

NON FORMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

**Report
October '84 to March '86**



**Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)
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BANGLADESH**

1. Introduction

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a registered non-governmental rural development organisation founded and managed by Bangladeshis. Begun as a relief and rehabilitation effort in the aftermath of the Bangladesh War of Liberation in February 1972. BRAC today is an established, comprehensive, multi-faceted development institution.

BRAC mobilises the disadvantaged men and women (those who sell their manual labour) into co-operative groups who then plan, initiate and control collective activities that lead to self reliance. These include : human development (health, nutrition, education, etc.) and economic (agriculture, pisciculture, animal husbandry, poultry, cottage industries, etc.) BRAC supports these activities by providing training, extension, credit and logistical assistance. It has demonstrated that, given proper support, the landless can plan, manage, and implement their own development activities.

Effective development is dependent on human development and human development in its turn, is dependent on education. In Bangladesh today, more than half of the primary age-group children are left uncovered by the formal education system and likely to remain so for years to come. The out of school population is spread all over the country, and it is difficult to reach them through the formal system alone, as most of them are involved in some kind of income generating or income saving activities. Moreover, the system is very formal, rigid and inflexible. Its content is remote from community concerns and touches no responsive chord in the village heart. Moreover the expansion of this system is costly and time consuming.

Taking this situation into account, BRA took the initiative of developing a Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE), Project for the Children who have never been enrolled in formal Primary Schools or are drop-outs.

2. Aims and Objectives.

2.1 BRAC initiated the project with the aim of developing a model of NFPE for the rural out of school children of Bangladesh, which can be duplicated throughout the country. The main objectives of this project are to :

- a) Develop an innovative curriculum of three years duration for the children of 8-10 years age group.
- b) Design, test and evaluate materials to meet identified needs and interest of rural children.
- c) Formulate teaching technique aimed to create para professional cadre of teachers in the community.
- d) Experiment with different modalities of community participation with a view to developing community organisation model in support of NFPE programme for future adoption on a national scale.
- e) Devise appropriate curriculum and methodology for pre-school children and assess the performance of these children in formal primary schools and in the NFPE centres who have completed pre-schooling earlier.

2.2 The specific objectives are:

- a. Relate teaching and instruction materials more closely to the needs of rural children.
- b. Increase the enrollment of girls.
- c. Increase the number of children completing primary level education.
- d. Identify and utilize para-professional teachers' thus creating a new avenue of productive off farm employment.
- e. Develop new materials and innovative techniques training of primary teachers.
- f. Develop community organization model in support of NFPE programme for future adoption on a national scale.
- g. Develop and implement a bridging mechanism by which successful rural NFPE graduates will attend secondary schools.

3. Project Activities.

From October 1984, the project activities started. These included:- planning and development of curriculum, field based activities; the opening of 20 primary and 3 pre-primary schools in 3 project areas and ongoing evaluation. A brief summary of the activities from October 1984 to March 1986 is presented below:

3.1 Selection of project Areas:

The first phase of project activities started with the selection of project areas. In selecting these areas a number of aspects were taken into consideration so that the selected areas represent rural Bangladesh. Finally two BRAC areas and one non-BRAC area were selected as laboratory areas of the project. The areas are Mirzapur and Manikganj, and Dhamarai was chosen as the non-BRAC area.

3.2 Selection of Teachers.

In selecting teachers care was taken to identify those candidates who were interested in rendering service for the development of the rural community.

- the teacher must be a permanent resident of the community.
- preference was given to female candidates.
- the teachers educational qualification must range between 10 to 12 years of schooling (Appendix I, table #)

3.3 Formation of Village Level Committees:

For smooth functioning of the schools a five-member village level committee was formed for each school. The committee comprises of :

Community Leader	- 1
Parents	- 2
Teacher	- 1
BRAC's Programme Organiser (P.O.)	- 1

The main activities of this committee are: to ensure regular attendance of students; to improve the physical facilities of the school; to maintain close relationship and co-operation with the community, particularly the parents of the students, and to hold monthly meetings with the objective of solving different problems of the school.

3.4 Planning and Development of Curriculum.

Planning and development of curriculum is the core activity of this project. The task of planning the curriculum started from the latter part of October 1984. A number of steps were identified for developing the curriculum. The following schematic diagram illustrate the procedure for curriculum and materials development.

Situational Analysis

Curriculum Objectives

Identification of Concepts
skills and Content Areas

Experimentation of
Material and
Programme

Preparation of Instruction
Materials

Review of the
Materials and the
programme

Preparation of Teaching
Notes

Preparation and procurement
of Teaching Aids and
Illustrations

Preparation of Training
Manual

3.4.1 Situational Analysis

It is the initial step for curriculum and materials development. This includes: information about the learners (their parents, home, economic conditions, language, perception interest, aspiration, level of cognitive development, physiological and psychological development, needs etc.) the teacher, the education system, the current curriculum in practice, the advancement of knowledge, availability of resources, the schools, the community and the nation. Its main source of information are social interaction observation, survey, research reports which were given due consideration. Rural experience of BRAC workers and their long association with the target group made it easier for them to understand the situation well.

3.4.2 Curriculum Objectives.

While formulating objectives the nature of the learners the society and the objectives of the formal school system were given due consideration. Special attention was paid to the account of learner's needs, interests and problems, the social, economic and cultural milieu of the community to which the children belong and the minimum essential learning required. Considering all these factors a set of general objectives were formulated. The general objectives thus identified were again split into several specific objectives with a view to achieving these through different subjects and activities.

3.4.3 Identification of Concepts and skills.

Modern research in the field of curriculum has indicated that concepts and skills can be the basis for developing curriculum and conceptualization facilitates learning. Learning activities are diverted towards the formation of concepts and acquisition of skills. Once the objectives were formulated, attention was devoted to the identification of concepts and skills.

3.4.4. Selection of Subjects and Content Areas.

Identification of concepts was followed by the selection of suitable educational experiences that are likely to help learners attain objectives. In this process, learners' maturity level, values culture, attitude and knowledge base etc. were taken into consideration. On the basis of the objectives formulated earlier and identified concepts and skills, the subjects and content areas were selected. Content areas thus identified were then placed under different subject headings.

3.4.5 Preparation of Instruction Materials:

Preparation of instructional materials involves the translation of concepts and their presentation in the form suited to the level of the learners. Instruction materials, such as books, were developed by the NFPE unit. The materials for the first year were written after numerous discussions with specialists and a consultant. Attempts were made to translate all the identified concepts and to cover all the selected areas of context. The first draft of the materials was presented before BRAC's NFPE Curriculum Committee, which comprises of the Executive Director and senior BRAC personnel. The materials were reviewed and necessary modifications made according to the suggestions of the Curriculum Committee. The instruction materials for year one took shape and were printed at BRAC's printing press. The following materials were ready for use by the end of February 1985.

- a. Preparatory Manual
- b. Books (a set of 4 - Literacy and Numeracy)
- c. Picture - word association cards (a set of 36 words)
- d. Word cards (a set of 30 words)
- e. Alphabet cards
- f. Lesson plans prepared for Environmental Science.
(Teachers' manual)
- g. Charts

The materials for the second year are being prepared according to the same procedures followed in preparing the previous one.

3.4.6 Preparation of Teaching Notes.

As part of overall curriculum activities, teaching notes for all the topics of first year course, were developed. The teaching notes include, specific objectives in behavioural form, concepts teaching aids, methods of presentation and reinforcement. The teaching notes indicate definite techniques of teaching, maintain continuity of the lesson, include the arrangement of the illustrative aids, keeping in view the age, ability and aptitude of the learners and provide scope for the activity of the learners.

3.4.7 Preparation of Teaching Aids:

Teaching aids have the dynamic quality of getting the learners involved and can play a vital role in improving teaching by making experiences more meaningful and interesting. Keeping in view the overall situation, a number of necessary teaching aids, such as charts, cards, counting sticks, etc. were developed for the first year programme. Teaching aids for the second year programme are being developed.

3.4.8 Preparation of a Teacher's Training Manual.

To make the teaching programme effective a training manual is being developed. The manual contains the latest information on primary education, non-formal education, pedagogy, use of teaching aids, co-curricular activities, child psychology and methods of organizing rural poor children. The purpose of the manual is to help the instructors broaden their knowledge of the various facts on the subjects concerned and understand the techniques of imparting instruction to the children. The manual will be finalised by November 1985.

3.5 Teachers' Training.

The success of any innovative educational programme depends on the ability preparation and willing participation of the teachers. The teachers form the action brigade of the programme and need proper motivation, orientation and training before launching any programme.

The training for BRAC's NFPE teachers was held in two phases. In the first phase, a six-day training workshop was held at Manikganj from February 24 - 29, 1985. There were 24 participants in the training programme and it was organised with the aim of developing

programme and it was organised with the aim of developing the knowledge base of the participants. In this workshop information on primary education, non-formal education, pedagogy, use of teaching aids, and child psychology were given.

The second workshop was held at TARC Savar from April 20-25 1985. In the second workshop emphasis was laid on the participants improvement of classroom teaching skills as well as organizing cocurricular activities.

In the second training workshop maximum time was earmarked to demonstrate model lesson by the trainees. In the case of cocurricular activities, the same procedure was followed. Trainers demonstrated different activities which were then practised by the participants so that they could implement these activities in their respective centres.

Although the duration of the training programmes was short adequate preparations were taken and provisions made for maximum utilization of the time available in a planned systematic way. Besides these training workshops there is provision for refresher's course for the teachers. A one day refresher course was organized in each cluster in June. A five day refreshers' course was given to the teachers in October. The course covered numeracy, literacy and social studies.

3.6 School House.

Twenty three school houses, twenty for the NFPE and three for the pre-school programme were either constructed or rented. Most of the school houses are simple tin sheds with tin or bamboo walls. Each house can accommodate at least 30-35 children.

3.7 Supply of Materials.

BRAC supplied each of the twenty three schools with the following materials; books, slates, pencils, exercise books, charts, word cards, counting sticks, picture-word cards, rings, ball, clock, steel cabinet and blackboard and chalks.

3.8 Selection of students

To keep the teaching learning situation within the control of the teacher, it was decided not to enroll more than 30 children of age group 8-10 years in each school. The P.O.s of each centre selected the children who belonged to the disadvantaged section of the rural community with the help of the members of the local committee and the teacher. (Appendix -I, table 2)

4. Commencement of school

All the twenty schools of NFPE started functioning from March 1, 1986.

5. Supervision

All the twenty schools have been working under the supervision of the central level project personnel and the respective P.O. at the local level. The P.O. of each cluster visits all his schools more or less a week. He then submits a weekly report of his visits to the field supervisor. The project personnel at the central level frequently visits the schools. Such visits motivate the school.

children as well as the teachers. The main objective of school supervision is to help the teacher solve the problems they face in running the programme at the institutional level. Moreover the field supervisor maintains liaison between the project personnel, the P.O.s and the teachers of the school.

6. Community participation

Participation of the community and its active support facilitated BRAC to run the programme successfully. The village level committee of five - comprising community leaders, parents and teachers with the P.O. as member. convenor holds monthly meetings to inform parents about the progress of the centre. The P.O. submits a report of these monthly meetings to the field supervisor. The members of the committee contact and motivate the parents to send their children to the schools. They try to overcome the problems such as irregular attendance of the students, by conferring with their guardians. They guide the teachers in fixing holidays, and class timings in consultation with the parents.

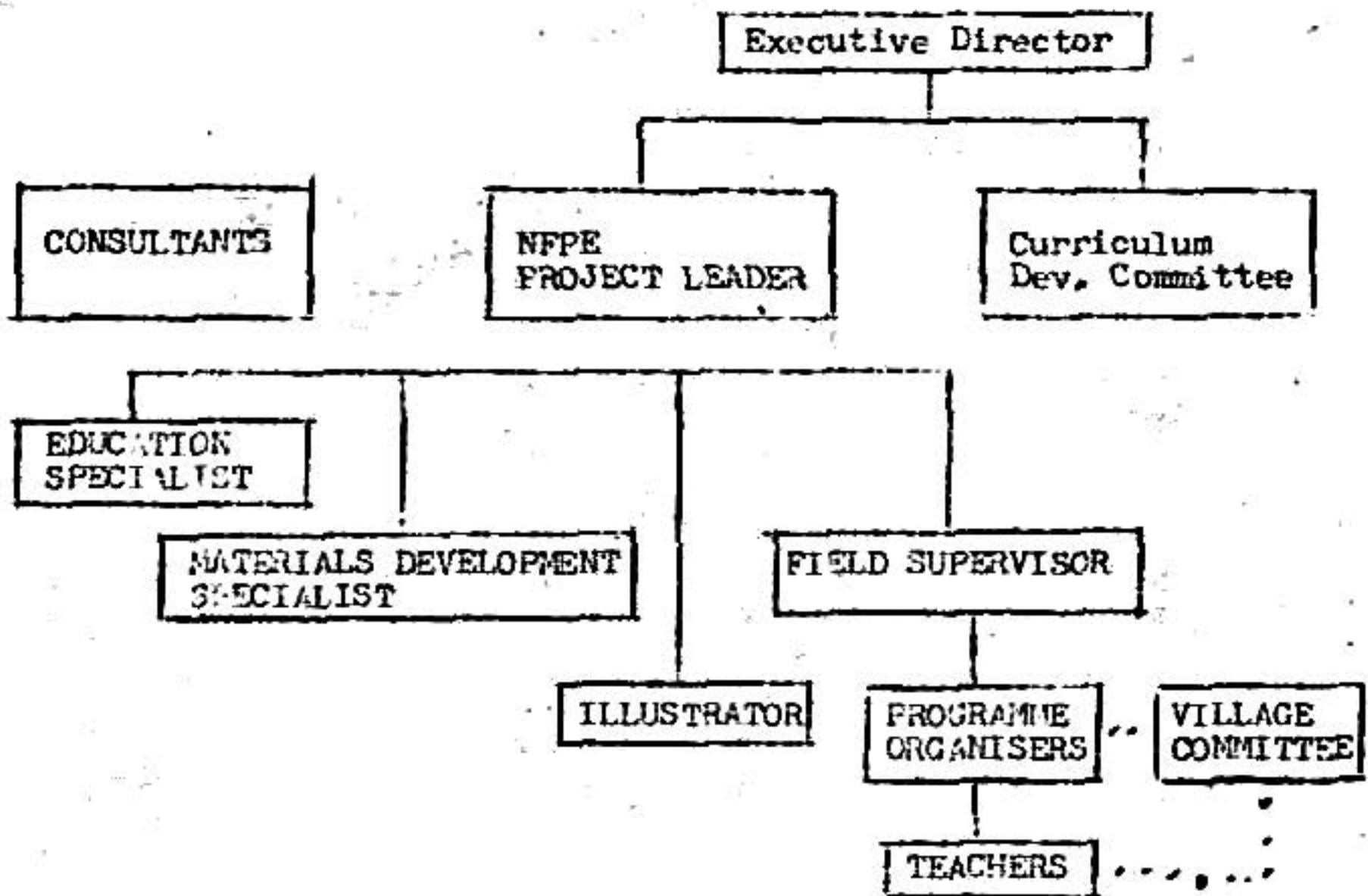
7. Main Features of the programme

- a) The children enrolled in NFPE programme have never attended formal schools. Each school enrolls 30 children only. However, there is pressure from the community to enroll more children and to open more schools.
- b) The average rate of attendance is more than 90 per cent in all the schools. This number in the formal primary schools ranges from 60-70 percent.
- c) In the formal sector of education 60 percent (1) of the children enrolled in class I dropout before completing one year's course. BRAC's NFPE classes started in March 1, 1985. Out of the 600 children enrolled in 20 schools, only 3 dropped out during the 9 month period. Thus the percentage of dropout stands at 0.48. (Appendix-I, table 3.)
- d) In BRAC's schools equal emphasis is laid on co-curricular and recreational activities by organising a variety of co-curricular activities. The children participate in such activities with enthusiasm as it makes the school programme more interesting.
- e) BRAC has managed to bring those rural disadvantaged children to the schools whose parents had never had them enrolled due to socio-economic reasons.
- f) Teachers of the NFPE programme are very regular and punctual. They prepare their lessons to make it more effective and interesting for the children. Thus, attendance is regular and teacher/students interaction takes place.

(1) Ministry of Education, Education in Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1983, pg.2.

8. ORGANOGRAM

Organizational Structure



9. Evaluation

Evaluation of the students performance is being done by an ongoing method. Teachers evaluate the achievement of their children and record them in a specially designed proforma supplied to them by the project. Such evaluation helps the teacher take necessary steps for the improvement of those children who are weak as and when necessary. There is no place of summative system of evaluation; children will step into the next higher course on completion of the first years' programme.

Besides this the respective PO. and the project personnel evaluate the childrens performance when they visit the school and suggest necessary measures to overcome the drawbacks.

In this connection it may be mentioned that a pre-test at the beginning and a post test at the end of the training workshop of the teachers, using a specially designed questionnaire, was administered to evaluate the achievement of the training programme.

Necessary measures to evaluate the different aspects of the programme, including the curriculam materials will be adopted as per research design in due time. Finally, the findings of the reasearch will be presented in the form of a research report.

10. Experimental Pre-school Component of NFPE

10.1. Background

The pre-school programme originated after discussions on the fact that lack of school readiness is a very important factor in the dropout syndrome at primary level.

10.2. Objectives

The immediate objective of this experimental effort will be two fold:

1. To assess the performance of the children in the formal primary schools who have completed pre-schooling earlier.
2. For those who do not go to formal schools, to enroll in NFPE and to compare their readiness and achievement to original NFPE enrolling.

10.3. Curriculum

The curriculum contains materials to foster the development of those skills and concepts identified educationally as knowledge required to facilitate the process of learning to read and write and the acquisition of numbers.

The curriculum includes, forms, colours, concepts of big-small, equal to, equal and different, left to right, position and directionality, exercises to train small muscle and eye coordination, acquaintance with letters and written presentation of simple whole words. Learning the number concept, counting recognition of number symbols, simple addition and subtraction, initial acquaintance with families of number. In addition, as guides to the teacher, a half hour session on general information and vocabulary development, a set of units on self awareness ~~and self awareness~~ and self knowledge, the family occupations, transportation, animals and birds, water, weather and rice have been developed.

Games and classroom aides for concrete manipulation and visual stimulation have been made within the limitation of national resources.

Provision have been made for free painting, modelling, reciting singing and playing.

The curriculum and instruction materials for the pre-primary have been developed by the volunteer consultant.

10.4. Evaluation

The evaluation of the kindergarten programme is mainly teacher centred stressing record keeping for each individual child in achievement and attendance.

The long term planned evaluation will come with the evaluation of achievement and performance of the kindergarten population.

10.5. Teacher selection and training

The pre-primary teacher were selected in the same way and received the same training as all teachers of the NFPE programme. To the general training a special two day session was added for the kindergarten teachers.

10.6 Implementation

Three kindergarten schools had been opened with a total registration of 90 children. Two of these schools are in rural areas and one in a slum area within Dhaka. The schools have been functioning for approximately three months now.

The schools are being supervised by a volunteer consultant in team with a member of the NFPE staff.

11. Expansion of NFPE Centres: January - March 1986.

It was proposed in the project proposal of NFPE programme that in 1986 the number of schools would be increased to 45 but NFPE in December 1985 changed its decision and increased the number to 80. This decision was taken after a long deliberation and discussion among the NFPE staffs and Executive Director of BRAC. There were several reasons which prompted NFPE to double the number of schools. The reasons are mentioned below:

- a. Success of the first year was more than expected.
- b. This success created a great impact on the adjacent villages where the parents put pressure both on NFPE and other BRAC staffs to open new schools in their villages.
- c. These new schools were accommodated within NFPE budgets as we could foresee that it would be possible to do so without adversely affecting quality of education.
- d. The expanded programme will afford an opportunity for NFPE to evaluate the curricular when considered as a moderately large scale model.

In 1986, 85 new schools have so far been opened in the 3 project areas where NFPE is in operation from 1985 but all these schools are in new villages. The project activities taken up and completed upto March 1986 are:

- a. Recruitment and orientation of five new programme Organisers.
- b. Selection of sites
- c. Formation of village level committee
- d. Hiring and renovation of 58 new school houses.
- e. Recruitment of teachers for 1986 (Appendix - II, table I)
- f. Training of teachers
- g. Providing logistic support to 80 schools.
- h. Enrolment of pupils for 1986 (Appendix - II)

i. Opening of new schools in March - April 1986.

j. Renovation of schools house of 1985.

Teachers Training:

In 1986 NFPE has taken up a programme to develop a batch of trainers as the demand for teachers trainers is being increasingly felt every year.

12. Conclusion.

BRAC developed an innovative model of primary education in a system of non-formal education. This is the first of its kind in a developing country like Bangladesh. The curriculum and instructional materials, so far developed for the programme, succeeded in creating enthusiasm in the community, particularly among the children and their parents.

Children in NFPE centres are showing keen interest in schools and their progress is encouraging. It is indicated by their high attendance record and progress in performance.

The teaching technique the development of teachers as para professional cadets, community participation especially mothers participation in parents meetings and their enthusiasm in their childrens education are some of the striking features of NFPE.

NFPE has shown definite signs of success in its first year though this is just the begining it appears to have bright future.

It also indicates that NFPE will be an important channel for spreading education to the disadvantaged segment of the community.

13. An account statement of receipts and expenditures for NFPE is given in appendix - III

NFPE - 1985

Teachers in Primary Schools

Appendix - I
Table - II

Name of Camp	Schools Opened in 1985	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Total Teacher	Academic Qualification		Remarks.
		No.	%	No.	%		S.S.C. & above	Below S.S.C.	
Manikganj	7	1	16.66	5	83.34	6	3	3	In Manikganj I Male teacher and in Dhamrai I Female teacher is conducting 2 schools
Dhamrai	6	2	40.00	3	60.00	5	3	2	
Mirzapur	7	5	71.42	2	28.58	7	6	1	
Total	20	8	44.44	10	55.56	18	12	6	

Teachers in pre-primary schools

Manikganj	2	-	-	1	100.00	1	-	1	In Manikganj I teach conducted two pre- primary schools.
Mirzapur	1	-	-	1	100.00	1	1	-	
Total	3	-	-	2	100.00	2	1	1	

NFPE - 1985

Students in Primary Schools

Appendix -I

Table -1

Name of Camp	No. of schools	No. of Boys No. / %		No. of girls No. / %		Total
Manikganj	7	89	44.29	131	59.71	220
Dhamrai	6	87	47.29	97	52.71	184
Mirzapur	7	117	54.17	99	45.83	216
Total	20	293	47.26	327	52.74	620

Students in Pre-primary schools

Name of Camp	No. of schools	No. of Boys No. / %		No. of girls No. / %		Total
Manikganj	2	30	50	30	50	60
Badda	1	15	50	15	50	30
Total	3	45	50	45	50	90

Drop-out in Primary Schools

Appendix - I

Table - 2

Students enrolled	Drop-out	percentage of drop-outs
620	3	0.48%

Average Attendance in Primary Schools

Appendix - I

Table- 3

Name of Area	No. of Schools	Total Enrollment	Average Enrollment	Average Attendance
Manikgong	7	220	31.42	27.77 (88.38%)
Dhemrai	6	184	30.66	27.61 (90.05%)
Mirzapur	7	216	30.85	28.20 (91.41%)
Total	20	620	31.00	27.86 (89.84%)

Average Attendance in pre-primary schools

Name of Area	No. of Schools	Total enrollment	Average enrollment	Average attendance
Manikgong	2	60	30	25.66
Badda	1	30	30	24.50
Total	3	90	30	24.83

NFPE - 1986
Teachers in Primary Schools

Appendix - II
Table - I

Name of Camp	No. of Schools Opened in 1986	Male Teachers No. %	Female Teachers No. %	Total Teachers	Academic qualification S.S.C. & above	Below S.S.C.	Remarks
Krishnapur	7	5 71.42	2 28.58	7	2	5	In Manikganj 1 male teacher is conducting
Betila	10	5 50.00	5 50.00	10	66	4	2 schools (one opened in 85 and other in 86)
Garpura	7	1 14.28	6 85.72	7	5	2	In Dhamrai 4 teachers are conducting 8 schools (5 opened in 85 and 3 opened in 86)
Balirtek	10	5 50.00	5 50.00	10	4	6	In Mirzapur 2 teachers are conducting 4 schools (2 opened in 85 and 2 in 86)
Manikganj	7	1 16.66	5 83.34	6			
Dhamrai	4		1 100.00	1			
Mirzapur	8	3 50.00	3 50.00	6	7	1	
Total	55	20 42.55	27 57.45	47	24	18	

Teachers in pre-primary schools

Manikganj	3		2 100.00	2	1	1	
Mirzapur	2		2 100.00	2	2	-	
Total	5		4 100.00	4	3	1	

NFPT.-1986

Students Enrolled in Primary Schools

Names of area	No. of Schools	Boys		Girls		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	
Krishnapur	7	93	44.28	117	55.72	210
Garpara	7	74	35.23	136	64.77	210
Manikganj	7	76	36.19	134	63.18	210
Balirtek	10	110	36.66	190	63.34	300
Betila	10	120	40.00	180	60.00	300
Mirzapur	8	115	47.91	125	52.09	240
Dhamrai	4	47	39.16	73	60.84	120
Total	53	635	39.93	955	60.07	1590

Students enrolled in Pre-primary - 1986

Name of Camp	No. of schools	No. of boys		No. of girls		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	
Manikganj	3	43	47.77	47	52.23	90
Mirzapur	2	28	46.66	32	53.34	60
Total	5	71	47.33	79	52.67	150