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Renewed Hope:
NGOs and Civil Society
in Education for All



The **Collective Consultation** of NGOs
ON LITERACY AND EDUCATION FOR ALL
La **Consultation Collective** d'ONG
EN ALPHABETISATION ET EDUCATION POUR TOUS
La **Consultación Colectiva** de las ONG
EN ALFABETIZACIÓN Y EDUCACIÓN PARA TODOS



The End-of-Decade Assessment of Jomtien Goals

**LINKING NONFORMAL EDUCATION TO DEVELOPMENT :
NGO EXPERIENCES
DURING THE EDUCATION FOR ALL DECADE**

DRAFT SYNTHESIS OF NGO CASE STUDIES

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NGO Case Studies: Linking NFE to Technical Sectors/1/2000

**COLLECTIVE CONSULTATION OF NGOS ON LITERACY
AND EDUCATION FOR ALL**

SYNTHESIS OF NGO CASE STUDIES ON

**LINKING NONFORMAL EDUCATION TO DEVELOPMENT: NGO
EXPERIENCES DURING THE EDUCATION FOR ALL DECADE**

**Prepared by
World Education
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1. BACKGROUND

An important element of the Jomtien Education for All Framework for Action was the recognition of the need for substantive and sustained efforts focused on building linkages between basic education, nonformal education, and/or literacy and sector-specific development efforts. In short, what had been missing in many previous efforts was a clear demonstration of how basic and nonformal education activities could be used to expand and extend the efforts of development sectors like health, agriculture, environment, micro enterprise development and water and sanitation.

The set of NGO case studies reviewed for this part of the NGO Assessment for the Education for All 200 Assessment documented NGO activities in adapting nonformal education methods and approaches to technical sector development activities in Egypt, Nepal, Indonesia, Bolivia and Senegal. Additional materials on NGO activities in Turkey, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Philippines, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Burkina Faso and Cameroon were also reviewed. This rich body of documentation describes the processes used in NGO activities in downloading sector-specific content and contextualizing it at a level where program participants could take action on the content and make more informed decisions affecting their daily lives. The cases identify and discuss the kinds of processes and partnerships that are necessary to make the critical linkage between nonformal education and technical content possible. The cases describe the challenges met in linking NFE practices and approaches to technical sector content. And, most importantly, the cases stress the role of learners in these processes and how information from learners, and their participation, can be used to enrich not only the outcomes but also sustain the processes themselves.

2. WHY NGO CASES?

Nongovernmental organizations have been, and continue to be at the forefront of innovation in the development field. NGO efforts in education, and more specifically in nonformal education, clearly demonstrate the advantages of linking nonformal education methods and approaches to a wide range of development sectors. This should not be surprising as it represents a natural part

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of the learning process in the education field in the past two decades in particular. In many countries NGOs have taken an increased responsibility for broader aspects of community development and improvements, and have become major providers of health, micro finance, education, agriculture and environmental education and in some instances, direct services in these fields.

NGOs are flexible, not only in terms of their educational approaches, but also in terms of their ability to intervene in a timely fashion in response to development problems. NGOs have a different relationship with their constituencies than do government agencies. As a result, NGOs have evolved a number of innovative approaches to presenting the technical development content and skills, through systems that are sometimes parallel and, almost always complementary to the services offered by government agencies. The end result of this field-based approach to the design of educational and development activities is programs which are owned and implemented by program beneficiaries—a product of their involvement in the process, of growing self-confidence and of mastery of the skills and technical information needed to do the job.

A review of the case studies and related documentation submitted by NGOs on linking nonformal education to development demonstrates a wealth of experience on the part of NGOs in working with colleagues from technical sectors on linking nonformal education to development activities. The collaborations ranged from NGOs soliciting assistance from the technical sectors to enhance their own programming, to NGOs working with the technical sectors to help those sectors improve the outreach and effectiveness of their technical programs, to NGOs providing assistance to other NGOs to incorporate more sector specific information into their programming in an effort to create more integrated program offerings.

The cases prepared and submitted were:

- The Mokattam Project, prepared by Laila Iskandar Kamal, Community and Institutional Development, Cairo, Egypt (referred to in this document as Mokattam);
- Women's Economic Empowerment and Literacy Programme in Nepal prepared by Helen Sherpa, Pamela Civins and Cristine Smith of World Education (referred to in this document as WEEL/Nepal)
- L'établissement de Liens entre l'Éducation Non Formelle et le Développement, prepared by Mamadou Sarr, Enda, EDEV, Dakar, Senegal (referred to in this document as Enda);
- Seasons of Learning: From Farmer Field Schools to Farmer-Organized Management, Extension and Advocacy in Indonesia, prepared for World Education by Mary Ann Kingsley (referred to in this document as Farmer Field Schools);
- Producción de Material para Educación Básica de Mujeres: El Caso de PRO Mujer, prepared by Cecilia Crespo, Education Development Center and Girls and Women's Education Activity-Component III (GWE III), La Paz, Bolivia (referred to in this document as PRO Mujer); and

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- National Resource Center for Non-Formal Education in Nepal, prepared by the National Center for Non-Formal Education, Kathmandu, Nepal (referred to in this document as NFE Center/Nepal).

Partial documentation was submitted by:

- International Federation of University Women on Project Five-O activities in India, Philippines, Turkey, Thailand, Philippines, Zimbabwe and South Africa(carried out in collaboration with the International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Soroptimist International and Zonta International);
- Bangladesh Federation of University Women Bina Roy Partners in Development Programme on the Uttarkhan Health, Education and Vocational Training Project;
- International Federation for Home Economics on activities in Burkina Faso and Cameroon; and
- People's Action Forum, Report on the Conference on The End of Decade Assessment of The Education for All Goals in Zambia by NGOs/Civil Society

3. CONTEXT

This section of the synthesis presents a short description of each of the full cases that were submitted.

- **The Women's Economic Empowerment and Literacy (WEEL) Program in Nepal** case describes pilot activities carried out by World Education and its national and international partner agencies to develop and pilot a savings and credit program for women in rural Nepal. Ford Foundation, New Delhi, provided funding for the three-year pilot activity. The program was developed in response to learner needs for literacy and post literacy instruction, need for increased status and role in decision making as well as building self-confidence, need for income and food security, and need for access to credit to start small businesses and agriculture-based income generation activities.

The goal of the WEEL Program was to help women acquire literacy skills and simultaneously develop skills to improve their economic situation and that of their families. The program was piloted in seven districts and was implemented through local NGOs and in partnership with two international NGOs, CECI and World Neighbors. Learning materials for program participants and training materials used with NGO facilitators were developed in collaboration with learners, other NGOs, and government agencies and programs.

- **The Mokattam Project** case study focuses a ten-year alternative education experiment implemented through the Association for the Protection of the Environment (A.P.E.) that
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successfully addressed the realities of garbage collectors' children, especially girls, and their families. This activity was financed largely by private contributions. There was a need to develop that NFE aspect of the project as children in the community could not attend formal schooling given their work schedules and the lack of relevance of formal school offerings to the daily lives of children in garbage collector families.

Among the desired outcomes of the project were a greater ability on the part of participants to earn an income, greater ability to face life's crises, improved decision making processes, acquisition of literacy in all its senses (reading the word and reading the world), and increased educational opportunities. The program, which used a rag recycling center as an alternative education delivery system, was evolutionary in nature with the project design and the curriculum being derived from discovery learning activities and in response to issues as they arose in the project context.

- **The Enda Case Study** highlights the research-action-training approach taken by the organization in its programs that assist disadvantaged individuals, local groups and communities to undertake agriculture, nonformal economic sector and agriculture projects that combine nonformal education, development and participation. A range of international bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have financed Enda's program work over the years.

The Enda case reviews activities of five of Enda's 20 teams, mainly in Senegal. Projects reviewed included informal economic sector, agriculture and health linked to income generation. Each Enda project aims at fostering local management of learning and income generation activities through the use of highly participatory methods and tools. Program beneficiaries are involved in the development of performance indicators for each project activity. The development of new educational practices and the use of new educational methods have become an important part of Enda's work.

- **Seasons of Learning: From Farmer Field Schools to Farmer-Organized Management, Extension, and Advocacy in Indonesia** describes the development of an action learning approach in which rice farmers work together to observe and analyze the eco-system in their fields and make decisions about the status and management of field plots. The work reported on in this case was largely financed by USAID, FAO and private organizations.

Developed over an eight-year period, the farmer field school approach to integrated pest management (IPM) is viewed as a plant protection strategy and as a nonformal education approach. Action learning is a key concept with farmers having to prove the need for interventions themselves. This approach has contributed to increased farmer self-confidence and critical analysis skills that lead to more informed decision making on crop management, farmer experimentation, and adoption and adaptation of new practices.

- **The PRO Mujer Materials Development Case** on the production of basic education materials in Bolivia focuses on the processes involved in integrating information on maternal
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and child health and women's reproductive health into an existing community banking program for women in peri-urban areas. The activities described in this case were funded by USAID.

Women participants in PRO Mujer's banking program requested information on health topics. The organization had developed and was using a set of materials that it realized were not resulting in changes in attitudes or health behaviors. The materials development process, which included the involvement of program participants, resulted in new materials, but more importantly in changes in teaching/learning methods and results. The organizational development nature of the materials development process has produced wide-ranging results in the NGO itself.

- **The National Center for Non-Formal Education in Nepal Case Study** reports on the activities of the center which respond to new government policies related to the more systematic provision of nonformal education activities. The activities described in this case have been funded by a range of international donors.

The Center has been instrumental in developing a national level NFE curriculum, which includes a number of technical modules. The Center provides training to NGOs interested in using the materials, as well as other kinds of support services. Two short cases present specific development activities undertaken by the Center.

4. WHY LINK NFE TO TECHNICAL SECTOR CONTENT?

In each situation, the activities described were developed in response needs at a variety of levels. These needs ranged from those identified through needs assessment activities with prospective or existing program participants to needs arising from new government policies to needs arising from growing urbanization and decreasing resources to provide services to urban populations.

Of particular interest at the level of program or project beneficiaries, the cases cited the need for

- literacy (WEEL/Nepal, Mokattam, Enda, NFE Center);
- increased status and role in decision making (WEEL/Nepal, Mokattam, Enda, Farmer Field Schools, PRO Mujer);
- increased self-confidence (WEEL/Nepal, Mokattam, Enda, Farmer Field Schools, PRO Mujer);
- alternative activities to replace inadequate delivery systems (lack of relevance of formal schooling in the case of Mokattam, limitations of traditional farmer extension system in the case of Farmer Field Schools, inadequacies of formal education system in case of NFE Center, inappropriate materials in the case of PRO Mujer);
- increased income and food security (WEEL/Nepal, Mokattam, Enda, Farmer Field Schools);
- access to resources (credit in the case of the WEEL/Nepal, other networks in the case of Mokattam and Farmer Field Schools)

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- access to information for more informed decision making (WEEL/Nepal, Mokattam, Enda, Farmer Field Schools, PRO Mujer);
- access to technical information related to new skills and new income generation activities (WEEL/Nepal, Mokattam, Enda, Farmer Field Schools).

Several of the cases noted the importance of linking technical information to concrete situations, situations directly related to the every day realities of program participants. The failure of past activities to make the linkages as concrete as possible had provided valuable lessons in what “functional” could and did mean. While technical specialists in the IPM field, for instance, had come to nonformal education practitioners for assistance when they realized that their messages, as conceived and delivered by technical specialists, were not garnering the desired outcomes from farmers, other technical sectors had to be dealt with in a more direct and deliberate fashion.

5. CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

The major challenges cited in the cases were those of time, human resource development and the process of reaching consensus with the technical sectors on content and presentation.

Time. Most of the cases described project and program activities that were evolutionary in nature, that is projects that were not designed in response to specific donor project designs, but rather projects that emerged from specific needs of a specific group of individuals or specific communities. As such, considerable time and energy was invested in working with program participants to identify their needs, develop inventories of possible resources that could be drawn upon, and then slowly beginning to build the program. Few of the organizations could have guessed the amount of time it would take to develop, test and revise teaching/learning materials. Few of the technical sector partners had ever worked in this way. More than one case writer noted purposeful inquiry and reflection were among the most critical elements of the processes that were developed to facilitate the linkages between nonformal education and the technical sectors. None of the case writers noted any regret on the investment of time, as it was one of the best investments made.

Human Resource Development. Few of the NGOs preparing the cases had in-house capacities in health, agriculture, livelihood development, credit or micro-finance. Their engagement with the technical sectors was a way in which to develop these in-house skills, while relying on the quality of assistance and collaboration with the technical sectors to bring NGO staff “up to speed.” As many of the NGOs implemented their programs through local groups—in the instance of these cases community groups, farmers groups and local/national NGOs—there was a need to invest in human resource development in those groups as well. That investment included the development of skills and knowledge in nonformal education as well as technical sector content. Several case writers noted that the most important area of human resource development was in program participants themselves, who, in several of the cases, have become the catalysts for the expansion and sustainability of program activities.

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Reaching Consensus with Technical Sector Colleagues. Often times, reaching consensus necessitates giving up control. In at least two of the cases, there was a creative tension between the technical sector specialists and the nonformal educators over whether using nonformal education methods would dilute the technical quality of the information. Once it was clearly demonstrated that this was not the case, collaboration moved ahead more smoothly. An anecdote from one of the case writers serves as an excellent example from the health field. When contacted by a health group for assistance, he suggested that the major reason why his group should be the collaborating partner was because they were not health specialists, and thus the health content would not be “tinkered with.” They thus provide the nonformal education approach and methods that would make the messages more accessible to mothers and other primary care givers—which they did successfully.

In other cases, there was concern over the level at which information should be presented. In these instances, nonformal education practitioners were able to help technical specialists sort through the “must know,” “the useful to know,” and “the nice to know” in order to identify what specific information farmers or mothers needed to know in order to make more informed decisions about their fields or their own health or that of their families.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

Among the major learnings from the case studies are:

- **Cross-sectoral collaboration is essential in addressing the complex nature of many development problems in an increasingly more complex world.** Development problems are rarely “uni-sectoral” in their resolution. While the technical information to address many prevailing development problems has existed for some time, that information and the skills to act on the information were not appropriately packaged. Integrated literacy and nonformal education programs developed over the past ten years are providing mothers with critical information and skills to make more informed decisions about their health and that of their families. The same is true for recent community-based education programs on water and sanitation, integrated pest management, and reproductive health. These programs clearly demonstrate the value added when nonformal education is linked to the work of the technical sectors.
- **Building trust and respect between education and the technical sectors is a critical element to successful integration of nonformal education and the technical sectors.** While many of the technical sectors have had a long established “extension” element to their work (as in the example of agriculture), few have strong participatory adult education or nonformal education elements to them. Similarly, few education NGOs had strong technical capacities in agriculture, health or the environment. Establishing viable working relationships between the two groups has necessitated both a willingness to learn from each other as well as developing an understanding of how the other sector works—or goes about its business.

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- **Recognition of the power of processes.** The process of developing working relationships with the technical sectors and the resultant materials development process that many NGOs used and experienced became, over time, an institutional development process. NGOs have come to recognize that an activity or set of activities that they may have previously viewed as being peripheral to program implementation (materials development for example) became, instead, central to program implementation.
- **The importance of taking a human resource development approach.** All of the cases strongly support the paramount need of taking a human resource development approach to integrating nonformal education with the technical development sectors. Attending to the training needs of NGO staff in both nonformal education methodology and technical content was extremely important in each case, as was helping train technical sector staff in nonformal education philosophy and approaches. In most of the cases, this investment in human resource development led to new kinds of ownership of the products developed—training materials, training methods, and training outcomes—by project and program beneficiaries. In several instances, the approach led to former program beneficiaries becoming the catalysts for further dissemination of the innovations being introduced, replacing the NGO staff who had originally started the program or project. Creating and nurturing local ownership was cited as a key element to the continued sustainability of many of the programs described in the cases.
- **The experiential learning approach used by many NGOs in linking NFE to development activities was found to be equally valid for use in staff training and orientation, as it is for use with learners in integrated basic education and literacy programs.** An understanding of the merits of the experiential learning model was often introduced as the central element in learning activities that were designed. While the educational partner often brought this understanding with them, the technical partner often did not. Helping the technical partner develop a better understanding of experiential learning, how adults learn and the role of nonformal education in promoting learning often became a central aspect of the collaboration. The experiential learning approach also proved useful in helping technical sector colleagues clarify the “must know” elements of their field from those elements that are “useful to know” or “nice to know.”
- **Each step of the nonformal education materials development process must be honored.** There are no shortcuts in the nonformal education materials development process. Developing quality integrated learning materials requires investments in staff time and resources. Partner organizations often entered into the materials development activity without a full level of awareness of how much time was going to be needed. Training of staff in the use of integrated materials has meant that literacy facilitators and nonformal education program animators have had to further develop their knowledge and skills in technical areas

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where their expertise may have been weak. This need has placed increased importance on training of trainers and the role of technical sector specialists in helping design and facilitate that training.

- **NGO flexibility in programming has allowed for significant innovation.** Developing localized, tailor-made responses to technical development problems has forced NGOs to innovate. Program and resource constraints have encouraged NGOs to focus on situation specific responses rather than those of a more centralized and generic nature. The inclusion of prospective learners and program beneficiaries in the development of nonformal education-based programs has provided a rich experience base that has helped ensure relevance while promoting local ownership and contributing to sustainability of program efforts over time. NGOs have proven to be more flexible in their programming options, and their abilities to experiment, than many of their technical sector colleagues, especially those coming from the government sector.
- **NGOs and the technical sectors have benefited from their collaboration with each other.** NGOs reported that they have benefited in several ways from their collaboration with technical sectors. Not only are NGO programs more responsive to local needs and technically sound because of this collaboration, NGOs have become better at identifying, organizing and managing local resources in support of their programs. Similarly, technical sectors programs, particularly in the areas of maternal and child health, reproductive health and agriculture have become more sustainable because they have opted for a more relevant, needs-based, participatory, beneficiary-oriented mode of communicating information to project and program participants.

ANNEX 1: Guidelines for the Case Studies

A. Program Context

In this section of the case study, you should provide the program context for which sector-specific nonformal education or literacy activities were developed. In doing so, please use the following questions to help shape your presentation of the program context. This section should clearly identify why the linkage between nonformal education/literacy and a specific development sector was seen as a central part of supporting and strengthening the development activity.

1. Describe the development activity (or sector) to which nonformal education methods and approaches were linked. What were the objectives of the development activity? What were the desired outcomes of the activity? What was the funding source? What was the duration of the activity? What government agencies were involved and how? What nongovernmental agencies were involved and how?
2. Why did project staff need to develop a nonformal education aspect for the activity? Describe the role that nonformal education, basic education and/or literacy was to play in the development activity?
3. Who were the ultimate beneficiaries of the development activity? What were they to be able to do at the end of the activity that they could not do before? What was their literacy level? How were beneficiaries involved in the design and implementation of the development activity?
4. Were there previous situations in which similar linkages had been made between nonformal education and specific development sectors in your area of intervention?

B. Linking Nonformal Education to the Development Sector

In this section of the case, you should focus on how resources were organized to make the linkage between nonformal education and the specific development sector. We are particularly interested in the partnerships that were needed to make this linkage, the processes that were used for developing learning materials and learning activities, and the outcomes of the partnership in terms of new understandings of the value of nonformal education in support of development sectors like health, agriculture, environment, micro enterprise development and water/sanitation.

1. How was the role of nonformal education defined in the development activity? Who was responsible for developing that definition?

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2. What were the objectives of the nonformal education aspect of the activity? How were these objectives developed? By whom? And with what kind of participation from stakeholders?
3. What agencies were identified as partners in developing the nonformal education aspect of the development activity? How were these partners brought together? How did coordination take place? What kind of negotiations were necessary and how did those negotiations take place?
4. What were the responsibilities of each partner in developing the nonformal education aspect of the program? What resources did each of the partners bring to the activity?
5. What was the role of needs assessment with learners in the program? How was this information taken into consideration in the development of the nonformal education activity?
6. How was/were the initial product(s) (for example, curriculum, learner materials, facilitators guides, practical field training activities) conceptualized?
7. What was the process that was used for developing the nonformal education aspect of the program? Please explain in detail.
8. What were the specific products (learning activities, curricula, etc.) which resulted from the process described in question 7?
9. How were the nonformal education materials and activities pre-tested? Revised? Reproduced? Distributed?
10. What was the role of evaluation in the process of linking nonformal education to a specific development sector? How did you use the results of evaluation activities to change/improve the process that you used?
11. What lessons did you learn from your efforts (the process that you used) to develop nonformal education activities that were linked to a specific development sector? How did you arrive at these learnings? How did you use these learnings to shape the process?

C. Implementing Nonformal Education Activities in Support of Development Sectors

In this section of the case study, we are interested in learning how your organization prepared program staff for using the nonformal education activities in sector-specific development activities. Special attention should be given to issues of coordination with other development sectors, the training of teachers/facilitators in the use of the sector-specific nonformal education materials, and the application of the content of these materials by learners to their daily lives.

1. Please describe how the materials which your organization developed were used in nonformal
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education learning activities focused on sector-specific content. How did the approach used in the learning materials differ from materials that your organization might have used in the past?

2. Who were the trainers or facilitators in the development activity? How were trainers/facilitators recruited and prepared to participate in the development activity?
3. What was their prior experience with nonformal education methods and approaches? How were gaps in their exposure to and understanding of nonformal education addressed?
4. What specific training activities did your organization design and implement so that trainers/teachers/facilitators could make maximum use of sector-specific nonformal education learning materials?
5. How did you evaluate trainer/teacher/facilitator readiness to use the sector-specific nonformal education materials and approaches?

D. Reflecting on Outcomes of Your Organizational Experience in Linking Nonformal Education to a Specific Development Sector

In this section of the case, we encourage you to reflect on the outcomes from your organization's experiences in linking nonformal education to a specific development sector.

In this section, we are interested in outcomes in terms of what and how learners learned and how learners applied their new learnings and skills to every day life. We are also interested in what your organization learned in the process of developing nonformal education materials that were oriented to a specific development sector. Specific attention should be given to the development of the partnerships which may have been necessary in developing the learning materials, the changes that may have been necessary in your own organization to accommodate these new partnerships, the training that was necessary so that trainers and/or facilitators could use the sector-specific nonformal education materials, and the monitoring of the use of the nonformal education materials in the field, specifically as it related to the delivery of the technical content of the nonformal education activities.

1. What learner outcomes were measured? What was the relationship between the learner outcomes which were measured and the original objectives of the activity? How were learner outcomes measured? Who assessed learner outcomes and how? How were learners involved in assessing their own learning?
2. How was organizational effectiveness in delivering the sector-specific nonformal education program measured? What was the relationship between the measures used to assess organizational effectiveness in implementing the program and the original objectives of the activity? How was the evaluation designed and by whom? How did staff participate in the evaluation?

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3. What kinds of creative tensions evolved from the partnerships and the processes that your organization used to develop the sector-specific nonformal education activities? How were these tensions dealt with and with what kind of results? What changes in strategy were necessary?
4. What did your organization learn about partnerships from this experience? About developing nonformal education activities that are related to more specific development sectors? About the time and resources that are needed? About materials production? About facilitator training? About monitoring and evaluation?
5. How have you used these learnings to strengthen other development activities that you have undertaken?
6. What are the positive forces that exist for the replication of the partnerships and processes for other nonformal education activities? What are the constraints that need to be addressed?

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