EDUCATION IN THE DOLDRUMS

AFGHAN TRAGEDY

Edition with a new chapter "Curriculum Conflict"

S.B. Ekanayake
2004
SUMMARY

‘Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy’ is the first ever book to be devoted on the educational issues of Afghanistan. It traces the history of education from the earliest dates, up to the present malaise in Afghanistan. The book analyzes the educational problems and attempts to highlight the causes for the ongoing crises from a cultural perspective. Ignoring the culture and the level of readiness of the communities and pushing programmes too far and too quick by the policy makers have been the key elements that have derailed most of the educational agendas in Afghanistan. Forced changes on the communities encounters displeasure with reactions either to withdraw or completely reject, even aggressively. ‘Education in the Doldrums’ highlights these strategic flaws of well meaning educational policies during the 20th century in Afghanistan. The book also delves into the muddles brought about by different foreign benefactors with their varied educational agendas, apparently making it difficult to bring about a coherent Afghan national educational policy. The wrath of the religions groups and conservative forces at the rural level who considered education as an anathema and a challenge to their way of life is another aspect that this book looks into. The tragedy of education during the Soviet invasion and aftermath the internecine conflicts, influx of refugees to the neighbouring countries, host and donor fatigue resulting in difficulties in the current returnee process, discriminatory policies of the Taliban and the effects of all these on the education of children are critically searched. The book highlights both the positive and negative exposures of migration and the lessons learnt thereby. The role of the international community in Afghanistan taking care of almost every aspect of people to fill the hiatus, is yet another issue that is highlighted in the Afghan drama. The book while discussing the educational programmes of all actors, both UN and NGOs, for refugees, returnees and those in the country, focuses on some of the possible interventions that could be incorporated into an educational framework for Afghanistan. ‘Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy’ is a bold diagnosis of the educational scenario and an essential reading to all those working on education for the Afghans.
Dedication

This book is dedicated to my wife, Manel and children Anoji, Manjeri, Indika all of whom patiently endured my absence from home
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S.B. Ekanayake
2000
Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy

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Foreword

Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy

The author Dr. S.B. Ekanayake, of Sri Lankan origin, has gathered a vast experience in the field of education, not only in his own country but also with several international organizations. In this book he is applying his knowledge and experience to the understanding of education in a country, which is unique by itself, firstly because it has remained isolated from outside developed countries for long, and secondly because it has suffered tremendously because of wars for more than two decades. Even then love and desire for education has been the motivating element among certain sections of the Afghan populations, whether in the country or living outside as refugees. As shown in the first chapter on history of education, this lust for education has been traditional, as has been the case in Central Asian Countries and in Pakistan before they came under the influence of foreign rules. Afghanistan remained free from foreign rule and its educational history was affected mainly by local factors. It is only in the twentieth century administrative authority became more effective that new schools, colleges and university were sponsored by the Government and, as the author has correctly shown, this led to new trends in at least the urban education in Afghanistan. The result of this change is also seen in the social movement and we notice the development of new social classes – which have been interpreted by the author as emergence of upper, middle and lower classes.

It is in the middle of the twentieth century that international agencies came in to introduce their own methods, systems and materials of education. Although we have learnt a lot about them in the different chapters, yet we remain uneducated about the influence this type of education exerted on the rural education, which was controlled by the traditionalists and governed by conventional system and material. The result was disastrous. With the coming of the Soviets and start of the war, many former intellectuals left the country and government controlled education fell apart. But the lust for education did not die out. The Afghans, whether in the country or in the neighbouring countries of refuge, continued the education which has been traditional and conventional. The Talibans are the product of this system although they are now motivated towards political regeneration.
In different chapters the author has admirably summed up the efforts made by international agencies to introduce modern education in Afghanistan, giving in detail their methodology, the system, the material and teacher training programme. But it is not clear as to who is controlling these agencies. Each of them has its own programme and sphere of influence. From the book we learn a great deal about their works. Suggestions have also been given about the betterment of their application. But with the coming of the Taliban government we have not seen any coordination between the educational policies of the two. Certainly with the return of the Afghan refugees, particularly those who have been open to modern education, these agencies have received definite support, but it remains to be seen how the Talibans are going to change their own system. Talibans are after all a product of a particular kind of education. One cannot totally discard their type of education. That education has to be amalgamated and absorbed into the modern system of education. Madrasa and modern education have to come on one system of education. We have yet to see how that is possible. In the case of Afghanistan the Taliban factor cannot be ignored. As they are getting strengthened in the control of the government, they have to be geared to a new direction in education. This education cannot be limited to religious and conventional material. This has to be enriched with the new demands of modern time. As the Talibans have to face the modern world, they have to re-orientate their education. It is this need to which the present book draws our attention. While we learn a great deal about the work of the international agencies, we would like to see how the Taliban can be motivated to face the modern world and in what way they can reorient their education so that their people can stand shoulder to shoulder with the educated people of the rest of the world. The book draws great attention to how modern education can be applied to the present conditions in Afghanistan. Hence the value and importance of the present book that is relevant not only to Afghanistan but also to those neighbouring countries where traditional education is still of some importance.

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Introduction

Amongst the vast plentitude of challenges posed by the need to reconstruct war-torn Afghanistan, education looms large, although the rhetoric of both policy makers and donors is replete with paradoxes. While consistently stating that education is a vital prerequisite for reconstruction in every sector, they offer scant support to education which remains the most severely under funded sector in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

Looking beyond the rhetoric one realizes that the issue is fraught with complex difficulties. In few other nations is the educational infrastructure in such complete disarray, although it is not correct to say, as many do, that all has been totally destroyed. Buildings, teachers, administrators and libraries have survived - but all hang in limbo much as they were before the war began in 1978.

And at that time there was already much wanting for the system was riddled by economic, regional and gender bias. Whereas the pre-war literacy rate was estimated at 11.4%, literates in the rural areas accounted for only 8.8%. In some provinces the percentage of literate females was a dismal 0.1%. As for children attending schools, 32% lived in or around the capital city of Kabul, compared to 3.8% living in the remote provinces of Bamiyan and Ghor. Education was primarily the prerogative of upper urban groups.

Stringent State regulation dominated the system and the curriculum, designed to ensure loyalty to the State, was not only subject-oriented but totally irrelevant for the majority of students living in rural areas. Since education provided little of benefit to compensate for time spent in school, there was scant community support and considerable active opposition. The tensions that had long existed between the advocates of the traditional religious system and those favouring the more secular State system intensified as the nation was engulfed by war.

On the pedagogy front, the situation was equally bleak. Rote learning and memorization was the norm. Teachers expounded while students listened, rarely engaging in interactive discussions. Lessons were consequently a bore and many dropped out. Even those who did graduate were mostly ill-prepared to cope with the complexities of their rapidly changing world.
In a sense, it could be said that the breakdown of so much that existed before makes it easier for those facing the challenges of the present, starting anew on a cleaner slate. Much of the impedimenta has disappeared and, most encouragingly, new attitudes have developed among the Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan - whose numbers at times rose to five million. While living for over two decades in exile they came to appreciate the benefits of education and now there is a demand for education all across the nation that never existed before. This is a positive starting point.

At least, it would be except for constraints on a variety of levels that impose daunting difficulties. Even the size of today's potential school population is intimidating. There are now roughly 4 million school-aged children in Afghanistan. Few receive schooling. One report estimates that 750,000 are reached by schools run by the authorities (although these are mostly on paper) and 250,000 attend some sort of NGO programme of varying effectiveness.

It is not just a matter of marshalling aid for these students, however. Attitudes must change if funds, personnel and supplies are to be used effectively. To mention only a few:

First the implacable aversion of many in the assistance community to the attitudes held by the Taliban and the limitations these impose on education. This aversion is reciprocated by those in the Taliban movement who believe westerners are intent on introducing corrosive ideas into the minds of the young. The aggressive statements propounded by numbers of actors in the assistance community add to the concerns of these skeptics, convincing them that there is indeed cause for worry.

Most assistance providers in the field, I submit, have no such intentions. The solution therefore lies in strengthening communities so that they may express their new-found desire for education and convince local authorities to comply with their wishes. This has already been achieved in numerous areas. It will take time but only when such impetuses come from within and not from without can ultimate success be expected. In addition, a willingness on both sides to enter into meaningful dialogue based on mutual trust is essential, with each side making sincere attempts to understand the other. Building understanding and trust is the key. This too is beginning to happen with increasing frequency. To achieve results in this manner, without unacceptable compromise on either side, the ability to factor in
flexibility, be it in organization, training or curricula, will govern success or failure.

Second, The assistance community needs to practice today's highly touted ideals of cooperation and coordination. Prevailing territorial attitudes towards locations, students, staff and curricula hamper the delivery of services.

Thirdly and closely allied to the second point, is the need to think ahead and formulate integrated strategies. Such forward thinking is all the more imperative when donors favour short-term funding. There is nothing short-term about education. To build up student and parent expectations only to wind up after six months without plans to incorporate activities into other on going programmes in the area is irresponsible, and can only create frustration, distrust and anger.

Fourth. Proceeding according to an integrated strategy will also necessitate changes in attitudes toward such issues as teacher training. Much time and money has been expended on this component without noticeable results because little in-depth thought is given to what teachers are being trained for. What happens to all these men and women once they are trained?

Trained teachers leave the profession because job opportunities are so few, or teach only part-time because salaries are not sufficient for minimum family sustenance. Inadequate salaries also imply low social status so there is little natural motivation to take up teaching as a career. How to attract men and women of caliber to the education sector and keep them there is an issue that has been too long neglected.

Fifth. The reluctance of donors to consider secondary and tertiary education is another attitude that needs amending. Stubbornly holding to the belief that higher social returns are gained from the promotion of primary education, donors are loathe to contribute to anything beyond. In a country where the education system is in such shambles, however, there is no time to wait for primary students to mature. Furthermore, college age youth are highly vulnerable, susceptible to manipulation by others with questionable political agendas and those touting any number of criminal occupations, such as drugs and smuggling, that prosper round them both in refugee communities and inside Afghanistan. Frustrated youth represent a time-bomb that none can afford to ignore.
Dr. S.B. Ekanayake addresses these points, with more, and places them in a professional global context. There will be those who will take issue with him. But it is through controversy that solutions are often found. His is the first attempt to tackle these knotty challenges head on and it behooves every one involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan to take careful note of what he has to tell us in *Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy*.

Nancy Hatch Dupree  
Peshawar  
September 2000
Acknowledgements

Writing a book is a difficult task but when one has to focus the subject on a country, which is very fluid and in disarray, it becomes enormously arduous. This is what I experienced in writing ‘Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy’. The fluidity relates to the ever-changing political scenario in Afghanistan with implications on all other development facets. The subject is further complicated by the constant changes in the policies of the international community. Identifying the threads of educational progress over the years is not an easy task. Education, though not supported by the international community to the extent it should have been, is a sensitive issue for the current rulers. The latter accept that education is important but their priorities at the moment are on the war front. Although the rulers have their stance on education of girls, more is desired from both the rulers and the donors.

This is the background against which the book is developed. The task was however facilitated due to my interaction with different people from all walks of life: politicians, intellectuals, teachers, students, community leaders, rural folk and refugees all of which I enjoyed. Specially my interactions with the students, both inside Afghanistan and in the refugee camps, were very stimulating and thought provoking. In spite of the political and social confusion, their expectations and aspirations seemed to be very positive and confident of a bright future, a vision which should be underscored, fostered and reinforced by well wishers of the Afghans. All these augur well for the future of the Afghan human resources development.

While paying my gratitude to all those Afghans from whom I learnt the pains of destruction, I wish to make a special mention of some key persons who supported me both professionally and as colleagues to undertake this venture. Initial encouragement came from Mr. Sirimega Wijeratne, Chief of Mission, UNHCR, Kabul (1996/98) followed by Mr. Said Ahmed Farah, Chief of Mission, Kabul (1998 to date) and Dr. Prem Kasaju, Representative of UNESCO for Afghanistan and Pakistan, all of whom were very positive towards recording the events of the educational process for posterity, that had been a disaster during the last two decades. Ms Nancy Dupree, Consultant, ACBAR, and an authority on Afghanistan devoted to the cause of the Afghans has been a great source of encouragement and a resource for my work.
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## Map
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I. Forbidden Fruit of Asia

Geography and Culture
Afghanistan occupies a pivotal geographical position and forms the northeastern portion of the Iranian plateau. It is a landlocked country lying between 29 and 38-north latitude and between 60 and 75 east longitude. The total area of the country is approximately 700,000 square kilometers, with a population of about 21 million (1999) but no official figure is available. It has borders with a number of countries—Pakistan, Iran, Central Asian States, China and Kashmir. Afghanistan displays four topographical regions, characterized by many descending levels of altitude. These form the Hindu Kush and its auxiliary ranges (14,000 to 25,000 feet), barren and rugged foothills, gently sloping plains and infertile lands. Afghanistan is a beautiful country with snow-covered hills and peaks, and deep green valleys inhabited by virile people. In the ancient days, it was part of the silk route, which ran through its territory, bringing different cultures into play and assisting trade between the west and the east.

On the map, Afghanistan looks like an irregular-shaped leaf hanging from a stem. It is primarily an agricultural country whose natives are known for their martial traditions. The structure of the Afghan society is loose and bears little resemblance to a highly integrated or interdependent modern society. The whole society is built on family and tribal units, which gives it an individualistic character revolving around family or tribe. The most striking qualities of the Afghans are their toughness, poverty, self-respect, religious devotion, conservatism and frugality. Religion plays a vital role in the Afghan mind. Family honour and prestige are of utmost importance, especially for the Pashtuns. It is not correct to say that Afghans are militaristic. By and large, the tribal tendency has been to solve problems through discussions, using 'jirgah,' which is a council of village elders. Heroic tales and love ballads, proverbs and wise sayings, fairy tales and ghost stories, epic and ribald war songs are part of the fabric of their folk-literature which feeds the imagination of the Afghans (Wilber 1962).

I. Ancient times
The great civilizations of the world had their origins in the east, especially around Indus and the Yangtze valleys and on the west in Egypt and
Mesopotamia. Rivers have been the artery of civilizations as agricultural activities form their nucleus around them. This is evident from 'the earliest known civilizations (that) were founded almost contemporaneously in India, Egypt, and Mesopotamia' (Singhal 1993). Afghanistan, lying between these great ancient civilizations, could not be isolated in the making of history and contributing to the culture of the world.

Use of artifacts and contrivances for cultivation and methods of storage of products, especially grains, formed part of the cultural practices associated with agricultural economy. This technical knowledge related to agriculture seemed to have been commonly shared amongst almost all the people in these civilizations. Thus in southern Afghanistan, there had existed huge granaries similar to those of Harappa, and great mud brick buildings which belonged to the third millennium B.C. with facades of half columns suggestive of Mesopotamia (Singhal, ibid). This indicates the nature of the international relationship of Afghanistan that prevailed in the early periods of the human race. The Sumerians, originally from the East, also carried with them their arts and crafts indicating common origins (Woolley 1983) of both peoples. The existing mud architectural culture in the Afghan society is an indication of the ancient traditions in arts and crafts, which continues to this day.

' Afghanistan, especially the northern region around Balkh and Tokharestan was the crossroad of Central Asia. It was here that the nomadic people first learned the ways of settled life, and thus Tokharestan played a significant role of a cultural intermediary' (Singhal, ibid). In subsequent centuries the overland silk route passed through Balkh, a city in northern Afghanistan, linking east and west. Thus due to its central location, Afghanistan's role in the international scenario has been of significance in terms of migration of cultures since early civilizations of mankind.

Some historians refer to Rig-Veda in the identification of Afghanistan (Dupree Louis 1980). It was also here that the oldest Aryan hymns and a great part of the Rig-Veda were composed (Mohammed 1970). According to others, 'Avesta', one of the oldest scriptural writings of the Aryan race and probably written in the reign of Cyrus (559-30), is considered as the key source which refers to the original name of Afghanistan as 'Aryana' or 'Ariana'. 'The name 'Aryana', therefore, belongs to the period (559-30 B.C.) when the Aryan race migrated from its from its centre in Bactria, today known as Balkh, in the northern province of Mazar near the bank of river
Oxus or Amu Darya,’ which was also the first Aryan settlement. The ‘Avesta’ describes in expressive terms the glory of this centre established by the Aryan race. Balkh is referred to as the ‘Beautiful City of High Flags’ (Afghanistan 1952). The word, ‘Arya’ means ‘excellent’ or ‘noble’. The current name of the flag carrier of Afghanistan is Ariyana, which shows that this word is being used at the national level even today.

To some, ‘The country known today as Afghanistan was, until 150 years ago, called ‘Khorasan.’ Khorasan literally means ‘the land from which the sun rises. This name was given to the country at the beginning of the Islamic period by Persians and Arabs living in the West’ (Afghanistan, 1952). While its geographical boundaries changed frequently, Khorasan, at any one time, was a bigger country than today’s Afghanistan. The present boundaries and the new name of ‘Afghanistan’ have gradually formalized over the last 100 years’… What is interesting in the case of Afghanistan is that this newly created country remained nameless for over a century, even to its own founder, Ahmad Khan (1747-72) (Mousavi 1998).

Influence of Greeks
Reference to the influence of Greeks is vital in the discussion of the history of Afghanistan. It was in the year 330 B.C. that Alexander entered the province of Herat where he established the city of Alexandria-Ariya, today known as the city of Herat. This was followed by his invasion of the southern part of Afghanistan and the establishment of the city of Alexandria-Arochosia, or Kandhar (Afghanistan 1952). Being the first contact between Afghans and the Western world, it is one of the most significant events in the history of Afghanistan. During the brief period of the reign of Alexander, Greek culture, mythology, philosophy and art were introduced into Afghanistan, and thus assumed the role of an Asian Greece during this period. Greek ideas, culture, art, science, philosophy, literature, language, sports and civic law, which later influenced the whole of Central Asia, were introduced into the country (Mohammed 1970).

Religious Thought
Afghanistan’s major contribution to the cultures of the world comes from religion. It was during the reign of West - Aspa and Gusht Aspa (aspa in Pashto means ‘horse’ even today) that Zarathustra the Great appeared in the scene. Zarathustra was born in Balkh around 1000 B.C. He was a member of the Aspa Royal Family. His profound doctrine brought marked changes in the point of view of the people. He brought in the concept of
monotheism and the importance of goodness. According to him the human should be free of superstition. Each man has to find his own salvation through the 'pure light of thought.' He emphasized the recognition of freedom of will, and the freedom of man to choose the Right or Wrong.' He laid stress on the practical side of religion, which included a three-fold maxim of pure thought, pure words and, pure action (Afghanistan 1952, Dupree Louis 1980, Mohammed 1970).

The influence of Indian culture followed around the 2nd century B.C. during the reign of Asoka (273-232 B.C.) when Buddhism was introduced to Afghanistan, which was perhaps the most significant factor in the development of Afghanistan from cultural point of view. Later, commencing from the second century B.C., Afghanistan became the centre of Buddhism. This is testified by the records of Hsuan-tuang - (602-664), who on his way from India had seen that Balkh (Bahluka or Fo-ho) had been the centre of original Buddhist studies. There are vivid accounts, supported by archaeological evidence, which indicate the impact of Buddhism on Afghan soil and the role it had subsequently played in expanding the teachings of Lord Buddha to the east as well as to the west of Afghanistan. The Chehel Zina Edict ('40 steps') in Kandhar is the first evidence of the spread of Buddhism to the west during the reign of Asoka (Piyadassi). In this connection Bamiyan, situated in the northwest of Kabul, was the major seat of Buddhist culture and had thousands of monasteries. Furthermore, it had the tallest Buddhist statues in the world. Although some of these are still there, most of them were destroyed during the invasions of the Arabs at the end of the 7th century. This is why Afghanistan attracted scholars and monks from India. According to Nancy Dupree (1997) 'Afghanistan's landscape is liberally dotted with Buddhist sites dating from the 2nd to the 8th centuries A.D. The most spectacular is situated at an elevation of about 2500 metres on a high plateau in the centre of Afghanistan, in the valley of Bamiyan... The tens of convents, the thousands of priests of yore are gone, but countless caves and two Buddha figures standing 55 metres and 38 metres tall, still inspire awe and reverence' (Dupree Nancy 1997). Remains of Buddhist art in Balkh reveal clearly that Buddhism was flourishing on the southern side of the river Oxus. As late as the time of Hsuang-tsang of China, (7th century AD) Buddhist monasteries were flourishing in Balkh. Desai is of the opinion that ' Afghanistan has been all along in the mid-stream of history. It was a mixing bowl and a battle ground for centuries for a variety of Central Asian, Iranian, Turkish, Chinese, and even European settlers and invaders.... The intermingling of two cultures
(Sassanian and Buddhist) that took place here was so complete and homogeneous that some scholars were inclined to call it a Sassano-Buddhist civilization' (Desai 1975).

Persian culture prevailed till the arrival of the Greek, which in its turn was taken over by Buddhism. Even though many different people and cultures occupied Afghanistan—the Greeks, the Sakas, the Yueh-chih and the Huns—Buddhism remained dominant until the end of the 7th century. The Buddhist monasteries were not destroyed until the Muslims conquered Afghanistan. Most of the people converted to Islam including the chief priests who were taken to the court of the Caliph (Singhal ibid). However, according to Mohammed Ali it was the White Huns who, around 460 AD overran Afghanistan and 'literally extirpated Buddhism by demolishing temples, monasteries and by the wholesale massacre of the monks and population' (Mohammed 1970). This resulted in a severe set back to the art of the country and whatever Buddhist art remained was in isolated valleys and places as late as the 7th and 8th centuries. Later, in the 13th century the Mongol invasion destroyed most of the splendour and richness of Afghanistan. 'The culture of the country that had been so dynamic and creative declined rapidly, losing its expansive vigour. As a result of this unparalleled catastrophe in human history, a wave of pessimism and fatalism spread throughout the country…. Intellectual activities diminished and civilization began to decline. Afghanistan, in spite of the lapse of seven and a half centuries, has not recovered from the shock it received at the hands of these wild hordes' (Mohammed, ibid).

'Education has always been a treasured ideal in this region where renowned centres of learning (referred to above) flourished during various historical periods.' It was very likely that as Buddhism prevailed in Afghanistan during the earlier periods of its history, religious schools invariably would have been established in all Buddhist temples, providing both secular and religious learning, as was commonly seen in all the Buddhist countries in Asia. Much of these, coupled later with the Islamic learning, have been lost today. These institutions focussed on creativity and rationality. However, although these ideals in learning were more or less lost, the basic desire for learning prevailed over the centuries so that most of the people sent their children to mosques from about the 7th century to receive Islamic knowledge while the rich had their own tutors brought home to teach their children (Dupree Nancy 1998, Safi 1987).
With the arrival of Arabs, Islam was introduced towards the end of the 7th century. Though the Arabs failed to conquer the whole of Afghanistan, their missionary activities had a better chance of succeeding in the country. The Islamic concept of one Supreme God, equality and brotherhood of man revolutionized the outlook of the Afghans… Islam gave social and political solidarity and cohesion to Afghanistan (Mohammed 1970). The heterogeneous tribes, for the first time in their history, were linked together by a common faith and a common ideal. Unfortunately, this no longer holds true (Dupree Louis 1980).

Isolationism

Afghanistan had either been a part of many empires or split up between independent local principalities during the 10th to the 12th centuries. This was more evident during the 16th-18th centuries when Afghanistan had no political identity of its own. The country was parcelled out between the Mughal Empire of India and the Empire of Persia. It was during the Durrani period from about 1750 that Afghanistan began to shape into a nation. However, by the turn of the 18th century another set of powers began to take interest in Afghanistan, namely Russia and Britain. This further affected the precarious existence of Afghanistan leading to adverse consequences in later years. These were related to two wars with Great Britain in 1839 and 1880 resulting in foreign occupation, annexation of territory, and dislocation of economy. All these perhaps, resulted in the growing power of the religious leaders and tribal groups, which consolidated their powers at the expense of the central state. Afghanistan, towards the end of the 19th century, was subjected to constant pressure and aggression. Internally, perennial struggles weakened the powers of the central authority, leaving them with no alternative, except to seek constant assistance from the tribal groups. Under such a structure the influence and power of the landowners, religious and tribal leaders increased.

Another critical factor that led to the isolation of Afghanistan was the distrust in foreigners. This was a result of the Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842), which left a decisive and indelible mark on the ideological climate of Afghanistan (Oleson 1995). The Afghans mistrusted all the Europeans whom they considered not only infidels, but also their enemies who threatened Islam and Afghan independence. Thus the tolerant attitude of the Afghans to other faiths, which prevailed until the beginning of the Anglo-Afghan War (1839-42), changed dramatically.
The tussle for power as part of the "Great Games' continued and Afghanistan was subjected to incessant interference from Russia and Britain. Afghanistan, on its part did not wish for any military support from Britain against Russia, either due to mistrust of the Westerns or due to the fear of upsetting the religious establishment of the Ulema in Afghanistan. Thus Amir Abdur-Rahman ensured that these two countries did not exercise any significant power over Afghanistan. Subsequently, the continued struggles between Britain and Russia were settled in agreements drawn up between them in 1891 and 1895-96, to fix the present northern frontiers of Afghanistan. On the other hand, the eastern boundary between British India and Afghanistan, i.e., the Durand Line, was also drawn in 1893. This divided the Pushtoons into two halves between Afghanistan and the British India (Marsden 1999).

II. Modern Afghanistan—Internal Trouble Shooting Era Issues Related to Wars and Internal Conflicts

Modern Afghanistan was created during the late 19th century under the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan.’ While external powers drew the boundaries of Afghanistan (Britain and Russia), the Amir attempted to spread his influence over a myriad of ethno-linguistic groups and tribal kingdoms (Dupree Louis, ibid). In the 20th century the key factors that influenced the development of Afghanistan are its neutrality in the World War II, political upheavals inside Afghanistan, and non-alignment until the Soviet invasion in 1979. With the Soviet invasion the whole political scenario changed. It brought many players into the scene during the Soviet occupation, especially after they left in 1989. The affiliated mujahadeen elements, which united and fought against the Soviets in their struggle, fell apart and the country plunged into an internal struggle. The neighbouring countries became partners in these conflicts, further aggravating the situation and retarding any efforts at restoring peace in the troubled land since the Soviets left in 1989. Support from the neighbours had been in the form of military hardware, religious fanaticism, and technical support leading to ethnic strife and religious division. Such instigations led to a further breakdown of the country's machinery, as it split into factions. In as much as outsiders have played a key role in shaping the Afghan history, the same holds true of the country's educational development. The development ventures in Afghanistan have had their effect in the region and beyond.
Ethnic Composition

It is pertinent to discuss briefly the ethnic composition of Afghanistan, for some of the dissension and conflicts of the Afghan society have origins in the multiplicity of divisions. Ethnicity can be defined as ‘a principle of social order and social boundary based on identification of oneself and of others with social units or categories which combines gender, consists of distinct cultural qualities, possibilities of identification of a past, given a separate name by neighbours and not sub-units of another ethnic group’ (Bernt 1998). On the other hand, outsiders fan these ethnic differences, which aggravates the current problems. Thus conflicts and fights emerge as a means to achieving long-term political and economic desires. When one really studies the ethnic characteristics it is discernable that ‘Afghanistan is not one country nor one culture, but consists of many peoples, many ethnic groups and sub-cultures’ (Boesen 1986). Most scholars have tried hard to count the ethnic groups and tribes without much agreement. According to these sources, Afghanistan consists of 55 ethnic names.

The dominant ethnic groups are the Pushtuns, the Tajiks, the Hazaras, and the Uzbek, while the main languages are Dari and Pashto. In addition, a number of other languages are spoken by different ethnic groups such as Turkoman, Uzbek, Kirghiz in the north, Pashai and Nuristani in the east, Baluch in the northwest. For most groups, except for some Pashtun, Dari is the lingua franca in Afghanistan. Although there are differences in ethnicity, the common factor for Afghans is their religion, which is Islam, even though there are two sects, namely the Sunni and the Shiites. Most of the Hazaras in the Central Highlands belong to the Shiite group while the rest of the population is predominantly Sunni.

Although statistics about ethnic groups are very unreliable, the Pashtuns comprise the largest number, about 40 to 60 per cent of the population, which is about 6 million. Most of them live in the east and south of Afghanistan. The Tajiks are the second largest group, mainly concentrated in the northern part. The number of Hazaras is around 1.5 million. The Hazaras can be identified quite easily, for they stand out among the other groups due to their physical features. Basically, they dislike the Pashtuns. The last major group is the Uzbek which consists of about the same number as that of the Hazaras and is predominantly found in the north.
In the current struggle and turmoil one can see power struggles based on ethnicity. But since the desire of the people is for a united Afghanistan, it is unlikely that there would be a permanent demarcation on these lines. The perceptions on these lines are played up and to some extent encouraged by outside elements that wish to see the disintegration of Afghanistan. This is very obvious when one speaks to an Afghan from any part of Afghanistan, both inside and outside Afghanistan. The author had the opportunity to meet such individuals as well as groups in large numbers during his missions and while working with the Afghans for over four years. Foreign powers, and those controlling the media, not the Afghans, conceived the idea of division.

Today, the Afghan issue ranks as one of the key problems in the international community, including the UNO. This has become increasingly serious with the entry of the Taliban into the scene in 1994. Although the purpose of this book is not to discuss the political scenario, one sees how this has affected the development of education in Afghanistan. The headlines of newspapers clearly indicate the complexities of the situation in Afghanistan and the roles of the vested interests of the neighbouring countries. Some of them say something like: 'Afghanistan: Flawed Policy' (The Nation August 7, 1997); 'Taliban stand on women's issue' (The Nation April 17, 1998); 'US pushes for quick dialogue for Afghan peace' (The Nation April 17, 1998); 'US envoy secures Afghan cease fire, talks agreement' (The Nation April 18, 1998); 'US envoy claims Afghan breakthrough' (The Nation April 18, 1998); 'EU concerned at fighting in Afghanistan' (The News 17, 1998); 'Unity Council for end to fighting in Afghanistan;' 'RAWA for early solution of imbroglio' (The Nation, 14 September, 2000). These are but a few of such headings of news items that appear daily in Pakistani papers. But the critical question remains unanswered, namely whether Afghan militants and the parties concerned are interested in a negotiated settlement or whether war has made it more profitable for the Central Asian oil/gas pipeline projects to raise the stakes. There is also a need to ascertain whether there is a common ground, some common interest, a common objective, and a common desire, which can unite the Afghan factions (The Nation, August 17, 1997). All these have added to the instability that has prevailed all along amongst those who have taken refuge in Iran and Pakistan.
The ‘refugee genocide,’ as some refer to it, which does not seem to end, has worsened due to the internal power struggles and has added to the number of internally displaced persons. Although large numbers have returned to Afghanistan, the present situation is at a plateau. The Afghan refugees are faced with the dilemma of whether to return home or survive as second class citizens in the land of refuge. Apart from political instability, one of the key reasons relates to the lack of services, especially facilities for education inside Afghanistan. What is disturbing is that some of those who returned wish to go back to the countries of refuge. Although the number is only a trickle, it is not a welcome sign. A detailed discussion on the issues of refugees will follow in chapters X and XI. The issues related to refugees are many and interwoven with the political milieu of the countries of refuge: they are no more welcomed as they were two decades ago. A kind of hospitality fatigue has set in, which can result in great repercussions in the near future.

Thus a country with a long glorious history, playing key roles between countries, rich in culture, enriched by some of the greatest religions in the world and facilitating religious thoughts to the north, east and west, is facing the worst crisis in its history.
II Education in Afghanistan

Traditional Learning: Historical Perspective
Madrasas were the traditional centres of learning in Afghanistan, which were established all over the country. The madrasa was a private institution invariably located near a mosque. Its upkeep was the responsibility of the local population. The key person in the madrasa was the teacher who was looked after by the people (Rubin 1996: 52). This resembles the organization of Buddhist 'pirivenas' (temple school) located near Buddhist temples. The students were mostly from poor rural, landless families, and were provided food by the community. Students were taught on an individual basis, as in private tuition today. One of the key objectives of their learning was to become priests in mosques some day in the future. The richer, and those commanding higher social status, did not send their children to madrasas. They arranged for their children to be taught at home by private tutors. Girls were not admitted to madrasas. Traditionally imparted knowledge was related to Islamic jurisprudence, Quranic interpretation and the tradition of the Prophet, besides philosophy and theology. Philosophy included metaphysics, logic and grammar. Natural sciences focussed on the old Greek medicine. In view of the functions the best master-teacher of a madrasa was a type of theologian-alchemist-astronomer (Rubin 1996: 53, Majrooh 1986: 128, Elphistone 1815).

During the early periods of the Islamic civilization, the madrasas were more open to new ideas and also contributed to sciences and arts. However, during later periods the focus of the religious leaders was mainly on traditional studies, adopting a hostile attitude towards science and philosophy. Original texts of theology, philosophy jurisprudence were replaced by commentaries and by commentaries upon commentaries (Majrooh, ibid). Learning became sterile and unimaginative. Arabic grammar was one of the more favoured non-religious subjects and students were expected to learn grammatical rules by heart without ever applying them. Besides, students were never taught the art of discussion and rational thinking. Instead they were trained in the 'art of disputation,' where skills of discussion and argument were ignored. One would see strong, emotional outbursts of anger, exchange of insults, with occasional physical fighting among rival students as part of the art of disputation.
The traditional learning in Afghanistan was at three levels, conducted by three different religious persons i.e., the Mullah, Maulvi and Quazi (judge), and the Pir. The Mullah barely knew how to read or write but could read the Holy Koran without understanding its meaning. The Maulvi/Quazi was well versed in Islamic law and could read and write. The Pir was the most venerated the most popular among the religious figures. The earlier mentioned representatives of the 'traditional education had two basic points in common: ignorance and intolerance.' On the other hand, all of these three had one common element: they were never prepared or willing to face the modern world, and rejected anything new. This dogmatism and intolerance apparently led the younger generation to move towards the other extreme of accepting everything foreign and rejecting native old ideas (Majrooh, ibid: 75-92). It is from intolerance and ignorance that extremism emerges. These highly conservative systems can be traced to the Deoband madrasa, India, which trained Afghan religious scholars. This is considered as one of the causes for the decline of the relatively liberal and secular traditional teaching in Afghanistan.

In spite of the emphasis on traditional learning as discussed above, the process of secular learning was also maintained in which private tutors taught the children of the rich families. Those who were the products of such programmes were the privileged who later became bureaucrats of the state. Creative writers and intellectuals also came from this category. Persian was the medium of instruction of these groups. Thus the learning process led to the creation of divisions in the society: one comprised the ordinary citizens taught by the mullah, and the other consisted of the privileged class governing the country.

The main source of the influence of the religious leaders on the society was their monopoly over the educational system. This was not structured as a coherent system during the 19th century. For the greater part of the male population, education, at best, consisted of studying the Koran in Arabic in the local mosque under the guidance of the local imam/mullah. While on the one hand religious fervency kept Afghan independent, on the other, religious character 'promoted conservatism, Afghan xenophobia and cultural isolationism.' As a result many of the religious leaders resisted the introduction and adoption of major socio-economic and cultural innovations, despising them as alien to the spirit and tenets of Islam and the Afghan traditions. Most of those who introduced these reforms were associated with their Christian enemy (Olesen 1995:41, Gregorian 1969).
The education system during the 18th and 19th centuries has been very clearly described by Elphinstone (1815) in his publication, 'An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul (Kabul).’ 'All the Afghauns are sent in their infancy to a Moollah for education. Some learn no more than their regular Namauz, and other occasional prayers and passages of the Koran, with ceremonies of their religion, and the duties of a Musssulmaun... This is the education of the lower orders, of whom not a quarter can read their own language. 'The rich keep Moollahs in their own houses to teach their children, but allow them all the power of a common school master... There is a schoolmaster in every village and camp, who is maintained by a piece of land allotted to him, and by a small contribution which he receives from his scholars. His office is sometimes united with that of the priest of the village; but it is often distinct, especially in large areas.' However, in towns there had been regular schools similar to the ones in the European countries. Schooling commences at the age of four years, four months and four days of a child, but actual learning takes place at a later date, when the child is six or seven years of age. The curriculum included learning of the Koran, reading Persian classics, Arabic grammar. At a higher level, studies include medicine, history, and poetry. However, the country is over run with 'half taught Moollahs,' who rather impede than promote the progress of learning (Elphinstone 1815).

This brief description provides a thorough view of the nature of the education system and the learning structures that prevailed during the 19th century. One cannot say that there was no culture of learning or that education was mainly confined to religious aspects. As in many other countries of Asia, education was basically centred round religious institutions, but in Afghanistan the emphasis was on non-secular learning too. There is little reference to education of females and it is very likely that it was not an important aspect of the Afghanistan education system during those times. This was true of the Indian education on the eve of the British supremacy on India as well. 'Whilst the Hindu system of learning was jealously guarded in Brahamin caste interests, Muslim education, though open to all, was dominated by theologians... Both systems neglected literacy and scientific education, critical analysis, and women's education (Singhal 1993). All these seem to be paradoxical in a country, which had remained under the influence of the Gandhara civilization, and promoted aesthetic aspects, arts and crafts.
Objectives of Education

One of the key objectives of education was to train ‘reliable, competent administrators schooled in Islamic law.’ Thus Islamization was used as polity expansion i.e. as a vehicle for expanding state control over legal matters. The sole objective of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan's (1891-1901) educational efforts in the early part of this century was more towards control of state power than towards enlightenment. During his tenure he created ‘slave boys' (ghulam bachas) who were trained and educated for wars and administration. Predominant form of education was privately financed schools by the mullahs (Rubin 1996:52-53). In a discussion, the Amir concluded ‘that he did not mind about the ignorance of the nation so long as they remained loyal to their ruler and offered combined opposition to the external foe; he preferred barbarism to intelligence, as the former was more useful in war than the latter’ (Foreign and Political Department, May 1890). He had further stated that ‘knowledge is a noble quality, and it must find its place in noble brains, because dregs of society cannot be allowed to obtain education and commit mischief’ (Political Department 1893: Nos.511-539). All these explain the thinking of the rulers in relation to education of the masses. These also point out the perceptions of the rulers to development. It also indicates the fear of the rulers of educating the masses who would perhaps revolt against authority. The thrust of the power of education is implicit in the above statements of the Amir. This fear still prevails in Afghanistan and in some of the neighbouring countries though not explicitly stated.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, certain changes seemed to have occurred in social and political spheres. The repressive nature of governance, which prevailed earlier during the last decades of the 19th century, was relaxed. There was growing agitation from influential quarters about the need to break away from the 'isolationism and xenophobia’, seen during the last few decades of the 19th century. These policies were considered as inhibitions to the development of the state and society. Amir Habibullah, 1901-1919, son of Amir Khan (commander), at that time, himself considered these as obnoxious and was keen to place Afghanistan on a par with the developing countries. His era can be considered as a 'period of realignments where new ideas were developing and taking new root' (Olesen, ibid: 95). Changes were occurring at this time around the world, in the Middle East, the British India, the Balkans, and the World War I had greater effects on both the thinking of 'modernists' and the 'traditionalists' in Afghanistan.
Visits to India and other countries by the rulers had opened their eyes and exposed them to the realities of development occurring outside Afghanistan. Use of foreign personnel in development programmes as technical experts, such as road construction, had further exposed the rulers to the significance of technological development. These had a salutary effect in the improvement of the education system in Afghanistan. Thus ‘in 1903, as a first step, Amir Habibullah had issued orders to all mosques in Kabul to collect the children playing around the streets and give them an education’ (Olesen, ibid: 98). As a further step Amir provided additional funds to children who could not afford to attend schools. Although applicable to all parts of the country the order was not carried out on a national scale. However, steps were taken to establish a secular school system. The first secondary school established was only for boys (1904).

For the first time, secular subjects were brought into the curriculum, which hitherto, as indicated earlier, were confined to religious subjects only. Most of these secular schools were under the management of foreign hands such as Turks and Indians. Thus education was subjected to state control through the foundation of a system of government schools. Although secular subjects were introduced to the curriculum, the influence of traditional, religious systems remained intact. One could say that the modern educational system commenced with Amir Habibullah (1901) who, while being a great supporter of western education, also emphasized religious education as the basis on which all other education should rest (Olesen, ibid: 99, Rubin 1996: 52-54). His ideas were greatly opposed to the policies of the rulers before him in the country. He considered education as knowledge against ignorance. Habibullah declared that all Muslims should ‘turn their attention towards the acquirement of new sciences, as unless you acquire Western knowledge, you will remain without bread’ (Gregorian 1969: 99). This seems to be a very significant change from the earlier declarations of the country about education. Most likely it must have been triggered off by the visits of the rulers to foreign countries. This becomes evident in the later decades after the 1st World War when more of the rulers visited foreign countries. More publications, weekly papers and educational material emerged during this period.

After World War I and with change of rulers in Afghanistan modern thought became the focus than it was before. It was accepted that the only way to face the threat of Europe was to reorganize Muslim society and to adopt
scientific methods and technology. Furthermore, the superiority of the Europeans was due to their achievements in the fields of economics, technology, and science, which was possible because of education made available to all citizens. Moreover, the lessons of the development of Japan, an Asian country, were quoted often as an example, which, while absorbing European techniques, had not shed and sacrificed its traditional culture and moral values. Using these examples, the Afghan rulers attempted to develop a rationale to highlight the importance of modernization in the process of development. Their arguments were aimed at countering the opposition of those who wanted to maintain status quo and who resisted change and exposure of their country to science and technology. However, the anti-imperialist stance of those opposed to modern ideas remained unchanged. They argued that Europe was facing economic problems due to depletion of its resources, and that the expansionist and imperialist programmes of Europe were designed to exploit the resources of other continents.

Forces of Modernization

The arguments for modernization included the following:

i) Modern science was not contrary to Islam.
ii) European technology and science were necessary for progress of the contemporary Afghan society.
iii) All modern science in Europe had roots in medieval Arabic science.
iv) Acquiring knowledge through education was compatible with the precepts of the Quran.
v) Neglect of knowledge was a disservice to the individual and the community.
vi) Recognized the important role of women in development.

(Olesen ibid: 117-119, Rubin ibid: 53-59)

These arguments replaced the concept of the 'learned' with the 'intellectual,' i.e., the latter provides enlightenment to the masses as such people are exposed to modern ways of thinking and acting. The former, on the other hand, refers to the spiritual aspects of life underscored in the traditional manner and supported by the clergy. Thus, one may state that the philosophy of enlightenment was a major breakthrough and unparalleled hitherto, in the thinking of the Afghan leadership. Quite obviously the repercussions of these changes in attitude were considerably
positive on education policies. Acceptance of the right of women to education and monogamous marriages during this period could be considered another major breakthrough in the development process of the Afghan leadership. However, these reforms, promulgated during this period, were not totally acceptable to the conservative elements of the country. Further, the younger generation faced a sort of dilemma: pursuing Islamic heritage and model while at the same time attempting to achieve modernization as well. These two were in eternal conflict and to a great extent incompatible. This conflict had another dimension; the Muslims in India equated the so called 'modernization' with a rapprochement with the British Raj while in Afghanistan it was considered a vehicle to resist the British influence. The Afghans looked towards the Turks for leadership and inspiration in this modernization process, which is why they invited many experts of different disciplines from Turkey, rather than from India (Olesen ibid: 120).

The modernization fervour took great strides during the time of King Amanullah (1919-29). Following his European tour he became more convinced in secularism. New laws were promulgated which contained the seeds of 'modern Afghan nation state.' The King, while trying to bring in modernism, attempted to create a balance between secularism and Islamic liberal modernization as well.

During King Amanullah's reign one could identify 4 key areas of reforms directed towards modernization. They were:

a) institutional secularization i.e. changes brought about to reduce the institutional strength of Islam,
b) functional secularization i.e. changes in the government and religious institutions including education,
c) legal secularization i.e. changes in the legal domain, and
d) symbolic secularization i.e. changes related to social and cultural life of the people, aspects which had bearing of Islam.

(Olesen ibid: 127)

Legacy of Secularization

A brief explanation of the aspects related to education, which falls under functional aspects of secularization, is discussed below. This will help one appreciate King Amanullah's initiative to develop a comprehensive package covering all key facets of governance so as to implement the reforms in the country. Education was recognized as one of the key
elements to achieve modernization. Hence, changes in the structure of the education system were proposed. Religious education came under state control and schools for mullahs were established to bring about equality in standards. The mullahs, who acted as teachers or preachers, had to present themselves for examination and obtain a certificate showing that they had sufficient knowledge to undertake such tasks. Thus the mullahs like any other civil servant were directly brought under the state control.

Education was considered a prerequisite for reforms in the ideology of the ruling elite. Control of schools was one way to influence people and create public opinion in the absence of media. Hence, focus on education served both as a means of controlling and guiding the people and also providing access to knowledge, to bring the nation on a par with the modern world. Further, through education King Amanullah wanted to develop an enlightened intellectual class in Afghanistan and to provide a cadre of officers to run the state machinery (Shah 1982).

To what extent did King Amanullah succeed in achieving his targets? If he failed, why and what legacies did he leave behind? What are the lessons that may be learnt from his revolutionary ideas? These are some of the pertinent questions that one may raise especially at the beginning of a new century. Basically the reformers during the 1920s had underestimated the power of the tribal leaders. They had not understood that the opinion creators at the community level were more powerful and that the changes enacted were in conflict with the interests that challenged power base of these tribal leaders or elders. These groups were determined not to allow such radical changes take hold of people at large.

It has been noted that in the non-western countries, modern education systems had no roots in the local cultural contexts. Only Japan, bridging the old and the new, was able to blend modernization with its traditions without losing that latter. In Afghanistan this was not possible due to the nature of the conservatism in the education system of the madrasa set up. Besides, the modernists in Afghanistan could not provide a healthy combination between the old and the new either. Hence, clashes were bound to occur affecting adversely the progress of education and modernization.

The religious groups and the tribal leaders inflicted hard blows to these reforms. They objected, to: a) women having their hair trimmed b) non-
observance of purdah by women, c) sending of grown up girls to Europe, d) opening of theatres, e) establishment of girls' schools, and f) laying down qualifications for appointment of mullahs. In the process these groups went to the extent of demanding a permanent council of 'ulema' to examine all laws enacted by the National Assembly. This gave a clear indication to the rulers that they could not go too far without the stamp of the religious/tribal groups. The reformers of this century should be very mindful of this cultural phenomenon while considering the development in Afghanistan.

The readiness of people to accept change is a key principle in development. Reforms cannot be effective, no matter how effective, unless the beneficiaries and more so, the opinion makers are willing to accept them. This is an arduous task in the case of societies which are very conservative and which are not exposed to change. The comments of the Soviet envoy to Afghanistan during this period can be appropriately quoted in this context. According to him the 'tragedy of King Amanullah' was the result of undertaking bourgeois reforms without the existence of a similar class in Afghanistan (Gregorian 1969: 165). The reformers, following Turkey as a model of a modern Muslim country, had lost sight of the background of these two countries. Turkey, subjected to European influence for centuries, was in readiness for change. The culture of modernization was not something of a surprise to the Turks. There were no tribes of any strength in Turkey and it had a well-ordered system of governance. But Afghanistan, a country steeped in tribalism for centuries, did not have that cultural advantage. A few enthusiasts at the central level could not change the tide easily and successfully. However, the recent incidents of over-secularization versus religious groups in Turkey demonstrate the power-yielding nature of these elements even in the 21st century. Thus this new ideological paradigm of King Amanullah and his close associates faced ignominious failure, leading to the overthrow of the King and departure of the intellectuals. The modernists' interpretation of Islam held no meaning for those who had been living in a society of conservatism.

The strategy during the period that followed King Amanullah transpired to be one of a low ideological profile in nature in the 'reform policies.' Unlike the earlier period, in which attempts were made to project changes at high speed thus antagonizing the clergy and the tribal leaders, the process during this period was slower. Changes were brought about without much
fanfare and proclamations, while at the same time attempts were made to meet the desires of the traditionalists and keep them happy by way of including their needs as well. This tight ropewalk sought to keep both the radicals and the religious leaders satisfied and in good humour. Religious issues and ideological discourses were kept at low ebb, thus keeping the religious leaders away from publicity. Avoiding confrontation was the course of action of the rulers during the years 1930 to 1950. An example relates to the provision of education. Article 20 of the constitution stipulated education as compulsory for children and public schools under the supervision of the government. The curriculum included learning of literature, science and arts. This satisfied the radicals and the interests of the society at large. The religious leaders were satisfied, having been empowered with the right to impart religious education to any citizen. This concession differed from the previous period where educational standards were set for mullahs and a school was established for quazis, both of which formed part of the policy of polity dominance. These were disliked by the religious leaders, and became a cause of irritation and the beginning of confrontation. Once satisfied, the religious leaders did not interfere in the secular education programmes, which included the re-establishment of schools for girls.

The interest in education continued in the same vein as during the period of King Amanullah. Elementary education was made free and compulsory (1931). Besides, the ministry supplied free textbooks, exercise books, and stationery to all students. In addition, faculty students received a small amount of pocket money for bus fare and refreshments. Those who came from villages had the facility of having free boarding and lodging, and brilliant students were sent abroad for higher education (Mohammed 1970). Public education had a ten-year life cycle with four years of primary, three years of middle and three years of senior secondary. Primary schools were established in provincial centres and mosque schools were incorporated into the general school system as junior primary schools (Khan 1936). The emphasis in the curriculum of these schools was mostly on religious aspects, especially in the primary and middle grade i.e. seven years of schooling (Wilber 1952). The key issues that affected the students in getting to the secondary cycle during this period were: a) lack of a uniform school curriculum, b) lack of qualified teachers, c) difference in the medium of instruction for religion (Arabic) and other subjects (Pashtu and Dari) while most of the students had yet a different language as a mother-tongue, and d) patterning of schools under different systems (Olesen ibid:
190-191). The last brought more difficulties to the students in their entry to the secondary schools run after the German, British, American and French school system. This affected the students adversely. The main objective of all these foreign schools was to prepare students for their universities back in Europe.

These foreign language secondary schools in Kabul were of the elite type and had little in common with the schools and the society at large. The civil servants and military officers were products of these schools and therefore enjoyed privileges denied to the rest of the schools. Of course, this was the scenario in most of the Asian countries during the pre-independence era, but the difference in the case of Afghanistan was lack of access to schools for the rest of the children. Although education was compulsory in Afghanistan by law (1931) the rate of literacy was around 10 per cent (1967). But Afghanistan was not the only one; most Asian countries, except Japan and Sri Lanka (Japan, 99% in 1998; Sri Lanks, 91 % in the same year). This is still true of Pakistan (43% - 1998), Nepal (24% -1998), Bhutan (20%) with less than fifty per cent (UNDP 1998). Though low level of literacy in some countries does not offer any justification for Afghanistan or any other country to be in the same shoes, it seems to be the norm of the period all over the region. The effort of spreading education and the class struggle continue to date in most of these countries. The situation in Afghanistan is much more complex in the filed of education, which will be the key focus in the following chapters.

This dichotomy of the education system of Afghanistan in the secondary cycles resulting in the adoption of different models continued to the tertiary levels as well. Thus the different faculties followed different approaches depending on the foreign support. For example at the University of Kabul, the faculties of medicine, political science, and law adopted the French model while economics and Pharmacy followed the German pattern and the American system was adopted in the faculties of agriculture and education. Faculty of Sharia came under the influence of Egypt. This naturally brought about confusion and clash of interests resulting in the inability to develop a ‘coherent education system’ for Afghanistan (Olsen ibid: 192). Perhaps, the objective of seeking assistance from a number of countries professing different political philosophies was meant to quell accusations of being dependent on one system and that a blend of different systems also helped gather experiences of different academic cultures and thus enriching the Afghan human resources. It was a political
balancing exercise of a non-alignment nature. However, this had the adverse effect of not being able to develop a common education policy based on the needs of the country.

As a result of the progressive measures towards secularization adopted in the early periods of the century, certain changes in the socio-political scenario emerged in the 1950s. It should be remembered that not all the adopted measures proved successful or continued thereafter due to religious influences. Hence the effects were invariably short of the targets. However, the perceptible changes relate to the emergence of an urban middle class and the alignment of the 'ulama' with the state. The former was the direct result of the secular education policies implemented since King Amanullah's reign. The religious groups also relaxed their conservative attitude and were relatively liberal than they were during the earlier periods.

During this period the 'ideological state apparatuses' assumed greater importance. Of this, education played a key role, which strengthened the establishment of the secular education system (polity expansion) and the dominance of state run educational institutions (polity dominance). All this led to the undermining of the influence of madrasas. The growing of the state influence led to more employment in the government sector and an increased role in the economic development of the country. Thus marked changes were observed in the economic life of the people who demanded new employment opportunities. At this stage conflicts between education and needs of the country also became apparent.

Opportunities for more education led to the growth of writers who through their writings came to influence the social fabric. Despite a variety of hindrances, the educated people, who kindled the light of reforms, facilitated the process of modernization. The nationalist elite groups came to be representative of the educated class, who drew the people's attention towards a need to act. This was clearly expressed by the then Prime Minister in a speech in 1966 when he stated that the youth of the country, including girls, should unite 'in the struggle against all kinds of discrimination, selfishness, tribalism, regionalism, fanaticism, despotism, reaction and exploitation.' Later, in 1994 Minister of Education for Afghanistan, Professor Mohammed Fazal was equally vocal when he stated that 'Afghanistan needs education as an urgent need to remedy and therapy the unsecured wounded body of the country.... Afghanistan's first
need is education. We know all what is going on in Afghanistan.... Ignorance brings all sorts of tragedies and bad luck. I could say that all provinces, which have more educated people, rich cultural background, are rather in peace and avoid fighting among themselves. They solve their problems through discussions' (Fazal 1994). In this struggle education was the key vehicle to broaden the vision of the people. Not only this, education was also considered as a precondition for better understanding of Islam, national and democratic values, and for the preservation of order and progress of society. Thus for the first time education vis-a-vis Islam was seen as the initial step in the understanding of Islam itself and, in a way, compatible with the interests of the society (Olesen ibid: 210-211).

Key Characteristics

Social Crises: Alienation of the Educated

There were a number of problems, which resulted from the expansion of education during this period. Inasmuch as lack of education leads to stultification of the development process and affecting human resources of a country, a misdirected education system without a clear vision causes social problems for a nation. Education should not be static; policies and strategies should be evolved to take care of changes and needs. Therefore, policies that alienate the beneficiaries from the mainstream of the society would cause serious obstacles to the progress of a nation. Education programmes, which do not assist the beneficiaries to develop the ethos of the community, tend to alienate community—something which was common among most of the countries that were under colonial regimes. Even though Afghanistan was never a colony, it faced the problem of a system of education utterly lacking in a vision. This is why the educated Afghans were increasingly becoming alienated from their society which was deeply rooted in Islam and rural setting. This led to the alienation of Afghans in their own society. Thus the educated Afghan was ‘neither a complete Westerner nor a genuine Easterner’ (Majrooh 1987:133). This had ‘a suffocating effect on Afghan culture in general, both among the population at large and among the elite. This was reflected in the sterility of the new ideological trends which, from the 1960,’ increasingly manifested themselves in Afghanistan: Pashtun nationalism, Islamism and the Afghan version of Marxism-Leninism (Olesen, ibid: 216). Alienation of the educated from the common man has been one of the greatest tragedies of the developing countries. They formed part of the ‘well-fed and well-read’ groups of the society. In Afghanistan the educated
man with his 'west trained consciousness remained a prisoner of his foggy sub
certainty and his own over-evaluated self-image.'

Opportunities and Dilemmas for Rural Folk
In the 1950s, education was accessible to people in the rural areas as well. This enabled the bright youth from humble origins to aspire for privileged positions in society. But when models replaced the traditional norms based on foreign norms there was bound to be a clash of 'cultures'--rural versus the urban. The traditional values of Afghans were now challenged and subjected to scrutiny in the educational institutions in the urban areas. The youth from rural areas felt for the first time that they were liberated and free from the traditional bondages they had experienced in their villages. They questioned the rationale of those 'authoritarian norms.' However, they did not realize that the society from which they came and to which they belonged had still not undergone such radical changes. This clash of the micro cultures led to conflicts between the educated youth and the traditional elders. The newly educated were neither western nor local; they were stranded in these two cultures, which further aggravated their sense of frustration.

Reactions of the Vested Interests
The growing interest and spread of education did not change the traditional thinking of the majority of the people overnight, especially in the rural areas. The religious groups and conservative elements did not show enthusiasm for the emerging trends related to the status of women. These, inter alia, relate to the abolition of the use of the veil as an aspect of the emancipation of women. One should also understand the respect that the Afghans have for women in their patriarchal society where, by tradition, women are believed to be the weaker sex. The arguments of the traditional groups are based on the assumptions that their society is supportive and protective enough for women to survive in it. Therefore, anything that is not in accordance with their tradition is unnecessary, and education is one of them. This was mainly due to the ignorance of the male members of the impact of education on the quality of life. That means, strategy should be developed to provide better education to the males. It is, however, interesting that though any physical attack on women is taken as a serious offence and infringement on the rights of the weaker sex, women are usually not allowed or encouraged to seek education. One can see that the conservative elements of the Afghan society have an idea of the concepts of rights but the rights are interpreted from their cultural point of view.
Instead of a head-on clash with these elements, the enlightened way out would be to bring them into the fold of education, although it would take a long time. One should understand that changing social and cultural norms that have been observed for centuries takes time; the change will not occur overnight. This is why even though the leftists supported programmes aimed at bringing about change they did not succeed much. Instead there were constant differences and clashes between the leftists and the religious leadership.

Impact of Education

In spite of the obstacles and adverse reaction of the traditional groups, education did have an impact on the people. The new education opened the eyes of the community to social, political and economic developments of other countries, which was the outcome of education, literacy, and exposure to new paradigms of development seen in the developed world. It also indicated that no country has ever developed beyond the level of education of the people. Even when countries, such as Japan and Germany were destroyed due to wars, they arose like phonics from the desert and emerged as great industrial nations due to high levels of literacy and educational development. Even the little education of the modern type that the people of Afghanistan received, helped them realize the chasm and the primeval stage at which they are at the moment vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

With the spread of the modern system of education throughout the country, the ordinary people came to value learning per se, despite the negative attitudes of the traditional elements. There was demand from the rural areas for more education. Perhaps this was why two universities were opened in Kabul and Jalalabad. In addition, professional schools were established and a literacy programme for adults commenced, pursuant to these changes. A large number of Afghans went to the western institutions for further studies. Even co-education was introduced at the Kabul University in 1960. For the first time in the history of Afghanistan, more women were employed in the government sector, which included ministers, doctors and diplomats. Wearing of the veil was relaxed. These changes took place as a result of actions that were initiated in 1900, with failures, retraction and patience as only natural parts of them. However, such progressive steps were to change dramatically in the late 1970s with the arrival of the Soviets in Afghanistan.
By the 1950s, the incoherent divisions of responsibilities existing between the state and the clergy were being sorted out more clearly due to the actions of the rulers since 1900. Frictions between the state and religious groups/tribal leaders were common and natural occurrences in a country dominated by religious groups for centuries. In fact, a parallelism can be drawn between Afghanistan of the 1950s and Europe of the earlier centuries. Conflicts between the church and the state were the order of the day, and intellectuals who defied church orders and its beliefs had to face severe reprimands. Due to late exposure to modernization and western influence Afghanistan was experiencing similar pains in relation to modernization in the early decades of the 20th century, which holds true to date. Unlike most other Asian countries Afghanistan, for good or bad, had not been a colony of the west or east. Hence it remained deprived of access to different cultures, although different nations had relationships with it from time to time. Furthermore, the relationships were not cordial either, and resulted in clashes of interests between foreign nations inside Afghanistan. Attempts to force alien systems were vehemently opposed by the clergy. This was evident in the race for dominance between Russia and Britain in the 19th century, and Russia and the USA in the 20th.

During its recent history, especially during the 18th and 19th centuries, various countries attempted to influence the Afghans with their hidden agendas, which invariably added confusion to the already complex society. This aspect will be dealt with in greater detail later.

Education During the Soviet Presence
Having discussed the historical process of education in Afghanistan up to the 1970s, a reference and impact of another system, which was more political than any previous one, would be very significant in highlighting the country’s educational development. The key elements of this new system during this period were related to the following, although some of the characteristics can be traced back to more distant times.

1. Desire on part of the educated groups to make changes as rapidly as possible. Having learned and been exposed to new ideas, the educated became impatient. Evolutionary changes were too slow and the assumption was that people at large and the less literate would be ready to accept these changes willy-nilly, which was the major error in this process.
2. Presumptuousness that dogmatic ideas, valid elsewhere, would be attractive to those who have been ‘living under strong and timeless dogmas’.

3. Expectation of the power of new revolutionary ideas, to mobilize the backward masses.

4. Development of an ideological crisis referred to by Barry as ‘cultural schizophrenia,’ alienation of the westernized elite (Olesen ibid: 227).

5. Inability to win the hearts and minds of the people.

6. Retracting and changing of policies of the ruling group during crisis situations, exposing more of their follies.

7. Lack of popular support for decrees on the emancipation of women, which were in contradiction to laws of Sharia.

The main aspects of the Sovietization programme included the teaching of Russian language from primary schools to the university, replacing English and French. The curriculum of colleges included Principles of Marxism, Political economy, Dialectical materialism, and History of the Communist Party etc. These were supported by radio and TV programmes about lifestyle in Russia, the World War II and the role of Russia in it. Holding of propaganda meetings and sending students to Russia and other East European countries were other activities adopted by the Soviets as part of their education programmes for the Afghans. Furthermore, during this period a General Department of Islamic Affairs was created within the Prime Minister’s Office, to assist the religious organizations and institutions in the country. One of the key functions of this department was to ensure the spread of the ‘right kind of learning’ and ‘to prevent misinterpretation and incorrect propaganda of the orders of Islam at schools, religious institutions, mosques, publications, radio and television (article 11.6).’

However, with all these decrees the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), which was the ruling organ of the Soviets in Afghanistan, could not block the tide of opposition against them. The opposing groups included the religious leaders, tribal groups, the feudal, and independent and nationalist people. Basically, the two opposing groups were related to ‘political perspectives and ideological discourses.’ These represented the PDPA and the Islamists. The common elements of both the sides were their awareness of the importance of the modern educational system in achieving ideological hegemony (Olesen ibid: 272).

Paradoxically, none of these groups i.e. PDPA or the religious groups
could achieve overall leadership and integrate varying heterogeneous factions of the nation together. What is striking is the fact that these rival factions considered education as the main vehicle for propagation of ideologies and indoctrination. The difference may be in the curriculum contents, and the methodologies adopted by the groups. Thus it is not surprising that the Islamist parties both inside Afghanistan and in the refugee camps opened more schools. In the case of the PDPA the focus was on a secular curriculum taking into consideration the developmental needs of the present and future in addition to propagation. On the other hand, the Islamists groups provided a curriculum, more related to religious aspects and achieving objectives of jehad. Therefore, the contents directly attacked the communists. Even a subject like Mathematics was used to bring in issues related to jehad, such as adding, counting guns, bullets, Russian soldiers and killings (UNO Textbooks). The educational objectives were lost sight of before the needs of the resistance movements. It is unlikely that the cognition or the skills of the subject were developed in students. Judging by the aftermath effects over the years, the continuation of internal struggles indicates that the impact of these messages on the malleable minds of the young children has been very adverse and disastrous.
III   The Educational Great Game in Afghanistan

Background
The main objective of the following chapters (III-X) is to highlight the impact of various factors responsible for the changes, both positive and negative, in the development of education in Afghanistan. It is an attempt to separate the wheat from the chaff. As was seen earlier in chapter II, both national and international players had brought in interventions during various periods of the last century, which had invariably failed some, ignominiously. The latest intercession has been by a whole array of international community along with the UN, embarking for the first time, not only on providing assistance for education development, but also on promoting peace. However, to date no one has been able to crack this 'hard nut' successfully, although several ambitious plans were drawn up and implemented. Nevertheless, one can see that today, more than ever before, the need for education is being felt very strongly by the masses inside Afghanistan due to the exposures to relatively better facilities in the lands of refuge. A modest attempt is made in the following chapters to see the hidden and visible aspects of this drama, 'The Educational Great Game'.

One is at a loss where to commence, when it comes to identifying the problems and issues in relation to education in Afghanistan. Education is defined here in a broader context to include what goes beyond the formal school. Seemingly, in a disjointed and disorganized society like Afghanistan, the role and influence of formal institutions in social dynamics has been less formidable. The issues are embroiled in a web of controversies. These will be discussed in different chapters under the following headings:

i) Traditional institutions and structures
ii) Basic needs for a culture of learning
iii) Enigmas of catalysts and the systems
iv) Mono-delivery constructs
v) Pedagogy of the depressed/in the doldrums
vi) Accessibility in education
vii) Entrepreneurship in exile and honour in returning
viii) Education and social divisions
Each of the above categories deals with a large number of sub issues, often merged with others, adding complexities to the already confused state of affairs. Some of these are objectively discussed in detail highlighting micro-issues so as to see the real picture of the vicissitudes and ups and downs of the educational scenario. As the issues are interrelated, some minor repetitions may recur during the course of the arguments. The strategies suggested may not necessarily be profound but are alternatives for consideration.

**Traditional Institutions and Structural Issues**

These relate to the governance of traditional structures, educational institutions, power relationships with traditional organizations, and political, cultural, and religious structures some of which are highly complex in nature.

**Institutional Factor**

By definition an institution is an organized system of social relationships, which embodies certain common values and procedures and meets certain basic needs of the society (Horton and Hunt 1984). This refers to a system of procedures, values and shared goals. Some of the basic institutions are familial, religious, governmental, economic and educational. Of these the religious institution has dominated the others in Afghanistan. It should be mentioned that over the decades, whenever the governmental institutions became weak, the religious institutions took the upper hand in determining what is good for the society. In the history of mankind, religion has played a dominant role in the determination of the day-to-day functions and the future of a state. History indicates that whenever and wherever religion dominated matters of the state, progress has been checkered, chaotic and irrational. Unfortunately in Afghanistan, one observes the repeated appearance of this trend till the end of the 20th century, which inevitably continues at the dawn of the 21st century. On the other hand, in other countries, especially in the west, this approach has been part of their history, as secularism won the day during the religious struggles in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Institutional factors here refer to aspects that emerge from traditional social structures. The Afghan society is steeped in traditions related to religion. Louis Dupree (1988) analyzes the attributes of the Afghan
peasant tribal society in six major areas, which make it stand out from
the industrially developed countries. These attributes are:

1. Multilingualism encompasses several languages and related
   ethnic compositions, which are reinforced by religious
differences. Language unites or divides nation-states and in
Afghanistan language has brought about discrimination,
suspicions and dislikes, leading to constraints in national unity.

2. Illiteracy is yet another element that hampers unity among
diverse peoples. A literate society would be more positive
towards unity, although there are countries which clamour for
division in spite of high literacy levels.

3. Agricultural and pastoral character is another attribute, which
makes Afghanistan different from most nations. Here the
majority of the people live on agriculture and herding, and
unlike most of other countries in the region there are very few
other natural resources. It is universally known that such
economies, which are commercially and industrially oriented,
tend to breed conservatism.

4. Lack of social mobility is another obvious impediment.
Although possibilities exist for people to move from one social
level to another, the chances are very limited. A person from a
farming family is very likely to remain in such an environment
for the rest of his life. The socio-cultural pattern does not
provide flexibility and opportunity to bring about mobility, which
is why the major pattern remains limited for such movements.
Education is the key to bring about social integration and
opportunities for self-development, but it is relatively absent in
Afghanistan.

5. Another drawback in the Afghan society is the lack of exposure
of the adolescence to other cultures nor is there any
opportunity for such exposure due to the nature of its social
fabric. In the Afghan society, socialization takes place only
inside the family circle and at best with the members of the
extended family.

6. Dominance of kinship replacing government in governance.

These attributes lend more authority to the social norms over the state
due to the inward looking nature of the structures, where unlike in a
democratic society, traditionalism takes precedence over dialogue and
egalitarian approaches (Dupree Louis 1988). Thus one finds that these
common attributes have helped to develop cultural factors, which make the Afghan unique, in that the educated and illiterate, the rural and the urban generally tend to react in the same way under social stress and times of crises because of their limited exposures and social inhibitions. The rulers of Afghanistan adopted and used the principles of family and kinship mores and ties of loyalties in their state building efforts. This has had paradoxical results (Nazif 1998). It may be the reason for the nurturing of fundamentalism in Afghanistan.

These, along with social norms, add to the sacrosanct nature of the social fabric, which are respected and followed religiously. Of the traditional Islamic institutions affecting Afghan society, education and law are the most basic. Other systems that rely on local customs include village authority, land-holding patterns, lending systems and gender (Magnus and Naby 1998: 78-90). Any deviation is subjected to strictures and punishments. Educational activities are no exception and cannot remain isolated from these requirements. Thus the conservative nature of the traditional educational system can be seen in the type of knowledge provided, by whom such knowledge is imparted and the modalities adopted. All these resulted in sterile knowledge, limited to religious subjects, delivered by priests and learnt by heart without room for rationality. These factors have to be taken in cognizance in the current development of educational programmes.

Impact of social institutions on education is common in countries of Asia. Even countries with high rates of literacy had experienced the conservative institutional adversaries in earlier decades, where people thought that education of girls was not important enough to be given priority in the family. Even socialization of the children was within the nuclear and extended family and with close relations. Since they marry at a very early age, attending school was considered a waste of time. Furthermore, the employment opportunities for women were very limited and the opportunity cost of working at home and assisting in chores were more economical than attending school. It took a few decades in these countries for the community to understand the importance of education in development. In fact, it was only when their men attained literacy to a satisfactory level that they realized the significance of education for women, which led to an increased demand for educational facilities for all. Besides, men realized that an educated female is an asset both at home and in society in improving the quality of life. So
much so that when it came to the age of marriage, males opted mostly for educated and employable females as partners in life. This social demand led to a resurgence of female education, as men wanted higher education for women. This trend could be observed in the more literate societies of the world too, where in the 1930s the literacy rate for women was very low and so was their participation. With increase in educational facilities, the impact of education/literacy on the development of the personality was bolstered. The community also realized that education would help their sisters and daughters seek employment opportunities, which led to the easing of these traditional institutional structures and gave way to the acceptance of a more progressive and open approach. However, it was not so easy to change the traditional social structures.

It should be understood that Afghans, both in and outside Afghanistan today, consider education as an important means of escaping the stranglehold of poverty. Thus in urban areas, refugee communities and in the returnee areas, every family gives high priority to education in their list of needs. It is seen that the returnees from both Iran and Pakistan to Afghanistan give high consideration to education as a factor for returning. However, poor families who struggle to eke out a living may give more efforts to educate the male child rather than girls, but education for girls, is still considered important (Masden 1999, Colclough 1993).

An analysis of the development of education in Afghanistan over the past century makes it apparent, that this process of emancipation has been one long struggle between the traditionalists and the progressives. Thus the euphoria of education progress has always been short-lived. Positive approaches and policies appear only to disappear almost immediately after so that whatever has been gained is lost due to the intervention of the Ulema and other conservative elements.

**Structural Issues**

Sometimes literacy programmes were imposed without regard to both local traditions and absence of local support, which were causes for derailment of educational reforms rather than opposition per se from the traditional religious groups (Magnus and Naby 1998: 79-80). The reformers were under the impression that the people would accept anything which came from outside. Lamentably, one of the critical
factors that has been ignored or bypassed in Afghanistan's modern education system relates to the relegation of the traditions of the madrassas, i.e. religious schools in the development of the modern system. As there was no co-ordination between these two systems, an unbridgeable gap was created between the past and the present; they grew apart and often times in conflict with each other unlike in some of the Asian countries. For example, the new educational plans of Japan and Sri Lanka in the last century were a mixture of the old and the new; the former providing the base for the latter without breaking the process and enriching the new with cherished traditions. The Buddhist tradition of teaching in temples was carried over to the modern school and to this date the 'privenas,' i.e. schools in the temples of Sri Lanka, provide teaching of all modern sciences from the secondary to the university levels, for both girls and boys. Thus unlike in Afghanistan, the process of assimilation has brought about mutual enrichment for both systems in Japan and Sri Lanka.

Importance of Readiness

It is a basic principle in development that the 'readiness' of the people is important to bring about changes in the social institutions and ensure that the changes take root in the society. Outside pressures to bring about changes will not be acceptable/successful and such ideas may even be highly objectionable, counter-productive and rejected by the more conservative elements. These could even lead to conservative elements becoming more suspicious. One should not forget that Afghans became highly suspicious of foreigners after the war with the British in the 1840s and since then this has become part of their psyche. For example Abdul Rahman Khan's (1890-1901) modernization efforts were constrained by his mistrust of all foreigners. Even those few Europeans who were employed by him for specific tasks were treated with suspicion and considered to be potential spies. During this period the education system remained wholly conservative. This is evident in the number of schools he built during his reign, which was a 'madarassa' for 200 children. (Magnus and Naby: 37). During King Amanullah's period of rule (1919-1929) a strong emphasis was laid on education in an effort to introduce western concepts into the Afghan education system. However, this was viewed as an attempt to undermine the influence of Islam and offend traditional leadership. As a result, he was overthrown and the Ministry of Education was dissolved, and their responsibilities were given to the Ulema. Another example of
an attempt to bring about changes before people were 'ready' was the democratic process attempted by Zahir Shah, the ruler in the 1960s. He was trying to bring an advance form of governance to the inward looking conservative Afghans, in which he failed. 'Democracy and constitutional systems did not work, perhaps because the Afghans were not ready to go from tribalism to the parliamentary system in a mere ten years' (Grant, Merriam 1988). Even the educated groups during this period advocated this conservatism. A good example from the educated groups relates to the emergence of fundamentalists from the middle class in Afghanistan discussed in chapter VIII. Thus it is interesting to note that as a result of the spread of education, Islamic fundamentalists formed one of the factions of the middle class that was emerging in the 1960s, especially in the urban areas in Afghanistan. The other two were the leftists and the western educated class. The Islamic group looked for conservative approaches in governance as opposed to modernists and other groups, in spite of their exposure to modern education from the prestigious University of Kabul (Farr, Merriam ibid).

Due to adverse experiences, people sometimes change their ideas overnight. Thus despite the hostile attitude of the religious leaders at the beginning of the 20th century, people slowly adopted the changes in education and began to favour it even in rural areas. However, with the Soviet invasion in December 1979, the modernization of education regressed to the way it was in the early part of the 20th century. The favourable attitude of the people very soon changed towards the modern schools. This was due to the conversion of schools into centres for the activities of the Communist Party. The people were convinced by the mujahideens, anti-Soviet elements, that education was responsible for the conversions of the youth to communism. Schools became the targets of the freedom fighters. Another interesting example of the lack of understanding of the culture and norms of the Afghans by the progressives during the Soviet occupation relates to the mass literacy campaign by the Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1978. Here, they forced the tribal and veiled Afghan women into schools to be taught by male teachers. The males in the communities were furious about this and went to the extent of boycotting and destroying schools (Grardet and Walter 1998). In fact the aversion and phobia to the word ‘training’ is still found amongst the Taliban. The writer, in a discussion with the Taliban (1997) on professional development of teachers in Kandhar, used the word
'training' of teachers, which was vehemently opposed by them on the grounds that 'training' was responsible for the conversions of the Afghan youth to communism. Hence instead of training, it was decided to provide 'assistance in teaching learning activities' for the teachers, which was agreeable to the Taliban.

The current institutional scenario in Afghanistan is due to conservatism and lack of 'readiness,' which is very well substantiated by the arguments of the Taliban for not providing education to girls. The Taliban always state that they are in favour of education but security is not assured for girls. Any counter argument, for example, provision of transport for girls to ensure their safety, does not convince them. Even in Kabul, which was more liberal than the rural areas, society has been dominated by convention and Islam has had a strong hold. No sooner did the Taliban take over major part of Afghanistan that all doors to female education were closed. The international community reacted very strongly to the stance taken by the Taliban. Thus the Secretary General of the UN, European Union, UN Human Rights High Commissioner, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Security Council, all joined hands in the condemnation of the Taliban's discriminatory policies. All these organizations fail to read the psyche of the Afghan. In fact, they judge them on their own standards not realizing that the Taliban have their own own timetable and framework. This criticism and their stand vis-a-vis the Taliban policy towards education of girls and working women, though true in terms of universality, lacks relativism and cultural congruence. It is more like putting a jet engine to a donkey cart!

Looking at human rights issues, one can perceive the paradox in the international discourses and relationships. Thus different regions in the world take different positions, which are sometimes diametrically opposed approaches. 'There are a number of factors like the reality of the state system, diversity of social, economic and political life in a heterogeneous world and the ideas of state sovereignty which make the proper place for human rights in the international legal and political system controversial. Apart from deep-rooted ideological cleavages between nations, they also disagree on the definition of the term. Human rights as an idea—as an issue in religious, political, legal and moral philosophies—does not just figure in traditions of the west, but is rooted in all higher religions and ancient values and traditions of human heritage. These traditions, at times, have their own methods of
extending respect to an individual, which is different from the way the west does it. Such societies view the liberal notion of individualism as destructive for traditional forms of community such as family, tribe and religion' (Sattar 1998). Nira Yuval-Davis (1999) supports these views saying ‘culture is never an essentialist and homogeneous body of traditions but a rich resource of international contradictions and a resource which is always used selectively in various ethnic, cultural and religious projects within specific power relations and political discourse’. For the Taliban, UN and the international community are synonymous with the west. Thus attacks on their laws are interpreted as expressions of western liberal ideologies. Although the western system places high value on democracy, the Islamic value system puts individual freedom as secondary to that of Islamic value system. The individual is seen as absorbed within, and subject to society. The people will conform to the norms of the group for personal fulfilment. Thus one could see the two groups, the West and the Taliban, view the same issue from diametrically opposed perspectives.

Need for Understanding
Of late, Afghanistan has been exposed to outside cultural influences of a limited nature, especially through the returnees from Pakistan, Iran, and from elsewhere. This has brought about confusion in the value systems. The ‘success’ of Taliban indicates that due to the uncertainty and confusion that prevailed over a decade as a result of conflicts, people are more inclined to follow a new movement offering certainties in an absolute form, although violence created by anarchy has been replaced by violence sanctioned by religion. The people are in a dilemma. Should they accept violence, rape, robbery and ransom? Should they live in fear of abduction of their wives and daughters? These were some of the key fears that people lived with under the commanders. The alternative was provided by the Taliban who guaranteed safety and security but at the cost of their personal liberty and rights (Marsden 1998).

These arguments on human rights, both for and against, may look very irrational to those who have forgotten their histories and social upheavals that prevailed a century ago, e.g. during the Industrial Revolutions in their countries. Women folk were never in the forefront in social activities and facilities, as learning was utilized less by females. To judge the behaviour of the Taliban by the prevailing international
standards may not be, therefore, rational and fair in the context of their understanding of modern trends. Unfortunately, the international community has not been able to comprehend these institutional cultural constraints/barriers in the light of the experiences of other countries and those of their own decades ago, especially the introduction of education and other progressive policies into their social fabric. Hence, among other matters, there is constant conflict and friction between the international community and the local authorities over the issue of education. The international community is in a hurry, while for Taliban time is immaterial. Further, the Taliban have allowed women to work in the agricultural and health sectors, although they are denied the right to work within the urban environment on the grounds that they will interact with men. This 'cultural relativism' has to be accepted by the international community and a flexible view that is acceptable to the Taliban needs to be adopted. Of course, some are of the opinion that this is another form of apartheid. On the part of the Taliban they fear that ‘negative pressure (on them) will give negative results. If more pressure is being put on us, it will not yield positive results.’ The Taliban feel that the United States is not understanding the psychology of Islam and the Afghan people. They are seeking advice from those individuals who have ulterior motives and personal benefits. The US is adopting a policy of ‘might is right’ (Mujahid 2000). A greater understanding by the international community of the way the Afghan social institutions function is essential; otherwise, it would be the Afghans, who would eventually suffer.

**Importance of Understanding the Cultural Elements in Development**

Since culture is considered as an important aspect in development, it is pertinent to reflect upon the relevance of culture in development in the context of Afghanistan. It was in the 1980s that culture was considered as an important factor in development. Previously most development thinkers—including politicians—considered cultural factors of secondary importance. Times have changed. Local traditions are now considered essential factors in development. This is most important in issues connected with changes. ‘Local knowledge, local belief systems, local practices, in short local cultures play an important role in guiding human action and in holding together the fabric of society.... culture nowadays emerges as the fountainhead of unexpected local expertise and local wisdom which can profitably be used in the battle for a better life’
Culture is defined as a way of how people think, feel and express their emotions. It is a process where understanding reality, defining and solving their problems becomes the order. These include reaction to climate, food habits, ways of acceptance and greetings, concept of time, relationships between sexes, care for each other, community relationships, patterns of living etc. In development programmes these factors have to be taken into cognizance if the programmes have to meet success and receive cooperation from the local people. In Afghanistan, religious practices and culture are interwoven inextricably, perhaps much more than elsewhere in other countries. Currently, fundamentalists are in control of the government and any changes have to be carefully measured in line with their ideas. The international community cannot afford to wait till the Taliban go away or change the policies to accommodate the existing scenarios.

Some of the recommendations related to culture sensitive approach, which would make development projects more successful are:

i. Putting people first.

ii. Participation of local people in all processes of development programmes

iii. Attending to perceived needs than abstract goals

iv. Respect for people’s own culture

v. Basing development in the local cultural context

vi. Learning from the people.

vii. Development projects should be learning programmes as well

(Vera Gianotten1995, Ekanayake 1993)

The last of these recommendations indicates that learning and development can go hand in hand in a non-formal way, whereby learning becomes functional as well. Thus education should not be confined to the three traditional ‘Rs’ but should well ingrained into a working learning atmosphere.

The following is a quotation from one of the participants in a rural development project developed for university graduates in Sri Lanka, which indicates the value attached to culture and learning by people: ‘I am indebted to all that I learnt from this experience as a result of which I am now greatly attached to the cause of development. All this, while I was under the impression that passing examinations and obtaining
good results are indicators of an educated person (sic). After undergoing this field exposure now I am convinced that understanding the humaneness of the people, showing kindness to the people, and the importance of fostering and protecting rural values should form the core of education. My mind now has been exposed to great vistas of life through this project’ (Mauch and Papen 1997).

However, cultural intervention in development is not devoid of criticism. Critics argue that indigenous cultures are bastions of conservatism and Afghanistan is no exception. In fact, Afghanistan is a classic example of conservatism. Each culture has its norms, which are in contradiction to the norms of the intervening actors and here again Afghanistan provides experiences and examples of the nature of the change agents that are working with international agencies. The responsibility of the outsiders should be to accept the realities rather than impose their own ideas, reciprocate rather than try to maintain unequal power relations. The approaches to development thus would be culturally congruent and people friendly. The significance of culture in development could be forcefully projected in an African proverb, ‘culture and development are, together with love, the only things that grow provided that they are shared’ (Peres and Javier 1995).
IV  Basic Needs for Culture of Learning

Absence of a Culture of Learning
The Afghans have warred against outsiders and amongst themselves. History indicates that at the end of every ‘international war,’ the Afghans commenced to fight each other, bringing more destruction on themselves and their country, compared to that inflicted by outsiders. Being placed at the crossroads between the East and the West and at the gateway to the Indian sub-continent, Afghanistan has a history full of wars. The Afghan wars are unique in that these were fought on behalf of others, as well as for their own independence. Moreover, no other country in the modern era has been such a terrible victim to outside influence and interference by superpowers and neighbours as Afghanistan. Threats from the neighbouring nations in Central Asia, China, India, USA and Russia, on the issue of terrorism have added to its woes. Afghanistan is perceived today as the hub of international terrorism with the Taliban as extremists who have made the country a haven for Bin Laden and his men. Afghanistan was bombed by the USA in August 1998, and the current threats by Russia should be taken seriously. The whole state machinery and the minds of the people have been directed towards meeting the demands and needs of such a state of affairs, that both the rulers and the ruled were and are still immersed in a state of a culture of war, which is the key and the only message that is being passed down to future generations. Absence of schools and constant internal and external migrations over the last two decades have not facilitated the establishing of any stable forms of learning either. 'Ad hoc' measures, as well as perennial destructive forces torpedoed all development programmes related to education. Even a casual visit to any educational institute from a university to a school anywhere in Afghanistan would indicate the nature of destruction of the structures and logistics. The general weaknesses of the environment and depressed nature of the personnel do not augur well for the future development of the country. It is only by a miracle and determination of the people that some educational institutions are managing to function with whatever structures exist and meager resources available. All over the country, the same dismal state of education, if any, is to be found.

One of the key factors for migration—to Iran, Pakistan or elsewhere—was a result of the absence of educational facilities in Afghanistan and
avenues for living, both in the state and the private sector. In the countries of refuge the facilities, especially for the education of children were available and relatively better. Lack of interest in education of those who remained inside Afghanistan caused further erosion of the already dwindling system. Although people wanted education, there were no resources and personnel to support such needs. The salary of the teaching personnel was very low and not paid on time, if at all they were paid. A month's salary did not cover the price of a bag of wheat flour. Hence, teachers and principals were employed in other activities after school hours, which was limited to 2-3 hours per day. The writer met a number of teachers working as cooks, waiters, chauffeurs etc. in the refugee camps who considered themselves very fortunate to have found some form of employment. In the absence of professional development there was only lukewarm support from the management to cater to educational needs. Visits to any department of education in the provinces, a casual observation of the management processes and the general outlook of the environment indicate clearly the absence of direction in the activities. One cannot blame the personnel for this state of affairs. In addition, there is no motivation for students due to lack of any certification and opportunities for tertiary education in the future and development of professional skills. However, children at the secondary level have clear ambitions, although they rarely achieve these. In schools in Kandhar and Herat, the writer recalls the responses of students to questions regarding their future ambitions. They aspired to be doctors, engineers, teachers, pilots, and to serve their country. This is very encouraging, indeed. Absence of motivating factors is one of the biggest reasons for the erosion of a learning environment in Afghanistan.

As war did not require educated males, it was the only means and the easiest way of making a living. Thus, the youth moved towards this easy war employment economy. Children from the age of 10 onwards were involved in various activities in this war, both as part of the 'jehad' and later in the internecine war, which persists to date. Afghanistan is one of the few countries accused of using child soldiers. Thus the need for education seems to have been relegated to the background at the moment and those who needed it were able to receive it from neighbouring countries through migration. The well qualified and those capable of resurrecting the nation have migrated to the west for greener pastures. The vacuum created by these migrations will take a long time
to fill and normalcy to prevail. Now, with the Taliban in the saddle, it may
still take a longer time for proper education to emerge, especially,
education for girls and employment of women. Illiteracy may reign
supreme for decades in this millennium, just as it did during the previous
centuries.

**Standards**

Like their never ending internecine war and conflicts, supply of materials
and issues related textbooks and curriculum development have been
areas of disagreement and confrontation in Afghanistan for a long
period. This is mainly due to the absence of a central authority and the
adverse experiences of producing 'jehad' oriented textbooks. Lack of
resources of both funds and personnel are yet other issues in this
connection. In the development of materials certain basic standards
have to be followed. Standards in the context of Afghanistan do not
mean achieving universal norms. One has to be very cautious in the
application of this concept of 'standard' in the Afghan contexts.

What are standards in the context of the education system in
Afghanistan? Should these conform to universal standards, or should
the focus be Afghan specific, more realistic and contextual? The
standards in the context of Afghan education have to be of a realistic
nature in the light of the country's problems. One should not make
comparisons with the more developed countries. The standard of
education of the more literate societies are at a higher level, which are
results of inputs by their governments, carried out without serious
obstructions and conflicts over a long period of time. The Afghan
scenario, over the last two decades, is of a different nature. Thus when
we use the term 'standard' as an example, which may relate to
'minimum quantum of learning,' 'minimum learning achievements' or
such similar concepts, one has to keep Afghanistan's limitations in mind.
In this regard, the important question, vis-à-vis Afghanistan, would be to
identify the relevant levels of standards and the areas to which these
standards should be applied. Currently, the main focus has been on the
need for some form of acceptable standards in textbooks, teaching
learning processes, evaluation procedures, teacher education
programmes etc. These could be achieved relatively easily through
coordination at agency levels. The problem would be the lack of desire
and determination for such coordination and collaboration. Without
universal participation, properly developed textbooks, assessment
procedures and updated teacher education programmes in Afghanistan, one cannot expect any standards of achievements from pupils whose progress would depend on these variables. Each child's criterion should be followed up, focussing on his performance related to his achievements. Other standards would confuse the child, force him to leave the school, and end up joining the 'schooled illiterates'.

On the other hand, standards in the present context of Afghanistan should not necessarily refer to achieving/reaching higher levels, for example, in subjects or adopting sophisticated approaches in evaluation. Nor does it mean developing teacher education programmes focussing on the use of high technology in teaching/learning operations. The approaches and modalities should ensure that the child understands and develops relevant behavioural traits of practical use in the Afghan society. Thus the capacity to develop peace and tolerance, living in harmony and cooperation would form part of the standards needed by the Afghan society at the moment. These should form an integral part of the culture of learning. The textbooks should carry messages to achieve these objectives; the evaluation procedures must focus on ways to fix these in the behavioural patterns of the child; and, above all, teachers should have the necessary skills and a mindset to pursue and engineer the achievement of these objectives in the teaching/learning process. Currently, these could form the standards envisaged for Afghanistan.

**New Dimensions Related to Quality Learning / Teaching**

There seems to be a lack of understanding of new dimensions needed in the field of education to meet the challenges. It should be recalled that over the years emphasis has been laid on achievements in subjects as the main indicator of quality of education. This is true of all the countries in the developing world. Hence, achievement levels are considered as indicators of positive signs of improvements in the standards of education both at the school and national level. There have been comparative international studies in various subjects projecting achievements of the country with its level of economic and scientific development. In addition, some in-depth studies by individual countries have taken place to identify the micro picture of the education scenario. All these studies have focussed on the qualitative aspects, meaning the extent to which children have fared in different subjects using test
scores. ‘A new generation of national and cross-national studies has given us important insights into what pupils in primary schools in developing countries know and are able to do’ (UNESCO 2000). A number of questions could be raised in this connection. To begin with, what percentage of children has achieved mastery in all the subjects? What follow up activities have been planned to upgrade those that have achieved low levels? Have all those who achieved high levels fared better in life than those who have not? What studies and action have been taken regarding those who have been academically unsuccessful? Can we say emphatically and conclusively that those who have failed to achieve higher grades are worse off than the others, or of less service to the development of humanity? All these queries are connected with the issue of quality education. When viewed from the Afghan context, these questions play a key role but have to be adjusted suitably. Thus the validity of these questions in the context of not only Afghanistan but also in the light of the experiences of the developing world could come under scrutiny. Although achievement levels are important, these do not alone satisfy the human development aspects needed in the current situation in Afghanistan or for that matter elsewhere in the world. Quality of education therefore has to be redefined in the light of the needs and the operational elements in the society.

Quality has to be considered in terms of human development and the capacity for learning to care. Unlike the past, the future of the world and humanity depends on understanding and caring for others as well. Due to the depletion of resources and increase of population, struggle for survival has become increasingly difficult and is the root cause for most of the problems of the world today. Emotional balance plays a key role in the development of the personality in respect of rationalization. Thus the cost of emotional illiteracy in Afghanistan is very high which is discussed in detail in chapter XII (Goleman 1996). This aspect has to be placed on a high order in teaching learning process. Thus, however educated or religious a person may be, if he does not respect the views of others, cannot accept arguments but is bent on revenge and destruction, adopts honour killing and carries jehad into the classroom, his education will not bring about peace and solidarity amongst communities and countries. This is the basis of emotional balance. No body would disagree with the saying of Aristotle that ‘anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right
way—this is not easy’. It is this concept that has to be ingrained in the minds of the Afghan children in the interest of future peace in Afghanistan.

It is important to take cognizance of these factors for two main reasons. One relates to the fact that only a small percentage achieves the stipulated higher level, and secondly, those who achieve mastery over the traditional subjects may not necessarily be humane and respect the deprived and poor. In Afghanistan the latter aspects are more important at the moment than obtaining mere high scores in subjects so that quality in education has a different connotation and wider meaning than the conventional application and understanding. This is the aspect that has been totally neglected by the international agencies in the delivery of educational programmes. In Afghanistan, under the present context, there are other priorities which include provision of materials, payment of salaries, training of personnel, struggling with forces that are antagonistic to the provision of equity in education for all and several other complex issues. Nevertheless, healthy human relationships of a positive nature are the prime need of the day in Afghan society. The animosities that have developed over the years have to be eliminated and better relationships and coordination leading to a culture of peace has to be encouraged and fostered if the Afghan society is to proceed unheeded and unhindered by hate and destruction. The new education systems should incorporate these qualities into the teaching learning process to bring about new insights of the concept of quality in education, which should include culture of peace, humanism, rationalism and emotional balance.

The Nightmare: Curriculum and Textbooks

In relation to textbooks, it is pertinent to refer to a review of educational activities in Afghanistan undertaken by UNESCO in 1991. According to this report ‘a number of textbooks have been written in the last twelve years and many are based on texts written before 1978… Many of the books are isolated from daily life and needs and are often too academic for the pupils. In many of the books there is a good deal of subject matter related to waging of the holy war (UNESCO 1991). In general, the texts used in both Afghanistan and in the refugee camps schools in Pakistan are of a traditional and academic kind and ill suited to the needs of a country where massive rehabilitation and reconstruction have to be undertaken in the near future.'
Textbooks
Currently, textbooks for children are developed in Peshawar, Pakistan by NGOs working for Afghanistan. A number of them are involved in writing texts for different grades and for different subjects. However, textbooks are not developed scientifically due to lack of writing abilities and understanding of principles of curriculum development and textbook writing. On the other hand, there is no accepted curriculum for Afghan schools. 'The government has changed the schools' curriculum no less than five times in recent years ... At this time, with no agreed curriculum formulated, it would be preferable to provide assistance directed towards the improvement of the teaching done in the first three grades of the primary level of teaching which is principally related to the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic' (UNESCO 1991). Not only this, constant changes also occur in the formal structure of the cycles. Thus the five-year primary cycle was later increased to six years. The cycles of the primary, junior secondary and senior secondary had varied from 4+4+2 to 5+3+3 and now to 6+2+2 (ibid). What is important is not so much the changes in the duration of each cycle but provision of opportunities to children which help them learn how to move on to new vistas of life and development.

There is no coherence of facts and presentation of the contents in these textbooks. Lack of an accepted curriculum has been the root cause for all this confusion. There have been constant revisions of the curriculum by the department of Translation and Compilation of the Ministry of Education, Afghanistan; the last revision was done in 1993. However, no consensus on the teaching objectives and contents has been evolved. Furthermore, due to lack of funds the Ministry of Education could not proceed with the plans of developing textbooks and printing them. With the arrival of the Taliban (1997) in Kabul new Education High Council was established. One of the key aspects of the Council was to reaffirm and strengthen the Islamic beliefs and values in the schools system. Even as late as May 2000 ACBAR Education Subcommittee raised the issue of textbooks and curriculum with the Taliban. Hence, the NGOs filled in the gap, particularly the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan and GTZ/BEFARe along with University of Nebraska, Omaha (UNO) continued to develop and print the texts.

The textbooks that were developed during the Soviet occupation by UNO had a clear and unambiguous objective to castigate the
communists. The primary architect of the UNO textbooks was the Interim Government and they were written for the express purpose of furthering the 'jihad.' This was done very blatantly right from the basic principles of curriculum development and child psychology. Thus in mathematics, concepts like addition, subtraction and multiplication were explained through war-focused examples, such as 'killing of a certain number of soldiers and the balance left of a group;' 'counting of guns and bullets;' and similar war messages. Clearly the objective was more to gain political mileage than enhance conceptual development of the child.' Therefore, both the actors, the communist regime in Kabul and the resistance movement outside Afghanistan, tried hard to mould and shape the children of Afghanistan with their own perceived political images. As a result various curricula were often introduced for the school children in Afghanistan and abroad' (Nuristani 1997). A country that is steeped in war needs messages of peace and cooperation rather than captions about war. Continuation of the tradition that education was always used for some other purpose than to prepare children for a well-rounded life seems to be the tradition during this period in Afghanistan. However, later in 1995-96, due to pressure from the UN and NGO community, these war-provoking messages were extracted from the textbooks. Yet, it is known that these old un-revised textbooks are in use even to date in some of the remote areas in Afghanistan, due to non-availability of any other textbooks in schools.

One of the key issues in textbook development in Afghanistan has been the lack of professional guidelines for textbook writers. Those who are involved in textbook development have been either out of touch with the principles of writing, or have not been involved in education per se during their early days. One may find engineers, agriculturists, anthropologists and other technical people from different disciplines involved in educational matters. Thus 'quality may have been a secondary issue, largely because most assistance staff are managers and administrators of projects, and not educators. Often, they did not distinguish clearly between the needs and approaches, seeing access as a question of numbers and service delivery and quality as a question of service delivery plus other tangible inputs such as training. Although somewhat understandable in the current situation of emergency...paying insufficient attention to quality issues can have a devastating effects on children's learning and whether they acquire basic functional skills' (Rugh 1998). They may be educated but some of
them are not educationists per se. On the other hand, as stated earlier, non-availability of an accepted curriculum has made the task of writing texts more difficult. Hence, understanding of exact concepts, contents, development of creativity, fitting to taxonomy of educational objectives and sequencing of the contents and evaluation processes have either not been understood or simply not followed. Nevertheless, one should appreciate their efforts for providing material in an environment where there is almost nothing.

Drawbacks of War Oriented Textbooks
A study of these textbooks carried out by a group of Afghan educationists in 1997 revealed the following weaknesses. This group was very mindful of the circumstances under which the UNO developed these books outside Afghanistan at a time when the central government was at war with the Soviets; textbooks were formed part of the propaganda and indoctrination process of the resistance movement. As a result, the educational objectives were not reflected in the materials developed. The participants of this workshop on "Initiatives on curriculum design and development" included educationists from both the Taliban and non-Taliban, as well as personnel from Pakistan based NGOs for Afghanistan.

The views are as follows:

Contents
1. The educational plans of the NGOs do not conform to the revised education plans of the Ministry of Education.
2. The contents of the texts for religion, language, and history are almost the same, and as such cannot assist children in achieving the learning objectives of different subjects.
3. The academic level of the students and their age, and their physical and mental growth are not considered in the contents of these textbooks.
4. The authors have ignored the objectives of teaching each subject.
5. The volume of the subject matter is not in proportion to the teaching periods assigned to each subject.
Quality

6 The approved spelling and writing styles of Pashtu and Dari languages, common for textbook writing, are not properly observed.

7 The calligraphy style of the books is very important, particularly for the first three levels, 1-3. However, several types of calligraphy have been used in a textbook creating confusion in the minds of children at a tender age.

8 The emotions of the authors clearly overshadow facts in the preparation of texts of certain historical episodes.

9 During the preparation of the curriculum the authors have almost forgotten the areas of affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains.

10 Scope and sequence of contents are not observed appropriately.

Afghan Contexts

11 The national Afghan culture does not find a proper place in these books.

12 Nationally, regionally and internationally, accepted standards of understanding are ignored, particularly at the secondary levels. This could isolate Afghanistan's educational standards from that of other regions in the world as a whole (UNESCO 1997).

Critical Inputs

It is known that one of the critical variables in improving the quality of learning is the textbook along with the teacher. A study conducted by Heyneman et al (1981) finds a strong and more consistent relationship between pupil achievement and the availability of books than between the pupil and school quality variables. Further, Fuller's study (1987) supports the above conclusion where it is reported that the availability of learning materials contributes significantly to learning achievement. Another study conducted in Sri Lanka on Disparities in Achievement (1992) indicates the significant correlation between language and achievements in mathematics.... Language skills could be a factor that decides the achievements in Mathematics. In general it is cited that language is a general ability that influences achievement in other areas. Language is the vehicle of transmitting knowledge, particularly in our
context, where the verbal medium is predominant, if not the only medium of expression in the underprivileged schools'. (Ekanayake, Sedera 1989) Thus improving quality and increasing the quantity of textbooks should be a high priority for countries like Afghanistan. It is against this background that one perceives the rationale and validity of attempts by some agencies in Afghanistan to bring about common standards in development of children. Perhaps it may not be rational and even harmful to think of common standards of achievement for Afghan children because the prerequisites for such assessments do not exist in Afghanistan at the moment. The task should be to improve participation. Even countries that have higher percentage of literacy, including ones that have almost universal participation have not embarked on stipulating minimum learning levels as these are considered educational luxuries.

In modern society a certain amount of sophistication is necessary to keep pace with the changing time. This sophistication can be achieved if, apart from the traditional 3Rs, economic literacy is imparted to children. Research has shown that children grapple with economic concepts at an early age. In Afghanistan this is visible since children are involved in labour exercises as part of their daily life. Be the children inside Afghanistan or in refugee camps, they have an understanding of the concepts of ownership, possession, money and value. Thus children in some of the Asian countries are more mature in economic concepts than children from protected environments in the west. Economic literacy could be included in the new curriculum. It will require quite a few changes and the manner of teacher training programmes (Faisal Bari 2000).

Production of Material
In addition to the flaws of the textbooks, there is a dearth of supplementary reading materials. There is a great demand for books on topics related to the immediate needs of the community and children. It is an area in which little has been done. Material production refers to the basic reading materials needed for both the student and the teacher. These include textbooks, additional reading materials for children, resource books for the teacher and principal as well as materials for the members of the community. There is a dearth of all of the above material. Some children have never seen a textbook and stationery. For both the teacher and the child these are luxuries. In a country where
education has been neglected, or rather almost absent for nearly two decades, learning materials are greatly needed. Material that is developed should relate to various social needs and information including skills of different natures, especially development aspects. Creativity of the citizens will be enhanced through reading and also assist in the awareness of services in relation to health, extension needs, drugs, environment etc. It will help to develop a learning society and encourage lifelong learning.

Books and libraries are almost non-existent in Afghanistan. Even basic texts are not available in schools. Libraries form part of the paraphernalia of a learning society. The writer, in the visits to high schools in Afghanistan, has found the absence/dearth of texts as well as other reading material for the student and the teacher. One feels very depressed at the sight of empty shelves and outdated and worn out books placed in the school libraries. All these speak of the nature of the problems of learning in Afghanistan. In such an environment what can one expect in terms of HRD and creativity?

Of late, BBC, in collaboration with UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF and a number of UN agencies and NGOs started printing of additional reading material of quality, conveying messages of peace, cooperation and rights of the individual as part of a regular magazine titled 'New Home, New Life,' which is a drama series and is very popular with the Afghans. However, its reach to the masses is limited. Some of the episodes are directed to life skills; daily issues related to health; environment; and sharing and cooperation depicting cultural values. These stories form the basis for a soap opera programme broadcast over the radio in Pashtu as well. UNHCR has also developed a special magazine titled 'Maharooof' for refugee children. It covers a wide range of subjects to attract a larger audience. A special workshop was also conducted by UNHCR to improve the quality of Afghan writers for children in 1999.

Reading materials for Afghan children have a number of dimensions. Of these, creating an interest in reading to improve literacy comes first. Others relate to assisting those who have a basic knowledge in the 3Rs from relapsing into illiteracy; provide information about current changes in the modern world; creating awareness in the significance of culture of peace and the importance of non-violence in the context of Afghanistan; all of which would allow the Afghans to make choices about their future
(Ekanayake, Karim 1999). Using Afghan writers, UNESCO, in collaboration with UNHCR, has developed around 50 stories on Culture of Peace and Tolerance (2000). These are in English, Pashtu and Dari. All these add to the literature and reading materials for the Afghans.

'Although Afghanistan has the lowest literacy rate in Asia, Afghans revere in memory the great libraries that once flourished at the courts. These collections, each in their turn, fell victims to destruction and theft during Afghanistan's turbulent history. Despite this, respect for books remains an honoured legacy within Afghan society.' An innovative approach to provide information and create an interest in literacy has been made through mobile library boxes known as Afghan Box Libraries (ABL). This is a creation of an individual, Nancy Dupree from Afghan Resource and Information Centre, (ARIC), ACBAR, Pakistan. These small boxes contain around 50 books, which are passed on from one village to another periodically, depending on the logistic support available. There are already 30 such libraries operating in 22 of the 32 provinces in Afghanistan. The majority of the users are students and teachers. In addition, 5 other agencies have commenced 360 libraries based on ABLE model inside Afghanistan, while another 5 agencies with 260 libraries are working for the refugee communities in Pakistan. ABLE is also catering to the needs of the refugee children in Iran. All these are very encouraging steps in the provision of basic needs for literacy (Dupree, N. 1999). The methodology is economical, simple and 'reader friendly.' These efforts will strengthen the learning environment and one could see that the replication of this model by other agencies. These are simple ways, while encouraging participation from the community learning could be expanded without head-on clashes with the authorities.

The logistics needed for printing of books do not exist, not even in the Ministry of Education. The printing machinery of the Ministry of Education, Kabul, is out of order and there is no power even for testing of the machines. It has been noted that necessary competency is also lacking in the personnel. Like the machines they too have rusted due to a state of inactivity over the long period.
V Enigmas of Catalysts and Systems

This section will discuss the implications of the lack of professional development in the Afghan educationists. Directly, it affects the quantitative and qualitative aspects of education. The key actors in this area are the international NGOs and the UN, with the local NGOs as implementing partners and the authorities of local government. Absence of a clear-cut policy on education on part of the Taliban, UN agencies, and the NGO community has affected the smooth progress and end results. The Taliban controlled areas which have different approaches towards education. Some areas have flexible laws about girls’ education like central and eastern Afghanistan. This again varies with grades and the availability of teachers, both male and female. On the other hand, home schools abound all over Afghanistan but are conducted discreetly by mothers and supported by locals and international NGOs. The UN agencies, especially those dealing with education too, have faltered and gone back on the policies based on the equality of access and international politics. One agency has called the Taliban ‘barbarians of the century.’

Gaps in Professional Development
Professional issues are concerned with the development of capacities of those engaged in the educational system. These include teachers at the bottom line, and others such as principals, supervisors, teacher educators and senior managers at the centre and the provinces. It is a sad state of affairs that there has been no systematic attempt to look into the possibility of upgrading the knowledge and skills of the above categories of professionals through some exposure to the latest educational development programmes. Apart from this factor, even the provision of resource materials has not taken place over the decades. Furthermore, the Afghans and the international community, apparently due to constraints of time, funds and guidance, have developed few books/resource materials. The Ministry of Education in Afghanistan has been involved in the war front rather than putting the house in order under prevailing conditions and resources. Therefore, for the Ministry of Education to think of academic aspects of the nature of professional development and development of resource books and textbooks was too arduous a task and a tall order without resources, including personnel. Attempts of a limited nature have been made to fill these
gaps by the funding agencies and NGOs in some parts of the country, especially in the Eastern and Central regions of Afghanistan. But here again, uncertainty about regular funds; instability of the political situation; and policies of the Taliban and other hazards perhaps have discouraged these organizations in making attempts to attend to the needs in every region, affecting the continuity of the education programmes. Whatever funds were received were tied up with provision of stationery, textbooks and construction and maintenance of buildings, including salaries by some NGOs like SCA. Since this is a 'war without winners' and a prolonged one without any signs of abating, the donor agencies could have programmed emergency plans of a long-term nature. These plans could be incorporated into the national grid in the future, when normalcy returns to the country.

**NGO Factor in Development**

The local NGOs formed mostly by the educated Afghans in exile in Pakistan, are expected to assist in the uplift of the lives of the Afghans inside Afghanistan and refugees in Pakistan and Iran. The organizations could be small, consisting of a few individuals supported by funds from richer international or UN organizations, or these could be large ones with facilities to look into many issues and needs of the Afghans. Funding comes mainly from Western countries. Some are international NGOs with local staff but under the leadership of the donor country. Most of these are located inside Pakistan, mainly in Peshawar and Quetta, working for the people of Afghanistan; some have sub-offices in Afghanistan.

There are around 22,600 persons employed in these NGOs of which 21,000 are Afghans, some 700 Pakistanis, and 500 expatriates. These NGOs are mostly from Europe (44); a few from Canada and the USA (6); and from the Arab states (7). Other countries include Afghanistan (116), Japan and Pakistan. All these NGOs are coordinated by 4 agencies of which ACBAR has the largest membership. The total budget of the members of ACBAR amounts to almost US$ 130,000 (1997). The main funding sources of the NGOs are the UN (20%), European Union (26%), Others include bilateral agreements (20%); overseas NGOs (17%) and other NGOs (ACBAR 1997).

A question could be raised about the expenditure of these NGOs and International Agencies connected with the percentage of the total
amount spent on the beneficiaries. In other words, what is the service cost of expenditure per dollar? This is an important issue one could raise because it is known that sometimes over 70 per cent of the fund is utilised for overhead management and administrative costs.

The expertise of these organizations would be on one or many disciplines/activities, sometimes rather dubious and superficial in nature. The protocol of some of these NGOs, mostly local, indicates that they specialize from road building to teacher education. Naturally they have a broader net cast to catch any assistance floating around. Of the nearly 500 such NGOs, around 30 have shown their interest in educational activities (ACBAR 1995). However, an analysis of their activities indicates that most of these relate to supplying of educational materials, construction of school buildings and providing such logistics. Only a few have shown interest in the development of professional aspects of the educational personnel, which is even true of the UN agencies involved in education.

It seems that for most of these organizations, education is synonymous with supply of materials. Although provision of material needs is necessary, but that alone will not improve and assist in the development of educational programmes. Understanding and supporting professional needs are sine qua non, in the improvement of the educational aspects. In fact, well-trained professionals, teachers, headmasters and supervisors can take care of many problems of deficiencies. They could fill the vacuum of lack of basic needs. Thus a good teacher, trained in pedagogy, would complement the absence of textbooks or any other deficiency.

Research has identified that the critical variables affecting school quality are teachers and textbooks. Achievement levels of children of the poorer countries depend on the teacher quality and the effect of the school than on the background of the socio-economic factors, which is the case in the richer countries (Husen and Noonan 1978, Lockheed et al 1990). The training programmes in operation available for capacity building are not based on latest trends in education due to lack of awareness of such changes. Hence, one would see the traditional methodologies in operation, instead of adopting challenging and innovative strategies. The systems adopted in teaching learning are highly traditional and academic. Rote learning and memorisation of
information without any concession being made to natural curiosity or independence is the order of the day.

The courses provided for teachers are of a very short duration, lacking focus on the key issues faced by the teacher in a situation like the present one in Afghanistan. Moreover, there is no follow up of the progress later at the field level, forcing the teachers to fall back again on the traditional approaches in teaching learning. The international NGOs could have taken steps to rectify the situation by providing quality inputs through exposure of some key Afghans to outside sources. Absence of such a focus by many NGOs, including UN agencies, may be the result of the lack of skills and vision in educational development, understanding of the issues and absence of any professional competency among the personnel involved in the development of educational programmes for Afghanistan. My experience suggests that some NGOs are merely acting as 'stock exchanges' and distribution centres. Some agencies attempt to bring in expertise from environments alien to the Afghan culture and contexts. In addition to the skills, empathy is an important element needed in working under such traumatic conditions as in Afghanistan. There seems to be criticism on the dependency of the Afghans on these external patrons who themselves are tied down to many competing 'tribes' of international funding.

In September 2000, the government of Pakistan launched a survey for screening NGOs engaged in Afghan relief work to wind up those, which are inactive or involved in suspicious activities. The government is collecting information for decision-making about the future of NGOs. A committee set up under the Commissioner of Afghan Refugees is responsible for this activity. This committee will be responsible for the decisions regarding the future of the NGOs. The government is probing as to how many of the foreigners engaged with NGOs have valid travel documents. It is expected that this exercise will enable the government to identify fake foreign NGOs, as well as those of a dubious nature.

Over 30 NGOs were identified as totally inactive a few years back. The authorities are also in possession of some 'scandalous' information about several of these NGOs. Many organizations get funds from their foreign sources in the name of relief work in Afghanistan without being involved in any relief activity in reality (WAPHA 2000).
Role Of Afghan Educationists

It is also very encouraging and praiseworthy to see both retired and young Afghan educationists involved in various educational activities, in spite of the poor remuneration, lack of facilities and daunting obstacles. There has been no serious effort at all by the international community to update the capacities of those involved in the field of education. What they do and plan are based on their experiences of what they had learned two decades ago based on alien models and concepts. They are oblivious to the challenges of the current needs of Afghanistan. Lack of resources makes their tasks more difficult and out of date. It is amazing to see them work without access to any of the latest resources, books, journals etc. in the field of educational development. The international community can rectify this hiatus. Thus, in addition to bringing 'experts' from elsewhere, it would be a good investment if the international community trained and updated the knowledge and skills of the Afghans involved in the field of education by granting scholarships on both short and long terms, depending on their age and qualifications. The younger professionals should be awarded assistance for higher degrees while the older personnel be provided short-term exposures within the region. In addition, a more sophisticated library/resource centre could be built and supported with the latest materials on education, especially in Peshawar, with the idea of relocating it inside Afghanistan in the future. The much-talked-about 'HRD', 'capacity building,' 'empowerment' etc. should have been a part of the policy for the Afghans in reality. This is yet another tragedy of international support to Afghanistan.

Catalysts or Tourists

The activities of NGOs working for Afghanistan can thus be viewed from a number of angles, which would provide insight into their strengths and aspects that could be improved upon with resources and professionalism in the context of education. Some of these are related to a) lack of coordination, b) absence of uniform standards, c) adopting conventional forms of delivery, d) reluctance and or lack of confidence to undertake innovative approaches/strategies to overcome socio-cultural and political issues, e) lack of a thorough understanding of the basic conceptual changes needed in education the light of the Afghan issues, f) less emphasis on teacher education, g) lack of focus on the challenges of the needs/problems, h) complete negligence in understanding the psychosocial factors of the child, i) absence of a
common plan of action with a clear division of responsibilities amongst actors, and j) inability to focus on new dimensions/definitions related to quality of teaching learning. Some of these activities are elaborated for better in-depth understanding.

Lack of Coordination
This seems to be a major issue, although the NGOs, through the Agency for Coordinating Body for Afghan Refugees (ACBAR), which is the coordinating body for all NGOs operating for Afghanistan from Peshawar, have been attempting to achieve this over the years through discussions and deliberations. ACBAR has sub-offices both in Quetta, Pakistan and Kabul, Afghanistan. Due to the prevailing political situation in Afghanistan, its progress in educational activities has gone into a limbo and not much in terms of activities is seen on the ground to improve participation rates and the quantitative expansion of education. But their energies are spent on resolving conflicts with authorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, this does not mean that ACBAR has not been successful in its efforts. The special sub-committee of ACBAR on education conducts meetings regularly and discusses the issues related to education. It has brought out a database on NGOs and on education in Afghanistan. Above all, the fact that there is the presence of an organized body for Afghan NGOs is a source of strength for the Afghan educationists.

Since each NGO is independent with a mandate of its own for its activities, it is natural that NGOs follow different programmes. Further, the donors, their policies and availability of funds also influence the nature of the programme. It may be that two decades of struggles and conflicts have fatigued the international community and the donors. The activities of these NGOs discussed later in the book indicate overlapping of activities and the materials developed. This includes even areas of operation at the field level. An example relates to the publication of textbooks by different NGOs. Another relates to the teacher education programmes. The NGOs involved in education have different teacher education programmes and formats, which perhaps confuse the teacher community. It is also common for teacher trainers/master trainers to shift their loyalties from one NGO to another. Teacher community is thus caught up with many advertising agencies. Furthermore, the number of teachers supposed to have been trained by NGOs, when computed, outnumbered the teachers available in
Afghanistan. Can this over-lapping be avoided? What are the likely areas of collaboration? On the other hand, it is very unlikely that overlapping of the areas of operation could be avoided, since each NGO attempts to carve an empire and also to serve the ethnic/religious needs. The NGO personnel being refugees themselves face certain limitations, as they have to eke out a living in an alien and competitive environment, which makes tremendous demands on their time and energy. Sometimes they agree with donors, not on principle but on expediency and pragmatism. Some Afghan NGO personnel have confided in me about the irrelevance of the programmes in the Afghan context. They have their own clientele groups to serve and, therefore, feel that they have an obligation towards them. Although this is true, a combined programme with others could be beneficial for all parties, save resources, improve quality and bring out an integrated approach with better impact on the beneficiaries. It will not only save their time and create a better understanding of the programmes, but also help them establish the relationships between programmes and how the beneficiaries themselves can contribute and be resourceful to the programmes. This will ensure quality in community participation and lesser number of meetings.

A coordinated effort will help the people to understand the objectives clearly as well. Appropriate strategies can be adopted to improve the quality of the materials, delivery systems, training activities, development of coherent education policy for the refugee schools, and provision of other services. Such quality improving measures and savings in logistics will enhance the output of the organizations and have a great bearing on the beneficiaries. This could emerge through discussions as well as appointing of an independent committee/group to study the materials and programmes prior to operations. It is important to point this out since, of late, there have been attempts in this direction and it may take some time to see the results in the field. Thus the concept of 'common programming' amongst the UN agencies had been in the air for a long time. UN has also been studying new approaches to be adopted with the Taliban. Referred to as 'principle-centered' approach, the 'tip-toe' approach and 'Community Empowerment' approach are 'based on a driving assumption about Taliban authorities and constitutes an argument on its own on how to deal with this regime.' The principle-centered approach assumes that the authorities will change their policies and work in line with the accepted norms and
fundamental precepts articulated in UN instruments. The second approach i.e. tip-toe approach also assumes the same arguments but it hopes to bring about changes at a professional level and is more flexible in the approach towards the Taliban. The third approach, which is the community empowerment, assumes to collaborate with the authorities in the 'margin,' at a distant in which contacts with authorities is minimal (UN 1997).

Since 1997, UNHCR, with the assistance of the government of Japan, has taken the initiative and has designed and implemented an integrated programme with the collaboration of a number of UN agencies and NGOs as implementing partners in the Central and Eastern parts of Afghanistan. This is a major returnee area where education forms one of the key activities in this programme (Ekanayake 1998). It is very interesting to note that all activities of the UN in Afghanistan are implemented by NGOs, as the local authorities lack the capacity and the skills. Hence, the presence of NGOs is very vital for the functioning of the system. This is also the reason why the capacities of the local technical personnel of the NGOs should be developed, which will not be a waste and will add to the resources of the country.

However, in spite of the drawbacks, the role of these organizations has to be admired for the upkeep of the education system given that there is hardly any support from the state. These organizations have been able to keep the light of learning burning with whatever resources they have at their disposal. The future generations in Afghanistan will remember these NGOs with gratitude. Identification of flaws here is for the purpose of improvement and is not meant in any way to suggest that what is being done by them is futile. Any drawbacks in their activities may be attributed to the eagerness of delivering the materials and also to the difficulties encountered in the way of accessibility and other logistics. Perhaps these NGOs undertook the programmes in education, but neither they nor the funding agencies ever anticipated to stay for long; hence, adopted short-term measures. However, the lessons learnt indicate that short-term programmes should be developed in such a way that they are of use in the long run and are absorbed into the main stream in the future.
Alien Systems

Systems here refer to the foreign influences on education that affected Afghanistan over a long period of time. In a typically colonized country, invariably, the influences come from the colonizer, and relate to a number of areas such as governance, socio-economic factors, education and cultural aspects. The impact depends on the duration of the period of colonisation. In all these, education had been the stabiliser of other factors and forms the common denominator. Education shapes the social milieu, providing both assimilation and rejection. The behavioural changes and impact of the alien systems depend on the reaction of the local cultures to these elements. If religious changes also take place, changes in the socio-culture become very marked. Nevertheless, the dominance of the alien system/culture depends upon its strength, the nature and power of the interventions and the duration. For example, the influences of the western cultures along with their religious conversions in the colonies of Asia had not been able to change the existing cultural milieu drastically. Although these influences had both positive and adverse effects on the local communities, yet the basic structure was never disturbed. This was not so in Afghanistan, which had Buddhist influence, as stated earlier, up to about the 7th century. The Buddhist learning centres and its cultural artifacts and structures were spread all over the country, with Bamyan as the centre of Buddhist learning. With the spread of Islam, the Islamic culture held sway, and today there are only a few traces in the form of ruins of this rich culture and the connected traditions. Thus the dominant nature of the intervention and the long period of stabilization have been responsible for this state, which is not so in most of the other nations in Asia.

In the process of assimilation, clashes of cultures did occur but ended up in mutual benefit. Afghanistan, like Thailand, did not undergo this experience of colonialism. Nevertheless, clash of cultures of a different nature occurred in their scenarios. Unlike Thailand, Afghanistan played a key role in the Great Games from the 17th century to the end of the last century and is still doing so. Although Afghanistan did escape being colonized, one could see various influences in the field of education. Lack of clear policy and pattern of the flow of influences, which were ‘ad hoc’ in nature and which came from different sources at different times, had adverse effects as well. The effects lacked coherence and objectivity and apparently, these influences were never absorbed
rigorously into the overall development plan. On the contrary, not all the friendly donor countries, international agencies and NGOs necessarily share the same interests of Afghanistan. ‘Indeed, many of them would consider the return of peace to war-torn Afghanistan to be detrimental to their own national and regional geo-strategic interests, and indeed it might be so, as the flames of war will be fuelled by outside forces that benefit from instability in the region’ (Shahrani 1998).

Thus it so happened that whenever a ruler of Afghanistan visits another country, he brings back some aspects of the education system of that country and attempts to fit that to the existing system of education in Afghanistan without an overall change in the policies and structures in the country. These inputs, though progressive, have at times led to clashes with both the existing system and the religious groups. The visit of Amir Habibullah to India (1907), which was considered as a turning point in the Afghan education system, led to the introduction of subjects taught in India. On his return he established the ‘Habibiya’ school in Kabul based on the Indian model combining the curriculum of the European schools and that of the traditional madrasas. Later, a military school on the Turkish model was also established. During Amanullah’s period (1919-1928) different schools were established on the systems of some other countries in the west, like France (1922), Germany (1924), Britain (1927) and the USA. Teachers were brought from these countries, including India, to serve in these institutions. The curricular and co-curricular activities of these schools had the trademark of each country. Later, after 1978 one would also see the Russians joining the bandwagon of education with the Russian brand. Furthermore, students were sent to all these countries on scholarships who later returned with assortments of systems and concepts. Although exposure to different systems is beneficial, these should be absorbed into the mainstream and digested suitably and then transmitted to the whole country. An example of the laisser faire approach of systems entering the Afghan education system, which led to an educational disaster during the struggle against the Soviets, is discussed in detail under Curriculum. The objective of writing these textbooks was not educational per se, but supporting mujahadeen activities by the Americans against the Soviets, thus operating in two fronts, one in the battle zone and the other in the schools. These jehad-oriented textbooks are still in use with revisions, yet with flaws in contents and objectives.
Later, after the Soviet pull out from Afghanistan in 1989, the NGOs stepped in to fill the gap and they brought in their systems as well. In the case of the NGOs the influence of ‘other systems’ was less due to the destruction of schools inside Afghanistan and the dysfunctioning of the structures and later the Taliban factor. With the influx of refugees numbering over 6 million at one stage in the early 1990s, children were subjected to different systems prevailing in the countries of refuge such as Pakistan, Iran, India and the Central Asian countries, thus creating further confusion. The gravity of this issue of different systems is borne by the children of returnees. Thus, the overwhelming desire of the Afghans to be independent throughout the past centuries, have made them more dependant today, pushing them into a quagmire. However, for the first time in their history, the Afghans were forcibly exposed to alien systems of a different nature with complexities. Where do the Afghans go from this impasse is the question of the new millennium.
VI Mono-Delivery Constructs

Part I
Poverty in Pedagogy
This section discusses the process of education organized for children in the formal school system, as well as for youth and adults, who have missed this opportunity over the years. In this connection the issues relate to relying on the traditional cycles in school system, non-use of formal modalities for non-formal educational programmes and vice versa, teacher dominated mono delivery systems, and lack of initiatives and innovativeness in making teaching learning attractive. All those engaged in education have ignored or not adopted pro-active modalities in their delivery systems, in the context of problems of education over the past two decades in Afghanistan. These problems include lack of schooling for a large number of students, age, variations in grades, education of the 'leftovers' over long periods, rehabilitation of the youth, provision of skills and guidance for peaceful living and to bring the children and the youth from the battlefronts to enjoy a culture of peace etc. In this scenario, the methodologies, as well as the contents and objectives of teaching/learning, have to change substantially.

Organizational Constraints - Merging/ Combination of Grades
In a scenario such as that in Afghanistan, there are few choices to reduce tensions in teaching learning and increase the participation rates. Any method or strategy adopted in this context must be well meaning and rational to bring about increased response and also improve the basic skills needed for quality improvement of life conditions. These include social skills as well. One such strategy should be related to changes in the length of the cycle of the primary and secondary levels. Currently, as is in most of the countries of the world, the primary cycle in the Afghan schools has been fixed to 6 years. In Afghanistan and even in most of the developing countries, the drop out rate is very high at the primary level and only small percentage enter the junior secondary. Thus almost 80 percent drop out at the end of the primary cycle in Afghanistan and rate for Pakistan amounts to over 60 percent compared to 2 percent in Sri Lanka. One of the key reasons adduced for this high rate of dropouts is the 'pull factor' from the parents
and household exigencies. As the child’s attendance is reduced to a mere formality, he loses interest and the capacity to cope with the learning process, as he feels lost in the academic environment. The lesson for the educational planner is not to bring about rhetoric by way of admonishing the parents or suggesting to bring about improvements in the per capita income of the family as ways of increasing attendance, which are well intentioned but far from achieving in a matter of a few years. Instead of this vertical/traditional thinking and suggestions it would be desirable to move on to an introspective process of horizontal thinking whereby to find out the weaknesses of the school system and possible changes to arrest this issue of dropping out early. Why children leave/drop out at an early stage is an important factor related to quality of teaching learning. It also relates to the home factor and inability of the child to continue for long periods in school. Besides the child not achieving the basics, leads to wastage of resources. One such change to arrest the dropout rates and reduce wastage would be the reduction of the school years in the cycles, both primary and secondary levels, because the existing length of stay of 6 years for primary, in most developing countries, varying from 3-9 years, has not brought about any internal efficiency; hence, the need to cut down on additional costs for the state. In the case of Afghanistan, children may be victims of the social unrest and may have to be forcibly evacuated disrupting his learning, which will increase the length of the primary schooling period further. Apart from these ground realities what does research on the reduction of schooling has to offer to educational planners and policy makers? A number of studies have been undertaken and these indicate that there is no co-relation between ‘longer cycles and higher student achievements’ at the primary level. Furthermore, the length of the cycles in the secondary education has also to be examined in the light of this policy (Postlethwaite and Wiley 1993).

**Internal Efficiency**

The excessive length usually leads to lower internal efficiency. ‘In long cycles, student motivation tends to be lower in the middle grades and the incidence of repetitions is higher. Further, the propensity to drop out is positively related to previous repetition. Colcough explains this shortening of the cycles and states that this could help to maintain achievements at a lower cost, if measurers are taken to increase the effectiveness of teaching and reduce the length of the cycle simultaneously (Colcough 1993). This will also mean similar changes in
the secondary cycle, some years of which could be reduced or absorbed into the junior secondary, as is suitable for the country. Curricular and pedagogic concerns are relevant to the choice of the strategy. It is these realities and the background, both at the ground level and research findings and social issues that leads to suggest the reduction of the primary cycle in Afghanistan. As stated later in the chapter, the age levels of the students in the primary grades vary, and discourage the elder children to stay long in the school. It should be remembered that the problems at home keep on lingering in the minds of the elder children even when in school. Combing the key concepts of subjects of two adjoining grades, especially in the lower primary, could reduce the years of schooling. Grades 1,2,3 could lay the foundation for the basics and a learning culture in the minds of the students. Thus for example the concepts in mathematics of grades 4 and 5 could be integrated. Likewise the concepts in language and religion of the same two grades can be integrated to form one grade. Between these two grades the concepts of the contents can be merged and inter-changed. This would save one year of primary schooling and energy of students and parents. It should be realized that education for the poorer people in Afghanistan has less of material value since it does not bring immediate relief to their pressing problems in life. Perhaps they are the first generation of learners. This is true of most of the developing countries, which have caused constraints in achieving the Universal Primary Education, (UPE) in spite of the facilities made available to the communities. Thus one has to examine this structural issue to see whether the current length of the primary or the secondary school cycle is appropriate in the light of the socio-economic and cultural factors in Afghanistan. This entails changes in the texts, teaching learning methodologies, assessment procedures and teacher education programmes. It would be interesting to note that, as an initial step on an experimental basis, UNESCO, Islamabad had developed combined texts for grades 4 and 5 in mathematics and language (UNESCO 1997).

Many questions have been raised about the value of UPE per se for some, although there are benefits arising out of the externalities such as better understanding on health issues and nutrition leading to improving the quality of life in the long run. There are a number of reasons emerging from various studies, adduced to the lack of earnestness amongst the communities to provide education for their children. Firstly, although returns are direct and indirect, the opportunity cost of school
attendance is high for the poorer families. Secondly, many families do not know the net benefits of primary education, especially on the wage earnings in the market economy. Even the private rate of return of schooling may differ with in the country, depending on the opportunities available and may vary with sex as well. Thirdly, the critical issue is the decision to go to school, which is the responsibility of the household, the parent, and not the child (Colclough 1993: 35-36). All these lead to the issue of keeping children, especially the older ones at the primary level for a minimum period of 6 years. Why not then reduce the span of this primary grade by one year to enable them to leave early and be of economic support to the family?

A casual visit to any school in Afghanistan would reveal that the age differences are visible and these may be from 3-4 years. Although the age of a child in grade 1 should be around 6-7 years there are children as old as 9-11 years or even married girls are found in the same grade. This is seen in both the refugee camp schools and inside Afghanistan. These age differences lead to differences in comprehension, difficulties in interactions, emotional gaps in understanding, conflicting peer relationships etc. The delivery systems in the classroom have to take cognizance of these elements. Moreover, these differences lead to conflicts and stresses amongst the students due to their adverse experiences in their personal life. Some of the older students may not have patience to stay too long in schools and would like to get the basics as early as possible and to be out of school and assist the family. In such a situation what is important is to provide the necessary basic skills at the earliest possible and therefore the delivery systems have to perceive these needs of the child. By merely following the traditional patterns and adopting conventional forms of keeping the child in school for a mandatory period may not be productive for both the child and the parents. It is here that donors should reflect on the need for a shorter, cheaper alternative, which will provide skills critical to survival and useful for rural population while at the same time assist the child to move up in the cycles, if needed. The idea was to concentrate upon those aspects of the primary cycle which did lead to the formation of economically useful skills such as literacy and numeracy and to add others which might support productive self-employment in primarily rural communities. Thus, rather than planning emphasis upon helping developing countries to universalise existing primary education, it was believed to be more functional and cost effective to provide especially
designed programmes which would improve equity (and more access) by giving education to those presently excluded. And it was hoped that it would deliver higher returns for the investment made than the conventional primary education' (Colcough: 25).

Methodological Constructs
Non-formal education has not taken a deep root in the Afghan context. It is very rare that formal institutions are used for these purposes even at times when these are closed. Further, the activities of the non-formal programmes have not touched on the needs nor are based on the cultural aspects of the community. Most of these programmes attempt to develop skills for which there is no market. The logistic support does not exist either, nor is there any study undertaken to identify the needs of the Afghan society prior to the implementation of the programme.

The practices of NGOs and UN agencies dealing with education have rarely attempted to bring formal and non-formal approaches together with an idea to enrich each method mutually. Instead, the practice has been invariably to follow the traditional modalities and approaches in relation to all aspects of teaching and learning. Considering the constraints related to delivery mechanisms in terms of equity, accessibility, supply and availability of materials, professional inputs, logistics, dys-functionality of the structures, irregularity of the sessions, and the approaches adopted have not been able to circumvent these obstacles. Hence the methods are not realistic and therefore have not achieved any success in learning related to quality or quantity. Nor have these approaches been able to increase the participation rates or provide alternative strategies to problems arising out of the current political scenario.

Emergency Responses
In situations of emergency and turmoil, emergency responses using humanitarian educational interventions are necessary. These situations are connected with 'post-crises' and 'in-crises.' The emergency approaches should support and ensure from 'relief to rehabilitation and development.' Emergency assistance should also assist programmes that are 'supportive of recovery and long term development.' However, the organizations responsible for the education of Afghanistan during the traumatic periods have been adopting methods that are applicable in scenarios where normality prevails. Whereas what is needed is to find
actions/modalities that could surmount the above issues to achieve some measure of success. For example, what would people do in case a bridge has been destroyed? Will they wait till necessary funds are found and stay till peace prevails or construct a temporary passage for people to get across? What will happen to patients, official businesses, commercial activities and other emergency needs of the people and the state? Similarly if formal schools are closed for girls what should be the alternative approaches that are possible to assist girls? If teacher colleges are not functioning, what other arrangements could be made for professional guidance? If buildings are destroyed, how could children be provided with space and cover for children? What alternatives could be provided for lack of textbooks? How could the issue of lack of materials be sorted out through other methods? How could teachers be remunerated to keep them in the service? One can identify a large array of such issues that emerge in emergency situations like the one in Afghanistan, for which traditional approaches adopted elsewhere may not provide the right answers and bring about pertinent solutions. Sitting back and waiting for someone to deliver the goods has not paid dividends. This approach has become a part of the 'waiting syndrome' and dependency servitude of the Afghans. The tragedies of aid/assistance make some nations to be poorer, in terms of materials and mental framework, at the end of the day. It is pointed out that the per capita income of those African countries, which received greatest development assistance, has declined and that they are poorer today than they were 30 years ago. This situation is attributed to suffocation of self-help forces by an excess of aid to capital flight (Development Cooperation, May/June 2000).

**Formal, Non-Formal Fits**

Rarely have these organizations attempted to bring formal and non-formal approaches together enabling mutual enrichment of the approaches, using the positive elements of both forms of delivery. Since Afghanistan has a history of educational disaster for decades described earlier, the conventional approaches adopted elsewhere in the world will not be able to provide answers to her problems. A generation, which has lost the opportunities for education, with another on the verge of following the earlier generation, needs radically different approaches.

Added to these is the impasse on the education of girls and employment of female teachers. How can these issues be solved and sorted out
through innovative approaches rather than keep on passing resolutions at the highest forums, which have apparently not brought any viable and positive results over the years? The approaches so far adopted by the international community have only tired both the Afghan authorities/rulers and the beneficiaries. It has alarmed the child who is lost in the game of dialogues and procrastinations. These complex issues have to be solved through a combination of various learning strategies without leaning on a few specific approaches. Thus ‘learning should take place from everywhere without a centre anywhere.’ What could be these sources that would help the development of skills of the youth? Certainly the formal system and the operational methods are very rigid and have their own merits and significance. However, other methods such as non-formal systems, informal methods, as well as traditional techniques, which have made people resilient enough to survive under pressure over centuries, should be carefully studied and adopted. All these techniques have learning strategies. Some of these learning approaches, which form part of the culture, have to be studied prior to designing educational programmes in societies under stress, as in Afghanistan. This makes it imperative to combine non-formal and formal systems with all other modalities available to make the people accept and benefit from the programmes.

It is not only the modalities referred to above that should be used but also the endogenous resources, which are very pertinent in the operations/implementation of these activities. In Afghanistan these resources include traditional leadership, institutions, grassroots level organizations, educated young people etc. Using them provides safeguards culturally and socially and avoids misunderstandings of the intentions of those who volunteer to assist, of which there could be many in a country like Afghanistan. Local resource personnel is cost friendly. Furthermore, since formal institutions have been destroyed almost totally and those that remain are functioning at a very low level of capacity and efficiency, use of other resources would be very desirable and prudent. It is here that the international organizations should use their insights into the cultural norms and respect the ethos and values of the local population. One should be ready to take one step forward and move two steps back in dealing with these local people. The step taken forward is the step of implementation while the steps taken back are learning steps, which are perhaps more important than the forward step. Any attempts to be too ambitious will end up in ignominious failure.
There are innumerable examples from Afghanistan scenario for both success and failure, which were results of either the correct approach or the wrong steps.

The concept of non-formal approaches to education and development has to be re-defined and applied in the context of emergency situations as in Afghanistan and in areas of refugee/returnee locations. Primarily NFE approaches in the context of deprived and crisis situations could avoid technology and sophistication of the formal system, allowing space, time and resources for flexibility and maneuver. In the use of personnel and workplace, NFE strategies are crisis friendly, empathetic and humane. Thus non-formal approaches can be broadly categorized into two main areas: firstly, in relation to crisis management strategies, and secondly in the context of pragmatic education progression.

Crisis Management
In relation to crisis management non-formal approaches are initially the best to overcome the problems. This is universally accepted as the modus operandi. Thus operations related to all manner of logistics are relaxed to meet the urgent needs. Likewise in the field of education the initial phase would be to provide the base for learning focussing more on realities and the traumatic nature of the lives of the people. As the majority of the population consists of children and youth, programmes on education have to focus their needs in the light of the ground realities. In such situations there should be no gaps in the provision of educational services. Keeping the child and the youth in positive activities even for brief periods would help to take away their minds from the problems they encounter. Thus non-formal approaches and services will be able to tide away the problems and bring about self-esteem amongst them. These require only organizational and imaginative skills and less or no resources at all from outside. One such activity could be of a recreational type, which involves play and dramatic activities. Children love to get together and exchange their ideas and play about with whatever they posses. These aspects have to be harnessed by educationists and social workers as the basis for learning. The children can reenact their life experiences in various forms, which could include drama, art, signing and dancing, creative activities etc. all of which could express their genuine experiences in many informal ways. Play is a mechanism, which provides an outlet to express their stresses and emotions, fears and anxieties. It helps them come back to a normal life
at least for a short while and provides motivation to carry it on the following days, making good memories of their own initiatives and fun. In all these assistance from the elders, it is important to bring about a better ending and also connect the episodes to a learning situation. The latter could include episodes related to cooperation, living in harmony, importance of peace etc. There could be games from which concepts of mathematics could be drawn out. Language exercises and competencies could be developed through various activities where elders or elder children relate traditional stories, which are in abundance in the Afghan society.

Another approach could be the organization of community-managed programmes. Here the residents of a local area, ‘shura,’ could identify their own problems, select their own project workers, evaluate their own programmes and make their own decisions. Here the actors themselves are the recipients. The projects could be on the improvement of the quality of life and the participation of children in schools. The activities for children could include:

- working with out-of-school children to organize recreational activities and solve problems related to non-attendance in schools
- help parents to increase their participation in activities of children in schools; check attendance and create more opportunities for both children and parents
- solve peer group problems
- reconstruct the history of the area prior to Soviet invasion and internal wars (Boothy, n.d.).

All these take place in a non-formal manner but are directed at achieving educational objectives as well, and 'geared towards stabilization of educational performance'. Although the age groups may vary, a slow transition from the non-formal programmes to relatively formal programmes could take place over a period of time, providing durable solutions. It could even lead to the development of a less formalized curricular, later to be formalized using the key concepts of subjects such as in mathematics, language, social studies etc. In fact new subject areas could be included which would have relevance to the issues of the refugees. It is not necessary that students/children in refugee situations should know all that is taught in the conventional school systems. Rather, they should develop skills and gather
knowledge and information about the ground situations. For example, mine awareness is an important subject, and so is the protection of the environment and culture of peace in Afghanistan. "What is basically suggested is a flexible continuum of strategies that will be adequate to preserve and maintain a security net for the psycho-social protection of the most vulnerable, and to help reproduce the basic educational skills required for their survival" (Anguilar and Gonzalo 1999). Non-formal approaches to education in stress and crisis situations help to bring about peace in the environment. It encourages people to respect law and order and bring about readiness to seriously organize education in a more formal way in the future.

Non-formal education as a delivery system can make an important contribution to the living standards of the poorest sections of society due to its flexible approach. Furthermore, the functional aspect of learning programmes can be better developed through non-formal approaches than in the formal approach.

Non-formal education has to be redefined in the context of countries like Afghanistan, which are under stress. These stresses are connected to quality of life, which is connected with education, health, availability of other services, prevalence of a culture of peace, and enjoyment of basic human rights by individuals. Interference from other nations, natural disasters, exploitation and lack of security are some of the secondary factors that affect the quality of life. The Afghans have to be provided with the above needs and brought back from the dilemma and shock of prolonged wars and conflict. Non-formal methods combined with other delivery systems are the most appropriate ways of achieving this end. The NFE approaches need not necessarily be for literacy per se but engulf programmes that will lead to improving the quality of life of the people, and focus on all age groups, thus leading to self-organization of the vulnerable at the country level. The best antidote to powerlessness is to develop a central source of poverty, that is the capacity of the individual (UNDP 2000).

Informal Economy and Learning Competencies

The entire economy of Afghanistan more or less revolves around a non-formal informal economy, which is very universal among the developing countries, as the formal organizational structures are not in place, or are defunct or inefficient. It would be relevant to look as to how informal and
non-formal methods interface more than formal methods in cultural contexts. Formal methods are rigid and have a closer affinity to universal concepts. Educational innovations may fall into a blind alley of universalism by neglecting micro-level realities. In a country where the formal sectors of the economy are in disarray, lacking resources and reliable markets as in Afghanistan, the informal economy has to be supported and strengthened. By merely following the traditional paths and programmes, meaning formal, the participants will not benefit; hence, the need for innovative attempts to overcome the current socio-economic issues. The focus of assisting the informal economy through informal means is more important than perhaps through the formal and even non-formal approaches. At the moment most of the approaches to the informal economy in Afghanistan are of a 'formal nature,' as elsewhere in the world, attempting to develop skills which are relatively of lesser use in the given context of Afghanistan and characteristics of informal sector activities.

It should be understood that the clientele of the informal economy require a variety of competencies which are related to 'generalized types' and 'vocational specific' types. The generalized competencies would include 'cognitive and social competencies as well as dispositions and orientations.' The vocational skills relate to 'job specific and entrepreneurial competencies.' These two skills are mutually inclusive and inter-related. The skills needed in the informal sector are ones directly related to the production process where theory is of least significance.

Other competencies that should be developed in the informal sector relate to entrepreneurial skills, which are very different from the formal sector. These may be difficult to identify at a glance and even in a short space of time. These skills may also change from place to place and time to time. Thus book keeping, official credit systems, accountancy etc. play an insignificant role in the informal sector programmes. Informal friendship leagues, bribing methods, wooing people, working with relatives and associates of the same religion, castes etc make better relationships.

Social competencies are equally important in the informal sector. These relate to informal relationships, recommendations through friends, advertising through known people by word of mouth are key factors that
assist informal activities. It is the informal sector that is truly running the economy of Afghanistan. Hence the need to support this sector in ways that genuinely informal is important than the sophisticated process, which is brought from outside cultures. In this respect one way would be to study the informal sector approaches amongst the Afghans who are in exile in Pakistan and elsewhere and use those strategies as exemplars rather than use theoretical information (Singh 1998).

Part II
Pedagogy in the Doldrums

Historically, teacher education is a recent phenomenon in Afghanistan, which although it existed in the 1930s, commenced earnestly in the 1950s with the assistance of a US Aid programme. In the period 1930-1950 the Ministry of Education showed a keen interest in developing capable teachers, as did other sectors, needing technical experts during this period. The Ministry was keen on enhancing the capacity of the teacher training colleges, both administratively and professionally. Initially the programmes were confined to training of teachers for the primary grades. All these suffered a setback due to the Second World War. With support from the US aid, the initial step was the establishment of a Faculty of Education at the University of Kabul. In 1964 an Academy for Teacher Educators was established, which was the beginning of the Pedagogical Institute of Education in Kabul and servicing the teacher educators directly. Later, a number of Teachers' Colleges were formed all over the country, numbering 12 in all. The graduates of the 12th grade were eligible for admission to these colleges, which initially provided one year, later extended to two years of training. However, the duration varied with the basic qualification, some extending to three years. The number of trainees in all these colleges numbered 2,282 (1991) of which almost 1000 were females (UNESCO 1991).

Traditionalism

All these edifices underwent changes, especially after 1992, when the internal struggle commenced. The nature of the destruction of all institutions and teacher educational structures has been stated already. Thus by 1984 only 25% of the teacher training institutes functioning in 1978 were available. The rest had been destroyed altogether (Safi 1987). Added to all these was the cutting off of external collaboration for
any academic inputs and resources. Hence, teachers and the teacher educators adopted talking methods, which too, was possible only if they had any teachers and students around. The teaching community was highly suspected by the establishment for bringing communist ideas to the schools and the classrooms. Hence, a serious hiatus was created between the training needs and what the country could offer. This gap had to be bridged by the international community, which too, has not been able to address the demands and challenges of both quality and quantity. The current status of teacher education in Afghanistan is in dire straits. The teacher colleges and institutes of education are mostly functioning with minimum facilities both in terms of personnel and materials. The old hands and experienced personnel are no more in service, being either dead or out of the country as refugees. The present cadres have not been exposed to any form of recent trends in education. Such persons are even averse to more recent changes in the educational world and are very sensitive to innovations. This is again, a personal experience of the writer, who has conducted a large number of such teacher education programmes for the Afghans. It may be that some of them are not teachers per se with sufficient grounding, and prefer the methods they have studied as students both in refugee camps or elsewhere. Even NGOs are helpless in this aspect for they have to work with whatever resources they have in hand. Lack of books and resource material further aggravates this anomaly. These aspects have to be taken care of by all those who deal with educational programmes. Training programmes, like all other aspects in education, are out dated and lack issue specific approaches.

As a result of the chaos, teacher education suffered most and became victim to extreme neglect. The writer visited most of the educational institutes and departments of education in universities in major cities such as Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Balkh, Herat, and Kandahar, and witnessed the dilapidated conditions of the institutes. Some of these do not have even blackboards and use the blackened walls and doors as substitutes. To see teacher educators working under such difficult and poor conditions was extremely pathetic, but very encouraging at the same time.

All the organizations in Afghanistan, including the UN agencies involved in educational programmes, are adopting conventional approaches, which are more appropriate under normal situations. Thus the
processes involved currently are well known, where one would observe a teacher-dominated scenario, with students meekly seated in obedience to the teacher. They may sit the whole day in a classroom, if there is one at all, in semi-darkness. The environment in these classrooms is anything but encouraging and conducive for learning. No effort, even in a minor way is made by the teacher or the principal to bring about any change or improvement in this situation. Neither the teacher, nor the principal realizes that prior to knowing the 3Rs, students face many other problems of a complex nature. Teachers attempt to teach in the same way that they had learnt under different conditions when the social structures were stable and functioning smoothly. On the other hand, teachers too, suffer from various problems. The issues relating to the child and his psychology apparently have not been analysed in the framework of the current issues and therefore, are not reflected in the current teacher education programmes.

In teacher education, the focus is, by and large, on the general components and the academic aspects. Emphasis on the development of pedagogical skills related to specific Afghan issues is negligible, because this requires ground experiences and basic studies, both of which are lacking. As such, these programmes, although satisfactory for the teacher with paper qualifications, are unable to “deal creatively with the pedagogical challenges of the classroom.” What is important in a situation like that of Afghanistan’s is the ability of the teacher to possess a wide repertoire of skills, which could be used effectively with different children suitably adjusted to meet the individual needs. “Effective pre-service training needs to be built on a sound knowledge of the curriculum, teach pedagogical methods, and encourage practice teaching under the supervision of an experienced and capable teacher” (Lockeed and Verspoor 1991). The teacher should be competent in the subject matter and understand how to transmit knowledge effectively. The teacher should be able to "elucidate the knowledge in new ways, recognize and partition it and clothe it in activities, emotions, metaphors, examples and demonstrations so that it can be grasped by students.” The goal of teacher education is not to indoctrinate teachers to behave in predetermined ways. On the contrary, the teacher should be encouraged to undertake innovative methods and develop pedagogical skills related to classroom management and organization, appreciation of each student’s performance and psychological needs.
Psychosocial Elements
An important aspect that has been neglected in teacher education programmes is the lack of emphasis on the psychosocial elements discussed in Chapter IX. Suffice here to see the extent to which these are incorporated in the teacher education programmes by the relevant authorities. In fact, one can see that the concepts of psychosocial aspects have not been brought into the teaching learning contexts by the educationists working for Afghanistan. The concept of psychosocial is an integration of the concepts of both psychology and sociology. It is an attempt to understand the child in the reality of the context, where he has undergone stresses, not generally seen and experienced even by children in deprived communities. The Afghan children have seen deaths, rapes, torture and exploitation of their beloved ones. How do these traumatic experiences affect the mental framework and behavioural aspects of the child? These lead to reactions in the child. In such a scenario the teacher has to deal more cautiously and with greater understanding with such children. Thus knowing John is more important than teaching John. A statement of a child from Herat (Western part of Afghanistan) is eloquent enough to indicate the inner feelings. Thus, “When we left Morghab we fastened my brother, who was one year old, on the back of a donkey. On the way he got cold, and by the time we arrived in Herat he was dead.” Another had a worse experience: “My cousin was walking on Bibi Mahro hill with her mother. A mine exploded, she was killed and her mother was injured.” Another child from Kabul describes his pathetic story. “My father was on the way to Charasiab with my younger brother when he was taken away by armed men. His eyes were removed, his legs were cut off, and after months of searching, his body was found and buried.” In spite of these traumas the desire to go to school is seen in most children. Thus a boy aged 12 in Jallalabad (Eastern part of Afghanistan) says, “if we don’t study we will become porters.” Yet another has this to say, “If we attend school and study we can become doctors and teachers, otherwise we will become carpet weavers’ (girl from Jowzjan district). A quotation from a teacher from Herat shows the environment in which they teach and live. “If wind comes and shakes the tent, or we hear firing, both the teachers and students feel frightened” (Radda Barna 1998).

Many working children had other responsibilities, which distracted them from studying. Teachers described how children put their heads on the desk, heavy with sleepy eyes and hunger. This is the classroom
situation in which teachers have to teach. What kind of training should the teachers receive to carry out their functions effectively and in a humane manner? Despite these shortcomings, children were generally positive about school. It is the one place that is dedicated to children. There they could meet their peers and have the attention of a saviour outside their family; hence, the reason for children selecting teachers as their role model (Radda Barnen, ibid). "The teacher should realize that the school is perhaps the only stable institution available in the community, where peace prevails and children are acceptable. The role of the teacher should be of a crusader welcoming and attracting the child into his lap" (Ekanayake 1998).

It should be realized that the universal development stages of children, indicated by Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson are not applicable in the Afghan contexts. Their constructs of children do not necessarily fit in to the scenarios of the developing countries and certainly do not reflect that traumatic nature of children in Afghanistan. Thus, for example, the period of adolescence related to the age group between 13-18 may not figure in the Afghan contexts. This may be due to the absence of the adolescence stage for Afghan children who move directly from childhood to adulthood, due to the additional responsibilities they have to bear at this early age. This is an important element of which teachers should be aware, when working with children of this age group.

To what extent do the training programmes conducted for teachers in Afghanistan by the NGOs adhere to these needs? It is very unlikely that these skills referred to above are developed at all in the pre-service training programmes. On the contrary, most of them do not even believe that Afghan children suffer from traumatic issues. The focus of these programmes has been either on the broad theoretical issues or at best a limited range of pedagogical skills rather than on specific strategies to enhance students’ comprehension. The practical components of Afghan teacher education programmes are very minimal. In fact this is true of teacher training programmes of most developing countries in the world. Thus for example the teacher training in the following countries devotes less than 5 percent of the time to the practical components: Haiti – 5%, Nepal – 0%, Yemen – 4% (World Bank 1991). This is further aggravated by the capacities of the teacher educators who themselves are not very knowledgeable, and possess few skills to guide the teachers.
Management Gaps

In addition to the above drawbacks, one could add the lacuna in management skills of the heads of schools, including the pedagogical institutes. Management of school begins in the classroom with the teacher and ends up in the school with the principal. In the case of Afghanistan one of the key factors that affect management is stress, which is common to all personnel in the school. In training programmes of teachers and principals, the stress factor is overlooked by the NGOs and other agencies. Absence of focussing on this aspect indicates again that key issues are lost sight of in the programmes. Capacity to manage uncertainty is a skill that should be developed in both the teacher and the principal in the context of Afghanistan (refer to chapter XII).

Stresses in classroom management relate to: a) stresses of the teacher; b) stresses of the institution; c) stresses of the students; d) learning stresses; e) environmental stresses; f) stresses of the family; and g) stresses of the community. Thus the stresses of the teacher are associated with his lack of professional skills, poor remuneration or lack of it altogether, lack of teaching materials, and other resource books and, finally, absence of professional support from the headmaster. Assistance from the parents is another problem associated with the Afghan schools.

Stresses are also related to institutions. These are more connected with the lack of basic logistics. The stresses of students have been dealt with elsewhere in detail. However, briefly, these are related with the traumas that the children had to undergo over long years in exile or when they were internally displaced. Environmental issues are of two types, one of which is war and its adverse effects on the environment and the second one is lack of schools in the vicinity. The other relates to land mines and their deadly effects on the children. It should be realized that Afghanistan is the most heavily mined country in the world today. Family and community stresses are related to security concerns and have been thrust upon them through various rules and regulations imposed by leaders during different periods of their rule. Internal displacement, loss of property, migration, loss of beloved ones, insecurity, perennial dependency are other factors that bring insecurity to the elders, which in turn, affect children and their education.
These are factors that should be understood by the teacher. Generally, in teacher education programmes classroom management aspect is given a minor role and subsumed under methodologies; and good teaching is associated with efficient management. But the stresses of the magnitude and complexities that prevail in Afghan schools are not likely to be seen in most other countries. Hence, the importance of this aspect in teaching learning programmes. These stresses relate to a number of issues such as stresses of the teacher, of the institution, of the students; stresses of the gaps in teaching learning; environmental causes; family and community stresses, and the integrated nature of these issues (Ekanayake 1998, UNESCO 1996).

Management refers to aspects that assist the development of teaching/learning process from the micro level, the classroom, to the macro situation, school and other attached institutions, involving professional development of personnel. In both situations professional development is essential to improving the quality of the inputs and the services of the institutions. Professional development (PD) could be considered as the key factor in educational development. This forms the basis on which educational improvement could take place. Quality improvement of the professional is the cornerstone of any development programme, whether health, agriculture, or irrigation. PD would assist in covering up other deficiencies in the system to a greater extent. It is universally accepted that training programmes for teachers, principals, supervisors, teacher educators and managers of the system are sine qua non in the development of the educational system. Such support helps to motivate the educational personnel, provide better opportunities for equitable access, strengthen the resource base for education and augment institutional capabilities, finally leading to improving learning achievements.

The political confusion in Afghanistan for the last two decades has affected every section of life and disturbed and disrupted the development of all programmes in the country. In this scenario, education is one of the main areas that has been severely afflicted and as a result education has been proceeding on an unfertile, dry and parched environment. This picture has not changed even today and by and large, remains the same. Although NGOs have undertaken training programmes for both teachers and principals, these are mostly in the eastern parts of Afghanistan, which are closer to the head offices of the
NGOs based in Peshawar, Pakistan. The nature of these programmes has been discussed earlier and the importance for more imaginative types has been suggested as well. Some of the programmes developed by UNESCO, UNHCR, and UNOPS for principals, supervisors and teachers will be dealt with later. By and large, the programmes developed for the educational personnel by the NGOs are not challenging enough and do not motivate the teacher or the principal to be innovative, imaginative and productive. It is very important that the school managers at the grass-roots level be more proactive than merely waiting for a 'good Samaritan' to provide the resources. Instead, the programmes offered are prescriptions leading to greater dependency. These programmes have not been sufficiently dealt with at the root causes of the educational issues, which are within the means of the teacher and the principal.

Proactive action involves both the principal and the teacher to look for alternative strategies in the face of lack of facilities and resources. Due to war situation and constant internal displacements, the relevant ministries and officials are not in a position to service the needs; hence the need for the principals and the teachers to be proactive. When the sources that should provide guidance to the personnel are not available, it is very difficult to expect miracles to take place at the bottom line i.e. school level. Any training programme organized by the educational authorities in collaboration with an NGO or UN agency suffers from limitations of specificity due to lack of basic facilities and the mobility to project the programme shaped to the specific needs of the teachers/children.

Classroom Organization
One of the key determinants of student achievement is the quality of teaching. An effective teacher should possess appropriate pedagogical skills and a good knowledge of the subject matter being taught. Self-motivation results from the possession of skills apart from remuneration and other basic facilities. The goal of teacher education is to provide skills to enable teachers to achieve expertise in the theory and practice and how to apply knowledge in order to make learning meaningful. The teachers should comprehend both subject matter and the pedagogical skills. The latter includes classroom management and organization, appreciation of each student’s characteristics and preconceptions, formal and informal evaluation of students, personal reflection and
critical self-analysis. Unfortunately, the teaching force in Afghanistan fails to meet any of the above and naturally suffer from being effective in the classroom.
Gender

This section discusses the historical backdrop of the issue of gender education and employment in Afghanistan and attempts to look at the issue from a different perspective. Some of the aspects related to this issue have been touched upon earlier. The main focus here is to look at gender from the educational and contextualized frame of reference.

Gender is one of the thorniest issues considered by the international community in Afghan development context. They have flagged Articles of the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976) and other related UN Covenants to highlight the importance of these in Afghan contexts. These have also provoked the Taliban. Thus, for example, Article 13 refers to everyone’s right to education, and that ‘primary education shall be compulsory and available to all. The development of a system of schools at all levels should be pursued.’ These have irked the Taliban and they have responded that ‘religious education is provided within the family and that this, in their view, is all that is needed to ensure full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity. They would equally argue that Islam does strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedom’ (Marsden 1999).

Historically, education for women was not a priority since the role of women was confined to household activities and around agricultural lands. The Afghans believed that the role of the mother should be to pass on the traditions of the Islamic culture. Hence men were very careful that women should not be exposed to modern ideas and practices, which would seep through to the children, and which the conservatives thought would dilute these traditions to bring harmful effects. Added to this is the concept of the Pashtuns, ‘Pashtunwali,’ where the protection of the society is associated with women. They consider the honour of women as part of honour of the society. Any unwarranted behaviour of women to outside influence could bring dishonour to the family. On this issue the other ethnic groups, such as Hazaras, Uzbek, Tajiks and the Nomads are relatively more liberal. The
The significance of this concept could be seen by the arguments put forward even today by the Taliban to postpone education for girls. They emphatically state that, the present curriculum is ill suited for girls. Hence, it has to be changed suitably to bring about an appropriate education so that the next generation could be brought up on an acceptable 'system of belief.' The present curriculum drawn up by the mujahideen is not acceptable to the Taliban, so that these arguments have been mere excuses for them to delay education for girls.

Going back to the early part of the century one finds that education not only for girls, but also for boys was almost nonexistent in the rural areas. Whatever meagre education existed was confined to the urban areas, especially in Kabul. So, the historical backdrop had not been very supportive of what we clamour for women today. Thus even as late as in the 1950s, the number of schools for girls was limited to around 8 percent of the total, numbering 17 out of a total of 277 primary schools. In fact, some districts in Afghanistan did not have a single school either for boys or girls. Around 60 percent of the schools were confined to Kabul and its surroundings despite the fact that the Ministry of Education provided free stationery and books. The curriculum for girls emphasised more on handicraft, drawing and knitting. There were special schools for rural areas, which were based in mosques. The children of these schools were entitled to free books and stationery. However, the curriculum for these schools was different (Ministry of Education, Kabul 1954).

It has been noted that whenever a progressive ruler took over the reins of government, education progressed in a satisfactory manner in respect of both sexes. Government patronage was of immense importance in this respect without which educational advancement was impossible. The impact had been felt more in the urban areas and relatively less in the rural areas and those far away from the capital, Kabul. This scenario existed even prior to the Taliban regime; the Taliban carried over the same policy more aggressively and discriminately vis-à-vis gender issues.

The international community has to be mindful of these factors and should not attempt, on any account, to ignore the traditional influence of these aspects on education. When one analyzes the events of Afghanistan over the last few years, one can see that the international
community, albeit with bona fide intentions, has attempted to turn the tide of events without any success. These attempts have been mistrusted and misunderstood by the Taliban, resulting in abject failures most of the time, consequently aggravating the conflicts between the Taliban and the international community. Analyses of the education policies and the strategies adopted by the international community indicate very high inconsistency. These are in relation to activities, programmes and areas of operations. Under more favourable conditions, that is when the Taliban were not in power, no serious efforts were made by the international community to improve the educational programmes. This is clearly evident by the funding provided for education. In the year 1994-95 only 5 percent of the total funds provided were available for education (ACBAR 1994-95). This amount was mainly for construction and provision of logistic support rather than for professional development of the educational personnel and other basic learning needs of the child. The international community awakened too late, with meagre resources for education during the last five years and the constant excuse had been that education was not a priority and humanitarian needs were the first concern. Thus education was invariably relegated to the background and one could see the crocodile tears being shed by those who championed the cause of education.

Furthermore, the concern for education arose not for education per se, but as part of a strategy connected with gender issues. This does not mean that gender is not an important issue in Afghanistan. Thus the slogan 'education for girls or no education at all for boys' can be considered as yet another form of discrimination. Who is responsible for this omission? The Afghans, in years to come, may accuse both the Taliban and the international community for neglecting education as a result of irrational decisions. When analyzing the precise periods during which interest grew in the gender issues and why these were not raised on earlier occasions one feels suspicious of the sincerity of those gender sponsors in Afghanistan. Gender in Afghanistan has to be viewed and analyzed in the context of the culture, religion and politics of the country for over a century or more. One would question seriously the bona fide, especially of the western world and the international community regarding education and gender. Although the high powered mission from the UN to study the gender related issues in late 1997 in Afghanistan focused on the importance of culture as a critical aspect in
training of personnel, the report shows lack of understanding of the ground realities (UN 1997). The author has participated in a number of discussions including the final meeting held in Islamabad. In which there wasn’t a single Afghan woman to express her opinion in the concluding session.

Another contradiction relates to the actions taken by the international community in areas where the Taliban were not in control, such as the Northern areas, and until 1998, the Hazarajat Region (Central Highlands) did not receive attention, although the stated policy of the international community was to support education where both sexes were admitted to schools without discrimination. These areas received only lukewarm support until 1997. One is at a loss to understand the policy of the international community, especially the UN Agencies. One comes across statements highlighting the importance of human resource development and capacity building and wonders how this can be achieved without basic education.

Discriminatory Principles

This policy of discriminating against children in the Taliban controlled areas shows lack of humanness. Although it may be in line with the 'principled approach' of the UN as a deterrent form of action against the Taliban's irrational type of behaviour, it is reminiscent of the medieval era. These children are subjected to various forms of discrimination and deprivation; the school can be one source for them to feel relieved from the traumatic culture. Where is the humaneness in this policy? On the one hand, UN fosters the development of human resources and is referred to in all the UN reports on development for Afghanistan. On the other, it deprives the future generations of the opportunity for development of their capacities and skills by not providing facilities for education. The UN reports emphasize the need for 'capacity building,' 'enhancing sustainability,' and 'empowering' people, enabling them to fight for human rights. Well-meaning seminars and workshops are held to achieve the above concepts amongst the Afghans, but forgetting all the time that the future generations hold the key to development. What do we offer to them? How do we carefully make a distinction between education for all and education for only those willing to avail this opportunity? Sincerity of purpose should be reflected both in the practices and policies in working with and assisting Afghans for their resurrection. Some even adopt 'dog in the manger' policies, where they
neither work nor provide positive support to those who work. Negativism seems to be an essential characteristic of some organizations, which attempt to find a needle in a haystack. In fact, stringent, injudicious, and preposterous policies only assisted and supported the Taliban and other extremists, who would like to see a society full of illiterate and irrational followers whom the extremists could control and manipulate easily. Thus, depriving boys of education would be a Pyrrhic victory and a myopic policy of the international community, which could even drive the youth to extremism as a way of economic survival. An educated and literate male in the family would certainly carry on the fight to educate his sisters. If the international community is sincere in its proceedings and sermons, it should re-think seriously in an enlightened way about a new policy approach to education in Afghanistan.

By and large, in most parts of the world, education first commenced with males. The literacy of females followed with the enlightened support from the males. Men have to educate themselves to understand the value of education for women. By trying to impose education on conservative women when the country is full of illiterate men, including the rulers who themselves have only a religious education from madrassas, is courting disaster. The conservative elements—who are in majority in Afghanistan—will not permit such a move. In fact, if one were to analyze the literacy of women in countries that have a high literate population, both in the west and the developing countries, one observes that education of women and their involvement in public matters took a secondary role at the initial stages. It was only when men of the ordinary rank and file became literate and the need for employment as a way out of the economic difficulties arose, that the latter clamoured for the provision of education for girls. Education for girls and opportunities for women were not aspects for which there were struggles in the developed countries that have literate populations today. The lessons of these countries indicate that there should be a level of readiness on the part of the community to demand more education as part of the development process. In a country like Afghanistan, where the literacy rate for males is woefully low—around 15 percent—with a history of conservatism and failure of progressive measures in the last century, and lacking basic needs in education in the present, pushing the authorities too far, will not be very opportune at the moment and may be counterproductive as well. It may take a long time for women to take responsibility of governance, which is how it was even in the west.
This is not by any means an attempt to underplay, delay or distract from any opportunities for girls' education but only to place the reality in the correct perspective. By trying to pull the Afghan women into the bandwagon of modernism and feminism, as defined in the west, although well meaning, will infuriate the conservative elements. They may even feel that outsiders are trying to force their culture on the Afghans, which, in fact, has been stated by the Taliban and in general disliked by the Afghans throughout their history.

The writer recalls the proceedings of a meeting held in Kandahar by the UNDP in March 1997 with the objective of “educating” the Taliban leadership about the activities of the UN and the importance of gender in development. The reactions of the Taliban to these concepts of modernism and feminism were one of utter disgust. They categorically stated that the Afghans can “take care of their women and there was no need for outsiders to tell them how this should be done.” These reactions indicated to the writer that the two groups—the Taliban and the UN personnel—were talking on two different wavelengths. The cultural gap between the two groups was clear and marked. If the mountain does not come to Mohammad, Mohammad should go to the mountain. This simple lesson seems to have been ignored by the ‘well fed and well educated.’ Learning from the Taliban is a better form of approach than teaching them, as they are steeped in fundamentalism and are not ready in mind and soul to move into the next millennium. Thus when one looks at the progress of the international community, since the Taliban took over the greater part of the country, one observes that the former have invariably stepped from one crisis to another, neither heeding nor learning lessons from the previous errors. These have resulted in the Taliban carrying on their activities at will and pleasure and constantly keeping the international community confused and on the defensive. The role of the international community should be to assist people in their development work rather than try to mould them to a pattern for which they are not ready at the moment. The question will be whether the international community adopts such approaches against the wishes and policies of those who are in power elsewhere in the world.

At this juncture it would be relevant to see the changes in the role of women transformed from a very lower and a primitive status in society to a reasonably acceptable level in the mid twentieth century in
Afghanistan. However, it does not mean that women emancipated by the mid 1950s enjoyed all the privileges that men did. This would be too far-fetched and too ambitious an expectation. Seeing the difficulties that women had to undergo over the decades, which includes lack of access to education, no say in marriage and other social rights etc., one cannot imagine the emancipation of women coming about overnight through provision of education alone, especially in a society like Afghanistan, which is steeped in and governed by tribal and religious norms covering all manner of social relationships. This background will help us understand and appreciate the current issues related to gender, which has many ramifications and runs deep in the social structure of Afghanistan. Currently, the focus of the international community in their development programmes in Afghanistan is confined to education and employment, whereas these are issues that are tied up with other customs and traditions. Even if the restrictions on these two aspects are to be relaxed or removed, there are other related aspects which govern the social behaviour of the individual and which have to be looked into. It is like a complicated patient who has to be diagnosed carefully before prescribing medicine. Thus the issue of gender has to be perceived holistically and in totality of social norms, and not from a narrow perspective or in a superficial manner, as is currently being practised.

**Historical Backdrop on Gender**

The formal and the initial confrontation on the subject of gender can be traced back to the reign of King Abdur Rahman (1890-1901), during which period he attempted to consolidate the Afghan state and transform it from a ‘tribal state’ to a ‘modern state.’ To achieve this, he created an administrative infrastructure of the state and introduced taxation as the economic base for those new institutions he created to keep the state functioning. In order to achieve these, King Rahman had to destabilize and reduce the power and the independence of the traditional groups in society, which included tribal leaders and the religious establishments, by bringing all of these under the tutelage of the state. Thus, King Abdur Rahman’s centralized state extended to control a new section in public life encompassing administration, legal, military, and economic affairs. Of these, what is more relevant to the issue of women’s emancipation relates to attempts made to bring about changes in the legal system. Breaking down of the power of the ulema and tribes seemed to be the first step in the direction of other reforms, which emerged more clearly in the later periods. During this period two
of the relevant changes related to emancipation of women that were attempted by King Amanullah were:

- ban on child labour and
- polygamy

However, all these faced stiff opposition from the ulema. The leaders of these groups demanded that the king rescind all the following laws related to women, education and many other similar issues such as:

- disallowing of having 4 wives
- allowing forcible divorce of the wives of his officials,
- allowing the cutting of women’s hair, the discarding of the ‘chadar,’ which women use to cover their chest and arms
- non-observance of ‘purdah’ by women and sending of grown-up girls to Europe for education, and
- establishment of girls’ schools (Olesen 1995:137).

Thus one can see that the above have been very sensitive issues in the eyes of religious leaders as well as of the community at large, since these touched the foundation of emancipation of women at the family level. Religious leaders and conservatives looked on these as threats to the morals and honour of the family, though these cannot be justified on religious grounds (ibid). These elements were able to outsway the progressives in the society.

**Opposition to Changes**

King Amanullah’s attempts to separate the church and the state through education and land reforms were met with vehement opposition. The conservatives considered challenging man’s authority in the family as a violation of religious sanctity as well as of the basic concepts of ‘Pashtunvali.’ The woman in Afghan society is an emotional figure related to the possibility of disgrace and spoiled reputation of the whole group. These reforms were taken up as a challenge to the honour of cherished norms of the tribesmen. Hence, people rallied against this modernization process and these were reflected in the writings at that time. For example, in the condemnation of modern women the following indicates the depth of the hatred the conservatives had developed against the progressive moves of the King.

‘In the time of King Amanulla Khan
the girls were flirts.'
They were going everywhere jumping like Tatar gazelles
Their legs were shown above their socks
Paris and London were no match for them
They had washed their hands of shame, dishonour and holy honour
and shamed the Nation by their flirting.
became ashamed of this act of ignorance of
the Afghan King ....'

(Olesen ibid)

All these were reactions to King Amanullah’s attempts to:
  a. raise the age of marriage of women and men to 18 and 21 respectively,
  b. abolition of the veil,
  c. tearing of the veil in public by the queen, and
  d. abolition of polygamy

Though these were never implemented by the King, the tribal leaders and
religious hegemony prevalent in Afghanistan never pardoned him and
were convinced that they should get rid of him as early as possible, in
which they succeeded in 1929 by banishing him from the throne.

Although King Amanullah was well meaning in his modernization
attempts and was able to involve religious leaders or ‘ulema’ in
discussions on the basis of a modern Islamic nation, the people at large
in the country were not prepared to accept progressive ideas. In this
King Amanullah’s strategy failed in that he ‘undertook bourgeois reforms
without the existence of any national bourgeois in the country.’ By trying
to follow other Islamic nations like Turkey, King Amanullah fell from
grace; Turkey had been exposed to European culture for centuries, and
it did not have tribes of the nature found in Afghanistan. The central
power of Turkey was also strongly supported by a loyal army (Olsen
ibid). Thus emancipation of women in Turkey was not a result of a few
decades but the work of centuries. This is an important lesson for those
who are in a hurry to promote feminism in Afghanistan.

Cautious Approaches
King Nadir Shah who ruled from 1930 to 1950 was more cautious than
his predecessor. He did not abandon King Amanullah’s reforms.
Although his constitution is considered as a ‘hotch-potch’ of ideas from
different countries, some of the marriage laws of 1921 and 1924 were
retained in a diluted form in the marriage law of 1934, which disapproved of paying for bride and presents. Religious leaders also supported these but the de facto situation remains the same to date. Though King Nadir Shah and his brothers were modernizers, they did not go about implementing their programmes in an aggressive manner, as was done previously. Thus they were successful in education reforms, which made education compulsory for all children. All public schools were under the supervision of the state. The religious leaders were also pacified once they were allowed the right to impart Islamic religious education. These were incorporated into the articles 20 and 21 of the constitution. Thus secularization gained ground and even girls’ schools, which were previously closed down, were re-opened. These modernizers kept a low profile and did not antagonize the conservatives. This is a practical way of achieving results in a conservative environment, and even in developed countries people have to be won over prior to introducing new initiatives. One may draw a parallel with King Amanullah’s approach with that of the modalities of the international community today in their relationship with the Taliban on issues related to education and gender. As part of the recognition of secular education and also as a prerequisite for adequately trained manpower to run the state machinery, King Nadir Shah followed the same educational policy of King Amanullah throughout his period from 1930 to 1950. It was a gradual process collaborating with religious educational institutions, but all under the control of the state.

**Ideological Changes**

The ideological scenario changed considerably during this period and there seemed to be a disappearance of activities of mullahs who were powerful during the 1880-1930 period. There were also signs of an urban middle class emerging (1950s) and a relaxed nature regarding the issue of the abolition of the veil. From about 1950s one could see the middle class growing in power. They were demanding political liberalization, which included ‘rapid westernization of life and manners, discarding of socio-religious forms and observances,’ destruction of the influence of religious leaders, development of a homogeneous whole under the modernist youth. Thus the 1964 constitution was an attempt to accommodate these ideas in the Afghan state, in the light of changing socio-economic structure of the society.
Islam seemed to have receded in place of economic development and political liberalization. The emancipation of women was another sore point for the more conservative and religious sections of the community. Prime Minister Daoud abolished the veil and an increasing number of girls began attending university. Nevertheless, the society at large, especially in the rural areas, were unaffected by these education programmes and were not in favour of these changes. However, women were becoming powerful and they were able to rally more than 5000 to the streets to protest against throwing of acid on an unveiled woman in Kandahar. The people, too, supported the victims and the culprits were brought to book. Such a force of women getting together was unthinkable in the early part of the 20th century. Thus one could see that changes were taking place slowly but steadily. The power struggle of the left-oriented middle class was seen in many incidents both for and against them in public. These clashes apparently grew deeper and regular with the progress of time. The universities and schools too joined in the fray adding to the polarization of the society bringing radicalization and militancy, leading ultimately to an ideological crisis in the Afghan society. The educated class became alienated from the larger mass of society and Islam. These had a suffocating effect on society and Afghan culture—the clash of Pashtu nationalism, Islamism and Afghan version of Marxism and Leninism. All these had adverse effects on the progress of gender in the society (Barry 1995).

One can see, that as a result of the left movement which was moving towards liberalization and democracy, there grew another group to counteract and ward off these ‘evil’ effects on the Afghan culture leading to the growth of the Islamic movement from about the 1960s. However, the religious movement was silenced through repression by Daoud, which led to further radicalization of its strategies and ideology. As a result of this attitude of the state, both groups, the leftist and the religious, went underground and indulged in subversive activities.

Again, the emancipation of women was back to square one with religious zealots crying for blood and strongly condemning freedom for female. These were combined with land reforms and emancipation of women in the concept of ‘Pashtunwali.’ The same arguments put forward during King Amanullah’s reign were brought back to fight the new order.
Thus the history of the emancipation of women has had ups and downs throughout the century, beginning in the 1880s. Although there has been an upsurge about gender today as compared to what it was a century ago, the fact remains that Afghan women were worse off under the Taliban. Thus after a period of about a century, the emancipation process for women which includes education and employment, was back to almost where it began. The process that underwent cycles of changes mixed with liberalism, conservatism and fundamentalism is currently back to a very bleak condition period after period of brightness from the 1960s to the 1980s. In view of the background of these cycles of change one could say that the present malaise is but another phase of the Afghan history of women's emancipation. Thus all is not lost and there is a bright light at the end of this tunnel, but how long the tunnel could be, is anybody's guess.

The Taliban's policy towards gender seems to be at the extreme end of the spectrum of conservatism, in comparison with the policies of the previous regimes over the last century. For example, no women were beaten in public during any previous period. Afghans consider physical abuse of women in public as a disgrace, and something contrary to the honour of man in a paternalistic society. But such incidents did occur earlier in Kandahar and indicate the extent to which the Taliban radicals have changed in their outlook. Marsden (1999) refers to 5 main elements in the policy of the Taliban to gender:

1. Ban on employment of women except in the health sector.
2. Temporary halt for female education pending the development of an appropriate curriculum.
3. Imposition of strict code of dress.
4. Men to grow beards, unstyled hair and shalwar kamiz (shirt).
5. Introduction of strict control on the movement of women, 'mahram' outside home.

The Taliban even shaved the heads of some of their guest players from Pakistan who visited Kandahar, Afghanistan in July 2000 for a friendly soccer match between two clubs.

Vice, Virtue and Disaster

The Department for the Preservation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice supervises all these strictures under the Taliban government. The Taliban have created a climate of fear among women and thereby have
restricted the economic capacity of women, leading to an increase in child workers in the streets of Kabul and elsewhere in Afghanistan. This overflow is felt even in Pakistan where one comes across numerous Afghan children begging and working in the main cities. There are a number of Afghan widows, around 50,000 in Kabul alone, and in the traditional economies women have been part of the family economy. Due to these strictures, the families are living in worse conditions than ever before. This has been one of the causes, which have led families to become refugees. It is also one of the reasons for women not to return to Afghanistan unless they are assured of education and employment facilities, both of which they enjoy in Pakistan. These rules are strictly adhered to in big cities such as Kabul and Herat but are less visible in other Taliban controlled areas.

It has been said by the Taliban, that these strict decrees are for the security of the women as Taliban leadership is afraid that their foot soldiers may run amuck if they see the fair sex in the open without covers--'burqa.' This young militia is the base of the power, but they are less sanguine about their real ability to control them. Nor do they dare risk losing the loyalty of these fighting forces by modifying their stand on women, an important symbol of the movement's Islamic legitimacy (Dupree Nancy 1999). The leadership feels that women could be sexually dishonoured and that would spell disaster for them. The only way is to cover them and keep them out of sight.

While everyone is clamouring for education for girls there has been a question related to the type of education that should be provided for them by the Afghans. The curriculum of the schools has been criticized for not focussing on the actual needs of the community. In this connection the major criticism is laid on the curriculum for girls. The common people feel that educating women means encouraging them to give up their traditional dress and Islamic values. Thus they conclude that if educating girls will result in this change, they would rather do without it. Earlier, there was a reference to the traumas of progressive education policies and practices adopted during the 1920s under King Amanullah, which ultimately cost him his throne. Under communism the results of girls' education came to appear more outrageous in the eyes of the traditional masses. Some parents were aghast at the way their daughters handled their fathers. 'If education is considered to be culturally subversive, it will be rejected by the majority of Afghans. That
is the lesson of the 20th century as far as girls’ education is concerned’ (Butt 1998).

It is known that even before the Taliban came onto the scene, schools were more or less empty. This is a lesson for the international community that buildings alone do not motivate girls to attend schools. What is important is the need to convince the parents of the girls that education is a good investment and desirable. ‘The problem for girls’ education in Afghanistan is not the Taliban: it is the public perception of education for girls as being culturally and religiously unacceptable and irrelevant: the Taliban are symptomatic of that perception, they are not the cause of it’ (Butt ibid).

Later, the Taliban seemed to be relaxing a bit on the restrictions which may either be due to pressure from the global community or their keenness to secure international credibility. The tough legal restrictions of the Taliban, toughest anywhere in the world, closing schools for girls, covering up women from head to foot etc which are originating from the conservative villages of Afghanistan seemed to be melting away, in that one saw a large number of women in the Kabul city unaccompanied by male elders. They were even shopping freely, visiting families and even eating ice cream without clutching to the burqas’ (News, 2000) The writer’s visit to Kabul and villages in Logar, Paktia, and Gardez in June, 2000 provided first hand information of the relaxed nature of the behaviour of the women and girl children. In fact, a large number of schools organised by CARE International, with funding from UNHCR had girls up to the age of 12 years (details in chapter XI). Most of these girls constituting about 40 percent of the total were in grades 1 and 2. In Kabul, in the early months of 2000, women celebrated the International Women’s Day, where elite women representing the medical, teaching, nursing professions and poetesses and groups of scientists gathered in large numbers. The speakers focussed on women’s education and housing and remembered famous women in Afghan history. This gathering although in a different context was reminiscent of the women’s protest against the man who threw acid on a female in Kandahar in the early years of the last century. Nevertheless, given the opportunity a show of power of the women was always on the cards.

Unfortunately, UNICEF took an extreme step in relation to education in Afghanistan by taking the stand that if education were not permitted for
girls, boys would also be deprived of the same for no sin of theirs but only for being males. Girls were deprived of education even before the Taliban stepped into the picture and especially in the southern area, Kandahar. For example, the overall participation rate for girls was estimated at 3.7 percent in 1993. In 12 out of the 29 provinces in Afghanistan the enrolment rate for girls was less than 0.1 percent (The Frontier Post, 1998). Throughout the last century the rulers have not been able to provide an acceptable curriculum to convince the majority of the Afghans that education is a priority for girls. On the other hand, the rulers have been trying all the time to open up more schools and provide facilities; no one thought about educating the conservative parents about the value of education. The latter did not see any benefits accruing to the members of the community through education and schooling, as was visible in the urban environments. There were no examples in the rural areas where education and schooling had helped the youth to achieve higher positions in the Afghan society. The authorities were not able to win over the masses due to lack of understanding of the importance of culture in development. The same seems to be true of the authorities of the present day progressive elements amongst the international community.

The Taliban had made efforts to include religion and home economics into the curriculum but failed to convince the international community. Instead of gaining approval they were condemned in some quarters as being discriminatory. UNICEF's stand that the Taliban's assurances of a 'segregated educational structure, with a limited curriculum for girls' was clearly not acceptable and would be a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. 'It is too easy for the interested parties in the West to see separate education for girls in terms of 'discrimination,' and a limited curriculum in terms of 'sexism.' But in Afghanistan it was the best way to convince the intensely conservative masses that education for girls was and still is a good idea considering the above arguments. They may present a unique way to devise an educational system, which addresses the desires, skills, needs and cultural values of the Afghans. Here again one is able to see the importance of culture in development (Butt 1998).

Universalism and Individualism
The highly individualistic society of the west leaves the individual to select his/her choices regarding life. This is not so in Islamic societies
where the roles of the family and the community are important elements that guide the rationale; hence, the Taliban's adverse reactions to UN Human Rights Convention. It is not right and appropriate for the West to deny the values and rights of the Afghans. 'The West, especially the US, believe that non-western people should commit themselves to Western values of democracy, free markets, limited governments, human rights, individualism, rule of law, and should embody these values in their institutions but the dominant attitudes in non-western customs range from widespread skepticism to intense opposition. What is universalism to the west is imperialism to the rest...' (Huntington 1997). As Taliban represented the extreme version of the Afghan society and controlled 95 percent of the country (although this was contested on the demographic and territorial statistics, Nazif, 1998), it was worth working out a solution with them to promote education of girls, which had failed over the last century. The approach would be worth trying where now one sees a trend that the number of girls attending schools is increasing without fanfare and publicity.

The new approaches adopted by UN agencies, especially UNHCR and UNESCO and some NGOs such as CARE International, Afghan Basic Education, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan etc. and a host of other innovative programmes specially designed for returnees, both boys and girls, which are presumably becoming workable solutions, will be discussed later.
Determinants of Social Status
This chapter discusses the emergence of a semblance of middle class in the early decades of the 20th century in Afghanistan. It also focuses on the vibrant nature of this class and discusses how it attempted to bring about social and political changes, though without much success, mainly due to their urgency and also due to the modalities adopted. Such attempts were acceptable to a few educated middle class people living in the cities, sometimes supported by the ruling class. The conservatives viewed these moves as dangerous and tampering with the age-old norms and cultural practices. Furthermore, as an offshoot of the middle class, there emerged a similar group—educated but mostly representing the conservatives from the rural areas—which spearheaded the movements against the progressive middle class ventures. All these brought disaster upon the nation. The current ruling outfits resemble the conservative middle class structure, but without a similar educational background.

Historically, the Afghan society unlike in India did not have a caste system. However, there are distinct social differences among the Afghans based on wealth and social patterns. Those in the leadership in the tribes were from aristocratic family groups. Although mobility between groups is possible, there was clearly a social pattern of the elite, middle and the lower groups. Thus the façade of bourgeoisie, as distinct from the working people can be discerned in the towns, where the distinctions between the upper, middle and lower classes have some significance’ (Wilber 1962). The middle class consisted of government employees, teachers, professionals, shopkeepers etc. and with time their grouping was becoming stabilized and growing slowly, albeit they were of a small portion of the society.’ The symbols of these classes were possession of material needs such as cars, horses and houses, coupled with power. The upper class was, more or less, confined to the cities, while the middle and the lower classes were distributed all over the country much more than the upper class, due to the service needs of the government. From the point of view of ethnicity, the Hazaras represented more of the lowest group. At the village level
the class structure was based on wealth and power. However, learning/education, both formal and ‘native wisdom,’ was respected and this aspect also emerged as part of a status symbol to be reckoned within the society. Dress also formed part of this status and those who wore western dress were also considered of a higher distinction. Better homes with elegant furniture were additions to these symbols. However, in the tribal structures there is an accepted norm that the family that provides the chief for that tribe is accorded a higher status above the rest. So that though there was an absence of caste system there were other social structures/instruments that determined the status of the individual.

Education and Middle Class
With the spread of education, one could see that it became one of the surest ways to reach the upper social levels, even for a boy from a poor family background. As a result education was given as much importance in Afghan society or even more than wealth and traditional hegemony. At the beginning of the 20th century the promotion of education was fostered by the rulers, which further enhanced its role as a social mobilizer. Beginning with King Abdul Rahman's (1880-1901) time, attempts were made to recruit a new elite loyal to the King and the state on the lines of the Turkish model. It was a process of ‘artificially creating a new elite, technically slaves,’ who would be free of kin links to distract them from their duty. But in Turkey this elite later turned out to be ‘Young Turks’ who rebelled against the state. On the other hand, Abdur Rahman's elites were all from the royal family and they were a different form of ‘slaves’ from that of the Turkish model. They lacked the intellectual articulation of the Turks and were literally like slaves, who could be imprisoned or even executed by the King for the slightest error. Abdur Rahman did not posses any state institution to train them to higher levels either, as was prevalent in the Turkish model. The only education they received was from madrasas. However, this strategy enabled the King to dispense with the tribal army and the urban clerics (Rubin 1996, Ahmad 1990). Amir Habibullah, who followed his father in 1901, took a further bold step and created an intellectual class separate from the clergy. Since no facilities were available in Afghanistan, he established state schools where they received special training, or some were even sent abroad and on the completion of their training they were recruited for state services. Thus for the first time a separate group emerged, from the clergy, to run the state machinery.
Another important step in the direction of supporting intellectual groups and laying the embryo of class-consciousness relates to the establishment of a newspaper in 1911. This newspaper advocated modern education and liberal political views, which awakened the modern Afghan intellectuals and reformers. These ideas subsequently led to the formation of a small group of 'Young Afghans', clamouring for rapid changes in the political scenario. They demanded rapid changes in life norms, including 'fusion of different tribes into one homogenous whole' under the modernist youth (Oleson 1980). Since it was premature and too radical for the period, some of the 'young officers' paid dearly with their lives. Nevertheless, these had the desired effect in subsequent periods. Thus by the 1950s, during Sardar Muhammad Da'ud Khan's period as Prime Minister, radical reforms were brought about as a result of the encouragement from the young modernizing Afghans. Laws for a free press were affected and a number of newspapers sprang up resulting in various demands from the government such as an end to corruption, improving living conditions etc. Students in the Kabul University commenced producing satirical plays, all of which again stirred up fears among the ruling class resulting in clamping down the freedom of the youth. Thus the modern education system which started with Amir Habibullah became the breeding ground for the youth to stage opposition movements demanding fundamental changes in the political system. These elements could be traced back to 'old constitutionalists' in Habibiya College (1909) followed later to re-emerge as 'Young Afghans' during Mahmud Beg Tarzi period as Foreign Minister (1920s) leading up to the 1950s referred to above and various elements following ideologies of the Chinese and the Soviets, all demanding quick fixes in the patterns of governance. At the end of the day one could see that these led to the intrusion of foreign elements providing assistance and foreign advice. These were radical departures from the Afghan traditions of the 1880s, during which period suspicion of foreigners, seclusion and isolationism were seen as the policy of the day.

**Elitism and Education**

In later years one could see that elitism in social status was creeping through education as well, although it was meant to be a leveller of differences. The key persons emerging in the leadership pattern of the political parties and hierarchy in the state services were from those who had studied at the elite state schools in Kabul. This reflects that where
one received education mattered far more than one's skills in gaining positions of power and prestige. Admission to these schools needed patronage and only a limited segment of the society had access to these privileged institutions. In later years one could see a large number of the above elite group receiving education in the West or the Soviet Block. Did they belong to the middle class? These patterns of conflict between the rural educated elite and the urban 'kultur' groups have parallels elsewhere in the developing countries of the region.

Another interesting phenomenon in the initial stages of the development of the middle class and in their struggles to follow was that both communists and Islamists were mainly from the Kabul University. Initially, some of them had their education in the rural schools so that this new group of intelligentsia, who formed the bulk of the middle class, differed from the elite styles of the old regime. It could be observed with the passage of time that the emerging new patterns of the class system in Afghanistan were regrouping their composition and the role of education in this connection.

The horizons of education expanded rapidly in the 1960s, which included free education from primary to the university/tertiary levels enabling a larger segment of the society to acquire learning and improve their social status. This also allowed the growth of the middle class more rapidly than before, especially in the urban areas, which had access to better educational facilities. Nevertheless, the power of governance rested on a few. On the other hand, the leadership in the country during the 1950s was keen on providing opportunities to the intelligentsia to associate with the government. The educated government officials were of the opinion that the ruling oligarchy, meaning the 'few,' was in no mood to initiate changes of a wider spectrum, in the way the middle class would have anticipated. Further, the educated middle class was numerically small as compared to the more literate societies elsewhere at that time, and 'devoid of influence to carry any impact on the policies and actions of the ruling regime.'

Tribalism to Middle Class

Development of a middle class in Islamic societies is less obvious than in other societies due to 'the social structure of Islamic societies which are built round vertical organizations such as kinship, tribe or ethnicity; structures that cut across horizontal or class lines.' As such, social
changes brought about by the middle class are less apparent and they are less active in Islamic countries, which have strong tribal structures, such as in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Instead of normal upper, middle and lower class categories usually seen in western societies, one finds three basic classes in tribal societies. These include the peasants, bazaar keepers, and the ruling class. However, due to changes brought about by education and development in Afghanistan, this seems to have changed to some extent even in the tribal areas; hence, the emergence of an additional class, the middle class and an industrial working class. This new middle class consists of teachers and university personnel; bureaucrats; other professionals like doctors and engineers; including writers, journalists and those serving in the armed forces. However, the percentage of this sector varies with the total population and the level of literacy and accessibility to educational centres and employment opportunities in the government sector and the stage of economic development of the country. In the case of Afghanistan this number may be less than one percent (Farr 1988).

The middle class is a challenge to the status quo of any country and the greater its strength, the greater the power it wields over the society. This has a direct relationship to educational opportunities. Besides, the middle class looks for merits and skills rather than to personal and traditional yardsticks of assessing individuals. Invariably, this class is in association with similar groups elsewhere in the world or at least emulates their feats and causes in their struggles. One saw widespread struggles of university students all over the United States, Europe and Asia in the 1960s.

Commencing from the early 20th century, Afghanistan's middle class began to make a gradual emergence. The middle class conflict with the traditional social structures is a universal phenomenon. In the case of Afghanistan, the middle class conflicts were with the vertical structures of the tribal and religious norms. Although an exact time period for the polarization of these social events in Afghanistan cannot be identified, one can see that with the expansion of education, especially in the urban areas, the group commenced its stabilization from the 1950s. As stated elsewhere, the same education base and also the employment pattern provided the emergence of a middle class of three types. These included a) the leftist group, b) Islamic fundamentalists and c) western-oriented liberals. The leftist group in Afghanistan, which came into
power in the 1960s had its rival group in the fundamentalists faction, who fled to the neighbouring countries, especially to Pakistan during this period. This latter group spearheaded the insurgency and the 'jehad' against those in power in Afghanistan, namely the left backed group. On the other hand, the western-oriented liberals and others left the country for the western world, or other forces pushed those out who remained in Afghanistan. Farr (1988), and Oleson (1995) in their analysis of the middle class provide characteristics of this new class in Afghanistan that has emerged over and above the tribes.

1. The new middle class was not of intellectuals.
2. It formed part of the intelligentsia and was the product of modern education.
3. The middle class was not the product of the traditional madrasas - religious schools.
4. The university students from the Kabul University spearheaded the middle class groups.
5. The middle class was essentially urban, lacking the touch of reality in the rural social structures, even if it had origins in the rural areas.
6. The middle class, comprising mostly of youth, was ambitious and too hasty in the implementation of reforms and strategies.
7. Ideological divisions in the middle class divided them into three main groups viz leftists, Islamic fundamentalists and western educated liberals.

The impetus to the expansion of the base of the middle class at the university level resulted from the introduction of the entrance examination, which altered the ethnic, rural and urban bias of the Kabul University. Further, provision of a quota for entry to the University of Kabul enabled to bring 'sons of tribal leaders to education.' These factors enabled the rural elements to enter the prestigious University of Kabul and helped them to seek self-admission to the emerging middle class and enjoy the opportunities for better prospects in the society. The middle class had the initial support and blessings of the ruling class in their political and social struggles. However, the growth of western styled life patterns and loosening ties with the traditional society led them to a sense of isolation.

Thus one could see a pattern amongst the Afghan highly educated middle class, commonly observed in the developing countries both in
Asia and Africa, where obligations to the rural society/tribes became weakened. This led to a chasm in understanding the needs of the rural masses and their empathy towards them. Both groups lacked mutual appreciation. One of the major causes for this gap is the flaw in education. Hence, no sooner problems occur in the social milieu, changes in the education become sine qua non for the rulers. A good example is the insurgency movement of the youth in Sri Lanka, in 1971 and the subsequent reforms in the education policies in the country to provide more opportunities to the rural areas in relation to education. In Afghanistan the cleavages were too great due to the prevalence of illiteracy amongst a large segment in addition to the tribal norms and structures. Later, in the period from 1980 to 1990s, these factors led the masses to look on education as an evil element cast on society, which brought about problems to the country at large and made life difficult for them. As stated earlier, the community’s first reaction after the departure of the Soviets was to destroy schools and even kill the teachers. This was very unfortunate in a country where the literacy level had not reached even 15 per cent.

Impact of Education

In analyzing the impact of education on those who entered the University of Kabul from rural areas, one could see that to some degree they maintained their rural contacts although perhaps not properly understood. This dichotomy between those who entered the Kabul University from rural areas with tribal roots and those who entered from the Kabul city and who had lost such contacts completely was to play a great role in the events from 1978 to the 1990s. In a way the sequence of events in Afghanistan during these periods is similar to the class biases and results seen in the education pattern in Sri Lanka in the 1940s and 1950s. Thus when the medium of instruction in Sri Lanka at the university level changed from English to the mother tongue there was an exodus of students to the universities—those from the rural areas overwhelming those from urban schools. Although those from the rural schools, too, fell into the middle class but unlike Afghanistan, the gaps between the two groups led to different life styles, economic issues and unemployment, culminating in the failed insurrections of 1971 and 1983 against the state by the Sri Lankan youth. The current terrorism of the ‘Tamil Tigers’ in Sri Lanka by the Tamil youth (Sri Lankan Tamils constitute 12.6 per cent of the total population in Sri Lanka) has similar economic undertones and frustrations. The situation
was also similar in Afghanistan where the educated youth, especially from the universities, did not find employment in the state sector. Here again, one could see the problem of education not gearing to the issues of the country, while the economies of both the countries did not have the capacity to absorb them as well.

Since the purpose of this work is to identify the impact of education in underscoring the emergence of a middle class in Afghanistan with connections with the left, right and centre as power base to push and influence the political events, it is not attempted to go into details of these struggles. It is important to mention that the positive signals of these middle class struggles in Afghanistan led all ethnic groups to regroup in ways to protect their rights, airing their ethnic grievances rather than their ideologies. Thus education, which is supposed to bring about tolerance, unity and promote development, has been onset by diversions bringing disaster to the country. The cultural diversities, which lead to bifurcation in social dynamics, have to be understood in this light in the planning of educational policies for a developing and complex nation like Afghanistan. This is why culturally congruent educational systems have to be initiated by the policy makers and this demands a thorough understanding of the social structures and development issues of the country. Lack of foresight and too aggressive an approach by the middle class youth have led to thousands being killed, tortured or imprisoned, some, if fortunate, fleeing to distant lands with only their children. The middle class, consisting of all the three groups referred to above, was trapped in the process. The events of the period between 1963 and 1973 'were chaotic, at times amusing, at times bloody, and ultimately unsuccessful.' The attempted democracy did not succeed because the people were not ready to understand and appreciate the new changes through the myopic approach of tribalism. Thus those of the middle class who were alive also fled as refugees but could not survive in tents and mud huts of camps in Pakistan or Iran. Furthermore, they also had political problems with others who were opposed to their ideologies inside Afghanistan, which were part of their baggage brought to the lands of refuge, especially Pakistan. Thus the middle class fell into the 'acute' group of refugees who were unable to respond to changes in the government (Afghanistan) and, perhaps underwent trauma more than the 'anticipatory' groups, who were ready to accept the ordeal that was awaiting them in the lands of refuge.
It would be pertinent to refer to the problems of refugee children and women, as they constitute three quarters of the refugee population. The Mujahideen has recognized their role in the jehad. The concept of honour, which protected the women, continued in the camps too. The issues of women relate to widowhood; confinement to the camps; developing a high dependency syndrome; conflict relationships and tensions with the Pakistani hosts; limited access to education facilities and employment opportunities and continuation of taboos and enforced idleness.

Links with Taliban

One can continue in the same vein to find links of this middle class with the Taliban on a different plane. Of course, the Taliban are not products of the Kabul University or any such higher educational institute. On the contrary, they are from rural level madrasas in Afghanistan or trained in the Pakistani religious schools. The middle class groups who fought on both sides of the fence, namely the pro-Communist and the mujahadeen groups were more educated and in complete awareness of the changes taking place in the world at large. Origins of these groups were discussed earlier. On the other hand, Pakistani Jamiat-e-Ulema-i Islam was the godfather of the Taliban and their brand of Islam is more conservative than that of Islamists and deeply anti-western in nature, without any specific political agenda, strategy or framework. They stepped into the vacuum created by the absence of the other groups and the failure of the Mujahideen to establish a stable government in Kabul. Hence, ‘the return of a more traditional but exacerbated Islamic fundamentalism, that of the Taliban. Actors who retained an Islamic agenda shifted from a revolutionary and a political approach to advocate the mere interpretation of Sharia,’ the model in vogue today (Oliver 1999). The relevance of this discussion is to show the continuation of an unfinished agenda of the growing struggle in the Afghan society, prior to emerging as a democratic and a tolerant community in the decades to come. The turning of the clock one full round in relation to gender issues where the Taliban stepped up the pressure to debar females from taking part in any activity outside their homes, brought undercurrents of frustration among the women in their family lives. Hence, the dilemma in development, resulting from the ambiguous crusaders.

One may state, that the Taliban filled the vacuum created by the middle class groups, leftist and extreme right elements, although they do not by
definition fall into the category of the middle class. The voices of the intellectual are less heard, for they are either dead or in distant places in the world. Even those who live as refugees, especially in Pakistan, seem to be very much mellowed down due to the prevalent dangers of being explicit. However, one common factor between the Taliban and the middle class of yesteryears is in the terror tactics adopted to suppress opinions. Over the years the Taliban realized that they needed to be more accommodative in the face of international condemnation of their approaches and violations of human rights. Perhaps that was why they held and promoted the celebration of the International Women’s Day in Kabul (2000) and ignored the establishment of home schools for girls, etc. However, their harsh and repressive attitude towards education of girls, gender issues like working opportunities for women, and other draconian laws were in operation as never before. There was apparently no substantial relaxation of their rules imposed at the time of their assumption of control over areas. These were the major differences between the Taliban outfit, pseudo-middle class, and the middle classes of the left and right wing groups in the early 1970s. One may not be wrong, if one conjectures that the Taliban represented the traditional elements, both the clergy and the landowners in Afghanistan, the forces that had disrupted all progressive moves during the whole of the last century. The Taliban were performing this task in a more determined manner with some moral and political support from a few countries in their neighbourhood. These countries themselves were more bent on regressive forms than democratic approaches in governance and tolerance. One common factor amongst these countries seemed to be the policies related to education and gender, where the declared policies of the governments were contrary to activities in the field. The following pages focus on these crusaders and how the processes have dented the emergence of a politically viable middle class.

The Dilemma in Development: the Ambiguous Crusaders

True to its history, Afghanistan has come up with a solution to a confused and complex political scenario but leading to more travesties. When the state was in the hands of the mujahedeen/commandoes after the departure of the Soviets, there were problems related to security where no one was safe. Imposition of taxes at will and
pleasure, rape, and plunder were common occurrences. It was against this background that the Taliban emerged in 1994 in the southern part of Afghanistan. However, they had roots in the 1980s where they were trained under foreign personnel and enlisted from the traditional village religious schools. This was the source and inspiration for the Taliban movement, later to be formally and covertly supported by a number of neighbouring countries, both financially and materially (Newsweek, 13 Oct. 1997). With the capture of Kandahar in 1994, they swiftly moved in all directions—north, south, west and east and by end of 1997 they were in control of almost two thirds of the country. Thus the Taliban provided a solution to the problems caused by the mujahedeens but at the price of losing other privileges related to education of girls and working of women.

But what has been happening over the last few years in relation to development and specifically education under the Taliban? This is the focus of this chapter which attempts to spell out the tragedies and follies of both the Taliban and the international community vis-a-vis educational programmes, although other development programmes, too, have been affected and influenced both for good and bad at the same time. The history of the education system of Afghanistan during this century, as stated earlier, has been subject to fortunes and misfortunes. Invariably, during this period, progressive steps in the development of education have faced serious setbacks whenever the godfathers of the programme were overthrown and the control of the central power either became weak or fell into the hands of the religious zealous groups. Such interventions have been common in Afghanistan resulting in reversals in the progress made.

Vision of the Taliban

Before discussing in detail the impact of the Taliban policies on the development process it is pertinent to analyze their policies vis-a-vis education. In a statement made by the Taliban to the international web the accomplishments of the Taliban and their aims are as follows:

a. restoration of full security of the citizens
b. pursuance of honest and sincere negotiations
c. support for UN and OIC peace efforts
d. respect for UN rules and principles
e. search for mutual respect and friendly relations towards all countries
f. protection of human rights and liberties

g. restoration of women's safety, dignity and freedom

h. observation of Islamic 'hejab' or the veil

i. women's education in the Islamic state of Afghanistan

j. establishment of representative government on the basis of Islamic Shariah

k. efforts to combat production and consumption of illicit drugs

l. establishment of a credible and accountable Islamic regime (Taleban, Internet 1998).

In the achievement of the above, the Islamic State is determined to act against all forms of terrorism, re-build the war-torn country, and lend full support to the UN agencies and NGOs.

The above have been, time and again, further elaborated by the Taliban in their policy statements, some of which are relevant to the theme under discussion in this book. For example, in relation to protection of human rights and liberties, it is the express view of the Taliban that security has been established for the first time since 1978 under the Islamic Shariah law providing equal protection and justice for all. As a result of the introduction of Shariah, arbitrariness in resolution of disputes, nepotism, discrimination on the basis of tribal, linguistic, religious orientation or regional affiliation has been eliminated. This has further guaranteed freedom to engage in legal occupations/economic activities and freedom of movement.

Phobias of the Taliban

It would be interesting to look into the rights of women in relation to restoration of women’s safety, dignity and freedom. Seemingly, Taliban believed that their being highly concerned about the wellbeing of their female citizens had put a stop to the miserable living conditions under which they lived in Kabul. The Taliban strongly believed that after the communists took over in Kabul, they exploited women for purposes of advancing their political and social agendas. They strongly felt that the communist regime forced a large number of women to attend government offices only for their amusement. The Taliban feared the United Nations or other foreign relief groups might employ women who were spies, contending some 35,000 of them were trained by the former Soviet Union as KGB agents…. defined women working for foreign agencies a 'national security issue…. Due to the issue of women,
regimes have been toppled' (The News, July 14, 2000). As a consequence the Taliban under the Islamic state decided to pay women their salaries at their homes, so that they could stay indoors and take care of their families. This policy helped to revive the Afghan family and household as the foundation of Afghan society. Further, the Islamic State was determined to provide education and employment opportunities to women in Afghanistan, as soon as security and financial circumstances under which the Islamic State operates allowed such a step to be taken. Till such time the state was to work on facilities that would make separate education of women possible.

In relation to the specific issue of women’s education based on the holy teachings of Islam, the Taliban were convinced that education was the pillar of a healthy and prosperous individual and social life. Hence, the Islamic State was determined to provide educational opportunities for all Afghans, irrespective of gender, race, tribe, language, or regional differences. However, they felt that the conditions that prevailed at that time were not conducive to the implementation of a sound, effective Islamic educational programme for women. They believed that a proper education had not taken root in Afghanistan due to the following reasons:

a. Destruction of over 90% school buildings by war.
b. Non-availability of qualified teachers due to their leaving the country.
c. Indoctrination through books/materials during the communist regime.
d. Use of the education system for propagation of the communist ideology.
e. Loss of faith of the community in the schools and secular education.
f. Lack of financial and physical resources of the Islamic State to provide facilities at the moment in relation to security, construction of schools, printing of new books, provision of materials, and payment of salaries to educational personnel.

Having stated the above from the point of view of the Taliban, it would be interesting to look into what the world community has to say about the policies and actions of the Taliban. How did they feel about those new rulers? What were the factors that bind them together? What were the factors that separated them from the Taliban? How did the other
groups who were in control of the northern areas feel about the Taliban? To what extent were the Taliban consistent in what they said and did? The views of the international community about the Taliban policies, specifically related to gender and education, are important in the context of this book. The Taliban, who on the one hand, professed the importance of education for all, attempted to adopt methods that stultified and deprived accessibility of the same to girls. How do we reconcile between these contradictions of the statements vis-a-vis the realities? What were the reasons behind these contradictions? As a result of these peculiar governance and behavioural patterns, which the international community was unable to comprehend, the Taliban policy was criticized since they assumed power. Some of the reasons adduced have historical precedents related to education of girls; their analysis is given at the end of the chapter. The following paragraphs provide some of these facts and criticism.

It has been learnt that since 1996, when the Taliban took over the city of Kabul, discriminatory regulations were promulgated making the Afghan women more or less prisoners in their homes. The following are worth noting:

- disallowing women from working outside the home;
- banning women from attending the university;
- prohibiting girls from going to school;
- prohibiting women from leaving home unless accompanied by a member of the family; ie mahram,
- requiring homes with women to paint their windows opaque so that women inside cannot be seen, and
- banning women from wearing shoes that make a sound when they walk.

Reactions to Taliban Phobia

Some of the major criticisms emerge from womens’ organizations, especially the Afghans living abroad in exile both in Pakistan and in the west and also to some extent from those living outside Taliban controlled areas. Thus the ‘Women’s alliance for peace and human rights in Afghanistan’ (WAPHA) based in New York, has very poignantly stated that the Taliban mode of governance is a chapter from medieval history. According to them, ‘ever since they seized power they have been trying to reverse the process of social development, apart from introducing an arbitrary social order. They have forced women to stay
indoors, closed schools for girls, and encouraged bizarre public shows of flogging and execution’ (WAPHA, 7 April, 1998). Much of the criticism stemmed from the fact that the Taliban were unable to provide an administration and, instead of rebuilding a war-ravaged nation, they tried to impose a primitive social order and structures in those parts of Afghanistan which they controlled.

Feminist groups waged their war against such sanctions and were campaigning in the UN, the United States, and the European Parliament to condemn the gender apartheid in Afghanistan. ‘A Flower for the Women of Kabul,’ is such an international organization where they try to draw the attention of the international community to the plight of the Afghan women. These groups have brought out information sheets using e-mail facilities to disseminate information universally drawing attention to universal rights and agreements to which Afghanistan had been a party in earlier decades. It should be recalled that Afghanistan ratified the Convention of Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention of the Rights of the Child and a number of such human rights treaties.

The WAPHA recognizes the importance of cultural traditions, but those of the Afghans, not the Taliban style. WAPHA is very clear on this when it states that ‘it has become very clear to the world’s community that neither the Taliban’s brand of “Islam” represents Islam nor the Taliban’s brand of ‘cultural tradition’ represents the genuine cultural traditions of the Afghan people. The Taliban’s brand of “Islam” and “cultural traditions” denied the Afghan women the right to work, education, access to health care, freedom of movement and expression. That the Taliban had banished the Afghan women from the public sphere of society, and had them voiceless, invisible nonbeings. They denied the Afghan women the basic rights that are required for human existence (WAPHA, 15 May 1998).

It would be very relevant to cite the statement made by Ms Carol Bellamy, Chief of UNICEF on her visit to Afghanistan and meeting the Taliban leadership in Kabul, in April 1998 on matters related to education and rights of women to work. She delivered a strong message from the UN leaders to the Taliban militia. Much of her talks were focussed on educational issues, particularly government policies restricting the education of girls. However, the Taliban in their response
had not given her any satisfactory explanation for their educational policies. What the Taliban had stated was related to the importance of understanding their cultural norms and custom, saying that it was not proper for someone to impose a western way of life on them.

The writer's experience in his associations with some of the key leaders of the Taliban in relation to development of education had both positive and negative results. Prior to the closure of schools both in Herat and Kabul, the writer had undertaken several mission which helped him do comparative assessments of the situations had undertaken. The schools, although open and attended by both girls and boys, lacked basic facilities and their functioning left a great deal to be desired. Children had no furniture and sometimes classrooms were held under whatever covering was available. School timings were too short to enable both teachers and students to attend to other activities, which provided additional sources of income. Teaching personnel were mostly involved in small time business and worked on construction sites etc. Evaluation of children was irregular and keeping records rare. However, the fact that the schools functioned was a great source of encouragement and strength to the Afghan community. Assistance for education was not forthcoming from the international community in spite of the very adverse conditions, as their priorities lay elsewhere. According to ACBAR data sources, only five per cent of the total aid was devoted to education by NGOs in 1995 (ACBAR Data Base, 1995), and about the same percentage was involved in educational programmes during the same period. Although education was considered an important component in development by aid agencies, assistance was rather lukewarm (UNESCO 1995), so that by and large interest in education was limited even though this was considered as a priority need by the Afghan people. The writer, however, invariably found the responses aspirations of students in higher grades very high. Very often the students, whether from Kabul, Herat or Mazar-i-Shafir, would state that they wished to be professionals, meaning doctors, engineers, pilots, teachers, etc. This was something very positive in an environment without any facilities for such courses.

Girls in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan, did not used to attend school long before the Taliban took over in 1994. During the post Soviet period from about 1990 to 1994, until the emergence of the Taliban in the political field, parents themselves decided not to send children to
schools due to the fear of the girls being kidnapped by the commandos who were all over the place. Thus when the Taliban took over Kandahar, they continued with the same policy, which was to their liking.

In other areas, both in Kabul and Herat, with the arrival of the Taliban the girl students and women teachers vanished from the schools. When asked the reasons for this change of policy the Taliban would always state that there was no security for the girls and unless things changed for the better they faced problems in attending schools. They were never able to tell how long such a change will take.

**Taliban and the UN**

Although no one could carry a brief for the Taliban prohibiting education for girls and not allowing women to teach, one would raise the issue of what was the commitment of the international community towards the development of education during earlier periods. Some also might question depriving the boys of the facility as another violation of basic rights of the child, which was quoted in support of the education of the girls. Thus the moral issues raised by the International community against the Taliban recoiled on them as well. Paradoxically, the special agencies that were responsible for education, namely UNESCO and UNICEF, were the ones that were totally against providing education for all inside Afghanistan. In this case UNESCO had gone to the extent of calling the Taliban ‘a set of barbarians who interpret the Koran as they see fit, who humiliated and discriminated against women to the extent of withholding education from girls. We must speak out loud and clear against those who violate human rights so flagrantly. All those who supply arms and assistance to these mad men must cease to do so. The Taliban now claim they are willing to support education for women but say that they are lacking funds. Let those who financed their war now finance their schools for girls (UNESCO Press, 19 March, 1998).

However, UNESCO which did not wish to get involved with the Taliban in education, due to their policy of discrimination, expressed its willingness by mid-July 1998 to be a member of the Education Commission, constituting of the UN agencies and NGOs, to be set up in Kabul under the Taliban leadership. This was a welcome move, although one may not understand properly the rationale for a ‘volt face’ of this nature despite the fact that the Taliban did not change their policy
at all. One may question the bona fi de of such polices of international organizations. Are some playing politics with the future generations? Or are they naive enough to follow principles, which have no reality? One could say that the Taliban had a steady policy, although it was not to the liking of the children of the country. Contradictions occur when people/organizations are not certain and confident about what should be done and this has to be avoided by responsible organizations.

On the other hand, the UNDP along with UNESCO has agreed to launch a distance education programme for Afghanistan titled as Reaching Afghan Children (REACH). The title seems to be attractive and the objective magnanimous. But the question arises as to how many people possess, radios to listen to these programmes when they do not have shoes to wear even in winter! Further, as Taliban are in control of almost two-thirds of the country, will this not contradict the UN policy of anti-Taliban policy regarding women's and girls' education, especially in terms of the above very harsh statement from UNESCO? So that although the project seemed to be very attractive and the objectives laudable, the practicalities were far from reality. UNESCO was concentrating more on activities in relation to income generation rather than on education per se. For example, the project of carpet weaving and making of natural dyes to be taught to Afghans who have been weaving carpets for centuries and currently producing some of the best quality carpets in the world, including silk ones. For example Herat, the capital in the western part of Afghanistan has a large market entirely for carpets. It is ludicrous for experts to teach the Afghans carpet weaving and a crime to waste meagre funds on unnecessary projects. For all these projects, experts are sent from the west for this part of the ‘consultancy business’ of the west, retired public servants and administrators and, sometimes, questionable people are engaged in consultancy services, the qualifications of some of whom have no relevance to the programme in operation. Many such persons are freely found on the soil of Afghanistan. Strangely, these projects are initiated and administered by its headquarters directly, without concurrence of the regional office in Islamabad, which oversees educational programmes in Afghanistan. The activities of UNESCO are discussed in chapter XII.

UNICEF is clear in its policy of education in the Taliban controlled area. In these statements there are truths and contradictions. As for the other
agencies and some NGOs, they continue to provide education for boys and girls in both Taliban and non-Taliban areas, regardless of the Taliban's restrictions.

The relationship between the Taliban and the international community has never been on a positive note. It runs always through rough weather and, invariably, before one problem is solved a few more are lined up rendering progress in any development programme impossible. Identifying the cause of the problem is more difficult than finding a needle in a haystack, but there seems to be a pattern in the progress of the conflicts. The Taliban were pushing the international community to the wall, enforcing one edict after another, while the latter was forgetting the aim of their mission in Afghanistan, a poor country which needed kindness, mercy and forgiveness for the sake of their future generation. For an outsider it seemed that the confrontation between the Taliban and the international community, including the UN, was a never-ending phenomenon, and the emergence of a solution was invariably the beginning of another problem. Will the international community behave similarly and adopt the same attitude in the case of another country? Would any other people tolerate the imposition of outsiders to carry on regardless? These are very pertinent questions that should be raised when rationalising and analysing Taliban relationships vis-a-vis the international community. The most ad rem question remain unanswered, i.e., whether the middle class of the earlier decades will return to power. If so, will they adopt the same urgent tactics to change a society steeped in conservatism and traditionalism or be patient and follow a natural process of transformation of their society to bring back the ancient glories of their history and culture?

The following poem attempts to recapture the glorious past and the need for reconciliation for the sake of the child.

Pangs of a Nation
A culture rich in values
Full of history
Silk route passing through
Bringing religious thoughts
Trade and commerce
West to east and east to west
Blending ideas
And encouraging discourses.
Faith in tolerance
Peace and serenity
Love and care to one and all
With noble practices, humane in nature
Echoing messages to the world
This was our country
In the ancient glory of the past

It's a lost history
A heritage no more
Unable to comprehend
Victims of war and terror
Manipulations of the able
Bringing destruction
To Afghans and their land

They run in fear
With nothing but life and children
To neighbours hospitable
Receiving in good faith
Now fatigued and tired
Making our living questionable (lives miserable)

Children without land
Lacking everything
Victims of cruelty
And vicious circles
Without a future
Vultures around
Playing (a game of) 'buzkashi' *1
What a (cruel) world we live in

International forums
Deliberations to meet
Again and again
To confer and disperse (live and enjoy at our expense)
Without solutions
It's time we unite
Against feigning friends
And enemies within
To build a future strong and lasting
And help ourselves
To care for our children
Land and water, fauna and flora

(Ekanayake 1998)
IX The Afghan Child: Traumas and Conflicts

This chapter discusses the child in conflict situations with reference to Afghan refugee children. At the height of migration in the 1980s, children constituted nearly 25 percent of the total refugee population in terms of numbers, and when computed, out of a total of 6 million refugees 2 million were children came to almost 2 million, of a total number of 6 million refugees. Today there are still nearly 3.0 million refugees living mostly in Iran and Pakistan (UNHCR 2000). Of the refugees child is the most affected in this ‘migratory genocide.’ Being sensitive and vulnerable, he undergoes the traumatic experience of fear and insecurity, when subjected to various kinds of conflict. Case studies of children from the field are provided as examples to substantiate the nature of the changes of behaviour that take place in children as a result of this ‘genocide.’ The focus of discussion in this chapter is on the areas given below and are projected as questions. However, the areas identified for discussion are gray areas, one merging into the other thus forming the totality/gestalt of the conflicts.

The questions are as follows:
What are conflict environments (CE) and under what circumstances do these originate?

What are the key elements in CEs and who are the major victims of CEs?

What are the factors that affect the child and the nature of the characteristics of these children?

What is the role of the family/community/religious leaders (affected parties) and the international community in resolving these conflicts?

And

What strategies/modalities should be developed to reduce conflicts for children and what should be the role of education in this strategy?

What are Conflict Environments?
Background
Twentieth century can be crowned as the heyday of mankind in technological achievements, which has made the world ‘a super village.’ Man has taken strides to go beyond the earth to outer space and develop communication techniques that have made great distances, a thing of the past. Satellite mapping, transmitting information, and development in medical sciences are but a few examples of disciplines where mankind has excelled in the last few decades much more than ever before. However, these achievements are marred with depletion of natural resources, tremendous pollution, and behaviour of man to mankind and fauna and flora. There seems to be no end to the gregarious nature of mans’ desires. They have overstepped the limits and the struggle is to have more of whatever little is left, forgetting that the earth cannot bear and withstand these exploitations any more. In spite of these development efforts and innovative power of the man, human qualities too are eroding in the same manner and perhaps at a greater speed than the depletion of natural resources. In this context, the human beings in the twentieth century are not any better off than those who lived in caves fighting each other for land, space and resources. Hence the rise in conflicts; and where man uses modern technologies he exhibits his cruelty to mankind in unimaginable ways and usually adopts destructive means. The basis of the present conflicts in the world can be attributed to man’s lust for power and acquisition of wealth through fair means or foul.

Conflict Environments
Although it is difficult to define precisely a conflict environment, one may easily state that such an environment is not normal. Therefore, describing a normal society could be the starting point to understand a conflict environment. By and large, a normal society has its economic, social and political affiliations and interactions relatively stable over a period of time. The social stability is reflected in codes of behaviour, ideologies and institutionalization of norms. The people responsible and involved in institutionalization of behaviour must be prepared to carry out their appropriate roles. These behaviours are expressed in formal codes as well as in informal structures, especially in tribal societies and less developed communities. However, acceptance of codes of behaviour is not a guarantee of proper role performance (Horton, Hunt 1984). There is no guarantee that all codes of behaviour and the functioning of institutions will operate smoothly all the time, to the best
satisfaction of the entire community. History of societies is full of examples of conflicts. There are occasions where normality is disturbed due to deviant behaviour of people who would upset the norms of society and disrupt the social fabric, even for short periods. However, the majority would always attempt to bring normalcy back into the fore.

Definition
Conflicts should be defined in a way that it encompasses a macro picture of a large scale or a micro situation of a smaller scale. For that matter it is prudent to describe, rather than define, what conflicts are likely to be. On conceptual level conflicts mean clash of interest, ideas or even desires on which consensus cannot be evolved and which cannot apparently be resolved through amicable means. When that happens, the germ of conflict emerges amongst the aggrieved parties. And if it is not resolved, a smaller conflict can grow out of proportion. Conflicts could end up in physical destruction involving armed conflicts using modern technologies, creating social destruction and upheavals in the lives of communities. The latter could take the form of rape, torture, forced labour, coerced violence, separation of families, attacks on civilians, distortion of information etc. The process could further lead to destruction of agriculture and livelihoods on based farming and small-scale cottage industries; and disruption of marketing and resource mobilization which directly impacts the poor segment of society. On the other hand, it may involve forced recruitment in the fighting units, compulsory displacement, disruption of services to community, such as education, health, extension services of development programmes, communications etc. Whatever the situation, it is abnormal and causes fear and grave uncertainty among the population. Broadly speaking, armed conflicts could be national, international or wars of liberation. National conflicts could relate to civil wars, state violence against civilians, civil disorders, tribal, and ethnic and sectarian types. International conflicts relate to conventional wars. Sometimes wars of liberation spill over the national boundaries and become international conflicts.

At a micro level conflicts relate to love hate relationships, personal animosities, temporary disagreements, conflict of ideologies of a controllable type, party politics among groups and interests etc. The scale of such conflicts could be very local or even national, sometimes spilling beyond the boundaries of the nation but never going beyond the
control of an amicable settlement. They even tend to lead to positive effects and new initiatives and assist in the emergence of innovative approaches in solving problems. Destruction of human lives or of the social fabric rarely takes place in such conflicts. However, group violence may turn to be destructive as that of guerilla groups and fanatical organizations. The police or state backed institutions may perpetrate some violence. Structured violence arises from a situation where assistance is provided to a cause such as discrimination against minorities or apartheid (Ressler et al 1993: 20-21).

Circumstances of Origin of Conflicts
Why do conflicts occur? There cannot be one reason for this, because conflicts are results of complex issues. Although the immediate cause may be identified, the background has to be studied and analyzed to come to conclusions. Except in cases of personal conflicts, which may also have reasons beyond the incident, by and large they result from long term misunderstandings, emotional attachments to situations (religious, cultural etc.), disregard to equity, social justice and deliberate negligence and violations of human rights. These factors grow beyond proportions when people lack basic needs and live in abject poverty. Such environments are fertile grounds to germinate discontent and conflicts.

In a conflict-ridden scenario, the relationships in the community and between groups remain acrimonious and they experience anxiety, traumas, distress, disorders, depressions, and suffer from delusions. Conflicts are inter and intra-group in nature where there is no single authority or leader. These may be the result of internecine warfare or threats from external forces. Whatever the cause, the panorama is such that the life of the community is disturbed to the extent that members of the community tend to leave the environment. They either migrate to another country resulting in migration, or temporarily move to a safer haven within the country and thus leading to internal displacement. However, if compelled to live in the same environment, they would suffer from an innumerable set of traumas. Whatever the outcome and the type of movement, sufferings are inevitable and innumerable, and the worst affected are the children.

Since the beginning of this century, with the increase of population and limited natural resources, the occurrence of conflicts has increased.
Commencing with the First World War, the pace of struggles has grown and the numbers affected has increased. The capacity for destruction has also increased with the use of more sophisticated technology. Thus, since World War II, there have been some 150 large wars, causing an estimated 20 million deaths. This excludes minor conflicts which add to a conservative estimate of another 140 conflicts (UNICEF 1990). It may happen that when one conflict is resolved, another may ensue as a result of the poor and not well-thought-out solutions for the former. The current Afghan conflict is a clear case in point. The Afghan conflict had two major dimensions: firstly, declaration of Jehad to fight the Russians commencing in 1989, and secondly, the aftermath of internal struggles since 1993 to date. Both brought its toll of destruction, escalating the refugee issue numbering to staggering proportions of over 6 million (1994), the highest in the world (UNHCR, Afghan Refugee 1997). The latter continues with no solutions in the near future.

Key Elements
Characteristics of Conflicts
In conflict situations, depression results due to the loss of beloved ones in the family, which is very common in Afghanistan. This disrupts and affects seriously the dependency relationship of the family. Losses can trigger prolonged and exaggerated grief reaction, which includes loss of self-esteem. Such feelings of depression can be carried over from childhood to adult stages. Research shows that depressed people have high frequencies of unpleasant and unrewarding events in their lives. Such depressed people tend to invest less in hope and less energy in their activities, including social interactions (Freud 1988).

Apart from the above, conflicts bring about social upheavals where normal life situations are completely disrupted and threatened. Often the victims suffer from famines and diseases, which lead to physical disabilities or deaths. Children are the earliest and easiest victims of such situations. They become helpless and involve themselves in any activity that provides them relief in their day-to-day life. As a result they fall prey to the demands of the elders and are exploited by becoming victims of under-employment, labour, prostitution, drug peddling, working in unhealthy and uncongenial situations etc. In addition to this are death, injury illness, disability, deprivation due to family impoverishment, separation from family, lack of education, constant
displacement from their homes and environment, torture, arrest, sexual and physical abuse, psychological distress, slavery, recruitment for war. Growing up in an environment charged with frustration and vengeance, these mentally disturbed children develop distorted behavioural traits.

Major Victims
Of the total refugees in the world over fifty percent are children and adolescents (UNHCR 1995). Infants are the hardest hit during refugee emergencies. They suffer from both physiological and socio-physiological problems. In the case of Afghanistan, the effects of two decades of traumatic experiences show later in their adult lives. The sufferings relate to separation from parents, families, relations, and the environment. Separation takes place quite often due to sudden changes of war fortunes between groups. In Afghanistan there have been many such groups led by commanders and even at present two major groups, namely the Taliban and the Northern Alliance, are at daggers drawn with each other. In such an uncertain scenario the constant fear in which the families survive brings about fear psychosis, which ‘includes severe disorders in which the individual’s perception of reality is severely distorted…[and] psychological functioning becomes severely disorganized.’ It may also include neurosis, which are mild disorders that are moderately incapacitating—disorders in which the individual’s perception of reality is not grossly impaired (Freud 1988). Such shocks set in personality disorders as well. These are characterized by maladaptive personality patterns, which interfere with school effectiveness, to begin with, to later life activities. As for children, these conditions are further aggravated when they are displaced from home, with school routines and community life disrupted more often than otherwise. These are the given conditions in such disturbed environments. Most important, therefore, are the specific interventions that should be taken to avoid more difficulties.

It is very pertinent to quote here the description a mother’s description of her 11-year old son’s behaviour after he was threatened with execution. She said Thus according to the mother ‘his hair is white since then, and since that day he gets scared….Is it that since that day he gets these suffocation?….I don’t know. He stays like this…he doesn’t talk to anybody. He doesn’t sit while anyone is here…. He often sits alone, spaced out. He spaces out a lot.” (Bryce 1986:11).
Further examples from Afghan contexts would amplify the extent to which children are affected in the ensuing conflicts. This case study from 'The Children in Afghanistan in War and Refugee Camps (Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, 1988) indicates the traumatic nature of a child in the province of Kunduz, Afghanistan. ‘She is seven years old. She was registered by our centre on 8 June, 1987. She migrated to Pakistan on 1 June 1987. Her father was an ordinary farmer, and his family, along with two families of their relatives, had to flee from their homeland. On their way to Pakistan they had to face a sudden air raid. Four Russian aircraft bombed Hajigal pass. S’s mother and her four-year old sister, in her arms, riding on a donkey were killed by a missile. Another victim was her grandfather. S was an eye witness of this horrible incident. S has not spoken since then. S shows doubtful, emotional reactions towards friendly contact, and shows an open face. She avoids looking other people in the eye and shows anxiety. She has chosen mutism. The main symptoms relate to sleep disturbances, nightmares, sadness, loss of appetite, loss of pleasure, withdrawal, elective mutism, anxiety, looking worried, separation and acute depressive reactions.’

There are hundreds of such cases, which have gone unrecorded but living in constant turmoil internally. The adverse impact of such vast numbers in a future development programme for Afghanistan cannot be solved and attended to easily by only providing funds. These traumas demand greatest human kindness and sympathy than bestowed anywhere on earth.

Factors Affecting Children

Causes of Psychosocial Distresses

In this section, specific effects of conflicts on children are discussed, although reference is made to these aspects briefly in the above paragraphs. This is because of the importance of psychosocial distresses of children under stress. Traumas and distresses refer to situations when one has unmet social, psychological needs. These arise due to conflicts which disturb normal behavioural patterns depriving one from achieving self-actualization meaning not allowing one to grow at her/his own pace in a congenial environment. Such deprivations lead to persons becoming mentally disturbed and the gravity depends on the extent to which one is subjected to such desires. A number of studies conducted in conflict situations indicate that the emotional adjustment of
children to hostilities has been very low. This is true of adults as well. The signs of psychosocial strain in children include nervousness, trembling, crying, aggressive behaviour, indigestion, soiling, and pallor. Psychosocial means a combined effect of both psychological and social factors in the determination of behaviour and development of the mental processes. In this, importance is laid on the social milieu and social mechanisms that affect the psychological factors. In conflict situations this term better reflects the reality and key determinants of the behaviour, emotions, and the psyche of the people. 'In this conception, psychosocial distress is the result of seeking to respond to overwhelming threat, not a sickness to be cured or a mental dysfunction. Specialised mental interventions may be necessary, even essential, to help to fill certain needs' (Ressler 168). One can identify three levels of psychosocial needs of children under conflict. These are: a) discomforting psychosocial needs requiring modest interventions, consisting of a larger group, b) disturbing psychosocial needs, which prefer special type of assistance with a few numbers than in ‘a’, while c) disabling psychosocial needs demand extraordinary interventions and guidance but will be needed by a small number.

Since all children do not face the gravity of psychosocial effects in the same manner, it is important that interventions be made to those who need them most and urgently and on a priority basis. This does not mean denying support to others, but the limited resources need to be utilized in a better and efficient manner. Such approaches are important for decision-makers and planners to prioritize the programmes due to limitations of funds and personnel. The UN is clear in this aspect and has laid down these in a number of articles in the International Law applicable to psychosocial aspects of children. Thus article 39, UN Convention on the Rights of Children categorically states that “State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social re-integration of a child victim of any form of neglect, exploitation or abuse: torture or any form of cruel, inhuman, degrading punishment: or armed conflicts. Such recovery and re-integration shall take place in an environment which fosters health, self-respect and dignity of child.”

Principle 5, Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959 has declared that, “The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his
particular condition.” These, along with a number of other articles focus on the importance of the needs of the children in conflict situations and draw attention of the international community to treat them with dignity, respect and provide maximum care in order to make the future world a better place for humanity. However laudable and useful in mitigating stress factors and looking into the rights of the child these may be, the reality is ambiguous and the ground situations change like quicksand due to lack of resources, political conflicts etc.

Key Characteristics of Children Under Conflicts

a) Gravity Focused Disturbances

The psycho-sociological factors can be discussed from the point of view of its gravity and origin of the problem.

Depressions

From the viewpoint of the gravity of the problem, the key areas relate to depression, traumas. Depressions by definition are results of early loss of ‘attachment figures.’ ‘There could be serious loss of dependency relationship, such that the child comes to fear or fantasize such a loss. Losses of this sort can set in motion a prolonged and exaggerated grief reaction. This, in turn, can set the stage for the development of depression when the child enters adulthood’ (Morgon et al, 1988: 649).

Death of a parent seems to be an important factor causing depressions in childhood. This is true of most situations in Afghanistan. Research indicates that depressed people have often high frequencies of unpleasant, unrewarding events in their lives. Moreover, depressed people experience these unpleasant situations than those who are less depressed. Since depressed people tend to be less rewarding than others to be partners in social life others tend to avoid them, which in turn aggravates their depressed minds/status (Arnold and Lewinsohn 1988: 649). The Afghan society is full of such children who have undergone and are undergoing depressions. A case in point illustrates the nature and severity of the psychological sufferings of these children. These are stories of children in the Setara Orphanage located in Taymani, Afghanistan. The conditions inside these orphanages further add to the sufferings of the already anguish children. Farida is one such girl who says, ‘my father was a worker and my mother was a tailor. Both were killed by rockets. I don’t like to stay in an orphanage. I have never seen a happy day in my life.’ Another girl is Fereshta who says,
'all my life is full of sorrow and grief. All days and nights I keep thinking that my father got killed and my mother remarried. I am hopeless. What can I do while I am in prison? I write these few lines with tears in my eyes. My life is miserable' (RAWA, 1997: 69).

An important research on depression hypothesis is that depression makes a person give up or leads to ‘learned helplessness.’ This means that people after experiencing a series of setbacks or failures, and reach the conclusion that there is no reason for them to proceed any more, because they are sure that failure is the end result and there is no way to prevent this happening. Such depressed persons generalize their failure across all situations for all times. The individual feelings of depressions can be extended to a larger community. Thus when all the members of the community feel in the same way there cannot be any progress and this seems to be a key characteristic in the Afghan scenario.

These setbacks relate at a macro level to negligence of Afghan issues by the international community. At the national level, constant migration and displacement lead to helplessness and may be some of the causes for the setbacks. The family level issues relate to continuous loss of beloved ones due to war or having been killed by enemies at home, which includes sufferings of women due to molestation, loss of husband, abduction of their daughters by commandos etc. All these lead to mental conflicts and depressions. They suffer from negative attitudes of self, the outside world, and the future. They see themselves as losers, and all their perceptions are coloured by this major premise. They even lack logical thinking. These distortions include arbitrary inference, i.e. coming to conclusions based on too little evidence or without any evidence; selective abstraction like drawing conclusions with one piece of evidence; over generalizations or unjustified conclusions; and exaggeration of a conclusion or limiting the significance of the information; and taking extreme views of a situation. (Morgan : 650).

Trauma

Trauma is the other disturbing factor, which these children experience as a result of conflicts. Traumatic experiences relate to children who are unaccompanied or in the care of others; children without basic survival necessities; children forced into conscription and killings; children who
witness macabre cruelties like murder, torture and death of parents and close associates; and children who are kidnapped, raped, and whose homes have been attacked etc. To this should be added children in deleterious conditions. These refer to those living in orphanages, detention camps, independently on the streets and in uncongenial homes. More could be added to the list. A large number of refugee Afghan children are on the streets in all the large cities in Pakistan and Kabul, and are earning a living by working in dangerous and unhealthy environments. All of them suffer from traumas. The disturbance to the family structure has had a great adverse impact on the lives of children. It would be very revealing to add from Nancy Dupree who states that there are very classic examples to illustrate the nature of anxieties and traumas amongst the children in Afghanistan. ‘Mothers have also talked to me at great length about their children because they have nightmares, which are very common in association with sleeplessness. These nightmares are, of course, a matter of stress for the whole family, especially since they usually sleep in very crowded conditions. There are many children who are confused and depersonalized. They don’t care about some funny lady coming in; they don’t run to see what something new is; they just sit. Many of them are in constant terror, a paranoid fear of anything new. They run to their mother’s skirts and they scream even though you haven’t said two words to them’ (Dupree Nancy 1988:72). These children suffer from concentration or performing any task. For example, if they go to fetch water these children wonder all over and come back without bringing water, completely forgetting the key task. Some are completely withdrawn, making the mothers undergo more distress.’ On the other hand, some are aggressive and hostile to anything and everything. They maltreat themselves and the environment and throw things around’ (ibid: 74).

b) Origin-Focused Disturbances

The second method of discussing the psychosocial factors that disturb children relate to the origin of the problems, although the key factor for all disturbances relate to conflict situations. These are basically indicators of disturbances of the personality of the child. Thus broadly speaking, these factors fall under the category of the origin of the psychosocial disturbances. However, the reader should remember that these are gray areas in the analysis of psychosocial situations and one should not be carried away with categorization as the final conclusion. They include the following:
Personality Disorders
Personality Disorders relate to thoughts and feeling of a state of mind and include shame for being alive, lack of desire to live, feeling of guilt and possessing a pessimistic view of life on the whole. Such persons suffer from depression and lack of concentration; experience nightmares; have flashbacks of the past; and feel unusual fear. Other characteristics relate to extended sadness over a period of time with anxiety and panic attacks. Constant irritation, flat display of emotions, fear of commonplace and separation are some other qualities that such people show.

Panic Disorders
This is another behavioural trait of persons under distress. Such disorders include hyperactivity, nervous tics, and high level of dependency. They can be highly startled; easily moved into tears; suffer from sleepiness; and express regressive behaviours like thumb sucking and bed-wetting. Such children would repeatedly describe their traumas but suddenly avoid talking about such events in an uncharacteristic manner.

Social Disorders
Socially such persons prefer to be isolated, show very aggressive behaviour with defiance and are sometimes rebellious in nature. As they are social isolates, they like to cling to someone in whom they have complete faith. To cite an example from Afghanistan would be very appropriate. According to a report in a journal “Farida, 18 year old with a crew cut, spends hours in an unlighted second-floor corridor hugging herself and saying nothing. She came to the orphanage 12 years ago after her parents were killed during combat between Afghanistan’s then Kremlin installed government and Muslim insurgents. Noor Jan, 9, is another speechless girl, who sometimes tears her clothes for no apparent reason. Orphanage workers said her mother, driven mad by a sound of bombs and rockets, burned four of Noor Jan’s sisters alive by throwing them in cooking fire.” (RAWA, 1997:68).

Physiological Disorders
Constant headaches associated with loss of weight, loss of energy, and loss of appetite are also some of the symptoms. Children may not exhibit what they are thinking or feeling; their mental injuries are hidden
in their psyche. They would not like to share any of their problems of fear, guilt, sadness, and possess a negative view of the future. Basically they are confused and suffer from and cope with traumas at the same time (Ressler 1993: 173-75; Morgon 1988: 631-662).

Refugee Children
As stated earlier, around 50 percent of the refugees comprise children. Hence the significance not only in terms of numbers but in relation to the future of Afghanistan and the roles that these children have to play in building their nation. Thus understanding the nature of children in the context of disturbances, psychological, social, and cultural aspects is very essential for policy makers, donors and the international community to help the children resurrect. The composition of the returnees would be an important starting point in this discussion. It is estimated that over 90 percent of the refugees are from rural areas (Dafda 1988: 52). Hence, basically the children are sons and daughters of farmers, herdsmen and those engaged in agricultural pursuits. This social phenomenon has to be understood carefully in developing educational programmes, which would be a challenging one indeed. How to provide such education in the refugee camps? This is yet another conflict, which involves social mechanisms. How can these children renounce their traditional cultural practices and adopt a new one? Thus they should either renounce their old culture or assimilate into a new one? It is a new culture, which adds pressure on them and brings about conflicts, adding to the psychological traumas.

The changes in the traditional functionality of the family is yet another cause of concern for the families and their children in the refugee camps. In the traditional family structure a whole retinue of relations is involved in taking decisions on behalf of the rest in a multilateral way, which includes uncles, aunts, and cousins etc., who form an integral part of the family life. Now the children are mostly without them living somewhat independently. How to reconcile this functionality gap and loss of family ties at early stages of life is an important social question. Children seem to leave their families earlier than usual and for survival they have to look for employment in the land of refuge. They are exploited and are forced to work. Delays in marriages in the camps due to economic conditions, is yet another problem of these children.
Undermining the authority of the parents, children blaming the parents for the current problems, and conflicts between urban and rural refugees are some of the other trends that have been observed amongst children of the Afghan refugees. The gravity of these cultural clashes seems to be more in the case of the Afghan refugees in Iran than in Pakistan, which is due to the ethnic composition of Pashtuns in Pakistan. The Pashtuns from Afghanistan were readily accepted. But 'life in Pakistan seems to lead to ... militarisation of children. Ideological training in refugee children's schools seems to lead to the creation of a new militant political culture among the refugee children. It seems that ...a neutral and more balanced method of school education could come into conflict with the goals and necessities of Jehad, which requires children to get acquainted with a concept of an enemy, which in turn involves development of hatred and militancy in children' (Dafda, 1988, p.55).

Thus migration has influenced the life pattern of Afghan families and children. These changes relate to functions, behaviour and structure of the family. The children also see in their father, who is the head of the family and decides everything for them, suddenly confronted in the streets by younger persons who abuse him with no reaction from him. The younger children do not understand and are unable to comprehend this anomalous behaviour of not reacting, as he does to them at home and in the family. This is a major conflict in the mind of the child. As a refugee he has to be in the backyard, which perhaps the children do not comprehend. The image of the parent as a protector is lost in the eyes of the child.

There is the other role of the child who has to act as an adult in the absence of parents and relatives. He is sometimes made to take decisions for which he is not mature enough but being the oldest in the family, it is imperative that he gives his judgement when needed, in relation to crucial situations of his younger members of the family. For example giving his consent for an operation of a younger member of the family, which is required by law. Children who should be in schools face these conflicts, which make their lives more miserable.

Apart from these there is the 'refugee camp syndrome', which causes psychological problems to the Afghan refugee children, which include the migration stress of moving from one place to another over periods of
time undergoing both physical and psychological stresses. Thus moving from one place of low temperatures in Afghanistan to another of higher temperatures inside Pakistan during different seasons causes physical weaknesses associated with dehydration, malnutrition, infectious disease etc. Poor primary health care leads to children growing physically and mentally weak. As a result they are prone to various diseases at the first instance (Dafda ibid: 65).

Dafda (1988) has identified a number of such refugee camp specific issues, some of which are similar to the stresses discussed earlier. Nevertheless, one finds similar issues in camps as well. Education is one such factor that results due to the non-education culture that prevails inside the camps. There is also an absence of encouragement from parents and as a result children suffer from intellectual retardation. Thus the whole community suffers from a collective catastrophe, which is a result of the uprooting from their homeland; being second-class citizens subject to various hardships; and a sense of dependence. Coupled with these is psychosocial stress resulting from high rate of mortality of children in the refugee camps; unemployment; poverty which affects their social life; hardships of the life camps; breaking of family and social hierarchy; family dispersion; feeling of humility and cultural shock.

Separation from objects of love is yet another key factor that disturbs the mental frame of the child. These relate to their original homeland and the free life their parents enjoyed inside Afghanistan. The stories related by the elders motivate the child to get back to Afghanistan, which is not possible. These lead to conflicts in the mind of the child causing further disorders.

Added to the above are the anxiety disorders of the parents. These have adverse bearings on the child as they project their problems onto the child in the form of beating the child; silencing the child harshly without any reason; and their preoccupation with their own problems which prevents them from attending to the needs of the child. Further these have led to rejection and depreciation of the child. The child feels that he is not wanted and against the desires of the parents (Dafda, ibid: 65-68).
Cultural Determinants of Behaviour

Different cultures have different ways of reacting to conflicts and interpreting depressions and traumas as each culture is a complex mixture of its own traditions, norms and values, which have been incorporated in a creative manner (Gianotten 1995: 193). Hence people of some cultures may be strong enough to withstand the graviest, adverse infliction of sufferings, while some others of another culture may be very sensitive and flee from centres of distress at the earliest opportunity. Some may be attached to their land and may not want to leave it at any cost. Since interpretations of stress and trauma may differ with culture, it is important for outsiders, who come from elsewhere and from different cultures, to understand the significance of the cultural factor in developing programmes and activities. Otherwise even well thought ideas and programmes might fail to be accepted by the recipients. In Afghanistan this seems to be an underlying cause for some of the conflicts between the locals and the international community, especially with reference to gender issues and feminism.

Although children of different cultures face distresses, which are common to all children in conflict situations, cultural factors determine the capacity and tenacity to withstand these distresses. Children have a natural mechanism to cope with these stresses, some successfully others ending up in failure and these have to be understood in the context of their culture. The common distress signals have to be understood by those who would be responsible for alleviating them. The age factor is another determinant of the ability to withstand the changes.

What should be done?

According to research and experience some of the traumas indicated above appear to disappear after a period of time. But some of these symptoms tend to relapse after a certain period—a pattern similar to rehabilitation of drug addicts who, after calm periods, revert to drugs when confronted with a drug situation. However studies carried out so far have not come to conclusive decisions regarding the validity of 'post-traumatic stress diagnostic' categories mainly due to cultural variations of children. There is much more to be investigated and known about impact of continuous stresses such as repression (Krener and Sabin 1985). The key factor in mitigating persons with distress is to provide for the needs of the children.
Who are the Beneficiaries?
Apart from the disturbed children who would directly benefit from the services, other beneficiaries include policy makers, programme implementers, and the educational personnel. All these personnel would be able to map out strategies and the interventions that are likely to give relatively better results and influence, resilience and recovery.

Factors Affecting Recovery
It should be remembered that different children react to the impact of stressful experiences in different ways. This perhaps complicates the deciphering of the causes. However, Ressler et al (UNICEF, 1993) studying the literature on this subject have identified eight types of influences that affect children's responses to stresses. These are a) predisposing factors, b) developmental stage, c) characteristics of the traumatic experiences, d) family support, e) social relationships, f) perceptions, g) physical condition and h) psychological resolution (Ressler, ibid, p.177). All these are to be underscored by cultural and physical environment factors. Those who have taken the responsibility of resurrecting children in conflicts, have to be mindful and aware of these while designing the modalities.

Basically predisposing refers to factors that are found in the child in a given situation, which are mostly results of personality traits, genetically inherited and cultural conditioning. Thus some children react to situations differently than others, though they are the products of the same environment. These differences are visible even amongst the family members. Some possess greater resilience than others, and the missing factor is the individual strength. Nurturing is a key factor in this aspect, and those who had enjoyed the love and care of parents during their childhood react positively and bravely to unforeseen traumas in life. They have the capacity of ‘readiness’ built in their physical and mental structure. As teachers and planners for the development of children, these factors have to be looked into carefully to achieve positive results in short-term periods.

Jean Piaget has studied the developmental stages of children carefully. His thesis lends itself to different levels or stages of child development from birth to adulthood, which include the period of infancy-sensorimotor stage, where the reflex patterns weave into intentional movement designed first to repeat, later to maintain, and then to produce new
changes in the environment leading to increasing understanding of means-end relationships. This is followed by pre-operational stage up to about 7 years when unsystematic reasoning commences. Development of language with little reasoning commences at this stage. It is at the next stage of development, which is referred to as concrete operational stage between years 7-12, when systematic reasoning begins. At the formal operational stage from the age of 12 years onwards that organised logic commences (Morgon 1988: 425-426). What is important for educationists and planners is to understand the needs of children at different stages of development with the skills and capacities that the children possess with the proposed interventions to match these inherent qualities. Each developmental stage has its own ways of exhibiting distress. Children express their distresses by overt and covert behaviours by crying or by apathy.

Understanding the nature of the traumatic experience is important. Children are influenced by the severity, the number of occurrences of the experience of the incident/s and its duration. Other factors relate to 'predictability, nature of the threat, victims directly targeted or of a secondary nature.' Depending on the nature of the trauma, steps can be taken to reduce the gravity of the problem, although children who are under constant deprivation cannot overcome the stresses fully and completely.

The support of the family is yet another factor that is important in the recovery of stress. Separation of family members tends to intensify the psycho-sociological factors in this exercise. The absence of a family member can deeply affect the behaviour pattern of the child. It causes the break of emotional attachments with the family group. Sometimes the break away of the family member seems to be a greater factor in bringing stress than war itself. Findings of studies have supported this argument to a greater extent (Burbury 1941, Bodman 1944).

The extent to which adult caregivers provide love and nurturing support to children is one of the most important variables related to the psychosocial responses of children' (Ressler 1993: 182). Thus teachers have to make sure whether the unit of family is complete and identify the missing links if any. Such an approach will help them understand the background of the child in their classroom. The gravity of this aspect can be seen by the following reports on the children of Afghanistan.
“The past decade and a half have been a calamity for most Afghans millions of whom have lost homes, livelihoods, relatives, herds and other property in this country’s civil war. But no group elicits more pity than the children who no longer have parents or loved ones to turn to in a society where family ties count for everything.” Really we cannot do the same thing that children’s parents do,” Darum Itam’s acting Director Abumuslim Mukhta, admitted. “The orphans feel different from other children when they see the kindness of fathers and mothers towards their own children; it is very painful for them. That, I think is the hardest thing for them to bear” (RAWA 1997: 68).

Social Camaraderie
Since man is a social creature where attachments and relationships form an important aspect of his daily life, the social life is a soothing agent in times of crisis. It is natural that people tend to consult and influence and assist each other in protecting and providing the needs of children or for that matter, any person in the community. In order to get the best judgements, teachers, priests, and elders are consulted. Social contact and support form an essential part of the social milieu and these are mutually supportive of each other in times of problems. The services for the community should be readily available at all times and these include health and schooling facilities. Availability of these, even under stress, is a revitalizing factor providing strength and confidence to the victims of stress: it provides an alternative source for rallying.

Perceptions of Children
As children perceive issues differently from that of adults it is important that one should know their ‘perceptions of events and responses to others, such as the family, peers, and society at large’.

UNHCR has special focus on the ‘psychosocial well being’ of refugee children. This is achieved through preventive measurers and providing special remedial assistance. One of the key reasons why psychological factors are important relates to the fact that they are developing, dependent, and vulnerable. They are never on hold and development needs do not wait for an emergency phase of the refugees to end. Thus they are provided with prevention methods, helping children directly, helping the family of the child and helping the community of the child. Both health and education are major components of these supportive measurers (Ogata 1992: 5, 37-48, 121).
X Entrepreneurship in Exile

Issues Resulting From Soviet Invasion Rationale
In this section education of refugees will be discussed separately because of the nebulous nature of the issue in terms of numbers, spatial distribution, duration of the stay and conflicts related to socio-economic and cultural aspects in the lands of refuge and ethical issues. The discussion will include a conceptual background of education for refugees/returnees and the programmes and strategies adopted by UN agencies for protection and rehabilitation and NGOs as supporting and implementing partners in this endeavor. Answers to questions as to why Afghans preferred to be in exile, facilities provided and problems encountered in the lands of refuge and causes to return are the focus of this chapter. The attention would be on the key issues of the education of refugees, returnees and the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and importance of education as a key factor in their development. Thus it would centre on the extent of influence of education as a pull/push factor, changes in the thinking and attitudes of the refugees to education of girls, education as a means of propaganda and ideological brainwashing, the role of the international community, especially UNHCR in pursuing education as an urgent need and the double standards, reactions of the local authorities to education development and bones of contention related to education in the lands of refuge. Because of the complexities, the new approaches to be adopted and paradigms to be developed for the education of the refugees would be a formidable challenge for the international community in general and to UNHCR in particular. The mandate of UNHCR for education of refugees and returnees is very unambiguous, as they will be functional in their home environment, rather than return to other countries once again. One reads this in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which categorically states the responsibility of UNHCR in education of the refugees/returnees when it states that "Make primary education compulsory and available free to all; Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child" (Article 28, UNHCR 1994). These have been carefully looked into at the moment with resources available, although there is more room for provision of educational facilities to a large segment of the refugee population.
Role of the International Community in the Education of Refugees

Never in the history of mankind have so many people been uprooted from their places of origin, nor has the world ever seen such a massive movement of people as it did during the last decade. The issue of migration has become so amorphous that it has gained a prominent position in the agenda of the United Nations and its member states. The key factors or trends that are discernable in the solutions to the refugee problem today relate to: i) the need to adopt a proactive and preventive approach, i.e. to take action to avert refugee movements before it becomes a problem; ii) involvement of wider spectrum of actors including international bankers iii) the importance of approaching solutions in an integrated manner, which includes solutions to armed conflicts, political repression, social violence, economic inequity, involuntary migration all of which coexist and reinforce each other; and iv) search for new solutions for negative manifestations such as declining in provision of support for refugees, ignoring protection principles, returning of refugees at the earliest etc. (UNHCR 1995:15-16). The problems related to refugees have become very complicated in 'scale, scope and complexity' over the last few years, thus affecting opportunities. Dangers relate to the increase of numbers that were uprooted during the post-cold war period, while opportunities depend on the international community to look at issues of good governance and dangers of small arms.

It is important to weigh these activities in relation to the norms and principles adopted/recommended by UNHCR in dealing with education of the children of refugees as well as development programmes for them. A great amount of emphasis is laid on the protection and healthy development of the children by UNHCR. These principles include assurances to both girls and boys and also the special needs of children. The activities should be child focussed and carried out with the full participation of the families and communities (UNHCR, Refugee Survey Quarterly 1996).

UNHCR is emphatic on the importance of the intellectual development and future wellbeing of every refugee child. A variety of measurers have been adopted by UNHCR to improve the quality of learning to these children. In this connection a set of guidelines has been developed, which includes choice of curriculum, teacher training, administration and supervision, education of girls, basic education and training of school leavers, including
out-of-school youth and the refugee community. Guidelines have been prepared for field management and implementation of primary education emergency situations. These guidelines include strategies for helping children experiencing war-related stress and research on types and categories of traumas amongst war affected children (UNHCR, Refugee Survey Quarterly 1999).

Attention is paid to the needs of disabled children as well since there is a significant number of such who needs preventive action and rehabilitation. UNHCR in principle accepts that the disabled children should be developed to enable them integrate into the normal society and share the social life as normal citizens. The significance is clearly indicated in no uncertain terms in Article 22 of the 1951 of the Refugee Convention where it states that:

1) The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.
2) The Contracting States shall accord to refugees treatment as favourable as possible, and in any event, not less favourable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances with respect to education other than elementary education and particularly in regard to access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges, and the award of scholarships" (UNHCR 1990:18).

UNHCR is very explicit about the educational services that should be provided and how it should be organized. Accordingly, educational assistance to refugee children must be based on a timely and sound assessment of their needs by competent authorities, which should begin in the emergency phase and regularly updated. Such an assessment should provide access to satisfactory level of education, maintaining their cultural identity, assisting in the understanding of the life of the country of asylum and developing practical skills in the development of their economic life. The assessment development of programmes should be followed by the participation of the refugee community. In this connection UNHCR currently contributes to primary education in a number of countries in relation to building and maintenance of schools, school equipment, educational supplies, teacher training and salaries, uniforms, transport and even school fees. Attempts are also made to bring a balance of sex ratios
in such programmes (UNHCR, Refugee Survey Quarterly 1996: 93). In this case, Kandahar and the Eastern provinces in Afghanistan need to be mentioned where UNHCR is assisting both formal schools and home schools for both girls and boys in the provision of primary education. This will be discussed in detail under 'Education of Returnees,' in Chapter XI. The key objective in the provision of education relates to the development of the refugees in the country of refuge and integration both in the place where they are and later back in their own country.

UNHCR also supports programmes related to post-primary and tertiary education in Pakistan, skill development programmes, pre-school education and language training. The mandate of the UNHCR is wide, not only to provide shelter but to enhance human resource development of the individuals as well, to enable them to improve the quality of life, wherever they live. Considering that refugee children constitute one-half of the world's refugee population, they have specific problems, which demand special protection and durable assistance. Projecting this ratio to the Afghan context indicates that over a million of the refugees are children.

Reasons for Seeking Refuge
Interestingly, the Afghan refugees like to be in exile more due to the facilities available for their social and economic activities, rather than for their personal security. In the countries of exile, the Afghans have had better access to schools, health services electricity, gas, water, markets, income generating activities etc. In such a scenario there is little incentive for them to return to Afghanistan, perhaps other than being with their own community. Thus for repatriation, the social structure should be stable with facilities for personal development enabling them to lead 'productive lives and re-integrating with other members of the population.'

Political
There were many reasons for the Afghans to leave their country. The immediate reasons were fear for life and limited economic opportunities, which have almost been 'exhausted.' Economic and social climate of Afghanistan deteriorated. 'Prices rose sharply while incomes declined, service facilities were cut off while education facilities outside the major cities effectively ceased to exist' (Farr and Merriam 1998). However, this is not the first time that those from eastern parts of Afghanistan, especially Pashtuns, changed their abode. They had 'traversed this zone into what is now Pakistan as invader, trader, smuggler and most
Most Afghans left Afghanistan as political refugees between 1973-78 but the process escalated with the Soviet occupation in 1979. The bulk of these live in the North-west Frontier Province and Baluchistan both bordering Afghanistan. However, Afghans are found all over in Pakistan from Peshawar in the north to Karachi in the south. Those who are in refugee camps are registered, but an equally large number of refugees are unregistered and live near the borders of the camps. This number varies from 60,000 to 250,000. Those from the western parts of Afghanistan left for Iran, due to ethnicity, language and proximity.

Another reason for the flight is well described by a British traveller during this period through the eastern part of Afghanistan. 'We passed through an area where, according to a mujahid, three thousand families had lived before the war. There was almost no one left. As if an earthquake had devastated the land, hardly a house remained intact. Splintered roof beams, piles of rubble, tangles of weeds and clover flourished at the edges. Broken irrigation channels and in the orchards, the air was pungent with the smell of fallen fruits rotting on the ground' (Hodsen 1986).

The flight of the middle-class was the result of their involvement directly in politics and in the struggle for or against the political masters, the Soviets. Though they did not necessarily belong to the higher intellectual group, they were the dynamism and the power that supported both the reformists/revolutionaries and the opposite anti-reformists/conservative groups. Thus of the two groups, one supported the Soviets and the other opposed their invasion. In the process, as their struggles continued, both became victims of this catastrophe of idealism and fundamentalism. As a result a large number who were fortunate to escape, took the cause to the lands of refuge, while considerable number of 'conservatives' were killed and imprisoned during Soviet occupation, while the 'progressives' faced the same fate after the eviction of the Soviets. One could also see another phenomenon during the same periods in the refugee camps in Pakistan. Here schools in the refugee camps were used as centres to build up support for the cause of the resistance groups of the 'mujahideens,' in
the same way as the communists did inside Afghan schools to propagate their ideology. The inclusion of concept of 'jehad' in the school curriculum by University of Nebraska, Omaha, (USA) is a clear example of this trend. Both strategies brought in a disaster, unprecedented in Afghan history, vis-à-vis the development of education in the country, which aggravated the culture of war and resulted in an avalanche of refugees. In this debacle, the USA cannot absolve itself from the past sins of creating 'extremists,' 'fundamentalists,' and 'Bin Ladens'.

**Better Pastures**

There were those affluent and articulate Afghans who left in search of better pastures in the West. They were skilled and qualitatively better. The professional groups who left for the west were the critical ones in the future development of Afghanistan. Although they are sympathetic to the issues in their country, it is very unlikely that they would return home with their families and face the risk. Fleeing of intellectuals to the western countries from 1979 to 1990s was a result of the 'inability of the Kabul regime to retain the loyalty of these key ideologically uncommitted but fiercely nationalist urban elitists' (Magnus and Naby 1998:147). This caused a major lacuna in the education environment in Afghanistan, as the country was deprived of the intellectual guidance and strength to provide support to the educational progress. However, at that time it did strengthen and help to communicate to the outside world the rationale for resistance against the Soviets by these intellectuals. During the period between 1978-1992, sixty-five university professors perished and around 100 left the country as refugees.

**Impact on Educational Institutions**

It is also very tragic and unfortunate to find how both the government and the opposition forces in Afghanistan and in the refugee camps used schools and educational institutes in the 1980s and 1990s as bases for recruitment of youth to the front. In fact, one of the reasons why the youth and adults left Afghanistan was fear of conscription by any one of the groups, the Soviets or the mujahadeens. This had adverse effects on the minds of the youth, which pervades even to date. The objectives related to the development of the individual were superseded by new objectives to wage war against each other. For example, Hizbi-i-Islami, a political group formed under Gulbadeen Hikmatyar, recruited members from where tribal structures have broken down or which have
a mixture of groups from different tribes. Hizbi did not by any means confront/cause micro-segregation of Afghan society. The boys who grew up in refugee camps did not represent any one social group inside Afghanistan. Thus Hizbis depended on the revolutionary Islamic schools in refugee camps in Pakistan for their recruits. On the other hand, the key source of recruitment inside Afghanistan to fight against Hizbis was from the government tribal boarding schools in Kabul, that 'taught an official ideology from that of the popular culture.' For the Hizbi the largest such numbers were not from Afghanistan but from the camps of refugee settlements in Pakistan. Hizbi gained access to these camps and built a network of schools with the aim of recruiting refugee youth for the front (Rubin 1997). With the assistance of Pakistan government Hizbi had '250 schools with 43,000 students and a staff of 1,500 teachers and administrators' (Rastegar 1991). The graduates of these schools formed the core of Hikmatyar's force. Most of Hizbi leaders were products of modern education received from Afghan universities. It is very strange and pathetic to note that products of education and schools of the Afghans fought each other to destroy their own nation.

It is also very bizarre that both armies were funded by foreign sources running into billions of US dollars and Russian Rubles and whatever the country could export at that time. The aftermath of these wars was that education of the country suffered not only in terms of destruction of educational institutions but also orchestration of evils in the minds of the children towards corruption and diverting the attention to 'jehads' in solving problems. Education in the camps was directed at developing skills and attitudes needed to fight for 'jehad.' The whole curriculum was focused on achieving these objectives (c.f. section in curriculum, chapter V), which remains unchanged to date. This is a major flaw in the education for Afghan refugees, which could have played a more constructive role in bringing about positive changes in the curriculum of schools in the refugee camps.

Land of Refuge: Pakistan
Against this background, the focus is on what is happening at the ground level of the refugee camps both in Pakistan and Iran. This will include the educational activities, innovative practices, agencies and their programmes, vocational programmes for youth and the problems confronting both in terms of funds and opportunity costs to the families. It will also reveal the impact of education on the refugees on their return
to Afghanistan and the changes that are taking place with assistance from the international community, especially UNHCR. Another aspect on which to concentrate is the need for tertiary education of youth living as refugees for over two decades. We will also look at the problems and prospects in this area.

The biggest single group of refugees in the world is from Afghanistan, which in 1990 was calculated to be 6.2 million, almost 30 percent of the total population of the country. The influx of refugees to the neighbouring countries commenced in 1980 and ever since this movement has not stopped. This can be considered as the greatest tragedy of the Afghans though for the first time it has created an opportunity for interaction with different cultures—something which did not take place in the earlier centuries. This discussion also focuses more in the direction of the impact of migration on educational development of the migrants.

Migration has been of two major categories, namely external migration to other countries, especially to Pakistan and Iran and internal displacement (IDPs). The largest numbers involved in migration relate to people leaving Afghanistan, of which a majority left for Pakistan, numbering 1.2 million out of a total of 2.7 million. The other countries to which Afghans have gone as refugees, are Iran (1.4m), Russia (20,000), India (19,000) and Central Asian countries (36,000) (UNHCR, Refugee 1997).

Ethnicity and Choice of Roosting

Another interesting phenomenon in the migration pattern relates to the sources of origin. It seems that most of the refugees to Iran have been from the western provinces of Herat, Farah and Nimroz, which are in close proximity. The refugees to Pakistan have been mainly from the other provinces, notably in the east. Seemingly, factors of proximity, ethnicity and tribal affiliations may have been the determining factors in this connection. Religious sects of these coincide with migratory patterns. By and large, the Pashtu speaking Sunnis moved to the east while Dari, Shia groups preferred moving to the west in Iran. The most interesting fact of the migration pattern relates to the sources in Afghanistan, which indicate that almost 90% of the refugees originate from 15 out of the 32 provinces. These are located in the eastern, southern and western Afghanistan. Thus the central, northern and northeastern areas of Afghanistan count only for the remaining 10 percent (UNDP, Kabul 1990).
As stated, migration to the west and other developed countries, though relatively small compared to the mass migration to the neighbouring countries, is enormous in terms of quality. The more affluent and skilled professionals are in the west due to selective processes of those countries and preferences of the migrants themselves so that there has been a natural class bias of the movements. There are of course, constant new arrivals, though very small compared to the early migrations, who have moved due to the continuous conflicts that occur in the Northern and Central Highlands of Afghanistan, especially from Bamyan and from the Hazaras and Tajiks.

"In relation to protection both Pakistan and Iran generally are safe countries of first asylum for Afghan refugees. Nonetheless, the Pakistani authorities are unable to ensure the safety of a number of refugees, mainly those identified as opponents to the Taliban and some educated women of urban background who have no traditional family support. UNHCR resorts to resettlement of such refugees to other countries, or when feasible and appropriate, relocation within Pakistan' (UNHCR 1999).

Spatial Distribution of Refugees in Pakistan

In the spatial distribution of refugees in Pakistan, North-west Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan has the largest number amounting to 1.2 million, with 80,000 families in 54 refugee camps, while Baluchistan has a population of around 704,000 in 66 camps and another 100,000 in Punjab. This is in addition to over 500,000 to 2 million people living in areas in the main cities throughout Pakistan, for example Islamabad has 77,000 refugees in 11,145 families (The News, July 12, 2000). It should be stated that Pakistan has very warmly welcomed these refugees in spite of the fact that it is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugee and has granted asylum to all Afghans on a prima facie basis. This fact has to be appreciated very much by the United Nations, International Community, and especially by the Afghans themselves. The refugees in Pakistan were treated with tremendous generosity both by the government and the people as part of the traditional welcome. By the end of 1980s, there were 350 refugee tent villages (RTVs) more or less like small cities or 'mini-Afghanistans.' The amount of land utilized by these refugees, and the strain on the infrastructure is tremendous. Even with less assistance from the international community Iran too forged ahead in assisting the refugees (UNHCR, Refugee 1997). When the international community reflects on these generosities in decades to come, it would be
remembered as one of the greatest gestures of human kind to their kith and kin, in times of disaster and untold miseries.

(A) Refugee Education: Comparison with the Afghan Situation

It is interesting to make a comparison between the education that prevails inside Afghanistan and with the same in the refugee camps. Thus similarities occur in relation to a number of factors. The differences relate to gender, lack of state-sponsored schools, and absence of permanent buildings and levels of participation. In the refugee camp schools both boys and girls are admitted without restrictions and any discrimination. Girls can go up to higher levels if they so desire and 40 percent of students in the self-help five universities in Peshawar and Afghanistan are girls (UNHCR 1998). Most schools function in tents, which are not government schools as such, but are termed as refugee schools in Pakistan. On the other hand, a number of private schools are established and the number seems to be multiplying quickly, especially in the cities of Peshawar, Quetta and Islamabad. Although, Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, has no refugee camps, nearly 30 private schools function for Afghan children, which is an indication of the number of refugees living outside the camps. This is also a reflection of the quality of life of the refugees since they have to pay for the education of their children in these private schools. In addition, Afghans who are not in the refugee camps, attend local Pakistani schools. What is important in all these is the eagerness of the Afghan community to provide education to their children, especially in learning English. A study carried out by one of the Pakistani newspapers, namely, The Frontier Post has revealed that the Afghan refugees have developed a deep acumen in English reading, writing, and speaking through a large numbers of English Learning Centres. These are established in rented houses. Afghans wish to have English as the third language of instruction in education. They need English for both psychological impressions, seeking employment in Pakistan and travelling abroad. Thus both in and outside the camps the level of interest and participation of the students is much higher than those inside Afghanistan. The author has visited a considerable number of schools both in camps and others inside Afghanistan and has seen the interest of the students in education and the ambitious plans they have for their future.

The similarities between the two systems i.e. schools in RTVs and inside Afghanistan relate to the low level of literacy among the Afghans, meager facilities, traditional type of education, which is presumably of an academic
type, dependency on external assistance other than in the private schools in the cities of Pakistan, keen interest of the middle class, greater demand than can be provided and lack of reliable data on the schools system. It is interesting to note that while children in schools inside Afghanistan are following the traditional forms of learning and the number in schools is either decreasing or not growing, educational opportunities on modern aspects for the refugee children seem to be increasing and widening. These include access to education in Computer Technology, English, Business Management, and other skills development aspects.

The migrants, in a way, are more fortunate in that they have relatively better access to educational facilities and or at least are exposed to relatively better environments, which put stress on the culture of learning and the role of education in development. Furthermore, accessibility of education for both sexes at all levels is another advantage the refugees enjoy with positive impact on their attitudes. 'For many Afghan women, life in exile opened new horizons through contacts with people and things previously unknown' (Bradsher 2000). A comment by one of the Afghan refugee teachers in Peshawar further supports the view of the significance of refugee exposure. Thus according to him 'if on the one hand, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 had opened up still an unending chapter of agonies and miseries for the Afghan nation. On the other hand, it had virtually opened up the world of knowledge to them. Today, Afghans are in Pakistan, India, Europe and America. In case they come back to their homeland, they will bring new and fresh ideas besides a complete knowledge of internationally spoken languages like English' (The Frontier Post, February 9, 1999). Even though all the children of the refugees may not avail these opportunities, their awareness of the role of the education and the importance given to education for both sexes has a great influence and motivation in developing positive attitudes for change of behaviour amongst the adults. All these advantages and experiences are not enjoyed by these IDPs, inside Afghanistan. They move from a place of deprivation to another of the same or even of worse nature, with little or no support from elsewhere.

Funding from UNHCR for education is confined to the camps and limited to the primary cycle. Since 1999, UNHCR has provided nearly US$ 100,000 to the Afghan University established in Peshawar. Over the last few years funding for refugees has declined affecting the education programmes currently amounting to around US$ 700,000, which came especially from
the government of Japan. Besides, the numbers that return to Afghanistan have not increased appreciably, which further aggravates the financial situation. The major problem is how to accommodate the refugees for an indefinitely extended period of stay since the donors are not forthcoming to assist the refugee cause.

Refugee Education in Pakistan

The education of refugees has been systematically taken care of and planned by UNHCR in collaboration with NGOs. In this section, education programmes, including basic education executed in Pakistan, is briefly discussed. Here basic education refers to the provision of skills needed for better quality of life and this includes services related to health and mother child health programmes and community involvement activities. The key NGOs involved in the education of the refugees are Swiss Aid for Afghans with 14 schools, Okenden International 84, IRC Secondary Education 3, GTZ Out of School 49, IRC Home Schools 49, IRC Female Schools 30 Education Cell 81, Afghan Institute for Learning 5, GTZ Home School 9, and SAVE USA 49 schools (UNHCR 2000).

These schools are spread over NWFP, Punjab and Baluchistan, (three key provinces bordering Afghanistan and sharing religious, cultural and ethnic affinities with Afghanistan). UNHCR, collaborating with Commissionerate for Afghans, provides funds to GTZ, which has the largest number of schools and children (see Tables 1-4)

Table 1  Types of Schools for Refugees Supported by UNHCR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>NWFP</th>
<th>Punjab</th>
<th>Baluchistan</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal schools</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home schools</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-school</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>804</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - UNHCR, Pakistan, 2000
Table 2  Gender Distribution of Schools in the Provinces Supported by UNHCR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>NWFP</th>
<th>Punjab</th>
<th>Baluchistan</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source- UNHCR, Pakistan, 2000

Table 3  Cycles of Learning Supported by UNHCR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>NWFP</th>
<th>Punjab</th>
<th>Baluchistan</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - UNHCR, Pakistan, 2000

Table 4 Total Students - Gender-Wise Supported by UNHCR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NWFP</td>
<td>117,617</td>
<td>58,262</td>
<td>176,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>1,155</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>2,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>17,790</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>18,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136,562</td>
<td>60,491</td>
<td>197,053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - UNHCR Study of EFA 2000, 1999

FS - Formal school, HS-Home school, OS-Out of school
Pr - Primary, Mid - Middle, Sec- Secondary B-boys,
G - Girls, Mx - Mixed

Table 5 Private and Self Help Schools of the Refugees in Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Types of Schools</th>
<th>Schools Genderwise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Pri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWFP</td>
<td>12,108</td>
<td>3,382</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total schools - 65
Total students - 22,490  (boys 14,908, girls 8,700)

Source - UNHCR study for EFA 2000, 1999
The establishment of private schools is a recent phenomenon indicating the desire of the parents to educate their children, which is a very positive signal. One can see from the above tables that there is an increase in the number of senior secondary schools, especially from the private/self-help categories. The actual number of senior secondary private schools in the NWFP and Punjab may be higher than indicated. It is because the international institutions are focussing more on the needs of the primary group and this gap for senior secondary education seems to be the responsibility of the community. Apparently it is one of the reasons why Afghan refugees in Pakistan take risks and compete in economic activities vis-à-vis the Pakistanis to earn to educate their children. The fact that these refugees have been in Pakistan for over two decades also indicates the needs of higher education. Thus those who were five years of age at the time of seeking refuge two decades ago should be, under normal circumstance, at the doorstep of the university or any other tertiary educational institute after fifteen years of schooling.

The data in table 5 indicates that about 70 percent of the students attending schools, both in the private schools and others funded by NGOs, are boys. Of the total number of students in refugee schools, which is 220,661—both NGOs and private schools—boys constitute 151,470 (69%) while 69,191 (31%) are girls. However, one can see that nearly 37 percent of the total students in the private schools of the refugees from all the provinces are girls, which is yet another encouraging feature (see table 6). It indicates the desire of parents even to pay for and provide education to their children, which shows the culture of learning among the refugees.

Table 6 Distribution of Student Population Gender-Wise Private and NGO Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>NGO Schools</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NWFP</td>
<td></td>
<td>117,617</td>
<td>58,262</td>
<td>175,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td></td>
<td>12,108</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>16,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>NGO Schools</td>
<td>17,790</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>18,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>NGO Schools</td>
<td>1,155</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>2,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: NGO &amp; Private</td>
<td>151,470 (69 %)</td>
<td>69,191 (31 %)</td>
<td>220,661</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - UNHCR study for EFA 2000, 1999

Schools adopt various methods to provide greater access and accommodate a large number of children. Advocating two shifts is one
such strategy, which is more feasible due to the inability to find accommodation for all and helps cut down the costs of rent and additional salaries etc. It is also interesting to note from the above data (table 6) that the number of girls attending schools is not very far short of boys, considering the cultural milieu of the refugees especially of those who are from the tribal areas. There are different attitudes towards education, especially of girls from different tribes. These differences are visible when we compare education of girls amongst ethnic groups. Thus the participation of girls from the Pashtun families is less in comparison with that of Dari speaking groups (Table 7).

Table 7  Language and Participation - Quetta City Schools Baluchistan, Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dari Speaking</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>322 (13 %)</td>
<td>2097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pashtu</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>1850 (98 %)</td>
<td>28 (02 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - EFA Study 2000, UNESCO, Islamabad 1999

The author in his visits to refugee camp schools noted that some tribal families do not like their children to be taught by members of another tribe. Nor do they want their children to attend schools that are located away from their tribal group. However, the desire for learning can be seen in some camps where even young married girls attend school. Girls' participation has increased considerably over the last few years. Provision of edible oil to girls has been one of the attractions to attend school. At times, one finds that boys are greater economic supporters of the family and are kept at home by the parents. These are important factors to be considered in designing educational programmes for refugees in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. Western notions of adopting universal norms may not be appropriate in contexts of this nature.

Table 8  Gender and Level-Wise Distribution of Students in Private Schools NWFP, Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>588 (54 %)</td>
<td>508 (46 %)</td>
<td>1096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary/High School</td>
<td>1041 (37 %)</td>
<td>1807 (63 %)</td>
<td>2848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1629 (41 %)</td>
<td>2315 (59 %)</td>
<td>3944</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - EFA Study, UNESCO, Islamabad, 2000
The above data (table 8), which is based on the NWFP, clearly indicates that greater interest in secondary education is among girls leading them a step closer to higher education. This is indeed very reassuring and indicates that given the opportunity, the girl child will exploit such chances to the maximum. However, there are doubts cast over the quality of these private schools, some of which are bogus and scandalous providing poor services and are opened solely for money making. It was very encouraging to hear a mother in Quetta, Baluchistan (Pakistan) say, 'our life is over. We need education for our girls instead.' It also augurs well for the future of the women's role in the development of the Afghan society. Of the total school-going population in the refugee camps of Pakistan, which is around 220,000, there are a fair number of students who aspire to enter higher educational institutes/tertiary education programmes. This number, though small and far less than in countries of high literacy rates, is a welcome sign for the refugees. One can see their desire for higher education in the establishment of 5 private, self-help universities in the NWFP, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Another encouraging feature in the schools for refugees is the presence of old boys from the same school serving as teachers.

Modalities Adopted to Encourage Education Amongst Children in Refugee Camps

Briefly some of the measures that have been adopted by the international community, private institutions and members of the refugee community to motivate children to study are as follows:

I. Student Motivation

- setting up of mixed schools;
- provision of edible oil for girl child resulting in attendance of girls better than boys;
- provision of materials, textbooks and stationery;
- supply of supplementary reading materials (UNHCR and BBC);
- awarding of prizes to students at school level;
- encouraging even very old children to attend school - age varies from 6-20 years in the primary grades (see table 9);
- encouragement of student leadership through establishing prefect/monitor systems, games, extra curricular activities and other competitions;
provision of different curricula to different clientele groups, thus short courses for elders/youth which could be completed in 6 months;
combining literacy with functionality to the adults;
needs of the tribe looked into in skills development programmes and location of the school;
priority given to vulnerable groups such as disabled and handicapped; and
consideration for age and resources in the locality are also factors in the determination of programmes.

II. Teacher Motivation/Professional Development
- regular training programmes in pedagogy;
- training programmes on first aid;
- evaluation of teachers based on the performance of students at examinations;
- awarding prizes and certificates to teachers at the end of each year;
- payment of salaries to teachers; and
- provision of edible oil to teachers in some areas.

III. Community Interest
- establishment of various committees for health, water management, social welfare, security by the communities;
- setting up of home based schools for girls who have to travel far to a school or who is not allowed by the family;
- members to attend formal schools; and
- establishment of separate English medium schools.

IV. Provision of Services
- provision of medical support at a very low cost;
- visits to the school by medical officers once a month advising students on personal hygiene; and
- provision of skills development programmes to both refugees and children from the locality (Pakistan) to avoid clashes and bring harmony between refugees and the local population.
V. Management

- adopting appropriate curriculum;
- careful monitoring of attendance and follow-up measures by SAVE, USA, Afghan Commissionerate on their schools;
- reduction of the school year by working on Saturdays;
- regular discussions at the NGO coordinating body, ACBAR along with UN agencies; and
- regular meetings of the staff, with the principal and the camp managers and discussion of issues related to school, students, services, professional problems.

(UNHCR, Pakistan 1999)

It has also been revealed that the initial objections by refugees to education of girls and monitoring of the anti-social activities of refugee community, were later given up and accepted as important for the well being of refugees due to appointment of leaders from the refugee community to look into these issues. It is a process of participatory development.

Getting Ready for Post Refugee Status

One can see the growing interest of the refugee community, getting ready on their own, for the post-refugee problems that they are to encounter in Afghanistan. Lack of facilities for education after the destruction of the educational structures, as referred to earlier inside Afghanistan by the internecine warfare has been one of the causes for the Afghans to seek refugee status. The males, both skilled and unskilled, even leave their families in Pakistan and Iran, and seek employment in the Middle East or elsewhere to pay for the education of their children. In fact, one of the blessings of being a refugee relates to their compulsory exposure to other relatively developed cultural scenarios. This is especially so with the illiterates and those from the lower strata of the Afghan society, who otherwise, would not have become aware of the massive changes that are taking place in the 21st century, the challenges of the modern world and the importance of new skills and behaviours to face these changes. Thus this new culture of the need to learn to be a useful citizen and improve the quality of life has influenced the returnees as well. It would be pertinent to quote the author's interactions with the locals on two different occasions in high returnee eastern areas of Afghanistan. One of the community leaders from Azro (Eastern area, Nangahar Province), the first group to flee with the arrival of Soviets in the 1980's but now returning, said that 'if education
is provided to our children, both girls and boys, we would bring the rest of our tribe the very next day to these parts.' This indicates the desire for education and the trust they hold in education. In another district, Gardez, of the same province, a member of the village education committee was very emotional when he said that 'we are dependant today because we are not educated. Our parents instead of sending us to schools wanted us to look after sheep and cattle. They even hid us when officers from the Ministry of Education came to check whether children are attending school. But now we have realized that we are blind and deaf as a result of ignorance in this world due to our illiteracy. Therefore, we will see that this disaster will not fall on our children, both boys and girls, even if outsiders do not support us" (CARE International educational programme in Gardez).

Table 9  Age Structure of Students in Home Schools, Primary Grades – Baluchistan (SAVE USA) – 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Total Number of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Years</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 11</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>67 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – 20</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>18 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - EFA study 2000, UNESCO, Islamabad, 1999

University Education

There were five universities established for Afghan students as of the 1990s, in Peshawar, Pakistan. Of these, one was exclusively for girls. The total number of students was 3020 out of which 1200 (40%) were females. These five universities had an academic staff of 564 all of whom were Afghan refugee educationists, and had served in Afghan universities earlier. Some of these were supported by NGOs such as Norwegian Afghanistan Committee, while others depended on the fees collected from students. However, all these were closed in 1998 by the government of Pakistan. At present one university is open to accommodate all these students. It is very encouraging that these retired university dons from Afghanistan opted more or less voluntarily to commence universities despite the shortcomings in terms of buildings, laboritories, libraries, funds and salaries. The faculties included medicine, agriculture, engineering, humanities and journalism. Although the standards may not be of a higher order, the Afghans were determined to provide university education so that 'these universities were for Afghans, the degree is for the Afghans, conducted by Afghan professors, to serve the needs of the Afghans...
Even if we produce half a doctor we would be satisfied than not having any' (UNHCR Study 1998, Talbot, UNHCR 2000). This is a clear indication of the dire need for higher education by the Afghan students and the commitment of the elder Afghans to educate their children though this is not a welcome sign and does not augur well in the context of the future higher education in Afghanistan.

There were a number of reasons for the closure of the universities by the local authorities of the government of Pakistan. These were related to the following:

- lack of basic facilities especially in the medical and engineering faculties;
- lack of competent managers;
- absence of a quality curriculum;
- absence of entry criteria;
- absence of comparability in examinations;
- inability to apply the concept of university to these institutions;
- produced quacks; and
- centres of money machines than academic institutions.

As a result, all these universities were combined and a new university was opened in Peshawar, NWFP, Pakistan. For this university UNHCR has already undertaken to provide funds for higher education as part of its commitment to 'ensure that the ladder of educational opportunity is open in some form, from entry to class 1 to the level of at least the first secondary school leaving programme.'

CIDA, NAC and UNHCR are the key supporters for this university, although 33 per cent of the budget is still collected from the students. The fees charged from the university students vary with the course of studies: medicine and engineering (Rs. 500/-) and literature (Rs.300/-). The university has 9 faculties for males (2170) and 4 for females (643). These include computer Sciences, Stomotology etc. The university is looking forward to having affiliations with other universities in Pakistan and elsewhere. The World Bank has already conducted a need assessment survey of the university (ACBAR 2000).

Implementing Partners in Education

A number of UN agencies, NGOs, and private individuals are involved in providing education for children in the refugee camps and outside camp
villages. Of the UN agencies, UNHCR provides funding; WFP assists with food items (edible oil); UNICEF assists with material needs related to both education and health; and UNESCO provides technical support in training of personnel and developing educational materials. All NGOs work under the umbrella of the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) based in Peshawar. ACBAR has an education sub-committee, which meets regularly and monitors the programmes, exchanges experiences and implements activities. A striking feature of these NGOs is that they have educationists with long years of experience inside Afghanistan some of whom have been university dons and working in Pedagogical Institutes. However, their knowledge has to be updated, but they do not seem to have access to latest resource materials either. The focus of these NGOs in relation to refugee education depends on their capacities and funding.

The mandates of these NGOs relate to the following key areas:

i. Development of materials for teachers, principals, and adults;

ii. Development of textbooks for children including guide books for teachers and principals;

iii. Training of personnel which includes teachers, principals, members of the community;

iv. Provision of resource materials, supplementary reading materials; and

v. Provision of adult education programmes.

Few NGOs support madrasses. Assistance to secondary education is minimal and so is the support for private or self-help schools in the cities. The disabled are also supported by some of the NGOs. The following table provides data of the schools supported by UNHCR in collaboration with NGOs in the NWFP:

### Table 10  Education Data in the NWFP Refugee Camps – Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GTZ COPE</td>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>67,917</td>
<td>25,508</td>
<td>93,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okenden International</td>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>4,849</td>
<td>3,461</td>
<td>8,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Aid for Afghans</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Pri/Sec.</td>
<td>3,312</td>
<td>1,855</td>
<td>4,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Type</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Pri/Sec.</td>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>T/P Ratio</td>
<td>T/P Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC Secondary</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Pri/Sec.</td>
<td>3,781</td>
<td>123 (31)</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC Home Schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1,274</td>
<td>49 (37)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC Female Schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Pri/Sec.</td>
<td>17,297</td>
<td>668 (26)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Cell</td>
<td>UNHCR Partial</td>
<td>Pri/Sec.</td>
<td>4,602</td>
<td>312 (18)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghan Institute of Learning</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Pri/Sec.</td>
<td>1,392</td>
<td>40 (33)</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ Home Schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ out of school</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1,409</td>
<td>48 (29)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-help schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>110 (136)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>152,202</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers in parentheses shows Teacher Pupil (T/P) Ratio (UNHCR, Islamabad, May 2000).

According to table 10, one can observe that the T/P ratio ranges from 18 to 42, which, in comparison to some of the developing countries, is seemingly satisfactory in the given situation of these schools. One could also note that some NGOs concentrate on the education of girls only. Further, in some, the number of girls exceeds far more than that of the boys.

A detailed discussion of the specific activities related to basic education would provide greater understanding of the nature of the programmes and the impact they have on refugees. The programmes are concerted efforts and coherent in implementation so that the beneficiaries, both children and adults, are directed towards achieving set goals. These programmes are not affected by vicissitudes of the culture of war and edicts of Taliban who stood as obstacles to educational programmes in Afghanistan. These basic provisions include education, health, and community participation. The approach in the operations of these programmes has been of an integrated nature.

The discussion that follows consists of:

a. exogenic factors/forces, meaning assistance provided by outside agencies/actors to assist in the development of and sustainability of structures, ideas, knowledge and competencies.
These consist of international NGOs and UN agencies and 
b. endogenic elements, referring to the local resources both human and physical. These are remnants of the past structures, which have been destroyed to a great extent due to the war and lack of maintenance. To this, one could add the Afghan intelligentsia who have en masse migrated to the west; and those who stayed back don’t find resources for updating themselves professionally. The establishment of private schools and universities in Pakistan can be considered as results of this eagerness.

A description of programmes by some leading NGOs, namely GTZ BEFARe, Swiss Aid for Afghans (SAA) follows. These agencies operate from Peshawar, in the NWFP, where a large number of refugees dwell. The objective of this presentation is to provide the reader with a detailed background, to use the experiences as a model elsewhere, in situations of similar nature.

I. Basic Education for Afghan Refugees

BEFARe is a bilateral government project, agreed between the governments of the Federal Republic of German and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in late 1994 to support Afghan refugees. The project is jointly executed through the Commissioner Afghan Refugees, Peshawar and the GTZ with main office in Peshawar and branches in 3 other districts in the NWFP.

Since GTZ BEFARe could not operate directly inside Afghanistan due to lack of politically viable government inside Afghanistan an NGO was created to be supported by BEFARe, namely Afghan German Basic Education (AG BAS-ED). AG BAS-ED is to be the arm of BEFARe that would contribute to the educational rehabilitation of Afghanistan. It is indeed an innovative approach to overcome a policy issue (BEFARe 1996).

The focus of GTZ BEFARe was more on the refugee schools in the NWFP. Due to the initiatives shown by this organization, UNHCR handed over all the refugee schools in this province to GTZ from the Education Cell of the Afghan Commissionerate in January 1996. GTZ BEFARe also created a special wing, namely Community Oriented Primary Education (GTZ-COPE), to undertake this programme covering 271 schools in the RVTs spread over in the NWFP. The creation of this new wing was of an
innovative nature in that it facilitated the practical, official and legal aspects of the mother organization GTZ.

GTZ sought technical support for this project from UNESCO, Islamabad. Similar cooperation was provided by Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), CARE International, and Orphans Refugees and Aid International (ORA). These organizations had experiences related to non-formal education, teacher training, provision of teaching learning materials, and professional expertise. The programme therefore, contained the key elements of a model of an integrated project in terms of both organization and delivery aspects. The programme of GTZ BEFARe focussed on the following aspects:

**Primary Education**

a. Training of teachers and principals. In the case of teachers, the key components of guidance consisted of methodology and pedagogy. These were short-term in-service training programmes, each being of ten days’ duration.

**Adult Education**

b. In the year 1996, ninety-two courses were provided to nearly 1400 females and 1600 males through non-formal courses on literacy for males and females. Training programmes for instructors were an essential component of this package to maintain the quality of education being provided.

**Women’s Education**

c) Another programme, referred to as the mother and child health care (MCH) project, focused primarily on mother and child health. The contents included, issues related to health such as child health, mother’s health, prenatal aspects of the child, prevention of child mortality, child growth and nutrition, environmental health, breast feeding etc. In addition mine awareness was also included with a view that it would be beneficial to all once they return to Afghanistan. In fact, every school had relevant pictorial diagrams on mine awareness well displayed for children to read and understand. There were over 70,000 participants for these programmes from 1989 to 1995. An evaluation conducted on
this MCH programme in 1995 indicated positive impact of it on lives of the people in the camps (GTZ BEFARe 1995).

Management and Supervision

d) Supply of materials for schools, which included textbooks, stationery, tents to both schools and the community, edible oils, especially to girls’ schools as an incentive for their participation.

Teachers were paid in the school, which helped reduce absenteeism. In addition to this, attention was paid to management aspects of the school viz. timetables, logbooks, and stress on discipline of the teachers. The process of issuing school leaving certificates was streamlined to enable students to seek employment or admission to other schools.

Community Involvement

e) The programme also had a component of involving the community in school activities and education of their children. In addition school management committees were established so that parents were directly involved in the affairs of the school. This was encouraged by UNHCR as part of their new policy of involvement of the stakeholders in their development activities (GTZ BEFARe 1996).

f) Literacy Programmes in Madrassas

This is yet another indigenous approach used to promote literacy amongst the refugee children. It is relevant to mention here, that madrasas were the traditional forms of learning centres that prevailed in the earlier centuries in this part of the world. This was a demand-based programme where the heads of madrasses in the refugee camps in the NWFP requested GTZ BEFARe to assist in the provision of courses on literacy. The participants included both boys (334) and girls (265) in 14 madrasas in 14 refugee camps. The courses were of two types: the adult literacy courses mostly for boys and out-of-school children; and courses mainly for girls (Mojadidi 1997).

Madrassas, being an endogenous form of an education system is cost intensive and survives in a war-torn society like Afghanistan. Further it is gender oriented. Hence when other forms of delivery are hindered, it is
opportune to use such structures suitably modified to provide education until normality comes. It may also be possible to expand such institutions without stepping on the sensitivity of cultural issues, and at the same time attempt to bring about changes in the mindset of the conservative elements. Unfortunately, these are not only forgotten and madrasas are relegated as institutions of fanatics, which is true of some. In a situation like the one in Afghanistan, it is advisable to use all available resources to provide learning opportunities, even though the methodologies and the contents may not be in keeping with modern day needs. At least it would provide an opportunity for them to learn the 3Rs.

II. International Rescue Committee

It would be very appropriate to discuss the educational programme of another organization, namely International Rescue Committee (IRC). Founded in 1933, the IRC is the leading non-sectarian voluntary organization providing relief, protection, and re-settlement services to refugees and victims of oppression and violence. The IRC operates in 20 countries in the world and its programme for Afghanistan commenced in 1980.

IRC has placed special emphasis on education of the refugee females. The support for female education includes community based pre-schools and primary as well secondary schools. In addition, vocational education and training of women on teacher education, and school administration are also provided. In 1996 nearly 100 teachers had received training. The contents included subject matter, techniques, and pedagogical guidance. Material support included textbooks, stationery, notebooks, and furniture. Although initially the salaries of the academic staff was paid by IRC, later due to reduction of funds from the donors only part of it was provided by IRC while the rest was provided by the community. Other payments by the community included rental charges and utility expenses. This strengthened community mobilization and consciousness promotion.

By the end of 1996 there were 29 schools with nearly 12,000 students under this project with nearly 400 teachers and principals. Of the total number of students the majority were females with over 6000 students (60 %).

The main characteristics of the IRC’s approach to development of the refugees can be summarized as follows:
a. Integrated nature in that their programmes include pre-school education, general education, vocational and self-reliance, and income-generating programmes, women's health programmes, specialized skills development programme such as computer and English language courses for women. IRC has a component of reconstruction and rehabilitation which includes projects on agriculture, irrigation and water supply programme, mostly operated inside Afghanistan.

b. Most of the above programmes specially for adults are women-focused in nature, except the education projects which are for both boys and girls.

c. Vertical and horizontal operational approach. This covers the needs of pre-schoolers as well as those of adults vertically, and needs of both education and skills development horizontally. For example, in the health sector activities programmes are focused on maternal and child health, prenatal and postnatal, nutritional education, reproductive health, immunization, malaria control and sanitation, diagnostic and curative aspects which include referral programmes, laboratory services, and dental services.

d. Promotion of self-reliance. This is achieved through community participation through voluntary and token/modest support for programmes. For example, a monthly payment of 5 rupees (boys) 01 rupee (girls) has to be made as contribution for primary education. Contribution to pre-schools is by way of materials, including food and even payment of a monthly fee, depending on their financial ability.

e. Encouraging innovations. Establishment of home schools for pre-school education. Thus out of 14 pre-schools established in 1996, eleven were home based types.

f. Support services for development programmes. This includes the establishment of resource centres to assist teachers develop additional materials, printing press (1985) for publishing of textbooks for both NGOs and the UN system, health education resource centre (1986) for development of materials for IRC as well as for other NGOs and the UN system. To this list could be added teacher training and textbook programme, which aims at improving the quality of secondary education in the refugee camps in Pakistan. In addition to textbook development, services related to seminars are provided to teachers at the secondary level.
The funding for IRC is mainly from the European community (44.5%). The rest is from American community (21.7%), UN (11.9%), Income-generation (21.7%) and Asian (0.2%). The funding over the years has been receding markedly from a little over US $14 million in 1990 to less than US $4 million in 1996, a decrease of nearly 45 percent in 6 years.

III. SAVE the Children USA (SC/USA)
SAVE is another implementing partner of UNHCR concerned with the education of refugees. It is mainly confined to Baluchistan, an area adjoining Afghanistan in the South West Pakistan. The main focus of SC is on the Home Based Schools (HBS) established in 1997. Currently there are 54 schools with a student population of 1154. The main objective of SC is to provide education to girls and adolescents who observe strict purdah (wear a veil on their faces) and cannot have access to regular schools due to problems related to mobility. These HBS are established far away from the existing girls and mixed schools. The HBS are only a supplementary effort to meet the specific needs of the Afghan children and not an alternative to primary schools. The teachers are paid a stipend every month and get edible oil, which is what is provided to the students as well. The age group of the students varies from 10-20 years and the grades are mostly from 1-3. The key problems for the SC regarding HBS are: a) the knowledge content of the teachers, b) meeting educational needs of the children, and c) greater increase in the requests for more HBS.

(B) Refugee Education in Iran
Since a larger number of returnees are in Iran as well, it is important to discuss the education programmes undertaken for them by Iran. Iran is a signatory of the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees and like Pakistan has granted refugee status on a prima facie basis. However, unlike Pakistan the new arrivals were not granted the same right to reside in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Later, in 1995, refugees were granted temporary residence permits (TRPs) for one year on an ad hoc basis. With the expiry of these TRPs within one year of stay, it created more problems for the Afghan refugees as they were considered illegal aliens. This group of people was permitted to apply for work permits and a majority of the Afghans working in Iran today are illegal workers. As a result of this policy there is a group of forced returnees amounting to over tens of thousands in addition to the 90,000 who returned through the normal channels in 1999 (UNHCR 1999).
The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to host one of the world's largest refugee populations. Of the total estimated 2 million refugees in Iran, nearly 1.4 are Afghans; hence the importance of this focus. Many of the refugees went to Iran after the Soviet invasion. A majority of the refugees are HAZARA Shites, followed by Tajiks and Pashtuns. However, when there is a major internal disturbance, such as the one that occurred in the North of Afghanistan in 1998, the Afghans tend to flock back to Iran.

As in Pakistan—perhaps more intensely—the Iranian government feels that their generosity cannot be extended too far and they would wish that refugees returned to their natural lands. This is mainly due to economic pressure that is too familiar with the refugees in Pakistan. The impatience and frustrations have often led to forced returns or deportations. The total budget for the refugees in Iran targeted by UNHCR for the year 1999 was US$ 17.7 million (UNHCR May 1999).

In Iran about 654,000 have access to education at all levels. Of these 448,160 children were in public schools and another 205,600 aged between 20-49 had attended adult literacy classes. According to the Ministry of Education, Tehran (MET) the literacy level of the Afghan refugee at the time of arrival in Iran had been around 19 percent. As a result of the interventions of Iranian authorities over a period of time, this percentage went up to 41 percent, which seems to be remarkable (MET, Teheran 1998/99).

The enrollment of the Afghan refugee children in the Iranian schools for the years 1992, 1995 and 1998, is given below:

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>56,870</td>
<td>43,331</td>
<td>51,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>33,607</td>
<td>36,590</td>
<td>61,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90,447</td>
<td>79,921</td>
<td>113,195</td>
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Source: Ministry of Education Iran, UNICEF, Iran 1999.

Around 70 % of the Afghan refugees are enrolled in the primary grades and they are scattered all over the country in 27 out of the 28 districts in the 11,747 schools, which includes schools from primary to secondary. According to the data provided by the MET there was almost an equally high percentage of girls attending secondary schools. Thus the figures for
secondary children for the year 1997 stand at 4310 (44%) girls, as against 5430 (56%) boys.

As against the scenario in Pakistan, one can see that in Iran, there are more girls in non-private schools. This may be due to the fact that the refugees who are in Iran are from ethnic groups that favour education for all, as different from the more Pashtoon dominated groups in the refugee camps in Pakistan who are less convinced about education for girls. This is further substantiated by the level of participation of girls in the Sistan-Baluchistan region in Iran, bordering Baluchistan of Pakistan. In both these regions one finds Sunnis and Pashtuns as less eager to send their girl child to school.

The Pashtun groups tend to have large families and men do not value education for their children. Thus, in the Sistan-Baluchistan Province of Iran where Pashtuns are in a majority, only 36% of the girls attend school. However, other factors such as absolute poverty, sparse settlement pattern, huge distances and absence of schools could also be a contributory to this situation (Squire 2000). The curriculum and the examination system of these schools are the same as those of the others in the Iranian schools referred to above.

There are also schools for those who do not attend formal schools. Referred to as the Literacy Movement Organization (LMO), these are very flexible units, and are operated in mosques, tents, and attempt to meet the needs of nomadic people including the times of schooling. Teachers use standard textbooks. The sex of teacher depends on the nature of the student population, so that only female teachers are appointed for female students, taking into consideration the cultural norms of the community. The number of children attending these schools amounts to 18,000 while over 300,000 elders, especially women (58%), have been taught basic literacy. The grades extend up to 5 in the case of children but for the adults it is limited to grade 3 (study ibid 2000). The LMO apparently had been mindful of the limited time that adults can spend on education. The key objectives of the adult education programmes is to enable the elders to assist their children in providing information and knowledge and create a positive learning atmosphere at home for the benefit of the children.

The more affluent have organized 'informal schools,' which for all intents and purposes are private schools similar to the ones functioning in Iran for
Iranian children. They follow the standard curriculum of Iranian schools but possess very limited resources. The total number is not very clear, as seen in the case of private schools in Pakistan, and it is estimated that there are 46 schools with a student population of nearly 15,000. Some of them are mixed schools with children ranging from 30 to 600 in each school (MET, Tehran 1998/99).

Salary of teachers is very minimal and the fee charged per student is around US $0.5. Most of these schools function under extreme difficult conditions almost the same as the ones in which private schools for refugees operate in Pakistan, which is with basic or without heating/cooling facilities, few teaching learning aids, crowded classes, second-hand textbooks, without ventilation and very few toilets etc.

The quality of teaching is also very low, and use of teaching techniques is invariably absent, resorting more to traditional approaches. Teachers lack knowledge of the range of educational practices, theories of learning and role models. Furthermore, the Iranian authorities are very reluctant to allow the use of other curricular related to Afghan contexts for fear of indoctrination.

Of an estimated number of 500,000 refugee children in Iran, there are about 140,000 children in the government schools; 14,600 in the informal schools; and 3,000 in the camp schools totaling up to 154,000 children in all. However, this number excludes the unknown figures for children who are living outside refugee camps. The participation rate as a percentage of the total children accounted for amounts to 31 percent (ibid study).

**Expenditure on Education**

Although it is difficult to compute the exact amounts spent by MET, it is estimated that around US$ 6.2 million have been spent on 95,000 Afghan children in 1998. The LMO has obligated an amount of US $ 10 million since 1985 on adult education programmes (UNHCR 2000). Though education is free, there are a number of hidden costs for parents, which act as a barrier for poor parents to send their children to school. These costs include uniforms, shoes, transport, stationery and voluntary contributions to the school.

UNHCR provides a sum of around US$ 1-2 million per annum on the basis of per capita cost. In addition UNHCR has provided various materials
regarding sports, computers, libraries, cooling systems, hearing aids, furniture, vehicles to a tune of over US$1 million in 1999. Some of the facilities are for the liaison office of MET with UNHCR. UNHCR also provides support to the informal schools, which includes books and equipment and repair of the buildings. But these have been temporarily suspended pending discussions with MET.

Other agencies that support education in Iran are UNICEF (US$ 50,000, 1998) Ockendan International (OI), Global Partners (GP), Relief Committee for Destitute Afghan Children (RCDAC), and Mokarram Foundation. Some of these NGOs are beneficiaries of UNICEF grants.

Problems
As in Pakistan, there are a number of problems faced by the Afghan refugees in obtaining facilities for basic education. However, there is a lack of consensus on what problems seem to be the key factor. The problems of MET in Iran relate to lack of resources. They anticipate more assistance from the international community. The problems of the LMO are connected with the widely scattered nature of the refugees and the difficulties encountered in servicing their needs, in addition to shortage of trained teachers and resources for additional infrastructural needs. The problems of various actors involved in the supply of education for the refugee children are related to management, professional development, poor remuneration and benefits, lack of clear policies for refugees, lack of skills training, and high drop-outs.

1. Management/Administrative Fiats
   - inability to meet the residence criteria of the state, as some live with relatives or move from place to place looking for low rents
   - re-registration criteria of the state whereby the refugees register in areas where they do not physically reside
   - banning of refugee children attending in areas outside the designated areas
   - confiscation of refugee cards by the security forces debarring children from seeking admission to schools
   - lack of places in the informal/private schools
   - MET's lack of flexibility to respond to external evaluations of their programmes for Afghan refugees
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- restrictions on funding to informal/private schools by MET
- adoption of different educational policies in Iran and Pakistan for refugees

2. Lack of Coordination
   - lack of coordination with education policies and programmes of Afghanistan and Pakistan
   - absence of mechanisms for sharing of information and resources

3. Economic Issues
   - inability of the parents to pay fees in informal/private schools
   - use of children as earning partners in the family economy/loss of opportunity cost
   - lack of facilities and resources in schools

4. Curriculum Issues
   - the curriculum in practice (Iran and Pakistan) do not provide information about the geography, history and culture of Afghanistan
   - lack of courses in the training of skills related to earning capacities
   - absence of a broad framework of basic competencies
   - lack of a plan for preparing children/adults for returnee situations and post refugee status

5. Professional Development Aspects
   - insecure status of teachers
   - lack of exposure to skills needed to handle children with special needs
   - lack of training opportunities

6. Accessibility
   - limited accessibility/educational opportunities to a large number of children
   - high drop out rates, especially after grade 5
   - lack of facilities for higher education for refugee children
   - assistance to the refugees not arriving on time leading to discouragement, frustration and dropping out of school
7. Methodological Constraints
   - adoption of traditional methods in teaching discourages children to learn
   - lack of relevance of the materials to daily life contexts

8. Social Issues
   - lack of a learning culture
   - absence of successful stories from families amongst refugees who have economically gained from education

9. Host Fatigue
   - this will be discussed in detail later in the chapter, which basically refers to economic, social, cultural and political dimensions that have emerged over the period of two decades in both Iran and Pakistan. The problem is so great that it has led to the issue of forced repatriation in Iran.

10. Donor Fatigue
    - this is another critical factor that is emerging from the international community, which is also discussed here, separately.

Apparently Afghan refugees, both in Pakistan and Iran, face somewhat similar issues. These have to be understood in the light of the fact that both the hosts and refugees did not expect the Afghans to live in these countries for decades. That they have been living for such long periods, still without assurances of a time framework for peace inside Afghanistan, has to be a prime factor in the provision of services for the refugees. This is why a new paradigm on development of a rolling nature has to be designed by the international community for those refugees who stay for long periods. It would, no doubt, be a challenge to the sociologists and anthropologists. Such a design should focus the educational needs of the refugee children as part of an integrated package in the future human resources development of Afghanistan.

One of the key problems of the refugees emanates from international politics. The super powers and vested interests of other nations create problems. They intervene only when it is favourable for them; play one ethnic group against another; and leave the scenario altogether when they have achieved their objectives. Thus creating a lacuna with immense
problems in the country concerned. Those who created the problems have a moral obligation to intervene positively and generously to solve the problems of Afghanistan.

What can be done?
Some of the probable ways to improve the conditions of learning of the refugees are discussed here, although suggestions have been made throughout the chapter. This section attempts to look at the issues more broadly, taking into consideration the future needs of the Afghans back home in a post refugee scenario. The implications of development of Afghanistan relate to: a) lost generation(s) of youth in illiteracy, squalor, poverty, religion and fundamentalism, b) flight of intellectuals and very unlikely to return, c) lack of infrastructure and basic needs inside the country, d) absence of assurances of peace in the near future, e) host and donor fatigue, f) lack of skilled personnel to assist in the development of the country, g) growth of a very strong informal economy, and h) interests of the super powers and neighbours confined to few issues adopting a selfish diplomatic strategy. These could be some of the guiding factors for any development plan. Education for Afghans, unlike in other countries, should not necessarily be to develop academics and follow the traditional paths of the developing nations. Afghanistan should learn from the errors of other nations and adopt what is more appropriate in terms of its issues and immediate needs. Thus in making suggestions for refugees one has to be mindful of the Afghan scenario and develop modalities which could be practical in the country of refuge while at the same time be appropriate in the post refugee situations inside Afghanistan. This is where coordination and complementary approaches are vital rather than independent and ad hoc strategies.

1. Pursuance of new initiatives
Develop new initiatives to incorporate all the refugees in basic education and skills development programmes so that what is gained will not be lost in the long term perspective of development. For example, selection of children for specialized courses, training programmes, with a view to use them as key personnel in a future design.

Provide alternative methods and strategies to suit the issue, such as home schools to accommodate children with strict codes of conduct and cultural behaviors in different ethnic groups.
Since most of the children are from the first generation of learners, provide education programmes for elders to both motivate them to send their children, especially girls, and also to improve their life styles and quality of living. It should be understood that these refugees have no examples in their communities who have achieved success through education and the social and cultural milieu may militate against education; hence the need for the motivation of elders.

Changing the school cycles from the traditional years of schooling, which makes it compulsory for children to stay for specified number of years such as 5/6 years in the primary etc is important. Since the children have less time to spend at school due to their age, and economic demands at home, it would be pertinent to reduce the primary cycle from 5/6 years to 3-4 years by combining grades. For this, special textbooks could be developed. Such a process will improve participation, reduce absenteeism, provide economic relief to the family, and will reduce cost of education both to the family and the organizations (refer to innovations earlier).

Provide opportunities for higher education through introduction of special quotas at the universities in the country of refuge. Also provide scholarships and other benefits needed for them to carry on with their higher studies. Since the Afghans have been refugees for two decades it necessarily means that children over the years have graduated from the lower grades to the university. Further, the post-refugee situation demands human resources to run the country, as the intellectuals from Afghanistan have gone to the western countries more or less permanently. The gaps created have to be filled up by these young educated Afghans to avoid the dependency syndrome.

Another issue is that of developing resource materials for functional literacy, i.e. motivate those for learning who have lost schooling. The contents need to cover a variety of subjects that would be of considerable value in their day-to-day activities, and at the same time broaden their views on changes in the world at large. That the world has diversity in terms of races, religions, resources and tolerance and sharing is vital for the survival of the human being.
II. Provision of access to basic education for all, both boys and girls, using radio and distance learning.
Provision of different competencies needed for the informal economy, which could include generalized competencies and vocationally specialized competencies. The technical competencies related to the informal economy could be mostly job-specific, producer related and practical in nature. Generalized types could be ones that would provide entrepreneurial competencies such as personal relationships, social competency and a certain amount of cognitive competency. These will include literacy, numeracy, and communication, all of which should be related to the types of activities. Technical workshops should be part of the refugee camps that would help to develop the above competencies among the children, both boys and girls.

III. Development of programmes for the disabled and disturbed children is an important element in a development programme for Afghans. Disabled have to be brought back to the main stream of development so that their talents are also utilized for the country.

IV. Information sharing
Collection of basic data on the student population by age, gender and spatial distribution to help plan educational programmes.

Sharing of materials and other resources amongst the organizations in both Pakistan and Iran in order to avoid duplication and wastage of resources. This could include a broad framework of action on educational policies and sharing of information. UNHCR could act as the focal point in this respect.

V. Focus on new approaches to curriculum and materials development
Development of materials on the culture of peace, cooperation, conflict resolution using Afghan folk stories and activities to bring about a culture of peace in the Afghan contexts. The same content could be suitably modified to be included in the textbooks and teaching materials as supplementary materials.
Develop curriculum and textbooks taking into consideration the post-refugee status enabling the Afghans to reintegrate into their environments appreciating their culture and issues, rather than making them aliens in their own society. Such a curriculum should also be of practical value to both boys and girls.

VI. Problem oriented learning designs for teachers

Provision of special education programmes for teacher and educational personnel on the importance of emotional balance as part of the pedagogical training. Lack of emotional balance leads to extremism and fundamentalism, which is rampant in the Afghan society.

Training of Afghan educational personnel in other countries would be another step in the direction of capacity building of the Afghans. Rather than waiting for peace to come it is better to prepare the capacities of the Afghan refugees for the post refugee situation.

The problems of refugees are results of politics. What is suggested here relates to education only. Although education is one important segment, many other factors intervene to support or obstruct and disturb the progress of activities. Therefore, these too have to be solved simultaneously for effectiveness in the education programmes.

VII. Provision of enhanced funds continuously from the international community, some of whom were directly responsible for the destruction of the Afghan society, till the Afghans reach a satisfactory level of development is an important obligation.

VIII. Above all forcing peace is absolutely necessary for any progress to be made in the development of Afghanistan and taking care of the refugee problem once and for all.

IX. Development of self-instructional books for both students and teachers.

X. Provision of more facilities for higher education both for university degree and non-degree technical programmes. The non-degree courses could be on computer technology, English or any other foreign language, secretarial programmes etc. This could be achieved through provision of
more seats for the Afghan refugee children in the universities in the lands of refuge and supporting scholarships on an expanded level.

**Prolonged Stay of Guests and Heart Burns**

Having discussed in detail what facilities were made available to the refugees it would be pertinent to discuss the problems they encounter in living as refugees. Although the Afghans have been accepted as brothers and were extended the traditional hospitality, especially by the Pakistanis during the early stages, one should not be carried away that this camaraderie remains the same to date. In due course of time, pressure mounted, and more competition from the refugees developed though not so much in the open. The Afghans are blamed for many anti-social issues that have emerged in Pakistan.

Thus, the pressure from the countries of asylum for the Afghans to return is building up. The traditional hospitality the Afghans received is weaning out. This is a result of economic pressures on the local people as a result of losing the monopoly of the informal economy, issues related to environment such as pressure on land, water and vegetation etc. These have brought in tensions between the refugees and the locals. Thus repatriation has to be well thought about with least possible delays, to provide attractive opportunities in Afghanistan before serious issues may crop costing more funds to bring about peace in the lands of refuge. Already simmering of these tensions can be seen in Pakistan and Iran. In the former, the politicians are formally exerting the pressure. This can be seen in the recent statements and proposed plans to restrict the Afghans to camps and in some areas to change the locations of the camps from urban centres by the government of Pakistan.

Apart from Afghans impinging on the resources of the Pakistanis, they are involved in crime and drug abuses. It has been indicated by the Pakistan government that the Afghan involvement in crime is higher than that of the locals. Apart from these factors is the adverse impact of their living on the environment. These include occupation of more space, use of natural resources, increased pollution and health hazards, and unsystematic manner of occupation and use of land. All these have affected the host country in the development plans in the areas where there is a high concentration of refugees, especially in the NWFP.
The element of Afghan refugees is omnipresent invariably in most of social turmoils and upheavals, especially in the NWFP. This is evident by the recent clashes between Sunni and Shia that occurred in Hungu, district Kohat, in the NWFP. A recent report that appeared in a weekly clearly highlights the issues of conflict and economic rivalry. Hungu city, like other areas in the NWFP, has been a host to a sizeable population of Afghan refugees. ‘These refugees, Sunni Deobandis, have actively played a part in the Shia-Sunni conflicts in Hangu and up in the North West in the Kurram Agency. The two main Afghan camps near Hungu are Katakani and Lakti Banda camps.’ This same report goes on to state that the ‘Afghans are not liked by the local population primarily because of economic reasons. Most of the Afghans have settled down and have acquired property.... Everyone in Kohat and Hangu agrees that the Afghans are nuisance for local businessmen and traders. The shop and house rents and property values have gone up because they are prepared to pay three times the price. They can do it because they have no bills to pay, no taxes and never send their children to school...but they are more hard working than we (Pakistanis) can ever be’ (Friday Times, May 1-7 1996). Another survey, recently conducted by the Special Branch of Police in Islamabad, points out that ‘Afghans can be literally in every field of life. There are 38 medical practitioners, 65 teachers, 143 taxi drivers, 3,900 attached to public transport with 2,700 vehicles which belong to the Afghans. There are offices of seven Afghan political parties in the capital while there are 1,700 members in 48 organized gangs…some are entered into wedlock with locals including wealthy businessmen. (The News, May 17, 2000)

Some of them have lived so long that they claim to be Pakistani citizens. Moreover, it is very unlikely that the Afghans will ever get a government acceptable to all in the near future. In that case the refugees who have been here on political grounds will not return for fear of insecurity. However, the real reason for Afghans to stay in Pakistan is pure economics. The war-ravaged country has lost all its economic sustenance and cannot feed the population. The refugees earn better, live comfortably, provide quality education to their children girls and boys equally, enjoys better opportunities for their children, and do not have to undergo recriminations of the Taliban such as growing a beard, wearing Hejab (women). In addition more educated and articulate Afghans have the opportunity to go to the west from Pakistan more easily than they can from Afghanistan. They also share the same
religion, language and culture of the Pashtuns. Pakistan has become a natural haven for the Afghans.

Over the two decades the clever and the intelligent Afghans have qualified for tertiary education. The large numbers qualifying for higher education have made it imperative that more accommodation is needed for the increasing numbers. This has led to mushrooming of new schools and higher educational institutes, thus affecting the quality of the local educational institutes which is now considered to be another sore point of concern between the refugees and the hosts in Pakistan.

The Afghans are also accused of smuggling weapons and fighting with sectarian groups making their presence troublesome to the locals. These are some of the problems that are simmering in the refugee camp areas. Thus, a number of questions emerge as a result of these new dimensions in the Diaspora of refugee scenario in Pakistan, perhaps unparalleled elsewhere amongst people of refugee status. These also indicate the significance of the peace process that has been going on over a decade without substantial progress. One group or the other has always torpedoed the process. As the focus of this section is limited to issues related to education and development, other aspects, though very important, will be less stressed.

There are a number of bizarre facts emerging from the over stay of the Afghans in both Iran and Pakistan. These relate to voices of displeasure from the political heads. The Minister of Interior, Iran was explicit and clear in his speech about the adverse impact of the refugees on the local problems at the Second NGO Symposium on Refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was held in Teheran (May 1999). Thus with reference to the expenses incurred on the refugees in relation to city services, energy, nutrition subsidies, treatment, health and education services and occupation of around 800,000 vacancies in Iran, the amount was well over millions of US dollars per year, which is too heavy a burden for a country such as Iran in view of the tremendous damages incurred by a war of 8 years in Iran. Currently Iran is facing problems in executing its economic development plan.

The Minister further added that the social and psychological damages from mental and cultural differences between the refugees and the native people have caused severe problems and in some cases have resulted in
tensions, social opposition and cultural dissociation, which again imposes additional expenses on Iran. Further, the long stay of the Afghan refugees has demoralized the international community, which has led to continuous decrease of their contributions. The long stay has also caused the second generation of refugees to be alienated from their country and has resulted in their reluctance leave the lands of refuge (UNHCR, May 1999).

The impressions of the local politicians and the general public regarding the refugees in Pakistan remains almost the same as that in Iran despite more common relationships between the refugees and the ethnic groups in the NWFP. To add to what has been stated above, the Chief Minister of the NWFP stated that the government was compelled to confine the refugees to the camp areas. This apparently was a result of a host of social, economic, and political problems for Pakistan resulting from the refusal of the refugees to be confined to the camps along the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Afghans have also spread to the big cities even hundreds of miles away from the camps (DAWN, 30 April 1999). The refugees, especially in Pakistan, who are involved in commercial activities and even the refugees who own land inside Afghanistan make frequent visits to their home country, although they would not wish to remain there. Thus they enjoy the best of each country to the annoyance of the hosts.

It is also noted that in Pakistan, the environments of the refugee camps are considered as havens and safe areas for anti-social activities, committed both by Afghans and the locals. As a result of the black money the refugees have even encroached entire urban areas and even cantonments with the assistance of militant groups inside Afghanistan. Such criminal Mafioso with the connivance of local collaborators has viciously attacked local citizens. All these make the governance difficult for the Pakistani administrators (Shahwar Junaid 2000).

The other adverse effects of the refugee staying over relates to the damages caused to the environment, competition with the locals for water, forests, pasture for the livestock, wear and tear of canals and roads. All these have disturbed the ecology of the border areas causing desertification and soil erosion. In the labour market, due to the presence of a large number of refugees, they compete with the locals at lower rates, which has brought bitterness amongst Pakistanis. However, there are a number of benefits such as the boosting of the Pakistani economy by the refugees, aid interactive impact and secondary and tertiary positive effects on the host population. Refugee status has also led them to be highly
enterprising and one would find the Afghans capturing most of the trades such as transport, carpet business etc. Their honesty and hard working capacity are the two main qualities that have helped them to achieve economic progress in Pakistan (UNDP 1990, Boesen 1986).

The print media in Pakistan has also drawn attention of the public towards the elements connected with the Durand Line of 1890s drawn by the British to establish the border with British India as a buffer against Russia’s efforts to enter the Indian Ocean. Thus the recent maps of Afghanistan drawn in the 1960s during the reign of King Zahir Shah, for school primers, showed these areas in Pakistan as parts belonging to Afghanistan in an imaginary Pakhtoon territory. (The Nation, 6 July 2000) With these backgrounds the issue of refugees in Pakistan is becoming rather sensitive and volatile.

There are some other internal factors which have also hindered the rehabilitation process such as tenure disputes, ethnic problems, religious and tribal differences. On the other hand, a considerable number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan keep their families in the camps of the NWFP and migrate further to the middle-eastern countries for employment, a strategy adopted to overcome these local problems. One of the key factors for this second migration is for purposes of employment so as to educate their children in Pakistan. From a long-term perspective, it is a very positive factor in the future development of the country.

Donor Fatigue

Development of facilities to a level that can absorb the returnees in Afghanistan is a perennial problem that is prevalent today. For this the support of the donors is sine-qua-non. But since 1990 the international community has not responded to the calls for assistance. For example, although the UN needed US $157 million for the period 1998, the aid community promised only US $20.8 million (13 percent) for this period. In this one would note that no donor has agreed to provide funds for education although the requested sum amounts to US $ 6.5 million (UNOCHA 1998). Thus, education has been the greatest victim. Afghanistan has slipped down the funding agenda of the international donors. This has been further aggravated by greater increase of humanitarian problems elsewhere in the world, which have attracted the attention of the world community. However, the continuous instability in Afghanistan is the key cause for this reversal of support and as a result there seems to be a donor fatigue.
Another problem that is encountered in the provision of funds is related to bypassing and undermining of local structures in the eagerness to establish programmes and implement projects. In the process the international agents do not prefer to work through the local organizations due to inherent weak structures but instead assume responsibility directly. This is followed by employing local personnel and paying higher incentives, which further weakens the existing government organizations. Due to the prevalent difficulties the local governments offer little or no resistance to these initiative for fear of antagonizing donors. The worst is that the locals have no voice in the decisions taken and the programmes implemented. This results in aggravating the dependency syndrome. In the case of Afghanistan this is very apparent in that though the cry for education is almost the key need of both the returnees and those who are inside Afghanistan the priority of the donors is something else. So that in a phase of re-development process the cycle will be caught up in vicious circle of violence, poverty and mass displacement (UNHCR 1995:184-185).

On the other hand, donors tend to request the beneficiaries to become participants in the development programmes. In these they equate participation with little more than free labour in the projects. But what the beneficiaries need is the ownership of the projects rather than be onlookers till outsiders get involved in eating a major part of the cake. 'Here it is enough to remark that until decisions about development projects are given over to the people for whom they are intended whatever is done by International Non-Government Organizations to promote their participation, in some sense they will always be manifestations of power.' In the case of Afghan scenario, serious and rapid responses are morally urgent. Humanitarian interventions can only be legitimate when those victims are associated and they themselves own their 'regeneration.' 'What seems to us less certain is that the will, or the ability, to remedy the disease lies with in the complex of institutions which have caused it' (Middleton and O'Keefe 1998). One factor remains related to the causes of poverty: destruction. It is invariably caused by those in power using the locals as a cat's paw to achieve their targets. Hence, it is their responsibility to assist in the reconstruction as well. Another negative factor relates to the assistance of relief itself. Thus by the time assistance for relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction is completed and is at the crucial phase of development, the donors would have exhausted their funds. That means development will remain unattended, which will create more problems for the sick nation.
XI Honour and Dignity in Return

Background and Operational Environment

Armed conflicts have become a common occurrence if not the order of the day, and are accompanied by destruction of infrastructure disturbing the social fabric with never ending problems related to development. Since the occurrence of conflicts has been a perennial phenomenon in Afghanistan, the severity of the adverse effects on the provision of services in Afghanistan has affected the lives of the people to such an extent that they would very likely remain there in terms of development where they were at the dawn of the last century. As a result of two decades of war, Afghanistan has had the largest number of refugees in the world, and continues to hold the record. Therefore, in terms of numbers, complexity of issues, impact on the neighbouring countries, and the human resource development, it is imperative that greater emphasis should be laid on the development needs of the returnees for the resurrection of Afghanistan from the current malaise. Of all these complexities the unsteady nature of repatriation is the most complex making it well nigh impossible to provide a uniform development package for all sectors, which forces the international community to adopt ad hoc programmes. Furthermore, the factor of ethnicity and the politics of the Taliban also affected the smoothness of the process of repatriation. One must also remember that the longer the delay in repatriation, the lesser the economic and social eagerness and enthusiasm for the refugees to return, for they will tend to be domiciled in the lands of refuge. In addition to this, the cost factor for repatriation on the international community also increases annually while funding is also decreasing. Whatever the international community has achieved for the returnees so far has to be viewed in this background.

Contrary to the view maintained in the earlier decades, refugees are now looked upon as resources that should be developed to enable them to be on their own, both at home and in places where they seek refuge. One of the key needs expressed by the returnees relates to the provision of quality education for both girls and boys, similar to what they had enjoyed in the country of refuge. This demands new approaches to refugees and repatriation. In the case of the Afghan refugees, children form a great bulk of the population, which is why the development of their skills would be an asset from a long-term perspective of development in Afghanistan. Children are the most vulnerable, and their neutrality makes their well
being independent of political and other ideological considerations. Referred to as ‘preventive development,’ there is growing emphasis on this concept by the international community. UNHCR considers that investment in the development of the individuals which ‘may seem large now but may prove to be money well spent in the future and certainly less costly than prolonged stability and conflicts.’ This is rightly affirmed and recognized by UNESCO which unambiguously declares that ‘since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defenses of peace must be constructed.’

Refugee vs. Traveller

It is interesting to note that when Afghan refugees speak about their status, they do not wish to use the term ‘refugee.’ Instead, they prefer the word ‘traveller,’ indicating their willingness to return. It is the fervent hope of the Afghans that their present status is only temporary. They believe that the circumstances that drove them to exile will end soon and they hope to be home sooner or later (Boesen 1986). With the Soviet withdrawal in 1992, plans were set in motion by the international community to assist in mass repatriation of six million refugees both from Pakistan and Iran. However, the political changes anticipated by the international community did not take place in Afghanistan at that time and communist-backed Najibullah government remained in power. This slowed down the repatriation plans and the international community set in motion the rehabilitation of the expected areas of the returnees. These included development of agricultural base, repair of irrigation schemes, construction of flood protection structures etc, repair of roads, and mine clearing; all these were done in consultation with the local authorities.

In 1998, a total of 104,000 returned to Afghanistan, of which 96,000 were from Pakistan, and 14,000 from Iran. Though the numbers gradually increased, they do not provide any light at the end of the tunnel. The ‘travellers,’ instead of returning, seem to be moving with in the lands of refuge. It was expected that nearly 100,000 would be repatriated at the end of the year 2000. At this rate, it would take 20 years to repatriate all those Afghan refugees who are registered with UNHCR. This is not to say anything about the new heads that represent a natural increase in the refugee population. In addition 100,000 from Iran was also expected to return to Afghanistan during the same period (Shahwar 2000; UNHCR Afghanistan, 1999).
Fear of Non-Returning

On the other hand, there is a growing fear, which is justified, that a very substantial number of refugees may not return to Afghanistan and the Pakistanis fear that ‘Afghan settlers are here forever.’ This is substantiated from reports that appear in the daily press in Pakistan. One such report from The NEWS (12 June, 2000) refers to ‘the 400 shops in sector G-9’s Nishtar Market, of which approximately 50% are being run solely by Afghan refugees. From beauty parlours to bakeries and restaurants, and from schools to industrial homes and video shops, there is hardly any business venture that has not been tapped by these guests of Pakistan. The streets and bazaars, which keep humming with the red-cheeked, healthy Afghan kids, bear testimony to the fact that a large number of Afghans living here are fast multiplying. A majority of the Afghan refugees who had settled in Islamabad continue to live here, apparently with an intention of never to return to their motherland. The same report quotes an Afghan tailor, who says, ‘Staying in Pakistan is the only option we have irrespective of whether we are happy about it or not.’ Another such immigrant living here for 13 years was very decisive in what he says, ‘I want to live here for good. The Taliban are too strict. They would force you to have a beard and follow all Islamic principles.’ The tendency for their vested interests tend to grow deeper and deeper, the longer the visitors stay in the host country, the stronger their roots and reasons to stay there. Then there are other Afghans who survive on the remittances from their relations in the US or elsewhere.

The local shopkeepers too prefer to employ Afghan boys as salesmen because these people have an edge to the local counterparts. They demand less and work for longer hours without leave. This report ends by saying, ‘Those of us who keep declaring that the Afghan refugees are a threat to security will have to digest the fact that these people are here to stay’ (The NEWS, 12 July, 2000). These realities have to be taken into serious consideration by the international community, which has to make provisions inside Afghanistan very attractive and safe for those who arrive and also for those who are reluctant and indecisive to return. This is a challenge for all in the coming years.

Composition of the Returnees

This is an important aspect since it indicates the type of needs of the returnees. The data also provides insights as to the place of birth, whether they were born as refugees or at home in Afghanistan. A study conducted
by UNHCR on the description of returnees to Afghanistan indicates that almost 50 percent of them have been living for a period between 16-20 years as refugees and another 28 percent between 11-16 years (table below). Thus in all 78 percent of the returnees have never set foot on their homeland for over 11 years. The percentage of those who have stayed less than 5 years is only 7 percent. This is an important fact for consideration of the urgency of repatriation of Afghans from countries of refuge to enable them to be useful citizens and serve their own country.

Table 1  Years of Refuge in Iran and Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – UNHCR Afghanistan, 1999

The composition of the returnee population indicates a gender balance. The large majority of the returnees are under 18 years of age (32% male and 31% female returnee children). The data provided below by UNHCR shows that there is an overwhelming number of children and youth entering the homeland, amounting to 79% of the total which is very encouraging. Since there is a lot of potential in the returnees, they demand suitable educational and skill development programmes as they would form the embryo of leaders in the future.

Table 2  Age Group of the Returnees to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-50</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 51</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNHCR, Afghanistan, December 1999

The priority assistance indicated by the returnees also clearly points to this fact. Thus their priorities are shelter, water, land, health, and education for their children. On the other hand, investigations have revealed that 71% of
the families who have returned do not have access to schools for their children in their land of birth. This is rather disturbing. Other sectors that require focus are income generation activities for the youth and literacy programmes for the adults. These gaps have to be filled up at the earliest to distract them from going back as well as keeping them away from joining the armed struggle that is going on.

What has been done
Under this section activities of the NGOs and the UN will be discussed. As inside Pakistan and Iran, the role of NGOs in the provision of education for both the returnees and those who are already living inside the country has had a salutary effect. Although there are gaps, yet the NGO community has made important dents despite many obstacles they face in the implementation process. Thus a brief account is presented to help the reader see the commitments of the NGOs in the provision of education to the Afghans who would otherwise be deprived of access to knowledge. One of the key NGOs that promotes education inside Afghanistan is the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA).

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan was established in 1980 with its head office in Peshawar with the main objective of assisting the victims of the Afghan war. It is basically a humanitarian organisation funded by the Swedish government (SIDA) and supported by the UN agencies and philanthropists in Sweden. Its main focus is primary education and functions mainly in the eastern parts of Afghanistan. It supports 582 primary schools (grade 1-6), and 55 girls home schools (grade 1-3) in rural areas in 18 districts (SCA 1987). The organization of SCA consists of three regional offices and educational technical support unit based at its head quarters in Peshawar. The schools are provided with textbooks, stationery and other materials needed for the schools. In addition, the salaries of the teachers (4717) are paid by SCA. Construction of schools has also been undertaken by SCA, numbering 11 in 1997. Between 1996 and ’97 the number of students increased, especially of girls by over 6,000. Even in the Taliban controlled areas 14 per cent of the students were girls. A number of obstacles had to be faced by SCA in the provision of logistics which were mainly due to lack of communications and security problems.

Teacher training forms an important component of this project. Both teachers and principles have been provided with short-term training
courses. SCA took serious note of ethnic, religious and political factors and evenly provided facilities in the regions. Special programmes for women have been initiated by SCA. Already a total of 95 courses to nearly 2000 women have been conducted (SCA 1997).

At the moment there is no effective central authority controlling education in Afghanistan and only representatives of the Ministry of Education are available in some districts and provinces both from the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. In places where representatives are available, there are constraints related to professional capacity, finances, consistency in policy and other resources. The local representatives play a pessimistic role and are more concerned in employment of their people, salary distribution, construction of mosques etc. These at times lead to conflicts between them and the SCA staff. However, there seem to be exceptions and, by and large, there is camaraderie between the two partners. Typical of disorganised societies and war torn communities, all operations are studded with constraints. SCA collaborates with other NGO’s to avoid duplication of school support and clustering of schools.

Notwithstanding all complications, one of the very positive factors that SCA has experienced relates to the acceptance of education as an important aspect of life by the Afghans. They have increasingly accepted the school as an important institution in the Afghan society, even in remote areas. This form of thinking enables the society to perceive futuristic needs, a fact which has to be strengthened and supported by the international community. Although the financial support the community can provide may be small, education has been accepted by the community as a priority in terms of social stability, social transformation and the nucleus for a better society. This can be considered a great achievement, in the context of future development of Afghanistan.

**Work of Other NGOs**

A number of educational programmes have been developed by some other NGOs numbering around 20, which have undertaken small-scale projects in different parts of Afghanistan. Although in number these may be seen as few and the activities relatively small in terms of finance and beneficiaries, the impact these have created is praiseworthy in that these NGOs are making effective inroads at the grassroots level. And such efforts, when combined, would be very effective in bringing about social changes. It will help to spread the light of learning and at least a few would
benefit from the education who could then form the nucleus for further expansion and support for education. These would form the initial steps in an environment where there is almost nothing at the moment. This would lend support and enlighten the rest of the community in progressive programmes thus leading to a culture of peace and cooperation amongst multi ethnic and religious groups. Hence, a brief mention of the activities of these smaller NGOs would be a fitting acceptance of their dedication to the cause of education in Afghanistan.

These include Afghan Agency for Integrated Development working in the Nuristani Provinces, with 4 schools, Afghan Development Association in the South West of Afghanistan supporting 122 primary schools.

Table 3  Afghan NGOs inside Afghanistan and the Educational Programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Areas Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghan Agency for Integrated development</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>22135 (975)</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>SW Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amite Franco-Afghana Aide Humanitarian (AFRANE-1987)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2000 (600)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Loghar Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghan Inkishaafiee Tarbiswee Markaz (AITM)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Afg./NWFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation d’Ecoles Pilotes en Afghanistan (AMNA)</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Afg./NWFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA)</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>VE</td>
<td>Heart, Farah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination of Afghan Relief (COAR)</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>3550</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Ghazni, Wadak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and Humanitarian Services in Afghanistan</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Hazarajat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relief Agency (ISRC)</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>PE, SE, VE</td>
<td>Kunar, Nangahar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Norwegian Afghan Committee (NAC)  n.a.  3990  n.a.  PE,SE  Ghazni, Kunar

Norwegian Church Aid/Norwegian Refugee Council  Support learning activities in camps for IDPs, develop magazines  -  -  -  Jalalabad

Norwegian Church Project Office/Rural Rehabilitation Asso.for Afg. (NPO/RRAA)  n.a. collaborates with UN/NGOs 15,000  n.a.  VE,BE  Heart,Balk, Nanghar, Lagman

Partners in Social Development (PSD)  n.a.  3080 (530)  n.a.  PE,SE, BE  Hazarajat, Bamyon, Ghazani

Shuda Organisation (SO)  16  8000 (2000)  n.a.  PE  Hazarajat, Ghazani

PE- primary education, SE- secondary education, VE- vocational education, BE- basic education

Number of girls is indicated in parenthesis (Peterson 1995).

**Areas Served by Other NGOs**

Analysis of the areas these NGOs serve indicate that a large number concentrate in the eastern and western parts of Afghanistan. While around 60 per cent of the activities are concentrated in the eastern sections of the country, over 70 per cent of the above NGOs operate in the eastern and west central parts of Afghanistan. This may be due to the closeness of these areas to the Pakistan border in the NWFP where most of the head offices of the NGOs are established. The northern areas are more or less completely neglected. Accessibility during winter and otherwise may be plausible explanations for these biased operations. Though data about all the activities of the NGOs are not available, the above table indicates that 57,755 children are provided education—primary secondary and vocational. Of this number around 7 per cent are girls, which although is not satisfactory indicates the initial steps taken in
this direction. One should realise that this is the response of the community before the Talibans stepped into these areas.

This imbalanced nature of the assistance to some areas could be further substantiated by a regional priority need assessment analysis conducted by UNDP. In terms of regions the priority areas that require assistance in education for boys are the east central, southwest, and northeast. The best served areas, meaning the areas that need relatively least assistance are north, west and east. Even for girls education the above indications are valid to great extent. Most of the facilities computed for the above analysis relate to school facilities, constructions, teacher supply, and participation (UNDP, Kabul 1993).

Objectives

UNHCR has set the following objectives for the repatriation programme:

- Facilitate voluntary repatriation of about 200,000 from Iran and Pakistan in safety and dignity;
- Contribute to the realization of basic human rights of returnees; and
- Address the initial and long-term re-integration needs of the returnees, jointly with other agencies.

On the basis of the above objectives, voluntary repatriation is made under the following circumstances:

i) Refugees have made an informed decision, and return is voluntary

ii) Country of origin does not oppose the return of refugees

iii) UNHCR is fully satisfied with genuineness of the intended return

UNHCR’s strictly humanitarian and non-political mandate is respected by all parties (UNHCR 1999).

To facilitate repatriation some NGOs such as SAVE the Children-US, a partner agency of UNHCR, has organised training packages for the returnees to enable them to understand: a) the role UN and other agencies (NGOs) play in rehabilitation and repatriation; b) their own role and responsibilities; c) the importance of participation; d) how to form a village/local shura and its responsibility to the programme; and e) the importance of sustainability and methods of achieving it (Save the Children-US, Haripur). All these aspects are dealt at length in these training
programmes. The success in the formation of Village Education Committees in the high returnee areas (discussed later in the chapter) in the eastern province could be traced to these pre-orientation programmes of NGOs.

Resettlement and Adjustment
A number of constraints confront both the UN and the returnees in this process. One such factor relates to the growing resentment of the host countries over the long continued presence of the Afghan refugees, which may compel them to return to their country. On the other hand, the conditions at home may not be as salubrious as in the lands of refuge. In view of this, the UN has identified several key needs to make the returnees more comfortable in their country. Their mental framework about their land of origin has to be adjusted. This is yet another issue for the international community to look into. Furthermore, some of the returnees do not own land in the areas of return due to the on-going conflicts. That the refugees are accustomed to different economic livelihoods may also not warrant even those who own land, to re-start as farmers after decades of absence from the fields. The incentives provided by UNHCR to return includes, after verification of their eligibility, 300 kgs of WFP wheat, cash grant of US$40 (Iran) and Rs.5000/ (Pakistan) as well plastic sheeting for shelter.

At times the emphasis is on more visible features of rehabilitation of refugees with focus mainly on important aspects such as human rights and violations. Albeit these are important, the prevention of refugees seems to be synonymous only with these issues and related activities such as human rights monitoring, peace keeping etc., forgetting the relationship between underdevelopment and displacement. Since of late the pursuance of these aspects has been properly weighed by UNHCR (Islamabad) against the social roots of the refugee problem as such efforts alone can provide only marginal benefits to the issues. Hence the importance of providing facilities for improving the quality of life, of which education is one key factor. It is known that there are examples that even in war areas elsewhere, education could prevail without much disruption. Currently in Afghanistan the activities related to education are mostly limited to areas of returnee concentrations.

In view of the keen interest and the desire to provide education for their children, UNHCR has taken special care to provide assistance to the returnees. These aspects are discussed in the next few pages. A blessing
in disguise of dislocation and being a refugee has been the exposure of refugees to better forms of life, which has shown the Afghans the importance of education in development. This does not mean that they were ignorant of the advantages or benefits of education before, but it did expose them to the importance of education of especially of girls, which was not a priority in the traditional way of life of the Afghans, specifically for those who came from rural areas. Looking at the social background of those who were in the camps or refugee tent villages (RTVs), one can see that most of them were from villages and of the lower category in the class structure. ‘The well-fed and well-read’ of the middle class were not in the mud huts and were well aware of the advantages of education earlier. They also had the economic advantage to provide education for their children. It was those who had neither the background of a culture of learning nor the economic capacity to send their children away from working at home to schools that needed a push. This was the silver lining in the dark clouds they received being refugees: they saw, learnt and participated. The time period itself was so long that this culture of learning was at their feet every day and they simply could not shut their eyes to the importance of education as a ‘catalyst for social development and an expression of the societal achievement of a nation’ (Matsuura, Director General, UNESCO 1999). They also found that in the lands of refuge, unlike in the secluded villages they were living in Afghanistan, ‘education is quite simply, an investment that yields a higher profit than any other.’ They saw that young people finding employment as a result of education and improving their family life, possessing material items and providing positive leadership to the community. Most astonishingly the refugees from the lower classes understood that ‘educating girls is not an option but it is a necessity’ and ‘a society which empowers its women is a society sure to succeed’ (Kofi Annan, Secretary General UNO, 1999). In a very recent visit (September 2000) to Afghanistan, Sadako Ogata, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, was very frank and candid in her discussions with the Taliban leadership when she reacted to the Taliban officials who stated that their efforts to educate women had been held back by Afghan customs. Her response was that the ‘issue of women’s rights is very high on the international agenda… and stated that ‘Okay, you have your tradition, but this is the 21st century. Come up with concrete results’ (Ogata, September 2000). A report from an NGO, namely Afghan German Basic Education, on the educational activities in one of the high returnee areas admissibly states that ‘for those in Tehzin valley (Eastern Province of Afghanistan) the effects of been in Pakistan has led to learning from the
manifestations of the civil society and especially of the opportunities of schooling their children had got in Pakistan. Furthermore, they have learnt some skills like carpet weaving, carpentry, tailoring, driving, masonry, embroidery etc. in Pakistan. These include women as well. About 30 persons now know English and Urdu as well. A remarkable interest was shown by the youth, both male and female, in learning vocational skills’ (UNHCR 1999). These led to shaken their traditional beliefs and slowly but surely awakening to facts of modern life. That is why education was considered as one of the priority needs of the returnees.

Although returnees were from all parts of Afghanistan, there were high returnee parts in the rural areas and concentrations in the cities of Kabul, Herat, Kandahar and Jalalabad. It would suffice here to briefly discuss the programmes, and the actors responsible for the implementation of educational programmes. The methodologies adopted to overcome obstacles will be discussed due to the possibility of these being duplicated universally in situations of emergency education.

Core Problems, Opportunities and Constraints:

Changes in the Operation Environment

Even under normal circumstances development of education in Afghanistan has been an exceptionally arduous task. It has ramifications of a highly complex nature running through its history of culture and social scenarios for over a century, issues, which are unparalleled in other countries in Asia. These have been further aggravated during the last few decades. Historically the progress of education has been subjected to vicissitudes of the power and influence of religious and tribal leaders and landlords vis-à-vis the central state. Hence the need for cautious steps to be taken in approaches in social development sectors and UNHCR always followed the principle of concurrence with local power groups. Respect for cultural norms and practices are an important step in the formulation of educational plans and activities. It has been the experience of UNHCR that collaboration with local authorities has avoided confrontation and conflicts.

Re-integration into the society is another key problem/need of the returnees. This does not mean that those inside Afghanistan are better off: they may be even worse off in some areas. But since they return after long years there could be special needs that the refugees enjoyed, both in Iran and Pakistan but which are lacking inside Afghanistan. Besides, the long stay in refugee camps the returnees may carry
shades of differences in cultural norms from that of the locals. The expectations and aspirations of the two groups i.e. refugees and locals, may run counter to each other, due to the nature of better exposures and influence of resourceful environmental factors in the country’s of asylum for the former but lacking for the latter. These have to be matched by programmes and activities in repatriation. Furthermore, provision of better inputs to the returnees may also rouse antagonism amongst the locals and jeopardize reconciliation efforts. There should be a balanced approach. It was found that the returnees had brought with them positive experiences in the field of education, specifically their attitude towards girls’ education, had influenced the local population as well. Their cousins at home look upon the returnees at home with great awe, as people with wide exposures. On their part, they feel that they had sacrificed much of their life to a just cause and suffered psychologically in the lands of refuge.

It is in this light that the returnees view the pressure to return, from the countries of asylum, which is increasingly building up. They also understood that the traditional hospitality the Afghans received initially, especially in Pakistan due to ethnic relationships and in Iran, is weaning and they are not wanted as guests any more. The refugees knew the economic pressures they had built on the local people as a result of their hold on informal economy, issues created in relation to the environment. All these had brought in tensions between them (refugees) and the locals. They realized that back in Afghanistan, they would be their own masters; hence the increase in voluntary returning of the Afghans. It is also the precise reason why the repatriation programme should provide attractive opportunities and interventions by the international community.

To retrieve them back to the fold of Afghanistan, incentives should be attractive, since opportunities for economic development and social well being have been relatively better for refugees and as stated earlier, some have used Iran and Pakistan as spring boards to seek employment in the Middle East and elsewhere. The earnings of those who had found such opportunities use these resources to provide a better quality of life for their families. The presence of such persons back in Afghanistan would likely to bring about changes in the attitudes towards gender, as seen in the heavy returnee areas in the eastern parts of Afghanistan.
The war-torn situation for over two decades has led to disruption of all services and the most affected ones are related to education, a common feature in all conflict environments. These relate to destruction of all logistical aspects of education, shortage of teachers, deprived nature of the educational institutes, lack of professional support for educational personnel etc. Moreover, all learning institutions and structures, formal, non-formal and informal and both traditional and modern have been destroyed, which is unique in the educational history of Afghanistan. The consequence of this has virtually led to widespread illiteracy and is likely the cause sine-qua-non affecting both rehabilitation and development.

Since Afghanistan is a unique case, new strategies have to be brought about to provide solutions to most of the current pressing issues. The clientele group is varied and large. Other issues relate to culture and needs of the returnees, varied age groups who have been deprived of access to education, handicapped and disabled persons, widows and orphans, youth and girls. In addition are youth, who would return from the war front. All of these groups require different approaches to make them useful citizens of the country. Thus the challenges are enormous.

Professional Inputs
In Afghanistan over 50 percent of the teachers are missing between 1978 and 1990, increasing the teacher pupil ratio as well as losing trained personnel. Hence new incentives have to be provided to attract better teachers and develop the confidence of the community in the school system. The returnees who have experienced better facilities for their children will evaluate the quality of teaching by the training of the teachers. It is a crucial issue. Thus this entails safety of the personnel, remuneration, supply of materials, professional support by way of training, constant supervision and guidance and due recognition for working under conflict situations. It was mentioned earlier that during the ‘jehad’ and struggles thereafter, it was the schools in the rural areas that were destroyed and the teachers either killed or fled to other countries, leading to the current hiatus, in both structures and personnel.

The Protection and Solutions Strategy in Re-Integration - Needs of the Returnees and Conflicts
Currently, one of the key problems in education in Afghanistan relates to the gender issue, where girls, especially in the urban areas, are denied
access to education. In addition, women teachers are not permitted to teach. These have brought in an array of issues and conflicts between the UN and the Taliban authorities. The Taliban themselves are not clear about the exact nature of the education programmes that should be provided to the country, other than emphasizing on the Islamic values and traditional forms of learning. However, the Taliban seem to relax their rules regarding education for girls in rural areas and where the pressure from the community is high. The pressure from the bottom seems to be providing answers and it could be Achilles heels of the Taliban. This process could put in motion a silent revolution. Gender has been a sour point between the UN and the Taliban. While the UN is keen to bring back the refugees, the Taliban are against the provision of one of the main needs of the refugees, education of the girls. This contradiction has caused dilemmas related to the principle of protection and assistance. In view of this background, one of the salutary effects of the returnees—much to the encouragement of UNHCR—has been, inter alia, the push for the education of the girls, bringing positive effects on the rest of population, boosting their morale and enthusiasm. In order to retain the returnees and keep them from going back to the country of refuge UNHCR adopted a number of innovative methods, which are discussed later in the paper. These were related to provision of materials for students, resource books for teachers, repair/construction of schools, textbooks and remuneration for teachers and integrated approach collaborating with a number of UN agencies and NGOs. Since the Taliban were not positive towards education of girls, UNHCR adopted strategies to circumvent this issue, such as seeking approval for the textbooks and resource materials from the Taliban, giving them recognition and seeking assurance of support.

As UNHCR is keen to repatriate as many refugees as possible, it has adopted a new approach referred to as ‘reintegration support’. In this, UNHCR had clearly understood that repatriation should not be just returning of refugees. It should be accompanied with security and provision of many needs, from repatriation to re-integration; otherwise the whole exercise may be undermined by frustrations of the returnees. This includes protection of the rights they enjoyed in the country of refuge. Thus protection includes the rights of the services and in this case one of the key demands of the returnees is quality education.

The education programmes for returnees in Afghanistan, particularly in the Southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan, i.e. Kandhar, Azro/Tezin, were
developed with this perspective in mind. Specifically needs of the girl child were taken care of in the design and implementation of the programmes in the above areas. These experiences enabled UNHCR to proceed with confidence in other areas of Afghanistan. The key characteristics of these programmes are:

- provision of material and professional inputs to schools;
- reintegration of refugees in addition to repatriation;
- equitable provision of services on a community wide basis, to both returnees and others;
- encouraging self-reliance and discouraging dependency through capacity building;
- interface between short term activities and longer-term development programmes of the UN and others; and
- integrated approaches to provide all basic services simultaneously from different actors.

**Implementation Strategy**

As girls were not permitted to attend formal schools, the strategy was to accommodate them in the 'home schools' designed to meet the problems of the child and sensitivity of the Taliban. In the Southern and Eastern areas, education was considered a key factor in the integrated plans, inter alia, water, health, roads, irrigation and other basic services and developmental needs. This was the first integrated plan of its nature to be designed and developed in Afghanistan, adopting the principles of participation and sustainability.

**Positive Impacts**

As a result of the relative success, these designs have been replicated elsewhere in Afghanistan by UN agencies and NGO community. The common programming approach developed by UNDP for 1999 contain the principles of integration. Furthermore, the increase in the number of home schools and students in the Central and Western parts of Afghanistan over a short period was encouraging. The positive support received for the home schools from the local authorities was exceptional. Even those UN agencies who had misgivings and objections to the home schools, at the initial stages, have later understood the value of these in war torn societies and have accepted these as useful institutions to overcome problems temporary. Details of these two key programmes will be discussed later.
Role of Education
The need for education in Afghanistan for the returnees is essentially a preventive action to achieve the following objectives:
- Make the returnees gainfully occupied.
- Develop the capacities of the people to be resourceful to the society.
- Induce more refugees to return to Afghanistan.
- Build up other competencies needed in life related activities.
- Develop a culture of learning.
- Build up a generation of learners.
- Provide the base for developmental programmes.
- Orient the mindset of the younger generation towards a culture of peace.

Preventive Action
Preventive action relates to preventing disruption of services, especially education for children. When this is not possible remedial measures should be adopted. This is so, particularly for those returnees, who should be encouraged to stay in Afghanistan. UNHCR has underscored the significance of the returnees in terms of their relatively more progressive thinking, due to interactions with more developed practices, possessing better-developed skills and capacity for absorption of new ideas. It is in this light that the following preventive actions have been taken by the international community:

Progress Achieved
1. Home Schools (HS): Innovation in Context
   Why? These relate to the development of schools complying with emergency situations. Since normal systems get disrupted during conflicts it is very necessary to use alternative methods enabling children to attend schools. In situations where formal structures have been destroyed unconventional practices have to be developed. Home schools are pragmatic, emergency outfits and community supported projects, providing the basic needs in education, till such time normality prevails. The approach required flexibility, adaptation and innovation. The educational needs of Afghanistan are such that no single method could provide answers and multiple approaches and entry points should be encouraged. These include teaching technologies, delivery systems,
management practices, evaluation procedures, curriculum designs etc. What has been lost over the decades has to be recovered to catch up with the rest of the world, for which learning should take place everywhere, without a centre anywhere.

Location and organization. Initially established in Kandahar, in the Southern part of Afghanistan, known as the headquarters of the Taliban, in 1986, these HSs are based in homes of individuals. The size of the home school is determined by the accommodation available in the house; the number of rooms that can be provided by the owner. Invariably the lady of the house is the manager/headmistress. Initially these commenced at the initiatives of the mothers who were keen to provide education to their girl children. As the concept grew and came to be acceptable to parents and the Taliban, the numbers attending increased rapidly. The children use the verandas, open spaces or even the rooftops. The school hours are from 7.30 to 11.30 am with a break of 10-15 minutes. Even children of Taliban are attending these schools. The education department of Kandahar has formally supported these schools. In some schools, teachers are remunerated through collection of fees from the students, although initially the teachers performed a voluntary service.

Subsequently in 1988 and thereafter, this concept spread to all parts of Afghanistan including Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. The number of children both boys and girls now amount to nearly 15,000. In Kabul itself there are over 82 such centres and the number of girls (52%) is more than that of boys (48%). Even the number of female teachers outnumbers the males. All these teachers are those who have been displaced since 1996, when the Taliban imposed restrictions on women working. Most of the children of these schools are those of the returnees and IDPs. These HS schools seem to have overgrown and have become more or less formal schools with grades up to 6, and total participation of over 100 in each centre. Housed not in homes any more but in separate buildings, these are conducted discreetly, without fanfare so that the organizers do not arouse undue suspicion from the Taliban (UNHCR, June 2000). The author visited a number of these schools and had discussions with the teachers and organizers. One could understand the apprehensions of the
organizers when they stated that the visitor (author) should not stay too long for fear of being discovered by the Taliban. Even the UN vehicle used by him was parked away from the school premises to avoid any suspicious eavesdroppers.

The Taliban are certainly aware of the existence of these institutions but are wisely ignoring their existence. They want to keep these activities at a low profile to begin with. They seem to be learning too. One can say that, this may be the beginning of the acceptance of formal schools for both girls and boys and permitting women to be back to work as before. It seems to be a silent revolution and an internal transformation of the diehard conservative elements in the Taliban organization. It is a great recovery and a strong positive breeze blowing across the country. This is also a victory for the international community who has been carrying on a war with the Taliban on these issues for over 4 years. Clearly the HS system enables some Afghans to get education, but it leaves out high schools students and poor families, who cannot afford tuition fees. Thus Gul Mohammed’s daughters, aged 14 and 16, have reached the end of the line. ‘They stay at home now; they cry when we talk about the old school days... They are waiting, everyday, waiting for the Taliban to go.’ Another little girl came up with an idea to get herself into school. ‘My seven-year old daughter asked me, “Why don’t you dress me up as a boy so that I can go to school too?”’ said Yashmine, wife of a guard of a school (Malley 2000).

2. Village Education Committees (VECs)

With the objective of making the community responsible for the education of their children, village education committees (VECs) have been established. This was another innovative strategy to promote participation of the returnee communities. These are established in the heavy returnee areas in the eastern parts of Afghanistan and are the brainchild of CARE International, Afghanistan with funds from UNHCR. The functions of these VECs are to:

- assist in identifying locations for the schools;
- provide security to the children and the institution;
- assist in the selection of the teachers;
- collect fees from the families of the children who attend school;
visit the school daily and assist the teacher;
provide amenities to the school;
encourage parents to send children to the school;
provide encouragement to the teacher and children;
assess the daily progress of the school using a specified form;
and
discuss with officials of the NGO assisting in the project.

At the moment, there are 99 VECs in the Eastern part of Afghanistan where this project is in operation. One of the indicators of keenness of the VECs was seen by the presence of elders of the village in the schools, during the visits from UNHCR to monitor the progress of the activities of these schools. When they are unable to find any young teacher from the village, this committee has even requested the ‘mullah’ to be responsible for conducting lessons, even though he is very old. These Afghans may be feeling rather nostalgic about the periods when they were provided education free by the state, which was not availed, especially by the rural folk. After living as refugees and observing the differences, the returnees are sure not to repeat the follies of the past and instead make amends for the deprivations faced by their children. Thus this new generation, with expectations for a bright future seems determined to practice what they experienced in the lands of refuge. That seems to be the vision of the returnees in undertaking the above responsibilities in the VECs. One has to understand and appreciate the fact that these children are the first generation of learners in these villages and it will take another generation for further improvements in the field of educational development.

UNHCR provided materials for the schools and notebooks and stationery for children. Textbooks for children in the primary grades, was part of this package. Repair and construction of these schools was also undertaken. A teacher-training programme has been developed for these teachers in collaboration with UNESCO. In addition, resource books for the teachers and principles have been given, providing guidelines for them to manage and develop teaching strategies. All these have been carried out in collaboration with the local authorities, the Taliban, who had approved the use of all the resource materials and textbooks.
Integrated Approaches

UNHCR in an innovative mood adopted a methodology where all the needs of the returnees are to be looked into simultaneously. The returnees had to be motivated to stay in Afghanistan, recognizing the relatively better quality facilities they enjoyed in the lands of refuge. Hence they were provided with basic necessities such as water, roads, health clinics, schools, irrigation facilities, agricultural needs, housing etc. so that they were satisfied to begin a new life of their own in dignity and honour. Education was part of this integrated programme, to motivate refugees to return to Afghanistan. This project was entirely supported by Japan at a cost of US$3 million. The UN agencies involved are UNDP (coordination), UNOCHA (de-mining), WHO (health), FAO (agricultural development), WFP (food), UNOPS (road construction, flood protection, irrigation, water and sanitation), UNESCO (education) and a number of NGOs as implementing partners. The basic principles adopted in the project are proactive nature of programming, creating a basis for re-integration, providing more to those who have less, consultation and collaboration with partners, sustainability through local partners, participatory approaches. The significance of this project, which is on going, relates to the "new dimensions that were brought into the donor/agency relationships in this model project. These were very healthy, resourceful and empathetic in nature. It increased openness, honesty and transparency between and among partners adding a new page to the development paradigms in the developing world" (Ekanayake 1998).

This resulted in constructing a number of schools both in Azro, Tezin, Kabul and Gardez districts, in the central and eastern parts of the country. A preliminary study of the area identified varied educational, materials, professional and the learning needs of the adults in relation to basic education. The teachers for the schools were obtained locally, which was an important factor, otherwise the possibility of recruiting teachers to serve in this area from outside would have been not possible at all.

3. Vocational Training Programmes for Street Children

A special training centre for street children is another facility provided to the children of returnees in addition to a number of such centres for youth established in the heavy returnee areas. The skills developed include carpentry, wood engraving, watch repair, electronic and non-electronic repair, calligraphy, wood painting, flower making, tailoring,
masonry. There are over 28,000 such children in Kabul city alone (1996), which includes both boys and girls. UNHCR’s support for this project has resulted in the training of 250 boys and girls in the above trades. The course for girls includes health, hygiene and basic education. These courses were conducted in their homes. The duration of each course is between 1 to 1 ½ years. The attendance is somewhat irregular due to their pre-occupations as garbage collectors, shoe polishers, and beggars in the streets. The earning per day is around US$ 01 a day, which is considered a reasonable income by local standards, compared to the income that university graduates employed in government departments (Taliban) earn per month, which is around US$ 3.5. It has been found that once they complete the course these children would give up the street jobs and engage in self-employment activities. Around 90 % of these children are either returnees or IDPs. These programmes are vital to bring back these children who are in the streets to follow a respectful and formalized way of earning and leading to a better quality of life. In the visit to one of these centres the author observed that these children are exceptionally creative and clever in their skills related to the above activities. Since these boys are on their way to the streets one could see their job utensils wrapped up in polythene bags kept at the entrance to the training centre. In addition to skills development, all the children are provided with a basic education programme as well (UNHCR, June 2000).

4. Development of Materials
UNHCR undertook a programme to develop a guidebook for teachers and principals. This was based on the textbooks used in these schools. This was the first time in the history of Afghanistan that a guidebook for the teacher and the principal was developed. The book contains guidelines for all subjects in all the grades from 1-8. The guidebook is in Pashtu and has been translated to Dari as well. Copies of the book have been provided to all the teachers and principals.

In addition, UNHCR in collaboration with UNOPS and UNESCO developed a guidebook for the teacher educators and master trainers. The book titled ‘Issue Focussed Teacher Education: Handbook for Teacher Educators in Afghanistan’, is again a first timer in the education system of Afghanistan. This resource book will serve not only the programmes of UNHCR, but also others being carried out all over the country.
5. Training of Trainers
Since the learning situations in the Afghan schools demanded new approaches and methodologies, it was imperative to train a proactive cadre of trainers in order to meet these new challenges. Moreover, the returnee children needed quality in the delivery systems to receive good education, similar to quality that they had enjoyed in the lands of refuge. Mindful of these professional demands UNHCR trained a cadre of trainers from NGOs, to assist in the training of teachers and principals. Furthermore, a number of workshops for teacher trainers were organized in collaboration with UNOPS, especially for those in the Hazarajath areas (Central Highlands) of Afghanistan. The programme covered a period of 6 weeks. It was the first time that teacher educators in this part of the country had undergone a course on professional guidance.

Lessons Learned
Basically one of the key issues of refugees relates to methods of attraction for them to come back. No doubt the refugees have caused enormous problems to the neighbouring host countries for over two decades. The duration of the stay is so long that the younger generation has not seen its motherland and is also enjoying the facilities of the host countries. These factors have to be countered by providing equal or better facilities to the returnees. This is a challenge for UNHCR, wherein education is an essential factor. Education programmes should be aimed at developing the human resources of the Afghans, which also include a culture of peace and open vistas for the future making them self-confident and self-reliant, enabling to shoulder their own responsibilities.

Against this backdrop, the approaches of UNHCR relate to advocacy for children’s education, increased support for teachers and professionals, collaboration with community members and local authorities, collaboration with NGOs and UN agencies, adopting highly innovative methods, modifying education arrangements, developing alternative structured learning programmes, focussing on specific Afghan issues in the development of materials and training programmes. Integrating education with human resource development and focussing on the specific needs of the Afghans in a future context would be very appropriate steps that UN has to adopt.
The key objectives of a special education programme for returnees relate to their exposures to better and resourceful environments, the new needs that have arisen as a result of complexities in the socio-psychological scenarios, the importance of innovative and unconventional approaches needed for situations of the nature as seen in Afghanistan. The significance of basic education and provision of different delivery systems have been underscored in this section. The whole purpose of the education programme is to motivate the refugees to return and to remain in their homeland, while at the same time discourage additional migrations. The vision is to invest now, to reap more, save the neighboring countries additional burdens in future and assist in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. Otherwise refugees will become time bombs causing irreparable damage in the countries of refuge.

Briefly the essential needs in education relate to the following aspects:

a) Professional Development;
b) Managerial Development;
c) Provision Of Basic Needs For Children, Teachers, Principals;
d) Supply Of Textbooks;
e) Development Of Infrastructure;
f) Basic Education For Youth And Adults For Peace, Democracy, Development And Reintegration;
g) Skill Development Programmes For Women; And

Internally Displaced People

The UN defines internally displaced people (IDPs) as ‘persons or groups of persons who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of, or in order to avoid, in particular, the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed and internationally recognized state border’ (Hampton 1998). Using this the UN further specified a body of principles for the internationally community to act upon on the needs of the IDPs. These guiding principles set forth the rights of the IDPs and the obligations of governments and insurgent forces. These Guiding Principles, although not
an abiding instrument, helps in the process of monitoring of the services and protection afforded to them.

In particular, specific guidelines are provided in the operation approaches in relation to IDP children. These include the following:

1. Understand displaced children in the world in which they live,
2. Design and implement comprehensive approaches to meeting the needs of displaced children,
3. Wherever possible, prevent displacement,
4. Hold authorities accountable for children,
5. Focus on durable children,
6. Ensure survival and well-being of children by supporting the community and
7. Demand that gender issues receive careful attention.

(Kunder 1998)

UNHCR's involvement with IDPs was unsystematic and ad hoc up to 1990. Since 1997 the guidelines set by UNHCR indicate that UNHCR will take responsibility for IDPs, under certain conditions. These include 'when people are present in or going back to the same areas as returning refugees, if they are living alongside a refugee population and have similar needs, where the same factors have given rise to both internal and external population movements and where there is a potential cross-border movement' (Schmeidl 1998).

An estimated 20-22 million people are IDPs by conflict throughout the world. Afghanistan has approximately 445,000 recently displaced people. The bulk of these are victims of the Taliban seizures of the Persian-speaking cities in Afghanistan, Heart and Kabul. But more were displaced during the earlier phases of the Afghan conflict. Recently, natural disasters like earthquakes and drought too added to this calamitous situation.

The IDPs have been mobile moving from places of armed conflict to areas of relative peace within the country. The IDPs in a way, suffer relatively more due to lack of stability of residence in one place. Hence they are deprived of most of social needs such as education and health, which are difficult to be provided due to constant movements and destruction of their homesteads regularly. Furthermore, the places to which movements take place lack basic needs. In education these relate to lack of teachers,
schools, textbooks and other material needs. Paradoxically, these make the plight of the IDPs worse than those who leave to other countries. Many have been forced to flee more than once, some of whom are former refugees. 'The IDP population has posed a tricky dilemma for UNHCR for several years. Its mandate does not specifically cover assistance to internally displaced people.... With no clear division of responsibility for IDPs the institutional framework for assisting IDPs in Afghanistan remains troublesome and topical' (Refugee 11, 1997).

Although internally displaced persons (IDPs) do not fall into the same categories as above, they are also refugees in their own land. Their positions are equally bad or perhaps worse due to the inaccessibility of their locations to receive any assistance from the outside world. Continuous threats from within due to ethnicity or religious factors and the lack of basic needs in the country itself make them more vulnerable to disease and malnutrition. Education becomes extremely difficult and remains a distant dream due to existing adverse conditions that already exist inside Afghanistan, described earlier. The situation is more aggravated by the ban on girls' education and employment of female teachers. Sometimes due to the vagaries of war amongst the warring partners, the IDPs are disturbed and further driven from pillar to post. Thus they are subjected to more instability and deprivation than refugees elsewhere in other countries. Hence, they need special care and innovative approaches to overcome these disabilities. The traditional methodologies adopted in teaching learning have to be drastically changed to accommodate these aspects. These relate to lack of teachers, formal schools, textbooks, materials, locations to study etc. The only positive factor in the case of IDPs is that they live in their own country but the question is how to provide basic learning needs in a highly deprived environment where vagaries of fortunes change rapidly.

They need unconventional approaches and quick remedies. Functionality should be a key factor in the designs for learning. Hence, achieving 3Rs per se has little significance. Thus additional Rs such as relevance, resilience, respect should be included in the educational programmes. There should be short-term activities/programmes, the results of which could fit in long term plans, so that exercises developed now will not be wasted efforts in the future. These aspects have been thought about in the educational programmes. Displacement has affected the psychology of the people, bringing traumas, anxiety, fear, uncertainty, hunger and
deprivations related to culture, social and economic aspects. All these aspects have to be articulated and taken care of in the provision of facilities for education.

The IDPs are located all over; some of them live even in caves in Bamyan, which were originally meant for meditation in the ancient days. Those who are in urban centres like Kabul live on the streets, especially children who earn a living by various forms of employment. They lack access to many basic needs and lead a life of both uncertainty and misery. It is the women/widows and children who are most affected by displacement. Unfortunately the main focus of international support is for either refugees or returnees and the IDPs are never in the picture. Kabul is full of women IDPs. With limited earning opportunities they are the most suffering lot, for they have to earn a family to survive and are responsible for disabled men who are unable to work. A survey conducted in 1997 indicated that there are over 50,000 widows, each with an average of 7-9 children (Dupree Nancy 1998).
XII  What can be done - Prospects and Possibilities

Part I
Progress in Education since 1950s

Around the 1960s, the progress of education in Afghanistan had surged relatively to unprecedented levels as compared to the early periods of the century. More schools had opened with accessibility to girls and opportunities for women in public life. For example of the total population of 16.6 million (1976) nearly 1.3 million of the 4.2 million women were engaged in employment (Safi 1987). Co-education for the primary was accepted as normal. With the economy progressing, more hands were needed and rapid inflow of people to the cities, especially Kabul, provided employment opportunities for the rural folk and also access to education for their children in the cities. The flow of students to foreign countries too increased and 'by 1974, some 1500, a year were leaving for studies abroad.' Thus these policies helped to reverse the situation that prevailed in 1880s when Amir Abdur Rahman (1880-1901) after his accession to the throne in 1880 could find only 3 clerks who could read and write. This resulted in his making education a pillar of his reforms and printed thousands of books (Dupree Nancy 1998). These positive indicators referred to above, fell rapidly by mid-1980s compared to other South Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives who, by 1990s, had better indices in relation to most of the social indicators such as education, health, life expectancy, child mortality etc. (table 1). The Afghan situation became deplorable. The UNDP Reports on Human Development from the 1990s indicates the low level of social indicators for Afghanistan and due to lack of reliable data as from 1997, Afghanistan does not appear at all in the analysis of development indicators in these reports.

Even the education provided for children remained very theoretical and divorced from life situations. In the later decades, this led to increase of marginally employable graduates, both high school and universities, and also increased unemployment. Although education expanded, it lacked the quality and the inputs needed by a developing nation. 'This type of education in developing countries is a result of urgent attempts to follow the west and achieve quantitative expansion of education without
attempting to make it more relevant to local needs. The victims have been mostly rural residents and disadvantaged groups' (Ekanayake 1990). The key characteristics of this education, stated elsewhere, included rote memorization, teacher centered learning, remembering than understanding, passive students with inattentive looks, highly depended on books, facts more sacred than analysis, child considered as an' empty vessel' and the repository of knowledge and absence of supplementary reading materials. The whole process of teaching learning lacked what Paulo Freire refers to as ' a truly liberating education' (Freire 1981). The teaching styles prevalent today in Afghanistan are the products of these social and pedagogical determinants.

Table 1  Social Development Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Social Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult literacy 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998*-14+ age group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy women 15-24 years 1998*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child mortality Per 1000 1980-89 1998*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life expectancy at birth 1992 1998*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source. UNDP, Human Development Report - 1994 and 2000*

Problems-related to curriculum were discussed earlier and as a result of the irrelevance of the same, the products from schools and universities
turned out to be functionally unskilled to handle life situations. In many
instances, children who finished primary school seemed to be less fit to
be creative members of the community, than if they had never been to
school. They turned out to be the 'schooled illiterates'. This is especially
true in poorer countries where this problem weighs heavily on the entire
social structure. Paradoxically, the education system becomes an
instigator of maladjustment rather than a factor of growth and
1990). Even those who continued to higher levels were not able to use
learning in development tasks that the nation needed, to bring about
changes in the contexts of the cultural milieu of the country. They were
a lost generation, not knowing what is best for their country. So that
both the 'modern education', a 'hotch potch' of many foreign
interventions, and the conservative religious schools in Afghanistan
failed to develop paradigms suited to both the current and changing
needs in the world. This has been the scenario in Afghanistan since
1970s.

Another key factor that led to confusion in the Afghan education system
was the presence of many advisors and funding agencies from different
countries, providing different agendas and educational menus. This led
to sidetracking of the future needs of Afghanistan and on the other
hand, created suspicions among the traditionalists, many of whom were
not willing to accept secular education in toto.

Table 2 Changes in the Number of Schools, Educational Institutes and
the Percentages of Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>% of decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High schools (lycees)</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>1154</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village schools</td>
<td>1451</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher training schools</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical schools</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Batinshah Safi, Education for Afghan Children, 1987

One can also observe a sharp decline in the educational institutions and
personnel during the 1970s and 1980s (table 2). Furthermore, 78% of
all training institutions in Afghanistan were destroyed by 1984 (ibid Safi). The reasons for this debacle have been discussed earlier in chapter. One can see the disaster that struck the country, especially the rural areas which lost all its village schools by 1978 (table 2).

Dupree very forthrightly castigates the bureaucracy for these failures when she says 'Failings within the bureaucracy were responsible for much of the sterility and stagnation that characterized the entire system by 1978. Today exactly the same mind-sets affect the officials, many of whom are holdovers from pre-war days. They stubbornly resist innovations; change is anathema to them. Having survived the King, Daud, Taraki, Najibullah, Rabbani, and now the Taliban, they know that continued survival depends on keeping the system functioning without rocking any boats. As in the past, these officials are perpetuators, not innovators. This is a big stumbling block' (Nancy ibid). This was evident in some of workshops (1999-2000) that the writer participated in the training of resource persons for training of teacher educators for a UNHCR project on education for returnees in Afghanistan. This group of resource persons were unable to comprehend some of the more recent educational approaches to classroom teaching undertaken elsewhere in the world, such as 'concept-based' teaching as distinct from content-based and 'problem oriented' teaching-learning as against rote learning in classroom. Some of these resource persons, who themselves have been teacher educators, possessing higher degrees from Kabul and elsewhere, considered that these approaches as irrelevant for the teachers in Afghanistan and preferred the traditional talk and chalk methods (SCA Annual report, 1997). This is an indication of the thinking of the more educated person. In such an environment, changes seem to be difficult.

Ecology of the Population
The ecology of the population of Afghanistan has undergone vast changes since 1980s. Although Afghanistan has not shed its traditional ways and social norms and remains so in many aspects described by Elphiston in his book, 'Kingdom of Cabul,' written in 1815. Due to the last few decades of turmoil the Afghans have been reborn and rejuvenated, in the sense that the people, in addition to fighting the common enemy (Soviets), had been forced to leave to other countries, as 'temporary' visitors or some settled for good (western countries). Now that large numbers are returning, although many will remain where they are, they
have brought in a new equation into the mindset of the Afghan society. This Afghan Diaspora has provided the secluded and traditional Afghans to experience new vistas, face challenges and life patterns, willy-nilly. They have been forced to adjust to these new dimensions and think beyond the 'mud hut' culture. This could be one of the reasons why some refugees in Pakistan, Iran and elsewhere would not return to their country, even if changes were to occur in the future. Of the exposures, one of the vibrant and dynamic effects has come through education, both formal and non-formal. Although secular education was objected to earlier most Afghans, due to their exposure to the world around, demand for secular education for their children inside Afghanistan. For some of the Afghans, even the most difficult conditions in the lands of refuge are better than what their country has to offer, both economically and educationally. Those who now demand secular education, which was incompatible with their line of thinking earlier, accept and demand for schools (refer chapter XI). This is a major breakthrough and a satisfying outcome of the results of being in exile and the revelation of the refugees to cultural and social changes outside their country: a reversal of the earlier incompatibility and uneasiness with secular education. It is 'an opportunity to forge a modern education system better adapted to Afghan traditions and society'. Before commencing such a system, it is very necessary to re-educate the educationists through exposure to the latest developments that have taken place around the world, including Islamic countries like Malaysia. Otherwise, the investments may turn out to be a waste of time and resources.

Another important feature in the current situation is the absence of the intellectuals and western educated class, who were in position of power in the earlier decades. This has given rise to new leadership patterns. The new middle class coming from exile is likely to fill this gap. They themselves received education outside Afghanistan and have gathered new ideas being exposed to the new technologies and sources of information. They may also face the problems that middle class experienced before and during Soviet occupation, due to the sensitivity of the masses and the leaders of religious groups, who were rather disturbed by western notions of education and change. The traditional fear of the adverse influences percolating to the Afghans through these educated groups still pervades strongly as before in some quarters. In the development of educational plans, these susceptibilities have to be
taken into serious considerations, if the plans have to see any measure of success. Otherwise, all grandiose schemes of planned educational programmes will meet the same fate, as had been seen during the last century. Hence cautious steps have to be taken, in view of the sensitivity of education amongst certain quarters of the country.

Education can be looked as a tool that serves to protect the child as well as the adolescent. It helps the child to receive information and develop skills and tools necessary to be self-confident and keep abreast of the current trends and also assist to seek employment at a later stage. Education also provides a vital source of emotional satisfaction to children who have had traumatic experiences inside Afghanistan. The gravity of the traumas could be seen when one analyses the background of the families in Afghanistan, for example 72 percent of the children in Kabul had experienced death in their immediate family and out of that 40 percent had lost a parent and 30 percent lost a sibling. A large number of children had also witnessed the death of a family member and a greater percentage had witnessed the destruction of their house through rockets. As a result of these most of the children have nightmares and some feel that life is not worth living (Aina spring 1999). Under such circumstances refugee children needs extreme solace to overcome these psychological setbacks, the experiences of which relate to the loss of familiar people and the environment, total disruption of their lives, lack of orientation of their future and predictability and a loss of order and structure (UN, ARC 1989, Boothby 1999). Education is thus the key to provide this support for children who have been affected by displacement and trauma. The presence of teachers, peers, elders and a place for congregation, an atmosphere of freedom, space for playing and time to forget at least for a while the emotional setbacks, assist the child to bring about some sort of complacence and psychological balance. The importance of the role of the teacher as a change agent and attachment figure in this regard is vital.

In the development of education programmes for Afghanistan, the key players involved are UNESCO, UNICEF and UNHCR. The role of UNHCR is mostly in relation to the education of the refugees and returnees, who constitute a great number in Afghanistan. These have been discussed in earlier chapters. Thus programmes developed for them would have a far-reaching effect on the rest of the learning
environment and the population. However, none of the UN agencies and other international bodies has a right to decide on the policies of education, which is mandatory on the government of Afghanistan. In this chapter, the plans and policies of UNESCO and UNICEF will be briefly touched upon to highlight the concerns of the UN agencies and the complexities of the steps ahead of such plans. However, these could be treated as alternative plans and activities for education, which could shed some thoughts in a future development plan. UNESCO’s role is very limited due to lack of funds and absence of its presence inside Afghanistan and can provide limited technical assistance through foreign and local consultants. On the other hand, UNICEF has more resources and like UNHCR, is physically present all over Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the combined resources of all these agencies could be of great strength and ingenious in the development of education in Afghanistan. Regrettably, this coordination does not seem to take place at the ground level.

**Specific Issues Related to Education**

The current scenario indicates a serious lacuna in the provision of education, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. In brief, these relate to physical infrastructure, professional development, and levels of participation, repatriation needs and HRD aspects of the Afghan community. As stated earlier it is due to these gaps, that Afghanistan is not indicated in the development report of UNDP, as of 1997.

One should remember that even under normal circumstances, development of education in Afghanistan has been an exceptionally arduous task. We have seen earlier that it has ramifications of a highly complex nature, running through its history of socio-cultural scenarios for over century, issues, which are unparalleled in other countries in Asia. These have been further aggravated during the last few decades. Historically, the progress of education has been subjected to vicissitudes of the power and influence of religious and tribal leaders and landlords vis-à-vis the central state. It has been pointed out earlier that whenever the central power weakened other powers prevailed, obstructing progressive policies.

While developing educational programmes for Afghans, these factors have to be taken into account. These include the lack of a culture of learning amongst the refugees, returnees and at home although they
may now be interested in providing opportunities of education to their children. The approaches have to include programmes for girls as well as for adults and the handicapped. Some of them may be the first generation of learners and therefore the programmes and approaches should not be too ambitious but relevant and focus on the needs. This is specially so in relation to the education of girls. If parents are hesitant to send their girls to formal schools alternative methods like home schools or use of special self-learning materials should be available for them to study at home, as referred to earlier, rather than have only one source such as the formal school, to seek learning. Providing only the formal school may discourage parents to allow their girls to participate, for one has to remember that the experiences of the refugees at home had been traumatic and scary. The majority of the commanders in Afghanistan had been very treacherous to women resulting in abductions, rape, keeping them on ransom, killing etc. In this context what is important is to provide options for the parents in a way that they will have faith in the strategies and be confident of the environment and the socio-cultural security of their children.

Even the curriculum has to be suitably adjusted to provide skills that would assist the child to be a resource at home, rather than training him/her for secretarial or professional work, most of which may be objectionable to the elders at early stages. Thus, basics on improving the quality of life in terms of health, nutrition, household cleanliness, cooperation, tolerance, seeking information etc should be included in the traditional curriculum. These will enable the elderly Afghans to gain confidence in what is being taught to their children, for they will feel that what their girl child is learning would at some stage be useful at home and in their future life. Developing bridges of confidence could be one approach in the provision of education. In the case of refugees one should remember that although the refugees are in countries professing and adhering to the same religion, socio-cultural contexts differ and these refugee parents may be suspicious and not certain about the new environment.

The curriculum should also include messages of peace, tolerance, cooperation, environmental protection, dangers of drug abuse, mine awareness etc. absence of all of which is responsible for the current impediments to development. These would help to create an understanding of the essential elements that is lacking at present in the
development of Afghanistan and the uphill tasks that they have to face in the development of the country in the future. Inclusion of the above in the educational programmes makes the child better prepared to meet the issues that confront their society. Presently, the education being imparted lacks long-term perspective ‘for peace, reconciliation or reconstruction’ of the human resource development of the Afghans. Therefore, one of the key challenges is to provide opportunities for the survival and development of children, who constitute over 50 percent of the Afghans. It will be these children who will shoulder the responsibility of the country in this century.

Part II
Key Elements of Relevance in the Development of Education in Afghanistan

I. Emotional Intelligence

Since the demand for education is increasing, it is very appropriate that the returnees and the ones in Afghanistan are provided with contents and materials that would bring about skills needed in the modern society, and develop rationalism in their mindsets. One has to remember that we live in a global village and sharing and understanding is vital for the survival of humanity. This is of paramount importance in the context of what is taking place in the world around and also by the imperative need for peace on the planet. ‘Any one can become angry; that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way is not easy’ (Aristotle). Apparently, as Afghans are driven more by emotion than by reason, the future generations have to be guided to be more sober and rational in their interactions. Therefore, in an educational development programme for Afghanistan, inclusion of emotional literacy could play a vital role and pay positive dividends in the decades to come. What is emotional literacy would be pertinent to examine at this point.

On traumas of children in Chapter IX, it was pointed out that some of the specific issues connected with traumas relate to withdrawal and social problems, anxiety and depression, inability to be attentive, delinquency and aggressiveness. Any of these occurring separately may not disturb anyone but when all these emerge en block it points to emotional competence. ‘The emotional malaise seems to be a universal price of modern life for children’. But in the case of Afghans this has
been part of their life throughout, especially to those who have been suffering for decades. However, emotional depression is equally common in the developed countries. Thus 'no children, rich or poor are exempt from risk; these problems are universal, occurring in all ethnic, racial and income groups. The children in poverty have the worst record on indices of emotional skills, their rate of deterioration over the decades was no worse than for middle-class children or wealthy children. All show the same steady slide' (Goleman 1996).

Managing emotions could be incorporated in the school curriculum and also form a part of extra-curricular studies. Emotional literacy could form part of learning. Such a design incorporates use of opportunities in and out of classes to help students turn moments of personal crisis into lessons of emotional competence. It also works best when the lessons at school are coordinated with what goes on in children's homes.' These openings help children to get consistent messages about emotional competence parts of life (ibid).

The aspects that could be included as suggested by Goleman, are simple and could be incorporated into the school framework. Some of these may not be as discreet but in built into all subjects discreetly and prudently. What is important is the process of teaching and here the training of teachers takes a critical role. The teacher should understand the concepts of emotional intelligence; use them in all the subjects, without losing the concepts related to the subject matter. The practical applications in schoolwork become important and through these it would be easy to get the messages related to emotional intelligence. Emotional literacy is practical and not theoretical.

The suggested areas of emotional literacy that may be included are as follows:

- Emotional self-awareness-recognizing, understanding causes.
- Managing emotions—frustration and anger management, and promotion of positive feelings.
- Harnessing emotions productively—more responsible and self-control.
- Empathy—understanding others feelings better, listening and caring, looking at issues from another's point of view.
- Handling relationships—analysis of relationships, conflict resolutions, more sharing, democratic.
It has been found that emotional literacy programmes improve the academic achievements of children. If all or some of above could be achieved, the morality of the individual could be improved. Moral issues can be very cogent when lessons are taught to children in the context of real issues and not abstract lessons. The purpose of such learning is to create awareness among people so that they differentiate between right and wrong.

Emotional intelligence can buttress character development, which in turn supports democratic societies. 'The bedrock of character is self-discipline; the virtuous life is based on self-control. A related keystone of character is being able to motivate and guide one-self… the ability to defer gratification and to control and channel one's urges to act is a basic emotional skill' (Goleman ibid: 328). In order to control ourselves, we should keep emotions under control by a process of developing capacity for reasoning. It requires relegating one's ego and one's self-centered focus and impulses to the background so one can achieve larger social benefits in the long run. This demands one's capacity to listen, and understand the problems of others empathetically. Empathy means caring, altruism and compassion. 'Seeing things from another's perspective breaks down biased stereotypes and so breeds tolerance and acceptance of differences' (ibid: 329). In the modern world these are more needed than ever before, where mutual respect and creating an environment for discourse are essential in a pluralistic society as basics of the state-of-the-art of democracy. Schools have a central role to play in cultivating self-discipline and compassion. This would provide the basis for moral values. How can these be achieved in schools? Mere lecturing will not permit these to be imbibed in the minds of children. Instead, practices should be accompanied as part of the learning pattern in the school system to develop emotional and social skills. Thus 'emotional literacy goes hand in hand with education for character, for moral development, and citizenship.'

The lessons for Afghanistan are to look at these aspects from a cultural perspective and incorporate them suitably to bring about changes in the mindset of the younger generation. In decades to come, the youth would be not only more rational but would also improve in attaining higher standards of intellectual ability. Results of emotional learning in a child development project, Development Studies Centre, Oakland, California (1992) has indicated that it helps to develop peaceful minds and intellectual capacities better than under normal learning
environments. Such studies have shown that children become more responsible, more assertive, better understanding of others, more considerate and concerned, more pro-social in inter-personal problem solving, more harmonious, more democratic and better in conflict-resolution skills (Goleman ibid). As returnees are positive towards education of both sexes, it is appropriate to bring about new inputs to the learning process at the initial stages itself rather than wait till every aspect is fulfilled to the ideal levels. This could be done through stages, to begin with teacher education programmes and with materials development for children and resource books for teacher personnel. Emotional literacy will take away the extremism and egoistic feelings from individuals and not resort to actions as that taken by the Taliban against football players from Pakistan, an incident to which we referred earlier. Emotional intelligence could be the other side of the coin of human rights and introduction of emotional intelligence could form the initial step in the introduction of human rights education. This approach will take away the current antagonism and cultural conflicts connected with human rights approaches seen in Afghanistan.

II. Pedagogical Interventions

Befuddlement has been the key attribute in all areas of development in Afghanistan. Tensions continue between conservative elements and relatively modern or less conservative groups. State regulations have dampened any progressive moves since 1995, when Taliban took over parts of the country. Even before Taliban, practically no progress occurred due to commando rule and struggles between and amongst antagonists, who were well known for changing loyalties. Even during the relatively calm and lull periods between fighting, nothing constructive had come out in relation to education development or progress in other sectors. The scenario remains more or less the same and it is very likely to be so for some time. However, one can also see some changes in the attitudes of the Taliban, towards the education of girls, especially in the high returnee areas and in some urban sectors. In the former the community consensus on the need for the education of the girls prevails and education is provided for boys as well as girls. In the latter, home schools are a growing phenomenon, details of which were discussed earlier. What is suggested here would be that this window of opportunity should be used by the Afghan educationists, along with others, to think anew about the whole issue of pedagogy: teacher education, teaching learning skills and new methodology. In
other words, focus on model building, methods, materials and building bridges between the old/traditional values with the new changes that are taking place in the educational field and technology today. Such initiatives, if taken now, will not be lost in times of peace to come.

In view of the above, using existing resources and also without disturbing the status quo, what are the critical areas that should be taken into consideration for these new initiatives? What are the minimum resources available to commence such interventions? With the existing constraints related to changes in curriculum, provision of materials, resources for structural development etc, it is unlikely that major tasks in these sectors of any nature could be mooted in the near future. The available resources at hand, with least cost, are the teachers and teacher educators with a remote semblance of functioning of teacher colleges none of which are in the desired state of quality to undertake challenges. It is well known that an efficient teacher and a headmaster would make a difference in the quality of teaching and management, even in the remotest areas and under very adverse conditions. Thus, till such time that normalcy prevails, a short term approach for development of education, changes with the minimum costs, could be adopted with inputs to improve the qualitative aspects of the educational personnel.

**Tensions in Learning**

Having stated these, it would be relevant to find out the role of the teacher in reducing the tensions related to learning in the student in deprived communities and environments. His awareness and appreciation of the realities are vital in this connection. The adverse results of poor home backgrounds and other deprivations are further aggravated by the fact that teachers begin teaching not with what the children know or have experienced but with what they do not know and have not experienced. This is because teachers have been provided with only traditional philosophies of education which emphasize that parents are an important part of the learning process so that if one part fails the whole blame goes to the parents. It is also suggested that improvements in achievement levels could take place only if the sub-culture of children i.e. home background, was changed, which is not possible. In the case of Afghanistan they suffer immensely from lack of access to most of the basic needs of life. This emphasis on the sub-culture is because the teachers lack skills related to effective use of the
There has long been an ideological debate over the content and the processes of education for rural children. As for content some educationalists (Chanan 1976, Cox and Jones 1983) believe that all, although unrelated to the life experiences of many people, should learn certain amount of academic knowledge. While on the other hand, Coombs (1985) and Gray et al (1992), suggest that the minimum learning essentials for children in rural areas should include positive attitudes, functional literacy and numeracy, a scientific outlook, functional knowledge and skills needed for raising a family and operating a household for living and civic participation. Both groups believe that there should not be differentiation between urban and rural children in relation to the curriculum provided; yet the latter group is of the view that any difference should be in the methods of presentation and teaching. However, there are others who advocate that the curriculum is centralized, rigid and biased towards the 'haves,' the urban and the middle class with westernized views (Bennet 1993, Ekanayake 1990). They view that 'irrelevant education breeds discontent and frustration and suggest that, in many cases, children who finish primary education seem to be less fit to be creative members of the community than if they had never been to school' (Ekanayake 1997).

According to Singh, the pedagogical practices amongst most teachers serving rural areas and deprived communities are likely to be poor. The teaching styles adopted by some urban teachers may be alien to what rural children experience in their day-to-day activities because these elite styles presuppose cognitive frameworks based on middle-class cultures (Singh 1997). The importance of relevant approaches in teaching is further substantiated by Witking's theory of 'field dependent' and 'field independent' styles of teaching (1967). Accordingly, 'field dependent' refers to perceptions based on field experiences where children are motivated by personnel and family experiences as opposed to abstract, unemotional and objective presentation of information found in the 'field independent' approach.

In traditional societies like the one in Afghanistan, children would like to be associated with personal and family lives and when teaching is practised on those lines, children will be motivated as understanding of...
what is taught becomes clear and meaningful. Teachers must recognize these variations and take cognizance of these in the teaching learning process (Teresa 1997). Development of these skills would bring about better effectiveness in their teaching. Physical tiredness, mental strain, social constraints, instability, fear and taboos and values affect parents, which are very common in the Afghan contexts; hence the need to change the pedagogical styles of teachers to accommodate the issues that confront the children in Afghanistan.

Concept-Based Learning

Another aspect that needs attention in Afghanistan at the moment is the lack of textbooks for children, in addition to the absence of an acceptable curriculum. What alternatives are available in a situation of this nature for the teacher and the headmaster to sustain students in school and engineer learning tasks? The contents of the subjects in the primary grades consist of concepts, levels of which increase with the grades. It is the concepts that help to develop tables of specification based on taxonomy of educational objectives, contents for each grade and evaluation procedures. In the absence of an acceptable curriculum and textbooks, teachers could be guided to formulate the relevant concepts for each grade and subject and the plans for teaching such concepts. It would be necessary to provide guidebooks for the teacher grade-wise and subject-wise at the primary level on the concept approach of teaching learning, identifying the key concepts for each grade and the methods of instructions for teachers. A teacher-training programme based on practice of teaching learning based on concepts would be also part of the package. Thus concept-based learning will take care of the deficiencies of the absence of a curriculum and textbooks as at present in Afghanistan. ‘Concepts are the basic building blocks around which people organize their thinking. Concept learning and logical thinking are critical goals for almost everything taught in schools. These become important scaffolding for building students’ understanding of school subjects. Concept learning is essentially a process of putting things into classes. The instructional goals of concept teaching are mainly to help learners conceptual understanding of the subjects they are studying (Arends 1998) The significance of concept teaching and learning is supported by theories and empirical evidence especially that of Bruner's and Piaget's development theories (Bruner 1966, Piaget 1954). So that even under normal conditions this approach
would be of use in the teaching-learning process. It is the natural way of learning and is culturally congruent too.

**Problem-Based Teaching**

In the absence of teaching materials and other aids in the Afghan schools one can also adopt methods that would ensure learning and develop skills effectively. Methodological approaches, as in the concept approach, can take care of these deficiencies. The methods suggested are problem oriented teaching and culturally congruent approaches. As in the concept-learning approach, expertise on these could be achieved with least investment through teacher education programmes and guidebooks for teachers and head masters. These methodologies could be later fitted into the mainstream, without much difficulty facilitating and augmenting the processes. This would also help to develop a culture of innovation in pedagogy in Afghanistan, supporting educational development with less time and delay. Problem-based instruction is not new, and has its intellectual roots in the Socratic methods expanded by the cognitive psychologists in the twentieth century. John Dewy is an exponent of this approach with his concept on 'environment as the laboratory of learning.' Basically, problem-based instruction poses problematic situations by the teacher to students and gets them to investigate and find solutions on their own. This methodology assists the student in learning effectively in a number of ways. It helps to find solutions on their own to problems; provides experience with adult roles; and allows gathering self-confidence in their own ability (Arends ibid).

These would be very pertinent in Afghan contexts, who had been all the time depending on others for solutions. Over the years, it will help the Afghans to be more independent and slide away from the current dependency syndrome.

**Cultural Congruence**

Another aspect closely related to the above is the significance of cultural congruence in educational practices. Cultural congruence is a field more common to ethnographers. Unfortunately, they have not paid attention to teacher education. In developing a pedagogy based on ethnography, teachers should be made to learn how young children organise themselves and the ways adults in the communities interact with them. It will make the teachers more reflective in their professional activities. Culturally congruent approaches, though not radical, would make a difference in the school system in developing countries like Afghanistan.
Anthropologically, the cultural adoption of structures related to conversation and lesson planning may reduce cultural shock in the classroom, enabling students to feel 'conversationally competent in familiar ways in an otherwise unfamiliar setting' (Erickson 1987).

Two other aspects of crucial importance in the programmes of education in Afghanistan relate to stress management aspects of schools and provision of education to those who had lost the opportunities for the last two decades. The latter needs more education of a functional nature to understand the changes and to be positive and pro-active in their contributions to development of their country. Since these two are considered very critical in the current contexts of Afghanistan, a brief discussion follows to highlight the significance of these two critical elements in an education development paradigm for Afghanistan.

III. Literacy Programmes for the Afghans

Literacy for What?

The word literacy with its derivative illiteracy and the adjectival embellishment, namely functional literacy have become the cornerstones to the development paradigms in the world today. Lack of literacy leads to the development of a syndrome, which is characterized by dependency, absence of social justice, unequal participation and mal-distribution of social wealth, and limited nature of democratization of institutions and social structures all of which are true in the Afghan context. These are related to some of the key elements used to measure the level of development of a nation. The level of literacy therefore is closely linked to sustainable development. Literacy is also the basis for understanding human rights and demanding of the same by the people meaning that the greater the rate of literacy, the greater the respect for human rights by the rulers and the ruled.

The concept of literacy has undergone changes in recent times. Literacy broadly defined refers to awareness, which in the modern world to a greater extent relates the 3Rs. In development, as man is placed at the centre, his participation has to be fostered through a process that helps him achieve basic skills and knowledge needed for participation (Hamadachvhe, Daniel 1986). Thus in complex societies for a man to function effectively, mastery of the language and basic general knowledge is manifestly inadequate.
Realizing the importance of functional literacy, UNESCO placed emphasis on functionality of literacy commencing with the Tehran Conference (1965) and later with the Declaration of Persepolis (1975) in which literacy was considered to go beyond the 3Rs, thus contributing to the liberation of man and to his full development. The threshold of functionality varies among countries as well as within the content of the times and needs of each society. It also means that one is not functionally literate all the time and if he does not keep pace with the changes one could become functionally illiterate no sooner than he stops his acquisition of skills and knowledge (Mayor 1990).

It is important, that the concept of functional literacy is further clarified in the light of the demanding needs and changes that are occurring in the world in general and dimensions needed in Afghanistan today. These changes are related not only to technology but also to the social life of the community, and to natural resources eventually. Understanding this interrelatedness becomes important for the society today in its unprecedented strives towards development. Of the various interconnected activities and actions, which are linked with literacy, the Tehran Conference's definition of functional literacy focussed mainly on 'vocational training programmes' leading to 'individual productivity.' Development and transformation came to be closely linked which included social, cultural as well as economic and qualitative as well as quantitative aspects (Thant 1986). It also came to be emphasized that functional literacy should lead 'everyone to understand, control and master progress.' Paulo Freire's psychosocial literacy approach emphasized the need for greater political awareness in functional literacy programmes. He has been critical of literacy, which does not articulate political consciousness. The coverage of functional literacy as stipulated in the Third International Conference on Adult Education (Tokyo 1972) includes society's needs and motivations and aspirations of the individual elements hitherto disregarded. Emphasis on just economic orientation functionality has to be rejected for it does not cover the totality of the development perspective and does not reflect the multi-dimensional needs of man. Hence in the development of functional literacy programmes for Afghanistan these are compulsions for the planners. Adiseshiah (1976) points out that 'functionality covers as wide a range as man's entire life and holistic development. It relates, to begin with, to his work. It relates to his culture, customs, beliefs, and values, which make for a humane life and that inner life which makes society a cultural society. Above all the functionality of literacy relates to the fight of the poor, illiterate, exploited
and disinherit to organize against growing poverty, and for an equitable and just social and political order. The pertinence of this statement in the Afghan circumstances is very poignant.

Possible Perspectives
Considering the issues confronted, Afghanistan does not have the means, the time, and the need to adopt formal, rigorous, and costly mechanisms. Hence functionality of learning could be a major breakthrough. Learning to read and write in itself cannot be the panacea to all problems, and in fact, the academic approaches of the western models copied faithfully by the developing countries have led to social unrest in countries, which have achieved satisfactory levels of literacy. Functional literacy should not only be a concept but a methodology to be adopted at all levels of learning/teaching.

In development, one of the key factors considered for sustainability is the level of participation, which can be achieved only through functional literacy. Participation means the capacity, not only to listen and absorb, but also to contribute to the critical processes of development.

Why Promote Literacy?
Why should the Afghans bother to read and write if they feel that their parents and grandparents have survived without knowing the 3Rs? This is a question that has to be answered clearly in promoting literacy. Moreover, making literacy compulsory may not bring desired results. Literacy should guarantee that it brings skills to people to satisfy their needs and improve the quality of life. In this respect, the significance of literacy for women plays a key role in development of the community which includes health, nutrition, improvement in the economic life, enhancement of their personality and taking them out of their marginalized and inferior life situations. It is more a literate mother who could break the traditions and customs, which inhibit progress. Thus functional literacy should not only be part of a literacy programme but rather a point of departure that enables people to see realities and provide practical solutions. However, this does not mean that general literacy should be replaced by functional literacy for people have to read and write and also understand vital information.
Supply vs. Demand: Pitfalls to be Avoided

Functional literacy has been invariably looked at from the supply side and as a result, whatever the suppliers had thought suitable was provided to the clientele irrespective of their needs. This has resulted in silent rejection of the materials and programmes to some extent. No serious assessment of the needs of the target group had been conducted by the suppliers. Motivation of learners had not been considered either. In the present day both functional literacy and literacy should be a means to an end and not an end itself. Looking from a supplier’s point of view would be the logical way of making literacy achieve success in a country like Afghanistan.

Challenges to Literacy in Afghanistan

The formal literacy rates in Afghanistan are one of the lowest in the world; so is their development level. A generation or more of those who are at present in their twenties, are very likely to have never attended any school. Education institutions are in disarray, without clear direction and a vision. Coupled with these is the lack of materials and other physical needs. There is general apathy in all aspects related to life. Issues related to health, food, security, deprivations, cultural erosion, disappearance and or destruction of institutions etc are the order of the day in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, life goes on and the community survives. How does it happen? It may be that the people have the inborn capacity to survive with minimum practical skills. If that is so, what type of education should be provided to the community? To what extent should such an education focus on realities? How should we ensure that education does not become another chore? These questions should be the pointers to educational and development planners. It means that literacy should be an integral part of all plans for development and improvement of quality of life. In Afghanistan literacy should lead to bring about changes in life styles and take away the dependency syndrome and the subservient nature of the community. This is crucial for the Afghan community, to bring about social transformation.

Stresses

Apart from the above, there are many factors in Afghanistan which hinder literacy programmes for adults. These relate to psychosocial aspects of the people. In this context, stress can be identified as one of the major factors inhibiting learning. Lack of access to learning materials, shocks resulting from the constant political changes, depriving women in some areas of access to learn (including girl child) and work, lack of opportunities for skill
development and making life economically viable, constant migrations and living as refugees, presence of widowed families and loss of family members combined with the absence of any prospects of peace in the near future, are some of these stressful factors. Thus an environment of this nature demands unconventional and innovative, as well as culture specific approaches in promoting literacy programmes.

It is a society that has survived for over a generation, with partial literacy and without proper formal education. Hence, some may not even see the advantage of access to learning. These are the other contexts that have to be taken into consideration in developing literacy programmes inside Afghanistan. Their desire to learn will emerge only when they feel that literacy will help them overcome their problems sooner or later. Therefore, the literacy materials should be of interest to the people. The materials should also focus on the development of critical thinking and not on providing mere facts and knowledge. Besides, as the programmes focus on adults, it is essential that we make use of the experiences of adults in the process of implementation. Some of the key areas for literacy development are explained in part III.

IV. Matching Managerial Skills with Stresses
It is very unlikely that the desire for resources, especially the insatiable demand for materials can be met, to the satisfaction of developing countries in the near future. One way out of this problem would be to develop the state-of-the-art of management and develop the capacities of the people who manage. This will enable them to get the maximum output from the resources available. This means emphasizing the importance of culture specific management methodologies, as a strategy for achieving higher outputs from whatever resources are available. Such a process would result in developing and improving the endogenic capacities of the people, compensating the lack of material resources to some extent. This will also comply with the modernity theory, which emphasize the idea of convergence where the people will absorb and understand modern development trends and also apply them taking into consideration the cultural nuances (Inkeles 1983).

Socio-Psychological Perspectives
Management can be viewed from a socio-psychological perspective as well. Thus in management, understanding of the cultural elements is of prime importance. Stress forms a key element in the culture of
management of such societies/environments which are under pressure, as in Afghanistan. The stressful factors, discussed later, have to be carefully understood and analyzed. Suffice is to say that in respect of management under stress, culture is not a static phenomenon but something which changes endogenously through the resolution of the tensions/stresses between its component elements. As every culture provides 'personal' as well as 'impersonal' identities in respect of management, stress management implies the importance of 'personal' traits as against 'impersonal' ones. The latter relates to phenomena which are universal while the former reflects cultural specificity. Universal management issues are the ones that relate to broader issues of a macro nature such as principles related to management or to national level policies, both of which are at a higher order. On the other hand, 'personal' management aspects relate to social values, as well as individual and social behaviour, specific to the cultural milieu of the school environment.

Resource Mobilisation Skills

'Resources,' 'stresses' and 'management' seem to be the key words in the HRD scenario of the developing world. Development of education is a key factor in HRD and is sine-qua-non for any progress to be initiated and sustained. Like all other sectors, education too suffers from meager resources. It will be a long time before all needs of this sector will be met. Looking into the alternative ways of utilizing available resources, capacity development of the key managers could be one way out of this impasse. Invariably the general tendency has been to cry for more resources, not even before knowing what is available. Thus prior to identifying what is lacking one could commence programmes with resources available. Creating awareness of these aspects in the manager would be a priority. What are the resources that are available for the schools? Although the schools may lack material needs, their environments posses some form of resources. What may be lacking are the skills of the manager, which in the case of education the principal, who has to understand the nature of such resources, posses the capacity to mobilize them, and process these in such a way that the aims of the institution/organization and needs of the community are met to a certain level of satisfaction.

Nature of Stress

How do we define stress? What are the main characteristics of stress? What types of stresses affect management at the grassroots? The word stress, when used in generic terms, may imply its pleasant aspects as well,
although invariably it carries a negative connotation. A working definition would figure out stress as an 'adaptive response, mediated by individual characteristics and/or psychological processes, that is a consequence of any external action, situation or event that places special physical/and or psychological demands upon a person' (Ivancevich, 1980). Stress is an outcome of the individual’s interaction with the environment. It encompasses physiological, psychological and behavioural aspects. Management stress is not limited to things that happen inside the organization during working time. It has dimensions that relate to extra organizational stressors such as the ones that relate to social, economic, cultural elements. Therefore stress may vary both spatially and time wise. Spatially it may mean that stressful factors prevalent in one area may not be the same elsewhere. What is important for those who manage developmental tasks is to appreciate and understand these micro changes and act accordingly without showing desperateness and excess anxiety.

Stress is also a relative term. It connotes constraints encountered in the organization. These could be of different orders and magnitudes. In relation to development of education the relevance of education to the realities of a country may be a stress for a nation. Lack of equality and access are two other stresses of the same order that a state/community has to face. Learning methodologies also become stresses for the children, which may result in children leaving the system at various levels. Socio-economic factors are stressful factors for children in lower income groups. War torn societies bring with them innumerable stresses in addition to the one mentioned above.

**Reflections on Management**

By and large, successful management reflects the quality of learning in a school. Management relates not only to routine administration, but also to professional aspects and human relationships. Managing efficiently what is available to get the maximum benefits would be an important guideline in environments, which lack basic needs. These require the principal to have the capacity to utilize maximally the meager resources available and manage these under stressful conditions. But management experts have not looked into this aspect seriously. Instead, the focus has been to use principles derived from industrial management with emphasis on input/output aspects, economics of scale with no bearing on development of human potentialities. Managing skills thus form an important aspect of the concept of HRD, which should encompass all these aspects.
Management involves different shades of stresses, which may result from a micro situation such as interactions with persons to a macro stance like political and social upheavals. Some of these may be within the institution while some are results of extraneous factors. The latter may be beyond the control of the manager. School heads in the Afghan context face similar issues. These relate not only to human relationships, but also to lack of physical infrastructural needs. The issues are too complex and it is unlikely that in Afghanistan normalcy in the provision of services would prevail in the near future. Under such circumstances, the school managers have to cope with various forms of stresses. Management has to be of a different order and solutions to most of the issues will not come easily and quickly. The managers of schools will have to live with constraints and resulting problems.

Against this scenario, what should be the management role of the principal? Should he wait till everything is in order and needs are met to the satisfaction of the principal or should he develop mechanisms both psychological and sociological to solve the issues using whatever resources he is able to mobilize from the environment?

Role of the Principal
Having discussed the 'raison d'etre' of stress management, the focus here would be specifically on the principal, in the articulation of the needs of the school. He is the key manager in this whole drama. He is the man on the spot, who takes decisions and creates a learning environment. His attitudes, capacities, and skills are important towards achieving the HRD aspects of the community, especially in the rural and peripheral areas of developing countries. The success of schools is determined by the efficiency of the head teacher. The community remembers its school in terms of the efficiency of the principal and the history of the institution records the successful principals vs. others.

What are the qualities of successful principals? What makes them successful? Do such successful principals perform in the same manner elsewhere in new environments all the time? These are some of the pertinent questions that could be raised vis-a-vis school managers. It seems that the principal could bring either new life to the school or make it fall to slumber. His spirit is important to vitalize a large number of variables that are connected with the development of the school. Time and again it has been shown that the will to change has to emanate from the principal.
No system can rise far too beyond the principal and the teacher. The training has to be concerned with development needs as well (Ekanayake 1990,1993).

Afghan Scenario
The current situation in the Afghan scenario calls for different approaches in managing primary schools. These schools lack basic facilities related to infrastructure, physical resources, human resources, humane relationships, peaceful environments, and lacuna in continuity of programmes and activities, and absence of remuneration. In addition, a total absence of professional development, non-availability of educational materials for both students and teachers, lack of evaluations and certification are other constraints. The psychological shocks and uncertainties also form part of the social system in which the schools have been functioning. It is also very pertinent to refer to the reactions of the Taliban and their priorities in a war situation. The rulers, however much interested in education, would have other priorities and even use these as an alibi not to provide education.

Thus in Afghanistan one meets a situation which is not normal at all and the traditional approaches may not be of much practical use in the management of institutions. This calls for development oriented management techniques as against maintenance administrative approaches. It means capacity for adaptability of facilities for a variety of learning teaching activities (Guruge 1994). As the situation in Afghanistan is fluid and complex, the approaches to issues have to be flexible and innovative in nature too. There cannot be solutions across the board to any problem. Thus, use of traditional structures and learning processes in the villages have to be tapped and these require skills.

In the management of basic education institutions, the principal has to possess extra abilities and skills other than pedagogical ones. The objectives of the learning programmes may also be of a different order and complex in nature.

The head of the school has to adopt strategies in cognizance of the constraints both in and out of the school. While motivating children to participate he has also to understand the importance of the economic value of the time of the child and also that of the teacher. The latter is not remunerated regularly. His tasks are not clear either and could vary daily
so that it is more crisis management. Such are the circumstances under which head teachers of these schools have to manage their institutions.

Under these contingencies, where resources tend to remain meager for a long time and stresses resulting from various factors will be the order of the day, there should be mechanisms that would help the principal develop his capacities to make use of whatever is available for the development of learning in the school/community. Such efforts should also provide him the ability to procure local efforts and resources. Managing efficiently and utilizing the available resources maximally, is an important asset of the head of the school in stressful scenarios. The significance of the school as perhaps the only centre of development in the peripheral areas in Afghanistan has also to be understood by the teacher community. Thus, managing uncertainty is yet another skill that the principal should develop in a political setting as in Afghanistan. Hence, taking small steps in a firm manner in all educational activities would be preferred to ambitious plans and rhetoric.

By and large, this is one aspect that has been overlooked by many management experts while the tendency has been more to view management as only getting more resources. This leads to a dependency syndrome. What is vital in Afghanistan is the development of endogenic capacities that would pave the way for self-reliance and empowerment of the people.

Key Questions in Management of Schools in Afghanistan

The following are some of the key questions identified by a group of Afghans in a field study to be used in the development of management modules for principals (UNESCO 1995). These were used as guidelines in the development of instruments for identifying the actual issues in the management of the schools (Chart 1).

I. Teaching Learning Processes
How are the needs of the students to be satisfied?
What kind of timetable should he prepare and adopt?
What kind of curriculum should he follow?
How should he bring a balance between learning and earning—student, teacher, and himself?
How should he evaluate students? What are the levels of achievement he should set for each grade/subject/child?

II. Professional Development
How should he provide work to the teachers?

What guidelines in professional activities should he set for the teachers?

How should he develop strategies for teaching large numbers and diverse levels and age groups?

What arrangements should he make for managing a number of classes if the school has only one or two teachers?

How can the principal assist/help teachers in their economic needs?

III. Community Relationships
What services and resources could he get from the community?

How should he motivate the community to participate?

What services should he offer/provide to the community?

How should the principal react to demands under conflict?

How can the principal relate the needs of the community to the local authorities?

IV. Issues Related to the Principal
What guidance does he receive for his professional development?

How does he survive with meager resources?

What strategies should be adopted to maintain discipline in the school?

What modalities should he adopt in the power relationships at the community level?

What is the vision he could develop for the school and the community?
Chart 1. Sample Summary of Possible Approaches to Solve Learning / Management Stresses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/ stress</th>
<th>Resources Available</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lack of classroom/space</td>
<td>Alternative space/garden/ tent/shade</td>
<td>shifting/grouping/ whole group/ small group/ individual</td>
<td>verbal/non verbal/ activity/reporting/ recording/presentation/whole class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of text books</td>
<td>Teacher's knowledge of subjects, contents/ Principal's capacity/guide books, environment and local resources both human and physical</td>
<td>concept based teacher training/ developing self learning skills of students/ developing self learning materials for students/ developing concept and or key contents based guide books for teachers text books/ teacher to replace text books</td>
<td>identify concepts, key contents for each grade, subject/write lesson notes/discuss with the principal/focus on simple targets/ commence teaching/use activity methods and resources of the locality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of materials-stationery, black boards/ chalk etc.</td>
<td>Throw away materials/local materials from the environment</td>
<td>use of local materials/guiding elders to develop materials/visual presentations/traditional skills both audio and visual/ demonstrations/ slow processes</td>
<td>verbal/rote learning/peer learning/support of elders/discussion/ demonstrate/group work/making learning to be fun, enjoyable and life oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-social issues of the child</td>
<td>Maturity of the teacher/elders of the village/institutions to meet/children/ attachment figures</td>
<td>Informal meetings/winning confidence/identifying causes/meeting elders/ diversifying approaches/ using activity methods</td>
<td>smiles/words of love/attachments/ respect fairness/tolerance/ school, classroom to be second home/guidance counseling/earn/ work/learn/listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher head teacher facility/remuneration</td>
<td>Stature, maturity of the teacher/children/leadership roles/social status/responsibility/village elders</td>
<td>focus on child/look for additional sources for income/self evaluation of the tragedies/avoidance of projecting personal adversities</td>
<td>Positive thinking/accepting challenges/variations in teaching activities/giving the best to Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition of the classroom multiage/grade/level/large numbers/single teacher</td>
<td>mature students/colleagues/peers/environment</td>
<td>grouping to ability, interest, experience/concept approach/integration with reality/multi grade teaching</td>
<td>different places for groups/rotation of teacher/repeat till fixed/create interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of opportunity/access for girls/boys</td>
<td>educated females/private locations/benefactors/eagerness</td>
<td>homes/private buildings/discreet approaches/short duration/voluntary services/shifting sessions/collaborations with NGOs, local authorities</td>
<td>slow paces/MGT/activity methods/fixing of concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part III**

**Development Plans for Education in Afghanistan by UN Agencies**

**Key Issues in Development**

Having drawn attention to some of the salient factors that could be used in the development of educational materials and training packages for educational personnel, the following aspects have been identified as of utmost importance in the provision of inputs to development of the Afghans, both refugees and those in the country. Thus, prior to discussing the plans for the development of education it would be very appropriate to highlight some of the areas of contention that Afghanistan has encountered over the years in relation to development, resulting from the
wars and conflicts of sorrow, which need to be addressed in educational programmes, formal, non-formal and in the development of materials, skills development and vocational needs for all categories of clientele in the society. These were identified by a group of Afghan writers and educationists who are refugees in Pakistan (1999); hence the relevance and significance of these factors. This would enable those responsible for literacy resurgence to target the issues, focussing on the beneficiaries/readers to feel for the country and the contributions that should be made to resurrect the nation from the current tragedy. The key issues identified by the above refugee personnel are as follows:

Unheard Afghan Voices

1. Issues related to mobility and deprivations in quality and quantity
   - loss of one's belongings
   - destruction of socio-economic structures
   - working for survival in activities unrelated to their expertise and interest
   - loss of social status and self-respect
   - problems related to psychological depressions
   - loss of identity
   - unmet basic needs such as education
   - loss of basic rights and civil rights
   - loss of cultural privileges
   - destruction of the traditional tribal system in relation to cooperation and inter-relatedness
   - loss of their relatives/community life styles
   - problems leading to absorption in terms of climate, culture, social norms
   - increase in dependency syndrome
   - deprivation of the rights of children born as refugees
   - vulnerability to social problems specially that of widows
   - moral deterioration

2. Issues related to human relationships and population increase and lands of refuge
   - deprivations and injustices due to politics and ethnicity
   - restrictions on the refugees in the country of refuge
   - restrictions on the behaviour styles of the refugees
- increasing domestic problems
- loss of relationship with families inside Afghanistan
- adverse effects of the local culture on the refugees
- increase of population of the refugees and resulting issues
- sharing of meagre resources

3. Issues connected with the absence of a culture of learning
- economic problems and access to learning
- lack of an understanding about the importance of education
- social limitations
- religious limitations
- disappearance of traditional games and cultural activities
- non-existence of a curriculum related to the Afghan issues
- lack of access to quality education
- gradual disappearance of the mother tongue of the refugees
- disappearance of social traditions

4. Issues related to fauna and flora inside Afghanistan
- increase in pollution, due to disappearance of vegetation
- increase in floods
- decrease of rain
- loss of the beauty of the environment
- adverse effects on health
- extinction of animals

5. Issues connected with anti-social activities, drugs/poppies etc.
- increase growth in poppy production and rugs
- effects on personal behavior
- damages on the capacity of the individual
- trafficking drugs
- un-Islamic nature of these activities

6. Issues related to cultural heritage
- ignorance of the contributions of Afghanistan to the Buddhist culture in the early centuries
- destruction of heritage by local collaboration with outsiders
- effects of different ethnic groups on the development of a nation
- rise of religious extremism and impact on culture

7. Absence of a vision
- problems related to the mental framework of the Afghans
- more concentration on the day-to-day issues
- scattered nature of the Afghans
- lack of a political will
- continuous erosion of the behaviour patterns of the Afghans

8. Problems related to tolerance
- lack of the ability to appreciate other cultures/religions
- lack of the ability to cooperate/used traditional methods

(Ekanayake, Karim 1999)

Strategy Framework Plans of the UN Agencies for Education in Afghanistan

As we have been able to understand the gravity of the issues related to development it is appropriate to look into plans of two UN agencies, which are mainly responsible for education in Afghanistan as to how these agencies have conceptualized the needs in educational development. In the development of education for Afghanistan, the key players in the UN system for Afghanistan are UNESCO, UNICEF and UNHCR, although many other agencies like UNOPS, WFP, CDAP and WHO support the development of education in aspects such as infrastructure, provision of materials like food, health services, de-mining, drug control etc. The mandate of UNESCO is exclusively for education, from primary to tertiary, while UNICEF focuses on education at the primary level. UNHCR has an exclusive role in the education of the refugees and returnees, discussed in earlier chapters. In this chapter, education plans and programmes UNESCO and UNICEF for Afghanistan is discussed so as to highlight the concerns of the two key UN agencies in the educational development of Afghanistan. However, none of these agencies consider these plans as policies, which is the responsibility of the state of Afghanistan. Yet these could provide important guidelines in development policies of a practical nature, at a future date. Based on these plans both UNESCO and
UNICEF has taken steps to commence activities when and where necessary, on a smaller scale so that these experiences could be ploughed in to formulate a major plan at a later stage, if and when needed.

A) Strategies of UNESCO
UNESCO’s educational framework is presented in a strategy paper titled Grassroots for Reconstruction of Education in Afghanistan (GREAT), 1995. This document has analyzed the historical backdrop and has identified key issues along with some model activities. These are discussed briefly in the following pages:

Educational Issues
Quantitative Disparities
Basic data on the number of schools between 1978 and 1990 i.e. pre-war and post-war indicates the wide disparities that have emerged over the years. Thus of the total of 3459 schools in 1978, only 589 remained in 1990. There has been a loss of nearly 85% of girls’ schools over this period. The drop in the number of teachers over the same period indicates a similar trend in that the number of teachers fell from 30502 to 15609. The number of students also dropped from 931716 (1978) to 628947 (1990) (UNDP, Kabul, 1993). Although data is highly unreliable, the picture it presents is gloomy. By 1988 the intake of the relevant age group to the primary grades had been reduced to 39%, and less than 20% entered grade 1. At best only 24% of eligible boys and 13% of eligible girls were enrolled in schools (1988) (UNDP, Kabul 1993). Thus one can see that almost 80% or more never received any education.

Qualitative Deficiencies
In accordance with the definition of literacy by UNESCO, it is referred to as the capacity to read a simple sentence and write one’s name. On the basis of this simple task one would find that a large number of the people is illiterate, especially as a result of the destruction and dysfunctional nature of the educational institutions over the last two decades. The quality of education received is far from satisfactory and lacks the demands of a modern society. Even those who are literate have had no access to new trends and information about modern changes and inputs to knowledge. This group includes educational managers, teacher educators and teachers in the universities.
Professional Growth
For qualitative education, professional development has to take place. There is no substitute for a good teacher. Excellent management of the deprived institutions is equally important, a quality needed by the headmasters. Teacher educators and curriculum developers have to be trained and brought up to date. Due to the war situation, none of the above personnel have undergone any form of guidance and capacity building over the last two decades. It may be stated that, professional growth could have made up for the lack of other needs to quite an extent.

Deprivation of Women and Education of Girls
Another issue related to the above is the deprivation of women. Not only are their literacy levels below that of men, but in some areas of Afghanistan, women and girls are denied access to both learning and working as well. This aspect is more pronounced in certain areas in the west and south at the moment. Contrary to the UN charter of human rights, which states that ‘every one has the right to education’ and universalizing access and promoting equity, the girl child is not permitted to attend school and women are not permitted to work. The impact of this in the long run, would be as disastrous, or more, accompanied by the effects of war itself.

Lack of a Curriculum and Textbooks
This is yet another important need that has not been attended to over the decade. There is no common curriculum for Afghanistan at the moment. Although it is the responsibility of the state to move for such a curriculum due to the inherent constraints, this had never been possible. Textbooks are developed haphazardly by different NGOs without following any principles of curriculum development. Nevertheless, these texts serve as a useful and urgent need of the moment.

Education of the Children of the Returnees
As stated earlier, one of the key demands of the returnees is education. Their exposure to education systems both in Pakistan and Iran have made them realize the significance of education in the development of an individual and the horizons that open as a result of learning.
Unskilled Nature of Youth
The unskilled nature of the youth is yet another cause of great concern. In any educational development plan, this aspect has to be given high priority. The youth have not had any provision for skills development to enable them to be self-reliant other than commissioning themselves in one or another faction to fight each other. This aspect should be of the greatest concern to the international community: how to retrieve them from a culture of war to a culture of peace and become a resource rather than a destructive force.

Conflicts and Conflict Resolutions
War has brought with it untold social miseries and eroded all values and morals of the Afghan society. How to resurrect them from these conflicts and develop peace in their minds would be an equally important task in an educational development programme for Afghanistan.

Quality of Life
Lack of opportunities for education, an indispensable key, has led to low ebbs in personal and social improvement of the people. It has led to weakening of the access to 'scientific and technological literacy and capacity and thus self-reliant development,' all in violation of the Jomtien Declaration (1990).

Proposed Strategy
In view of the above issues, GREAT has proposed the following strategies:

The objective of a planned strategy is to bring about a coherent approach so that resources utilized would be directed to a planned target and not wasted through haphazard implementation. For UNESCO it would be to provide technical assistance to the UN agencies and NGOs in whatever way they may need it. In addition it is also envisaged to develop materials and training programmes to lay the foundation for professional development and net working. The issues of Afghanistan are very different and complex in composition and structure that conventional and traditional approaches may not have answers and solutions. Hence activities should be innovative, complementary, integrated, endogenic and culture specific. The activities would adopt the following approaches:
1. Grounded Approach
Not withstanding war, HRD should be a continuous process in relation to different sectors. Development of HRD needs time, for it may even need the period of a generation. In all of this, education is the basis and it has to be fostered and expanded to reach every one equally and democratically. War is a creation of a few, which has brought suffering to millions. Education is the best means to bring about changes in the development of human resources. In this a graded approach is essential which would be the logical way to identify the felt needs of the people, activate a participatory process involving the community and maintain sustainability. It will also lead to the recognition of the complementarity and synergistic effects of related human resource investments in population, health and nutrition. Such a process will bring about the importance of joint actions with local level organizations at all levels and an opportunity to avail their resources as well.

Targets and Priorities
This plans to provide a broader coverage for all projects related to education and development. Thus it is expected to develop literacy, basic education, non-formal education, income generating activities and related skills, and encompass all educational projects depending on the prevailing situations, resources, and needs. The target groups include primary school age children to youths and adults of both sexes as well as literates, neo-literates and illiterates. The focus would be to bring about maximum participation, quality improvement and relevance.

Rolling Plan
The strategy encompasses a rolling plan, which means it is flexible and that changes could be made as and when needed to accommodate the political variations that prevail inside Afghanistan, while adhering to the UN principles. It is also envisaged to cooperate with the government/education departments in the regions.

Community Involvement
Community cooperation would be sought and utilized all the time. This is for sustainability and empowerment as well as for using all possible local resources. All these would be in addition to collaborations with the UN agencies and NGOs which have rich experiences. This would involve
collaborative planning with the local community in relation to execution, monitoring, and evaluation systematically.

Confidence Building
As Afghanistan had no system of educational management for consistency, quality and/or quantity for nearly two decades, there is a definite lack of confidence and direction in the minds of the Afghan educationists and planners as to what could be the approach to work in stressful situations. Hence, planning should take cognizance of these socio-psychological as well cultural nuances. On the other hand, the desire of the people for learning is very encouraging. This conflict of confidence and unmet desires through the designated channels, namely the political and bureaucratic/managerial, are important elements that have to be matched and bridged by the international community. As it is both these factors, political and bureaucratic/managerial are weak and unstable. The use of media would be one important source to bring about confidence. The media should be used to project messages on the culture of peace.

Endogenic Factors
The strength for learning lay to a great extent, within the culture of the community. Hence the importance of the use of cultural elements for development purposes where local traditions for learning have to be taken into account. These include 'local knowledge, local belief systems, local practices' and methods of articulating emotions in the community. This will also enable the community to be involved in what their children would learn and be supportive of the educational programmes as was not in periods of the educational history of Afghanistan. Thus the proposed plan includes:

1. adoption of those aspects on indigenous knowledge systems that may contribute positively to the transmission of both indigenous/external knowledge, skills and values
2. use of local knowledge in content and introducing new knowledge
3. providing non-formal education programmes for the youth and adults

New Methodologies
These involve the de-formalization of instruction using formal, non-formal and informal approaches and adopting multi-media approaches. The
other aspect of this relates to adopting a holistic approach both in content and methodology. The materials would include self-instructional ones with individual pacing, distance learning methods using media and print material. Methodologies would focus on different groups and interests for both motivation and sustainability.

Model Building
Developing models and replicating the successful stories elsewhere is the other key dissemination strategy of the plan. The proposed activities and programmes are of a short and long-term nature and also look at the scenario from micro as well as macro perspectives. Models would be developed in peaceful areas where work would be feasible and sustainable which would have desirable positive impacts on the surrounding areas. In the development of models a multi-media approach would be adopted. Initial work would be in workable paces, small in nature but allowing time to gain confidence and provide opportunities for the people to utilize their innate capacities. It will be a process of building partnerships.

In the promotion of basic education the individual learners would be considered as vital resources that need to be mobilized. Participation should not be assumed but encouraged through a well designed process, with flexibility and appropriate interventions and not left to chance. Flexibility includes 'learning from the people' as well. Barriers for women and children should be removed through programmes adapted to local contexts and seen by the learners. In the models, the learners should be seen as partners rather than treated merely as 'inputs' or 'beneficiaries.'

Integrated Approach
In the development of models and activities, collaboration with the UN agencies and NGOs as well as local organizations is of paramount importance. Greater responsibility should be given to the local organizations. Integration should begin from the initial stages of planning to evaluation. Activities related to basic education include aspects related to health, population, environment, and agriculture; services and skills of personnel from all sources should be utilized. A good example is the integrated development programme of UNHCR, launched in the Eastern Parts of Afghanistan in 1996, which includes a heavy component on education.
Identification of Pilot Areas

This is to be achieved through consultation with the key personnel in the respective regions, along with other UN agencies and NGO personnel. Apart from security, divergent interests/characteristics and accessibility would be key factors in the location of the sites for the model centres.

2. Feasibility Activities

Based on the above conceptual framework, the following feasibility activities are proposed. These activities reflect the present scenario of uncertainty and hence focus both on capacity building of the people and providing material needs. However, the latter, though important needs more resources from the international community. The structures have the risk of being destroyed by warring factions. Human resource building, on the other hand, would remain with the individuals to be retrieved as and when demanded and not subjected to destruction as easily as infrastructure. Afghanistan needs entirely different forms of approaches and very unconventional ones too. It may have to live with the present malaise for some time and even if it is, in the near future normalcy would ensue but the process would take sometime. Hence the feasibility activities should be of a model nature with a futuristic concern/focus.

Under each major activity a large number of specific activities would be developed in congruence with the needs and demands of specific groups/areas/cultures. These will be spread over periods of time in relation to the political situations that prevail in different parts of Afghanistan. All these proposed activities would be worked out under the following phases.

Phase 1

1. Provision of teaching-learning materials

Providing textbooks form an important aspect of this activity, until such time that the Afghans themselves develop an acceptable curriculum. The materials also include resource books for teachers and principals and also books for adults on functional literacy. The latter could focus on social and cultural needs of the community.
Phase II

I. Professional development
   - teacher education including teacher educators
   - management training focusing on stress factors
   - curriculum developers and textbook writers
   - evaluators and supervisors

III. Development of innovative methodologies and delivery systems
   - linking formal, non-formal, and informal structures for learning
   - adopt non-conventional and innovative approaches
   - integrate with other disciplines/agencies and community resources
   - locating community resources
   - adopting methods, activities, and materials for target groups

III. Mobilization of community resources
   - identifying and combining education with community needs and resources
   - incorporating societal needs, local leadership in planning and implementation

IV. Supervision, monitoring, and evaluation processes

Phase III

I. Policy research
   - needs identification study
   - data validation
   - technical and vocational needs
   - micro planning needs
   - school mapping
   - model development
   - action research programmes

II. Technical and vocational education
   - promoting technical and vocational education
   - developing income generating activities
   - focusing on different target groups
III. Tertiary education/ higher education

Since Afghan refugees have been residing in Pakistan and Iran for over two decades, the need for higher education has to be looked into with great seriousness, both inside the country and in the lands of refuge. This would be in accordance with the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 28, which states the need to provide higher education to all on the basis of capacity and by very appropriate means. Such assistance would not only help the refugees in the land of refuge but would facilitate the human resource development aspects of those who return. It would ensure that those who return be a resource in the future development of the country.

IV. Developing linkages with the UN agencies, NGOs, and local departments of education

V. Action to upgrade logistics

This includes construction of buildings, provision of basic materials to schools, departments of education and to children.

However, these plans and ideas have to be implemented, although these may be of use in the future. The weaknesses of the programmes of UNESCO lay in this respect. Without funds and not based inside Afghanistan, UNESCO suffers from many drawbacks, unlike most of other UN agencies and NGOs. Hence one has to view these ‘model’ plans and ideas from a practical point of view.

Nevertheless, within its limited resources both in terms of funds and personnel UNESCO has been able to provide models of resource materials for educational personnel and youth which can be further replicated and used by concerned agencies and NGOs. Thus based on this plan GREAT, UNESCO since 1994 had undertaken a number of activities related to development of materials and training of personnel. These include materials on functional literacy (1995), guide books for teachers (1995/98), stress management modules for principals (1996), resource books for teacher educators (1998), materials on culture of peace for adults and children (1999), training programmes on curriculum design and development (1997) and creative writing for Afghan writers (1999). Some of these were developed/conducted in collaboration with the UN agencies and NGOs.
B) Strategies of UNICEF

UNICEF’s educational plan for Afghanistan is titled ‘Education for Afghans: A Strategy Paper’ (July 1998) in collaboration with Save the Children, USA. UNICEF has also identified the factors for the crisis in education which are similar to the ones referred to by UNESCO, but emphasize that ‘support to education sector activities befitting Afghans has generally been piecemeal and lacking in the long-term vision.’ The focus of the report is on the contextual, operational and technical aspects. It emphasizes the importance of the assistance from the international community to work ‘within a principle-centered approach, to avert dire consequences that will result if a generation of children goes uneducated’ (Rugh 1998).

UNICEF emphasizes the following strategies to improve access.

1. assistance agencies should offer ‘packaged’ programmes which will include a full range of components, materials, training, supervision and assessment
2. agencies should produce low-cost supplementary materials to fill the gaps in existing education services
3. agencies should develop flexible alternative delivery systems such as home-based and community based initiatives, roving teachers, mosque schools, radio programmes etc.
4. emphasis on ‘action research’ to determine both cost and quality of the models and to scale the models

In order to improve the quality of the programmes a number of strategies have been provided. These include assessing the quality of curriculum models, improving supervision, use of continuous assessment of students’ learning, developing the capacity of the educational personnel and developing mechanisms to focus student initiatives on student learning (ibid).

Relevance of programmes is another concern of UNICEF. However, one is not certain how relevant a programme is until there is an authoritative government that can speak for the whole of Afghan population. Thus at this moment there are a number of questions that will arise in this connection.
Short Term
Another aspect on which UNICEF has focused is in relation to the nature of the planning process taking short and long-term considerations. Even though it is not possible to predict what the future will hold for Afghanistan, it is possible to develop programmes that would have long-term applicability so that whatever is invested now does not go waste in the future. The short-term strategies suggested include:

1. simple packed programmes,
2. supplementary materials,
3. teacher supports,
4. supervisory systems,
5. alternative delivery systems,
6. strengthening local initiatives and
7. strengthening the capacity within organizations.

Long Term
Long-term implications depend on the desire of the Afghans to continue these strategies. Although if applied they can be useful at any stage in the future as well. These considerations are affected by:

1. government resources
2. absence of infrastructure
3. scattered nature of settlements
4. conservative nature of some groups and
5. the desire for alternatives to formal education.

UNICEF has also developed a set of basic competencies on mathematics and language for the primary grades. This specifies the concepts that should be provided for each grade. It enables the teachers and teacher educators to develop relevant training programmes, evaluation procedures, guide books and to bring about some sort of standard practices which are absolutely absent in the Afghan scenario. The purpose is not to bring about international norms but to initiate the setting for an accepted curriculum development process. This can be considered as one of the very few revolutionary steps in the development of the education system for Afghanistan during the last two decades.
Materials Development
In addition, UNICEF in collaboration with all agencies working for education had conducted a study on the learning materials and resource books developed for the Afghans over the years. This is yet another positive step that enables the educationists and NGOs to look at the relevant books and materials, and avoid duplication in printing of materials. The latter is a common phenomenon amongst NGOs competing for prestige.

The vision of UNICEF, like that of UNESCO, is that even under difficult conditions there is room for improving education opportunities for Afghan children. Thus 'the crisis in Afghan education may not be so much a problem of the complicated political situation in Afghanistan, but a result of the serious neglect of those aspects of education that promote equality, relevance and efficient delivery' (Rugh ibid,1998).

C) Comprehensive Disabled Afghans' Programme (CDAP)
The CDAP is continuation of a programme that had commenced in the early 1990s by the UN. This is yet another UN Inter-Agency programme organised under the auspicious of the UNDP. The key objectives of CDAP are to:

1. establish a network of trained field workers capable of providing counseling, therapeutic and referral services and appropriate education to the disabled
2. establish a specialised service in rehabilitation of disabled people
3. mobilise local communities to be responsible for the development of the disabled in their community
4. create an awareness in the minds of the public to enable integration of disabled people into various sectors through community based rehabilitation (CBR)
5. develop the capacity of NGOs and national organisations
6. provide educational facilities in selected communities on a model basis
In order to achieve the above objectives CDAP has undertaken the following interventions.

1. training of community members at the village level, both able-bodied and disabled, in the concepts of disability in areas related to education, health, early detection, early rehabilitation etc.
2. creating a cadre of therapists and development workers at the middle level
3. development of senior managers who will provide assistance to the regional programmes of CDAP
4. incorporation of peace education and conflict management into the programme activities

Using the above strategies CDAP has been able to achieve satisfactory results over the years, especially the community based programmes which have enabled the community to appreciate the roles of disabled in development. These include training, rehabilitation and social integration of 26,036 persons in 1999. CDAP has achieved another important target of providing education for a large number of children in the Southern area. This includes provision of 44 schools for both boys (2053) and girls (777) in a very conservative area in Afghanistan. Women teachers form part of the teaching staff in these schools. It seems that Taliban are melting their hardened souls slowly but steadily (CDAP Report 1999).

Based on the submissions of the UN agencies and NGOs the following programme is suggested in the development of education in Afghanistan.
| Chart 2. Programmes for Educational Development in Afghanistan |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Clientele Group** | **Types of Activities** | **Professional development** | **Institutional Development** | **Endogenous fits** | **International collaboration** | **Strategy Framework** |
| Major categories | | | | | | |
| refugees | returns | warfront | IDPs | warfront | IDPs | warfront |
| returnees | IDPs | warfront | IDPs | warfront | IDPs | warfront |
| IDPs | warfront | IDPs | warfront | IDPs | warfront | IDPs | warfront |
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| Sub- groups | | | | | | |
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| ethnic leaders | tribal leaders | educational activities viz prof.devel op, matreials deve., teac.tr., external funding etc. central coordinati on of a profess. Group develop. Of models research studies |
Conclusion

One can discern a number of key issues, both positive and negative, in the Afghan scenario. Politically the current scene in Afghanistan is reminiscent of the situation that prevailed during the last century viz. successive progressive steps by the rulers, torpedoed invariably by the religious and conservative elements like the tides in the sea at the end of a period of radical changes and followed by an absence of a strong central authority. This seesaw game is what is being experienced currently. However, one observes that the interventions of religious groups have been relatively less frequent since the 1960s. This situation prevailed until the Taliban element appeared in the scene in 1994/5. Apparently, the intersession of the religious and conservative factor becoming less frequent towards the end of the last century may be a result of the community’s exposure to the current world trends. The exodus of refugees has further strengthened this situation since 1980s, who are now returning home after exposure to situations in the lands of refuge. Albeit, it is very unlikely that those who left for the west would return, but their influence on their relations inside Afghanistan would be profound in years to come on the development of the country. These influences and exposures include methods of governance and human rights—especially provision of education for all—are bearings that did not prevail in the earlier occasions during the 20th century. Further, with the rapid changes in technology and information in the world, Afghanistan cannot be shut out from these influences in the process of modernisation. So that in time, with the spread of education, no matter what its pace, ethnic conflicts will fade and democratic habits will eventually grow, slowly but steadily. There seems to be no hurry in the process, as some western elements hope, for cultural transformation is a long process. Using this as the yardstick, the progress for future development in line with the rest of the world is imminent; there is light at the end of the tunnel.

In this, the role of the international community would be vital which relates to refraining from adopting measurers that are inimical politically to the development of Afghanistan, such as using Afghanistan as a cat's paw to achieve political objectives of global nature deliberately bringing instability into the country.

On the other hand, undue pressure on the Taliban, directly or even through its neighbours, will not bring about any positive results. The
unreasonable economic and political pressures will have little effect on
the Taliban. What is essentially needed is a constructive engagement /
dialogue between Taliban and countries genuinely concerned about
peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region. It should be
understood that there is no public opinion, representative institutions, or
civil society mechanisms through which international opinion could be
filtered to the Afghans to bring about changes inside Afghanistan. By
and large, the ordinary Afghan remains in a frame of mind similar to the
one in the early part of the last century. Thus, more sanctions and the
like will not only harm the ordinary Afghans, but will further isolate and
victimize them as well.

It is, however, very satisfying to note the faith and the commitment of
the UN agencies and the NGO community to undertake educational
programmes in a country where the current rulers do not provide
education to half the population, deprive them of it blatantly, and are
unappreciative of the resourcefulness of women in development. This
has resulted in a number of alternative plans for the development of
education in Afghanistan, commencing from the refugees in the lands of
refuge to returnees and displaced, at the same time adopting other
options to overcome the embargo of the Taliban to provide education for
those inside the country. As in the early part of the last century, where
different nations provided varied educational programmes for the
Afghans, the last two decades of war and internal conflicts have also led
to changes and processes in a different form but repeated with more
vigour and bewilderment. Too many agendas, without a central authority
to guide with a vision, is the order of the day. In comparison to what
took place during the last century, the current situation is more
exasperating, moving like a ship without radar. The number of
influencing players was few and the presence of a central authority
provided guidelines for these supporting countries to fall within the
development framework of the country. The Taliban, like some of the
earlier rulers who did not believe in education and abstained from
establishing schools for girls, explicitly state that, 'previous leaders and
monarchs did not do much to establish schools for girls. I do not blame
them; I blame the culture. We are closing schools, high schools, we are
not allowing them to attend university, to please the 99 percent of the
population of Afghanistan, which is supporting us against the world'
(Mujahid 2000). Paradoxically this is the greatest danger that
Afghanistan is facing today, where, on the one hand, the younger
generation is presented with different educational agendas by a large number of ‘good Samaritans,’ while on the other, they are not provided with anything worth the while for the future development of the nation by a group of religious zealots.
I. Current Socio-political Desperations

This chapter is a postscript to the second edition of ‘Education in the Doldrums : Afghan Tragedy.’ Since the book was first published in December 2000, plenty of water has flown under the river of international politics including 11 September 2001. Changes were very drastic and macabre which include the dastardly acts of Bali bombing and destruction of the Bamyon Buddha statues in March 2001 against the wishes and appeals of all humanity not only from Buddhist countries but international organizations spearheaded by UNESCO. The Afghans were themselves aghast and many cried literally as they valued this piece of treasurer dear to their heart and soul. The Afghans feel that the destruction was executed not by Afghans, but by predators from other countries who were with the Talibans. Is this not a carry over of the struggles of the early centuries once again where Afghanistan was the center for this ‘Great Games?’ The statues were indications of the advanced level of artistry and aesthetic values, which emanated from a high order of literacy and intellectual background of the Afghans during the early Buddhist era commencing from the 2nd century AD. Buddhism promoted cultural and artistic development. This destruction of the Buddhist statues was followed by the attacks of the American forces on the Talibans driving them and taking the reins of power in Kabul in collaboration with the anti-Taliban forces from the Northern Alliance of Afghanistan. What happened thereafter to date is another tragedy still unfolding itself in different complexities affecting both Pakistan and the neighboring countries. The Americans have wrested power. Though with the support of forces from the west, they have occupied Afghanistan, but are confined to the urban centers in Afghanistan and is facing problems. The geo-politics of the ‘Great Games’ has now changed to another stage of operation where Americans have taken the center of the stage.

At the end of September 2004 the interim government of President Hamid Kasari, who has rallied the Afghans to relatively a better-organized government, is expected to hold free elections in order to elect representatives to a new government. This is a great step forward;
and if successful, would pave the way to a democratic government after almost 3-4 decades of confusion and destruction. Even if the voters’ lists are not complete, it appears that elections will take place any way. No one is shying away from saying that elections are hurried to please the White House. Unfortunately, the man who would have won hands down universally is dead, namely the Lion of Pasnjsher, General Ahamed Shah Masood whom the Taliban allegedly killed just a few days before 11 September. The writer’s personal experiences and observations from inside Afghanistan since 1994 to almost the end of 2004 allowed him to see three regimes with different patterns of governance and contradictions ruling Afghanistan i.e., Government of Rabbani and war lords; the Taliban and pro-Pakistan elements with greater influence from the Arabs; and now the post-Taliban structure, Hamid Kasari at the helm with great support from the west, especially the USA.

It is very interesting to see how different nations have played key roles in the ‘Great Games’ beginning from 18th and 19th centuries; the British and the Soviets in 20th century; and now the Americans in 21st century. Throughout these periods the Afghans have been the victims; no country in the world ever faced such a tragedy. There were only brief periods of relative peace for the Afghans for any solid development. They have been influenced by most of the nations in the west in their development work and education was no exception. This was seen until very recent times as we saw in the earlier chapters.

One also has to look at the impact of Afghan development since 2001, and determine to what extent these developments attracted the refugees from the neighboring countries, especially Pakistan which still accommodates the largest refugee population from Afghanistan despite the fact that Pakistan was not a signatory of the UN Convention related to the acceptance of refugees. According to UNHCR, Pakistan, the repatriation of the Afghans has dwindled since 2002 from 1,568,464 individuals to 338,390 in 2003 and to 169,443 to date (June 2004). This means that refugees feel that they are still not safe in their country; the services (education, health economic possibilities) provided are still inadequate; their personal problems related to lands and property not settled etc. It is also an indication that a majority of those who are in refugee camps in Pakistan may not return at all. It is in this connection that UNHCR along with WFP and Commissionerate for Afghan
Refugees (CAR) in Pakistan have decided that from September 2004 the refugees in the old camps will not receive any more food aid. Instead they would be provided a handsome package, a golden handshake, if they are to return to Afghanistan this summer. Already an emergency shake up of some of the camps along the boarders of Pakistan/Afghanistan by the Pakistan army is underway where some 500,000 refugees have been given a 72-hour notice to leave for their home country. This of course is a part of the ‘cleaning up’ of the hideouts of the ‘al-Qaeda’ elements supposed to be taking refuge in these parts. The killing of as many as 300 dangerous al-Qaeda supporters in the Eastern borders of Afghanistan (2004) along with key figures of the movement has been successful for the moment for the Americans. However, one has to wait and see the long-term consequences of these attacks and counter-attacks. Whatever the fall out, the development process of Afghanistan is not going to be positive in the immediate future, although it will help in the stability of the state at a future date provided many other international injustices are sorted out and fairness is seen in reality than mere rhetoric of the Americans.

Fall outs from Mujahideens
The importance of education in the development of Afghanistan has been stressed by Hamid Kasari, President of the Interim Government of Afghanistan. This is one of his priorities and on all occasions of state policy pronouncements in and outside Afghanistan he has stated this fact clearly and forcefully. However, the problems related to provision of education seems to be enormous in terms of man power, logistics, materials, absence of professionals and institutions including acceptable curriculum for schools and training of personnel. Attempts are underway to clear these issues through the assistance of the UN agencies, The World Bank, and other international institutions. But the problems are staggering. The current issues (2003/4) have been exacerbated by adoption of the textbooks which the University of Nebraska, Omaha, developed during the Mujahideen period in their anti-Soviet struggle. These texts are called UNO textbooks. The Afghans invariably use the terms ‘textbooks’ and ‘curriculum’ inter-changeably to mean one and the same which is not correct at all. Unfortunately this mixture of the terminology persists amongst all those involved in education for the Afghans, whether in refugee camps in Pakistan or inside Afghanistan. This includes the UN as well.
Curriculum is a guide, a path to develop the contents of a learning programme whereas textbooks are developed based on the curriculum for the use of the students and teachers in the teaching-learning processes. The negative nature of these UNO textbooks has already been discussed earlier. Suffice is it to say that these textbooks were solely focused on indoctrination against the Soviets at that time. The contents in almost all the textbooks contain more messages on religious aspects. The Talibans also approved of these textbooks. These books were not developed on the basis of any principles of education and curriculum development. Technically one could say that these textbooks are ‘garbage.’ Unfortunately, these books are still in use (2004) even under a regime that had fought to change the system. Over a million of these books were printed in March 2003 as part of the ‘back to school’ campaign by the interim government. The campaign was very laudable and a welcome effort by the authorities after a long period of harassment of girls and closure of schools by the Talibans. But the policy of using the unscientific texts for these children may be liable to bring about negative impacts on the development of the child in the long run. However, it may be that these were the only materials available, and that there was no choice in the selection. The following pages attempt to discuss this issue at length and focus on the importance of the curriculum in the development of a nation and its human resources.

The second major issue that has arisen since of late relates to the acceptance of the educational norms and standards of the children and teachers in refugee camps whom educational authorities in Afghanistan want to return.

II. Curriculum Concepts and Meanings
Background/setting

The process of learning has always been for different purpose in different form from place to place. The contents differed from the clientele and one can say that exclusion was a part of the process. People learned what was of use to them in their day-to-day life. Perhaps this is why it was not necessary for people to learn for the sake of knowledge. They learnt what was more effective and useful in daily life. Acquisition of skills and their development was a lifelong process strictly imparted, observed, and evaluated by peers and elders. Education for all, as we know now, had no meaning or relevance in that context. It
was a simple society with limited needs and resources which was
governed by traditions and structures, and which assigned
responsibilities to each group without the possibility of moving up or
down the ladder of hierarchy. The needs of learning or the contents of
what had to be learnt and the so called ‘curriculum contents’ was thus
limited to the determined functions of the specific clientele in the social
milieu.

Change of the concept of curriculum
How and why these changed over centuries is well known. When
society became more organized and flexibility occurred in the social
structures with increased number of learning institutions established by
state and religious bodies, learning became more organized, and
focused on matters beyond the immediate. Thus the concept of
‘curriculum’ as a course of studies to be followed also changed.

The original meaning/concept of the curriculum was that it was a course
of studies followed by students i.e., syllabi which details out the content
area. Based on this the experts develop the contents in terms of the
domains in relation to the taxonomy of educational objectives using a
table of specifications based on principles of curriculum development.
The vision and needs of the country, the psychological capacity of the
student, type of skills, and level of competencies needed for the age
level with focus on the cognitive, affective, and skills are other aspects
of the development of the curriculum. Curriculum directs teacher
education and development of materials for both the student and the
teacher. It also determines the evaluation methods and the emphasis on
content areas. In short, curriculum guides the development of the
personality of individual. This is why states are very concerned and
sensitive about what is included in curriculum, as we can see in the
cases of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Approaches to curriculum development
What should be the best approaches to curriculum development?
Bottom up vs. top down could be the best way, which means
consultations with the indirect beneficiaries i.e.,
community/society/religious leaders, teachers, specialists/curriculum
experts, and policy makers. But do they ever consult the student, the
direct beneficiary? Of the above groups the policy makers tend to follow
the dictates of the voter and rouse the emotions of the masses, and are
very likely to ignore the development needs and advise of experts. This is well known and equally well recorded in the history of the development of curriculum in Pakistan, Afghanistan and to some extent India. As elsewhere during the Second World War where curricular and teaching methods were used to encourage racism and militarism, in Afghanistan too, during the war against the Soviets, curriculum was used to propagate and indoctrinate the child both by the Soviets and the mujahadeen. This resulted in developing warped minds and irrational thinking and actions among those who were subjected to learning under this curriculum. Such learning only help continue with hatred and intolerance amongst the Afghans against each other encouraging ‘blatant practices and stereotyping and bias.’ It did not lead to develop social skills and attributes needed for ‘living together.’ On the contrary, this learning has now led to the emergence of religious extremists specially in the Islamic world leading to destructions in Bali, followed by many similar occurrences all over the world, the Middle East and South Asia in particular.

Religious harmony, ethnic cooperation, ethics and values, tolerance and accommodation are concepts that are more needed in globalized world. On the other hand, some still believe that inclusion of religion in school curriculum does not necessarily make the products more religious or pious. If this were true, the world would be a better place to live in considering the amount of religious teachings that have gone in schools over decades if not for centuries. Anwar Syed writing in a Pakistan English daily, DAWN, is very forthright when he says, ‘The vast majority of the Pakistani public servants are Muslim. It is a fair assumption that they bear some degree of attachment to Islam. What keeps them from following its ethics pertaining to their craft? It cannot be ignorance. Islam is a required subject in most of the Pakistani schools and colleges. It is also taught in academics that train public servants. But apparently all this exposure is making no impact.” Unfortunately, when religion is taught to achieve ‘jihad’ it has very positive impact on the learners. This is so in the case of teachings in madrassas where students are imbued with a superiority cult. Once they come out of these religious institutions they feel that they are genuine Muslims while others are sinners. They feel that it is their duty to purify the society and in the process they are pushed into conflict engulfing them in fiery clashes. All of the Taliban leaders were products of these madrassas in Pakistan. Their loyalties and the damages caused on education of the Afghans were discussed
in earlier chapters. Worse is the continued struggle and destruction that goes on in Afghanistan to date by machinations of these elements.

**Quality of Life vs. Curriculum**

Quality of life and its relationship to quality of learning is yet another approach some countries are looking for. For some quality of life is a result of quality of happiness and is not based on the material acquisitions. Happiness is derived from inner satisfaction, which is a result of mental development. Learning helps in this direction and at school level this concept of happiness should be ingrained in the curriculum through the emphasis of the positive elements of educational objectives. This means that affective aspects such as rationality, tolerance, cooperation, kindness, and empathy have to be part of the teaching learning strategies. Development of materials and training of teachers seem to be the initial steps in this direction. This helps to bring about a change in attitude transformation of the mindset of the people. Very few countries have attempted to look at happiness as an indicator of development. Development experts, international institutions, including the United Nations, countries, and individuals measure development through acquisition of wealth and material gains. Apparently basing development on ‘happiness’ may look too far flung and idealistic. This may still become blurred when one attempts to correlate quality of learning to the relevance of curriculum. However, the connections between these factors are not only important but also critical to the development of a nation. The whole edifice of education depends on what transpires in the classroom, which rests on the teacher and what he provides through a well designed and structured course of contents, the curriculum.

Some of the things that worry us in our lives can be traced to the society in which we live. We may not be able to control crime in our cities, the rising unemployment, and prejudiced attitudes of others. But our thoughts and attitudes can help us overcome the negative feelings that result from such worries.

There are a few basic principles of happy living such as keeping the heart free from hate, keeping the mind free from worry, and treating others as you would like to be treated. These can be ingrained in curriculum designs and practical activities in classroom operations with emphasis on the following positive methods.
• Concepts related to quality to be incorporated into learning and teacher training (Veloz, 2001)
• Quality of education to be reflected in the curriculum as a process of continuous construction and improvement (ibid)
• Curriculum should provide neutral knowledge which translates into the acquisition of scientific and literary culture.
• Reducing and/or avoiding gaps between the official curriculum and the curriculum practiced in schools by the teachers. Thus, for example, students’ preferences in subject areas not taught by teachers in relation to extra curricular activities offered.
• Accountability of the curriculum content in relation to ill preparedness of the products for the world of work.
• Overloading of the curriculum to be avoided by interdisciplinary approaches or focusing on basics or adopting thematic approaches or changing teaching methods.

The negative approaches, which led to the development of skewed minds, were seen in Afghanistan where the curriculum during 1980s to 2000 affected the development of thinking, capacities of the child, youth, and adult. These did not generate desirable sentiments and moral values which are all important aspects of the quality of life.

**Current Understanding of the Concept of Curriculum**

Today curriculum is considered as a contract between society, state, and educational professionals. This is why there is a need for all of the above institutions and groups to be in place and operational. When these are disturbed due to political and/or social reasons, a consensus may not be possible in drawing the basic criteria in the development of national curriculum. This was the status quo in Afghanistan. There was no acceptable and stable government since about the 1980s. Nor were there professionals to guide a rational development of the education system in Afghanistan. Either they had left the country for better pastures, fled through fear of reprisals, or were killed during the wars. The whole society was in disarray. This was a period similar to what is described by Charles Dickens in his novel *The Tale of Two Cities*. Every other person was either a refugee or an internally displaced person struggling for a daily existence. As stated earlier there were no educationists who could even differentiate between curriculum and textbooks. Those were times of tragedies when education was in the doldrums. Even worse, it was also the period when religious zealots
turned out to be textbook writers and curriculum developers ‘churning out’ textbooks as if preparing ‘chapathi’ in an oven!

III. Curriculum and Critical Pedagogy

These two are closely inter-connected because pedagogy is related to the behaviours and practices of teacher. He is supposed to be the one who guides children/students at various levels from the kindergarten to tertiary levels and brings about changes of behaviours through added knowledge and skills. However, these refer to the formal settings/institutions where knowledge and skills are provided which are assessed and certified. There are now equally forceful non-formal channels and sources that provide sources of information rather strongly and flexibly to suit the needs of the clientele. The informal settings also provide teachers who guide us through a different process but at times very effectively. These include one’s parents, and political and social leaders. Although there is no standard curriculum or guidelines, as one would see in relation to institutions with standard curriculum and evaluations leading to certification, in informal learning there is eventually gathering of knowledge related to all three domains of learning namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor although divisions may not be clearly laid down as in the formal set up.

Critical pedagogy refers to ‘the art of teaching in a way that critically questions the dormant social, political, and economic systems, and its institutions, process and attitudes’ (Shipa Jain, 2003) This raises many pertinent questions that we encounter today in the schools and the curriculum set for the child. In the classroom critical pedagogy is hampered by many factors such as the teacher, accepted norms and behaviours, and evaluation procedures. These do not allow students to be critical and they fall in line with the status quo. Critical pedagogy calls attention to certain injustices that prevail in the curriculum and its implementation where the source of knowledge begins and ends with the teacher. It is assumed that the teacher is the only person who could ‘remedy the deficiencies that prevail in the student, (as) the young child is dependant on the teacher, they are ignorant and this deficiency can be remedied by the teacher.’ The teacher is likely to be the end point of the dialogue where the students are led to that point of acceptance. In this light one could raise the question of the relationship of ‘critical pedagogy’ with that of “critical thinking?” Critical pedagogy brings our minds to Socratic method where the teacher is the keeper of knowledge
and ‘disseminator of truth.’ At this point the teacher is the propagating agent controlling thought to replicate the dominant socio-economic and political thinking of the rulers. Critical pedagogy is always under the control of the rulers. It has to conform to the hidden curriculum which operates through various mechanisms like testing, ranking, punishment, and rewards etc. Thus there seems to be limitations of critical pedagogy along with its hidden curriculum and related mechanisms. Now let us see how in reality this operates in some countries in Asia. This is where the curriculum in Afghanistan shows similarities between what was taught (during the Soviet period) inside Afghanistan, and the teachings in schools in the refugee camps in Pakistan (the period of the dominance of mujahideens) with that of the concept of critical pedagogy; guided learning of an indoctrinating nature.

The curriculum during the troubled periods of Afghanistan had ‘hidden’ messages but with clear intentions i.e., to thwart each other convincing/canvassing/poisoning the young minds against each other and depriving the child of ‘critical thinking.’ The child was only following a kind of propagandist and thought control learning, and thus became a devoted follower of the operators. What were the consequences of this curriculum? It helps the learner leading to war, violence, hatred, and greed. The teachers use these for propagation than for understanding the turmoils of the society. This is the result of ‘stubborn insistence on placing narrow, short-term self interests, social and ethnic groups above long-range good of the broader human community…. Too often, these drive us in pursuit of divisive, limited ends even when such pursuits are ultimately self-destructive’ (The Buddha and His Messages, 2003). The teacher should be a guide and teacher, who points out the path the student must follow and leave at that for independent thinking rather than thought controlling.

It is of importance to identify the countervailing factors that affect the implementation of a curriculum. The curriculum, however much it is progressive and provides opportunities for creativity of the child, other factors, both formal and informal, related to school/classroom influence the learning process. These form essential parts of the ‘hidden curriculum’ which includes methods of controlling students through testing, ranking, punishments, rewards, competitions, social hierarchies etc. which force students to be conformists. These determine the students’ relationships with the teacher and influence the behaviour of
the student vis-à-vis the teacher and authorities. Sometimes, creativity, openness, critical thinking, rationalism etc. are influenced by the above factors and it may be that if the teacher is not with the student, he may not get the grades, however much he is creative and capable. It often happens that the individuality of the child is sacrificed at the altar of the ‘hidden curriculum.’

On the other hand, can one teach a curriculum against the status quo or the establishment? These relate to nationalism, gender, religious constructs, economic development, racial issues, and political conflicts etc. For example, in some countries in the Middle East the word, ‘peace’ is not used in the teaching learning processes due to enmity between religious groups. They feel that there cannot be peace other than elimination of the opponents. Similarly in Pakistan the enmity towards their neighbour is highlighted in the curriculum and texts from kindergarten to grade V. ‘Rather than helping young students get modern education by developing their cognitive skills and creating an environment of free inquiry, research and open discussion in our schools, the ministry of education has made it its business to service a moribund political system and governments in power. In doing so, it has become a sad victim of its own rhetoric’ (Sami Mustafa, 2003).

Accordingly the Ministry of education expects that at the completion of grade V the child should be able to:

- Understand Hindu and Muslim differences and the resultant need for Pakistan to acknowledge and identify forces that may be working against Pakistan,
- understand India’s veiled designs against Pakistan, and
- make speeches on jihad and shahada (National Bureau of Curriculum and Text books, 1995).

In another document in a section, ‘Learning competencies for class V’ amongst the many objectives one is ‘to note the reactions of pupils about wars with India,’ promote realization about Kashmir issue and India’s role in it are highlighted (National Curriculum: Social Studies for Classes I-V, March 2002).

India’s record on curriculum development also has dents in it specially after the Hindu Nationalist Bharatiya party took over the reins in 1999. The ‘saffronisation’ of history during this period depicted the India’s
Muslim rulers as barbarous invaders and the medieval period as a dark age of Islamic colonial rule which snuffed out the glories of the Hindu empire that preceded it...one textbook claimed that the Taj Mahal, the Qutab Minar and the Red Fort, three of India’s outstanding examples of Islamic architecture, were designed and commissioned by Hindus’ (Ramesh, 2004). So much distortions had taken place that the India’s new government under Congress (2004 April) is poised to rewrite the history taught in schools in India after a panel of experts recommended scrapping these textbooks developed by the previous Hindu nationalist administration. The extent to which distortions have been clumsily added could be gauged the omission of Mahatma Gandhi’s assassination by a Hindu nationalist in 1948.

There are many other countries in the world which have tried and are trying to use the curriculum to achieve short term ends as indicated above, to propagate the political aims, religious objectives, and sectarian views etc. But in none of these situations it helps the progress of the country. It brings divisions and cleavages amongst social groups in the community. Even what they achieve through such approaches seems to be of a short term duration. Children themselves, once they mature, have access to more literature on the issues and tend to think rationally, which defeats the efforts of the state/groups. It is here that the concept of ‘sharing knowledge’ becomes important. Under this process the role of the teacher is not of a prescriptive nature whereby he tries to dominate the thinking process of the student but a person who is willing to share information and knowledge. Sharing knowledge is a process whereby students get the opportunity to share the ideas, beliefs, talents, and experiences with others. It is a process of learning together. The process does not involve certification or rewards as in the case of critical thinking. This concept goes against sectarian methods. Now the question is how one could bring the sharing methods into the classroom requiring formal operations. This is why the need for a compromise between the traditional and Socratic methods could be combined bringing about the best of both. The curriculum should be flexible enough to accommodate the positive qualities of both systems. The sharing method is certainly more beneficial at higher levels of learning but at the school level there are limitations governed by the demands of the social needs. However, the basic principles of sharing and tolerance have to be ingrained in the teaching learning process at the primary levels.
IV. Significance of Curriculum in Educational Development and Change in Emergency Scenarios

When a curriculum is developed on a rational basis with a vision and objectives related to the socio-economic and cultural progress of the nation it becomes a positive force unlike in situations which we discussed earlier. Such a process brings about changes in relation to the following.

- Politically, a rational curriculum assists in developing openness, encourages participation, brings about democratization and liberalism, connects with international trends and norms and impetus to human rights, culture of peace and facilitates tolerance and critical thinking.
- Assist in overall changes in the economic, technological and environmental aspects and bring closer to globalisation (Sobhi Tawil, Prospects 125)

In the context of Afghanistan the above is very critical. This includes the curriculum of the education programmes provided for refugees and those inside Afghanistan. The refugees, especially in Pakistan, had advantages over and above their cousins inside the country. Firstly, the education of the refugees was not disturbed. Opportunities were provided through various NGOs supported by the international community. Secondly, professional development of teachers took place. Although there were gaps attempts are being made by the NGOs to improve the quality of teaching/learning. A very few NGOs also had developed a curriculum, guided to great extent, by principles of curriculum development. These NGOs also had made use of foreign experts to assist in the training programmes. Although teacher training was mostly in-service and short in duration the programmes helped the teachers to carry on their work to some measure of satisfaction. In the case of UNHCR supported NGOs, one programme was intensively evaluated by external experts. The children receive textbooks and written materials. Monitoring and evaluation is carried out and examinations are held periodically. These are seen in both refugee and private schools. None of the above elements and approaches were observed in schools inside Afghanistan, and especially so during the Taliban authority. 'Education is given priority by the post-Taliban Government of Afghanistan, with impressive enrolment figures. But it will take time to provide quality education for all children, including the
returnees. As a matter of fact, returnees are not given priority in education in Afghanistan because they may have had better education opportunities abroad than those who remained at home during the war years’ (Hetland, DAWN, 2004). Due to consistency of the donor community and with relatively less interruptions the education programme for the refugees was and still is much better. However, ‘much good work is done for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, the fact that less than half of all refugee children get primary education and less than five per cent have any chance of receiving any education beyond that level means that a lot more needs to be done’ (Hetland, ibid 2004). The learning amongst the refugees over the last two decades has been of a higher quality. However, the tragedy of the system for refugees and people in Afghanistan both was the lack of a scientifically developed curriculum and related textbooks. On both sides there has been lot of talk and waste of time in disagreements than positive actions. This has been discussed earlier in detail. The international community, including the UN agencies inside Afghanistan, finds lame excuses for not carrying out their responsibilities towards children and for this they had the scapegoat in the Talibans.

One of the key reasons for this relates to the nature of how education is handled at the donor level. It should be noted that little academic and scientific work has been done in the field of refugee education. It has become a practical, logistic, and organizational field, handled almost by anybody much the same way like other things in emergency situations… (Hetland ibid). In fact, this has seeped into most of the NGO communities, the implementing partners in Pakistan, where education is the responsibility of any one. The understanding of educational issues is absolutely very low amongst most of the key personnel who are educated but not educationists. This is why a unified curriculum has not come into the refugee education for more than two decades. Any progress that is seen today in refugee education is mainly due to the capacity of the teachers and their supervisors.

What should curriculum be for refugees:
International perspectives?
What sort of curricula should be developed for the refugees? Although it may be late for the Afghan refugee children, it is pertinent to focus on the solutions for this so that there will be better and rational approaches in developing educational programmes in the future. Now that the
phobia of communism is no more and the jihadi struggles are not the need of the day, as it was during 1980s, it is time for those responsible to focus on the need for a developed curriculum to be followed by development of textbooks. In this the following questions would be of relevance for the curriculum developers as guidelines.

- Should the curriculum support long-term development of individual students/society and be of a durable solution—repatriation and reconstruction?
- How should the curriculum be developed to resolve conflicts?
- Should the following elements be reflected in the curriculum and incorporated in emergency education refugee scenarios?
- need for ‘supplementary survival messages’ such as development of concepts, skills, values and attitudes in relation to the following.
- land mines, environment, skills for peace, collaboration with NFE strategies, human rights, values for empathy, respect for others, tolerance, stress management, self-confidence and assertiveness as against dependency, critical thinking, emotional intelligence/balance
- Is there a need for the curriculum to be flexible?
- To what extent should the curriculum provide the learner to develop skills in how to learn?
- Has it the capacity for integration of an interdisciplinary nature?
- Does the curriculum provide for social cohesion and integration?

Positive answers to the above questions should provide a curriculum full of hope for refugees.

V. Titanic Issues Related to Curriculum

There is so much pressure on the curriculum designers from the policy makers that one wonders whether the curriculum can achieve all the desired goals. Another issue relates to the need for a completion of a cycle by all to absorb and achieve the expected skills stipulated in the learning domains i.e., cognitive, affective and psychomotor. This means universal participation of children up to the secondary level. Since all those who enter the primary level completion of the same is essential to achieve the set objectives of the curriculum designers. Is the formal curriculum the only source of learning today is yet another pertinent question. What is the curriculum set for non-formal and informal learning? How does life long learning mechanisms operate?
Furthermore, the policy makers and the politicians assume the school and its formal curriculum to solve all the social, political, cultural and development issues that confront mankind today. What is the ideal curriculum to be used in schools? Some of the other questions that could be raised should be the concerns of the curriculum developers and educationists all over the world.

Questions related to the limitations of the school curriculum
Is the curriculum panacea for all evils on earth?
Can education resolve all enigmas of humanity?
Is curriculum responsible for all catastrophes during the last 50 years?
What are the other social, cultural and economic factors contributing to the problems of the world?
Are we placing too heavy a responsibility on the school curriculum and ignore the gregariousness of nations/mankind?

Questions related to the role of other societal institutions and politicians in development
What is the role of other learning mechanisms?
What is the role of the teacher/school and the society in reducing the problems of the society?
What is the role of non-formal and informal systems in reducing the social evils, tensions in the society?

Questions related to studies
Importance of a study of the relationships of curriculum vis-à-vis peace, tolerance etc. Importance of a study in relation to morals, ethics taught in religion

These and more questions could be raised about the potential role of the school curriculum. The purpose of providing the questions is to help the reader think of the broader implications of the school curriculum and
the roles of other institutions in the context. In the modern context where communication technology has spread and improved tremendously and access to it is almost universal, it is not possible for one institution to be held responsible for all issues in the world, although the school initiates the child into a thinking process in a formal way than others. The school is the first contact and moderator of the child. But it has no monopoly over knowledge and direction unlike in the early years. The external influences are greater and complex.

VI. Afghan Contexts

Although there has been reference earlier to the curriculum/textbooks used during the Soviet invasion (1980) by the mujahideen and the after effects of this tragedy, it is appropriate to place on record the policies of the Afghan government prior to the Soviet invasion, civil wars, and repressive regimes over the decades as well. This would provide the readers the understanding the Afghans had on developing the education system of their country keeping to universal standards.

In short the education system possessed the following characteristics during the two decades since 1980.

1. Gaps filled by political opportunists and zealot religious groups
   - inside Afghanistan–Soviets and the local counterparts and
   - outside, mujahadeens funded by the Americans had been both non-professional and defied the basic education principles; combined together, lacked professional responses to professional questions such as why, what, when, where, how, with whom regarding curriculum development with educational objectives.

2. Their curriculum lacked sequencing to time, methods, resources, evaluation, teacher profiles

3. The curriculum developed was not a product of a process

4. The curriculum did not contain values such as justice, fairness, rationality, equality, critical thinking, and scientific methodology

5. The curriculum also lacked the importance of sensitivity and left no room for the creativity of the teacher
Historical Perspectives in Curriculum Development in Afghanistan

(A) Pre-Soviet Scenario
Characteristics of Curriculum at primary level

In Afghanistan modern primary education commenced only in the 1950s under five year plans. Education was compulsory from 7-14 years of age, and the state expected to achieve universal primary education by 2000, which has failed considerably. Adult illiteracy rate (1975) was 88 per cent (UNESCO, Samady, 2001) and the total number of children in schools, the maximum ever (1980) was 1.1 m children and the numbers kept on decreasing towards 2000 (875,000). One could state that 1980 was the watershed, which changed the face of education in Afghanistan from that of a process moving towards a modern structure with education for all to a decadent fossilized system as a consequence to the devastating events.

During this period the emphasis was on secular education with over 80 per cent of the time devoted to secular subjects in the primary grades 1-5. The system was flexible providing opportunities to rural areas and disadvantaged groups through fostering mosque schools, mixture of traditional systems with that of modern approaches. The language of the majority of the area was used for instruction while the other language (Dari/Pastu) was also taught. The objectives of education focused on developing a complete man with skills for living and adhering to Islamic values, Afghan traditions and national and universal aims (Samady 2001). Science along with other secular subjects was introduced from grade 4 onwards.

The secondary level proceeded to prepare the children for higher education and met the requirements for vocational and teacher training institutes. There was an expansion of secondary schools to 133 in 1970. Curriculum was more functional for girls and emphasis on extracurricular activities included sports, drama and music, scouting, celebrations of important days, both national and international. English or another foreign language was taught to provide windows of opportunities for contacts with the developed world.
Technical and Teacher Education

Technical education was emphasized with a view to provide skills for the development of the country. The establishment of Technical Schools in Afghanistan dates back to 1920s but modern TC appeared after the World War II. These included technical, vocational, administration, agriculture, craft, hotel management etc, which included girls as well; these were under the Ministry of Education. The curriculum for the technical education was developed through adaptation mostly from foreign curricula. Further, curriculum and training was also influenced by the experience of donors.

Teacher education was given high priority in the education system of Afghanistan. These included institutions for primary, middle, and secondary, and institutions for teacher educators as well. Here again the curriculum was based on experience of other countries but continuously changed to suit Afghan needs.

(B) Post Soviet Scenario

Concerns of International Organisations in the Education Development of Afghanistan from the 1990s to end of the Taliban regime

Although this has been touched upon earlier, there have been new developments since the publication of this book in 2000. Hence it would be relevant to refer to the new introductions since 2000 and also focus briefly on the attempts of the International community since 1990 to assist in the education development of Afghanistan.

Number studies and symposiums on refugee education were launched during this period, which were supported by reports. One of the first reports on Afghan Education during this period was ‘Grassroots Reconstruction of Afghanistan–Education Strategy for Afghanistan’ (UNESCO, Islamabad 1995). It focused on the significance of development of professionalism in refugee education and the importance of human resource development of the Afghan refugees in the future reconstruction of Afghanistan at a later date. Action research projects were launched in collaboration with a number of NGOs based in Peshawar working for Afghan refugees. The materials developed were used inside Afghanistan both by NGOs and government, some of which are still used as guidebooks for teachers.
One of the grave concerns of the educationists was curriculum development and methods adopted during the last two decades. Hence UNESCO in collaboration with NGOs both inside Afghanistan and in Pakistan organized a symposium leading to the development of a document titled ‘Curriculum Design and Development’ (1996). This brought to the fore the following.

a) focused on principles of curriculum development
b) reviewed existing materials used for Afghan children
c) identified that most subjects were religious oriented
d) contained unclear objectives
e) emotional presentation of historical facts
f) methods and contents do not confirm to MOE plans
g) lacked focus on age levels, time frame, presentation, language international norms

UNICEF followed UNESCO in developing ‘Education Strategy for Afghanistan’ (1998), which focused on the following areas.

a) contextual, operational and technical aspects of education for Afghans.
b) improvement of access and quality, plans for packaged programmes/home schools

Apart from the above UN agencies UNHCR was also very concerned about the education of the refugees since they are responsible for the well being of the refugees. Because of their concern UNHCR revised their guidelines for education of refugees in 2002. It has also supported the establishment of an independent wing for education, not governed by UNHCR mandate, namely the Refugee Education Trust, which is Geneva based. It is in its initial phase of development supporting education in Pakistan and Uganda. As a part of the support for education of the Afghan refugees a Conference for the NGOs was held under its auspices in Teheran in May 1999. The Conference reflected on the following areas.

a) to consider access to basic education as a fundamental strategy
b) to focus on the needs of integration, knowledge of Afghanistan and skills in curriculum development for repatriation of Afghans and
c) increase opportunities for tertiary education
UNHCR is supporting education programmes towards quality which is a new phenomenon in refugee education. It is also concerned with post secondary education since refugees go beyond emergency situations as is seen amongst Afghans in Pakistan.

Inter Network for Emergency Education (INEE) is another International organization that has emerged to bring quality aspects into refugee education programmes. It has developed minimum standards and basic curriculum in various fields of refugee education such as teacher training and primary education. Stress education is yet another area where INEE can provide assistance. Their main focus is on teacher training in emergencies and early reconstruction.

INEE is a worldwide network of humanitarian and aid agencies that works and advocates for quality education in situations of emergency and early reconstruction. INEE has already gathered information on teacher training programmes in times of crisis and early reconstruction with the objective of developing a teacher training kit for practitioners to use in the field.

'INEE recognizes the role that teachers play in crisis situations, communicating critical lifesaving messages to children, modeling caring adult behavior, and building strong academic and social skills. Quality teacher training programs in emergency and early reconstruction situations are indispensable in helping teachers see themselves as agents of child protection while providing them with the skills they need to meet the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of their students. While a fair amount of literature exists within agencies that work on teacher training in crises, most of it lies within each agency’s archives. The lack of shared documentation has created a learning vacuum and a tendency to improvise in the absence of documented “lessons learned.” This results in a further dearth of practical support to practitioners working in the field’ (INEE document, 2003).
VII. Strategies to Overcome the Impasse for Afghanistan in Educational Planning

Vision
- Combine what existed and was lost in the 1960s with the mega trends in educational development during the period of turmoil and tragedy 1980-2000
- Treat the past tragedies as learning experiences to rise from the ashes

Resources
It is judicious to use every conceivable resource—personnel, material, experiences available without biases/prejudices both from refugee situations and others to develop the country. Paradoxically it is the refugees who are more resourceful at present and authorities in Afghanistan have to take a serious note of this. The refugees who were in Pakistan for over two decades had an opportunity to receive relatively better quality education and exposures to relatively better modern systems than their cousins inside Afghanistan. There were very rare interruptions, basic facilities and resources were provided by UNHCR and NGOs, trained personnel guided them in schools, and examinations were conducted regularly. They did not bear the brunt of the Taliban atrocities in relation to education or otherwise. As a result, girls were able to complete primary education and many boys and girls enjoyed secondary education as well in private schools although there is still much to be desired. Now that these children are mature and educated, the Afghan government should entice them to help in their tasks. In addition there is a vast resource base in teachers and teacher trainers who could be brought into Afghanistan and made use of to overcome the current impasse in manpower needs.

Approaches
Adopt multi approaches in combination formal, non-formal, and informal educational structures
- Focus on all clientele groups children, youth and adults both men and women
- Initial development of key personnel/master trainers and teacher educators
Development of a curriculum focusing on quality of life in the light of modern changes
Relate changes to the key concepts of Delor’s Report (UNESCO 1998), which is learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be peaceful
Encourage and practice independency as against dependency

Priorities

- Professional development—teacher education on new trends/needs
- Expansion of primary education opportunities to all categories/using multiple means—strategies/media/distance modes/traditional methods (madrasas)
- Expansion of tertiary education—humanities, technical and professional
- Inclusion of messages of peace, tolerance etc. in all materials, texts, trainings—teacher education, tertiary education
- Social inclusion and curriculum development

In this context Afghanistan has initiated the basis (2003) for such changes as needed by the mega trends taking place in the world. They have understood the realities that confront the development of the education system and the gaps to be filled. These include high illiteracy, destruction of infrastructure, absence of a curriculum, lack of teacher education and training, absence of professionalism, lack of access to information and technology, and aloofness from the development trends of the rest of the world. Considering these it is very important to formulate policies and objectives that will answer the issues raised above. The new designs that Afghanistan has commenced in relation to curriculum development indicate the foresightedness of the planners and policy makers. It is certainly a Herculean task which would take years to bring back the lost heritage and culture of learning.
Appendix – I

Modern Period Rulers of Afghanistan

1880-1901 - Abdul Rahman Khan
1901-1919 - Habibullah Khan
1919-1929 - Amanullah Khan
1929-1933 - Nadir Shah
1933-1973 - Zahir Shah

Prime Ministers

1933-1946 - Hashim Khan
1946-1953 - Mahmud Khan
1953-1963 - Da’ud Khan
1963-1965 - Dr. Muhammad Yusuf
1965-1967 - Muhammad Hashim Maiwandwal
1967-1971 - Nur Ahmad Etmadi
1971-1972 - Dr. Abdul Zahir
1972-1973 - Muhammad Musa Shafiq
1973-1978 - Sadar Muhammad Da’ud Khan
1978-1979 - Nur Muhammad Taraki
1979-1986 - Babrak Karmal
1986-1992 - Dr. Muhammad Najibullah
1992-1995 - Burhanuddin Rabbani
1996- - Taliban control of Kabul

Appendix – II

Abbreviations

ACBAR - Agency Co-ordinating Body for Afghan Relief
AGBASED - Afghan German Basic Education
ARIC – ACBAR - Resource and Information Centre
ASG - Afghan Support Group
EFA - Education For All
GREAT - Grassroots Reconstruction of Education in Afghanistan
GTZ BEFARe - GTZ Basic Education for Afghan Refugees
HS - Home Schools
IRC - International Rescue Committee
NWFP - North Western Frontier Prince
SCA - Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
UNO - University of Nebraska Organisation
VEC - Village Education Committee
WAPHA - Women’s Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan
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Dr. S.B. Ekanayake, presently Basic Education Adviser, UNHCR, Afghanistan, has also been associated with UNESCO, Afghanistan, in the same position since 1994. He has traveled widely inside Afghanistan. During his period of service for both UNESCO and UNHCR, he has published a number of books for teachers, teacher educators and principals, on aspects related to stress management, multi-grade teaching, curriculum design, functional literacy. He was also responsible for developing UNESCO's Basic Education Strategy for Afghanistan. In addition to writing, he has conducted a large number of training programmes for teacher educators in Afghanistan. After retiring from the United Nations he served as a consultant to UNICEF in developing a field study on issues related to primary education in Bhutan. He was also a member of the evaluation team of the worlds’ largest refugee education project in Pakistan (GTZ/BEFARe) for UNHCR and later for GTZ in Sri Lanka. Dr. Ekanayake was both Technical Advisor and consultant on training of educational personnel to GTZ/BEFARe.

Formerly, as Director of Education at the National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka, Dr. Ekanayake initiated a number of innovative programmes on non-formal education and teacher education. He is considered as an expert on teacher education in the Third World. He served as a Research Specialist at the UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg and developed a framework on life long education for developing countries.

Prior to joining the UN, he was a consultant on Human Rights Education at the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Based on these experiences he developed two books on the methodology of teaching of human rights to school leavers and community.

He has 20 books and around 100 articles to his credit, published all over the world. 'Mega Trends and Challenges in Refugee Education' (2003) is the latest of his publications.
Amongst the vast plentitude of challenges posed by the need to reconstruct war-torn Afghanistan, education looms large, although the rhetoric of both policy makers and donors is replete, with paradoxes.... Dr. S.B. Ekanayake addresses these points, with more, and places them in a professional, global context. There will be those who will take issue with him. But it is through controversy that solutions are often found. His is the first attempt to tackle these knotty challenges head on and it behooves every one involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan to take careful note of what he has to tell us in 'Education in the Doldrums: Afghan Tragedy'.

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The author Dr. S.B. Ekanayake, of Sri Lankan origin, has gathered a vast experience in the field of education, not only in his own country but also with several international organisations. In this book he is applying his knowledge and experience to the understanding of education in a country.... isolated from outside developed countries. The book draws great attention to the way how modern education can be applied to the present conditions in Afghanistan. Hence the value and importance of the present book that is relevant not only to Afghanistan but also to those neighbouring countries where traditional education is still of some importance.

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