings, were able to make valuable comments and contributions which put the information provided in the papers in the broader context of the work of the Education Program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work of the team benefitted not only from the active participation of the two members of IDRC's Board of Governors, Dr. Frank A. DeMarco and Dr. Rolland Poirier, but also from the contribution of such staff members as Sheldon Shaeffer, Susanne Mowat, Anne Bernard, Nellie Stromquist, Marilyn Campbell and the help of the Office of Planning and Evaluation and the Director, Social Sciences Division in general. The members of the international team gave generously of their time to allow the task to be completed according to schedule and so did Michelle Hibler, the rapporteur.

M. Kazim Bacchus
Chairman

PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW AS SEEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL PANEL

In his opening remarks, Doug Daniels, Director of the Office of Planning and Evaluation, stressed the importance of this first fairly comprehensive review of the activities of an IDRC Program which is being carried out for the Board of Governors. Its outcome, he noted, could assist the Centre, improve the work of its Education sector -- if this was found necessary -- and help the Board decide whether similar reviews should be carried out on the work of other Programs. The team was therefore encouraged to comment candidly on research priorities that have been identified in the Program Review and the type of local institutions that could make the most effective use of IDRC's support. Such critical and constructive observations, he noted, would help to ensure that IDRC continues to respond most effectively to the developing countries' educational research needs.

After noting that education was an integral part of the social sciences at IDRC, David Steedman, Director of that Division, also urged the team to indicate what they felt to be the educational research priorities in their respective regions. In addition he asked them to comment on the "crisis" that social scientists seem to be facing in terms of choice of research methodologies and research paradigms used in studying ◼ educational problems in the LDCs.

He then went on to observe that while IDRC was a small actor in the development field, its hope was that, through its overall commitment to research, it would have an impact on the development process far greater than its financial contribution. It was also recognized that IDRC needed to be as thorough and thoughtful as possible in its activities since its research funding decisions are likely to influence the general direction of research in developing countries. Finally, he noted that the Centre faces an ethical question in deciding what research to fund: i.e. Should it simply respond to requests coming from the Third World or should it play a more active role in influencing such requests?

Because of these issues that confront IDRC, the team was again requested to be candid in their views about the Education Program's current activities and directions, and to indicate whether the present emphasis seemed correct or whether it should take new direction. And if the latter, what should that direction be?

The Chairperson then communicated to the panel his understanding of their mandate, i.e. "to present an external view of the activities of IDRC's Education Program" and to make recommendations: or as Sheldon Shaeffer put in his July 5, 1984, letter, The team would be expected

> "to discuss the issues raised in the documents, comment critically on the Program's activities and advise the Program on its current and future direction and strategies of work".

Following the presentations by IDRC staff and the questions and discussions which ensued, the international team, along with the two members of the Board of Governors, met by themselves to examine more fully the major issues raised, and to formulate recommendations.

1. SUGGESTED FOCUS OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The first question to which the team directed its attention is: "What should be the future focus of IDRC's Education Program? Should the Centre increasingly become another 'donor' agency providing funds for educational research in the LDCs, or should its major aim be, in the words of section 4(1)(b) of the IDRC Act,

"to assist the developing regions to build up the(ir) research capabilities, the innovative skills and the institutions required to solve their problems."

The team recognized that while both concerns were of crucial importance and should not be separated, it suggested that the second policy option i.e assisting the LDCs to build up their educational research capacity, should guide all of the Program's future activities.

There were many reasons for this recommendation. Foremost among them is the fact that effective solutions to educational problems in any country are readily "dated" in the sense that they might not be applicable for all times even within the same country. This is especially true when the country's economic, political, and social conditions are rapidly changing. Research on how education can more effectively contribute to development must therefore be an on-going processs if the results are to remain useful. Therefore, the results of educational research are, in large measure, unlike those produced in, say, the 'hard science'-based areas, like agriculture or health. They cannot, in the same way, stand the "test of time" in that they are usually only valid within a certain socio-political, economic and historical context.

Secondly, because the specific economic, political, cultural and historical context into which an educational change or innovation is introduced, determines or greatly influences its likelihood of success, findings from educational research carried out in one society cannot always be successfully applied in another. Each society or cultural region needs to find answers to its own educational problems by carrying out its own research. There is no "miracle grain" which can be applied across cultures to improve the efficiency of all educational systems. This points to the enormity of the field of educational research in the developing countries. Since neither IDRC nor any other single institution can make a continuous and sizeable commitment to attacking this overall problem, it would be therefore more productive, in the long run, if IDRC's Education Program focused its efforts on helping to build up and strengthen the capacity of Third World countries themselves to undertake this task, i.e. to carry out, on an on-going basis, thier own educational research.

The staff of IDRC and particularly of the Social Sciences Division seem to agree with this overall focus. When the question "If IDRC funds should eventually dry up, what would you consider the most cherished legacy that its Education Program can leave in the Third World countries?" was directly or indirectly asked, the general answer was along the following lines "A strong research capability which will allow them to continue seeking their own answers as to how their educational systems can help further their development efforts".

Sheldon Shaeffer, Associate Director in charge of the Education Program, himself made this point more fully when discussing the need for donor agencies to recognize the importance of helping the developing countries build up their research capability and their research environment in the field of education. He argued that

For practical, financial, and even ethical reasons, both local governments and foreign donors are beginning to recognize that much more effort must be made to enhance local capacity for educational research and indigenize the research process: to train local researchers in the analysis and interpretation of their own environment, to adapt foreign methodologies and assumptions to local conditions or develop truly indigenous approaches to research, quite different from foreign models; to monitor and evaluate educational systems made particularly complex by the rapidly changing societies in which they are developing, and, in general, to eliminate dependence upon the expertise and funding of foreign agencies. (emphasis added)

2. SOME IMPLICATIONS OF THE FOCUS

If this policy is accepted and seriously pursued, it would have a number of implications for the Program's activities.

a. First, it would require even more active participation by Third World educators in determining the overall research priorities of the Program and in approving research projects. The team recognized the fact that, of all the donor agencies with which they have worked, the IDRC staff has the best reputation for working closely with Third World researchers and therefore this recommendation is not to be seen as a criticism of the present modus operandi. It however felt that a further movement in the direction would be valuable and could partly be achieved by Increasing the autonomy of the regional offices and the involvement of local researchers in the identification, approval and support of research activities in the region. More specifically on this point the team recommended that each regional office develop a list of researchers in the region and from it a regional Advisory Board be selected to advise on the research directions and the research projects to which the regional office should accord funding priority. It is recognized that some of this work is already carried on through the Regional Research Advisory Groups (RRAG) but the team would like to see this activity more formally structured and coordinated through the Regional Offices.

The research priorities established by regional groups might have to fall within the overall umbrella of research priorities that the Program would determine and regularly revise through active consultation with educational researchers throughout the Third World. But in doing this the program should not attempt to forge a single set of educational research priorities if these do not adequately reflect the educational concerns, problems and challenges which the different regions face.

The members of these regional Advisory Boards could be recruited for a term of about three years after which they should be rotated in order to bring new blood into the group and prevent the older researchers from exercising a monopoly in helping to determine regional research needs and priorities. Further some mechanism should be developed to ensure that eventually the majority of the researchers selected to be members of these Advisory Boards would be done by their peers in the region and membership of these groups should not be confined to educators alone, since development itself is multi-faceted and educational research focussed on develpment issues could also have implications for such fields as health, agriculture, technology, etc.

The regional Advisory Boards would not only assist in drawing up and constantly revising the list of educational research priorities for the region but should also be made responsible for approving projects for funding within the region. It is recognized that projects involving funding above a certain figure might finally have to be approved in Ottawa because of IDRC's own accounting and financial contraints, but the group strongly recommended that maximum autonomy should be given to the regional offices to approve projects on the basis of the advice given by these regional advisory groups.

b. Another facet of the mechanism directed at strengthening the research capability of the LDCs would be the development of a network of local project consultants within a region selected from the list of researchers which it was suggested each regional office should develop. The IDRC regional officer should be able to refer project proposals or enquiries to these consultants for comments, advice or evaluation and these would be submitted to the regional Advisory Boards for consideration when they are making their recommendations for or decisions about funding.

But these consultants should not only be called upon to evaluate research proposals. If the topic proposed for research funding is important and the individual or group making the application lacks some of the skills needed to strengthen the proposal or carry out parts of the research, a local consultant could be selected to guide, help and even befriend the applicant, assist with the project and if necessary periodically visit to see the research in operation and advise the individuals or groups during its various stages of development. At other times this contact with a local consultant might simply result in the provision of information or documentation about similar research undertaken in the region or elsewhere in the Third World.

An issue that was considered in making this recommendation was one of cost. The question which was faced was "Can the Program afford the cost of setting up regional Advisory Boards and networks of local consultants?" In considering this matter it was noted that one of the points raised in the Program Review was that many research projects - especially those involving less experienced scholars and newer research institutions - were very costly. To the ordinary costs of the services of the Ottawa based project officers must be added their travel time, fares, subsistence etc which are involved in vetting each application for funding. This considerably inflates the indirect cost of these projects.

On the other hand it is very likely that the members of the regional Advisory Boards might be willing to serve in that capacity, free of charge, with IDRC only paying their travel and out of pocket expenses to attend meetings. The prestige of being a member of a regional advisory group, especially if the majority of the members are eventually selected by their peers, might be enough of a reward for the members. For those researchers who are asked to serve as consultants to evaluate proposals and help young researchers with their projects, a small consultancy fee might have to be paid, but since local salaries are relatively low these costs should not be great.

And the proposed involvement of locally experienced researchers in approving and generally assisting with the conduct of research in the region is likely to facilitate the Program's expressed objective of "capping off" the increase in the number of Project officers at IDRC's headquarters, allowing any increases needed to cope with future additional work loads, to take place in the regional offices.

In summary, the review team saw that the operation of regional offices with their increased autonomy along the lines suggested above, would allow them to respond more flexibly and effectively to the educational research needs and concerns of the regions in which they are located. It would also strengthen the network of support and cooperation

among the region's educational researchers and reduce the dependency which is created, however unintentionally, when researchers in the North have the overall responsibility for guiding, approving and funding research projects submitted by Third World scholars. And the proposed inclusion of individuals from other fields such as health and agriculture on these Advisory Boards would help to ensure that educational research would not only be focussed on schools and educational systems but also on the educational implications of other programs which are crucial to the overall development of these societies.

1. Training: The training of researchers is an important aspect of the policy aimed at helping Third World countries to build up their education research capabilities and therefore this element in all IDRC sponsored research project should continue to be emphasized.

    Research training financed by IDRC should be mainly geared towards supporting the field work or providing other forms of practical research experience for trainees in addition to the organization of, and attendance by more experienced researchers in specialist research seminars and workshops. The practical experience could be provided either on IDRC sponsored educational research projects or other appropriate projects not necessarily financed by IDRC. It can be located either in the trainee's own country or region or even in another developing country. But the crucial criteria should be the adequacy of the supervision which can be provided for the trainee. Therefore this provision would include bona-fide Third World students in other countries who need to return to a developing country to carry out their field work. One proviso suggested by the team that in such cases IDRC's contribution should be a modest one - possibly not more than $2,000.00 per student at current prices.

    While it was recognized that in some cases trainees might need assistance in meeting the costs of the "theoretical" aspects of their preparation for research work, this should not be a major activity of the Program. Providing funds for Third World students to do Ph.D.s should occur only in exceptional circumstances and only to students from those countries which are heavily deficient in research capability and have no adequate local facilities for their training.

    Further the group did not support the idea of the Program spending its funds to train Third World educational researchers in universities in the North except in those rare cases where adequate training facilities are not available in the students own country, in the region or in another country in the South. Their objection was based on the likely irrelevance of the training, its cost and the likelihood that it would contribute to increasing the brain drain. However it was recognized that it is sometimes useful for young researchers who have already received their basic research training to spend a short period in an educational institution in the North to be exposed to, or be involved in research projects likely to introduce them to new research methodologies or different conceptual frameworks.

    d. Dissemination of Research Results: It is recommended that IDRC should play a more active role in the dissemination of the results of educational rsearch conducted in the different countries and regions of the South partly as a way of helping these countries develop their own research capability. There is increasing need for such support especially since research findings in education in the developing countries are increasing as a result of the educational research now being conducted by Third World scholars.

The dissemination of such research results through publications, seminars and conferences, can contribute greatly in keeping individuals in the South aware and what is happening in the field of educational research in the Third World generally, what research methodologies are being tried out and what findings are emerging.

It was therefore suggested that

a) IDRC should continue its "state-of-the-art" reviews of research in key educational areas.

b) Since IDRC's current publications in education now tend to reach only university professors and educational researchers, the Centre should begin to examine ways by which educational practitioners including educational administrators and policy makers in the LDCs can benefit from its publications.

c) Thirdly, because of the costs that are likely to be involved in getting research results to reach educational practitioners the use of alternative means of disseminating the findings should be explored; - For example, through the continued use of Third World publishers and the medium of educational journals which are now being published in many of these countries. The possibility of working through other key educational groups such as lecturers in the teachers' colleges and the professional sub groups of local teachers associations could also be investigated.

d) Finally in this area the group felt that since so little is known about how research findings or other information pertaining to education enters the policy making process in developing countries, IDRC should encourage research which attempts to throw light on this issue.

3.   EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES

a.   Developing Research Priorities: There was an essential agreement with the research priorities indicated by the Education Program - basic education and illiteracy, the inequality of access to education; the irrelevance of the curriculum content of schools in most LDCs, the quality of education and the inefficiencies in the planning and management of educational systems.

The team recognized the wastage of efforts and the inefficiencies that are likely to develop if IDRC was to attempt to fund every type of research topic which, under an "open door" policy, is likely to be submitted to it for funding. It therefore subscribed to the view that IDRC should play a somewhat more active role in influencing the nature of the research proposals it receives for funding. However the team reiterated that these funding priorities should be developed as the result of a more active involvement of regional researchers who, through their Advisory Boards, could meet every two to three years to develop regional research priorities.

4. AREAS OF RESEARCH TO BE EMPHASIZED

a.   The research topics falling within the area of education and development can

generally be included in one of these three categories.

1) Research directed at increasing the efficiency of the Third World educational systems within the financial constraints which these countries face.

2) Research on ways of increasing the effectiveness of the knowledge, skills and attitudes which Third World individuals can acquire through their schooling, in improving their ability to earn a living and generally improve the 'quality' of their own lives.

3) Research which helps to increase our understanding of the relationship between education, the society, the economy and the State. It is suggested that such knowledge would throw light on how the educational systems of Third World societies contribute to the marginalization and even impoverishment of certain groups. The results might therefore hopefully lead to the development of more effective educational programs and activities which will prevent or at least alleviate the conditions of poverty among these groups.

While recognizing the importance of research in cateogry 1 above - those aimed at improving the efficiency of the educational systems of Third World countries - the group did not feel that the Program which now spends 50% of its funds in this area, should increase its funding here to any significant extent.

The first reason for this recommendation is that even if certain combination of inputs were found to increase learning outcomes in any one society, the findings might not be generalizable to countries with different cultures or at different levels of economic development. Secondly, even if certain inputs or combination of inputs were found to increase efficiency in schools, it does not necessarily mean that the knowledge, skills and attitudes which the students would have acquired would necessarily contribute towards increasing their productivity in the large traditional sector of these societies in which about 80% of their population have to earn their living. Thirdly, these governments are not usually guided by research findings in making educational decisions - a point which was reiterated in the costly Project Impact study. Despite these observations the group realized that since most of the education budget of developing countries is spent on schools, research efforts must continue to be made at improving the efficiency of the existing systems.

Therefore while the team recommended that there should be no major increases in IDRC funding for research in this area of education, it saw the need for the Centre

a. to play a more active role in encouraging and financially assisting organisations, including Ministries of Education and other educational agencies, to evaluate any new or even existing educational projects that they might be undertaking, and publicize the results.

b. It also suggested that within this area IDRC should more actively sponsor research which attempt to throw light on how the findings from educational research in the LDCs enter their policy making process and influence the development of new educational programs or the retention of existing ones.

c. that IDRC should continue attempting to examine the influence which the findings from its own sponsored researches are having on efforts to improve the efficiency of the educational systems especially of countries where the research have been carried out.

d.   that it should encourage research which are concerned with the issue of how
educational changes in the LDCs take place and what role ↱ research has
played in influencing changes.

As knowledge about these issues increases it would be possible to make more sensible
allocation of research funds focussing on how to improve existing educational systems.

The second research area mentioned above is one to which increased attention needs
to be given by IDRC. So far there has been a tendency to treat school knowledge as
"given" and universalistic. This has been encouraged by the work of economists of
education who tended to focus their research on such phenomenon as the rate of return
on given years of schooling without much attention directed at the use which is made of
the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired in schools in earning a living in societies
which are in many ways still traditional.

It is sometimes suggested that many individuals in these societies often retain two
fairly separate knowledge systems to explain reality and this is why school knowledge often
has little impact on the behaviour of individuals in traditional settings. If this is so, there
is need for research into the question of whether the educational content and instructional
strategies used in schools help to produce this dichtomy. In other words educational
research is needed which would help us to understand if and how individuals make use of
school knowledge to improve the quality of their lives in these societies. Such information
would be invaluable in efforts to improve the effectiveness or impact of education on the
development process.

Research in the third area listed above - the studies of the relationship between
education society and the State - is also important even though other agencies are usually not
very willing to fund such research topics partly because they are considered too
"theoretical" or because their benefits are seen to be less obvious and less immediate. The
team recommended that the financing of such research efforts should continue and
indicated, however, they should be opened up to include such areas as the relationship
between education and religion in countries where it has been observed that some of the
extremist religious movements with their strong anti-development views are often heavily
supported by the more highly educated individuals, thereby, challenging the assumption that
education leads to a more "rational" behavior and a more "scientific" approach to problem
solving.

5.   ESTABLISHING FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Program's educational research priorities should in the future be developed mainly
by the proposed regional Advisory Boards. This approach recognizes that the educational
research needs of a region might vary substantially and hence the regions need to be given
maximum autonomy in setting up their own research priorities.

It was realized however that there might be some duplication and narrow
"parochialism" in the selection of research priorities if each region has total autonomy for
determining its overall research priorities. This resulting splintering of research efforts can
affect the accummulation of useful research knowledge on educational issues of importance
to nearly all Third World countries. It is therefore recommended that

a.   in the development of its overall research priorities the Education Program

should be guided by the recommendations of the regional Advisory Boards

b.   IDRC should develop some general guidelines for establishing its funding priorities

In connection with this latter recommendation the team made the following suggestions for funding projects.

Funding of Projects By Level of Education

The team noted that 50% of Program funds have been directed towards pre-school and primary education, although this figure has been changing somewhat. The importance of improving efficiency at this level of the educational system is recognized partly because it takes up the largest share of the educational budgets of developing countries. Also the more efficient this level of education becomes, the greater the chances that developing countries would attain their stated goal of universalizing primary education. And this is important because primary education is said to yield the highest rate of return on investment in education. For all these reasons it was considered important that priority be given to research at this level of the educatonal system.

It was suggested that research on non-formal education might receive additional attention in the future especially since the formal education sector has so far not proved very successful in providing, especially the rural population, with the skills needed to improve their lives and living conditions. This has partly been due to the fact that realities and resource constraints of the traditional sector are not fully recognized in formal education training programs and the challenge exists of developing the productivity of individuals in the rural areas and the growing urban informal sector without the need for a relative large expenditure on capital resources which usually cannot be afforded. However to increase the value of such research there would need to be more active cooperation in project funding between IDRC's program in Education and other areas such as Health, Nutrition, Agriculture, etc. This would allow research questions such as "how can education help to improve health or agricultural practices also?" to be addressed in research projects.

By Institutions or Groups that Seek Funding

In funding research projects submitted by institutions, groups or individuals, the objective of strengthening the research capability of Third World countries should always be borne in-mind. As a result the team recommends that

1.   Priority consideration should be given to supporting the work of young researchers, providing obviously that their research proposals fall with IDRC broad areas of concern. This does not mean that poor research proposals should be excused on the grounds that the applicants are inexperienced. But every possible effort should be made to help such individuals or groups strengthen their proposals where necessary - through the network of local or regional scholars suggested earlier from whom they might be able to obtain technical and even moral support for their research. The proposals could include funding for this type of local consultation and should also provide the researchers with an

opportunity to present their research findings at national or regional meetings.

2. Applications from educational practitioners - headmasters, teachers and lecturers in Teachers' Colleges-should be particularly encouraged. In such cases where individual have limited research skills or experience and where the numbers warrant it, the Education Program might financially help local institutions organize research workshops for these educational practitioners. And the local and regional networks of experienced researchers mentioned earlier could also be asked to provide assistance to practitioners who have expressed interest in carrying out research aimed at improving the existing school system. Such studies are likely to be 'non-ideological' pragmatic and more practitioner oriented - to use Susan Mowat's description - but do not have to be atheoretical. The assistance of a more experienced researcher might help to make the theoretical dimensions of such studies more explicit.

3. Thirdly, young and 'fragile' research institutions that seem likely to succeed because of factors such as staff committment, should also be given as much support as possible. The same 'networking' mechanism - this time between institutions - linking weaker with stronger research centres could be encouraged through IDRC funding of individual projects.

4. Finally since the suggested focus of these proposals is to strengthen educational research capabilities in developing countries, it was not possible to recommend that any special consideration be given to the more established research institutions or that a policy be adopted that would result in the continuous refinancing of any single institution.

There might be exceptional circumstances, however, such as the termination of government funding for a particularly productive educational research institution because the Government does not like its research findings. But while such cases might merit additional consideration, the Education Program cannot assume responsibility for funding such an institution on any extended basis.

Some special consideration might be extended to the more experienced educational research institutions which are engaged on particularly innovative research or in helping younger and more fragile institutions find their feet or in the specialized training of young researchers in a country. But IDRC should not act primarily as a funding agency for these more experienced research centres.

Non Governmental Organizations

The review team strongly supported the idea that for a number of reasons NGOs should be given special encouragement to submit research proposals for funding if they have the capability of carrying these out. It was recognized, however, that since most NGOs are usually concerned with providing services to the population they should not ordinarily be given large research grants that might divert them from their main activity. Further, it is recommended that wherever possible the principle that matching funds should be provided should be waived in the case of NGOs and the same practice should be followed in considering applications from private research centres that have no separate source of funding.

Funding Research Proposals by Governments

The team expressed the view that educational research conducted by government departments tend to yield minimal results and they therefore felt that it would be more cost effective for IDRC to allocate its research funds to other groups, including NGOs, which are likely to be "more efficient, more effective, less bureauratic and more in need".

However, despite this it was recognized that because of their economic resource and political power, governments are in the best position to introduce changes to improve existing educational systems and current educational practices and therefore educational research proposals from the Government cannot be entirely ignored. It was therefore recommended that the proportion of the Program budget now allocated to assist the eucational research efforts of Governments should not be reduced. Further it was suggested that those research which are sponsored by IDRC, should be carefully monitored to see if the results are later taken into acount in these Government's educational policies or are affecting current classroom practices. This information should influence the outcome of future applications from the same Government for research funding. Also in the planning stages of such research - in fact of all IDRC sponsored research-proposals for dissemination of the research findings should be included. Finally as an indication of the seriousness of its intention to use the research results to help improve its educational system, a Government requesting research funds should be expected to match IDRC contribution with local funds.

Reducing Regional Disparities in Funding

It is recommended that constant efforts be made to reduce the present regional disparities in IDRC's funding of educational researach, even if this involves the adoption of "novel" approaches. Special efforts need to be made to develop the educational research capabilities in countries where these are weak, even if the help of experienced researchers in other culturally similar countries in the region must be temporarily relied upon.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The review team noted that the Education Program encourages the use of a variety of research methodologies, ranging from the traditional quantitative research to the more non-traditional alternative research modalities. In addition, it has supported efforts directed at increasing educators' understanding of the research process itself.

The group applauds the attempts by the Education Program to promote such alternative research strategies without necessarily sacrificing the more traditional quantitative approach with which most educational researchers tend to be familar. Most significant among these alternative approaches has been the "action research" or "research action" projects which have developed mainly in Latin America. This approach involves the participation of the different actors on the educational scene in the various stages of the research process itself and it therefore has a great potentiality for bringing about changes in the educational system itself - even though these might be micro level changes.

It is also recommended that efforts be made to increase the awareness of educational researchers in other developing countries of this research methodology. One step in this direction would be for the IDRC to sponsor a publication or publications dealing with the experiences, successes, failures and problems which Third World researchers have had over the last decade in using this approach.

However one point should be noted about this research strategy. It usually results in the demand for action or for new programs to meet diagnosed deficiences. Therefore the research projects to be financed in this area should be carefully chosen. Further such action research can form the basis of some cooperation between IDRC and CIDA so that needs that are diagnosed as a result of action research would have some chances of being met.

7. COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Only one mention was made of the Cooperative Research Program developed by IDRC and with so little information available it was difficult to assess how successful this Program, as applied to educational projects, has been. However, it is suggested that the Education Program should examine whether and to what extent it can encourage the use of the Cooperative Program primarily to help build up and strengthen the research capability especially of those developing countries where education research skills are in extreme short supply.

8. OTHER ISSUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Among the issues suggested by the team as possible priority areas for future research were

1. Education for Production - The relationship betwen education and unemployment or education and productive activities especially among young school leavers. This is an area of growing concern among Third World countries and some of them have introduced programs, such as the Botswana Brigades, to cope with this problem. Yet no serious studies have been carried out to evaluate such programs to see if there is anything other LDCs could learn from these experiences.

2. Language and National Development - In their efforts to break away from the colonial legacy and overcome the feeling of cultural alientation among their many linguistic groups, LDCs are increasingly teaching in and encouraging the use of native languages in schools. At the same time there is a pressure to create a feeling of national identity and solidarity through the use of a single language. The educational problems that such conflicting pressure imposes need to be researched.

3. Adult Education - It was proposed that research in the field of non-formal education be broadened to encompass "life long education" and to include adult education also. Further the suggestion was made that while much adult education activities have been undertaken in developing countries in the past years, some effort should now be made to assess what has been learnt from these experiences so that the findings might usefully guide the future development of adult education programs in the LDCs.

4.   Private Tutoring and School Efficiency - The rise of private tutorial classes in many developing countries could be one of the issues to be included in research on the efficiency of existing school systems. The phenomenon is considered important because it is resulting in the children of poorer parents, who cannot afford to pay for private tuition, increasingly being denied access to other levels of the educational system and eventually the better type of jobs in these societies.

5.   Women and Development - While this is an important and increasingly popular topic for research, the women's movements in the Third World must be seen as one of the many social movements that have developed in recent years in these countries. So while research in the area of women and development is important, it should be broadened to include studies of other social movements which are now emerging in many of these societies.

Recommendations

6.   That the focus of the Education Program should be to help build up and strengthen the education research capacity of Third World countries, and all its programs should be geared towards this objective.

7.   That the autonomy of the regional offices should be increased and for each region there should be an Advisory Board to advise on research directions and priorities and approve regional applications for research funding. That a network of 'regional' consultants experienced local educational researchers be created who would act in a supportive capacity to local individuals especially young researchers and less experienced educational institutions that want to apply or have applied for funding for particular educational projects.

8.   Research training which should be an important aspect of the suggested focus should be directed mainly towards supporting field work or providing other forms of practical experience for trainees and not with providing funds for Ph.D. studies. In these efforts consideration should be extended to trainees not necessarily involved in IDRC projects.

9.   The more active participation of IDRC in the dissemination of educational research results among practitioners is recommended. The Program should also support research projects aimed at studying how research findings in education enter into the policy making process and influence classroom practices.

10.   Greater involvement of regional researchers should be sought in the development of educational research priorities and this can be done more formally through the recommended regional Advisory Boards.

11.   The proportion of the Program's budget currently spent on research aimed at increasing the internal efficiency of schools should not be increased but greater emphasis should be placed on research directed at increasing the effectiveness of what is taught in schools. Studies on the relationship between education, society and the State should continue to be funded but their present almost exclusive emphasis on Latin America should be broadened.

12.   While the team accepts the view that because of its importance research on primary

education should continue to receive priority, it suggested that research on non-formal education could be increased.

13. Priority consideration should be given to supporting the work of young researchers and that applications for funding by educational practitioners should be actively encouraged.

14. Young and fragile research institutions which show promise should also be given special consideration, but since IDRC should not be considered primarily as a 'donor' agency no special funding consideration can be recmmended for supporting any institution on a continuing basis.

15. Non-Governmental organizations should be actively encouraged to apply for research funding if they have or can acquire the resources to undertake their proposed research. Also they, along with private research centres, should not be rigidly expected to come up with matching amounts when they are applying for research funds.

16. The funding of Government sponsored research should continue on a matching basis though not necessarily increased. Further such research should be carefuly monitored to see how far the research findings are taken into consideration by the Governments in developing new policies or programs in education. Also, as in all other IDRC sponsored research projects, plans should be made in advance for the dissemination of the research results - especially of these Government funded projects.

17. The Education Program should continue to make efforts to reduce the obvious regional disparities in its present allocation of research funds.

18. The use of both traditional and non-traditional research methodologies should continue to be encouraged and efforts made by the Program to disseminate the knowledge and experience which have been gained so far in the "action research" projects.

19. An examination of the work of the Cooperative Program as applied to education should be undertaken to see if it could not be specially used to help strengthen the research capability of developing countries where educational research skills are in extreme short supply.

20. Other Research issues to which funding consideration might be given in the future are Education for Production, Language and National Development, Adult Education - including life long education, Private Tutoring and School Efficiency and Women and Development - but broadened to include the study of other social movements.

APPENDIX A

Membership of the panel

Chairperson: Mr. M.K. Bacchus
             Centre for International Education and Development
             Faculty of Education
             University of Alberta
             Edmonton, Alberta

International panel:

             Mr. Sunthorn Sunanchai
             Department of Nonformal Education
             Ministry of Education
             Rajadamnoen Nok Rd.
             Bangkok, Thailand

             Dr. Saad El-din Ibrahim
             Professor of Sociology
             American University
             Cairo, Egypt

             Prof. Rajni Kothari
             Program Director
             Peace and Global Transformation
             United Nations University
             Delhi Sub-Office
             Delhi, India

             Dr. Leachim Semaj
             Research Fellow
             Regional Pre-school Child Development Centre
             Department of Extra-Mural Studies
             University of the West Indies
             P.O. Box 141
             Kingston 7, Jamaica, W.I.

             Dr. Agustin Lombana
             Dean of Graduate Interdisciplinary Studies
             Universidad Javeriana
             Carrera 7 Numeros 40-62
             Oficina M101
             Bogota, Colombia

             Mme. Jacqueline Ki-Zerbo
             B.P. 3311
             Dakar, Sénégal

Dra. Marcela Gajardo
Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación
 para la Agricultura (IICA)
R. do Passeio, 62 - 13º Andar - Sala 1303
20021 - Rio de Janeiro, RJ
Brasil

IDRC Governors:

Dr. Frank A. DeMarco
Department of Chemical Engineering
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4

Dr. Rolland Poirier
1012 Avenue Jeanne-Leber
Ste Foy, Québec G1W 4G8