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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AECs	Atoll Education Centres
AIOU	Allama Iqbal Open University
AL	Advanced Level
APs	Atoll Primary Schools
ASA	The Association for Social Advancement
ASTD	American Society for Training and Development
BGMEA	Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers & Exports Association
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advocacy Committee
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DAE	Diploma of Associate Engineer
DCET&T	Directorate General of Employment and Training
DMCs	Developing Member Countries
DTVE	Directorate for Technical and Vocational Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFA	Education for All
ESR	Education Sector Reforms
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
FOA	Food & Agriculture Organization
FYP	Fifth Year Plan
FY	Fiscal Year
GCE	General Certificates of Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	General System of Preferences
HEC	Higher Education Commission
ICAR	Indian Council for Agricultural Research
IET	Institute of Educational Technology
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IT	Information Technology
it is	Industrial Training Institutes
ISO	International Organization for Standards
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFI	Microfinance Institutions
MICO	Motor Industries Company Limited
MU	Million Units
NEC	National Education Commission
NESP	National Education System Plan
NIE	National Institute of Education
NPA	National Plan of Action
NPO	National Productivity Organization
NU	Ngultrum (Bhutanese Currency)
NVTS	National Vocational Training System
OL	Ordinary Level
OU	Open University
OUSL	Open University of Sri Lanka
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PITAC	Pakistan Industrial Technical Centre
PNAC	Pakistan National Accreditation Council
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PVTC	Punjab Vocational Training Council
RBIT	The Royal Bhutan Institute of Technology



RETPP	Radio Education Teacher Training Program
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SCANS	Secretary of Labour's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
SCCI	SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry
SC/ST	Scheduled Casts and Tribes
SDIs	Skills Development Institutes
SHRDC	SAARC Human Resource Development Centre
SIPA	SAARC Integrated Programme of Action
STPI	Software Technology Parks
TTC	Technical Training Centers
TTCs	Technical Training Colleges
TTTCs	Technical Teachers Training Colleges
TVEC	Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UA	University of the Aegean
UB	Royal University of Bhutan
UEE	Universalization of Elementary Education
UHI	University of the Highlands and Islands
USAID	United States Assistance for International Development
TU	Tribhuvan University
UK	United Kingdom
VTI	Vocational Training Institutes
WTO	World Trade Organization



GLOSSARY

Alif Laila	A Lahore based Pakistani non-governmental organization working in the education sector
Geog	Area marked in terms of block in Bhutan
Ustad Shagird	Teacher-student relationship
Zakat	Mandatory religious welfare tax in Islam to pay two and half percent of income and a fixed percent on monetary holdings to the needy if one's earning exceeds a certain amount.
Madrasah	Seminary or school attached to mosque

Executive Summary

The human resource development efforts of the SAARC countries emanate from the regional and international covenants. The SAARC Social Charter and similar initiatives such as Millennium Development Goals emphasise on capacity building to improve knowledge and skills base in the SARC region. Education and training have been recognized as key element for creating a “knowledge society” in the region. The study on “Integrated HRD approach in the SAARC region: An assessment of collective training needs,” is conducted with the objective to update HRD functionaries and policymakers of SAARC member states on current HRD strategies, review the HRD challenges and problems in the region, address the problems, and serve as a source for developing long term HRD strategies and policies to meet the education and training challenges.

The study focuses on human resource development of the region in the context of global trends as future progress of the region is intimately linked to them. Within the global economy, competition will arise from value addition to global economic products, services and processes. It is here that the knowledge and skills of the workforce of the region will determine how competitive the region is.

The priorities for education and training for this study are centred on the key subsectors of agriculture, services and industries. It is assumed that improved education will have spin-off effects and go beyond education and impact all aspects of well being including all the subsectors of economy. And similarly training will equip human resource with appropriate skills, ability to upgrade skills with changing needs, and ability to seize opportunities for social and economic growth and fulfillment.

Secondary data, print and electronic material, was gathered for the study to assess the knowledge and skills needs of the region. Research documents of ADB, the World Bank, ILO, UNESCO, UNDP, and FAO were looked at carefully. Interventions made by international donor agencies, organizations, SAARC governments were reviewed to fathom the education and training issues. Most of the statistics were lifted from ADB, UNDP, and the World Bank website as not all the government websites had current information.

The development plans and policies of the SAARC countries are examined to learn about the priorities of the SAARC governments for human resource development. The plans and policies spotlight on agriculture, education, health, higher value added services, the role of private sector through public private partnership, rural quality of life, and developing human resource capacity. The region’s education policies are driven by the emerging needs to compete internationally and integrate effectively with the regional economies and the world as a whole. In this perspective market driven education and vocational training has been seen as important activities of SARC member states. With mounting pressure of population explosion and meager resources, distance education has emerged as an important feature of the education systems of the SAARC countries. Vocational education and training is school based and non-formal as well as enterprise based. Usually the pathways of higher



education and vocational technical education do not intertwine and hence limit the opportunities for higher education for those who pursue vocational education.

The aim of the study is to create a relevant knowledge and skills based South Asia where labour force is properly trained to use modern technology and has access to gainful employment. The study looks into the economy of the region to identify the major employers and pinpoint industries of individual countries from which the whole region could benefit. The economy of the SAARC countries is generally marked with low wage, low skilled workforce producing low value added products. The countries are predominantly agrarian and are seeing a rising share of the services sector where tourism, health, social services, wholesale and retail trade, banking and finance are contributing to GDP. Bhutan, Maldives, and Nepal reinvigorate the local economy through tourism. In manufacturing textile India and Pakistan and apparel Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka are dominant. Construction activities are also thriving in the region. Hydropower industry is on the rise in Bhutan. Toward value added products and services India has stood out in software and pharmaceutical industries. Developing human capital and institution capacities according to the market demands, of these countries will strengthen economic base and help reduce poverty, hunger, and other similar deficiencies faced by the region.

The flourishing or major industries of the region are the ones that hold the bulk of workforce. The views of the demand side to produce a workforce with skills and knowledge resonating to the needs of the market are studied and are pitched against the supply side situation. The education and training analysis of the region puts in the picture that there is low awareness of skills development among small and medium enterprises and it is usually considered as an unnecessary expense. Opportunities for women are more limited both in terms of institutions and accessibility. The vocational training institutions remain underfinanced. Involvement of other social partners is not seen in financing the institutions. Skills needed are also not adequately assessed and hence industry specific skilled workforce is not produced. Curricula do not address the needs of the enterprises as a function of technology, changing realities of ecology and roles of women, and the drive for quality training. Other than technical skills the workforce lacks cognitive, social, team-working, problem solving, leadership and communication skills, and the attitude to learn and relearn and upgrade its skills. These skills determine how quick the workforce is in making the creative leap, solving problems and innovating. Linkages of education and training with research institutes and enterprises are not noticeable in the region. Because of the usually isolated roles these do not benefit from each other.

The recommendations are organized around the education and training challenges some relating to knowledge and education, others falling in the sphere of vocational education and training, and the others overlapping the domains of both. The recommendations hinge on the concept of robust collaboration as the government cannot provide the universal sunshine and the enterprises need to invest in education and training themselves so that it echoes their needs and fulfills their requirements for development. On the basis of the recommendations an Action Plan is proposed the main features of which are:



1. Weaving in generic skills in the curricula to develop in the workforce the ability to learn, relearn and upgrade its skills. Other than reading writing and arithmetic abilities the workforce should have communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to work in teams and lead.
2. Strengthening primary, secondary and tertiary education
3. Setting up more industry specific training institutes for men as well as women
4. Involving enterprises for assessing training needs, developing education and training curricula, forming systems of quality skills and services standards, and monitoring and evaluation of the training process.
5. Familiarising students with the world of work
6. Establishing a network of education and training institutions and forming regional training teams which also focus on the activities being pursued by women in the region
7. Fostering relationship among higher institutions of learning, research institutions and industry

The recommendations are to be acted upon by the SAARC countries through groups comprising representatives of ministries, employers' association or organisation of industries. The actions are categorized into short, medium, and long term measures. The recommendations focus on knowledge and training. The specific training areas that emerged out of this discourse are:

- Managing Development in Public and Corporate Sector
- Public Private Partnership
- Developing Niches for Regional Prosperity
- Information Communication Technology Development
- Market Responsive Education and Training
- Standard Setting and Monitoring
- Developing Services Sector
- Upgrading of Skills of Women Workforce
- Understanding Trade Regimes



CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

SAARC was officially born in 1985 as an association of seven states comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka with the aim to "promote the well-being of the populations of South Asia and improve their standard of living; to speed up economic growth, social progress and cultural development; to reinforce links between the countries of this area; and, lastly, to promote mutual collaboration and assistance in the economic, social, cultural technical and scientific fields".

The Association provides a platform for the peoples of South Asia to work together in a spirit of friendship, trust and understanding. It aims to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life through accelerated economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region.

The Association promotes interaction on multilateral issues of common concern to its members and has identified areas in which collective positions could be projected at international forums. These include trade, finance, environment, agriculture, women and children, and information and telecommunications.

Beyond official linkages, SAARC also encourages and facilitates cooperation in private sector through the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), which is a SAARC Apex Body.

1.1 SAARC & HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The significance of human resource in socio-economic development of the region has been recognized since the inception of SAARC. The leaders at the First SAARC Summit in 1985 reaffirmed that their fundamental goal was to accelerate the process of economic and social development through the optimum utilization of human and material resources to promote the welfare and prosperity of people and to improve their quality of life.

At the Second Summit in 1986, the leaders recognized that meeting the needs of children was the principal means of human resource development. They decided that children should be given highest priority in national development planning.

The leaders recognized at the Fourth Summit in 1988 that Human Resource Development (HRD) was one of the means of achieving the objectives of SAARC. In this context they welcomed the offer of Pakistan to host the SAARC Human Resource Development Centre in Islamabad. The Centre undertakes research, imparts training, and disseminates information on HRD issues and advises member states on HRD related policies and strategies.

SAARC countries have been cooperating in the development of various dimensions of human resource. Such cooperation started as early as August 1982 in the fields of sports, arts and culture. In 1998, the SAARC leaders decided to include education in the agreed areas of cooperation and a Technical Committee was formed to deal with the principal area requiring urgent attention in the region. This Technical Committee



was re-organized in 1992. The further re-structuring of the SAARC Integrated Programme of Action (SIPA) in 1999 resulted in the creation of the Technical Committee on Human Resource Development. This was reconstituted in January 2004 to deal with matters pertaining to education, skill development, arts, culture and sports. The Technical Committee met in March 2004 and made a number of concrete and result oriented recommendations for regional cooperation in the vital area of human resource development.

At the Twelfth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad in January 2004, the leaders signed the SAARC Social Charter to endeavour for social development in the region. They also underlined that investment in human resource development was critical for future progress of South Asia. It was deemed essential to establish a network of centers of higher learning and training, and Skill Development Institutes across South Asia.

The Leaders at the Thirteen Summit in Dhaka in the month of November 2005 reaffirmed their commitment to take national and regional level measures for achieving the specific objectives contained in the Social Charter. To supplement efforts of SAARC member states in human resource development for achieving the SAARC Social Charter, the SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) realised the need to have a collective and integrated training and research programme for the region. The purpose of this study is to formulate a long term vision for collective training and research needs of the SAARC member states and draw up a comprehensive plan of action for integrated training and research activities.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To update HRD functionaries and policymakers of SAARC member states on current HRD Strategies, Policies and Programmes of the region.
- To review the HRD challenges and problems faced by the South Asian region and suggest resolution of the problems.
- To serve as a source for developing long term HRD Strategies, Policies and Programmes to meet emerging education and training needs of the member states.

1.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference of the study are:

- To review and analyse the HRD Policies and approaches of SAARC member states.
- To review education and training systems and programmes for identifying problems of the member states and suggest solution to the identified problems.
- To analyse the capacity gaps and to identify collective training needs to fill the gaps.
- To design long term regional HRD strategies, policies and programmes.
- To emphasize on interdisciplinary and integrated approaches at regional level in the field of technical & vocational and higher level education & training.



- To suggest means to strengthen the coordinated mechanism between the member states for HRD training & research.
- To prepare a long term vision for collective training and research needs of the SAARC member states and draw up a comprehensive plan of action for integrated training and research activities on human resource development.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive regional survey based on secondary data was conducted. Initially, the team identified the available sources of data, collected the secondary data (print & electronic material) and reviewed research papers, reports, and documents. The assessment of skills and training has been made on the basis of global, regional and SAARC member countries' development perspectives. Training needs emerge mainly from PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) Millennium Development Goals and SAARC Social Charter to achieve a synergy between global community and SAARC region in the ongoing efforts for human development.

The activities took place in four phases details of which are as follows.

1.4.1 Preliminary Meetings Phase

A clear and lucid vision about the study was developed in this Phase in order to achieve the intended goal and objectives of the study. This phase started after contract signing and spanned over the first week of the Project implementation.

During this week, the Consultant Team held preliminary meetings with the relevant HRD institutions / agencies, including SAARC Human Resource Development Centre. These meetings, in line with our participatory and consensus-building approach, focused on the Project propelling mechanism and the broader outline of task assignments, overall work plan and the stakeholder linkages. Apart from that, the Consultant Team gathered country specific relevant documents available from various sources.

After the preliminary meetings and literature review, the Consultant Team finalized the methodology.

1.4.2 Data Collection Phase

This Phase was the most intensive as well as extensive phase of the project implementation. In this phase, secondary data related to the interventions and progress made in human resource development in South Asian Countries was gathered. It should be noted that the main emphasis remained on knowledge and skills development. Research documents of ADB, the World Bank, ILO, UNESCO, UNDP, and FAO were combed through. Interventions made by international donor agencies, organizations, respective government were reviewed to have an in-depth understanding; education and training issues in the developed world were also reviewed. Overall some 120 articles and research documents were studied.

Much difficulty was faced in gathering information on segregated primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios of the SAARC countries. The government websites of these countries do not contain complete data and where it existed it was not current. The problem was overcome by getting data from multilateral agencies like ADB and



the World Bank. At places the team managed to elicit the required information by crosschecking.

1.4.3 Analysis and Documentation Phase

In this Phase, the secondary data collected on the various HRD practices in education and training was collated and analyzed. The Team analysed the issues and challenges, identified the collective knowledge and training gaps and finally suggested ways and means to fill the gaps.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The theme of the study is delineating ways in which the SAARC countries could reduce the education and training gaps through interdisciplinary and integrated approaches at the regional level. Chapter II lays the importance of education and training for human resource development and identifies ways to create knowledge and skills base through human resource development at the regional level. Chapter III sets the stage for this study and identifies global regional trends focusing on knowledge and skills development that would impact the economic development in the SAARC region. Chapter IV presents the outlay of national development plans and programmes, focusing on education policies of the countries and development of distance learning. It also reviews vocational education and training structures of the SAARC countries and examines its degree of integration with the general education pathways and tertiary education. Chapter V looks into the subsectors of economy of the SAARC countries and their share in GDP. The understanding of policies and key subsectors of economy is then framed within the larger context of issues and challenges presented in Chapter VI as evident from education and training gaps of the workforce. It is not possible to cover all the industries because of the diversity within the scope of the study, however, some common trends are detected.

Chapter VII concludes the study with a review of development plans and education and training policies in the region and the knowledge and skills needs. Through this construction of issues it presents a set of recommendations for collective training and research needs of the region. Chapter VIII then classifies the recommendations in terms of knowledge and education, and skill needs and proposes an Action Plan on the basis of the recommendations to progress in levels of economic development and be involved high value-added product and systems. Examples of newly industrialized nations and the industrialized nations are cited to learn lessons. For integrated efforts actions are proposed that rely on governments' investment in education and training and latent heat of enterprises. Enterprises have been intensively involved in the process for two reasons. One, make education and training relevant to the needs of the industry and two, the governments have limited ability to provide quality education and training appropriate to the needs of the industries. The actions are compiled in terms of short, medium, and long term strategies for phase-wise implementation. Keeping in view the human development efforts and key sub sectors of economy, topics of training are suggested at the end.



CHAPTER-II

GLOBAL AGENDA FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The international commitments of the SAARC region for human development include Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations and SAARC development goals. The regional commitments are developed to meet the eight Millennium Development Goals which are concerned with issues ranging from eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and achieving universal primary education to developing a global partnership for development. Some of the development needs to achieve MDGs as apparent from the 48 indicators have been marked in Table 1.

Table 1 Development Needs for Achieving MDGs

Goal	Target	Indicators	Development Needs
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	1. Proportion of population below \$1 (1993 PPP) per day (World Bank) 2. Poverty gap ratio [incidence x depth of poverty] (World Bank) 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption (World Bank)	1. Creating employment Generation opportunities 2. Diversifying economy for creating jobs 3. Generating self employments activities 4. Enhancing food production
	2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	4. Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age (UNICEF-WHO) 5. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (FAO)	
2. Achieve universal primary education	3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education (UNESCO) 7. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 (UNESCO) 8. Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds (UNESCO)	5. Developing education infrastructure 6. Improving access 7. Improving quality of education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	9. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education (UNESCO) 10. Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old (UNESCO) 11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (ILO) 12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (IPU)	8. Awareness campaigns 9. Setting institutions for women
4. Reduce child mortality	5. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	13. Under-five mortality rate (UNICEF-WHO) 14. Infant mortality rate (UNICEF-WHO) 15. Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles (UNICEF-WHO)	10. Parental awareness 11. Providing child health services 12. Setting mother and child centres
5. Improve maternal health	6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	16. Maternal mortality ratio (UNICEF-WHO) 17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (UNICEF-WHO)	13. Provision of skilled health personnel 14. Setting mother and child centres



Goal	Target	Indicators	Development Needs
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	18. HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-24 years (UNAIDS-WHO-UNICEF) 19. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate (UN Population Division) 19a. Condom use at last high-risk sex (UNICEF-WHO) 19b. Percentage of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS (UNICEF-WHO) 19c. Contraceptive prevalence rate (UN Population Division) 20. Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years (UNICEF-UNAIDS-WHO)	15. Awareness campaigns 16. Medical health skilled for HIV treatment 17. Setting up health centres
	8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria (WHO) 22. Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures (UNICEF-WHO) 23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis (WHO) 24. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under DOTS (internationally recommended TB control strategy) (WHO)	18. Awareness campaigns 19. Provision of medicines 20. Availability of health staff 21. Setting up health centres
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	25. Proportion of land area covered by forest (FAO) 26. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area (UNEP-WCMC) 27. Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1,000 GDP (PPP) (IEA, World Bank) 28. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita (UNFCCC, UNSD) and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) (UNEP-Ozone Secretariat) 29. Proportion of population using solid fuels (WHO)	22. Awareness of consequences of environmental degradation 23. Judicious use of agricultural inputs 24. Move toward alternative resources and renewable resources 25. Environmental friendly production processes 26. Promoting production and use of environmental friendly products 27. Implementing environmental protection measures
	10. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation	30. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural (UNICEF-WHO) 31. Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural (UNICEF-WHO)	28. Developing infrastructure for water and sanitation 29. Developing measures for preventing contamination of water and conservation of water
	11. By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	32. Proportion of households with access to secure tenure (UN-HABITAT)	30. Developing mechanism to facilitate security of land 31. Establishing legal system for ownership rights 32. Promoting micro financing



Goal	Target	Indicators	Development Needs	
8. Develop a global partnership for development	12. Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally	Official development assistance (ODA) 33. Net ODA, total and to LDCs, as percentage of OECD/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors' gross national income (GNI)(OECD) 34. Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation) (OECD) 35. Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied (OECD) 36. ODA received in landlocked developing countries as a proportion of their GNIs (OECD) 37. ODA received in small island developing States as proportion of their GNIs (OECD)	33. Projecting needs and identifying sectors for donors' involvement 34. Understanding of the requirements of the donors for collaboration Facilitating the access of the donors 35. Providing platform for donors and CSOs collaboration 36. Strengthening Public Private Partnership 37. Familiarizing of state functionaries and employers about the requirements of the preference giving countries for levying export duties.	
	13. Address the special needs of the least developed countries. Includes: tariff and quota-free access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction	38. Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and from LDCs, admitted free of duty (UNCTAD, WTO, WB) 39. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries (UNCTAD, WTO, WB) 40. Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as percentage of their GDP (OECD) 41. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity (OECD, WTO)	Debt sustainability 42. Total number of countries that have reached their Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative) (IMF - World Bank) 43. Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative (IMF-World Bank) 44. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services (IMF-World Bank)	
	14. Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)	45. Unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 years, each sex and total (ILO)		38. Producing workforce with the ability to get employed 39. Providing labourforce that meet the needs of the employers 40. Diversifying economy to create more job opportunities
	15. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term	46. Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis (WHO)		41. Providing access to drugs 42. Creating awareness of people about health issues
	16. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth			

Goal	Target	Indicators	Development Needs
	18. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications	47. Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population (ITU) 48. Personal computers in use per 100 population and Internet users per 100 population (ITU)	43. Extending Communication infrastructure 44. Making Communication system affordable

Source: For Goals, Targets and Indicators UN Statistics Division

Considering that financial resources are foremost for any activity, the identified development needs fall into two categories. One is infrastructural laying and extension and the other is human resource development. While infrastructure development is vital to initiate service delivery and make accessible the social services such as education, health, and nutrition and population control, the agents of delivery of services are human resource. In any economic activity it is the human element that commands, directs, organizes, controls, and maximizes the factors of production. The quality of people appropriate to the particular level and complexities of the activity determines how well or poorly, these tasks are accomplished (ILO, 1997).

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development goes beyond the standard notion of economic development that has come to be synonymous with growth in real income per capita. It includes dimensions such as knowledge (education) and longevity that reflect non-material aspects of the quality of life. Based on the statement in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, that "we value wealth not for its own sake but for the sake of something else."

Thus, improvements in health besides being valuable in themselves, have the potential of expanding earning opportunities for the individual, and also contribute to improved cognitive abilities at school. Improvements in education could, similarly contribute to improved economic opportunities, besides enabling an individual to be empowered, whether by learning about the means to improve one's health or fight for one's rights in the public sphere. Again, improvements in basic rights —speech, religious freedom, life and liberty— are examples of improved capabilities that would be natural ingredients in the notion of development (Amartya Sen).

Adapted from Human Development Report 2005

The quality of human resource is a direct reflection of quality of education and training. The development needs shown in Table 1 indicate that for human resource development education and training is a necessary condition. A sound knowledge provides the necessary foundation for further absorption of knowledge. And at the same time training and skills is desirable, such as for self employment, delivering quality education, empowering women, providing personnel for mother and child health services, parental awareness on the issues of child health, awareness about diseases, well thought-out use of environmental resources, preventing resource degradation and contamination, environmental friendly production processes and use of inputs, understanding trade parameters and consequences on exports, producing workforce that is employable and that satisfies the needs of the employers.

Training areas abound. However, the priorities for education and training for this study is limited to the key sub-sectors of agriculture, services, and industries which are: farm and non-farm products, manufacturing, construction, tourism, micro finance, and Information Communication Technology (ICT); nevertheless, other subsectors of fisheries, pharmaceuticals have also been touched upon. Better education will result in improvement of all aspects of well being, including any sub-sectors that have not been mentioned above, and similarly training will equip human resource with appropriate skills, ability to upgrade skills with changing needs, and ability to seize opportunities for social and economic growth and fulfillment.



It is assumed that the SAARC countries will strengthen the education and training capacities of its human resource through regional cooperation and will be able to take advantages being sought in the global market place and at the same time contribute toward achieving the MDGs.



CHAPTER-III

SETTING THE STAGE FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDS

This study on “Integrated HRD approach in the SAARC region: An Assessment of collective training needs” is a contribution toward achieving the MDGs, SAARC Social Charter, and ongoing efforts of governments of the SAARC region. The human resource development of the region is studied in the context of global trends as future progress of developing countries is intimately linked to them. The trends recognize knowledge and skills as drivers of productivity and economic growth. Adopting measures to strengthen education and skill base remains a top priority for the decision makers in the South Asian economies.

The kind of ‘knowledge era’ into which humanity has entered, systems have become larger, problems have become complex, changes have become faster, and more than all, solutions to problems have alternatives. The rate of obsolescence of both hardware and software is very high. In the fast changing global environment the life of knowledge in science and technology is less than five years. Knowledge is doubling every 7-10 years¹. The resultant relatively rapid obsolescence of knowledge and skills has implications for human resource development in the SAARC region.

The training requirements in the changing environment are also changing rapidly to make training more relevant and up to date. An enlightened training policy, therefore, requires constant efforts for faculty development and modernization of infrastructure to meet the emerging needs.

Shelf-life of Degrees

- 1 year for computer science
- 2 years for electrical engineering
- 3 years for accounting & general medical practice
- 4 years for business
- 5 years for civil engineering & biotechnology
- 10 years for dentistry and surgery
- 15 years for architecture.

Source: ILO (1998), “Human Resource Development in Asia and the Pacific in the 21st Century

The broad global trends that are likely to exert a powerful influence on the South Asian economic development are:

- a) Growth of world trade;
- b) Growth of services sector;
- c) OECD labour shortages;
- d) Capital flows, and
- e) Technology and Infrastructure.

Growth of World Trade: By reducing and eventually eliminating all forms of trade barriers, the emerging institutional framework under World Trade Organization (WTO) is likely to accelerate the expansion of world trade in the coming years. This will open greater opportunities for domestic producers while at the same time make them more vulnerable to international competition. The spread of new technologies and production capabilities,

¹International Labour Organisation (1996), “Human Resource Development in Asia and the Pacific in the 21st Century



economies of scale are becoming increasingly important in reducing costs and prices. Growing surpluses will bring even greater competition between companies and countries producing the same products, as well as cheaper products for consumers, and higher standards of living. Opportunities in business will gradually shift from volume production to special value-added categories of products and services.

Growth of Services Sector: The driving force of economic growth and employment would increasingly come from the services sector. Rising living standards will fuel the demand for commercial, social and community services. Construction, retailing, education, health, entertainment and tourism will expand more rapidly than ever before. The incorporation of services under the WTO framework has opened up enormous opportunities for hitherto non-tradable sectors to expand their horizons across borders. This will enhance the quality, range and affordability of services to the domestic economy and add a further stimulus to a service-led economic growth around the world. At the same time, the efforts will be needed to secure a level playing field and fairness in the trading system.

OECD Labour Shortages: Demographic trends in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries will create acute labour shortages, opening up unprecedented opportunities for countries that can provide skilled manpower and outsourcing services. A UN study released in March 2000 estimates that the 15-nation European Community would have to accept 150 million new immigrants over the next 25 years in order to maintain the present levels of working population. By 2013, labour force growth in the USA will be zero. The UN estimates that Japan would need to admit 600,000 immigrants annually for the next 50 years in order to maintain the size of its working population at the 1995 level. This trend will further accelerate the outsourcing of production of goods and services to locations where skilled labour force, infrastructure, ease of doing business, quality, costs and availability of labour are most attractive, which will be beneficial for many labour surplus countries.

Capital Flows: The new institutional framework will promote free flow of capital and foreign investment, both direct as well as portfolio. Capital rich nations will seek out investment destinations generating higher returns. This trend will be reinforced by rising income levels and the aging of the OECD populations, which will swell the size of pension, insurance and mutual funds, resulting in a continued increase in international capital flows in search of secure and attractive returns. At the same time, large manufacturing companies will increasingly move from national to global production strategies resulting in further shifting of production and direct investment countries or regions in which markets exist or in which production costs are lower.

Technology and Infrastructure: Application and diffusion of technologies in a wide range of fields across international border will accelerate. The cost of global communications will continue to decline rapidly, reducing barriers of distance and making global production, distribution and marketing strategies more viable.



To reap any benefits accruing from the above trends, the South Asian region needs a strong education and skills level in synchronisation with the demand of the regional and global market. A majority of educational institutions in the SAARC region have been imparting training mainly in general education. This has resulted in decline of demand-driven knowledge and skills base.

The education system in the region does not produce pupils with the knowledge and understanding and the skills and attitudes appropriate for successful living and preparing labour force to meet the challenges of the 21st century. In the majority of regional countries college is the unit for most of the teaching responsibilities. The overwhelming majority of students are in the colleges. Colleges in the SAARC region are the main institutions imparting education and technical training in the region. In these colleges, however, academic environment is not conducive to the training requirements, particularly:

- a) Developing market driven knowledge and technical skills.
- b) Improving the quality of education: Relevance of curriculum and syllabi to the needs of the training and appropriateness of the instructional methods.
- c) Developing opportunities for higher education, technical and vocational training.
- d) Improving availability of resources for knowledge development and skill development

PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE

The SAARC countries have so far not demonstrated their capacity to shape and mould an educational and training system that will meet the emerging challenges effectively. The educational and training scene on the whole is discouraging. The education policies are still not fully equipped, neither in terms of organization nor in terms of the preparation of manpower for moving to high technology industries and then to knowledge-based industries. A more effective pattern of knowledge and skills with wider participation of society should include the following policies:

- Implementing relevant and quality education in a phased manner and emphasize the use of technology in education with a view to addressing human resource development needs within a framework of formal / non-formal and technical and vocational education programmes.
- Reinforcing and modernizing higher education with a view to providing high-level workforce and subject specialists in different domains.
- Defining, standardising and reviewing quality education. Developing pre-requisites for mandatory training and determining proficiency certificate level as minimum educational qualification for primary school teachers and introducing teacher licensing at all levels of supervision.
- Indicating resources available for accomplishing each of the specified tasks as the guiding principle for initiating, organizing and monitoring performance at all levels.
- Attaining gender equity and establishing links between education and employment at all levels.
- Developing partnership between core stakeholders: public, private, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in development of market based knowledge and skills.



CHAPTER-IV

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PLAN

The chapter gives an overview of the governments' development plans, and policies in education and vocational training for identifying knowledge and skills problems of the member states. The countries in the SAARC region have implemented development plans to set growth targets varying from 3, 5 to 10 years. The plans indicate development focus on agriculture, education, health, higher value added services, role of private sector through public private partnership, and human resource capacity. The development plans have also attached priority to improvement in rural quality of life.

The educational structure is on the pattern of class X + class XI-XII and followed by 2-5 years of college or university degree. Class X is regarded as secondary education certificate level, class XI-XII as higher secondary or senior secondary certificate level and onwards are degree level programmes. The vocational stream is generally introduced at the secondary level in the school based systems.

Education is the basis of knowledge; policies by the governments in the education sectors play a defining part in the development of the region. The education policies of the SAARC countries are driven by the Millennium Development Goals and consequent commitment to 'Education for All' (EFA). The chapter highlights the renewed actions of the countries of the region for universal primary education and endeavours in spreading education through distance learning. With mounting pressure of population explosion and meager resources, distance education has emerged as an important feature of the education systems of the SAARC countries since the early 1980s. Open Universities in the SAARC countries have been established on the model of the UK to give a second chance to mature students. Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh have open universities and efforts are underway in Nepal and Bhutan.

4.1 BANGLADESH

The country's sixth plan (2003-08) aims to increase Gross Domestic Production (GDP) growth rates by 5.5% in 2003-04 and 6.5% in 2005-06. Priority sectors include agriculture, education, health, family welfare and rural development, reflecting an ongoing shift in funding from physical infrastructure to human resource development. A major goal is to halve the poverty rate by 2015. Industry grew by 7.3% in 2002-03, compared with 6.5% the previous year².

4.1.1 Education Sector Policies

The government accords such high priority on education that it is the largest single item in the revenue and development budget of 2005-6 having a share of 15%³. There are also substantial demand-side incentives to boost enrolment (food-for-education program, secondary school stipend, etc.). Although government spending on primary education more than doubled in real terms between 1991 and 2000, since total public spending in Bangladesh is low, education outlays – at around 2.2

² Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Third edition, second quarter 2004

³ Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh, <http://www.cpd-bangladesh.org/activities/budget2005.html>



% of GDP -- remain low relative to other countries in the region (e.g. India 3.7 % and Sri Lanka 3.4 %).

The government institutions are dominant at the primary, technical and tertiary levels while private institutions, supported by government subventions, are pre-dominant at the secondary level. A significant recent development, moreover, is the rapid expansion of the NGO-run non-formal primary schooling in the country. The traditional religion-based system (*madrasahs*), both at primary and secondary levels, is also prevalent⁴.

Following Jomtien World Conference on Education for All, Bangladesh prepared its first EFA: National Plan of Action (NPA I) covering the period 1991-2000. Some of the EFA goals, like gross enrolment in primary education and adult literacy as set in the EFA NPA I, have already been achieved by 2000. As a follow up of the Dakar Conference 2000, the second National Plan of Action (2003-2015) has been prepared. The Dakar Framework of Action (DFA) provides six goals and the most important of them is the quality of education. The framework seeks to ensure quality education which covers learning from childhood to adulthood and beyond.

In view of DFA, NPA II has identified five major operational goals to be reached by the year 2015:

- (i) Expanded and improved early childhood care and education for survival, growth, learning and development;
- (ii) Universal and free access to basic education for all children with special emphasis on excluded groups;
- (iii) Universal access to basic learning opportunities and skills programmes for all young people and adults;
- (iv) Achievement by all learners of nationally defined, objectively measured levels in literacy, numeracy and life skills;
- (v) Elimination of gender disparity in primary and lower level by 2005 and full and equal access to and effective participation in basic education of women and girls.

The NPA II has set several strategic objectives, such as increased educational investments and coordinated support from private, local and international spheres; ensuring enlarged space for the civil society in planning, implementation and monitoring of basic education; integrating basic education with broader social development and anti-poverty programmes; harnessing the new technologies into basic education services in an equitable manner; and developing rights-based, learner-friendly, and inclusive educational environment⁵.

4.1.2 Distance Education

To spread education among general mass, particularly, in the remote villages to study at their convenience, Bangladesh Open University (BOU) was established in 1992. BOU uses a variety of means---radio, television, broadcasts, supply of self instructional printed materials through mail, and computer network. Course of formal

⁴ Mujeri, Mustafa K. (2003), "Financing Education: National Priorities and Future Directions, A Right to Development Perspective," July

⁵ Bangladesh (2003), "Education for All: National Plan of Action II, 2003 – 2015," (Fourth Draft), Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, May



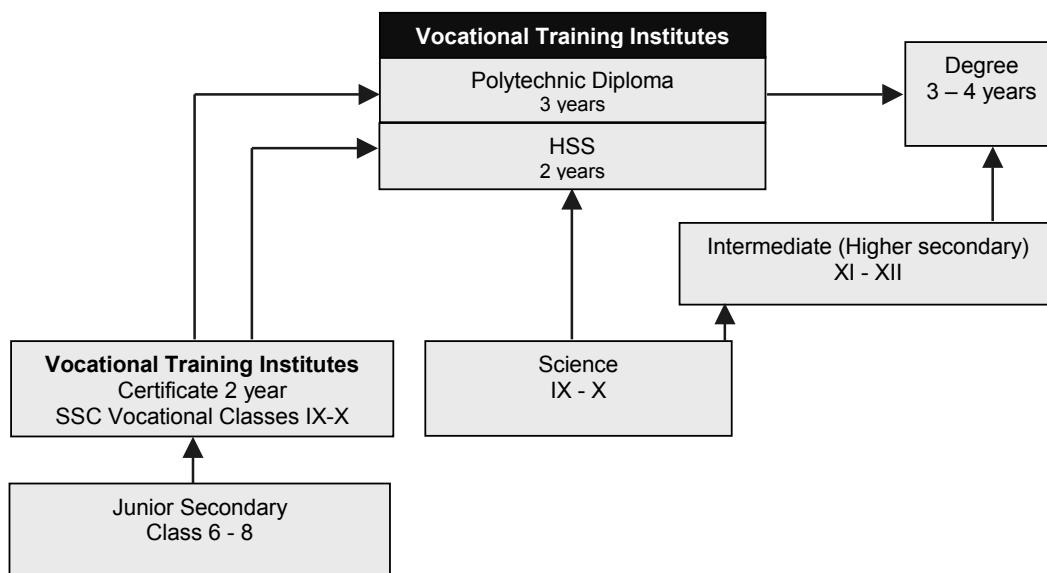
as well as non-formal education, basic, secondary and higher education are taught. BOU also disseminates information for creating awareness in the areas of environmental protection, health and hygiene, agriculture, fisheries, sanitation and family planning⁶.

4.1.3 Vocational Education and Training

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Bangladesh is provided by formal and informal means. Formal TVET is provided within the school system at the certificate level, diploma level, and degree level. At the secondary level there is a separate stream for imparting technical-vocational education and training. After completing the junior secondary level (class 6-8), students may enter into Vocational Training Institutes for 2-year Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC class 6-10) (vocational) courses and after having SSC Vocational/SSC (science) they may enter into Vocational Training Institutes (VTI), Polytechnic Institutes for 2-year HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate class 11-12) (Vocational) / 3-year Dip-in-Engineering courses Technology education at the higher education degree level includes agriculture, engineering, medical, textile, leather technology and ICT⁷.

Under the Ministry of Education, the Directorate of Technical Education plans, develops, coordinates, and supervises TVET. In the certificate level courses, short courses on basic trades in the Technical Training Colleges (TTCs) or Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) and tailor-made short courses on a cost recovery basis in the afternoon and evenings are being offered. The short term training programmes in after school timings let the students complete their formal school.

Figure 4: Education System in Bangladesh



⁶ Rahman, Md. Hakikur, in "bytes for all," <http://www.bytesforall.org/4thhakik.htm>

⁷ Bangladesh, "Development of education: National report of Bangladesh" (2004), Ministry of Education, pg. 10, 14, 31



Vocational education in Bangladesh is given in more than 55 Vocational Training Institutes (VTI) operated by the Ministry of Education, and 11 Technical Training Centers (TTC) run by the Ministry of Labor and Employment. In addition, several NGOs and private institutions are also engaged in producing skilled workers. However the capacity of these institutions seems much too inadequate. Private investors are coming up but at a slow pace. Vocational schools offer career-specific training for the labour market to have qualified skilled staff and at the same time give primarily young people and secondarily adults an education and training opportunity⁸.

4.2 BHUTAN

The Ninth Five-Year Plan (FYP) (2002-2006) seeks to maximize "gross national happiness," adopting a very cautious approach to economic development, putting preservation of the traditional Buddhist culture and the country's spectacular natural environment well ahead of ambitions for economic modernization⁹.

Considering that a large majority of the poor are dependent on agriculture, some of the salient strategies and interventions proposed under the Ninth FYP in Bhutan include improving productivity and promotion of off-farm enterprises and opportunities in the rural areas through access to training and technical assistance¹⁰. The plan aims to enhance the skills of the workforce including the youth through technical and vocational training, in partnership with potential employers, as well as adjusting the school curricula to impart more life skills for the graduates to be entrepreneurs in different sectors.

The ninth fiscal year plan (2002 to 2006) promises a continuation of the same moderate progress, although it calls for a 75% increase in outlays over the revised eighth FYP. A central strategy of the plan is to check what is seen as excessive urbanization, up to 21% in 2002, through, intensive rural development. For the first time the plan includes separate plans for each of the country's 201 local units or geogs.

Source:
Bhutan, "Economic Development," Encyclopedia of the Nations, Asia and Oceania

The four priorities of the plan are increasing domestic tax revenue, improving rural quality of life and income, geog-based planning¹¹, and enhancing the private sector.

4.2.1 Education Sector Policies

The main thrust of the Education sector strategy Bhutan in the Ninth Plan is to increase access and reach the un-reached, further develop the curriculum, improve the teacher pupil ratio, and expand educational facilities. The major programmes proposed to improve the quality of education include: a) constructing 120 community schools, 26 lower secondary and 23 middle and higher secondary schools, b) expanding the facilities at Sherubtse College to increase enrolment from 600 to 1000 students, c) increasing facilities at the two in-country teachers training institutes to increase the intake of trainee teachers from 900 to 1,470, d) providing special education for the disabled, e) continuing adult literacy programmes, and e) establishing the national university of Bhutan.

⁸ Skill stays the same! (2005), <http://subhan.blogspot.com/archive/2005/08/06/skill-stays-the-same.html>

⁹ Bhutan, "Economic Development," Encyclopedia of the Nations, Asia and Oceania

¹⁰ Royal Government of Bhutan, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, (2004), Department of Planning Ministry of Finance

¹¹ Block based planning



The high priority given to the education sector in the current Ninth Plan has resulted in an increase in the gross primary enrolment ratio from 55 percent in 1991 to 81 percent in 2003, an annual increase of about 6-7 percent. The girl's enrolment ratio has also risen significantly, from 39 percent in 1990 to 47 percent in 2003. There has also been a substantial rise in the share of school children completing seven years of primary school (class 1 through 7), doubling in the 1990s to reach 69 percent in 2001. Mid-day meals scheme, boarding provision and stationeries provided free of cost have made education attractive. The government aims to achieve cent percent enrolment rate in the lower secondary education (class 8) in 2007, and the higher secondary education (class 10) in 2012 (Vision 2020, 1999)¹². Adult literacy has also shown improvement as it rose from 48 percent in 1994 to 54 percent in 2000.

4.2.2 Distance Education

Formal distance education in Bhutan was initiated by some teachers and civil servants who undertook correspondence courses offered by colleges and universities in India (Dukpa 1987). Non-formal correspondence courses were offered as early as in 80s and radio programmes on health education, family planning and animal husbandry were aired. National institute of Education (NIE) implemented a distance education programme for teachers. Other potential target populations for distance education programmes include early school dropouts and non-school entrants (functional literacy and numeracy), extension workers (agriculture, veterinary science, health, etc.) and farmers.

Distance education is being pursued through Sustainable Systems for Distributed Higher Education (SSDHE) project with the Open University, UK as leaders and in collaboration with Institute of Educational Technology (IET) (India), Lews Castle College University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) Millennium Institute in Scotland (United Kingdom), University of the Aegean (UA) (Greece), Royal University of Bhutan (UB) (Bhutan), Tribhuvan University (TU), Institute of Engineering (Nepal)¹³. The aim of this project is to provide models, training and hands-on experience of distributed learning for Bhutan and Nepal. The target groups are senior administrators, academics, staff from the remote colleges and regions, technical/networking staff, rural and remote teachers.

4.2.3 Vocational Education and Training

For vocational training institutes class X qualification is not needed. Those who do not qualify for higher secondary education (class X) repeat or seek admission into vocational training institutes. School leavers at Class VI gain entry to trade level education and training courses, and those from Classes VIII and X to craft and technician level courses respectively.

There are two formal technical institutes in the country: the Royal Technical Institute in Phuntsholing and the Royal Bhutan Institute of Technology (RBIT) in Deothang formerly called Royal Bhutan Polytechnic. RBIT offers degree programmes in Civil and Electrical engineering, and Diploma programmes in Civil, Electrical and

¹² Bhutan, "Youth in Bhutan: Education, Employment, Development" (January 2005), The Centre for Bhutan Studies, Monograph 14

¹³ Asia-link programme project fact sheet (2005), The Development and Management of Sustainable Systems for Distributed Higher Education in Nepal and Bhutan (SSDHE)



Mechanical Engineering. RBIT is also involved in professional development, consultancy and R & D activities.

4.3 INDIA

Agricultural development is viewed as the core element of the Tenth Plan, 2002-07, with attention to sectors most likely to create employment opportunities. These include agriculture in its extended sense, construction, tourism, transport, small-scale industries (SSI), retailing, Information Technology (IT), and communications enabling services. Industrial policy includes continued emphasis on privatization and deregulation.

The Tenth Plan emphasizes on imparting quality education at all stages of education and the pursuit of excellence. Efforts are on-going to increase the enrolment in higher education of the 18-23 year age group from the present 6 per cent to 10 per cent by the end of the Plan period. The strategies focus on increasing access, quality, adoption of state-specific strategies and the liberalization of the higher education system. Emphasis is also laid on the relevance of the curriculum, vocationalisation, and networking on the use of information technology. There is also focus on distance education, convergence of formal, non-formal, distance and IT education institutions, increased private participation in the management of colleges and universities, and research in frontier areas of knowledge and meeting challenges in the area of Internationalization of Indian education.

In the tenth five-year plan, 2002–2007, the government set the ambitious target of achieving an average 8% growth, above the level achieved during the ninth plan and well ahead of the 5% to 5.5% growth forecast for 2002/03.

Other monitorable economic targets include a reduction of the poverty rate by 5% by 2007, and by 15% by 2012; providing gainful and high-quality employment at least equal to the projected increases in the labor force; increase in forest and tree cover to 25%, in 2007 and to 33% by 2012; all villages with sustained access to potable water by 2007; and cleaning of all major polluted rivers by 2007.

India, "Economic Development,"
Encyclopedia of the Nations, Asia and Oceania

4.3.1 Education Sector Policies

The Govt. of India is committed to universalizing elementary education. As per the Sixth All India Educational Survey, 1993, 94 per cent of the total rural population was served by primary schools. Concerted efforts towards Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) have resulted in the manifold increase in institutions, teachers and students. During the period 1950-51 to 1999-2000, the number of primary schools increased by more than three times from 2,10,000 in 1950-51 to 6,42,000 in 1999-2000 whereas the number of upper primary schools increased 15 times from 13,600 in 1950-51 to 1,98,000 in 1999-2000. This trend seems to have continued after 2000 as well.

To boost enrolment, a majority of states and Union Territories have introduced free education in Classes I-XII of their schools¹⁴. In the elementary education sector, the Tenth Plan's targets for Universal Access, Universal Enrolment, Universal Achievement, Universal Retention, and Equity are:

¹⁴ India, "National Policy on Education," (2005), Department of Education, <http://www.education.nic.in/htmlweb/natpol.htm#2>



- All children in the 6-14 age group should have access to primary schools, upper primary schools or their alternatives within a walking distance of one km and three km respectively.
- All children in the 3-6 age group must have universal access to early childhood care and education (ECCE) centres.
- Need-based expansion of upper primary education facilities, particularly for the disadvantaged sections. There should be one upper primary school for every two primary schools.
- All schools should have buildings, toilets, drinking water, electricity, playgrounds, blackboards and other basic facilities. There must be provision of one classroom for every teacher at the elementary stage.
- Enrolment of all children in schools or alternative arrangements by 2003.
- All children to complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
- Universal retention in the primary stage by 2007.
- Dropout rate to be reduced to less than 10 per cent for class VI-VIII by 2007.
- Improve the quality of education in all respects (content and process) to ensure reasonable learning outcomes at the elementary level, especially in literacy, numeric and in life skills.
- Bridge all gender and social gaps in enrolment, retention and learning achievement in the primary stage by 2007 and reduce the gap to 5 per cent in the upper primary stage by 2007.
- Special interventions and strategies to include girls, Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) children, working children, children with special needs, urban deprived children, children from minority groups, children below the poverty line, migratory children and children in the hardest-to-reach groups.

4.3.2 Distance Education

India turned to distance education with the creation of the Correspondence Institute of the University of Delhi in 1962 to meet the huge unmet demand of education. A few universities in India offered correspondence courses in limiting to arts and commerce. In 1982 Andhra Pradesh Open University was established. The university had 40,000 full-time and part-time students enrolled after only four years. Since then open universities have opened up in several states the states of Himanchel Pradesh, Rajasthan (Kota) and Bihar (Nolanda). In 1985, the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established which also has been empowered to supervise the functioning of all the distance education institutes throughout the entire country by undertaking a role similar to that of the University Grants Commission (Singh 1989).

4.3.3 Vocational Education and Training

In India, the Technical / Vocational Education and Training is multi-sectoral in nature. Each ministry / department in Central as well as State Governments is responsible for manpower development in that sector¹⁵. While some offer regular formal or non-formal courses, others draw from the general pool of educated and trained manpower.

¹⁵ Mishra, Arun K. (1993), "Technical/Vocational Education in India."



The first 10 years in Indian education structure is undifferentiated general education after which there are academic and vocational streams. There are three major types of vocational / technical education and training programmes:

- Technical industrial arts and crafts schools
- Higher secondary vocational education
- Technician education

The technical industrial arts and crafts schools are offshoots of general schooling offering one vocational subject such as carpentry, blacksmithy, moulding, welding, fitting, building construction rural technology, textile technology, wireman, etc., is taught in addition to the general curriculum of class X. The schools are inclined more toward preparing youth for polytechnics rather than for vocational fields.

The higher secondary vocational programme aims to develop skilled manpower through diversified courses to meet the requirements of mainly the unorganised sector and to prepare people for the world of work in general through a large number of self employment oriented courses, not precluding wage employment orientation of many courses. The design consists of theory and practice relating to the vocational field, related subjects, language and general foundation studies which includes entrepreneurship.

The technician education provides broad based education in engineering as well as some non-engineering areas in polytechnics with the aim to meet the manpower needs of the organised sector. The minimum qualification for entry into a polytechnic is class X certificate. The courses are generally of three year duration but a few range between two and four years. The training is mostly institutional (with some industrial experience) and the curricula are predominantly theory oriented.

The Labour Ministry offers two training programmes for primarily skilled workers for the organised industrial sector:

- Craftsmen training scheme
- Apprenticeship training scheme

The Directorate General of Employment and Training (DCET&T) of the Ministry of Labour in India is strengthening the national training programmes. Under this programme the Craftsmen Training Scheme for semi-skilled and skilled workers was launched¹⁶. The training is conducted in government run or privately managed Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in 42 engineering and 22 non-engineering trades with course duration of 1-2 years. The ITIs offer both X+ and VIII+ level courses in nearly equal numbers. State government and private agencies both set up ITIs. There are about 4000 industrial training institutes, 1600 polytechnics, and approximately 7000 vocational study centres¹⁷.

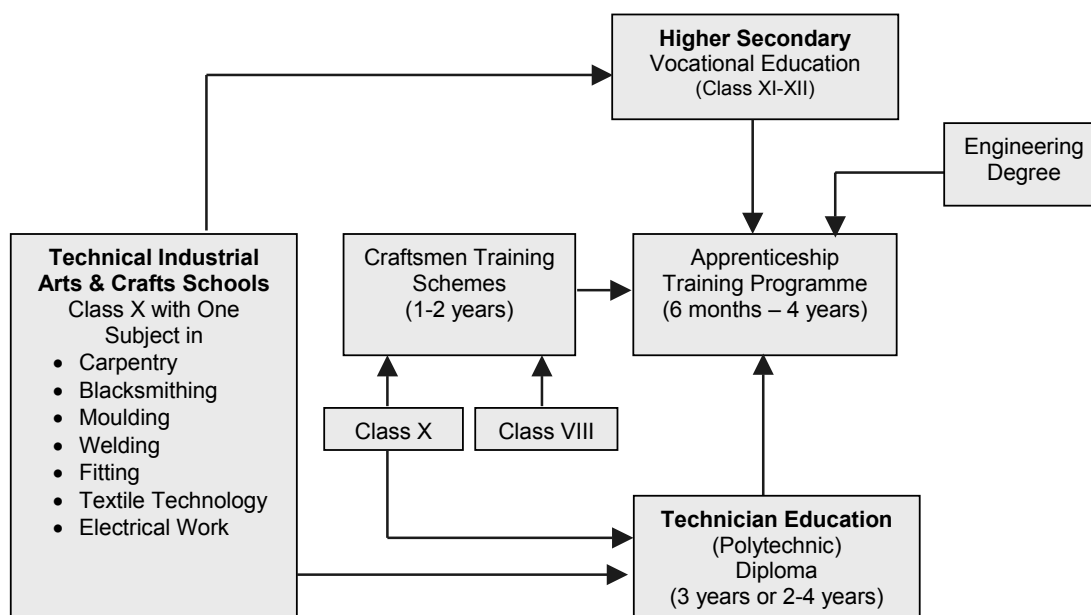
¹⁶ Gamerdinger, George W. (1997), "Employers' Organization and Human Resource Development in the 21st century: Views from South Asia," <http://www.ilo.org/public/English/dialogue/actemp/papers/1998/gwghreo.htm>

¹⁷ South Asia Foundation, <http://www.southasiafoundation.org/saf/vocationaltraining/vocationaltraining.asp>



The graduates of these courses find placement in organised public and private sector industrial and business establishments. Some of them go for self employment also. The curriculum is highly practice oriented and the elements of general education are kept at minimum. An ITI graduate is not eligible for university education.

Figure 1: Vocational Education System in India



As the needs of the industries changed, so did the demand for the skills imparted by ITIs. More need was felt for on-job training to respond to the call for skilled workers for industries. Consequently the Apprenticeship Act was adopted in 1961 under which employers in public as well as private sectors were required to hire a certain proportion of apprentices in their enterprises.

The apprenticeship training programme is designed on the model of dual system of vocational training in Germany where the state and the private sector share responsibilities. Enterprises deliver the entire training with duration varying from 6 months to four years in basic training of around 140 apprenticeable trades followed by “on-the job” or shop-flooring training. Large enterprises, with employee population more than 500, cover not only the training cost but also the stipend to apprentices. For enterprises with less than 500 employees the government covers the cost of instruction. The central government also reimburses 50% of the expenditure incurred on training for graduates, diploma holders and technician apprentices, and fresher trade apprentices. The government also carries out refresher courses for the instructors at the training centres.

There are four categories of apprentice programme: Graduate Apprenticeship for engineering graduates, Technician Apprenticeship for diploma holders from polytechnics, Trade Apprenticeship for the graduates of ITIs and Technician (Vocational) Apprenticeship for the graduates of higher secondary vocational courses. There are 71 subjects and 12,000 technician apprentices training at a time.



The Ministry of Labour also runs vocational training system and vocational training programmes particularly for women in separate institutes.

Some of the good examples of enterprises¹⁸ which have implemented apprentice training programmes are Motor Industries Company Limited (MICO) in Bangalore, Siemens India Limited in Bombay and Tata Engineering and Locomotive Works in Pune. These training programmes are designed with flexibility for future adaptation and provide all round skills and knowledge for supervisory work as well. While addressing to the needs of urban labour force, the trainings are also available for rural population.

4.4 MALDIVES

The Sixth National Development Plan (2002-05) is designed as a policy and strategy-orientated blueprint to steer the development of the first five years of the Vision 2020. The Plan recognizes the need for the private sector to play an increasingly substantive and important role in the socio-economic development of the Maldives. The 6th Plan was prepared based on an elaborate consultative process involving the Ministries / Departments of the Government, non-governmental organizations, and numerous organisations and individuals of the private sector. To meet human resource development requirements the Plan lays importance on education programmes in teaching (especially middle and secondary levels), health, technical and vocational, population, and early childhood education.

National development objectives of the Sixth Development Plan 2001-2005

1. Diversify and expand the economy by further developing existing industries and by exploring new economic activities, while ensuring the sustainability of physical and natural resources.
2. Increase the role of private sector in the development process, particularly in expanding the economic base of the country.
3. Improve the quality and relevance of educational, health and social services, while ensuring that the benefits of development are shared equitably among the population.
4. Increase the human resource capacity and productivity by providing relevant training and employment opportunities.
5. Pursue legislative, regulatory, governance and administrative reform to facilitate rapid economic and social development.
6. Develop a sustainable and cost-effective transportation and telecommunication infrastructure to facilitate economic, social and regional development
7. Ensure socio-political stability and democratic participation of all in the development process, while upholding the national unity and social cohesiveness based on shared social, cultural and religious values.

Source:
Republic of Maldives, Ministry of Planning and National Development

4.4.1 Education Sector Policies

The Maldives has a very young and literate population with a high rate of school enrolment. Public education is free and private schools charge nominal fees. The goal of universal primary education for all has been achieved. The education system is based on English medium. The highest level of formal education available in the country is the London G.C.E (General Certificate of Education) Advanced Level (AL). As there are no universities, tertiary education is undertaken overseas. Recently a college has been set up in Male` for tertiary education.

The four major EFA goals for the Maldives are¹⁹:

¹⁸ Daguar, ER. D.S (1997), "India: Enterprise participation in training,"

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/skills/training/publ/india.htm>

¹⁹ EFA Planning Implementation & Monitoring, Maldives (2005), 7th National EFA Coordinators' Meeting / Mid Decade Assessment, Planning Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand 24-29 October



- Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and development, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensuring that all children, irrespective of gender, ability and location have access to good quality basic education.
- Ensuring equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Ensuring that young people's learning needs are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

The total population on most islands is not enough to sustain even a small school. Nearly one third of the schools have an enrolment less than 300 pupils. More than 80% have an enrolment less than 500 pupils²⁰. A strategy adopted to cater to this widely dispersed small populations, has been the creation of services for an atoll. With respect to formal education, Atoll Education Centres (AECs) and Atoll Primary Schools (APSs) were started as model schools to provide a curriculum to the children on the atolls similar to what was offered in Male schools. Apart from being schools they also carried out other functions such as assisting in the in-service education of teachers and literacy work.

Now there is no inhabited island without a school. There is at least one primary school in each of the 199 inhabited islands. Children have access to a school on their own island. Nearly all of them have schooling up to class 7. The very few that do not have at the moment will be upgraded very soon.

4.4.2 Distance Education

The Maldives Government has stressed on distance education as appropriate for educating its scattered population through 200 islands. However, there is no formally established system of distance education. Some activities have been incorporated into both formal and non-formal education (Selim, 1987), such as a series of radio programmes on the teaching of English for Class I and II which is broadcast on a regular basis.

4.4.3 Vocational Education and Training

The policies and goals of the Maldives' Fifth Plan emphasise on expansion of vocational education throughout the country. Institutions for non-formal and technical education have been set up. Vocational training was earlier provided by Vocational Training Centre which has been upgraded to the Maldives Institute for Technical Education with branches in rural areas.

The number of qualified and competently trained people joining the workforce is increasing every year. High literacy also means that the workforce is easily trainable in technology oriented fields²¹.

Focused programmes aimed at rural communities and small farmers and fishermen have been implemented through specific projects. Similarly, the promotion of women in employment is also given due emphasis in special projects that provide training and skills development.

²⁰ UNESCO, "The EFA 2000 Assessment," Country Reports, Maldives

²¹ Human Resources, Economic Policies, Foreign Investment Services Bureau, Ministry of Trade, Industry & Labour, Maldives, <http://www.investmaldives.com/resources.htm>



The Institute of Hotel and Catering Services train employees to work in the tourism sector, and the Maldives Centre for Management and Administration train people in management.

4.5 NEPAL

The Tenth Plan, 2002-07, envisages expediting poverty alleviation by giving priority to high economic growth, good governance, and social justice. Based on the experiences of the Ninth Plan, programmes promoting poverty alleviation and social justice will be implemented more effectively in the Tenth Plan. In this context, strategies are directed towards achieving the set goal through participatory development process together with establishing the effective role of women in the national economic and social development, mainstreaming the down-trodden and ethnicities in the development process, and clearly defining the role of government, local bodies, the private sector, non-governmental organization and the civil societies. The main objective of the long-term development is to free the nation from the clutches of existing poverty, and to establish a cultured, modern and competent society²².

Indicative target for Nepal's Tenth Plan related to education is raising literacy to 63 percent. The Tenth Plan aims at improving access to and quality of primary education and expanding literacy programmes to make better the situation of livelihood of deprived groups, especially girls, dalits and disadvantaged children. The Plan objectives also include development and expansion of secondary education, production of middle-level technical manpower through the expansion of vocational and technical education and production of higher level skilled manpower through the development of higher education.

4.5.1 Education Sector Policies

The Government of Nepal, like other governments in many countries, has favoured fee-free schooling in order to improve equity and access for the poor. At the secondary level, implementation of the policy commenced in 1992. The measure did not prove to be effective as the government was unable to fulfill the needs of the schools and institutions demanded all sorts of substitute payments from parents. In many cases, whereas in the old system the burden of fees was spread over the year, the replacement payments are demanded as single lump sum which parents cannot afford²³.

4.5.2 Distance Education

Distance education seems appropriate in Nepal which is a relatively small country with population dispersed through a mountainous terrain. Recognizing this potential,

²² Government of Nepal, Tenth Plan (2002-07), National Planning Commission

²³ Bajracharya et al. (1997), in "Cost Sharing in Education,"

http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Education_NatDev_Asia/ Costs_Financing/cost_sharing_education.pdf



the Government of Nepal started off teacher training by radio and with the assistance of USAID, in 70s launched the Radio Education Teacher Training Program (RETTTP).

The Nepalese Government plans to use the experience of UHI as a consortium of distributed colleges and research centres, and the expertise of the OU in distance and online education, and the technological expertise of the University of the Aegean to offer models of appropriate pedagogies and systems for the Tribhuvan University, Nepal²⁴. The Sustainable Systems for Distributed Higher Education project focuses on sustainable models of distributed education for rural and remote areas priorities²⁵.

4.5.3 Vocational Education and Training

In 1954, National Vocational Training System was set up in Nepal to support the National Education System Plan (NESP). The committee introduced vocational education in the secondary education curriculum throughout the country. The formal system of technical education evolved in 80s with the establishment of the Karnali Technical School. Later, after abolishing NESP, a Technical and Vocational Education Committee was formed to manage technical schools. Some of the technical schools were under the Directorate for Technical and Vocational Education (DTVE) and some were under the Tribhuvan University. To unify the disparate activities the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) was formed under Technical Education and Vocational Training, TEVT Act in 1989.

The council has a Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI), two Rural Training Centres, 1 polytechnic and 12 Technical Schools. In affiliation with CTEVT run 173 private training centres, 114 of which are functioning. Diploma programmes are conducted in 32 private institutes²⁶.

4.6 PAKISTAN

The Ten Year Perspective Development Plan 2001-11 and Three Year Development Programme 2001-04 proposes to maintain the agriculture sector growth, on average, at 4.2 percent per annum, keep inflation low, and maintain employment; Revitalize manufacturing growth rate by pushing up the manufacturing growth from 4.8 percent of the 90s, to 7.8 percent by 2011. The plan also stresses on improvement in productivity and quality through policies of exchange rate, domestic input pricing, and credit availability, and setting up close linkages between high value added production structure and training and HRD facilitation²⁷.

Ten Year Perspective Development Plan 2001-11

A four pronged strategy has been envisaged for economic growth:

- Gradual acceleration in GDP growth
- Maintaining the tempo of agricultural growth rate
- Revitalizing manufacturing growth rate
- Improvement in Productivity and Quality:

Source:

Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning and Development

²⁴ Asia-link programme project fact sheet (2005), The Development and Management of Sustainable Systems for Distributed Higher Education in Nepal and Bhutan (SSDHE)

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ Government of Nepal, Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, <http://www.moe.gov.np/autonomous/ctevt.php>

²⁷ Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning and Development



4.6.1 Education Sector Policies

The Government of Pakistan aims at improving the access to and quality of primary education. The national education policy emphasizes increased enrolments in public sector schools, removing urban-rural and gender imbalance, improving quality of education at all levels particularly through curriculum reform, strengthening higher education, providing for demand-driven education and encouraging private sector participation. The linchpin of this effort is Education Sector Reforms (ESR) Action Plan 2001-2005, embedded in PRSP. An Education for All Plan of Action (2001-2015) has been developed through broad based consultations with the principal actors and other stakeholders.

The priorities under EFA include:

- Universal primary education and quality education for all
- Adult literacy rate of 86 percent for both males and females
- Reducing illiteracy by 50 percent with focus on reducing the gender gap
- Quality education and technical and skill development programmes.

Recently the education up till secondary level (class X) has been made free in public schools. Textbooks and notebooks are also given free of cost. The Government is also in dialogue with development partners for Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) to enhance quality and coverage in education. For improvement in higher education in Pakistan, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) was established as an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of Education. HEC will strive for the development of s that address the higher education sector as a whole and develop an environment conducive to academics, research, along with mechanism for management of funds and timely procurement.

The HEC has initiated foreign Ph. D scholarship programmes to develop a research base in areas of key importance for social and economic development of Pakistan. Special attention is focused on education and research infrastructure, including physical infrastructure, electronic access highway, digital library programme, curriculum, and distance education mechanism. While working towards overall uplift of the entire higher education sector, the Commission is in the process of developing targeted programmes to catalyze development in the focus areas: Engineering Sciences, Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology, Information Technology, Social Sciences / Economics / Management, Agricultural Sciences and Health Sciences.

4.6.2 Distance Education

The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) of Pakistan was established in 1974 to provide "education for all." The functions of AIOU were reiterated in the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1978-83), which included reference to the employment of multi-media distance learning techniques to offer in-service training courses for primary and middle school teachers, general foundation courses, and functional education courses, thus highlighting the university's role in non-formal as well as formal education. The emphasis on non-formal education is reflected in a number of AIOU projects, such as the Integrated Functional Education Project, the Civic Education Project, and the Women's Education Project. The human-resource development areas identified for priority treatment are: literacy, in-service teacher training (especially in industrial arts, agriculture, and commerce at the secondary level);

technical and vocational education, and the provision of professional education in the following sectors: agriculture, law, health (including the training of paramedics) and the training of distance education personnel.

4.6.3 Vocational Education and Training

In Pakistan different level of technical education and vocation training are:

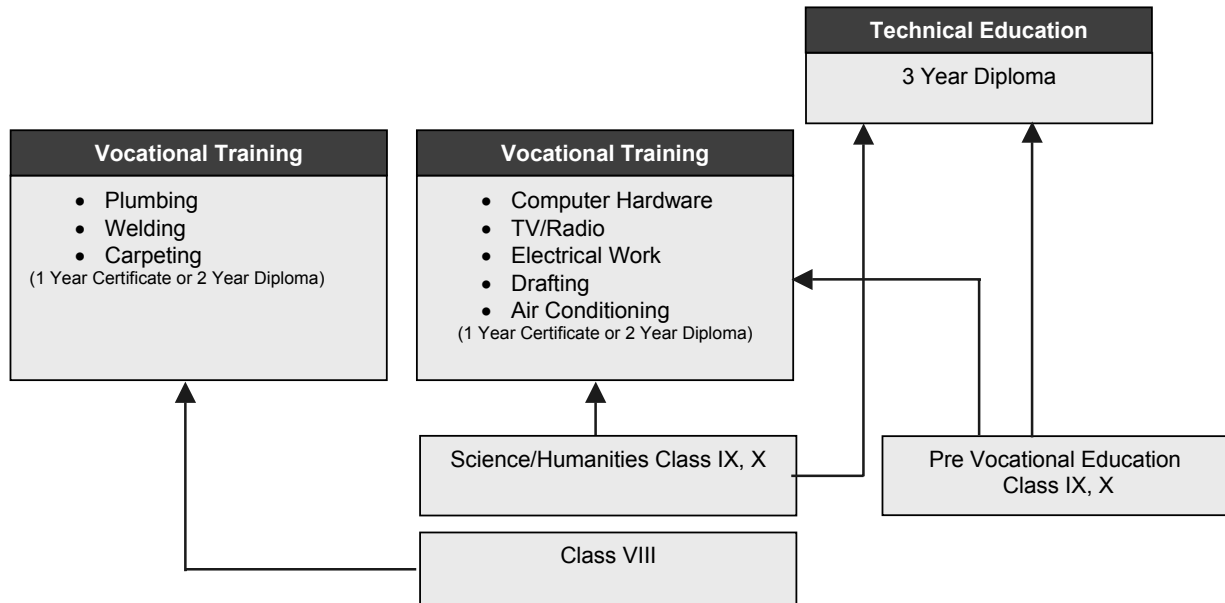
- Pre-vocational education
- Vocational training programme
- Technical education programme

The pre-vocational education is offered at vocational high schools as a parallel stream to science group and humanities group. In the general vocational programme vocational contents are added.

The vocational training programme is skill intensive post secondary programme offered in public and private sectors. The entry qualification is class X for trades like computer hardware, radio, TV repair, electrical work, drafting and air-conditioning and middle pass for trades like plumber, welding, carpentry, and auto work . The duration of the programme is 1 year for certificate and 2 years for diploma course.

The technical education is post-secondary 3 years programme offered at polytechnics or colleges of technology, leading to Diploma of Associate Engineer (DAE) in a technology of specialization. The curriculum aims at producing middle level engineering technicians.

Figure 3: Vocational Education System in Pakistan



Skills Development Councils have been set up to link the private sector and the National Vocational Training System (NVTs) and enhance vocational training



through flexible demand oriented and cost effective training with the participation of the employers.

In the budget of 2004-05, the Government of Pakistan announced the establishment of National Technical Education and Vocation Training Authority. Since, the skill development programmes are mainly offered in the public sector and hardly any in the private sector, the budget also announced incentives for private sector to establish vocational, technical, or polytechnic institutes.

In 1998 the Government of Punjab in Pakistan established Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA). The authority now coordinates the efforts of some 400 already existing training institutes attached with seven different departments. Also established in 1998 in Punjab is Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTC) which extends skills to poor so that they could get employment.

Other bodies at the national level, such as the Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) and National Productivity Organisation (NPO) provide support to Skills Development Institutes (SDIs). Ministry of Industries, Production & Special Initiatives has created Technical Up-gradation and Skills Development Company as an implementing institution to fulfill the aim of upgrading technology and developing skills in industrial sectors.

International donors are also engaged in establishing training facilities in Pakistan. JICA has helped establish Pakistan Industrial Technical Centre (PITAC) for the preparation of plastic moulds²⁸.

4.7 SRI LANKA

The three-year programme, 2003–2006, aims at the reduction of poverty through private-sector growth. The strategy focuses on creating conditions conducive to private sector growth and a sound fiscal position, and for helping establish lasting peace through relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction (RRR). To achieve programme's objectives, government policies are focused on four areas²⁹: 1) restoring fiscal sustainability, including raising revenues by 21/2% of GDP; 2) implementing structural reforms mainly involving deregulation and privatization; 3) creating opportunities for the poor to share more fully in the benefits of economic growth through improvements in infrastructure and education; and 4) garnering resources for reconstruction, including though donor assistance and government investments.

The three-year program, 2003–2006, aims at the reduction of poverty through private-sector growth is being pursued in close conjunction with a three-year arrangement with the IMF under its Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility and Extended Fund Facility (PRGF/EFF) with a credit line of SDR413.4 (\$567 million) approved in April 2003. Although aiming at sustained growth of 8–10% in the long run, the medium term goal is an average 6 1/2% real GDP growth for 2003–06.

Sri Lanka, "Economic Development,"
Encyclopedia of the Nations
Asia and Oceania

4.7.1 Education System Policies

Sri Lanka introduced the universal free education policy in 1945 perceiving human capital as a promising investment with the potential to produce a wide range of

²⁸ Chaudhary, Muhammad Alamgir, (2005), "Reducing gaps in skills development," DAWN Business October 24, <http://www.dawn.com/2005/10/24/ebr13.htm>

²⁹ Sri Lanka, "Economic Development," Encyclopedia of the Nations, Asia and Oceania



important economic and social benefits. The system then provided widespread access to primary and secondary education enabling the country to attain a high level of human development for a low income economy. Up to the early 1990s Sri Lanka enjoyed the highest basic social development outcomes relative to per capita income among virtually all developing countries. This achievement was the result of strategic public policy decisions, over several successive generations, to invest resources in education, health and other social services.

The high primary education (class 1-5) and junior secondary education (class 6-9) enrolment rates are the outcome of several complementary and mutually reinforcing policies. Sri Lanka has yet to achieve universal compulsory education as about 18% of children fail to complete class 9. The challenge for Sri Lanka is to meet the target of providing all children between ages 6-14 with 9 years of schooling.

According to a World Bank Study, about 70% of tertiary education enrolment is in the private sector, and the balance in the public sector. The high proportion of private sector enrolment at the tertiary level, in contrast to the primary and secondary levels, can be attributed to the policy framework, which does not legally prohibit private investment at the tertiary level³⁰. The time trend of tertiary education enrolment shows that, over the recent past, enrolment has risen from about 8% in 1997 to 11% in 2002. Overall, tertiary education enrolment rates have expanded about 38% over the period 1997-2002. This growth has been particularly rapid in private tertiary education institutions in the most recent years.

4.7.2 Distance Education

Sri Lanka was first country in South Asia to take the lead with the establishment of Sri Lanka Institute of Distance Education in the late 70s for the grant of diplomas at the tertiary level of education. This institution was absorbed into the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), which was created in 1980 to augment the work of eight conventional universities. Beginning with post graduate Diploma in Education, degree programmes in Law, Engineering and Science were offered³¹. The Open University education concept was hailed because it was at the time of its establishment the only university to offer fully complete Science and Engineering degrees leading to a relevant B.Sc. degree. Some private agencies affiliated with foreign universities offer university level degree education in Management, Computer Sciences, and Business Administration. There are non-fee levying state universities, but those who cannot afford going abroad are restricted to the programmes offered by the Open University.

4.7.3 Vocational Education and Training

In Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Skills development, Vocational & Technical Education is entrusted with formulation of policies on TVET and implementation of such policies through its implementation arms, such as the Tertiary and Vocational Education

³⁰ World Bank (2005), "Treasures of The Education System in Sri Lanka," June 30, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTSRILANKA/Resources/233024-1120241837002/2-TESS_Ex-SummaryE.pdf

³¹ Fernando, J. N. Oleap (2004), "Distance education at tertiary level: An effective non-conventional solution to overcome the severe competition for university education in Sri Lanka," presented in 3rd Pan Common wealth Forum on open learning, (July), http://www.col.org/pcf3/Papers/PDFs/Fernando_JNO.pdf



Commission (TVEC) and Vocational Training Authority (VTA)³². The TVEC is the apex statutory body in the Tertiary and Vocational Education and Training sector. The commission works under the overall guidance of the Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational and Technical Education. It plans, co-ordinates and develops tertiary and vocational education. It prepares policies and plans, maintains a national accreditation and certification system and provides guidance to Technical and Vocational Education institutes and develops core curricula³³. In order to coordinate and standardise the activities of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), National Vocational Qualification is developed. The national skill standards are prepared in consultation with the industries. Competency based approach is used for teaching and assessment. The curricula are designed from an analysis of roles to be filled on completion of the educational and training programme³⁴.

In Sri Lanka, the vocational training education is integrated with general education stream. As shown in Figure 2, links exist between the school system and the vocational and technical training system providing flexible learning opportunities to students. Career guidance and counseling has been introduced at this stage. Community Learning Centers have been established under Non-formal sector to provide flexible learning opportunities and life skills development to children not being able to attend school³⁵.

³² Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission Ministry of Skills Development ,Vocational & Technical Education, <http://www.tvec.gov.lk/vetagn.php>

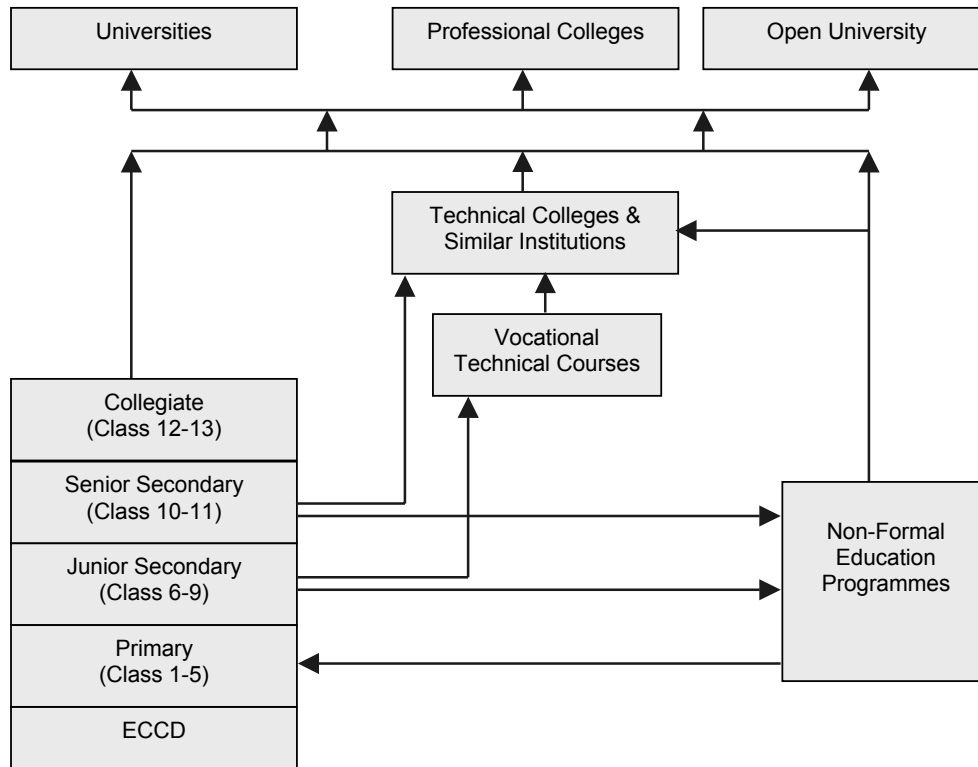
³³ UNESCO UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=33998&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

³⁴ Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, <http://www.tvec.gov.lk/nvqintro.phtml>

³⁵ Sri Lanka , “The development of education,” (August 2004), National Report, Ministry of Education



Figure 2: Education System in Sri Lanka



Source: Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission

The junior secondary stage curriculum has introduced life competencies as a subject and practical work and work on small project as an important element. The National Education Commission (NEC) proposed to establish activity rooms within the schools where students would learn by doing themselves. The Commission also proposed to rename the current Practical Technical Skills as Technical Skills and restructure the subject area in class 6 to 9 to cover the areas namely Graphic Arts, Computer Literacy (IT), Elementary Technology, Agriculture and Food Preparation.

In the curriculum for secondary senior stage of GCE Ordinary Level (OL), technical subject is included as a core subject to help students continue learning of life skills. Practical work has been made compulsory. The NEC has proposed the inclusion of 8 subjects, Information Technology, Agriculture, Food Technology & Home Economics, Business Studies, Crafts, Construction Trade, Motor Mechanism and Electrical Work, as options from which a student can select one.



CHAPTER-V

INSIGHT INTO THE ECONOMY

The chapter looks into the flourishing subsectors of the economies of the SAARC countries and their share in GDP. It is not possible to cover all the industries, because of the diversity, however, common trends are detected.

The state of economy of the countries in the SAARC region is generally characterized by low wage and low skilled workforce resulting in low value added products. Another feature is lack of quality of products produced for less quality conscious markets. Economic competitiveness is on the basis of low cost of production the input to which is readily available raw material and cheap labour³⁶.

Table 2: Major Contributors to GDP

Countries	%age Share in Sector				Key Sub Sectors
	Agriculture	All Industries	Manufacturing industry	Services	
Bangladesh	20.2	25.5	15.5	54.3	Garments, knitwear, pharmaceuticals, micro finance, community services, ceramics, and food products
Bhutan ³⁷	26.1 ³⁸	43.5	7.4	32.3	Hydro power, Construction, Tourism
India ³⁹	22.2	26.6	15.8	51.2	Software, pharmaceutical agriculture, garments, energy, leather goods, and cement,
Maldives ⁴⁰	9	15	7.69	80	Fisheries, Tourism
Nepal	38.7	20.9	7.7	40.4	Tourism, construction
Pakistan ⁴¹	23.1	30	18.3	52.4	Textile, agriculture Leather Transport, Storage and Communication Wholesale and Retail Trade
Sri Lanka	17.8	26.8	15.3	55.4	Tourism, garment, Construction

Table 2 shows that the trend of an economy oriented toward provision of services is dominant and is more pronounced in the case of the Maldives where services contribute to 80% of GDP. The nature of services varies from country to country and includes: Transport, storage, and communication, wholesale and retail, finance and insurance, housing, public administration, and defence, education, and community services.

³⁶ Asian Development Bank (2004), "Improving technical Education & Vocational Training Strategies for Asia"

³⁷ For Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh: Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries, Asian Development Bank Outlook 2005, http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/key_indicators/2005/default.asp

³⁸ Bhutan at a glance marks agriculture share 32.7% as of 2003, <http://www.bhutan.gov.bt/govataglance.php>

³⁹ India At A Glance, <http://www.economywatch.com/indianeconomy/india-at-a-glance.html>

⁴⁰ Maldives - key indicators 2005, Ministry of planning and national development - statistics section

⁴¹ Pakistan Economic Survey 2004-05, Finance Division, Government of Pakistan



The second biggest contributor to GDP in the SAARC region is the agriculture sector. All of these countries have agrarian economy with a focus on one or more of: farming, food processing, fishery, livestock, and forestry sectors. Sri Lanka and the Maldives practice agriculture to a lesser extent contributing only around 17.8% and 9% respectively to GDP.

Industries are broken down into mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction, and electricity and gas. Manufacturing ranks third in terms of its share in the GDP. The above table shows that Pakistan's manufacturing has the highest share of 18.3% followed by India at 15.8%.

A glimpse of the key sub-sectors of economy of each of the country in the SAARC region follows.

5.1 BANGLADESH

The economic structure of Bangladesh is still agrarian by nature, to the extent that the agriculture sector contributes 20 % to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as against the contribution of 25.5% by the industry sector and 54.3% by trade/other services sectors.

5.1.1 Apparel Industry

Bangladesh's apparel industry is the fourth largest employing sector with a workforce of 350,000⁴². It is the single biggest contribution to export regime reaching about 80% of the total earnings. It is among the world's 10 principal employers in the clothing sector⁴³. Different studies suggest that 80%-90% in the garment sector are women equaling to 280,000 to 300,000 workers in the formal and semi-formal sectors (for example Wichterich 1998:22.)

5.1.2 Micro Finance Industry

The microfinance industry in Bangladesh with twelve hundred microfinance institutions (MFI) currently provides access to credit to around thirteen million poor households.⁴⁴ The four dominant MFIs, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Grameen, the Association for Social Advancement (ASA) and Proshika, are serving around 11.4 million or ninety percent of all clients. These four institutions combined have over \$800 million in outstanding loans and around \$380 million in savings. The differences between the number of borrowers and members reflect differences in the variety of services offered by these MFIs. Proshika and BRAC offer a range of services to their members, while Grameen and ASA focus on the provision of microfinance services.

The growth in access to credit by the poor took place in several distinct phases starting in the late 1970s. The 1980s witnessed a growing number of non-

⁴² Bajaj, Manjul (1999), "Invisible workers, visible contribution: A study of homebased women workers in five sectors across south Asia"

⁴³ ILO (2000), "Labour Practices in the Footwear, Leather, Textiles and Clothing Industries," Report for discussion at the Tripartite Meeting on, Geneva, 16-20 October, International Labour Office Geneva, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/tmlfi00/tmlfir.htm>

⁴⁴ Zaman, Hassan (2004), "The Scaling-Up of Microfinance in Bangladesh: Determinants, Impact, and Lessons."



governmental organizations (NGOs) which experimented with different modalities of delivering credit to the poor. The various models converged in the beginning of the 1990s toward a fairly uniform 'Grameen-model' of delivering microcredit. It sparked a sharp growth in access to microcredit during this decade. In recent years the standard Grameen-model has undergone more refinements in order to cater to different niche markets as well as to different life-cycle circumstances.

5.2 BHUTAN

The power and construction subsectors are the drivers of economic growth. Hydroelectric sector accounts for some 12% of GDP and 45% of the Government revenues in 2003⁴⁵. Tourism is the major source of hard currency income and is expanding rapidly with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in luxury hotels and resorts, thus further enhancing the construction industry. Though, traditional form of agriculture is the main subsistence occupation of the majority of Bhutanese people, agriculture share to GDP was only 26.1 % in 2004. Because of the topography, only 7.7 % of the total land is suitable for agriculture.

5.2.1 Hydro Power Industry

The hydroelectricity power sector is the single biggest revenue earner of Bhutan. Bhutan's hydro-electricity power potential is estimated at about 30,000 MW⁴⁶. Out of which, safe and exploitable water resources potential are estimated at 6000 MW.

The Chukha hydropower project sold Nu 2,171 million worth of electricity to India in 2002. Kurichhu power project also sold 97 percent of its electricity to India. According to the government sources, by the year 2006, Bhutan would be exporting about 6,400 MUs of power annually.

The hydropower project at Tala is expected to be commissioned by end-2005.

5.2.2 Construction Industry

Construction has been robust for the past few years on account of downstream activities fueled by huge investment in Basochu, Kurichu, and Tala power project, the low-income housing project at Thimphu and Phuentsholing, and the Thimphu expressway. While construction-related work is gradually tapering off as the first two stations near completion, it is in full swing at the 1,020 MW Tala hydropower plant, which is expected to be completed by end-2005⁴⁷.

5.3 INDIA

With all its high illiterate population, India has been able to go astray from the profile of the SAARC countries by making considerable waves in its knowledge based software industry. Other industries with a significant contribution to GDP are agriculture, textile, garments, leather goods, energy, cement and pharmaceutical. Agriculture sector accounts for about 23% of GDP and is one of the largest employers in the country. The growth rate in the agriculture and the allied sector was 9.6% in 2003-04⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ Asian Development Bank (2005), "Asian Development Bank Outlook 2005," <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/ADO/2005/bhu.asp>

⁴⁶ Economy of Bhutan, <http://www.bhutannewsonline.com/economy.html>

⁴⁷ Recent Economic Developments, http://www.adb.org/Documents/CERs/BHU/2003/bhu_cer100.asp

⁴⁸ Agriculture, Indian Brand Equity Foundation,



5.3.1 Cement Industry

Indian cement industry is ranked second in the world in terms of production and has an expected growth rate of 10% annually. The cement industry has 125 large cement plants with a capacity to produce 148.28 million tones of cement per annum. The mini cement plants are over 300 which can produce as much as 11 million tones per annum. Technological upgrading and assimilation of latest technology is an ongoing process in the cement industry of India. Japanese assistance for co-generation of power by utilizing waste heat has helped the industry in conserving energy and fuel and save materials significantly.

5.3.2 Pharmaceutical Industry

India's pharmaceutical industry is also witnessing a spur because of its rich scientific talent and research capabilities, supported by Intellectual Property Protection regime. The domestic market size is about \$4.5 billion, growing at around 8-9% annually⁴⁹, and exports total about \$2 billion⁵⁰. With a growing R&D hub, it is competing with Europe. A recent Ernst and Young study has identified the country as an emerging centre for collaborative and outsourced R&D in drug development, biotechnology and chemicals. The Indian pharma industry has the highest number of plants approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) outside the US⁵¹.

Since 1972, the government policy dictated that manufacturers can only patent a process and not a product in health and food. Earlier the multinationals controlled 85% of the Indian pharma business. Now Indian companies control 85% of it as the industry has moved from "reverse engineering" drugs to making drugs with greater value addition. To facilitate the sector's growth, the Indian government has announced exemptions from import licences to foreign pharmaceutical units setting up their manufacturing units in Special Economic Zones.

5.3.3 Software Industry

India established its first communication city in 1991 Bangalore. There are more than 80 private IT parks in Bangalore and other cities of the state of Karnataka. A number of privately operated world class business centres have also sprung up in the city. Three types of IT clusters have been initially developed by the Ministry of IT: Software Technology Parks, International Technology Park, Electronic City. Software Technology Parks were initiated with an investment of Rs. 2.5 crore. These Software Technology Parks (STPI) have now drawn an investment of over Rs. 40 crores⁵². The STPI has a microwave network with 140 radios providing services to about 400 customer projects. The entire STPI system is run on intranet based process meeting ISO 9001 standards. In less than a decade in August 2000 a cyber park as Technology Incubation Centre was set up.

⁴⁹ Indian Pharmaceutical Industry: An overview, <http://www.pharmaceutical-drug-manufacturers.com/pharmaceutical-industry/>

⁵⁰ "Indian Drug Maker Leads the Charge for Low-Cost Aids Drugs," March 2003 <http://www.amfar.org/cgi-bin/iowa/asia/news/?record=3>

⁵¹ Pharmaceutical Industry, Indian Brand Equity Foundation, <http://www.ibef.org/industry/pharmaceuticals.aspx>

⁵² Sareen, Deepak Kr (2005), "Innovation and IT in India: Bangalore Case Study," 2nd International Conference on the Process of Innovation and learning in dynamic city regions in Bangalore, India, July.



The International Technology Park is provided for corporates desiring to invest in India. It is a futuristic park with state of the art infrastructure integrating office, production, commercial, residential and recreation facilities all in one location.

The Electronics City is reserved exclusively for electronics industries. More than 100 industries are located in the City including, IT industry, Motorola, Infosys, Siemens, Wipro.

5.4 MALDIVES

Natural resources and natural beauty roll the economy of the island nation of the Maldives. The main industries are fishing, tourism, shipping and commerce with fishing and tourism contributing 6% and 30% respectively to the GDP. Despite the small size, the economy has been growing rapidly and has largely transformed the traditional economic life of subsistence agriculture and fishing. Dependence on tourism and not developing any other industry significantly has backlashed due to the recent tsunami significantly damaging the industry. Tourism infrastructure and other related businesses got affected and there was loss of revenue from the downturn in tourist arrivals, both to the private sector and government.

5.4.1 Tourism Industry

Tourism has been the main driver behind the holiday islands' strong economic growth over the past several years with total receipts estimated at about \$478 million in 2004⁵³. The industry contributes approximately 30% to the GDP directly but an estimated 60-70% when indirect impacts are considered. The tourism industry, directly and indirectly, also accounts for a high portion of Government revenues. The hotel sector alone accounts for 17,000 jobs out of an economically active population of about 88,000 and when consideration is given to other tourism businesses and multiplier effects, the tourism industry is likely responsible for over 25,000 jobs. It should be noted that some 40% of jobs in the hotel sector are filled by expatriates, detracting from the economic benefits to the Maldivian economy.

While the government has set the overall policies and direction for tourism, the sector has been very private sector driven. Given the Maldives' small size and fragile ecosystem, several years ago the government decided to focus on high end tourism with potentially lower volumes but higher spend tourists instead of pursuing a mass tourism approach. This sustainable approach has worked well in terms of encouraging boutique style luxury resort development and attracting high spend tourists, maximizing revenues generated by the industry for both government and private sector investors and at the same time maintaining environmental and social sustainability. While there is still a mix of properties to cater to a variety of markets, the Maldives now hosts some of the world's top resorts. The largest markets for the Maldives are Italy (20%), UK (17%), Germany (11%), France (10%) and Japan (7%).

5.4.2 Fish Industry

The fisheries sector is the third largest sector after trade and tourism providing a sizeable proportion of the gross domestic product and job opportunities for the vast majority of the island population. With abundant sea resources, fish exports continue

⁵³ Annex 8 - Tourism Sector, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMALDIVES/Resources/mvna-annex-08.pdf>

to grow. Multinational companies have shown a renewed interest in the Maldives fishing industry. Tonnes of fish are used domestically as fish is the main source of protein for the inhabitants.

The State Trading Organisation had played a significant role in rebuilding the tuna cannery in the island of Felivaru. The new plant fully optimises the sea's natural resources. The operation is truly a "boat to cannery" process with abundant fresh tuna caught and processed. The canning process takes only four days. A sophisticated quality control laboratory finds technicians and scientists using the latest equipment for research and quality control⁵⁴. The workers have modern, comfortable living quarters in one of the most beautiful islands in the Maldives. Felivaru can boast of being the coldest place in all of the Maldives with an ice plant and cold storage installation which maintains a temperature of minus 25 degrees centigrade.

Tuna waste and residues are processed on location into fishmeal, an animal food supplement. The product provides an additional export and boosts the economy. Workers learn skills by using modern techniques and local fishermen have a ready market for their bountiful catches.

As with fishing boatbuilding has been a craft native to the Maldives. Projects for protecting and maintaining this skill have been organised on a grand scale. Boatbuilding training for young apprentices by expert carpenters is fully organised. The main site of boatbuilding is in Alifushi Raa Atoll. Boats crafted from timber take only 60 days to complete. The opening up of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Maldives for fisheries and the increase in the number of vessels in this zone has enhanced the growth of the fisheries sector.

5.5 NEPAL

Nepal has a predominately agrarian economy with the majority of the country's poor residing in rural areas. To almost 75% of the economically active population, agriculture provides the main source of income. Introduction of hydroelectricity operations led to growth in the electricity, gas and water subsectors.

5.5.1 Tourism industry

Tourists flock to Nepal in search of peace and tranquility in the skies of Mount Everest. They initiate their travel programme by staying in luxury hotels in the capital valley of Kathmandu thus spurring growth in hospitality services, transportation and communication as well as increase in wholesale and retail trade.

Plans to create niches by the Nepalese tourism industry include diversified tourism experiences, such as study of nature, wild life adventure in national park area, exclusive bird watching sanctuary, and planning and implementing eco-tourism⁵⁵. Also, government tourism policies are geared toward diversifying tourism investment for the creation and improvement of infrastructure in new destination areas⁵⁶. Services and facilities are planned to be expanded in temples, monasteries and

⁵⁴ "Fishing in the Maldives," http://www.themaldives.com/Maldives/Maldives_fishing.htm

⁵⁵ Importance of Ecological aspect in Tourism, <http://www.yomari.com/nepaltoday/2001/jan-feb/edit.html>

⁵⁶ Tourism Policy, 1995 (Unofficial Translation), Government Policies and Acts, Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), <http://www.fncci.org/tourism.php>



other religious sites to attract more domestic tourists on the one hand, while attempting to develop such sites as international religious centres on the other.

Especial attention is being given to rural tourism in collaboration with rural communities. One very important step to be taken by the government is formulation of national environmental guidelines for tourism to minimise adverse environmental impacts from tourism.

5.5.2 Construction Industry

Even though, the construction industry saw a decline to 0.7% in Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 from 1.0% in FY2004, the growth rate of the industry is the second highest across all sectors after electricity, gas, and water. A sharp rise in the price of construction materials and continued sluggishness in public construction caused the construction sector to contract 2.4% during FY2005⁵⁷. For overall greater growth rate, several reasons are attributed. Villagers in escape from Maoist have migrated to the cities where they are constructing houses. A significant portion of remittances from migrant Nepali workers is used in buying land and construction of houses. To facilitate construction activities, the commercial banks and finance companies are offering house building loans⁵⁸.

The Nepal's construction sector is a source of employment to most of the poorest sections of the population. Almost half of those who work in agriculture are considered to be underemployed. Construction offers off-farm income opportunities to the underemployed.

5.6 PAKISTAN

Pakistan's Textile, leather, and agriculture sectors have made a substantial contribution to the economy. Agriculture accounts for around 23% of GDP and employs 42% of the total workforce.

5.6.1 Textile Industry

The booming textile industry of the country draws raw material from the cotton crop which itself accounts for 2.4% of GDP. Some 35% of the workforce is engaged in this sector Pakistan has a world share of 30% in yarn trade and 8% in cotton cloth. The industry is the largest foreign exchange earner.

Most of textile sector industries are cottage industry, small to medium industrial units and few are large integrated state of the art units. Approximately, 500 units are functioning all over Pakistan with a total workforce of around 50,000 most of which is skilled⁵⁹. However the engineering base is weak and dependence on outside Engineering Industry keeps the cost of production high.

5.6.2 Leather Industry

Leather industry in Pakistan is one of the indigenous manufacturing sectors that has developed and matured over a period of 55 years and contributing 5% to

⁵⁷ Asian Development Bank (2005), "Nepal Quarterly Economic Update," Macroeconomic Review, volume II, No. 2, July

⁵⁸ <http://www.nepalnews.com.np/contents/englishmonthly/businessage/2002/sep/cover.htm>

⁵⁹ "Trends in Textile Engineering Industry of Pakistan," <http://www.ptj.com.pk/web%202004/03-2004/trend.html>



manufacturing GDP. The industry provides direct employment to 200,000 people. Tanneries and footwear units, over 2500, are located in Karachi, Lahore, Sialkot, and Kasur specialising in processing of raw hides and skins into finished leather, apparel, gloves and footwear. Footwear sub-sector is domestic demand oriented market. Leather industry had remained export oriented exporting raw hides and skins and semi-processes leather in the form of pickled, wet blue, and crust leather. In early 80s finished leather and leather products (sports jacket, and industrial gloves) became major export spinners⁶⁰.

5.7 SRI LANKA

Economic expansion has been led by manufactures, particularly textiles and apparel, which is also the leading net earner of foreign exchange. Other major industries are construction, tea, and tourism.

5.7.1 Apparel Industry

The apparel industry is the strongest manufacturing sub-sector in Sri Lanka, in terms of its contribution to the industrial production, foreign exchange earnings and employment generation. In the first half of 2003, the industry earned a foreign exchange of 1.4 billion dollars generated⁶¹ Four out of five enterprises producing apparels for export are classified as small-or medium scale enterprises. Production in local apparel Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) is characterized by high labour intensity and low capital intensity⁶².

After the abolition of the quota system under the multi fiber agreement in 2004, Sri Lanka is facing greater competition, particularly from low-cost countries, such as Bangladesh, China and Vietnam.

5.7.2 Tea Industry

Sri Lankan tea has unique characteristics and reputation as arguably the best teas in the world. The Sri Lankan tea industry is the country's largest employer providing jobs directly and indirectly to over a million people. It also contributes a significant amount to government revenue and to the gross domestic product. Sri Lanka is the 3rd biggest tea producer in the world with a market share of 9%⁶³.

⁶⁰ “Stagnant exports in leather products,” <http://www.telmedpak.com/agriculturenews.asp?a=5220>

⁶¹ sri.lanka-botschaft.de/newsupdates/updates_2003/updates_september2003e.html

⁶² International Labour Organisation, Improving the Productivity of SME in the Garment Industry, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/colombo/update1/prsme.htm>

⁶³ “Tea and Sri Lanka,” <http://www.teauction.com/industry/sltea.asp>



CHAPTER-VI

FINDINGS: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

This chapter relates the knowledge and education level of the workforce involved in public and corporate sectors. It uncovers what employers in the key subsectors of economy look for in the employees to develop from present level of economic development to higher, more value-added products, processes, and systems. General education needs are identified along with industry specific needs to suit the requirement of the employers.

6.1 KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION GAPS

At present the SAARC countries have cheap un-skilled labour thus attracting low cost, low skilled and high volume businesses. Higher value added products are attracted by the quality of the workforce. This is what the employers in the SAARC region are looking for and need to climb the ladder of economic development. The attitude, knowledge and skills of the workforce of the enterprises and its contractors and suppliers determine the quality of the human system and processes behind its products and services⁶⁴. Keeping in view the globalisation impacts, enterprises also need to update much more regularly the skill mix of their employees to respond to rapid technological change and remain competitive at the same time. With globalization, investment overseas in search of cheap labour has also become plausible for the SAARC countries to invest within the region, thus needing skills to manage a multicultural workforce. Do the SAARC countries have the workforce prepared for these challenges?

What employers look for?

- Attitude
- Knowledge
- Skills to perform, manage, and create
- Ability to regularly update knowledge and skills
- Skills to manage a multicultural workforce

Source:

Silva, Sriyan de (1997), "Human Resource Development for Competitiveness: A Priority for Employers," ILO

Knowledge attainment depends upon the education system. The better and more developed the education system the stronger and wider is the knowledge base. Examining the education status of the region, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and India have performed better than the others with literacy rates reaching as high as 97%, 90%, and 61% respectively. The trend is of dwindling enrolment ratio as the level of education increases from primary to secondary and tertiary.

Table 3 shows that primary education enrolment ratio is highest in Nepal (119) in 2004 and the Maldives (118) Sri Lanka (111) and India (108) are next in line closely followed by Bangladesh with an enrolment ratio of 96%. Bhutan and Pakistan lag far behind the rest of the countries in the region at 71.9% rate and 68% ratio respectively.

⁶⁴International Labour Organisation (1996), "Human Resource Development in Asia and the Pacific in the 21st Century."

**Table 3: Profile of SAARC Countries**

Countries	Primary Education Enrolment Ratio	Secondary Education Enrolment Ratio	Tertiary Education Enrolment Ratio	Combined	Adult literacy Rate	State of Economy
Bangladesh	96	47	6	53 ⁶⁵	41	Low wage, low skilled, low value added products; lack of quality feature
Bhutan	71.9% Rate ⁶⁶				54 ⁶⁷	Weak industrial base and relying on subsistence agriculture
India	108	53	12	60 ⁶⁸	61	Mostly low value added products alongside some high value added products
Maldives	118	67	<1%	75 ⁶⁹	97 ⁷⁰	Weak industrial base mostly relying on tourism
Nepal	119	45	5	61 ⁷¹	49 ⁷²	
Pakistan	68 ⁷³	23	3	35 ⁷⁴	54 ⁷⁵	Low wage, low skilled, low value added products; lack of quality feature
Sri Lanka	111 (2003-04)	87 (2003-04)	11% rate ⁷⁶	69 ⁷⁷	90	High growth rate from 1988-1998; Low technology products and basic service activities

⁶⁵ Human development index 2004 ,figure of 2002-03 <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=BGD>

⁶⁶ Bhutan Education System Statistics, 2001 www.raonline.ch/pages/bt/ecdu/bt_edustat01.html

⁶⁷ Bhutan-Socio Economic Indictors, <http://www.undp.org.bt/about.php>

⁶⁸ Human development index 2004 , figure of 2002-03 <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=IND>

⁶⁹ Human development index 2004 ,figure of 2002-03, <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=MDV>

⁷⁰ For Maldives: Table 5 Key indicators for other economies, World Bank, World Development Report 2006

⁷¹ Human development index 2004 ,figure of 2002-03 <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=NPL>

⁷² For India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh: Table 1: Key Indicators of development, World Development Report 2006

⁷³ Gross Enrolment Ratio (2002-04), For Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?URL_ID=5187&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201

⁷⁴ Human development index 2004 ,figure of 2002-03, <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=PAK>

⁷⁵ Pakistan Economic Survey 2004-05, Finance Division, Government of Pakistan

⁷⁶ World Bank (2005), "Treasures of The Education System in Sri Lanka," June 30,

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTSRILANKA/Resources/233024-1120241837002/2-TESS_Ex-SummaryE.pdf

⁷⁷ Human development index 2004 ,figure of 2002-03, <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=LKA>



At the secondary level, Sri Lanka is leading with a ratio of 87% enrolment followed from a distance by the Maldives at 67%. Pakistan has the lowest secondary enrolment ratio in the region at 23%.

The tertiary enrolment ratio is very low in the region with Sri Lanka topping at 69%⁷⁸ in combined gross enrolment ratio of primary, secondary, and tertiary education. India's tertiary enrolment ratio is 12% and ranks second with gross combined enrolment ratio at 60%. Only primary and secondary education is offered in the Maldives. Recently in 2005 Maldives College of Higher education has been set up. Enrolment ratio in tertiary education is less than 1 percent (.4%)⁷⁹.

The ever changing nature of technology and attempts to sustain advantage in the world markets, enterprises increasingly seek for the kinds of skills that are 'soft'⁸⁰. The importance of technical and practical skills remains there but team-working, problem solving and communication skills are context within which technical and practical skills are used for improving the organizational performance. These soft skills along with the aptitude for continuous learning are transferable across occupations⁸¹. In the SAARC region there is lack of investment in the core general education skills or generic skills in primary as well as secondary education. The high literacy rate further prevents one from having core general education skills. These skills and attitudes are the foundation for acquiring further education, job specific knowledge, and skills and training.

While contents of what is being taught is one issue, quality of what is delivered is another. Irrespective of enrolment ratio, if standard education is not delivered, the quality of product will suffer, thus limiting any further accomplishments in life. In India as well as in Pakistan, government education delivery system at the secondary and especially at the higher secondary levels is deteriorating. Private tuition centres and academies dot the urban landscape. These private institutions are run by the same teachers who teach at government, semi-government schools but with a difference. At government institutes teachers circulate hand made notes; prescribed text books are rarely touched. This is more prevalent at boys' schools than at girls'. And at tuition centres, the teachers teach with devotion, the same devotion that was displayed some 15 years ago. The cryptic message that is delivered to the students is: Join the private academies and excel. Those who can afford are indirectly forced to do so and the rest suffer from the insincerity of the instructors and are doomed as with low grades science subjects cannot be taken at the tertiary levels and the quality of education imparted does not make foundations strong enough to even do well in arts or humanities.

General education imparts general skills and vocational and technical education imparts specific skills. Considering the changing nature of technology, from one angle, general education seems to be more important as it is needed in every job, but specific job related skills suit more to a given job and adds to the productivity of

⁷⁸ Human development index 2004 ,figure of 2002-03 <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=LKA>

⁷⁹ General data of the Country, The Maldives, <http://www.library.uu.nl/wesp/populstat/Asia/maldivveg.htm>

⁸⁰ "Skills in Asia and the Pacific: Why training matters," http://www.-ilo-mirror.cornell.edu/public/english/employment/skills/recomm/publ/pdf_

⁸¹ Gamerdinger, George W. (1997), 'Employers' organizations and human resource development in the 21st century: Views from South Asia.'



the enterprise⁸². At the same time, schooling helps the absorption of in-service training and on-the job training which must be the main sources of skills in the workplace after schooling. Hence this raises the issue of a suitable mix of general education and vocational and technical education.

6.2 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The skills development practices are not deep rooted in the region's manufacturing sector which is still dominated by small and medium size industries. Recognition of skill development as a competitive tool is missing along with training given by the public sector in what is needed by the industries. Observing and learning from seniors, "*ustad-shagird*"⁸³ is the norm. But then master trainer too has his skills limitations.

The paragraphs below capture the situation of vocational education and training and their institutes in the SAARC countries. Other than the issue of lack of understanding of the importance of skill development, there are issues of curricula to meet the needs of the industry and realities of life, skills coverage of vocational training institutes and limited expansion of the vocational institutions, marginalization of vocational institutes in terms of government funding, and lack of management professionals. Specific industries with their specific issues and challenges are also discussed at length.

6.2.1 Curricula

The drawback of vocational and technical schools is curricular rigidity and distance from labour markets. Curricula are designed with little regard to specific sector requirement. With ever emerging technologies, vocational institutions are not kept abreast with technology and are not robustly networked with professional institutes like research institutes on one hand and industries on the other. Because of working independent of each other, skills need assessment is largely missing. Studies reveal that though, Sri Lanka has a high primary and secondary enrolment ratio and a good level of tertiary education and well integrated vocational education and training with the higher level of education, its level of production remains to low value added products because of the weak linkage of the education with the job requirements⁸⁴.

Vocational programmes often do not include training in the enterprises as part of the curriculum. This alienates education from "real life" work experience. With weak linkages with employers and the job market, training programmes do not produce the skills the employers require.

Another feature of vocational education and training curriculum, in almost all of the countries of the region, is its isolation from academic courses. Hence vocational students cannot acquire entry qualifications for tertiary education after taking vocational courses at the secondary level. This renders vocational education unattractive to pursue.

⁸² Tilak, Jandhyala B. G. (2002), "Vocational Education and Training in Asia."

⁸³ Teacher-student relationship

⁸⁴ Silva, Sriyan de (1996), Human resource development for competitiveness: A Priority for Employers,," ILO, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actemp/papers/1998/srshrd.htm>



6.2.2 Coverage and Spread of and Access to Vocational Centres

Vocational education systems have not expanded in the SAARC countries as it has in others. In Korea, Jordan, and Turkey, the enrolments in vocational is more than 20% of the enrolments in secondary education⁸⁵. But in the SAARC region it is considerably low. One reason is negative attitude attached to manual work and the other is less diversified economic structure retarding diversification of skills and establishment of more institutes.

Vocational institutes are also not always situated in close proximity of the industries. Immediate absorption of labour is hampered as well as the industry too does not benefit from the skilled labour produced for it and hires whatsoever is available.

Where vocational training is school based, as in Bangladesh, training clientele gets restricted. Those out of the school system remain isolated and cannot benefit from the opportunity. Fewer vocational institutions for women than for men affects the access of vocational training and marginalizes women from upgrading their skills. Girls because of low level of education and lack of access usually take those skills training courses that are typically occupied by women, such as hairdressing, secretarial work, health care, garment manufacture, and home economics. These limit women to low-skilled occupations⁸⁶.

Accessibility problems also surface when rural urban comparison is made. Children of farmers with talent are at disadvantage in gaining access to formal skills development centres and vocational education because of low level of educational attainment.

6.2.3 Quality of Training and Education and Investment of Government

Vocational schools and training institutes tend to be underfinanced in the region drawing low investment from the government. School based vocational education is expensive when compared

Leather Industry, Pakistan

In the leather industry, Pakistan lacks training programmes that encourage technicians to improve and develop new technical skills and conduct research and development to discover the technologies capable of anticipating problems, reducing current problems and contributing to the solution of possible environmental and social challenges

Because of low technology and research and development component, the industry has not been able to go beyond leather jackets and industrial gloves in the world market. Development and introduction of new products, such as furniture and leather upholstery are needed but the skilled workforce for product design are lacking.

Source:

"Need for research & development for small and medium enterprises," www.habibbankltd.com/docs/need_of_research.doc

Impact Evaluation Study of the Technical and Vocational Education Projects Pakistan and Sri Lanka

- The technical colleges (TCs) or polytechnics need repair and refurbishing
- Only half of the equipment is still operational
- Of the operational equipment, not all is fully utilized due to lack of consumable materials for practical exercises
- Most of the course curricula were not updated since the completion of the ADB's assistance in 1980
- A majority of the teacher participants of the projects' staff development programmes did not receive any further training
- Of those who sought employment after course completion only about 60% and 50% got a job within 6 months in Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- The student-teacher ratio was relatively high in Pakistan (19:1) and (22:1) in Sri Lanka
- Pass rates was as high as 40% in Pakistan and 50% in Sri Lanka
- Dropout rate in Sri Lanka was 50%, in Pakistan it was low

Source:

Asian Development Bank, (1999), Impact Evaluation Study of the Technical and Vocational Education

⁸⁵ Tilak, Jandhyala B. G. (2002), Vocational Education and Training in Asia

⁸⁶ Asian Development Bank (2004) "Improving technical Education and Vocational Training Strategies for Asia."



with enterprise based training and non-formal training centres. As compared to vocational and technical schools, diversified secondary education is expensive because of the need for dedicated facilities, specific equipment, and specialized training for teacher⁸⁷.

In 1980s, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided assistance to developing member countries (DMCs) to improve the quality, increasing the efficiency, expanding the capacity, and ensuring the relevance of the technical education and vocational training systems to produce highly trained technicians, operators, skilled workers, and craftsmen to support the DMCs drive toward industrialization. The project included establishment of technical teachers training colleges (TTTCs) and polytechnics in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Impact evaluation study of the technical and vocational education projects in 1999 reveals that generally the mindset of the education authorities is heavily oriented toward the “safety net” role of the TEVT, i.e., providing education and training opportunities to the socially, economically, and / or intellectually disadvantaged⁸⁸. So, the quality of training and the fact that the institutes operate in isolation from industry, without matching the education with the needs, does not matter. This situation is true for the rest of the countries as well where vocational stream is not considered equivalent in status to Science and Humanities and who could not perform well in academic stream join the vocational stream. In Bhutan too students who do not qualify to continue their studies after class X are encouraged to join technical and teacher education programmes⁸⁹.

Another finding of the study is that that the government is unable to sustain the project after completion in terms of capital investments and recurrent expenditure budgets. Though, vocational education is costlier than general education, public expenditure on vocational education in South Asia is found to be 2-60 times higher than general education⁹⁰. On the contrary, in China the unit costs were 50 to 100% higher in vocational and technical schools than in general secondary schools. In Bangladesh, despite the high operating costs of vocational training equivalent to \$300 per student per year and is shouldered by the government, the system is under funded⁹¹. Consequently, most VTIs and polytechnics and even specialized degree programmes suffer from outdated, obsolete and worn out equipment affecting the quality of education and training delivered.

Negligence of the authority also surfaces on the building and grounds of the institutes. Long idle furniture, broken windows, untrimmed grass, smelly toilets are writings on the walls about the systems and procedures of the institutes and their importance. Such unattractive learning environment can not be expected to produce much.

Government acts or regulations to finance education and training programmes is not noticeable in the regions. Some examples do exist as of the Enterprises Act 1998

⁸⁷ Asian Development Bank (2004), “Improving Technical Education and Vocational Training Strategies for Asia.”

⁸⁸ Asian Development Bank, (1999), Impact Evaluation Study of the Technical and Vocational Education Projects in Malaysia , Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka,” December.

⁸⁹ Government of Bhutan, “Education,” Chapter 29, http://www.dop.gov.bt/fyp/08/08fyp_29.pdf

⁹⁰ Tilak, Jandhyala B. G. (2002), Vocational Education and Training in Asia

⁹¹ Development of Education (2004): National Report of Bangladesh on



and Regulation 1999 of Nepal under which contractors contribute 0.1% of their bills to Construction Enterprises Development Fund (CEDF) for programmes to increase work-efficiency and improve quality of work⁹². But lack of such funds results in limiting the resources available with the government to direct to education and training of the workforce.

The poor quality of knowledge and skills imparted at the vocational training schools and institutes in the region does not equip the school leavers and the training graduates with the skills to be productive in the labour market.

6.2.4 Teachers and their Bag of Knowledge

Quality of the workforce suffers if the institutions are not well staffed and those responsible to train do not get the chance to hone their skills. A number of vocational training institutes, especially in rural areas, are understaffed. According to an International Labour Organisation (ILO) study of 1998-99, 30-40% of teacher posts in vocational training institutes lied vacant in Pakistan⁹³.

Those who teach do not have industrial experience in the skills they are paid to teach. They are also not encouraged to consult with employers. The mechanism for updating the skills is basically missing as it was observed by the ADB exercise that a majority of the teacher participants of the projects' staff development programmes did not receive any further training once the ADB completed its project.

6.2.5 Supervisors and Professional Managers

Training needs in professional and supervisory management peak with new technology and export orientation and when enterprises want to sharpen their competitive edge. However, education and training in SAARC countries is not delivered with a view to produce future supervisors and managers. The need for management and supervisory training is at two levels. At the strategic level the need is to develop mission statements and a vision for an organization and also the capacity for business process reengineering. Managers at this level have to understand the full range of management tools and organizational functions approaches and practices for managing systems and how they can be integrated and adapted to changing conditions.

At the functional level, the need is to focus on specific production or process-level activities, e.g., inventory control,

Leather Industry, India

Leather industry is India's fourth largest export earner employing 1.65 million people of which 90% work in the informal sector. The industry has seen a reduction in its share in the world market and has accounted between 2.1% to 2.5 % since 1995. The production is fragmented with about 2200 tanneries of which 2100 are small scale units and over 8000 leather product manufacturing units. The tiny units primarily engage in producing semi-finished leather, the small units engage in producing both semi-finished leather and finished leather and the large units are usually fully integrated units. The industry has a large tanning capacity per day but it utilizes only 60-70% of its installed capacity. Reasons are lack of flexibility to adjust to new competition arising from unskilled workers and lack of training and low technology¹.

According to ILO, there is an acute shortage of trained manpower and trained managers, supervisors and design operators. There is lack of modern teaching infrastructure. Outdated courses that have contributed to skill shortages.

Sources:

"WTO related sectoral study on leather and leather products industry," "Education and training: The root and branch of global competitiveness," World Employment Report 1998-99

⁹² Jha, Kishore K. (2002), "Informal Labour in the construction industry in Nepal," Sectoral Activities Programme, Working Paper 187, International Labour Organisation.

⁹³ ILO (1998-99), "Education and training: The root and branch of global competitiveness," World Employment Report, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pkits/wer98/wer98ch2.htm>



financial accounting, or personnel assignment. The training for the two levels is quite different. Yet management training is often structured around specific skill acquisition, without sufficient attention to the integration of the skills within any larger strategic framework or to the development of the problem-solving skills needed when individuals encounter situations that do not fall comfortably within the rules⁹⁴.

Managers and supervisors not only need to have technical skills to respond to the rapidly changing technologies, but also leadership and front-line supervisor skills. They need skills for thinking and acting strategically, managing performance, managing projects, project reporting/consolidation; they need to learn to motivate people through coaching and counseling and use delegation skills and training to maximize human resources.

6.2.6 Industry Specific Knowledge and Training Needs

Agriculture, construction and tourism are the most common industries of the countries. Some common issues related to education and training in these sectors are discussed below.

Agriculture

Over 60% of the poor in the SAARC region are dependent on agriculture with agriculture contributing about 23 percent to GDP⁹⁵. The issues identified in this sector are related to productivity and diversification into high value added products. In developing countries in general, agricultural education and training have failed to adapt and respond to the realities of rural societies. Curricula and teaching methods and tools often have been developed that are not relevant to the development objectives of individual countries, to the needs of farmers and to the labour market in general. Earlier, the public sector would absorb the large majority of agriculture graduates, but now the government can no longer afford to hire every graduate. In the private sector, agriculture graduates are finding it difficult to become employed because their education in agriculture has not been oriented to the needs of the labour market which is taking into account the realities of environmental degradation, marginalization of agricultural education and rural life, and changing role of women in the society.

Environmental issues are related to inappropriate production techniques and farming systems resulting in loss of natural resource and degradation of environment. Current practices in agricultural education and training do not demonstrate widespread integration of environmental concerns in the production practices of the farmers, and the commercial aspects of agric-businesses in the interest of society for a safe and secure environment.

Women have become more responsible for farm management owing to migration of men to urban areas. But agricultural education programmes and training curricula do not taken into account changing roles of women and their increased role in agricultural operations and their participation in decision making, harvest, storage, processing and marketing. A study on the work and training needs of women in

⁹⁴ Asian Development Bank, "Professional Development of Education Managers," http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Education_NatlDev_Asia/Management_Efficiency/professional_development.pdf

⁹⁵ International Food Policy Research Institute, <http://www.ifpri.org/themes/sai.htm>



agriculture in Andhra Pradesh, India reveals that despite women's significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields, they have neither access to agricultural information for services nor to production assets⁹⁶.

At the agricultural education delivery front, there is increased enrolment of women students in agricultural sciences at the technical and higher levels, but students from rural areas who could become extension agents, agricultural researchers, teachers, and policy makers are very few. Fewer female extension workers mean less dissemination of improved technology to women farmers.

Teaching of agriculture is posed with contextual constraints by marginalization of agriculture and rural life and weak relationship between education, research and extension. National budgetary policies have marginalized rural areas where rural youth do not receive education of the quality equivalent to what urban youth would receive. Rural youth, who have an aptitude and qualities for understanding of rural life, are marginalized from availing the opportunities of higher education and those with urban backgrounds with little practical knowledge of rural development and agricultural production work as extension agent and agricultural advisers.

Usually, the institutional relationships between agricultural teaching and research and extension services are inadequate. Sometimes this is because education, research and extension come under separate ministries and agencies and there is lack of resources and linking mechanisms. Agricultural research is conducted at government research stations and laboratories with little or no linkages with universities. India does present an exception here. Agricultural universities carry out an important part of research activities and are integrated within the programme of the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR). Some specialized centres of ICAR in turn offer post graduate M.Sc. or Ph. D. training programmes⁹⁷. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation, research activities are conducted as part of postgraduate programmes for higher agricultural education, but they are seldom directly related to farmers and national research priorities and programmes.

Construction

Construction industry has a significant share in the economies of the SAARC countries, particularly, Nepal and Bhutan. Studies suggest that at least three quarters of the world's construction workers are in the less developed countries and the figure will further increase⁹⁸. In much of the world, work in construction is not regarded as "decent work". Lack of opportunities for training and skill formation contribute to the unattractiveness of a career in construction. Difficulties are experienced in recruiting young, educated workers. The inability of the industry to attract workers and invest in training them has serious repercussions for the

⁹⁶ Rao, Chitemma (1996), "Work and training needs of women in agriculture in Andhra Pradesh," <http://www.manage.gov.in/mangelib/research/consultancy.htm>

⁹⁷ Cowder, L. Van, William I. Lindley, Thomas H. Bruening, and Nathaniel Doron (1991), "Agricultural education for sustainable Rural Development: Challenges for developing countries in the 21st century," <http://www.fao.org/sd/exdirect/exam0025.htm>

⁹⁸ International Labour Organisation (2001), "The construction industry in the twenty-first century: Its image, employment prospects and skill requirements," Tripartite Meeting, Geneva, http://www.adb.org/Documents/CERs/BHU/2003/bhu_cer100.asp



productivity and quality of construction products and hence for the ability of contractors to satisfy their clients' needs.

Construction provides opportunities to those with little or no academic qualification and is taken largely by immigrants or by children of immigrants who have. Women too have moved into construction activity where they make a visible contribution but perform unskilled tasks for low pay. In India it is estimated that 30% of the construction workforce are women who work at the bottom end of the industry. These are un-skilled workers or head load carries with no access to training. In Nepal, women work in specialized groups and in the production of construction materials constituting 25% to 40% in roof casting groups and approximately 75% in production of construction materials⁹⁹. Female workers are employed only as helpers and continue working as helpers throughout their lives.

Those who join the industry have fewer opportunities to acquire skills that industry needs to progress. Mostly, construction skills are acquired through an informal apprenticeship system. Informal training has limitations, notably a restricted learning opportunity (learning by doing), a narrow and static range of skills and the difficulty of instruction in new techniques. Learner's learning is also limited to skills that the master craftsmen know.

Vocational training schools for construction training do exist in most countries, but many workers and contractors see formal training as an unnecessary expense rather than an investment. They can only be persuaded to undergo training if they are paid for the lost time. Workers are reluctant to invest in their own training because of insecurity of employment and clients mostly build only once so they have no interest in upgrading the skills of their workers. Skill shortages make it difficult for contractors to deliver the quality of products that more discerning customers require or when there is a sudden increase in construction activity.

Dilemma exists as unskilled as well as skilled labourers suffer. Unskilled workers are exploited because of lack of skills which includes women as well, but if the training is not demand-led, the trained people do not find work or remain under employed.

Tourism

The South Asian region is rich in cultural and natural heritage, which the region shares through its long historical and religious traditions. Out of worldwide 788 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List 54 properties are located in the South Asian region¹⁰⁰. Of these, nine sites are rich in Biodiversity and others in natural resources. Although the number of natural heritage sites is still limited compared to cultural heritage sites, many of the cultural heritage sites are adjacent to nature reserves which have rich biodiversity, and they often have rich natural environment within their sites, which requires careful management of its ecosystem.

⁹⁹ Jha, Kishore K. (2002), "Informal Labour in the construction industry in Nepal," Sectoral Activities Programme, Working Paper 187, International Labour Organisation.

¹⁰⁰ "Regional Training Workshop on Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites," <http://geic.hq.unu.edu/ENV/training1.cfm?type=1&ID=283>



The far-flung countryside, the traditional dwelling places of native population, who constitute integral part of the exclusive local ecosystem, also needs to be properly preserved. Even their traditional culture can be as fragile as that of the natural world. Training is needed for managing World Heritage sites and countryside and the rural sectors or the farfetched hamlets and achieving long-term biodiversity conservation at the same time.

Regional Training Workshop on Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites held in Sri Lanka in 2001 identified the following specific training issues:

- Train local community members in tourism related activities to participate in the industry and receive tourism's benefits
- Increase the local capacity to create community-based enterprises and employment from tourism
- Raise public awareness of World Heritage and building pride with local communities and visitors through conservation education
- Build increased awareness of World Heritage and its activities and policies for tourism industry officials and their clients

Besides providing recreational activities, tourism industry includes parts of economic sectors, such as transportation, accommodations, food and beverage services, retail shopping and entertainment. The industry is quality driven with emphasis on the quality of its human resources for efficient administration and successful service delivery. Hence, training is required for employees in each of these sub-sectors. The Tripartite Regional Meeting on Employment in the Tourism Industry for Asia and the Pacific in 2003 highlighted the need for making the training affordable and ensuring the observance of established standards for syllabus and delivery of training.

According to ADB's Technical Assistance study for the South Asia sub-regional economic cooperation (2004) for human resource development and capacity building in the tourism sector, a highly skilled workforce is no longer enough, as there is a demand for "soft" (cognitive and social) skills. The study highlights basic, middle and advanced levels of skill development needs.

Basic and primary skills training is primarily intended for staff that either come into direct contact with tourists (tour and trail guides, host coordinators, airline, immigration, tourist police) or are involved in tasks/activities that provide base level services.

At the middle / tertiary skills training caters to middle or clerical level-staff who have basic qualifications or several years of industry experience (e.g., front office, tourism management, and travel and tour operations).

At the advanced skills training for middle- and senior-level personnel include project management, marketing, effective communication, property management and specialized tourism products or services. These people are at a decision-influencing level and who will be responsible for project conceptualization, design, execution, relationships with the private sector, and marketing.



Tourism industry needs multiskilled and multidisciplinary workforce that meets the requirements of both direct and indirect tourism products and service providers. The industry needs to identify and develop the higher qualitative skills to meet the requirements of the international visitors and at the same time make the training affordable for wider clientele.



CHAPTER-VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes the development policies of the SAARC countries for the attainment of knowledge and skills. It summarizes the issues and challenges in human resource development in the field of technical & vocational and higher level education & training.

While possession of knowledge is a necessary condition, it needs relevant training for application. For a wider knowledge base, the region requires both mass education that will ensure basic education for all and also higher level of education. Parallel to it is the need for skilled workers to be fit for newly emerging high technology jobs. Education and vocational policies should take due note of the needs for trained manpower development at all levels.

An overview of development plans of the SAARC countries shows continued focus on agriculture and rural development followed by pursuit for higher value added products and services. India has marked IT as one of the areas for creating more employment opportunities. The countries have felt the need for the creation of enabling environment for public private partnership. The developments plans also reflect the realisation of human resource development through education and vocational training. In the SAARC countries, efforts are underway for universal primary and secondary education as echoed by the individual country's Education for All policies. The Maldives and Sri Lanka have been successful in educating their people because of the farsightedness of the policy designers at an early stage to have free public education. In Pakistan in 2004 the government made secondary education free in public schools. A few states in India do not charge tuition fee. In Bhutan and Nepal fees are common. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are the only countries in South Asia to have attained gender and urban-rural parity in school enrolments.

The SAARC countries have school based, non-formal training as well as enterprise based skills formation systems. School based vocational education starts at the secondary level in the region. In India, general education is taught for the first 10 years in the education structure after which the system splits into academic and vocational streams. Within general education, India has diversified its education at the secondary level (class X) by including vocational courses. India also has enterprise based training or apprenticeship training. In Pakistan vocational training is introduced at the secondary level (classes IX, X) as a separate stream. The Maldives has a non-formal vocational and technical education system. In Nepal, secondary level curriculum and regulations were amended to accommodate vocational education.

The lowest level of intake in vocational training is after class VIII in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. In Bhutan it starts as early as after primary level. The non-formal education programmes offered in Sri Lanka are linked with primary level of education. Students of class VI to IX could access vocational technical courses in Sri Lanka which are further linked to technical colleges and similar institutions.



It is observed that except Sri Lanka where links exist between vocational / technical education and higher education, the pathways of vocational technical education do not provide many opportunities for higher education.

The economy of the region is agrarian as over 60% of the labour force is engaged in farm and non-farm products providing main source of income. But there is an increasing role of services sector which is contributing from 30% to over 50% to GDP. This has implications for the region for the development of knowledge and skills in the service industry. Construction is also growing particularly in Nepal and Bhutan. Global trends also indicate that services and construction will be on the rise in the 21st century and in the developing countries. India and Pakistan lead the region in the textile and leather sectors. Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and India have strong apparel industry. The Maldives depends upon tourism industry for much of its revenue generation which also encourages activities in other tourism related industries, such as communication and hospitality. Bhutan, India, Nepal too have thriving tourism industries. Nepal has plans to diversify tourism experiences on the concepts of rural tourism and eco-tourism. Bangladesh has a well established micro finance institutions lauded world over. In the region, India is the only country to have moved into high value added products as in software and pharmaceutical industries.

The challenges faced by the region to progress from small and medium size industries producing low value added products to industries producing higher value added products and even knowledge based products and systems have to deal with both the knowledge and skills levels of the workforce. Knowledge is linked with education and the most daunting challenge in the region is high illiteracy rates. Knowledge of the workforce is also limited because of the low level of education attainment---low primary secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios. Only Sri Lanka and the Maldives have high secondary enrolment ratios. Then there is the issue of right mix of general education and vocational education and training and integration of vocational stream with higher academic stream.

For those who get the opportunity to study, the question is of the quality of education. Basic or generic skills are also lacking from the education of the workforce making a difference in the attitude to learn, absorb, update knowledge, work in teams, and negotiate and communicate with team members and clients and customers.

Common HRD interventions request by 5 major Employers Organizations in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

1. Training in professional management areas
2. Training in specific skills development
3. Incentive programmes linking wages with productivity
4. Health, safety, environment & quality Issues
5. Productivity Improvement
6. Identification of training needs
7. Assistance in solving personnel problems
8. Wage negotiation, collective bargaining
9. Training of Trainers
10. Improving work culture
11. Training facilities

Source: ILO/SAAT (1997), "Employers' Organizations and Human Resource Development in the 21st Century: Views from South Asia."

The analysis of education and training in the SAARC region shows that there is low awareness of skills development among small and medium size enterprises, which is the usual size of industries in the SAARC region. Formal training is often seen as an unnecessary expense. Trained workers in newer technologies that are needed for productivity, high value added production, enhancement, and quality control in the manufacturing sector are not available. In general, opportunities of training are lacking and for women these are not only insufficient but also inaccessible.



The physical state of the training institutes is least inviting and least facilitating to a healthy and fruitful learning interaction. The institutes do not see an enthusiastic contribution of the government in terms of equipment provision, maintenance, and teachers' training. Government bias is also seen in rural-urban investment in vocational education and training institutes in the two regions. Financing of the vocational training by the enterprises or other social partners is also not evident in the region. Nepal construction industry does provide an example where the recent Enterprise Act 1998 is expected to provide the needed impetus where 0.1% fee is imposed on contractor's bills for financing training and education programmes in the construction industry.

Skills needs assessment is weak and hence there are fewer opportunities of acquiring skills that the industry needs to progress. The curricula remain largely outdated with little regard for sector specific skills training. Other than theoretical learning in the classroom and in school internal workshops, training usually does not have enterprise based component. Syllabus and delivery of training lacks quality control and certification does not follow any standards or competency based assessment process. Education and training curricula also fails to pay heed to the changing realities, such as environment, ecology, and participatory role of women in the economy. Consequently, the unskilled workers are exploited and mostly remain at the low level activity and those who have not been equipped with the skills needs of the employers and the job market remain unemployed or underemployed.

With diversity within an industry to producing newer products, training of staff calls for diversification to address the needs of newer variety of customers. It also beckons for change from traditional type of trainees who directly serve the industry to encompassing members of the community the industry flourishes in. A typical example is tourism industry of the region where with niches in the industry as in eco-tourism the skills of local community attached with the industry have to be tuned and sharpened to benefit from the industry.

Linkages of the vocational education training institutes and universities with research institutes, and industries are not noticeable in the region. There are no instances of enterprises designing academic courses to make students fit for employment or businesses spending on knowledge and skills in their respective countries. The research conducted in isolation does not reach the industry and universities also do not benefit from that research by incorporating the findings into the curricula.

Geographic distance between training institutes and industries, often limits interaction between the two and industries do not have a readily available labour pool in the immediate vicinity.

Performance Management training for leadership and professional growth is not common in the region. Training of new as well as experienced supervisors has not focused on skills, such as goal setting and expectations, performance feedback, general supervision issues, and staff motivation.

On one hand, the inability of the low level technology industries to attract trained workers has serious repercussions for the productivity and quality. On the other hand, low education and training level of the workers does not match with the needs



of the enterprises and employers who are directed toward enhancing organization's effectiveness and productivity, and the quality of the management of people.

The recommendations for integrated human resource development are organized around education and training challenges; some are related to knowledge and education, others fall in the sphere of vocational education and training, and the others overlap the domains of both.

The recommendations hinge on the concept of robust collaboration as the government cannot provide the universal sunshine and the enterprises need to invest in education and training themselves. This is not a new concept; it has been happening in the developed world and in Asia in particular as early as 1950s when corporate Japan undertook some part of the secondary education of employees to make them trainable for future. The eighth Millennium Development Goal also calls for constructive global partnership for development requiring synergies at the local, national, regional and global levels. It is time for the SAARC region to see a noticeable contribution by enterprises. The recommendations for collective training and research needs of the SAARC region are:

1. Weave in generic skills in the curricula to absorb knowledge, develop the attitude to learn, and lay the foundation for future education and learning.
2. Drive pervasively for basic education by teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills to illiterates and those with weak primary level schooling.
3. Intensify the efforts for primary and secondary education by banding together for political commitment, setting up system for teachers' licensing, facilitating the role of civil society organizations and involving corporate sector for the promotion of education.
4. Emphasize on tertiary education by involving enterprises as investors establishing collaboration of multinational corporations in institutions of their choice, setting up offshore campuses of higher institutions of learning, exploring the possibilities of regional distance education, and ensuring access of rural youth to tertiary education.
5. Develop small and medium enterprises and training institutes by involving enterprises for assessing training needs, training and development, developing curricula for education and training and through "adopting schools" by enterprises.
6. Promote training culture among the employers and future trainees.
7. Set more industry specific training institutes both for men and women
8. Establish a network of education and training institutes and form regional training teams with attention to training needs of the women workforce.
9. Familiarise students with the world of work.



10. Form systems of quality, skills and services standards, monitoring and evaluation, and competency-based assessment.
11. Identify region's best practices for niches in industries and develop a regional line of action for availing the opportunities presented by those industries.
12. Recruit and upgrade knowledge and skills of teachers and trainers through, regional training team, workshops, conferences, industrial experience and distance education.
13. Foster relationship among higher institutions of learning, research institutions, and industry by focusing on 'one country one industry' concept in the region and setting up the related infrastructure.



CHAPTER-VIII

ACTION PLAN AND TRAINING AREAS

This chapter proposes an Action Plan based upon the knowledge and skills issues and challenges prevailing in the region in the key sub-sectors of the economy and as also reflected by the development needs for moving toward the SAARC Social Charter and the Millennium Development Goals. The recommendations are broadly categorised as under:

- Meeting the education and knowledge challenges
- Processing the right system for vocational education and training

Each of the recommendations proposed in the earlier chapter is followed by suggested actions to be carried out together by the SAARC countries through groups comprising representatives of ministries, employers' association or organization of industries. Together these actions form the Action Plan. Table 5 summarises these actions and categorises them into short, medium, and long term measures. The chapter concludes with suggested areas for training.

8.1 MEETING THE EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE CHALLENGES

The governments in the SAARC region have already set Education for All goals, but they need to be effectively implemented. The challenge is to devise policies that will avoid the creation of a category of illiterate people or one lacking in educational attainments and having a narrow knowledge base. In the regional context recommendations to address the knowledge challenges are:

- Weave in generic skills in the curricula
- Drive pervasively for basic education
- Intensify the efforts for primary and secondary education
- Emphasize on tertiary education

8.1.1 Weave in Generic Skills in the Curricula

Increased competitiveness in the global market has reinforced the importance of education and skills of the workforce. Skills are needed to absorb knowledge and develop the attitude to learn. Then reading, writing, and arithmetic abilities of the workforce is important as communication with customers, documentation of transactions or moving new ideas into the workplace is not possible without these skills. But literature also suggests that these abilities need to be supplemented with "soft skills"¹⁰¹---better communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to work in teams. Other attributes, such as motivation, creativity, and a sense of responsibility are also crucial. While most of the SAARC countries are still fretting about high illiteracy

General Education within Vocational Education

In most countries the majority of students' time is reserved for vocational education subjects, but in Japan, Norway and Sweden, for instance, up to half of the study time is devoted to general education. The goal is to allow vocational students to acquire entry qualifications for tertiary education, as well as solid occupational qualifications.

Source:
"Making transitions Work: Developing Well Organised Education and Training Pathways," Final Conference on "transition from Initial Education to Working Life," Budapest, Hungary

¹⁰¹ International Labour Organisation (2000), Tripartite Asia and Pacific Meeting on Training for High Performance in Enterprises, Bangkok, Thailand 12-14 December, 2000



rates, investment in primary and secondary education with a view to inculcate generic skills or workplace basics are essential as they have a profound influence on the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to succeed in future. Such education lays the foundation for future education and learning.

Borrowing from the US Secretary of Labour's Commission on **Achieving Necessary Skills** (SCANS) report for America 2000 and the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) on "What Work Requires of Schools", the ASTD's 1990 report lists seven groups of skills employers want¹⁰². They are:

- Knowing how to learn
- Reading, writing and computation
- Communication Skills
- Adaptability Skills
- Developmental Skills
- Group Effectiveness
- Influencing skills

Primary education develops reading, writing and computation skills. With this workforce will be able to read charts and graphs and use computer terminals, and switch over to automated technologies. Secondary education develops the ability to collect, analyse, and apply information and adapt quickly. Equipped with this the workforce will be able to respond to new demands of flexible nature of the new technology. The secondary level of education will induce reasoning skills to interpret problems and devise solutions reflected through creative problem solving or creative innovations. Table 4 shows the purpose of these skills and the consequences of the absence of these attributes in the workforce. The table further relates the level of education that supplies those skills and shows that most of the skills are acquired through secondary education.

Workplace basics are portable across ones life and from job to job and must be woven into the education delivered by schools and training institutes to develop the right attitude for the world of work. Since these skills are basis of future absorption of knowledge and training and workplace provides a real environment to learning the soft skills in team working, problem solving and communication, enterprises should also utilize the workplace as a source of continuous learning and personal development through their training programmes.

¹⁰² International Labour Organisation (1996), "Human resource development in Asia and the Pacific in the 21st century,"

Table 4: Workplace Basics: The Essential Skills Employers Want

Workplace Basics	Purpose	Deficiencies Result in...	Source to Supply Skills
Knowing How to Learn	<p>Capacity to collect, analyse, organize and apply information.</p> <p>Ability to adapt quickly to new demands at work by using appropriate technology in a new context</p> <p>Ability to impart techniques, attitudes and knowledge that facilitate processing of information.</p>	<p>Workers cannot adapt quickly to new demands at work.</p> <p>Cannot efficiently apply application of new knowledge to work.</p> <p>Enterprise cannot meet its strategic goals and competitive challenges</p>	Secondary Education
Reading, Writing and Computation	<p>Ability to read forms, charts, graphs, manuals, computer terminals.</p> <p>Ability to managing statistical process controls through higher mathematical skills</p> <p>Ability to communicate with customers, document competitive transactions or successfully move new ideas into the workplace.</p>	<p>Productivity decline, increased accident rates and costly production errors. It will also be difficult to effect necessary job retraining.</p> <p>An employer's ability to meet strategic goals and to be competitive will be impaired.</p>	Primary
Communication Skills: Speaking and Listening Effectively	<p>Ability to win and keep customers; Pitch innovation, contribute to quality circles, resolve conflicts and provide meaningful feedback.</p>	<p>Costs millions each year in lost productivity and errors.</p>	Secondary
Adaptability Skills: Solving Problems and Thinking Creatively	<p>Capacity to free themselves from linear thinking in order to make the creative leap.</p> <p>Ability to solve problems quickly and innovate quickly.</p> <p>Ability to attain cognitive skills, group interaction skills and problem-processing skills for problem solving.</p>	<p>Unresolved problems create dysfunctional relationships in the workplace which can become impediments to dealing with strategic change in an open-ended and creative way.</p>	Secondary
Developmental Skills: Managing Personal and Professional-Growth	<p>A strong foundation of skills self-esteem, motivation, goal setting and employability/career development influences the behaviour, attitudes and desires of workers.</p> <p>To make decisions at the point of production or at the point of sale and to display good interpersonal skills when they work in teams or with customers.</p> <p>A positive sense of self worth.</p>	<p>Individual employee's lack of motivation or goal setting skills can produce repeated errors, absenteeism and quality problems or it can hinder change.</p>	Secondary and Tertiary
Group Effectiveness: Interpersonal Skills, Teamwork and Negotiation Skills	<p>Interpersonal skills</p> <p>Ability to judge and balance appropriate behaviour, cope with undesirable behaviour in others, absorb stress, deal with ambiguity, listen, inspire confidence in others, structure social interaction, share responsibility and interact easily with others.</p> <p>Negotiation skills</p> <p>Ability to separate people from the problem, to focus on interests not positions, to work out compromises for mutual gain, to use objective criteria and an understanding of the approach demanded by the circumstance.</p>	<p>Pooling of resources requires team members to have an array of skills that individual or routine jobs do not demand. If the team members do not possess the ability to work in teams then appropriate talents and skills can not be pooled to accomplish vital tasks and goals.</p>	Secondary and Tertiary

Workplace Basics	Purpose	Deficiencies Result in...	Source to Supply Skills
	Team Work Ability to recognise and cope with the various and unique personalities and when each has a sense of the cultures and approaches that other team members represent.		
Influencing Skills: Organised Effectiveness and Leadership	Organisational effectiveness and leadership skills Behaviours, attitudes, and knowledge an employee needs to achieve success on the job both as an individual and as a member of an enterprise. Skills to adapt to organizational expectations, rules and regulations including expected job performance levels. Guidelines for establishing appropriate and effective interrelationships.	Leadership can be misplaced or even be counterproductive. The employee at times may not be able to influence his work group and to provide a vision of what the organization as a whole or the specific task at hand requires.	Secondary, Tertiary

Adapted from ILO (1996), "Human resource development in Asia and the Pacific in the 21st century."

Action 1

To respond to the need for a multi-skilled and flexible workforce and have 'plug-and-play'¹⁰³ skills in job seekers, the representatives of the education ministries and labour ministries or governing bodies, and employers' association should develop a framework to include generic skills in the curricula. These skills should also be included in the teachers' training curricula who too need to develop an attitude to teach with diligence and sincerity. The tools for these could be any, such as group exercises, class discussions, and brain teasers.

8.1.2 Drive Pervasively for Basic Education

With high illiteracy rates, the SAARC countries have a challenging task of scaling up of their industrial activities. Foremost is the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills to illiterates and those with weak primary level schooling. Qualification of those with primary level of schooling should be raised to secondary education.

Action 2

The SAARC countries need to analyse the initiatives of Sri Lanka, the Maldives as models of having high literacy rates and design a course of action to emulate the initiatives in the national context. Successful use of radio series programmes in the Maldives and radio and television in Bangladesh are examples worth looking at. Bhutan has distance education programmes focusing on early school dropouts and non-school entrants (functional literacy and numeracy), extension workers

Education Impacts Productivity of Farmers

Even though, traditional agriculture could survive with illiterate farmers, for diversity and also to pay consideration to present environmental deterioration, education for farmers has become all the more important. Agricultural practices, such as use of pesticides, fertilizers and chemicals and farming technologies all require knowledge and know-how. According to ILO primary schooling improves the productivity of small farmers because of injudicious use of chemicals. Studies reveal that in low income countries, 4 years of schooling of farmers resulted in 8% increase of farm output. With emerging technologies as in biotechnology, higher levels of education will facilitate farmers of the region to use new agricultural extension services and with deeper understanding.

Adapted from Silva, Sriyan de (1997), "Human Resource Development for Competitiveness: A Priority for Employers

¹⁰³ UNESCO, "Challenges to technical and vocational education: the changing demands of the twenty-first century."



(agriculture, veterinary science, health, etc.) and farmers. The representatives should examine the strategies these countries had adopted to remove illiteracy and work out broad strategies to be modified in the national context.

8.1.3 Intensify Efforts for Primary and Secondary Education

Though, governments in the SAARC region are striving for expansion of education, the task is prohibitive both in terms of access as well as quality. Sri Lanka and the Maldives have addressed the issue of access, but quality still remains a question.

Banding Together for Political Commitment

Action 3

Together the SAARC countries should plan out ways to urge their respective governments to honour the political commitment to education for all. They should contact Civil Society Organisations to actively campaign for the cause of education for access as well as quality.

Setting up System for Teachers' licensing

Action 4

The representatives of the ministries of education should set regional quality standards for teachers of primary and secondary education and register teachers who meet that threshold. Existing teachers who do not meet the standards should be trained or facilitated to achieve the target. New recruitments should be strictly on the license base.

Facilitating the role of Civil Society Organisations

In Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, the organized CSOs have established reputation in terms of accountability, quality of services, cost effectiveness, innovation, closeness to the grassroots and effective management style. NGOs have made significant contribution in education in developing new models of pedagogy, innovative curriculum teaching, learning aids, teacher training, community empowerment and institutional development.

Action 5

SAARC countries should set up a network of CSOs to benefit all the countries of the region especially the smaller ones with the purpose to exchange the expertise. For instance, a CSO with a strong teachers' training work in one country could be requested to start its activities in another country where teachers' training programmes are weak. Similarly, Civil Society Organisations with proficiency in developing curricula could be contacted to scale up their activities and extend their services to other countries.

Involving Corporate Sector for the Promotion of Education

Examples of involvement of corporate sector in the promotion of education at the primary and secondary levels exist in the SAARC region. In India, the Confederation of Indian Industries has set up a Primary Education and Literacy Committee. The Azim Premji Foundation in association with WIPRO---a leading IT company---to promote elementary education in some states of the country.

In Pakistan too there are a few practices of corporate social responsibility. Unilever has established four primary schools in collaboration with the Citizen Foundation.



Recently, in 2005, it has established a government elementary school in Rahim Yar Khan. The school has a staff of 32 teachers, and a library of over 7000 books. Uniliver Brothers also focus on the training of teachers by supporting *Alif Laila*, a Lahore based NGO in Pakistan. With Book Group, another NGO, Uniliver distributed 5,000 copies of 3 textbooks to 136 schools in Karachi.

Action 6

SAARC countries should hold annual “regional education moots” as a forum of meeting and exchange of information of the activities of both the Civil Society Organisations and multinational corporations and national enterprises. These moots shall be coordinated by representatives of ministries of education in the region. The CSOs shall project category wise their work in education for the corporations who would be looking for partners in education in different countries of the region. For example, if a corporate is intending to work in the area of child friendly teaching methodology or curricula development in Nepal, this moot will be the place to look for reliable partners.

8.1.4 Emphasise on Tertiary Education

Enterprises as investors

Involvement of enterprises in tertiary education is not new in the developed world. ILO estimates are that productivity gains for companies from investment in education are twice that of investment in plant and machinery; and that the gains are even greater given the impact on employee morale¹⁰⁴. In SAARC region the governments are already overstressed; enterprises need to come forward as equal partners and establish formal linkages with educational institutions.

Enterprises Investing in Higher Education

In the USA, businesses have become significant educational institutions, accounting for about half of the country's expenditure on higher education. Since the mid 1980s corporate spending on education has increased by 5% a year, and businesses now spend about US \$50 billion a year on education and training. Consequently, the American Council on Education has extended "credits" to about 7,000 company classes, which can be used towards obtaining university degrees.

Source: Silva, Sriyan de (1997), "Human Resource Development for Competitiveness: A Priority for Employers"

Action 7

Governments in the SAARC region should set up sector specific “enterprise fund for education” in each country and use the funding for industry specific tertiary education.

Collaboration of Multinational Corporations in Institutions of their Choice

With numerous multinationals working in the SAARC region, the government should urge the multinationals to scale up their activities from working at primary and elementary level to tertiary level. With collaboration among them in developing institutions of tertiary education of their choice the industries would also benefit in terms of workforce.

Action 8

SAARC countries should provide a platform to multinationals to identify the areas of collaboration for institution development. Thus implying if one MNC invests in

¹⁰⁴ Silva, Sriyan de (1997), "Human Resource Development for Competitiveness: A Priority for Employers," Paper presented at the ILO Workshop on Employers' Organizations



equipment in a university of its choice, other invests in teachers' training, and the other in curricula development.

Offshore Campus of Higher Institutions of Learning

Countries with established higher institution of learning like, India Pakistan could benefit other countries of the region by setting up their campuses. India has several famous universities offering specialized courses. Pakistan's Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and Ghulam Ishaq Khan University of Technology could set offshore campuses.

Action 9

SAARC should identify renowned universities in the region and correspond with the heads of institutions to explore the possibility of opening offshore campuses elsewhere in the region.

Regional Distance Education

The governments in the SAARC region are focusing on education, but there is need to increase investment in education besides other policy measures. Within the limited spending, distance courses seem to be a viable option. Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan have established distance learning systems at the national level. Bangladesh's Open University too offers courses in formal as well as non-formal education, basic, secondary and higher education. SAARC countries should think of having distance education on regional level. There is already an example of Bhutan where some teachers and civil servants undertook correspondence courses offered by colleges and universities in India. A "joint development of courses"¹⁰⁵ to be offered through correspondence could occur on co-operative basis to serve the whole region.

While India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have also moved to science degrees, but Sri Lanka has an edge over others because of its rich experience in Engineering and Science.

Action 10

SAARC should set distance learning teams for joint development of courses in mathematics, engineering, science and other courses to meet common needs. The team should examine the Bhutan example for international distance learning and Sri Lankan example for engineering and science degrees as the region needs to expand its tertiary education especially in science and engineering.

To disseminate information on correspondence courses and distance learning in general, SAARC should organize periodic "distance learning fairs" where universities from the SAARC region shall congregate in every country and spread out information on the courses they would offer.

¹⁰⁵ Taylor, James, and Motilal Sharma (1990), "Distance Education in South Asia: Towards Regional Co-operation."



Ensuring Access of Rural Youth to Tertiary Education

SAARC countries should design strategies for improving access of marginalized rural youth to tertiary education especially professional and technical work in agriculture. Increased number of female graduates is also needed as extension workers to work directly with women farmers. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations¹⁰⁶ has come up with some suggestion to deal with the issue as outlined below.

Action 11

The representatives of training and education institutions should jointly define admission standards for the rural youths in urban colleges and universities and the ways to reach up to those standards. Some suggestions are:

- Short courses to upgrade students to the required standards
- Quotas system along with courses to meet the standards
- Adjustment period and a make-up year to meet standards

Regional scholarships should also be offered to capable rural youths.

8.2 PROCESSING THE RIGHT SYSTEM FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Systems to develop vocational education and training abound. SAARC countries show a combination of skills development systems varying from in-schools, outside schools (non-formal vocational training institutes), to within enterprises. In the SAARC region there is more trend of school based vocational and technical training and only in India of diversified secondary education as well.

Whatever is the delivery system of vocational education and training, the right system is the one that is cost effective, relevant to the needs of the industry, and efficient¹⁰⁷. The SAARC countries should together look for these attributes in each others' system and design ways to incorporate it in their own systems. The following paragraphs show how to process a cost effective, relevant, and efficient vocational education and training system through regional synergies.

Enterprise based Japanese Model

In Japan independent vocational tracks exist in regular schools, but the hallmark of the Japanese system of skills formation is training by large corporations. What sets Japan apart from other nations is its lavish provision of in-service training throughout the life of the worker. Courses beyond the immediate and specific needs of workers are offered, creating a work force that is dedicated, disciplined, flexible and versatile.

Sources:
Asian Development Bank (2004), Improving technical education and vocational training strategies for Asia"

The recommendations for skills and training in the region are:

- Develop small and medium enterprises and training institutes by involving enterprises for assessing training needs, training and development, developing curricula for education and training and through "adopting schools" by enterprises.

¹⁰⁶ Crowder, L. Van, William I. Lindley, Thomas H. Bruening and Nathaniel Doron (1991), "Agricultural Education for Sustainable Rural Development: Challenges for Developing Countries in the 21st Century."

¹⁰⁷ "Johanson, Richard, (2004), "Technical education and vocational training strategies in Asia region."



- Promote training culture among the employers and the future trainees
- Set more industry specific training institutes both for men and women
- Establish a network of education and training institutes and form regional training teams with attention to training needs of the women workforce
- Familiarise students with the world of work
- Form systems of quality, skills and services standards, monitoring and evaluation, and competency-based assessment
- Identify region's best practices for niches in industries and develop a regional line of action for availing the opportunities presented by those industries
- Recruit and upgrade knowledge and skills of teachers and trainers through, regional training team, workshops, conferences, industrial experience and distance education
- Foster relationship among higher institutions of learning, research institutions, and industry by focusing on 'one country one industry' concept in the region and setting up the related infrastructure.

8.2.1 Develop Small and Medium Enterprises and Training Institutes

Assessing Training Needs

Action 12

SAARC countries through associations of industry in each country set up learning networks of say 15 small firms to exchange information and ideas. In each country employers' association in collaboration with the government shall identify industry specific training needs by conducting surveys of their respective clusters for present production system and to develop the system to higher levels. Training needs of the individual clusters shall be compiled to determine industry specific training needs.

Involving Enterprises in Training and Development

SAARC countries should work out a process of identifying lead enterprises in each country in each industry through employers' organisation or association. On the basis of the skills development need survey, training areas should be identified. The lead enterprises should then assist the small firms develop their technology and design, and manufacturing processes.

These lead enterprises shall also impart training in areas, such as industrial relations and labour law, safety and health issues, productivity bargaining and performance, and skills based pay system.

Developing Learning Networks

Thai Foundrymen's Society assists factory owners develop their technology and know-how by: disseminating information on advanced foundry manufacturing technology; developing design and manufacturing processes up to international standards; training and human resources development; creating a forum for exchanging ideas.

In Italy, the Garment Industrial Development Corporation provides its 4000 members access to training, but also diffuses new organizational practices, offering its members an international marketing service, an information service, and an employment referral system.

Source:
Adapted from ILO (2000), Tripartite Asia and Pacific Meeting on Training for High Performance in Enterprises, Bangkok, Thailand, December,



Action 13

A forum of lead organizations for exchanging ideas shall develop product standards and quality, and set standards for working conditions of the small enterprises. The forum members shall work closely with their respective country's industry association and assist the learning networks to develop their technology, design and manufacturing processes up to international standards.

This forum shall also design an outline for training to be forwarded to the training institutions and vocational and technical schools for further development. Independent bodies that link training institutes with enterprises do exist in one form or other in the SAARC countries. So, in that case the employers' association shall collaborate with those established bodies in the development of training curricula and linking the training institutes with the industries.

Developing Curricula for Education and Training **Action 14**

The identified training needs should then be made basis for areas of training and special concerns for training, such as judicious use of natural resources, etc., should be identified. Programmes and curricula of industry related education and sector specific training institutes should then be developed by involving the association of employers and ministry of education in each country under the supervision of members of forum of lead enterprises so as to produce a workforce with employable potential.

Action 15

For relevance of the education system, lead employers of each industry should examine best practices for curriculum and modules of vocational schools in the region that have successfully included vocational courses on agriculture, construction, and other technical skills to see how those education programmes have been made job-oriented to meet the actual needs of the industry.

'Adopting a school' to Upgrade Facilities

Action 16

'Adopting' a school to upgrade facilities and institutional buildings should be considered by the SAARC countries by attaching a training institute to the relevant industry and refurbishing the labs with the required equipment to ensure the attainment of level and quality of skills as demanded by the industry.

Coordinating Education and Vocational Curricula

The limitations of the vocational system manifest in overspecialisation, insulation from general education and no entry points to tertiary education. Sri Lanka,

Institute Management Committees, Pakistan

IMCs provide feedback on labor market demands, and to help improve curricula and teaching practices to make them more responsive to job markets and industries.

They also provide technical assistance, and job placement and internships for students.

IMCs perform better in big cities and cities around industrial belts. Differences in attitude and leadership of the IMC chairpersons selected from the private sector, as well as the principals of institutions also impact the collective planning and management of training programs.

Sources:

Adapted from "Project Completion Report on the Technical Education Project in Pakistan," November 2004

Enterprises designing Academic Courses in U.S.A

A few companies have even commenced awarding their own degrees, while others have established formal relations with educational institutions and have even designed academic courses so that students will be fit for employment.

Source:

ILO (1998), "Human Resource Development for Competitiveness: A Priority for Employers."



however, presents a good example where the vocational education system is linked to university and professional education.

Action 17

A joint group of SAARC countries of representatives of education and vocational training ministries or statutory bodies with representation from employers' association should analyse the coordinated education and training systems offered in Sri Lanka and learn from it to develop policies, establish the institutional structures for curricula development, and design curricula that is easy to update and allows flexible entry and exit opportunities through out life.

8.2.2 Promote Training Culture

SAARC countries should design strategies to promote training culture in the region where vocational training is seen as an unnecessary expense. Several aspects could be looked at, such as involving the employers in direct financing the training, giving time out to employees, and attaching philanthropy to training.

Financing by the Employers

Mechanism for deducting some percentage from the employee should be considered. Insight from Nepal's attempt in introducing fee on contractors in the construction industry should be examined for replicating it in other industries throughout the region.

Action 18

Governing bodies for technical education and vocational education, representative of the concerned ministries, and representatives of the associations of all the major industries of each of the SAARC countries should meet to work out a plan for financing the vocational and technical institutes in their respective countries by exploring options, such as payroll tax paid by the employer to promote training culture.

Non formal vocational education and training in Latin American*

Training centres are run independently of the education system by autonomous training agencies that maintain close links with industry though strong representation. These training centres are financed by payroll tax about 1% paid by employers.

*Other than Argentina and Mexico
Sources:
Asian Development Bank (2004), Improving technical education and vocational training strategies for Asia,"

Giving Time Off for Training

In government sector study leave entitlement is common, but not in the private sector. United Kingdom has voluntarist approach to education and training. There are special laws to protect the employment rights of young workers aged 16-17 who have not achieved a certain standard of education or training are entitled to reasonable time off work for study or training. The time off is paid at normal hourly rate¹⁰⁸. Similar to this approach the enterprises in the SAARC region should also have an arrangement to give their employees a few hours off from work.

¹⁰⁸ Adviceguide, "Young People and Employment," http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/employment/young_people_and_employment.htm#timeoffforstudyingortraining



Action 19

SAARC countries with the participation of enterprises should make an arrangement of giving off at least two hours to employees for training tied to some binding that the employee works for at least 6 months with the employer after the training ends.

Attaching Philanthropy with Training

Traditions of philanthropy are deep rooted in the region. Enterprises also play a philanthropic role. In Muslim countries of the region *Zakat*¹⁰⁹, is paid and / or collected. In Pakistan already a system for collection of *zakat* exists at the government level. These philanthropic contributions need to be systemized with strings of compulsory training attached for those who are unemployed and could work to make them productive members of the society.

Action 20

SAARC countries should set up a process linking unemployed receiving charity from the government to compulsory training. A system to link these unemployed with enterprises for training should also be worked out where the employers would cover the travel and one meal expenses of the trainee.

Unemployment and Training go Together

The Korean social insurance system combines unemployment benefits with an employment stabilisation programme and a job skill development programme to both prevent unemployment and stimulate re-employment.

Source:
ILO (2004), "Successful employment and labour market policies in Europe and Asia and the Pacific," Employment strategy Department, Geneva

8.2.3 Set More Training Institutes both for Men and Women

Industry specific training Institutes

In the SAARC region, there is shortage of industry specific training institutes and institutes for women.

Action 21

SAARC countries should devise a process to involve country governments and international organisation to establish industry specific training institutes. After identifying areas of training, industry specific training institutes should be established. Separate institutes for women should be set up especially for the skills that women focus on, such as apparel, and construction.

8.2.4 Establish a Network of Education, Training Institutes and Enterprises and Form Regional Training Teams

Action 22

SAARC countries should establish a network of qualified education and training institutes and form "regional training teams" and exchange expertise by picking leaders in the region. For example India's private sector institutes could lead in hospitality and tourism industry and dispatch its regional training team to the other countries in the region to train government agencies, the private sector, enterprises and even community in areas, such as professional knowledge, marketing strategies and business skill. Other examples are Tata Engineering, and Siemens that could

¹⁰⁹ Mandatory religious welfare tax in Islam to pay two and half percent of income and a fixed percent on monetary holdings to the needy if one's earning exceeds a certain amount.



be requested to be members of the regional training team process. Similarly, Pakistan could send off regional team from LUMS to lead in personnel and human resource management of enterprise managers in other countries of the region where the expertise is missing or gap is felt. Chenab textile could lead on behalf of textile industry from Pakistan for training on product designing. The countries could benefit from Bangladesh Garment Manufactures and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Institute of Fashion & Technology for technical assistance to manufacturers, designers and exporters. In the same tune, the leading micro finance institutions of Bangladesh are worthwhile choices for providing regional teams.

Regional training teams for professional managers and supervisors should impart trainings in negotiation, cross cultural management keeping in view inter regional trend in investment. Training areas for rural development should include artificial insemination, off season and vegetable production. The teams should be formed to train in niches of economy where potential exists but has not been developed.

Since environmental degradation due to bad practices in agriculture is a mounting challenge in the region, the SAARC countries should also include in the regional network enterprises that produce fertilizers, pesticides and other agriculture related chemicals. Enterprises in the spirit of corporate social responsibility should then be urged to send their teams to go to the farmers and disseminate information on the wise use of their products.

Regional Training Teams for Women Workforce

Action 23

Since the region has a large proportion of women involved in industries, such as agriculture, apparel, and construction, SAARC should make a separate arrangement in collaboration with national level teams formed by employers' association for improving skills of women workforce through regional training teams. Training should be institute based as well as mobile specifically for farm women. The training areas could be agro forestry, bee keeping, mushroom cultivation, floriculture, pest management practices, marketing, post harvest handling, and organic farming.

8.2.5 Familiarise Students with the World of Work

The workforce should have the knowledge to determine the choices to make within the limits of their aptitude. Employers are in an advantageous position to provide workforce with that knowledge. Employers' association should go one step forward after adopting a school. The employers should interact with schools and teachers and help students know the choices available to them in the labour market and the requirements of business environment in terms of educational attainment. Employers should introduce students to business environment and provide counseling to school leavers as well.

Action 24

The lead enterprises identified by the employers' organization in each country of the region should design a systematic process for career development. With employers' organization they should arrange annual expert visits to institutions and schools to help students explore career alternatives that suit them best. They should also



arrange students' informational visits to industries on periodic bases for exposure to the real work environment.

8.2.6 Form Systems of Quality, Skills and Services Standards, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Competency-based Assessment

Following international benchmarking would be difficult when the stage of development is low as compared to the developed world. Common regional standards should be prepared. An exception is tourism industry, where higher qualitative skills are needed to meet the requirements of the international visitors.

Setting Regional Systems of Standards and international benchmarking for the tourism industry

Action 25

Representatives of Employer's associations in the region should formulate regional systems of quality and skills standards in consultation with the industries.

Tourism services should also be first brought to a common minimum standard for development and marketing of cross-national tourism products, and provide increased benefits from tourism. Later in the long term for the tourism industry, SAARC countries should together develop international benchmarking practices.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Education and Training Systems

Action 26

SAARC countries, with the help of employers' association and chamber of commerce should set up a system for monitoring and evaluating the performance of education and training in the countries. Part of this system would be the competent based assessment.

Vocational education and training programmes are certificate led. The school based programmes hold written exams as well as practical in the classroom workshop. To ensure the quality of workforce produced, SAARC countries should think on the lines of competency based assessment rather than time based certificates. A look into the Sri Lanka competency based approach for teaching and assessment would help to design a regional competency based assessment process on the concept of "self-paced learning"¹¹⁰.

For competency-based approach the curricula design should have modular format which will also facilitate life long learning opportunities. The process of assessing the competence will have a shop floor component to demonstrate the skills of the student in an industry. The lead organizations picked up by employers' association should be involved to give a practical dimension to this concept and design criteria of assessing the competency of the student and rate the students in the environment of the industry.

¹¹⁰ UNESCO (1999), "Improving systems providing education and training throughout life," Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 26 - 30 April <http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/tve/nseoul/docse/impede.html>



8.2.7 Identify Region's Best Practices for Niches in Industries

Action 27

Capitalising on regional strengths, representatives from employers' associations should together identify the forte in each industry of the countries and learn lessons from international best practices and develop a regional line of action for availing the opportunities presented by those industries. In eco-tourism, perhaps the region could benefit from Nepal's experience in community based tourism for reducing poverty and conserve the natural and cultural heritage. The countries could develop an integrated approach for managing the numerous World Heritage sites that the region is bestowed with.

8.2.8 Recruit Teachers and Upgrade Knowledge and Skills of Existing Teachers and Trainers

Shortage of teachers exists in the training institutions and those who teach have obsolete knowledge and skills. SAARC countries need to design process of a life long education in association with public and private partners at the national and regional levels.

Meeting Teachers' Shortage

Action 28

The SAARC countries should urge their respective governments to fill the sanctioned posts that lie vacant at institutions especially at distant and rural locations.

Exchanging Regional Training Teams

Common needs exist in the region for training instructors, vocational education teachers, reskilling primary and secondary school teachers, retraining middle and senior management.

Action 29

Representatives of training institutes from each country, lead employers, and representatives of the ministries of education should identify the training needs in their respective areas and use multidimensional approach to reach agreements at inter-institutional and regional levels for exchanging regional training teams. The approaches could be exchange of faculty members and specialized training teams, conferences and workshops, on-the job training supplemented by retraining during vacations to upgrade the skills and knowledge of teachers and trainers.

Giving Industrial Experience through Industrial Training

Action 30

The SAARC countries should develop a setup through which teachers of any training institute are linked with a related industry which gives them industrial experience through industrial training.

Upgrading theoretical Concepts

Action 31

Distance education should be used to upgrade teachers' theoretical concepts. The SAARC countries should look at setting up a 'regional virtual university.' Besides being modeled on the best practices in the region, the virtual university network



should utilize all appropriate means of communication for mass access throughout the region. This also entails the provision of internet facilities in the training institutes.

8.2.9 Foster relationship among Higher Institutions of Learning, Research Institutions, and Industry

SAARC region does not present many instances of collaboration of university, industry, and research institutions necessary to increase the relevance of University education to the needs of industry and to stimulate new research directions. Research and development is necessary for discovering new technologies, product development in terms of quality and value, anticipating problems, finding solutions to the problems faced by the industry, addressing new environmental and social challenges. Universities then train students on the basis of the research findings to create a fit between education and training and skills required by industries.

University and Research Linkages

All OECD countries are placing emphasis on developing linkages between the science system and the private sector in order to speed knowledge diffusion. As a result incentives are being by government for universities and laboratories to involve industrial partners in the selection and conduct of their research activities.

Source:
OECD (1996), "The Knowledge-Based Economy."

Focusing on 'one country one industry' concept

Action 32

On the concept of "one country one industry," SAARC think panel should pick top research institutions and universities and colleges related to each industry across the region and devise a mechanism to test innovative programmes and curricula in the institutions of learning. The Maldives could be chosen for tourism, Pakistan for textile, India for pharmaceutical, Nepal for construction, and Bangladesh for apparel. The successful results would then be exchanged within the region for replication after needed modification to suit country specific situations.

University and Research Linkages

Agricultural universities in India carry out an important part of research activities and are integrated within the programme of the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR). Some specialized centres of ICAR in turn offer post graduate M.Sc. or Ph.D training programmes

Sources:
Cowder, L. Van, William I. Lindley, Thomas H. Bruening, and Nathaniel Doron (1991), "Agricultural education for sustainable Rural Development: Challenges for developing countries in the 21st century."

Developing the Physical Infrastructure for Research and Development

Crucial to research and development is geographic proximity to transfer relevant knowledge. Knowledge based activities flourish best in technopoles. Examples of technopoles are France's Sophia Antipolis and California's Silicon Valley. Regional equivalent technopole is India's Bangalore where India has set up Entrepreneurship Development Cells, Science & Technology Entrepreneurs Park and Technology Business Incubators. In addition, small and medium size industries too require training institutes in their vicinity to have an immediate supply of labour.

Action 33

A regional pool of representatives of ministries of education, employers' associations, and heads of research institutes, and investors should work out strategies to set up hubs of innovations with universities, research institutions, and



corporations as dynamic participants. For information technology hub, India should lead with its expertise.

8.3 TERM-WISE STRATEGIES

The strategies for short, medium and long terms are shown as in Table 5. Short term interventions cover a period of 1 to 2 years and are those which encompass strengthening and networking; medium term strategies run for 3 to 5 years and are mostly policy level decision formulation and approvals. Long term strategies are those which need massive infrastructure development and require a time period of 6 to 12 years for implementation of policies.

Table 5: Term Wise Strategies

Short Term Strategies 1-2 years	Medium Term Strategies 3-5 years	Long Term Strategies 6-12 years
	Action 1 Develop a framework to include generic skills in the education and training curricula for students as well as for teachers' training.	
	Action 2 Analyse the initiatives of Sri Lanka, the Maldives as models of having high literacy rates and design a course of action to emulate the initiatives in the national context.	
Action 3 Plan out ways through CSOs to urge the respective governments to honour the political commitment to education for all.	Action 4 Set regional quality standards for teachers of primary and secondary education and register teachers who meet that threshold.	
Action 5 Set up a network of CSOs to benefit all the countries of the region especially the smaller ones to exchange expertise.		
Action 6 Hold annual "regional education moots" as a forum of meeting and exchange of information of the activities of both the Civil Society Organisations and multinational corporations and national enterprises.		Action 7 Set up sector specific "enterprise fund for education" in each country and use the funding for industry specific tertiary education.
	Action 8 Provide a platform to multinationals to identify the areas of collaboration in institutions.	
	Action 9 Identify renowned universities in the region and correspond with the heads of institutions to explore the possibility of opening offshore campuses elsewhere in the region.	Action 10 Set distance learning teams for joint development of courses in mathematics, engineering, science and other courses to meet common needs.
	Action 11 Jointly define admission standards for rural youths for admission in urban colleges and universities and the ways to reach up to those standards.	
Action 12 Set up learning networks of say 15 small firms to exchange information and ideas. In each country employers' association in collaboration with the government shall identify industry specific training needs. Training needs of the individual clusters shall be compiled to determine industry specific training needs.	Action 13 Make a forum of leading organizations for exchanging ideas and developing product standards and quality, and setting standards for working conditions of the small enterprises.	Action 14 Identify areas of training on the basis of the identified training needs and special concerns for training, such as judicious use of natural resources, etc. Develop programmes and curricula for of industry related education and sector



Short Term Strategies 1-2 years	Medium Term Strategies 3-5 years	Long Term Strategies 6-12 years
		specific training institutes by involving enterprises.
		Action 15 Examine best practices for curriculum and modules of vocational schools in the region.
Action 16 'Adopting' a school to upgrade facilities and institutional buildings.	Action 17 Analyse the coordinated education and training systems offered in Sri Lank and learn from it to develop policies, establish the institutional structures for curricula design that will allow flexible entry and exit opportunities throughout life and easy updating of curricula according to the demands of the industry.	
Action 18 Work out a plan for financing the vocational and technical institutes in their respective countries by exploring options, such as payroll tax paid by the employers		
Action 19 Make an arrangement of giving off at least two hours to employees for training tied to some binding that the employee works for at least 6 months with the employer after the training.		
Action 20 Set up a process linking unemployed receiving charity from the government to compulsory training.	Action 21 After identifying areas of training, industry specific training institutes should be established. Separate institutes for women should be set up especially for the skills that women focus on, such as apparel, and construction.	
	Action 22 Establish a network of qualified education and training institutes and form "regional training teams" and exchange expertise by picking leaders in the region.	
Action 23 Make a separate arrangement in collaboration with national level teams formed by employers' association for improving skills of women through regional training teams for women workforce.	Action 24 The lead enterprises identified by the employers' organization in each country of the region should design a systematic process for career development of the workforce.	
	Action 25 Formulate regional systems of quality, skills, and services standards. For tourism industry later develop international benchmarking practices.	
	Action 26 Set up a system for monitoring and evaluating the performance of education and training in the countries.	
	Action 27 Identify the forte in each industry of the countries and learn lessons from international best practices and develop a regional line of action for availing the opportunities presented by those industries.	
Action 28 Urge the respective country governments to fill the sanctioned posts that lie vacant at institutions especially at distant and rural locations.	Action 29 Identify the training needs in each industry and use multidimensional approach to reach agreements at inter-institutional and regional levels for exchanging regional	



Short Term Strategies 1-2 years	Medium Term Strategies 3-5 years	Long Term Strategies 6-12 years
	training teams.	
	Action 30 Develop a setup through which teachers of any training institute are linked with a related industry which gives them industrial experience through industrial training.	
	Action 31 Use distance education to upgrade teachers' theoretical concepts. The SAARC countries should look at setting up a 'regional virtual university.'	Action 32 On the concept of "one country one industry," pick top research institutions and universities and colleges related to each industry across the region and devise a mechanism to test innovative programmes and curriculum in the institutions of learning.
		Action 33 Work out strategies to set up hubs of innovations with universities, research institutions, and corporations as dynamic participants.

8.4 SUGGESTED TRAINING AREAS

Development needs identified in Chapter II and the key sub-sectors of the economy form the back drop of training areas in the SAARC region. The suggested training areas for human resource development in the region are:

Managing Development in Public and Corporate Sector

Management needs surface at macro and micro levels ranging from governance of the state to individual organization and department both in public and private sectors. The entire region is undergoing a change at the governance level with restructuring administration and management at the grass root level. The entire workforce involved needs to be familiarized with and trained in the concept of devolution, hierarchy of the administrative structure, redefined and added responsibilities, and the role of women in the region.

Within an organization, professional management needs to be developed at the strategic level for leadership, thinking and acting strategically, business reengineering, managing performance, policy implementation, managing projects, motivating people and using delegation and problem solving skills.

At the functional level, training should focus at technical skills to respond to the rapidly changing technologies, specific product or process level activities.

The developing state of the entire regions seeks for enhanced capability for managing programmes and projects at all levels in all sectors from the point of initiation, execution, subsequent assessment, and improving the programme based on the assessment results.

Public Private Partnership

Since government's coffers and capacities fall short of the resources needed to address the issues and needs of the populace and scale up the level of activities, sharing of responsibilities with the private sector has become critical. Building trust is the cornerstone of public private partnership to be achieved through familiarisation



with the needs and working processes of the two sectors, sensitisation of co-existence, developing tolerance for and understanding with the counterpart.

At the grass root level where CSOs are actively involved, greatest barriers to more widespread use of private partnership is the political will or lack of it of public representatives. Training for developing camaraderie with the local level power structure is also needed.

Developing Niches for Regional Prosperity

The SAARC countries need to create niches in sectors of economy with one country leading the region to develop in the rest of the countries. For instance, Nepal could lead in eco-tourism, India and Pakistan in agriculture, and Pakistan in sports goods.

In eco-tourism capacity building of local community in tourism-related activities, community-based enterprises and employment from tourism, media publicity, raising public awareness of World Heritage and building pride with local communities, and achieving biodiversity conservation are among the many areas to attend to.

Niches in agriculture could range from developing floriculture, organic farming, bee keeping, to mushroom cultivation.

Information Communication Technology Development

The SAARC region is dominated by low wage, low skilled and low value added products. Higher value added products need knowledge workers. For developing ICT, technical training needs to be imparted complemented by the skills to locate and get work. At the same time, the small and medium size industries should be made aware of the use of ICT in their setup for efficient, reliable, easy to manage, and cost-effective system in the long run. The ICT is also a vital tool for promoting distance learning in the region.

While India has taken a lead in developing ICT, the rest of the countries in the region are lagging behind. Others should take example of India and develop the ICT structure on similar lines where workings of institutions and industries tightly knitted together as institutions readily update their curricula of training according to the demands of the industry and not necessarily the other way round.

Market Responsive Education and Training

Because of the mismatch between the qualification of the workforce and demands of the industry, training is required for designing education and training curricula which is in response to the needs of the industry, produces competent workforce and allows flexible entry and exit opportunities as well as develops in the workforce the required basic skills that are transferable across jobs and provides a basis for further absorption of knowledge.

Curricula design on modular format shall facilitate life long learning and allow easy updating according to the needs of the industry. Application of competency based approach in the design shall make the workforce competitive in the environment of the industry or in practical life. Training area for curricula design also includes incorporating basic skills to develop in the workforce the attitude to learn and relearn,



interpersonal skills, leadership skills, cognitive and social skills, and problem solving and creative thinking traits.

Training is also needed to design gender sensitive education and training modules which accept the prominent role of women in economic sectors, such as agriculture, apparel, and construction.

Standard Setting and Monitoring

The SAARC countries need to set regional products and skills standards, and develop criteria for measuring the performance of education and training. Standards setting for the developed niches, such as relevant standards and regulations on organic production of agricultural commodities, mushroom cultivation, and floriculture is also required. Training area shall be for the development of a structure for regional standards, quality control, and monitoring of the process.

Developing Services Sector

Banking and Micro financing

Rampant poverty, increasing role of Civil Society Organizations, and presence of donors in the development arena providing health, family planning, education and economic support to poor communities are seen in the SAARC region. To make these efforts sustainable and include community as active participants, the importance of microfinance institutions is growing in the region. As a consequence, non-government organisations, managers of microfinance institutions commercial banks, and specialised micro-finance institutions, all need training of their staff to the new skills and tools to improve the quality of their institution's services, financial performance and outreach to poor clients.

Training for designing programmes focused on particular vulnerable groups or extreme poor, such as women and bonded labour is also needed. The access to micro-finance services---credit, savings, and insurance---are unequally distributed between men and women. Training of microfinance institutions for designing programmes to increase women's access to small loans and savings facilities are areas to look at.

In the SAARC countries bonded labour is pervasive especially in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal where families are bonded for as many as three generations to the same landlord. These are the people who are without land, or education and need cash for day to day survival and sell their labour for loan. Since buyers in the developed world have raised their concerns for labour standards practiced in the developing countries from where they source their products, improving labor conditions has become a necessity for the SAARC countries. Microfinance services in the region could become major relief giving institutions to the poor households at risk of falling into bondage, already in mild form of bondage, or have been legally released from bondage. The ILO is already experimenting with sets of financial services for poor households, with an emphasis on building assets, diversifying income sources and reducing vulnerability. Training needs to be given to the microfinance institution in developing programmes with features of prevention and rehabilitation of bonded labour.



With training of service providers, legal awareness training is needed for the recipients of the service.

Experience of BRAC in improving the socio-economic status of the rural poor through the provision of easy credit for income and employment generating activities could provide insight to the rest of the countries about issues, problems, and skills requirements of staff managing and implementing the programmes for the disadvantaged sections of the society.

For improving operational efficiency, access to services and information, transparency, networking, and management of financial services to a larger number of poor population, training to integrate ICT tools in the microfinance sector and using ICT is also required.

Hospitality Management

Training is needed to produce a multiskilled and multidisciplinary workforce in technical as well soft--cognitive and social---skills is needed to be given at the basic, middle and advanced levels. Basic level skills training will be given to those who are in direct contact with the tourists, such as tour and trail guides, host coordinators, airline, immigration, and tourist police to ensure service delivery and quality standards to a minimum acceptable level set by the region. The skills include customer service, public relations, first aid, information and food preparation training, etc.

Middle skills training is required for middle or clerical staff e.g., front office, tourism management, and travel and tour operations in environmental and cultural heritage. For both the basic and middle level tourism employees, training areas should include local tourism assets, such as local attraction, history of the area, directions to attraction, and information about regular events important for developing community based tourism.

At the advanced level, training for middle and senior level personnel who are involved in the areas of project conceptualization, design, execution, public private partnership and marketing the training needs are in project management, marketing, effective communication, property management and specialized tourism products or services.

Upgrading of Skills of Women Workforce

Women's skills need to be developed of women according to their changing roles in the economy. Women are participating in agriculture, construction and apparel industries in the region, but they have inadequate skills. Training should be delivered in specific activities that women focus on, such as in the production (cultivation, pest management) processing, handling (post-harvest handling) and marketing (marketing of agricultural products). Their skills also need to be developed in niches, such as organic farming, floriculture, mushroom cultivation.

Since women are employed in only low level of construction activities where they serve as head load carriers, training should given to women in other relevant technical and business skills in construction.



Understanding Trade Regimes

Trade in the world is driven by individual countries or a group of countries, WTO, and buyers' requirements. These determine the tariff rates on the flow of goods. Not understanding the trade regime could have serious implications for the region. Generalised System of Tariff preferences (GSP) has been introduced by the developed world allowing preference-giving countries to grant preferential tariff treatment under their respective GSP scheme. GSP schemes give reduced or zero tariff rates based on the exclusion criteria of the preference giving country. Some support linking issues of trade with core ILO labour conventions; and the others want the recipient country to adhere to environmental standards.

Issues are also being raised about including labour standards in the WTO. At the same time consumers have become sensitive about the process of production of the products they buy.

Unless the SAARC region does not sensitise its employers about the changing trade policies and trends, the region could loose competitiveness and miss opportunities in the world market with serious repercussions on production, employment, mouths to be fed and efforts to alleviate poverty.

Training area includes building the capacity of the state functionaries, such as judiciary, police, diplomats, district managers, district government officials, labour inspectors, parliamentarians, and government media managers on issues of concerns of the developed countries, internationally recognized labour standards, workplace standards, and buyers' requirements to remain competitive in the global trade and reap benefit from the new trade agreements.



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