Needs-based resource allocation via formula funding of schools

THE use of formula funding to determine resource allocations in school systems is not a new concept. For example, many ministries of education around the world have, at least, a simple 'in kind' formula funding system that employs student/teacher ratios to guide staffing decisions. In addition, some school systems provide certain schools with supplementary resources when these schools are designated as serving poor or disadvantaged communities according to certain indicators of 'poverty' or 'socio-economic disadvantage'. Other school systems take the physical location of schools into consideration and then provide extra staff or allowances to schools that are considered to be isolated because of their distance from population centres. Still other school systems provide higher than average resources for enrolments in schools that have been charged with the responsibility of offering special programmes (such as music or vocational programmes) or specialist subject offerings (such as minority languages or advanced laboratory science).

In some cases the formulae developed for these resource allocation mechanisms have been fairly complex. Examples of these can be found in the various measures of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage that were developed in the 1960s and 1970s for the *Title I Program* in the USA, the *Educational Priority Areas Network* in the United Kingdom, and the *Disadvantaged Schools Project* in Australia. These funding formulae employed detailed social indicators of: income, education, occupational status, language spoken in the home, and ethnicity.

Most of the early attempts at needs-based resource allocation using formula funding were programme specific, usually targeted at special sub-groups of schools, and were almost always linked to a relatively small proportion of the total budget available for a whole school system. Different formulae were usually used for different programmes – which sometimes resulted in a confusing array of resource allocation activities running in parallel without co-ordination of delivery or impact.

A new IIEP publication indicates that needs-based resource allocation in education via formula funding of schools offers considerable benefits to school systems in terms of increased levels of equity, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability. These benefits can be enjoyed by school systems independently of the degree to which their educational and administrative structures are either centralized or decentralized.

New developments in formula funding

Major advances in the conceptual and methodological aspects of needs-based formula funding in education emerged in the 1990s when school

Needs-Based Resource Allocation in Education via Formula Funding of Schools. K.N. Ross; R. Levačić, (Eds.). Paris: UNESCO/IIEP, 1999.

Inside

Co-operation	**Research**	**Communication**	**Internet Forum**
A symposium in Algeria assesses the situation of vocational and technical secondary education in the country.	The Pratham Project in Mumbaï, India, proves how communities can be mobilized to ensure basic literacy for slum children.	IIEP and the ADEA tackle the problems of communication and information for educational change in Latin America and Africa.	Yet another IIEP experience in internet forums, generating 'virtual' discussions on university-industry relationships.
3	5	8-9	11

systems in countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and USA, started to implement radically decentralized approaches to educational administration. These school systems began to employ school-based management models in which the majority, sometimes over 80 per cent, of a school system's available educational resources were placed under the direct control of individual schools. The arrival of these models has generated a very strong demand for formula funding because this has been seen as the only way in which to establish valid and defensible methods for making decisions about exactly how much each school should receive from a total school system budget.

The most recent approaches to the formula funding of schools have generally addressed four main cost components: a) *School enrolment*: a basic financial allocation for the number of students within a school – including appropriate weights for cost differentials across grade levels; b) *Curriculum enhancement*: a provision made for specialist curricula or schools with specialized missions; c) *Student supplementary needs*: extra resources for schools having students with disadvantages related to socio-economic factors, language difficulties, learning problems, disabilities, etc.; and d) *School site needs:* specific allocations to cover higher costs due to geographic isolation, general site running costs (cleaning, heating, etc.), and rules for protecting small schools from certain 'fixed-cost' requirements (secretarial support, administration, etc.).

Why should planners be interested in new approaches to formula funding?

These modern formula funding approaches represent a quantum jump in efforts to establish system-wide school finance models that are integrated with agreed educational values and policy, grounded in available research, and accessible to all stakeholders. There are *three* main reasons why all educational planners should begin to learn more about this extremely important trend.

➤ *Coverage, impact, and focus.* Unlike the earlier approaches mentioned above, the new applications of needs-based formula funding represent an unprecedented break with piecemeal patterns of resource allocation in education. In particular, these approaches: a) seek to cover funding procedures for **all** schools in a school system (rather than trying to identify sub-groups for differential treatment), b) are used to allocate most of a school system's resources (rather than just a few resource fragments linked to particular programmes), and c) focus on a genuine attempt to satisfy agreed educational needs (rather than ignoring those characteristics of students, school programmes, and school sites that generate genuine differential costs).

➤ *Research foundations.* The major financial impacts that can arise from the adoption of needs-based formula funding approaches have generated enormous pressures to construct and apply funding formulae in an impartial manner that is based on a research-based assessment of educational needs. This has made it possible for school systems to remove the following three non-systematic, but often widespread, influences on resource allocations: a) *Historical precedent*: where each school simply receives the same funding as it received the previous year – modified up or down by a few percentage points; b) *Bidding and bargaining*: where each school is expected to argue its own case for a specific level of funding; and c) *Discretion*: where each school receives an amount defined by the opinions and personal preferences of school system administrators.

➤ *Catalytic effect upon educational debate.* Differences in needs-based formula funding outcomes for different schools must always be justified at all levels of an education system. This requirement implies that the implementation of formula funding should be a transparent and intelligible process that permits all stakeholders in the education process to enter the school finance debate, to view and use relevant information, and to feel

Going beyond basic education in Algeria

At a symposium on 'Education and vocational training' held in Algeria from 8 to 10 December 1998, public officials, private sector traditional partners and foreign experts assessed the current situation of vocational and technical secondary education in the country, and tried to define viable alternatives for the future...

H ELD at the Club des Pins, about thirty kilometres outside of Algiers, under the auspices of the Government Commission on Education (*Conseil Supérieur de l'Education, CSE*, an advisory body directly responsible to the President of the Republic), this symposium was the second of its kind. The first, held at the beginning of 1998, focussed on *basic education*. As a logical sequence, this second symposium's main aim was to stimulate discussion on new directions to be taken in *general and technical/vocational education at the secondary level*, in view of new global trends and the circumstances prevailing in Algeria. Thus, during three intensive days, over three hundred public officials and traditional partners within the education sector, as well as a certain number of foreign experts debated – in plenary sessions as well as workshops – the current situation and the perspectives or alternatives available in this area.

The presentations and discussions focused on the courses and curriculum offered beyond the basic education level and which have take into account *two* often contradictory parameters: *on one hand,* the need to incorporate more extensive knowledge within the curriculum; and *on the other*, the promotion of specialization – qualified by some as 'professionalization' – of this same knowledge with the aim of facilitating entry into the labour market or special university courses, which are, themselves, becoming increasingly vocationalized.

Concerning the first point, *the curriculum* – as was clearly shown in initiatives recently undertaken by the French Ministry of Education, and referred to by several participants – the main question is: how can one integrate a continuously growing body of fresh knowledge while keeping class hours and efforts within sustainable limits, both for students, as well as their families? Whether one is talking about the exact sciences like Physics, Chemistry, Biology…but also in more general areas such as History, Geography, Foreign Languages or even Economics and Sociology (these last two subjects were not even being offered two decades ago) or artistic, sports and social activities (which are increasingly a part of comprehensive 'school programmes'), specialists in these subjects consider that acquiring the rudiments is essential. And yet, it is evident that choices must be available if the curriculum is going to be viable. Therefore, the question arises whether one should 'lighten' the study load while retaining a limited number of specialized courses, or should one stream students more strictly while at the same time offering a broader choice of specialities? Parallel to this concern is the relative importance one should give to Information Technology (IT) which is not only a science, but also a means of acquiring and processing information which is becoming an increasingly important means of communication.

On all of these points, several participants underlined the fact that the education system can only be the reflection of its environment, and therefore of the society it serves – others added that it should also be the engine room of social development – and as such, it cannot fundamentally diverge from society. This explains the failure of imported models, as well as the number of disappointing results obtained, due to inappropriate cultural social or economic values. This debate, which rapidly became intertwined with the ubiquitous discussion about globalization, soundly demonstrated that this phenomenon must not simply mean standardization on a global scale, but on the contrary, the accumulation and tolerance of diversity which is increasingly and significantly evident in all cultures.

The second point, namely, *specialization beyond basic education to facilitate integration into professional life* was more particularly treated in the workshops on technical and vocational teaching. It lent itself to a dual treatment: *first*, as training which leads directly to the job market; and *secondly*, as instruction which lays the ground for higher levels of education. Here again, two kinds of thinking predominate. Briefly, some wish to see the training period shorter but more specialized, so as to take into account not only the

unavoidable cost (a direct quality-indicator for this type of teaching), but also of the need to set up a modular system to facilitate reorientation courses and on-the-job training. On the other hand, others recommend a broader, more general curriculum – extreme supporters of this view strongly advocate that *only* this kind of general curriculum exist beyond basic education. The idea behind this approach is that by favouring 'horizontal' learning – i.e. Mathematics, written and oral skills, indeed even management or drawing – the pre-specialization period is prolonged for most students, while, at the same time, the variety of skills acquired is larger. By reducing the often heavy and expensive period needed for vocational training, it thus facilitates adaptation to available employment on the job market.

Naturally, it was not possible to clearly resolve this debate one way or the other, since there are numerous arguments to support each side, as well as drawbacks, without providing any definitive answers. However, it seems that a broad consensus is emerging in favour of the second alternative, which is more in keeping with the trend towards professional 'adaptability' which is becoming more and more popular in many industrialized countries.

At the end of discussions, the workshop participants agreed on *two* key points. *First*, the pressing need of getting businesses involved with training programmes, both in determining target objectives and curriculum, as well as for practical aspects (teaching, apprenticeship and work experience, applied research, etc.), financing and even certification. This effort requires – and this is especially true of Algeria – a significant mindshift, not only for CEOs, but also for educators, both of whom are conditioned by an overly rigid top-down management style due to a long period of centralized administration. The *second* point stressed by the participants concerns the necessary devolution of management responsibilities towards the regions, so as to match the form and content of training to the specificities and strengths of the surrounding environment, while at the same time maintaining overall uniformity within the system.

Bearing in mind the importance of these two points, the CSE has decided to organize a new forum in the near future (probably June 1999) on the general topic of **Business/ training/employment**.

The excellent preparation and logistics surrounding this forum warrant high praise. The tone of debate, which was both calm and intense, as well as the concern for openness and dialogue which were evident throughout the symposium bear witness to the spirit of co-operation which will doubtless continue to develop during the forthcoming months and years.

PIERRE RUNNER

comfortable with the fairness of the resulting resource allocations. All of these outcomes are highly desirable in any society because they establish the kind of environment in which school finance decisions can be based on informed, continuing, and widespread debate.

A publication on needs-based formula funding

These three arguments highlight the importance of needs-based formula funding and were instrumental in the decision taken by the IIEP to prepare a book on *Needs-Based Resource Allocation in Education via Formula Funding of Schools*. The book has been designed with *two* main objectives in mind. *First*, it aims to provide sufficient information to enable senior decision-makers within ministries of education to explore the policy contexts and basic principles related to this emerging trend. *Second*, it seeks to provide educational planners with sufficient technical background and implementation examples to be able to commence the process of designing and implementing needs-based funding formulae.

The book was prepared with the assistance of eight specialist authors who were selected because of their leadership role in the field of needs-based formula funding and their 'hands-on' experience in the production and implementation of funding formulae. The authors prepared their contributions in accordance with an agreed chapter framework and then met at the Paris offices of the IIEP in late 1997 to examine what had been written, to debate conceptual issues, and to reach consensus on a unified structure and style for the book. Throughout 1998 chapter preparation continued via the Internet until the book was completed in early 1999. The Director and staff of the IIEP would like to congratulate all of the authors for their excellent contributions to the book, and also for the manner in which they worked as a team on their own chapters and on refining the work of other authors.

The publication of this book marks a point in time where various needs-based formula funding schemes have precipitated great changes in the field of school finance. These changes have implications for all educational planners because they represent a fundamental shift in the philosophical and empirical bases for funding whole school systems. Charting the future evolution of needs-based formula funding will be an exciting and demanding task, and it will need to extend for at least another decade before its full impact is known and evaluated. This book is offered to the educational planning profession as an initial statement on needs-based formula funding – in the hope that it will both inform and provoke further investigation and debate. ❐

Education for every child in Mumbaï by the year 2001

The challenge set by the Pratham Association in India

During a recent IIEP fact-finding mission in Mumbai (Bombay), India, a meeting with those responsible for the Pratham project, Dr. Madhav Chavan and Professor Farida Lambay, showed how access of shanty town children to basic education can be significantly improved by mobilizing the communities concerned, and gaining the support of the local public authorities.

THE Pratham project, which aims at enrolling all children from Mumbai in primary school by the year 2001, grew out of the conviction that with a little help, deprived urban communities could overcome difficult circumstances and provide access to basic education for all of their children. It is based partly on mobilizing the communities bound to benefit from the venture, who are asked to provide classrooms, and to choose young women with teaching talents from their own ranks.

It is primarily aimed at pre-school children, or children who are encountering difficulty at the primary level, as well as the 30,000 to 40,000 young inhabitants of Mumbai, aged between 6 to 10 years who have never attended school, or who left it prematurely[1]. Most of them live in shanty towns which contain nearly 60 per cent of the city's population.

Five thousand persons are currently involved in setting up the project whose annual budget is modest – around US$250,000.
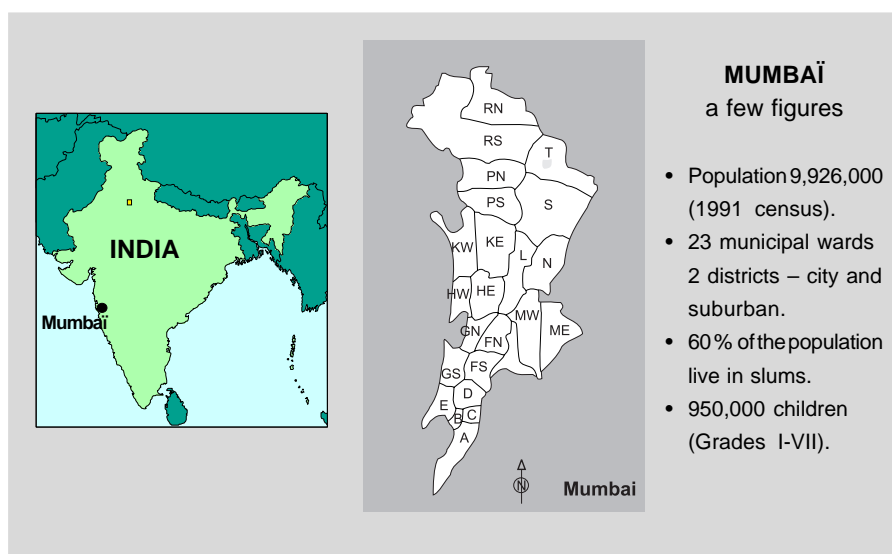
Visits to project locations

Guided by those responsible for the project, we visited:

➤ several *balwadis* (pre-school educational centres) which receive children aged from three to five, teaching them how to participate in group activities, listen to stories and learn songs, etc.

➤ centres where bridge courses are organized for children between eight and ten who have left school or have never attended, so as to give them a chance to catch up, and fit into the regular school system

Some of these centres were set up on sites where construction is strictly forbidden. This is especially true of shanty towns located on land belonging to the company which runs the naval shipyards. The latter tolerates the presence of slums on its land since it hires the deprived population to collect unused boat material at a low cost. However, it refuses to authorize solid constructions and access to basic services (water, electricity, etc.). This is why no municipal primary school has been installed on this site, and that an educational centre with a cement floor laid by the community was recently demolished.

Some of the centres are housed in the homes of the young community women who have been selected as teachers. They receive a small salary from Pratham, as well as socio-educational material, and collect the registration fees paid by the parents for their own use. The idea behind this is that in the long run, the community will be able to organize, finance and manage these educational centres on its own. Each centre receives about twenty students of different ages who are sometimes hard

MUMBAÏ
a few figures

- Population 9,926,000 (1991 census).
- 23 municipal wards 2 districts – city and suburban.
- 60 % of the population live in slums.
- 950,000 children (Grades I-VII).

[1] The figures supplied are not very reliable since some of these youngsters move on frequently, and the school registers do not keep track of their movements.

The progress of literacy in India: some recent data
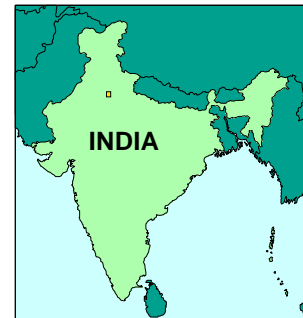
Literacy is an important input in the overall development of individuals and nations. In India, as in most other countries, data on literacy are provided only through the population census, more or less every ten years. However, because of the need to monitor more regularly the progress of literacy efforts, the Indian National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) undertakes every five years a sample of some 1,200,000 households and in December 1997 it completed a specific literacy survey. The results are commented below.

INDIA

A **PRESS** brief issued recently by the NSSO and an accompanying analysis provided to the IIEP by the Director-General of the National Literacy Mission, Mr Bhaskar Chatterjee, help us to see the evolution of literacy in the second most populated country in the world and the one with the highest number of illiterates.

The following graphs illustrate the main results of this most recent survey, with data on the literacy rates for the population of seven years and over, for 1997 and, where available, estimates for 1998 or 2001.

Graph 1 shows that India has made constant progress in its fight against illiteracy since 1951, and that this progress has been even more prominent since 1991. Indeed, the growth over the last six years exceeds the growth in previous ten-year periods and the increase in literacy was particularly rapid between July 1995 and December 1997.

Equally remarkable is the fact that these efforts towards eradicating illiteracy have benefited rural areas and women disproportionately. This is a welcome trend as these two groups have always been at a disad-vantage. *Graph 2* shows how the disparity between urban and rural areas is, slowly but steadfastly, diminishing. Over the last six years, the urban literacy rate increased by 6.9 per cent whereas the rural rate rose by over 11 per cent. Similarly, the rise of the female literacy rate (11%) over the same period was higher than that for males (9%). However, both gender and regional differences remain significant: while only about one out of four men is illiterate, this is still the case for one out of two women.

Graph 1: Evolution of the literacy rate, 1951-1998
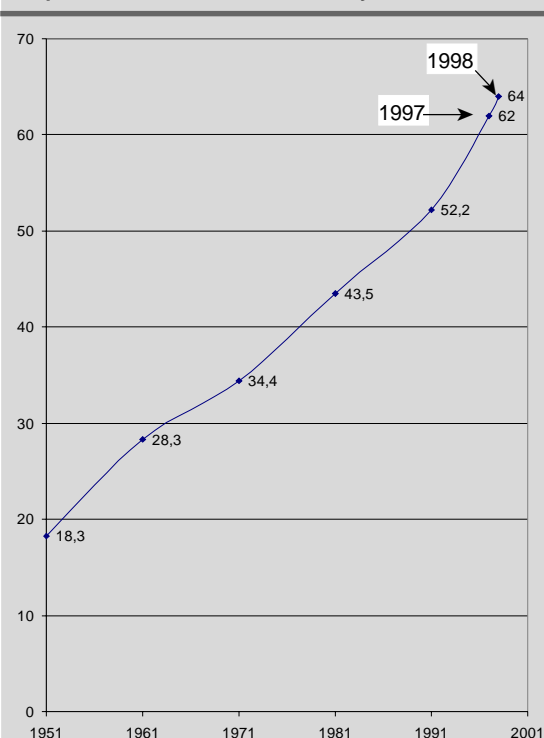
Graph 2: Literacy rate: disparities between urban and rural areas
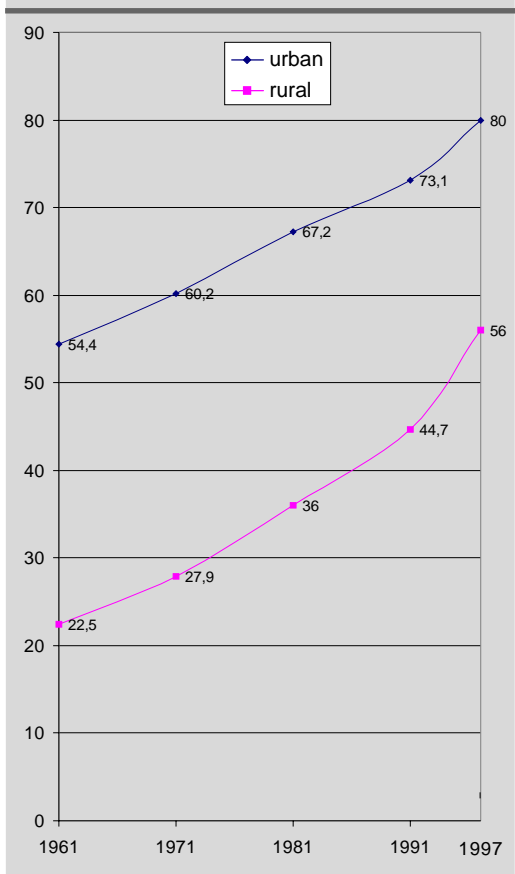
Several States have made great progress in their literacy efforts between 1991 and 1997. In the North-Eastern region for instance, in Meghalaya and Nagaland the literacy rates increased by 28 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively, attaining 77 per cent and 84 per cent, respectively. In the East, Sikkim progressed from 57 to 79 per cent and Assam from 53 to 75 per cent. Several States in the 'Hindi heartland', which

had long been among the least advanced, have done almost as well: Rajasthan rose from 39 to 55 per cent, Uttar Pradesh from 42 to 56 per cent, Bihar from 38 to 49 per cent, Madhya Pradesh from 44 to 56 per cent, and Himachal Pradesh from 64 to 77 per cent. Among the main States, the most literate remains Kerala, with a rate of 93 per cent in 1997.

The decrease in the illiteracy rate has been accompanied by a significant decline in the absolute number of illiterates. The NSSO estimates that the total number of illiterates over 7 years of age, will decrease from 329 million in 1991 to 268 million in 2001. As is shown in *Graph 3*, this reverses the trend between 1981 and 1991, when the growth in the literacy rate was outpaced by the population growth rate.
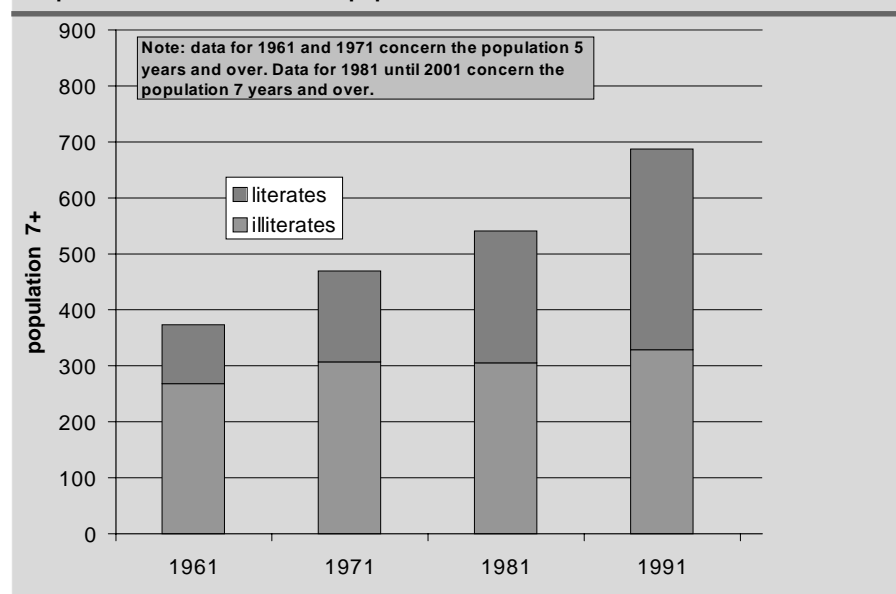
The improvement in the literacy situation is undoubtedly due to *two* factors: the special efforts made in adult education and in particular by the *National Literacy Mission*, and the spread and improvement of primary education. The fact that the data concern the population from seven years onwards makes it difficult to distinguish between these two factors. However, a few encouraging conclusions can be drawn:

➤ if the present trend continues, India might attain a 75 per cent literacy rate by the year 2005, quite a bit earlier than 2011, the original expectation;

➤ the stress on girls and deprived areas seems to be paying off;

➤ the progress achieved by literacy campaigns should be followed up with *post literacy and continuing education* efforts.

Graph 3: Evolution of illiterate population in absolute numbers

Note: data for 1961 and 1971 concern the population 5 years and over. Data for 1981 until 2001 concern the population 7 years and over.

(legend: ■ literates, ■ illiterates; y-axis: population 7+; x-axis: 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991)

to inculcate with good school-going habits for various reasons: child labour, family moves, etc.

We also visited two municipal primary schools where a computer-based learning programme is offered by Pratham to the enrolled students as well as street children, to familiarize them with reading and arithmetic through electronic games. Several software programmes were translated into various Indian languages to encourage their use by the widest number possible.

Achievements so far

Since the project was launched, and thanks to the involvement of the communities concerned, 2,700 *balwadis* receiving a total of 50,000 students have been opened, and 1,000 reorientation classes set up. The decisive support provided by the municipality of Mumbai also allowed 8,000 students to benefit from the computer programme, and for 7,000 children to attend 350 remedial classes at municipal schools. These classes are aimed at children who are seriously behind and to whom they offer 'joyful learning'.

In addition, Pratham supports the organization of advisory educational committees in the 1,254 municipal primary schools. These committees, created by the municipality, are made up of the principal, parents, municipal and Pratham project representatives. Their objective is to improve the school environment, increase student enrolments, and set up apprenticeship programmes. Finally, Pratham wishes to create a database to collect all information relevant to the city's school map.

Lessons to be learned

Some impressions drawn from our various discussions and visits are briefly outlined below:

➤ The non-enrolment of children is less linked to the poverty of their parents or the difficult circumstances in which they live than it is to the non-existence of educational facilities located nearby, or the poor quality of teaching available.

➤ The more a population is deprived, the greater the role that pre-school activities can play in the enrolment and success of children at the primary level.

➤ Apart from the case of street children, which is particularly difficult to deal with, it is possible to reorient most children towards school.

➤ A large number of parents are ready to make a special effort (including financial sacrifices) to educate their children – mobilization of women plays a key role in this respect.

➤ Social actors are capable of widely mobilizing the concerned communities, and thus reach a large number of children rapidly.

➤ An association like Pratham can play the role of a catalyst for municipal initiatives by keeping children and parents involved from pre-school on, by providing remedial teaching for children at risk, by promoting new teaching methods, etc.

JACQUES HALLAK AND MURIEL POISSON

Better communication for better education

Communication is one of the areas most neglected by policy-makers and planners or persons wanting to introduce educational transformation at the local level. Many reforms, policies and other innovations have suffered from incomprehension and strong resistance on the part of different actors due to a lack of proper information and communication and due to the absence of a clearly-defined communication policy and strategy. Two initiatives are being launched, one in Africa and another in Latin America, aiming at improving communication at the different management levels, through training of the relevant personnel. IIEP is committed to reinforce such aspects in its training programme and therefore follow these two pilot activities closely.

Training communicators for educational change in Latin America *(IIEP-Buenos Aires)*

FROM 22 to 23 March 1999, the IIEP regional office in Buenos Aires, Argentina organized a forum on ***The management of change and communication strategies: the training needs of communicators*** in an effort to improve communication at the different management levels when introducing innovations in education in Latin America. The forum was attended by 32 persons involved in various communication endeavours as part of educational reform processes in nine Latin American countries. Participants came from government agencies, NGOs, teachers' unions, and private firms. They were working on projects in the mass media (press, radio, and television), as well as with newsletters, magazines, video, computer networks, etc.

The objective of the forum was to explore communication, traditionally one of the most neglected elements of education transformation processes, not only at the local level but also at national and international levels. Many education-reform processes suffer from disinformation, incomprehension and resistance – all nurtured by the absence of a satisfactory and timely public information/communication policy and strategy. Similarly, teachers at the school level and educators involved in basic education programmes often do not have any meeting point or channels through which to feed their experiences to higher echelons for the briefing of decision-makers and thus have some impact on the framing of education policy.

The forum highlighted the need to put right some of the failings of most processes of educational change:

➤ *The artificial division between **top-down** and **bottom-up** processes*, whereas educational change requires complementarity and links between both movements; that is, the stimulation and strengthening of local, institutional innovation, through a well-directed but flexible educational policy, which promotes diversity and the measures needed to offset inequalities.

➤ *The tendency to classify aspects as opposites*, for instance: micro or macro, administrative or educational, as a process or outcome, traditional or modern, innovative or conservative, short-term or long-term strategies, a success or failure, etc.

➤ *The difficulty of putting things into perspective, of thinking through, registering, systematizing, and disseminating innovative experiences,* and the need to develop skills and create permanent machinery to ensure that these occur not only after but also throughout the process.

➤ *The narrow perceptions of communication which tend to prevail in educational circles: a)* communication solely **within the school system** (essentially for *teacher training purposes*) but not aimed at parents, the community, and society at large (and as *the* channel to determine the education demand); *b)* communication seen merely as information, namely as a **one-way rather than a two-way process.** People generally think in terms of information strategies for informing the country, the community, the teachers, etc. rather than in terms of genuine communication which entails consultation, debate, and the active participation of those involved; *c)* **vertical** communication **between** different tiers of the system (between

the centre and the schools etc.), **but not across** the system (between the different instances and among the various departments and projects within each institution).

➤ *Adherence to traditional ways and formats plus a reluctance to adopt and capitalize on modern technology.* On this issue, the forum emphasized that newsletters and magazines were the best way to convey information and truly communicate. It also highlighted the scarcity of television- and computer-based educational communication.

➤ *The language and style of (non) communication which have developed within the field of education.* Educational discourse has become uncommunicative, circular, and sterile. It is neither informative nor appealing. Educational research is still inaccessible to most educators. This is caused not only by low circulation and high costs of books, but also by the aloof academic style and language used.

➤ *The divorce between educators and communicators.* While educators often find it hard to write and communicate simply and clearly, journalists and communicators tend to simplify and trivialize educational issues instead of recognizing that it requires knowledge, analysis, and public debate. Education and communication must go hand in hand. Educators must learn to communicate and communicators must realise what education is so that both can work together and share their views on education and educational change.

In this respect, the forum agreed on the importance and productive-ness of dialogue between educators and communicators.

JUAN CARLOS TEDESCO AND
ROSA MARÍA TORRES

Communication for education: a new activity in support of education in Africa *(Association for the Development of Education in Africa – ADEA)*

Eᴅᴜᴄᴀᴛɪᴏɴ in Africa faces numerous challenges in the 21st century. Efforts such as broadening access to education, improving quality, or building the capacities and resources to do so, will require the participation of, and dialogue between, the various actors and partners in education. Communication, in order to share information, build confidence, sustain goodwill, reinforce co-operation and improve education, will be crucial to support the partnerships which promote educational development. But how to communicate? Concerning education, who says what, to whom, about what, how and with what effect? That is the classical set of questions that practitioners and researchers in communication have been asking for decades; and the answers are not immediately obvious to many leaders, including educational policy-makers and practitioners.

Building capacities for communicating education

In 1998, ADEA, in collaboration with the World Bank and the West African Newsmedia and Development Center (WANAD), launched a new initiative to tackle these queries and to promote the use of communication in support of education. The activity aims at developing ministerial capacities for communication and outreach as well as improved media understanding of education issues.

Two meetings have been held so far. A first meeting of communication experts, held in Cotonou, Bénin, October 12-16, 1998, sought to assess the communication needs of education ministries. A second meeting, held in Harare, March 17, 1999, was attended by ministers of education and was aimed at: *i*) discussing the role of communication, how it is used today and the potential it holds for the promotion of education in Africa; *ii*) getting the ministers' inputs on a capacity building programme developed in Cotonou.

Lessons learned

Both meetings examined successful, and not-so-successful, African experiences in achieving educational policy changes through various communication approaches, involving not only mass media, but also institutional, group and interpersonal communication. Presentations included a broad overview of the state of communication in Africa, a paper on the role of communication for education and development, and a reflection on communication related to partnerships, trust and pedagogy. Ways and means of involving communication tools, channels and technologies to initiate and sustain dialogue for education and development were explored. The use of traditional channels of communication as well as new information and communication technologies was discussed.

➤ ***Experiences in institutional communication.*** One of the highlights of the Cotonou meeting was the sharing of country experiences conveyed by the communication officers of ministries of education. Presentations showed that there is a growing awareness of the need for improved communication demonstrated by the emergence of communi-

cation officers and departments in most ministries of education. However, communication activities are still granted low priority due to the lack of broader, governmental awareness of the importance of effective communication. For this reason, existing structures are largely inadequate and the actions undertaken are often unstructured.

In most countries there is no established tradition of communication for education, and the cultural climate for it is not very favorable. Information policies and strategies are lacking and there is a tendency to retain information. Communication is often considered a luxury, used in times of crisis. In many cases, the concept of communication is reduced to media relations, public relations or publicity. As a result, the institutional locations and functional roles of officers in charge of communication vary from one country to the other. Some are one-person outfits attached directly to the ministers of education as publicity, protocol or media staff; while others are heads of formally established communication units. Nearly all the countries lack human, material and financial resources in communication.

➤ *The evolution of mass media in Africa.* The general context is characterized by the tremendous changes that have occurred in the last decade. Government monopoly has been broken so that in nearly all countries, private newspapers are flourishing. Radio and television, for a long time the exclusive domain of government, are opening up to private ownership. While quantitative growth has been substantial, much remains to be done in qualitative terms. Newspapers, which have made great efforts to develop editorial independence, still remain overwhelmingly political and personality-oriented. News agencies remain, in most cases, government departments or agencies. Television is handicapped by the lack of equipment and poor local production capacities. The private media, motivated by what will sell, are not interested in covering education issues. News tends to be defined in negative terms, as what does not work, what is going wrong. There is much superficial treatment of information with very little attention given to issues of education and development.

Outcomes of the meetings

The main outcome of the Cotonou and Harare meetings was the development of a strategy and programme of activities at regional and national levels. The programme was commented upon and approved by the ministers present at the Harare meeting. Forthcoming activities include the development of curricula for the training of journalists and communicators for education and development, the organization of regional training seminars, and the creation of networks of journalists and communication officers in education. While the programme is being implemented jointly by ADEA and the World Bank, training activities will be co-ordinated by the West African Newsmedia and Development Center (WANAD), based in Cotonou, Benin, and carried out in close collaboration with various African media and communication institutions.

THANH-HOA DESRUELLES

For further information on this programme, please contact:
ADEA at IIEP
e-mail: th.desruelles@iiep.unesco.org

Towards a 'virtual' Institute: an Internet Forum

THE Institute is organizing an Internet Forum on a recently released title in the *Fundamentals of educational planning* series – *Reducing repetition: issues and strategies*. The topic of repetition is one of great interest and concern to many educational planners, and the Forum is intended to give former IIEP participants an opportunity to exchange information and debate issues in a 'virtual' discussion group.

This continuing education activity for former IIEP course participants is being offered to English-speaking respondents to the invitation from the Director that was included in the last issue of 1998 of the *IIEP Newsletter*. Should there be sufficient interest, a second Forum will be organized for French-speaking respondents in the Autumn.

All participants in the Forum will receive a copy of the text and guidelines for reading and reflection on the issues raised. In mid-June a three-week Internet-based Forum will be held to discuss and debate issues and concerns of the participants under the guidance of a moderator. At its conclusion a synopsis will be prepared and distributed to the participants as a record of the interchange.

For further information on these courses please contact:
s.dantoni@iiep.unesco.org

Managing university-industry relationships

An Internet Forum

The idea of organizing an Internet Forum on university-industry relationships arose from a desire by the authors to discuss the findings of 11 international case studies undertaken, in 1998, by different institutions around the world (cf box) to explore innovative methods of managing such relations. The Forum was held on the internet over a period of 12 weeks (end-November 1998 – end-February 1999) and the information generated by these 'virtual' discussions proved the experience to be both enriching and worthwhile to all involved ...

THE Forum, in which eight out of the original 11 authors participated, was organized in five discussion rounds, each of which focussed on one crucial issue to be tackled fortnightly over the 12-week period. The issues selected for debate were:
➤ mechanisms for the control of external interface structures;
➤ distribution of revenues generated by contractual activities;
➤ costing of projects;
➤ incentives for the motivation of personnel to engage in university-industry relations;
➤ crucial success factors in the management of university-industry relations.

Each participant author prepared a contribution describing their institution's experience on the discussion topics and sent it to the IIEP before a given deadline. In turn, they received copies of all the other contributions from IIEP. The participants interacted with each other (with copy to the IIEP) on the different experiences presented and the IIEP played a moderating role, asking questions, commenting and drawing conclusions on best practices.

Since most of the communication on the case studies had previously taken place using e-mail, the authors were known to be well-equipped and frequent users of this medium thus, as expected, few communication problems arose during the forum interactive debates. However, the main communication flow was taking place between the participants and the IIEP with relatively little interaction among the participants themselves.

Can virtuality generate substantial knowledge ?

The evidence collected through the Internet Forum has demonstrated that relations with industry have been growing enormously over the past ten years in all case study institutions, in particular as a result of a growing need to diversify sources of income. In general, it was found that nowadays institutions adopt a more strategic and structured approach to the management of their relations with industry which are increasingly operated through tightly controlled, external interfaces.

Well adapted financial and personnel management structures can be considered as a crucial success factor in this domain. Such structures comprise a necessary devolution of authority over funds generated through collabortion with industry to implementing units, rules pertaining to the distribution of income perceived as fair by all actors. Participants also discussed: guidelines for the costing of projects, including a provision for overheads and measures to motivate staff (pay rises, promotion) as well as other material incentives (refurbished office space, travel grants and internal recognition).

In conclusion, it can be said that the Forum allowed to generate quite substantive information on innovative initiatives in the management of university-industry relations. In this respect, the Internet Forum can be considered both an effective instrument for exchanging knowledge between participants and a worthwhile experience.

What did participants think of the Forum ?

Given the relatively new character of the Internet Forum and its experimental character, an in-depth and

List of institutions which participated in the research:

❖ Makerere University, Uganda.
❖ University of Cairo, Egypt.
❖ Ecole Supérieure de Technologie de Casablanca, Morocco.
❖ Technical University of Lodz, Poland.
❖ Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.
❖ Bogacizi University, Turkey.
❖ Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand.
❖ Technological University of Papua New Guinea.
❖ Birla Institute of Science and Technology, India.
❖ University of São Paulo, Brazil.
❖ University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago.

open-ended evaluation was conducted after the Forum.

Generally, all participants found the selected topics relevant and interesting. It was suggested that the topics *environment for co-operation* and *managing university-industry relations internationally* might be added and that the list of participants could be widened to include more institutions.

All participants found their colleague's contributions, as well as the IIEP feed-back and supplementary questions very useful and stimulating.

A specific question was posed on suggestions that could have enhanced the interactivity among participants. One participant felt that a more immediate and interactive mode of communication would have been able to generate new topics for discussion. Several participants suggested that the Forum should be followed by a face-to-face meeting, video-conferencing and the use of the chat mode for a more immediate and interactive exploration of issues.

The IIEP is currently preparing a synthesis report of the information collected through the case studies and the Internet Forum. This synthesis will probably be published towards the end of this year.

MICHAELA MARTIN

From jigsaw puzzles to visions of global research and learning teams

THE final three-day training course of IIEP's 1998/1999 Annual Training Programme on *Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)* provided trainees with a unique opportunity to catch a small glimpse of learning and working modalities that will emerge in the next millennium.

At the beginning of the course we were assigned – via e-mail messages – to 'virtual research groups' in which group members were constrained to interact only by using e-mail messages. No conversation, handwritten notes, or even hand signals were permitted! Two IIEP staff members, Mioko Saito and Patricia Dias da Graça, acted as course moderators – and they also used only e-mail to answer our questions and provide us with assistance when technical difficulties were encountered.

We got down to hard work when individualized tasks were e-mailed by the moderators to the participants. These tasks represented different fragments of a larger overall research problem that could only be solved by the virtual research groups if *a*) each participant first used the World-Wide-Web to find information to solve his or her own individualized task, and *b*) all participants used e-mail to share, combine, and refine the various solutions proposed by individuals.

In the second phase of the course, the moderators combined the virtual research group reports into a single document and then e-mailed this back to the participants with instructions to reorganize themselves into larger 'electronic teams' for the preparation of synthesis reports. On the final day of the course the reports of these teams were e-mailed to the course moderators.

From the viewpoint of those who participated in this module, the experience of working in this manner was like working as a member of a team on a giant jigsaw puzzle without ever actually seeing or speaking face-to-face with other people working on the same puzzle. We were all amazed to see how quickly this challenge forced us to adopt and adapt our electronic exchanges in order to find a co-ordinated overall solution to a research problem that had been initially presented to us as fragmented tasks. This kind of problem-solving approach was clearly a quantum jump away from the learning processes that occur in traditional distance education programmes – where the participants undertake the same tasks and interact directly, and only, with centralized authority figures.

This innovative experience both shocked and delighted all of the participants. Suddenly we realized that the wide range of informatics skills that we had developed at the IIEP had removed geographic isolation as a barrier to involvement in training and research activities. We now understood the massive potential in being able to link up with other colleagues in different countries in order to share information, to work together, and to learn from each other. In our minds, the concepts of 'research team', 'working group', and 'course membership' took on new and exciting meanings that by-passed problems of distance and moved our thinking towards the possibilities of mounting 'global attacks' on important research and training issues.

The trainees involved in this course considered it to be one of the highlights of the IIEP's Annual Training Programme. We all felt very privileged to have had this opportunity to gain profound insights into working and learning together with the assistance of the 'information superhighway'.

MARTIN BAPTISTE AND
MARIAM-MARIE MILLOGO SANOU*
*Participants in the 1998/1999 IIEP
Annual Training Programme

"An institution in touch with its environment"

❑ **Study visit of ATP trainees to Japan**
(Hiroshima, Kyoto, Tokyo, Japan)
8-20 May 1999)

At the invitation of the Japanese Government, participants in the IIEP 1998/1999 Annual Training Programme in Paris will end their programme with a study visit to Japan in order to take a close look at the Japanese education system. The visit will be based at first in Hiroshima, and then move on to Kyoto and end in Tokyo before returning to Paris on the eve of the closing ceremony. A detailed report on this visit will appear in our next issue (July-September 1999).

❑ **Sub-regional training seminar on 'Education and the labour market in a transitional period'**
(Chisinau, Moldova
7-11 June 1999)

This workshop is organized jointly with the Moldova National Commission for UNESCO and is intended for participants from the Republics of Moldova, Byelorussia, Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The objective of the seminar is to share and discuss international experience in linking educational development to the needs of the labour market and the measures to be applied in so-called 'transition' countries.

❑ **Policy seminar on 'Improving supervision and support services for basic education in Eastern and Southern Africa'**
(Gaborone, Botswana
22-24 June 1999)

Organized for senior staff in charge of primary education and supervision for some ten countries of the Eastern and Southern African region, the main objectives of this seminar are to examine the situation of school supervision and support in this region (on the basis of studies made in Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe) and to discuss innovative strategies to improve the functioning and effectiveness of supervision services.

❑ **Meeting of experts on 'The use of geographical information systems for educational microplanning'**
(IIEP, Paris
29 June – 1 July 1999)

This meeting will bring together experts who have worked in different contexts with Geographical Information Systems and used these in educational micro-planning. Its objectives are to exchange experiences among these experts in the use of GIS in micro-level educational planning and to identify what could be the contribution of a GIS to educational microplanning, what are the present constraints and how these can be overcome.

❑ **National validation seminar on 'The diagnosis of the management of teachers in Morocco'**
(July/August 1999)

A national seminar for Moroccan policy-makers, planners and administrators involved in the management of teachers is planned to be held in Morocco in July or August 1999. Its main aim is to discuss and validate the conclusions of an 'audit' of the existing system of management of primary and lower secondary teachers which is currently being undertaken by the IIEP in co-operation with the Ministry of National Education of Morocco.

❑ **Sub-regional course on 'Costs, financing and education'**
(Luanda, Angola
7-18 September1999)

The IIEP is organizing, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and the Angolan National Commission for UNESCO, a sub-regional training course addressed to planners and those responsible for drawing up education budgets of the five African Portuguese speaking countries: *Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Principe.* The course will deal with the adaptability of economic concepts to education, cost analysis issues, problems of financing education and finally, the preparation and implementation of budgets.

NEWS BRIEF

IIEP is proud to inform its Newsletter readers that Ms Faïza Kefi, participant in the the Institute's Annual Training Programme for the 1973/1974 academic session and current Member of IIEP's Governing Board, has been nominated Minister of the Environment in the Government of Tunisia.

Via the Internet:
The management of primary teachers in South Asia

FROM the beginning of May 1999, former IIEP trainees in Asia and all members of the ANTRIEP (*Asian Network of Training and Research Institutes in Educational Planning*) can receive via e-mail, the main papers and the synthesis report of the joint IIEP/DSE* Workshop on **The management of primary teachers in South Asia**, held in Hendala/Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 14 to 18 December 1998 (cf *IIEP Newsletter*, Vol XVII, No. 1, January-March 1999, p.7).

The workshop focussed on how to organize and manage the provision, allocation and use of teachers in an optimal way, from both the teacher's and the system's perspective. Some major aspects of this issue were discussed at this meeting, with particular reference to the experiences of Madhya Pradesh in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

If you are interested in receiving, via e-mail, the above-mentioned set of workshop documents, please kindly sent your e-mail details to Ms Göttelmann at:

g.gottelmann@iiep.unesco.org

* DSE = German Foundation for International Development

Promoting educational change in Latin America

From 16-18 March 1999, IIEP's Regional Office in Buenos Aires, Argentina, organized a Forum on 'The management of change: learning requirements of institutions' which was attended by 49 participants from 11 Latin American countries involved in changing their education systems at the local, national and international levels.

THIS other Forum (see article p. 8) on educational change organized by IIEP-Buenos Aires aimed at analyzing the process of educational innovation from two angles: identifying inputs for defining policies to promote innovation at the central education administration level, as well as strategies to support and develop innovation at the local level.

The experiences presented and the discussions which took place helped the participants to appreciate the complexity of educational change. 'Micro' is no less complex than 'macro', there is a strong inter-relationship between the organizational, institutional, pedagogical, political, economic and financial factors. However, the complexity and systematic nature of educational change often go unrecognized.

How far the complexity of an innovation can be assumed is directly related to the following four types of sustainability:

➤ *Political*: this concerns the *visibility* of the innovation, *disseminating its*

results, both qualitative and quantitative, *going to scale*, and *developing partnerships* both between internal actors as well as between them and external actors.

➤ **Scientific**: the need to introduce regular evaluations of the results and adjust the project accordingly has to be organized.

➤ **Institutional**: this covers *leadership*, the *relationship between the institution undergoing the innovation and the central body to which it is linked*, and the *interaction between internal actors and external agents*.

➤ **Financial:** more often than not the financial implications are seriously lacking in the design, development and analysis of innovations because financing is viewed as something external and not as a factor that conditions the size of a project, its objectives and how it can be implemented.

Bearing all this in mind, a policy of educational innovation should aim to:

➤ *strengthen the capacity to innovate*, particularly among those working in deprived areas;

➤ *provide incentives for innovation*, both as regards its nature (material, symbolic and administrative, etc. incentives) and its origin (whether external or internal);

➤ *involve the university*, whose role is crucial in promoting educational change, undertaking research, producing knowledge and in developing the capacity to innovate as a basic teaching skill in initial teacher training programmes;

➤ *create an information system for the follow-up and support of innovations* using new information technologies and promoting the exchange of on-going experiences;

➤ *stress the importance of training* those involved in innovation processes;

➤ examine and open up *the role of international agencies,* particularly as regards financing, access to and dissemination of information, and in organizing meetings and dialogue between the actors involved in these processes.

JUAN CARLOS TEDESCO AND
ROSA MARÍA TORRES

World Press Freedom Day – 3 May 1999

ARTICLE **19** of the UDHR guarantees freedom of expression in the following terms: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".

To mark the anniversary of the *Declaration of Windhoek*, 3 May 1991, the WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY serves as an occasion to inform the public of violations of the right to freedom of expression and as a reminder that many journalists brave death or jail to bring people their daily news.

As UNESCO's Director-General, Federico Mayor pointed out in 1998 on the same occasion, one of UNESCO's main tasks "is to promote the free circulation of ideas by word and image throughout the world". Democratic rights are clearly indivisible. The struggle for peace through education runs parallel to the struggle for freedom of expression.

As the new information superhighways expand enormously the access to knowledge, the free dissemination of knowledge and its defense is even more necessary than 50 years ago. On the occasion of the last World Press Freedom Day of the century, the *IIEP Newsletter* wishes to express its solidarity, in particular, with those journalists (over 100

in number) who find themselves in prison today. As was spelt out in the joint statement made for this year's celebrations by Kofi Annan, Federico Mayor and Mary Robinson:

"Freedom of speech is a right to be fought for, not a blessing to be wished for. But it is more than that: it is a bridge of understanding and knowledge. It is essential for that exchange of ideas between nations and cultures which is a condition for true understanding and lasting co-operation."

For more information on the topic, consult:

*http://www.unesco.org/webworld/
http://www.unhchr.ch/*

The IIEP Newsletter is available on Internet: http://www.unesco.org/iiep/news/newslist.htm