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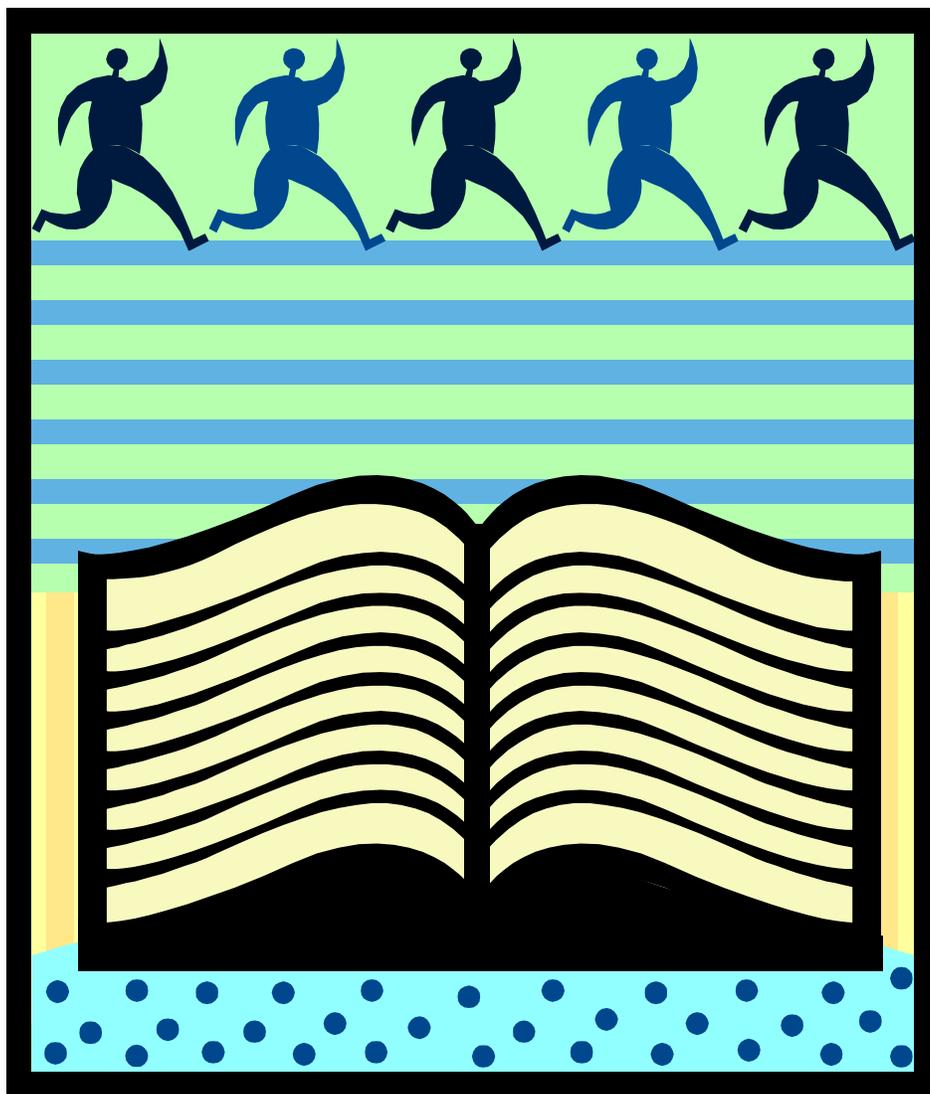
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EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY



by
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1 Introduction

This paper is written for the 2nd Ethiopian American Foundation International Conference on contemporary Development Issues in Ethiopia to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from July 11-13, 2003.

This paper explores the current situation of the country, the present policy of the Education sector and its current situation, the extent of enrolment at all levels, gender disparity in enrolment, quality, efficiency and equity in education. The contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations and private investment in the sector's development is also discussed. Owing to the persistent problems of the sector, the presenter's recommends a model educational center based on Non-Formal Education for parents of poor children. Finally conclusion and recommendations are presented.

2. Situation Analysis

Ethiopia is one of the least developed countries in the world whose economy is mainly dependent on smallholder rain-fed agriculture. The weather condition, backward technology, inadequate infrastructure and support services, environmental degradation, erosion of fertile soil and recurrent drought have contributed to the low productivity of the agricultural sector.

The Gross National Product (GNP) per capita according to World Development Report, (WDR)2000/01 was USD100 and the annual GNP growth rate 4.8%. The total population as mentioned in the Central Statistical Authority's abstract of 1994 (2001/2002) was 67.2 million. Out of the total population, about 85% live in rural areas while only 15% in urban

areas. The annual average growth rate of the population is 2.8% with a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 6.4 births per woman (WDR 2000/01). There is low contraceptive prevalence rate (4%), which led to higher rate of population and sexually transmitted diseases. Life expectancy at birth was 42 years for male and 44 for female (WDR 2000/01).

There is high unemployment and low work expectancy. Even those who are employed earn low income. Based on the Welfare Monitoring report of Ethiopia 2001 about 47% of the population lives below poverty line. These problems coupled with shortage of resources contributed to the underdevelopment of the economy that further added to the very low level of all the sectors. As it is rightly put in the WDR 2000/01 poverty encompasses not only low income and consumption but also low achievement in education, health, nutrition and other areas of human development. Out of the adult population aged 15 and above, 70% of the female and 58% of the male population are illiterate (WDR 2000/01)

2.1. The Education Sector

2.1.1. Policy of Education

The general objective of the education policy and its strategies of implementation indicate provision of primary education for all its citizens, improvement in the quality and efficiency of education, encouragement of other sectors to participate in the sector, Non-Formal Education and enhanced equity in gender in all parts of the country.

2.1.2. The system of Education

The Ethiopian educational system has been changing a number of times when governments change. During the Imperial period, the school structure was 4-4-4 (4 years of elementary, 4 years of junior secondary and 4 years of senior secondary). During the Military government (Derg) period, it was 6-2-4. At present, the schooling setup is changed to 8 years of primary, 2 years of general secondary (technical and vocational education) and 2 years of preparatory for university education.

Students in grade 10 sit for general education examination prepared by Ministry of Education (MOE). Those who pass grade 10 examinations will go to 2 years preparatory for university education and those who fail to achieve the required results go to vocational training. According to the government's capacity building strategy, the vocational education will assist in building the capacity of the government and encourages self-employment. From grade 11 onwards, expenditure sharing is taken as one of the strategies to decrease the expenditures of the government on education.

2.1.3 Education Expenditure

Expenditure is one of the useful indicators for the sectors development. As shown in table 1 below, the government has kept on increasing the education budget during the period from 1998/99 to 2001/2002. However, it has become too low to cover the requirements of the sector. According to the WDR 2000, public expenditure on education as percent of GNP was 4%. To increase the expenditure on education, the government has put forward a

strategy of attracting private investors, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and others to contribute to the sector.

Table1: Education Budget

In '000 birr

Type	Years			
	1998/99*	1999/00	2000/01	2001/2002
Recurrent	1,239	1,393	1,585	1,830
Capital	824	910	900	n.a
Total	2,063	2,303	2,485	1,830

Source: Ministry of Finance in Ministry of Education 1999/2000 report.

* Preliminary actual expenditure

n. a. = data not available

2.1.4 Infrastructures

Educational facilities have impact on access, quality, efficiency and equity in education. As is indicated in table 2 below, the number of schools have increased through time, though it did not keep pace with the number of school children that are ready for enrollment, every year.

Table 2: Education Infrastructures

Year	Primary	Secondary	College*	University
	Number		Number	Number
1998/99	10918	386	16	3
1999/00	11490	410	15	6
2000/01	11780	424	11	6
2001/02	12780	455	14	6

*Colleges under universities are not included

2.1.5 Enrolment

As shown in tables 3, 4 and 5 below total enrolment has increased at all levels showing an encouraging trend. In the 2001/02 report of MOE, it is indicated that the enrollment of primary students (boys and girls) was only 62% of the school age children; out of this, only 41% were girls. However, the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) as % of relevant age group is only 35% for primary and 25% for secondary school. This calls for an all round effort from the government and other sectors.

Table 3: Primary school enrolment (1-8)

Year	Girls	Girls enrolment as % of total	Boys	Boys enrolment as % of total	Total
1998/99	2157910	38	3544323	62	5702233
1999/00	2535233	39	3927270	61	6462503
2000/01	2927257	40	4346864	60	7274121
2001/2002	3254310	41	4728450	59	7982760

Source: Ministry of Education 2000/2001 report.

As can be seen from the table below, enrollment in secondary school compared with primary school enrolment is very low. This can be attributed to higher repetition rate particularly at grade 8 level and the poverty situation of parents to send their children to higher education particularly those from the rural areas since they can not find schools near their vicinity. Most of the students who are not accepted for higher education have nowhere to go.

Table 4: Secondary School enrolment (9-12)

Year	Girls	Girls as % of total	Boys	Boys as % of total	Total
1998/99	211614	41	310114	59	521728
1999/00	233192	41	358527	63	571719
2000/01	259620	40	389301	60	649221
2001/02	258566	38	426064	62	684630

Source: Ministry of Education 2000/2001 report.

The total number of students enrolled at the tertiary level has increased over the years, see table 5 below. However, girl's enrolment in the 4 years was at a maximum of only 19% of the total enrolment, requiring special attention by both the government and parents. According to UNESCO 1995, girls with less than half of 6-12 year olds are estimated to be in school. Also in UNICEF 2000 it is indicated that by the age of 18 girls have received on average 4.4 years less education than boys worldwide have and women's illiteracy exceeds men's nearly by 25%. MOE in recognition of the importance of girls education is trying to increase the enrolment rate at all levels. For instance to enter university, the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate exam result is lowered by 2 points and to join departments within universities a minimum quota is given to girls.

Table 5: University enrolment (Diploma, under-graduate and Post-graduate)

Year	Girls	girls as % of total	Boys	Boys as % of total	Total
1998/99	4508	14	27212	86	31720
1999/00	3453	13	23785	87	27238
2000/01	7216	19	31781	81	38997
2001/02	7759	18	36351	82	44110

Source: Ministry of Education 2000/2001 report.

2.1.6 Disparity

2.1.6.1 Gender

As shown in the above tables, gender disparity in enrolment at all levels is very high. In 2001/02, only 41%, 38% and 18% of the students were female at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, respectively (MOE, Annual Report 2001/02). Gender disparity in Ethiopia is higher compared even with African countries. For instance, in Kenya about 50% of the students were female at primary level, 46% at secondary and 32% at tertiary level. Girls enrolment in Ethiopia is mainly affected due to insecurity and cultural beliefs, sexual harassment by male colleagues and teachers in addition to the long distance they travel from home to schools, in rural areas, which makes them vulnerable to rape, early pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. From the total school age children who are out of school, in the regions, 61% and 65% are girls who are out of primary and secondary schools, respectively.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared access to all school age children by year 2015. Towards this end, the government of Ethiopia is trying to increase access to education. At this point the Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund can be sited as an example. It is one of the biggest Poverty Reduction Programs in the country and is

working in the construction of social infrastructures and empowerment of the community in all the 11 regions (including Addis Abeba and Dire Dawa administrative cities). This organization is building primary schools in the remote areas of the country. Hence, giving impetus to the sector. The increase in the number of schools will hopefully narrow the gap in gender and regional disparity. Ministry of Education is encouraging other contributors to enhance the sector's development so as to be able to meet the deadline.

2.1.6.2 Regional

The number of schools, teachers and school facilities in rural and urban areas and between regions are not equitably distributed. MOE has taken Addis Ababa as a point of reference to check the gap in regional disparity, in primary Gross enrolment Ratio (GER) and found out that there is a huge gap between regions. The lowest GER, as indicated in MOE Annual Report 2001/02, is in Afar followed by Somali while Harari performed well and stands next to Addis Abeba.

3 Non-Formal Education (NFE)

Until very recently the education policy of the country did not give attention to NFE. However, according to alternate routes to primary education, MOE 2000, NGO's and private organizations are being encouraged to strengthen the effort in this area.

4 Non-Governmental Organizations

There are more than 119 international & local NGOs which are functioning under the umbrella of Christian Relief and Rehabilitation Association (CRDA) that are assisting the government in providing non-formal schooling, rehabilitation and refurbishing of old schools and adult non-formal education.

5 The Private Sector

According to the Ethiopian Investment Authority, 175 schools were constructed all over the country from July 1992 - July 2000. The total amount approved for the construction of these schools was Birr 1.8 billion or USD213, 700,582 (@1USD to 8.423 Birr). The investment has provided employment for 12, 289 people.

6 Follow-up

To follow up the progress made in the sector, MOE set a number of indicators putting a time frame of (2001/02) for its achievement, as shown below. The efficiency indicators stood beyond the plan even before the target year, which is an encouraging trend. As for the quality indicators, a gap is still there on the number of qualified teachers for upper primary and secondary schools. see below.

Indicators	Base year 1995/96	Status 2000/01	of 2001/2002 target
Quality			
Share of lower primary (grades 1-4) teachers who are qualified	85%	95.6	95%
Total number of upper primary (grades 5-8) teachers	27,381	47748	36,777
Number of qualified upper primary teachers	5,729	12186	20,000
Total number of Secondary school teachers	12,143	14091	17,463
Number of qualified Secondary school teachers	4,910	4751	10,760
Number of core primary textbooks in school	2,273,000	n.a.	51,000,000
Grade 8 examination pass rate	61.7%	82.39%	80.0%
Efficiency			
Primary school student to section ratio	52	73	50
Secondary school student to section ratio	63	80	50
Grade 1 dropout rate	28.5%	27.5%	14.2%
Total Primary school dropout	8.4%	16.2%	4.2%
Average grade 4 to 8 repetition rate	12.8%	10.5%*	6.4%
Average grade 4 to 8 repetition rate for girls	16.2%	13.6%*	8.1%
Equity			
Gross primary enrollment ratio in the under-served areas	16.2%	13.0%	25%
Share of girls in primary school enrollment (grades 1-6)	38%	41.4%	45%

**Repetition rate indicates for the end of 1993 E.C (June 2001/02)*

To achieve quality in education, efficient mode of delivery, commitment and capacity of teachers, frequent student teacher contact and sufficient number of books for all students is important. In 2001/02 the student/teacher ratio was 63 in primary education. This was 13 more students per teacher compared with the standard set by MOE as 50 students per teacher (MOE

annual report, 2001/02), thereby affecting both quality and efficiency of education. The ratio of student to books is 1:4 as indicated in the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program.

7 Major problems of the education sector

- Low budget allocation to the sector
- Low quality of education
- Low enrolment at all levels compared with school age children
- Gender and regional disparity in enrolment
- Higher student teacher ratio which greatly affected both quality and efficiency
- Absence of required number of textbooks
- Lack of incentives to teaching and non-teaching staff members and other necessary facilities due to low budget allocation to the sector

However much the government is trying to overcome the above problems; it is still persistent due to the ever-increasing population growth and low production in the other sectors.

The presenter assumes that through Non-Formal Education (NFE) some of the problems like illiteracy, lower quality of education, access to primary education, skill development can be partly solved. Hence, to see the impact of educating the community towards solving some of the education sector problems, the presenter would like to suggest a Model Educational Center

where income generating skill development, training on handicrafts, agricultural tools, carpentry, plumber etc., and provision of better technology/knowledge on agriculture, for poor parents in particular and the surrounding communities can be applied.

8 The Model Educational Center

This center would be situated at the center of the poorest areas of the country, nearby villages or settlement areas, preferably where there is a primary school to save cost of construction. However, if the selected area has no school at all it calls for one. The model school will have satellite centers, which serve the parents of poor students, the community in general and students (in addition to formal studies). The community education will take place during slack periods and free time. The suggested areas of intervention would be skill development that has market in the surrounding areas. This center would be useful mainly for poor parents who are not in a position to send their children to school because of poverty, particularly for girls who face serious problems by walking long distances. The center would assist in building the capacities of poor parents to finance the education of their children thereby providing them with required educational materials, food and affordable shelter. Quality of education would be better in a sense that parents would be aware of the importance of education and will have the capability to follow-up their children to study and use their spare time after class assuming that all other quality inputs will be put in place.

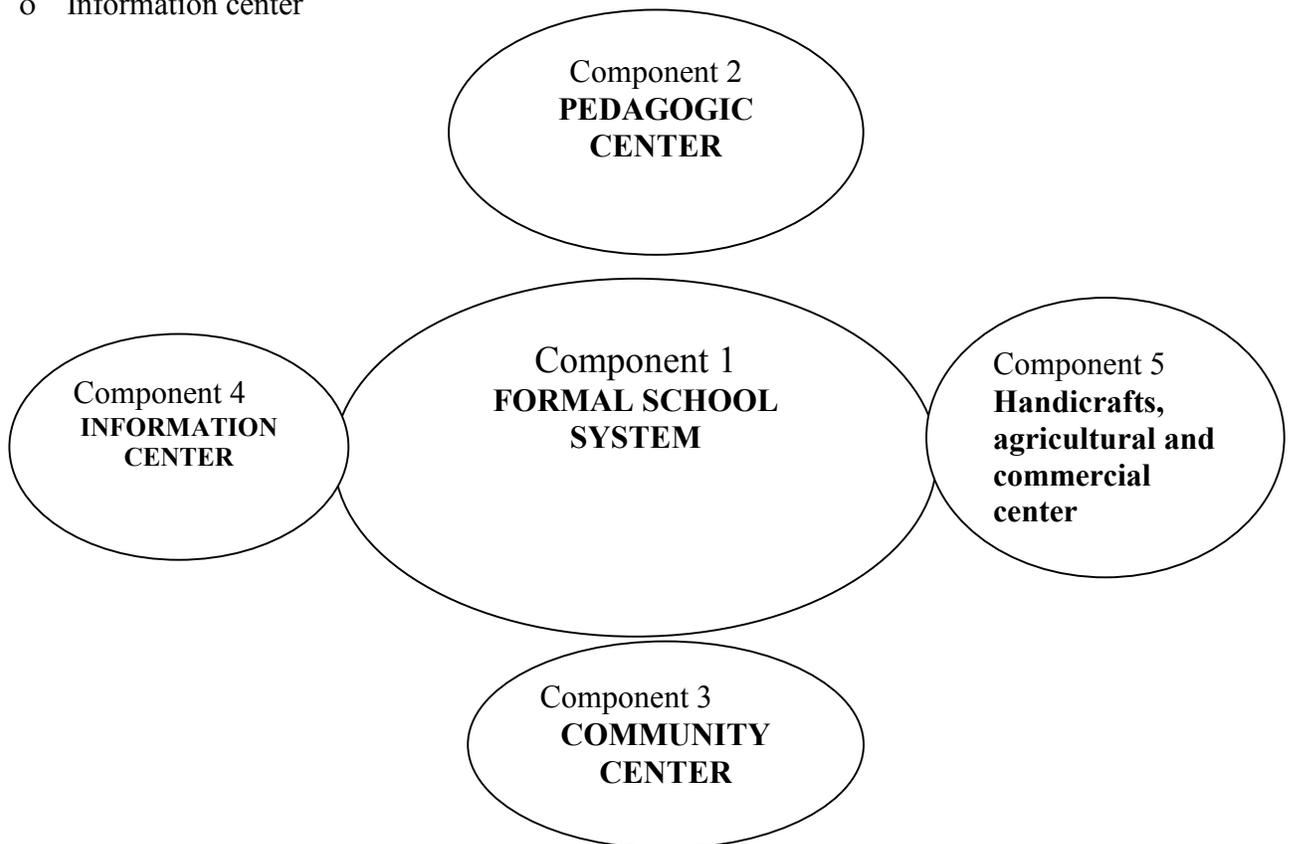
It can also open employment opportunity for students who complete their studies with high rank since they have advantage of gaining skill

development and training on better technology allowing the school to take advantage of hiring high-ranking students who will be committed to serve their areas.

It should be noted that the model is theoretical, however it should be applicable, flexible, modular and adaptable to local conditions. It can be also be changed according to the local conditions and possibilities. For the practicability of the Center further detailed study is required.

The model school will consist of the following components: -

- o Formal school system (main component)
- o Handicrafts, agriculture and commercial center
- o Pedagogical center
- o Community center
- o Information center



N.B: components 2, 3, 4 and 5 = Non-Formal Education center

8.1 Criteria for the model educational center

- o The distance between the villages and the school would be a possible walking distance
- o The area selection of the site would be where demand for education is strong and where available schools are very far from the villages or settlement areas.
- o The area could be characterized with low enrolment rates and higher disparities of gender
- o Where there are poor people who can not send their children to school because of poverty
- o No age limit for enrolment
- o The center should be equipped with required equipment

8.2 Advantages of the model center

The model center would assist in:

- o Improving quality of education
- o Improvement in the physical infrastructures (like roads, utilities)
- o Community participation
- o Keep up of culture
- o Greater interaction between parents, teachers and students
- o Exposure to information leading to improvement in general knowledge and market assessment
- o Creates job opportunity to the poorest community members
- o Helps in building capacities of communities in basic skills like carpentry, plumber, embroidery, masonry etc., which otherwise are problems of rural areas.

- o Develops Entrepreneurship skills.

8.3 Analysis of the model educational center

According to the proposed model most of the above mentioned problems would be solved, see the analysis as follows

FACTORS/COMPONENTS	PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED
Formal school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Some of the problems of quality improvement and access o Availability of text books o Student/teacher ratio o Gives emphasis to girl's education o Gives incentives to attract teachers o Extra knowledge on better technology on agriculture
Handicrafts and agriculture center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Addresses the demand for skill in the area itself and from its surroundings o Develops Entrepreneurship skills o Skills in agricultural processing factories, cottage industries etc o Establishment of Demonstration plots on improved methods of farming o Encourages and promotes local handicrafts
Pedagogical center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provide teaching materials like books, maps and others to the formal education o Improvement in qualification of teachers through on the job training o Introducing new teaching methodology and support to NFE
Information center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Access to market information o Experience sharing o Improvement on general knowledge o Preparing students for change o Provides media equipment like radio and Television to improve quality of education
Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Job opportunity for poor parents/families and students o Decreases the illiteracy rate in the area o Minimizes shortage of semi-skilled laborers which is hampering construction of schools, clinics and the likes o Gives opportunity to discuss problems of the

	area and exchange of ideas o Motivates social change
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9 Challenges

Some parents and the community at large may not be willing to join the Center until they gain benefit out of the scheme. This could be due to the habit they have formed to spend their slack period on other social activities. However, awareness should be created about the advantage of sending their children to school through the income they are going to generate by participating in the Center’s training. The future advantages of their children by going to school, the chance of finding a job within the school and the surrounding areas should be emphasized.

10 Conclusion and recommendation

Within the framework of setting a model school, it is the idea of the writer that an important part of the problems, like access, illiteracy and quality of education would be solved in rural areas given the chance that it would be replicated to all areas of the country. Collaboration of the Center with MOE is of paramount importance for quality inputs like reasonably qualified teachers, adequate operational budgets, the required quantities of textbooks, school radios etc.,

Furthermore, collaboration of health and Water bureaus is important to equip the Center with water, sanitation facilities and school clinics bearing in mind that it gives advantage to both parents and children unlike other formal schools. This center will be a centerpiece to promote the idea of the usefulness of girl's education in community meetings, in gatherings like idir,

equip etc. The writer of this paper would like to recommend further studies on the applicability and approach of the model school.

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