PARTICIPATORY   EVALUATION

OF

THE   ABNER   INTER   SCHOOL   AND

NONFORMAL   EDUCATION   PROJECT

NEW   DELHI

Anita Dighe

Rajesh Tandon

May, 1983.

INTRODUCTION:

In recent years, it has become obvious that formal and summative evaluation of development projects does not bring about desired results. An increasing need has been felt to develop a methodology of Participatory Evaluation (PE) as an alternative to the traditional methodology.

PE is an attempt to be a developmental process such that past experiences are carefully analyzed for identifying future directions. Carried out by the active participation of the project staff and multiple constituencies involved in a development project, it aims at building a valid information base about the project and developing evaluation skills among the project staff for ongoing evaluation. It thus attempts to demystify evaluation as an exclusive vocation of the experts. Besides performing an informing function about a particular project, PE also becomes a mobilizing process for future improvements of the project. It is the active participation of project staff and other constituencies in the project that catalyzes the process of mobilization whereby proposals for future are evolved and implemented by them.

This document describes such a participatory evaluation effort in a non-formal education project in Delhi. The authors were involved as consultants in the evaluation exercise with the project staff and functionaries at various levels playing an active role. Besides carrying out the evaluation, it was also intended to clarify the methodology of participatory evaluation.

This report is in several parts. The first section gives a brief overview of the non-formal education project; the second describes the methodology and the objectives of the evaluation as developed by the project staff. The step in the evaluation are described in detail in the next section.

Findings are presented in multiple ways. For ease of reading most tables, instruments and other details are included in the appendix. Proposals for future are the outcome of the entire evaluation process and enumerate the steps to be taken in future.

Overview of the Project:

In August 1977, as part of the Socially Useful and Productive Work (SUPW) scheme of the Central Board of Secondary Education, Abner Memorial School introduced community service for its ninth and tenth class students. A non-formal education (NFE) programme was initiated where these students became teachers of non-school going children (age 5-16) in the urban slums of Delhi. At the same time, some adult literacy centres were also started. Primarily, women learners (age 16-35) were involved and these centres were taught by adult volunteer teachers.

An evaluation of this programme was carried out in May 1979 which led to further collaboration and improvement of the project. In 1980, a separate Abner Inter School Non-Formal Education Project was launched in three schools: Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, St. Thomas' and Springdales. While St. Thomas' decided to involve its ninth class students in this project, the other two schools involved eleventh class students (in the ten plus two system). The following year, the Abner School Project, started in 1977, transformed itself into an education effort entirely staffed by Volunteer teachers.

At the time of this evaluation (March - July, 1982), 15 centres, for slum children in the Inter School Project (about 5 each by every participating school) were running. In the Abner project, about 35 centres were being run by 28 volunteer teachers (as some of them taught in more than one centre). Of these, 25 centres were meant for children and the rest for adults. Of the few adult centres, two were for men; of the 8 women centres, 4 were focusing on teaching of crafts for income-generation. Thus about 1500 learners (children and adults) were being covered by the project.

Each centre consisted of about 30 learners in the Inter School Project. The centres were run 6 days a week for 1½ hours each day. The student teachers worked in small groups (about 40 from each school) and were supervised by an adult Non-Formal Education worker attached to each school. The Abner Centres were run likewise and three separate Supervisors were incharge for 10-12 centres each. Thus in all there were 6 Supervisors (3 each for Inter School and Abner). Project staff also comprised of two professional coordinators, a Manager and a Typist-Secretary. The centres were held during day time, except for

ers came from was used for the activities of the centre.

The objectives of the Inter School and Abner projects were defined quite broadly. Besides teaching of literacy and numeracy skills larger socio-economic development of the learners and their communities was also envisaged. Enhancing social awareness of the student teachers in the Inter School Project was an additional objective. The development of innovative and liberating learning methods and aids was also considered as an important objective.

Methodology of Evaluation:

The process of participatory evaluation was initiated right from the beginning. It was felt that concrete steps had to be taken from the very beginning to set the process of participatory evaluation in motion. It will perhaps be useful to look at the sequence of events that were carried out. The common and unique steps in the evaluation process of the Inter School and Abner projects are detailed in Chart I. The methods of data-collection, the content or focus of data and the party responsible for collecting data are also shown in Charts II & III for the Inter School and Abner Projects respectively.

As can be seen from these charts, quite a complex process was evolved and multiple parties were engaged in the data-collection and analysis process. The methods used varied considerably and an attempt was made to develop them jointly with other participants. The most interesting part was to evolve characteristics of an effective centre with volunteer teachers and then have them evaluate their own centres on those characteristics. It was found similarly useful to involve student teachers in testing the impact of teaching on learners.

Objectives of Evaluation:

One of the first tasks in the evaluation process was to develop a comprehensive list of potential objectives for this exercise. An attempt was made to involve a broad-based group in the elaboration of the objectives of the evaluation. The following emerged as the main objectives of evaluation:

1. To assess the extent of goal accomplishment.
2. To assess the performance of
   - Project organisation,
   - Supervisors,

3. To clarify the role of the project and its staff.

4. To inform and motivate the schools (principals, teachers, students).

5. To mobilise some communities for greater participation in the project.

6. To build ongoing evaluation and skills for the same in the project.

7. To assess the effectiveness of teaching methods, aids and primers.

8. To assess the SUPW programme in relation to the Project and the role of School Social Worker or department.

9. To assess the collaboration relationships with other agencies.

10. To evaluate the relevance of training, its content and methodology.
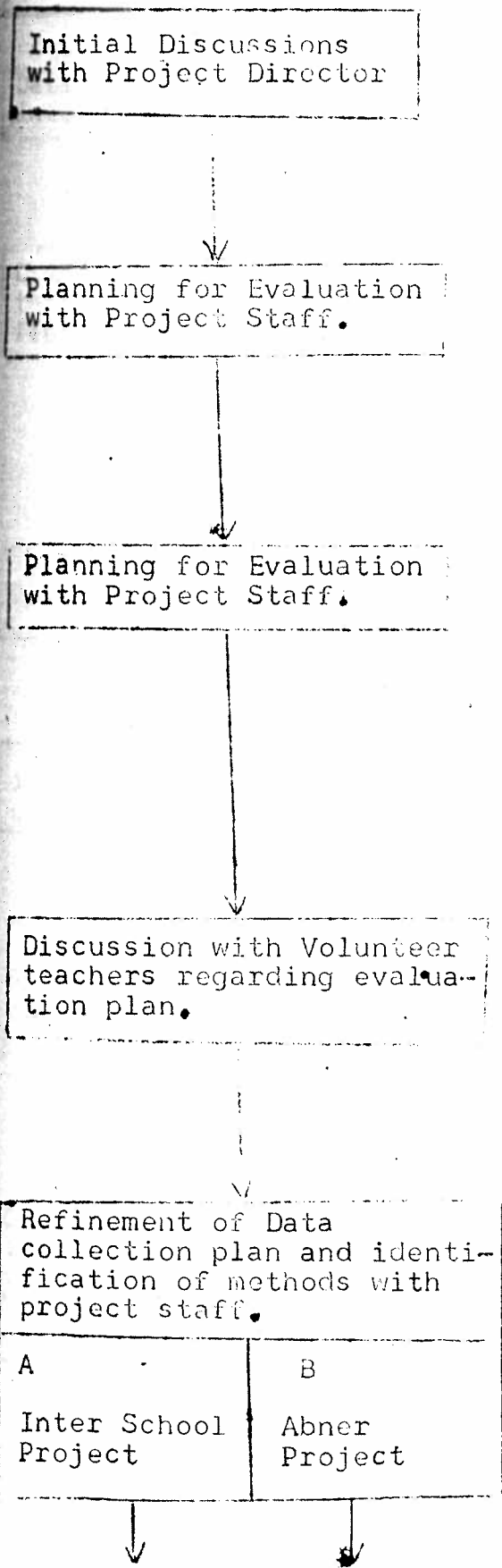
These objectives thus were both concrete and comprehensive. The impact on the community and literacy/numeracy learning by learners was included in the objective of goal accomplishment. Besides this, the 'Inter' nature of the 'Inter School Project' was also to be assessed.

The methodology thus evolved as evaluation proceeded and participation of different parties increased. The complexity of the process made it imperative that different parties shared responsibility for different parts of the process. To that extent, this turned out to be a collective endeavour.
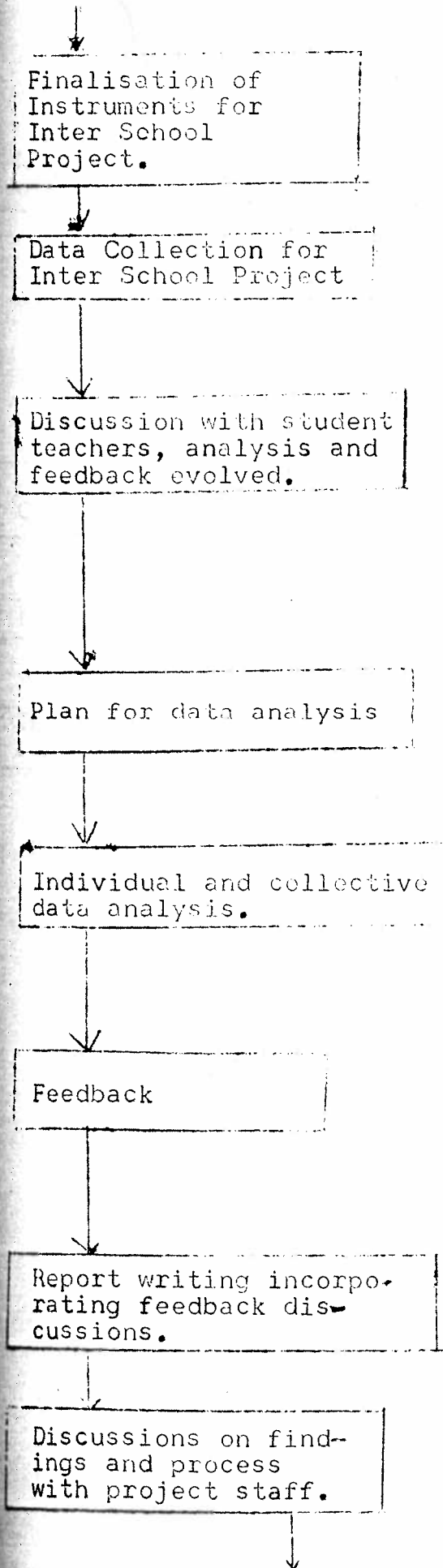
The Evaluation Process

CHART I: STEPS IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Initial Discussions     │
│ with Project Director   │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Planning for Evaluation │
│ with Project Staff.     │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Planning for Evaluation │
│ with Project Staff.     │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Discussion with Volunteer│
│ teachers regarding evalua-│
│ tion plan.              │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Refinement of Data      │
│ collection plan and identi-│
│ fication of methods with │
│ project staff.          │
├────────────┬────────────┤
│ A          │ B          │
│ Inter School│ Abner      │
│ Project    │ Project    │
└────────────┴────────────┘
      ↓            ↓
```
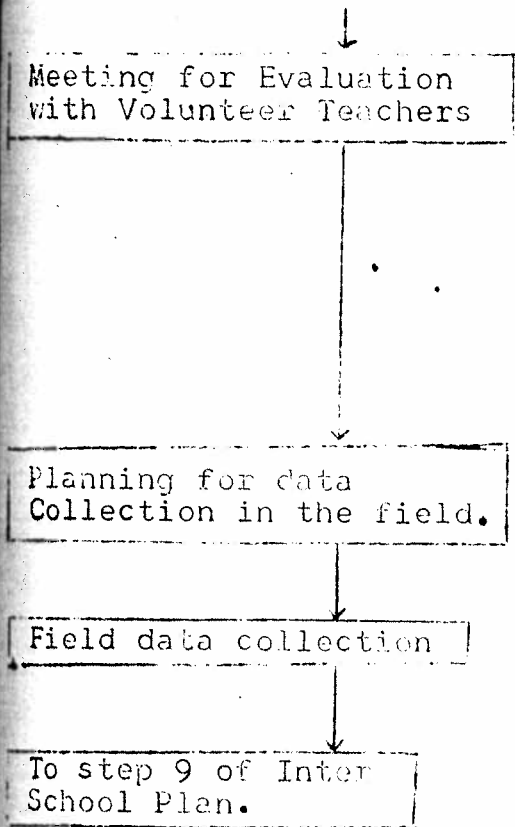
1. The project director gave an overview of the project to the consultants. The process of PE was broadly discussed. Next two steps were planned.

2. The consultants visited 5 centres with the project director and supervisors just to familiarize themselves with the activities and centres. The sample centres represented the range of population of entire set of centres. Day long visit.

3. This daylong event was utilized to jointly plan the evaluation. The two project coordinators and all the six supervisors were present besides the manager. It is here that the objectives of evaluation were set, the multiple constituencies were identified and the type of information/data required from these constituencies were identified. Next two steps planned.

4. Half day exercise to discuss the objectives and tentative plans of evaluation with volunteer teachers leading to elaboration and modification. Two day event planned with all volunteer teachers to initiate the evaluation process of Abner Project.

5. The evaluation plan, and in particular data-collection plan, refined and finalized with project staff. The instruments needed for data collection and alternative methods identified and responsibility for data collection and instrument design allocated. As shown in Charts II and III, the design of instruments as well as data collection was shared between project coordinators, supervisors, volunteers teachers, student teachers and consultants.

Flowchart	Text

Finalisation of
Instruments for
Inter School
Project.

↓

Data Collection for
Inter School Project

↓

Discussion with student
teachers, analysis and
feedback evolved.

↓

Plan for data analysis

↓

Individual and collective
data analysis.

↓

Feedback

↓

Report writing incorpo-
rating feedback dis-
cussions.

↓

Discussions on find-
ings and process
with project staff.

↓

A. INTER-SCHOOL PROJECT.

6. The instruments were finalised in
the joint meeting of all project
staff and plans for data-collec-
tion in the Inter School Project
made.

7. As per plan, data-collection be-
gan and completed in a month as
the schools were closing for
summer vacation.

8. A consultant along with non-formal
education worker of the school
held discussions with a few stu-
dent teachers to involve them in
the evaluation. The objective and
plans for evaluation were explain-
ed and they were invited to join
in the evaluation process. The
event was also used to collect
data through group interviews.

9. Along with project staff, a plan
for data analysis and feedback
evolved. All parties were assig-
ned responsibility for preliminary
analysis of data collected by them.

10. Data was analyzed individually
first and then a collective (with
project staff) analysis session
was held. Feedback meetings
within schools were planned.

11. Principal, Representatives of
Principals, SUPW Teachers, NFE
workers and project staff were
present in a half-day feedback
meeting where salient findings
were presented and critical issues
identified and discussed. A sec-
ond meeting was also held.

12. The suggestions made during feed-
back meeting were incorporated
in the report.

13. Held.

```
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Meeting for Evaluation  │
│ with Volunteer Teachers │
└─────────────────────────┘



            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Planning for data       │
│ Collection in the field.│
└─────────────────────────┘
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Field data collection   │
└─────────────────────────┘
            ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ To step 9 of Inter      │
│ School Plan.            │
└─────────────────────────┘
```

B. Abner Project

6. A one and half day event was orga-
    nised with project staff and volun-
    teer teachers. The time was spent
    in identifying characteristics of
    an effective centre and then eva-
    luating (both self and supervisor)
    centres on those characteristics.
    The data from volunteer teachers
    was also collected (through self
    reports and discussions) during
    this event.

7. A half-day event was used to plan
    field data-collection from the
    centres. Entire project staff
    and volunteer teachers were called.

8. As per plan, data collection in the
    field took another month and a half.
    Visits were made to the centre and
    the community.

9. Other steps, 9 to 13, are similar
    to those in the Inter-School Plan.

I. Salient Findings (Inter School)

An attempt is made in this section to highlight the salient findings of the study and to present them in a manner and language that would be easily comprehensible to the reader. The main findings are:

1. **The study showed that, on the whole, the student-teachers had benefitted from their involvement in the NFE Project.**

A questionnaire was administered to the student-teachers in the three schools. The data showed that a majority of the students in the three schools enjoyed working on the Project and expressed interest in teaching children. Thus, 94 per cent of the student-teachers in Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan (N = 47), 80 per cent in St. Thomas (N=31) and 95 per cent in Springdales (N = 21) expressed this opinion.

Most student-teachers also felt that they had benefitted personally from their participation in the programme. Some of the changes noticed by them were:

"I am now concerned about the poor people. I want to help them in any small way I can."

"The teaching in the centre has changed me completely. I have become aware of the problem that teachers face while teaching. It has broadened my opinion on need for education."

"Yes, I have changed a little. For instance, I do not look upon the slum children indifferently and now try to understand their problems."

"I have come to know a fraction of those living below the poverty line better than what I knew about them."

"We have come to know about poverty of India."

"It has made me feel the intensity of the problems India is presently facing. The direct exposure has made me aware of certain problems personal, economic etc. which I had never thought of earlier."

A majority of the parents had also noticed a favourable change in their children: 46.7% in BVB (N =43) and 65% in St. Thomas (N = 20). Some of the changes observed were - "There are marked changes in her temperament and approach to human problems." "She is more patient, more cooperative, more helpful, more understanding than before." "No apparent changes noticed, but I feel the changes will come and the experiences and training will make her grow into a socially aware person."

In addition, the class teachers and the NFE workers had also noticed positive changes in the student-teachers.

2.   On the whole, the study indicated that the
     School teachers were not well informed about
     the NFE Project.

In each school, the SUPW teacher, the class teachers
and a sample of other teachers were administered a ques-
tionnaire.   Their responses indicated that the teachers were
not very clear about the objectives of the NFE project or
about the communities in which the students were working or
of the other schools that were involved in the Project.
There was also a lack of clear understanding about the aims
and objectives of SUPW itself as part of the school curri-
culum.   This was true even of the SUPW teachers.   As one
teacher from St. Thomas' School remarked that SUPW was being
included in the curriculum because "probably a directive has
come from the Board -- for the staff and students have not
been given an orientation."   Other responses, however, inclu
ded, "to make the students understand how fortunate they are",
"to enable the students to involve themselves in work other
than studies", and "to make the children aware of their
surroundings and of their role in the community."

In terms of their attitude towards the project too,
a large number of them tended to be indifferent towards
the project.   Even a large number of students perceived
their indifference to the project --- 74% in Springdales
(N = 21) , and 50% in Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan (N = 47).
Among the suggestions offered by the teachers for making
the NFE Project more effective in the school were "teachers
in general should be made more aware of the project,
especially the class teachers", "an awareness must be
brought about and the whole school as a body must know
about it and work towards it through different means."

3.   The three Principals showed interest in and
     commitment to the idea of NFE work

Indepth interviews with the Principals/Vice-Principals
indicated that there was full commitment to the aims and
objectives of the NFE Project.   A need had been felt by the
top school managers to start community service for students.
Since NFE became part of SUPW, the schools became involved
in the Project as it was felt that it would have a positive

impact on the minds of the children or else they would never understand problems of poverty in the country. The project's achievements so far were summarised by one Principal thus – "What the students could not get from standards 1 to 10, they can get in one year" – indicating thereby the positive impact of the programme on the school children.

4. <u>On the whole, the Parents of student-teachers had a favourable opinion about the NFE Project</u>

In order to ascertain the level of awareness of the parents of the student-teachers and their attitude towards the Project, a questionnaire was sent to them. Their attitude towards the NFE Project was mainly favourable.

Category	St. Thomas (N = 20)	Springdales (N = 11)	B. V. B. (N = 43)
Favourable	90% (18)	73% (8)	90% (39)
Indifferent	(1)	..	(2)
Unfavourable	..	..	–
No response	(1)	(3)	(2)

Even a large majority of the student-teachers felt that in comparison to the school teachers, their parents had a favourable attitude towards the NFE Project – 89% in BVB (N = 47), 71% in Springdales (N = 21) and 64% in St. Thomas (N = 31) expressed this opinion.

5. <u>The study indicated that the NFE Project had some positive impact on learners.</u>

One of the main findings here related to the fact that almost all the learners interviewed enjoyed being at the NFE Centre. They differed in their preferences for specific activities but they liked the wide variety of teaching methods such as drama, singing, games, outings, study etc. that were used.

Overwhelmingly favourable reaction was expressed by them about student teachers who they said "taught lovingly". All the NFE workers were also praised by the learners.

The parents of learners felt the same way. They had only favourable opinions about student teachers and NFE workers.

Many parents (about 50% in all) noticed positive changes among their children - "my daughter has become more serious about her studies", "my son now wants to keep clean." Even the student teachers had observed positive changes in the learners (73% in Springdales, ..% in BVB, 90% in St. Thomas). Some comments that were made were - "Yes I see many changes in the children I teach. My students have become more interested in studies. They have become more punctual and well-mannered. They have become more friendly and are also becoming more clean." "They have become more obedient and respectable. They are also now better in their studies. They have stopped fighting and quarreling during the games." "The children have learned to be slightly more disciplined and have developed a deep attachment towards us". "Since I first met them, they have changed. In the beginning they were timid and shy to ask questions and even if they did not understand, they never asked for an explanation. But now they have opened up and even sing and dance and ask questions." The positive change in the learners was even corroborated by the NFE workers.

Most parents of learners were informed about the NFE project and showed willingness to help in whatever way they could.

Parents suggested that same student-teachers should teach every day and classes should be held regularly and for a longer duration. They also wanted functional education.

6. <u>The role of NFE worker is such that she faces multiple and conflicting demands.</u>

The NFE worker in the project is having a complex and difficult role (see figure 1). She is simultaneously dealing with such diverse constituences as local communities, parents of learners, learners, student-teachers, S U P W

and other teachers, principals and other project staff.
This presents multiple and, at times, conflicting demands
about her work. Thus an NFE worker needs to possess range
of skills to deal with such diverse constituencies.

Another aspect of this role is the apparent confusion
about the identity of NFE worker. Is she a part of the school
system or the project organisation or both? Is she inside
the school or outside? If she is outside, how does she in-
fluence the school system? If she is inside, does she per-
form other tasks of the school? In particular, Bharatiya
Vidya Bhawan has resolved this problem by taking on the NFE
worker as its full time staff. Thus she performs multiple
responsibilities, besides NFE project, as part of the SUPW
faculty. In other two schools, this tension is still conti-
nuing.

7. There had not been much systematic interaction
    between schools in the implementation of the
    project.

Interviews with student-teachers, NFE members and
project staff, school social workers, and Principals
indicated that while there had been some interaction bet-
ween the NFE workers and among students of the three schools
during the training programmes, the schools had tended, by
and large, to work independently of one another. Suggestions
included meetings between the three schools and sharing of
experiences so that the schools could learn from one another
and further strengthen the functioning of the project.

8. On the whole, student-teachers had benefitted
    more than children in the community and the
    community-at-large.

Interviews with Principals, school social workers,
NFE workers, project staff and some community members seemed
to indicate that despite the fact that positive changes had
been perceived in the learners, yet the NFE project had
tended to give priority to the needs of the student-teachers
rather than the needs of the learners or the needs of the
community.

Feedback

At a half-day meeting, the main findings of the study were presented to a group consisting of a school principal, representatives of school principals of 2 schools, SUPW workers, NFE workers, and Project staff. The following issues were then identified and analysed. On the basis of the discussions, the following recommendations were made for improving and strengthening the implementation of the NFE project. These recommendations and findings were shared in another similar meeting.

Issues for Analysis:

1. Lack of knowledge and skills regarding SUPW and NFE Project.
2. Integrating NFE worker into the participating school.
3. The issue regarding who should benefit -- the school community or the community at large.
4. Integrated approach to S U P W
5. "Inter" school nature of the project.
6. Relationship between the Formal and Nonformal education systems.

Recommendations: Proposals for Future.

1. Need to strengthen orientation and training programmes

Various ways were suggested to make the existing efforts more effective. A need was clearly felt for organising better training and orientation programmes for teachers. Some of the other suggestions included sharing of resource persons who could work together as a team and rotate to schools, exchange of teachers and visits to well-run centres. This would help to bring the schools together, encourage team effort among them and strengthen the "inter" school aspect of the project.

2. Need for better communication between teachers-- students and parents:

Recommendations made to bring about better communication at all levels included visits to centres of students of one school to those of another school; coming together of students to share experiences; using school assemblies to inform students and teachers about the NFE project, its achievements, its shortcomings; student meetings and performances to interest parents, and media coverage to enlist wider interest and support.

3. Need to integrate NFE workers into the School system.

In view of the role-conflict experienced by the NFE worker it was recommended that in the interests of the Project it was vital that the NFE worker should eventually be integrated into the school system as in the case of BVB. In case it was not immediately possible it was still necessary that psychologically the NFE worker be made to feel a part of the school system. For example, the sheer act of signing in the school register was important to give the NFE worker a sense of belongingness to the school. If one or two teachers could be trained as substitutes to the NFE worker, the NFE worker would not only feel less isolated but the training would also ensure a certain degree of involvement and sharing of responsibilities on the part of the other school teachers.

4. Need to broaden the concept of Nonformal Education to cater to community needs.

The need to extend the scope of nonformal education project beyond merely a literacy effort was recommended. A broader concept of NFE that is designed on the basis of the needs of the community was considered necessary to ensure that between the needs of the school community and those of the community-at-large, it is the needs of the latter that are catered to..

5. Need to work out specific strategies for an integrated approach to SUPW.

It was recommended that there was a need to work in a collaborative manner as far as SUPW was concerned. Communi-

cation between NFE and SUPW teachers was considered vital.
Besides working out the guidelines on how the integration
could be brought about, the specific issue of grading for
NFE work vis-a-vis other SUPW activities could be given
adequate attention at the school and later, at the inter-
school level.

6. Need to identify the relationship between the
   Formal and the Non-formal Education systems:

In view of the danger that the NFE system invariably
degenerates into a second-class educational system that is
designed for the poor and the deprived while the formal
system continues to service the elite classes, it was
recommended that efforts should be made to ensure that the
two systems have the same status and the interfaces are
established whereby the two systems are responsive to each
other. In other words, entry into the Formal system from
the non-formal system should be made possible and vice-versa.

In view of the policy implications of this recommenda-
tion, it was suggested that the Project Manager and the
Project Director or/and Coordinator should take up this issue
of the relationship at the level of the policy makers.
It was also recommended that at various forums and seminars,
it was necessary to raise the issue on whether NFE was a
hand-maiden to the formal system that in itself was faulty,
inefficient, ineffective; or whether NFE was a parallel
system, that had strengths and advantages over the formal
system, and the manner in which it could influence the
latter to be relevant, useful and cost-efficient.

****

II Salient Findings (Abner)

The following salient findings have been derived from a preliminary. analysis of existing data. Unlike Inter-school project, where evaluation exercise is more or less over this process in the Abner Non-formal project was completed partially. Hence, these findings should be treated as interim.

1. Children appear to have considerably benefitted from the project.

This was borne out by the observations made by NFE workers and project staff as well as volunteer teachers (VTs). The parents of learners also perceived a positive and noticeable change among them (75% of those interviewed; N=53). Salient changes noticed were enhanced ability to read, write and speak; improved manners and personal hygience; learning songs and poems, etc.

The VTs had also noticed positive changes among learners. All the VTs who filled the questionnaire (N=16, two third of all VTs then) reported positive/ change noticed by VTs was enhanced interest in education; other salient changes were mentioned as improvement in behaviour, punctuality, personal hygiene and self-confidence of learners.

2. The project does not seem to have made much impact on the communities as such.

While the NFE centres are providing important benefits to learners, the impact on the communities where centres are being run is not very significant. This is partly suggested by the fact that more than half of the parents interviewed had no knowledge of the project and about one third did not know about the activities at their local NFE centres. This has been confirmed by the project staff themselves.

/changes among learners. The most commonly reported

In the course of this evaluation, three community meetings were also held. It became clear through these meetings that the communities as collective entities had not benefitted from the project, though individual learners had benefitted a great deal.

3. <u>The parents of learners have a positive and favourable opinion of the project.</u>

About two third majority of respondents had a favourable opinion of the VTs and NFE workers. They also felt that the care and attention given to learners at the centres was good. About 80% of them wanted their children to study in these centres. This was further confirmed in the three community meetings where a favourable assessment of the centres was explicitly made.

The parents (60%) also felt responsible towards effective functioning of the centres. They offered to solve problems, collect children, inform others about the centre and check on its running.

Of those interviewed (n=16, two third of all VTs then), more than 75% VTs reported having sensed positive reaction of parents of learners towards the centres. This was also supported by the supervisors' comments.

4. <u>Most volunteer learners have personally gained from their involvement in NFE project.</u>

More than 80% of VTs who filled the questionnaire (n=16, two third of all VTs then) mentioned that they had benefitted personally from their involvement in the project. All of these VTs saw their involvement as more than a job, and a source of their continued learning. The most frequently mentioned benefits were knowledge of teaching methods, self-awareness, self-confidence, etc.

One of the areas requiring attention that VTs proposed, and other project staff concurred, is more systematic and varied training. It was felt that the project should continue to provide a series of learning opportunities for VTs and others involved in it.

5. <u>On the whole about 65% of the Centres are running</u> eff
   <u>effectively.</u>

During the course of evaluation,
volunteer teachers were asked to identify characteri-
stics of an effective centre (Chart IV) then they rated
their own centres against these characteristics. Besides,
a physical observation of the centres was also made.
The ratings by VTs indicated that about two-third of all
centres were running smoothly.

This is also supported by the physical observa-
tions made at each centre which showed that 55% of the
centres visited (n=16, half of all the centres running)
had good physical facility, supply position and arrange-
ments. Teaching aids were regularly used and properly
available in about 75% of the centres visited.

The ratings of supervisors were also made for
each centre. This rating also indicates that two-
third of VTs (n=15, about two-third of all VTs then)
had made good efforts in involving the learners in the
centres. The supervisors also noticed that about 80%
of the centres visited showed high participation of
learners in the centres (enthusiastic and responsive
group of learners). From the point of view of commu-
nity support to the centres, the supervisors assessed
40% of the centres as high.

The average attendance in the centres was 70%.
The medium to high attendance centres constituted more
than three fourths of all the centres. The average
number of learners on rolls was/ (n=12, about 40% of /27
all centres then).

Thus from a variety of perspectives, it can
be inferred that about two-third of all the centres
were running effectively.

Key Issues (for core Project Staff)

The following issues emerged out of the two projects as well as the internal functioning of the project organization. They were shared with the project staff along with other findings.

At the outset, it needs to be mentioned that the project organization functions informally and well and the core group of people constitute a good team.

1. The nature of the project is such that each core staff has to perform a variety of tasks simultaneously. While strict and rigid division of labour is not desirable in such situations, some degree of role clarity is essential. Perhaps improved multi-skilling of the core staff may reduce this tension.

2. A related issue is that of dual supervision. It was mentioned that the two main coordinators at times send different and conflicting messages to NFE workers/ supervisors. Yet eliminating dual supervision may not be the answer.

3. A rather sticky issue revolves around payments system--both present emoluments and future expectations. This is also discussed in the light of the physically more strenuous nature of job in Abner as compared to Inter-School project. Both VTs and NFE workers/supervisors seem to be somehow dissatisfied with this.

4. A major issue relates to clarity of objectives of the project.

First, are we engaged in adult/non-formal education or in community improvement through their organization-building ? The conflict gets translated in daily practice where emphasis on the former tends to push the latter into background.

Second, how is inter-school project similar to or different from the Abner one? Are they focusing on the same community or different ones? It appears that

the former benefits STs from middle class families while the latter benefits individual learners and VTs from lower class families.

Third, it is the question of choice of community and extent of coverage provided in the project. In inter-school project, the choice of community is primarily made by the school, mostly on the basis of locational convenience to the school system. In Abner project, no visible/seems to be made. The coverage here appears very extensive, geographically scattered for and wide and culturally diverse. This extensive coverage (high number of centres) may imply sacrificing intensive, community mobilization and organization work.

POST SCRIPT

While the previous sections presented salient findings of this evaluation, we would like to briefly enumerate the impact of the participatory evaluation efforts on the project, the learning acquired by different parties, and the problem areas encountered.

1. Impact

The process of participatory evaluation seems to have made considerable impact on the different parties of the project.

a) Most importantly, the participating schools in the Inter-school Project seem to have made many decisions following the feedback of the findings. The status of NFE workers in the two schools has been clarified, enhanced and integrated. Their access to the Principals has improved considerably. Many teachers have shown interest in the project and willingness to join in. Systematic orientation/training programmes on SUPW have been planned initiated for school teachers. Regular testing of learners every term has been introduced now. An overall improvement in the appreciation of the project by the school systems has been noticed.

/systematic selection or rejection of communities

b) The project itself has made many decisions during and
following the participatory evaluation process. Emoluments of some staff have been raised upwards; career
and growth planning discussions have been undertaken.
Field supervision plans have been differently made. Ongoing evaluation has been devised for the project, two
elements of which are weekly evaluation of one centre,
and quarterly testing of levels of learners. Major
reflections on the future directions of the project,
particularly the issue of intensive Vs extensive involvement, have been undertaken.

2. Learning:

a) One of the goals of evaluation was to enhance the skills
of the project staff in participatory evaluation. The
staff felt that they have acquired the necessary confidence and skills to carry out the process on their
own. Some, however, felt they may need external assistance to get started. One interesting point, in this
regard, was made that the Principals of schools found
external evaluators as credible and hence were influenced by the findings. So, there may still be some
need for bringing in external 'experts', but only for
strategic reasons and not to become dependent on them
totally.

b) All project staff felt they had personally benefitted
from their involvement in the process. For some, it was
an opportunity to get a total picture of the project; for
some others, it gave them an appreciation of the
complexity of their tasks and roles. Learning about
others' attitudes, knowledge of different segments and
people were other key learning. Some staff persons felt
more confident of themselves, particularly in relation
to dealing with the community.

c) The two 'external' evaluators also learnt some important things from the process. Besides learning
about the school system, SUPW and the complexity of
managing such a project, they also learnt about the
things that worked (or did not work) in the participatory evaluation process.

3. Problem Areas

Several problem areas became clear as the process came to an end.

a) It became evident that several goals of evaluation, as decided earlier, could not be accomplished this time. Assessment of teaching methods and collaboration with other agencies just could not be accomplished. Testing of learners was planned, partially carried out but got disrupted due to external irritations; hence, it could not be used in the findings. Mobilising communities and assessing training was tried out only partially, and could have been done more systematically. The project staff has now decided to carry out its own process in respect of these. For example, VTs have now been trained to test learners and it has begun.

It was generally recognised that a very ambitious set of goals were initially set for the evaluation. Perhaps one can be more realistic in the future. Yet, it was also felt that identifying all the multiple goals a priori was important to guide the evaluation process.

b) The second major problem area related to time schedule. When the evaluation process was started (March 1982), it was thought that the entire cycle will be over by end of August 1982, in about 5 months. While the Inter School part was over by late July 1982, the other component dragged on for another 5 months. A discussion with project staff revealed that the task undertaken was large and summer months plus external irritations delayed the second part. Perhaps the two parts could have been planned sequentially, one keeping the school system's time table in view, another following that in cooler months. In the Abner part, some floundering was also experienced by the project staff for a lack of ongoing guidance.

Despite these factors, it is evident that such a participatory evaluation process requires

better planning can reduce the overall time schedule.

c) One of the reasons mentioned for the floundering by the project staff was a lack of skills on their part. No explicit training in evaluation was built in consciously in the process. It now appears that we should have perhaps spent some structured time on training, thereby reducing the possibility of floundering.

On the whole, it was a positive and encouraging experience. The learning acquired from this experience is now being used in other efforts.

****

hrs.

APPENDIX

Chart - II: Methods, Content, Source and Party for data collection in Inter school Project

Source	Content	Methods	Party (ies) Responsible.
1. Principal	Impact and value of the project to the school; accomplishments; perception of their and others' roles in the project; perception of their and others' light of any constraints/problems.	Interview	Consultants
2. Administrator	Perception of the project, his role in it, problems and constraints.	– do –	– do –
3. School social worker	Besides the content of the principal, relation-ship with other SUPW subjects, role performance of nonformal education worker, impact on community, methods/aids used, impact on student teachers and their parents' views.	– do –	– do –
4. NFE worker	Given his/her central role, assessment of diff-erent parties, personal accomplishments and frustrations, nature of project organisation and processes, payment system, training, motivation and hopes, besides the items used for school social worker.	– do –	– do –
5. Project Coordinator	Besides what has been asked of NFE workers, historical reflection of the development of the project and future directions.	– do –	– do –
6. a) SUPW teachers	Nonformal Education Project in relation to other SUPW activities.	Meeting dis-cussion, select inter-views and question-aire	Consultant with NFE worker or Project Coordi-nator and NFE worker.
b) Class teachers	Impact of the Project on student in class.	– do –	– do –

c) Other Teachers	Understanding about SUPW in general and NFE project in particular.	- do -	- do -
7. Student-Teachers			
a) Current	Experiences, frustration, and accomplishments, assessment of changes in self and learners, methods/aids, supervision, interest, the manner in which project is being run.	Select interviews in groups, question-aire.	Consultant or project coordi-nator, mainly NFE worker.
b) Potential	Hopes and fears, impressions, needs.	Group dis-cussions.	- do -
c) Past	What had been important learning from the project?	- do -	- do -
8. Parents of Student-teachers	Impact on student teachers, understanding of the NFE Project and SUPW.	Question-aire	Student-teachers and NFE workers
9. Learners	What have they learnt - literacy/numeracy? Experiences.	Test, some discussion	Student-teachers and NFE worker.
10. Parents of learners	Perception of project and impact on their children, their role in it.	Interviews & discussion in groups.	NFE worker with super-visors of Abner Proje or Project Coordinator or consultant.
11. Records	Analysis of attendance, age, literacy, background.	Use of registers and other records.	Student-teachers and NFE workers.

CHART-III: SOURCE, CONTENT, METHOD AND PARTY FOR DATA COLLECTION IN ABNER PROJECT

	Source	Content	Methods	Party Responsible.
1.	Project co-ordinator.	Experiences, hopes, accomplishments and frustration of the project, history and growth, structure and dynamics of project organisation; assessment of self and other roles, future directions.	Interview	Consultant
2.	Supervisors	Besides the above, assessment of centres and impact, payment system, work allocation, personal motivation, interest, etc.	- do -	- do -
3.	Volunteer teachers	Characteristics of effective centres, evaluation of their centres, their successes and problems, supervision, payment, self learning.	Self reports, discussion, select interviews.	Consultants Coordinator and Supervisors.
4.	Centre's	Physical infrastructure, location and facility, attendance, age, socio-economic back-ground.	Observation, Register analysis.	Volunteer teachers and Supervisors.
5. a)	Learners **Children**	What have they learnt? Literacy, numeracy.	Tests	- do -
b)	Adults.	What have they learnt? Supervision, teaching, their role, concept of self, other social learning.	Test and discussions.	With interschool NFE workers
6. a)	.Community Members	Usefulness, impact, their role, teacher assessment.	Interview	With Project coordinators & Project consultants.

Source	Content	Methods	Party Respon
(b) Formal/ informal leadership.	Their opinions about centre's performance, future directions, their support/role.	Discussion Meeting	With Project Coordinators consultants.
7. Collaborating agencies	Perceptions of the project, experience of past collaboration, future plans	Meeting	Consultants Project staf

UNIT - IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE CENTRE:

(As collectively indentified by Volunteer teachers)

1. **Learners (Children)**
   Enthusiastic, eager to learn, about 20 in number, not
   school going, regular (even without being offered
   materials) punctual, clean and tidy.

2. **Community**
   Takes responsibility in running the centre, mobilises
   learners, arranges for space, contributes financially
   and materially, helps the teacher, forms an effective
   committee to run the centre.

3. **Physical Infrastructure**
   Covered from sun and rain, has sufficient light,
   quiet place, drinking water facility, proper seating
   arrangements and space, centrally located and easily
   accessible, has minimum required materials (Preferably
   locally provided).

4. **Supervision**
   Regular, punctual, knowledgeable, experienced, well-
   behaved, influential, spend time at the centre during
   every visit.

5. **Contents**
   Learning to read, write and speak, awareness, range and
   depth of subjects covered should include health and
   environment.

6. **Teaching Methodology**
   Interesting and creative, relevance based materials,
   other activities like field trips, games, aids, songs
   etc.

7. **Teacher**
   Independent, regular, punctual, experienced, motivated,
   well-behaved, well-paid, behaves in ways congruent with
   community, knows community and its problems and helps
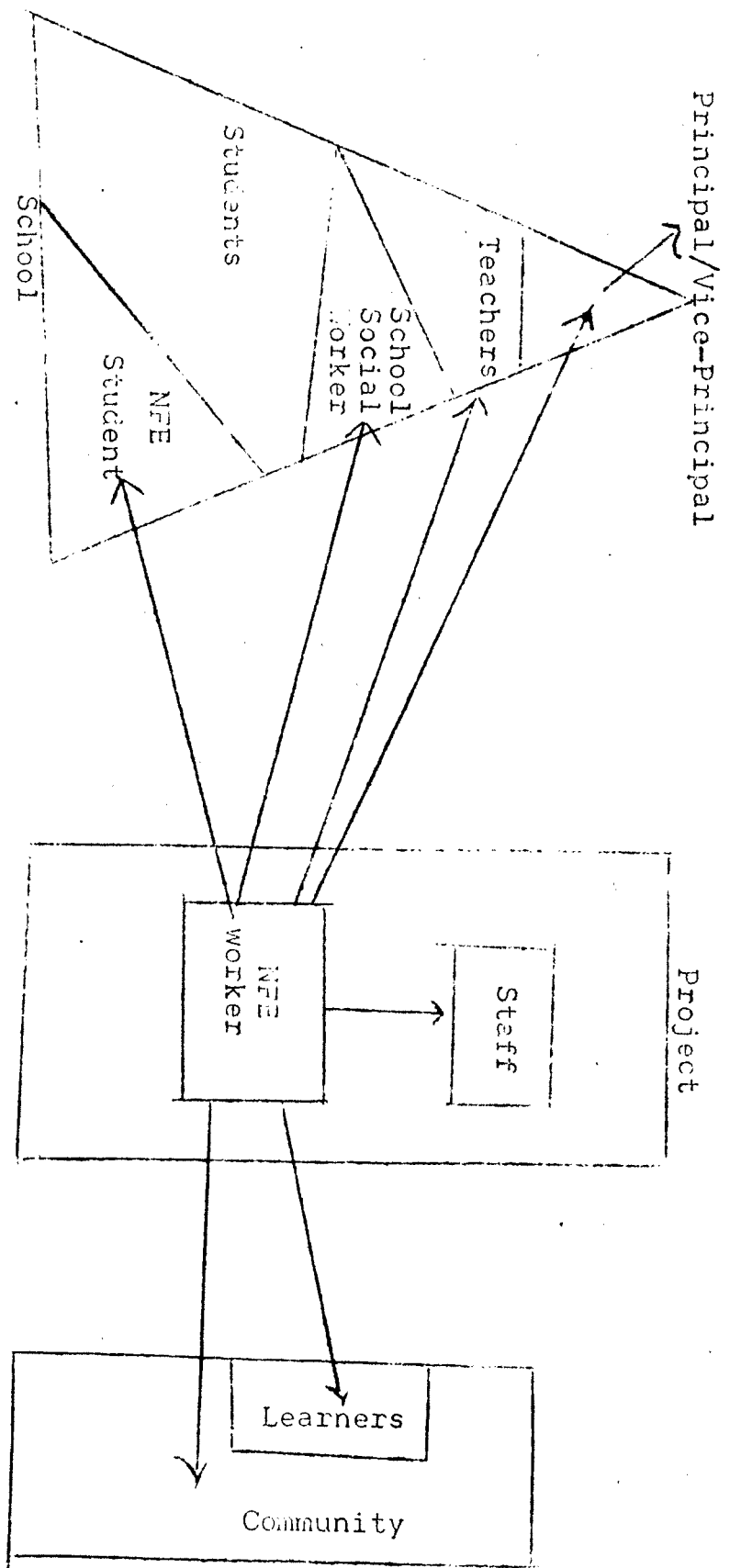   to solve them, resourceful, builds on the levels of
   learners.

FIGURE 1: Role of the NFE Worker