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Understanding Children's Work
An Inter-Agency Research Cooperation Project

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Non-Formal education approaches for child labourers: an issue paper

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November 2006

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Non-Formal education approaches for child labourers: an issue paper

ABSTRACT

Worldwide, an estimated 104 million children are working. Many of them have never attended school or have dropped out very early. About two-thirds of them are girls. Considering that most if not all of these children missing out on primary education are child laborers, efforts to achieve EFA must go hand in hand with efforts to eliminate child labor. Child labor also affects the academic achievement of the considerable number of children who combine school and work, contributing to the early drop-out and entry into full-time work. To these figures one should also add the large number of youth that enter the labor market without or with very limited schooling. The twin challenges posed by out-of-school children and child laborers therefore remain daunting. The paper examines the role of non-formal education (NFE) in helping to meet these challenges. It first reviews international program experience in the areas of NFE and working children and key lessons learned from this experience. Building on this review, it then examines additional research needed to identify where non formal education should fit in the broader effort towards Education For All and child labor elimination.

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1. THE CHALLENGE

1. Worldwide, an estimated 104 million children are working. Many of them have never attended school or have dropped out very early. About two-thirds of them are girls. Considering that most if not all of these children missing out on primary education are child laborers, efforts to achieve EFA must go hand in hand with efforts to eliminate child labor. Child labor also affects the academic achievement of the considerable number of children who combine school and work, contributing to the early drop-out and entry into full-time work. To these figures one should also add the large number of youth that enter the labor market without or with very limited schooling.

2. The twin challenges posed by out-of-school children and child laborers therefore remain daunting. The paper examines the role of non-formal education (NFE) in helping to meet these challenges. It first reviews international program experience in the areas of NFE and working children and key lessons learned from this experience. Building on this review, it then examines additional research needed to identify where non formal education should fit in the broader effort towards Education For All and child labor elimination.

2. TRANSITIONAL EDUCATION FOR CHILD LABORERS

2.1 Rationale

3. Transitional education (TE) programs are aimed at smoothing the transition of child laborers and other vulnerable children into the formal school system. They are based on the premise that child laborers are often difficult to insert directly (back) into the formal education system because of their age, different life experiences and lack of familiarity with the school environment. The well-known physical and psychosocial consequences of child labor – stunted growth, injury, disease including HIV/AIDS, insecurity, anti-social behaviour, low self-esteem, attention deficiency – all invariably have a negative impact on a child's ability to learn and to socialize. Their lack of formal education also frequently leaves them too far behind their peers academically to catch up on their own. If systems and programmes do not take these challenging characteristics into account, then inevitably they will either not reach these children or will fail to retain them in the classroom. TE programs are therefore critical to ensuring that children, once in school, remain there, and are able to learn effectively.

4. The programs are also based on the recognition that the role of non-formal education should not be as an alternative to state-run formal education, but rather as a stepping-stone to mainstreaming children into formal schools as and when they are ready. The field experience of ILO/IPEC and other development partners underscores that providing children with basic literacy and numeracy skills through NFE alone does not ensure that children are permanently withdrawn from work, and that mainstreaming these children into formal systems is therefore critical to ensuring their further education and gainful and skilled employment.

5. Such programs can take numerous forms, with some serving as a bridge to entry or re-entry into the formal education system and others serving as sources of remedial support or special needs education within the formal system. As such, TE programs break down artificial boundaries between what are traditionally considered "formal" and "non-formal" learning arrangements.

2.2 Policy options

6. International programming experience points to two main policy options for easing the transition of child laborers back into the formal school system (a) remedial education, providing returning children and child laborers with special remedial support within the regular classroom context; and (b) "bridging" education, involving intensive compensatory or "catch-up" courses designed to raise academic proficiency, offered in either non-formal community schools or in school facilities prior to, during or after regular classes.

7. *Remedial education measures* providing returning children with remedial support in the regular classroom are consistent with broader efforts towards inclusive education and mainstreaming disadvantaged children in the regular school system. Depending primarily on existing school facilities and human resources, they are often the most cost-effective and sustainable TE option. Mainstreaming programs have been piloted with apparent success in countries such as India, Cambodia and Bangladesh:

- The India *Balsakhi* program, run by the NGO Pratham, The program involves the hiring of young local women ("*Balsakhis*") with the equivalent of a high school education to provide remedial education to disadvantaged or lagging students within the formal school structure. The program, begun in 1994, now reaches over 161,000 children in over 20 cities. *Balsakhi* is one of the few remedial education programs to have been systematically evaluated. The evaluation showed the program to be both very effective and extremely cost-efficient. The test scores of students from participating schools in two cities increased by 0.12 and 0.16 standard deviations in the first year, and by 0.15 and 0.30 standard deviations in the second year. At the margin the program was 12-16 times more effective than resources spent on teachers. The program did not, however, appear to have a significant effect on attendance.

- The Cambodia "Mentors" program, involves reintegrating Phnom Penh street children into the formal education schools through the help of mentors. Following a brief training period, these locally-recruited persons monitor and provide remedial support within the classroom to mainstreamed children during their first year in school;

- In a similar program in Rangpur, Bangladesh, BRAC-[2], CB-[3] and IPEC-supported non-formal education teachers monitor and provide technical guidance and moral support to former working children. Program records show that when regularly supervised and guided, the mainstreamed children performed well and were more likely to be retained in the school system. They also proved very useful in easing the work burden of the formal classroom teacher, and relations between formal and non-formal teachers were found to be generally very good.

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[2] Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee

[3] Chhinnamukul Bangladesh

Table 1. A summary of policy options for providing transitional education for child laborers

Policy option	Description	Lessons learned
(a) Remedial education	Providing returning children and working children with special remedial support within the regular classroom context.	• Teachers are not well qualified and many lack training in even basic teaching skills, calling into question their ability to cope with additional children in their classes with substantial remedial learning needs. • In contexts in which class sizes are already large, or physical space is limited, it may not be possible to accommodate additional children in existing classes. • Mainstreaming programs depend primarily on existing school facilities and human resources, contributing to cost-effectiveness and sustainability.
(b) "Bridging" education	Extra-curricular "catch-up" education involving separate, intensive catch-up courses making use of school facilities held prior to, during or after regular classes.	• In circumstances in which schools are already functioning in two shifts, or all classroom space is occupied, there may not be time or physical space to accommodate additional classes of remedial learners. • Requires additional teaching resources. In some models, regular teachers have been recruited to run these courses, for a small supplement to the regular income. • Course instructors, whether drawn from the existing teacher corps or from the community, require some training on remedial education. • Requires development of special teaching/learning packages that permit progression at an accelerated pace.
	Establishment of non-formal networks of community schools, offering intensive courses designed to raise academic proficiency to a level permitting entry into the formal school system.	• Non-formal programs require substantial grassroots-level mobilization and organization, often making them difficult to scale up and sustain. • They also require strong community-school links to be effective • In the absence of a link to the formal education system, non-formal education programs run the danger of evolving into parallel, frequently inferior, education systems for advantaged children, rather than as bridges to the regular classroom

8.   *"Bridging" education courses* provide children with a more gradual introduction into the school environment, and a teacher dedicated exclusively to their learning needs. They are designed to ensure that children have good foundations in basic literacy and numeric skills and the prerequisite attitudes and habits for learning. The most common model involves the establishment of non-formal networks of community schools offering intensive courses designed to raise academic proficiency to a level permitting entry into the formal school system at the age-appropriate grade level. Such programs are useful in hard-to-reach areas lacking formal school facilities and for groups of disadvantaged children (e.g., street children) outside the reach of State structures. There are numerous examples of programs of this type:

- Networks of community schools have been established in providing marginalized out-of-school children with learning opportunities and a bridge to the formal system The India *Janshala* program, a joint Government-UN initiative, serves as a vehicle for mobilizing community involvement in schooling, introducing teaching innovation and meeting learning needs of disadvantaged children. Since its launch in 1998, it has opened more than 2,000 alternative schools, trained 58,000 teachers and established Village Education Committees in 15,000 villages.

- An India Back-to-School pilot program, linked to *Janshala* and administered by the Andra Pradesh Social Welfare Department, offers bridging courses to

school non-entrants and early drop-outs in order to raise their academic proficiency to a level permitting their re-entry into the formal education system. The pilot program was launched in 1997 and by 2000 was reaching around 100,000 children aged 7 -12 years each year.

- The Egypt Community Schools project has played a similar role, providing hard-to-reach rural children, particularly girls, with basic education equivalency allowing them to continue to preparatory school in the formal system. The initial UNICEF-supported project that established 200 community schools during the 1990s has now been incorporated into a national Girls' Education Initiative aimed at reaching half a million out-of-school girls in Egypt by 2007.

- The Basic Education for Hard-to-Reach Urban Children project in Bangladesh is a large-scale alternative education effort specifically targeting working children. Based on an "earn and learn" strategy, the project offers a two-year bridging course to working children at the end of which they receive an equivalency of grade 3 and can be admitted to mainstream education. The course runs two hours per day, six days per week, but timing is flexible in order that children are also able to continue working. In 2001, the project covered 351,000 working children aged 8-14 years in six major cities. It involved more than 150 NGO partners.

2.3 Lessons learned

9.   *Linkages with the formal education system:* In the absence of a link to the formal education system, non-formal education programs risk evolving into parallel, frequently inferior, education systems for disadvantaged children, rather than as bridges to the regular classroom. The integration of non-formal education into the legal framework of basic education helps ensure that students in the non-formal sub-sector are counted in national education statistics and that they are able to move between the non-formal and formal sub-sectors within a diversified basic education system. Integration also helps ensure minimum standards with regard to provision and the assessment of learning outcomes, and enables NFE programs to benefit from Ministry of Education inspection and supervision services, curriculum development and teacher training.

10. *Teacher capacity*: Teachers in many developing country contexts are not well qualified and many lack training in even basic teaching skills. They are also typically poorly remunerated and offered few career opportunities, resulting low levels of motivation and the need to supplement their incomes through taking on other work. These concerns call into question teachers' ability to cope with additional demands of transitional education, and the participatory teaching and learning facilitation methodologies that accompany it. They underscore the need for careful selection and appropriate training of teachers, and for the provision of appropriate teacher support at the classroom level. Placing local teaching assistants in the classroom, as in the India *Balsakhi* program (see above), may be one way of addressing some of these concerns. Providing regular teachers with a small supplement to the regular income for providing extra-curricular catch-up courses has also been piloted with success in some countries.

11. *Age-specific approaches*: Transitional education interventions for children removed from hazardous work need to be related to the approximate age of the child and depend on the level of his/her literacy and psycho-social development (see

figure). Mainstreaming or direct re-entry is most appropriate for younger returning children, whose remedial learning needs and adjustment difficulties are lesser than their older counterparts. Separate, non-formal TE measures are often best suited for children in the latter half of the basic education age range, as they face a more difficult transition back to formal schooling and face the risk of social stigmatization if placed in classes with younger students. For returning children beyond the age of basic education, vocational and skills training, designed to impart basic skills and knowledge of relevance to the job market and community life, is often most appropriate.
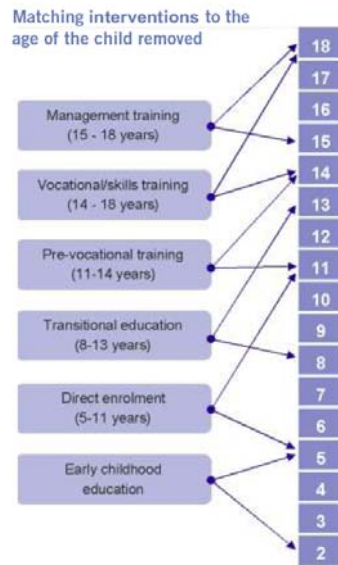
Source: ILO/IPEC, *Combating Child Labour through Education*, An information kit for teachers, educators and their organisations, Book 3, Geneva, 2003

12. *Learning environment*: Appropriate physical premises and learning materials are critical ingredients to successful TE programs. In contexts in which class sizes are already large, or physical space is limited, it may not be possible to accommodate additional children in existing classes or to accommodate additional classes of remedial learners. Community-based TE programs often lack physical premises, equipment and teaching/learning resources, needed for created an effective learning environment.

3.   FLEXIBLE SCHOOLING

3.1 Rationale

13. Flexible schooling (FS) programs are targeted specifically to working children, and are designed to make school more accommodating of the exigencies of work. These programs are not therefore aimed primarily at reducing child work *per se*, but rather at increasing school attendance and reducing drop-out among child laborers. Analyses of household decisions concerning children's school and work point to a hard core of children whose parents will not return them to school even in the presence of an attendance incentive. While cultural factors also play a role, many of

these children are left out of school because their time on work (household chores or economic activity) is seen as being too valuable to be lost on schooling.

14. Flexible schooling programs are designed to balance the learning and earning needs of families and children by facilitating fluid work/study schedules. They encompass formal, non-formal and work-based learning arrangements, and, ideally, help children who need or want to work to move back and forth between systems considered to be equally valid, rather than one the "poor cousin" of the other.

3.2 Policy options

15. International programming experience points to three main policy options for helping children to combine work and school more easily: (a) flexible delivery modes, designed to make schooling more accommodative of children's work schedules; (b) adaptive curricula, designed to make course contents more relevant to the lives of working children; and (c) substitute non-formal education, designed to impart basic literacy, numeracy and life skills at times not in conflict with work (Table 2).

16. Flexible school scheduling and curricula are often of particular relevance in rural agricultural contexts, where the sheer numbers of children at work make its elimination an unrealistic initial policy objective, and where there is thus a need for strategies to accommodate work and school. Substitute non-formal education, on the other hand, might be more appropriate in an urban context, where street children and other hard-core working children beyond the reach of State structures, are found. For hard-to-reach groups of working children such as street children, and other groups with few prospects of entering formal schooling, non-formal programs may represent the only chance of acquiring basic life skills and knowledge.

17. There are a variety of possible *flexible delivery modes* making schooling more accommodative of children's work schedules, including setting daily school hours to accommodate daily work schedules; setting the yearly academic calendar to reflect local conditions; adding additional school shifts during off-work hours; and introduction of independent study modules to compensate for class time lost to work. These measures are typically combined with *adaptive curricula* reflecting the socio-cultural realities of working children and tailored to their needs and interests. Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Philippines, Peru, Bolivia, Kenya are among the many countries experimenting with flexible scheduling and curricula for working children:

- The BRAC program in Bangladesh is probably the best known scheme. In this program, school times are set by local parents, and the school calendar is adapted to fit local considerations such harvest seasons.

- The multi-partner alternative basic education program for children of seasonal migrant workers in Mexico, for example, establishes learning sites in the camps where the children are; tailors its schedule to dates of harvesting; generates curriculum materials based on the specific indigenous languages of the children and life-stories created by them; and involves children in the management of the classroom through student assemblies. To avoid marginalizing children further by being a 'second-rate poor school for the poor', the program links with the formal school system. The curriculum is accredited at the first two grade levels (further levels are planned), allowing graduates to move into the regular system as they can.

- In Guatemala, a number of flexible scheduling measures are used to make schooling more compatible with the work-related demands on children's time. One measure allows children who spend the morning working on farms to begin school later in the day, with the fewer class hours compensated for by more time on independent study. Another allows students to complete 1,000 hours of schooling with no time restriction to get primary school certification.

- In Nicaragua, "Extra-Age" program, classes are taught in modules to permit maximum attendance during off-work hours, and separate extra-age classrooms are established to avoid the social stigma associated with older children attending classes with younger children.

- A project implemented by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports in the Philippines allows children to attend school in the morning and report for work in the afternoon.

- Peru has made the school attendance of working children a particular priority. The Peru Child and Adolescent Code guarantees special school schedules that allow children who work to attend school regularly. A number of Peruvian schools have established multiple shifts – morning, afternoon and night – to allow working children to fit schooling into their work schedules, and teachers are charged with providing extra attention to children who lag behind because of work.

- In Bolivia an alternative youth education program targeting girls, street children, child workers and at-risk youth offers night classes with specially designed curricula that are flexible and adapted to the specific needs of these groups.

- A flexible schooling initiative in Kenya offers a dual curriculum – one providing job skills for those who might not go on to further education, and the other more closely aligned with the formal school curriculum for those who might wish to continue their education. Flexibility is built into the program, enabling learners to attend classes at their convenience during the day, as well as allowing them to re-enter after dropping out. Education against drug addiction, on HIV/AIDS, and about environment and gender issues is included in the curriculum to make it more relevant to contemporary needs.

18. *Non-formal substitute education* is designed to provide disadvantaged children, and particularly working children, with basic literacy, numeracy and life skills, but not necessarily formal school accreditation. Courses are frequently held at the work site, with lessons conducted at times and for a duration that accommodates children's work schedule. Non-formal substitute education programs run counter to the broad strategies of mainstreaming and inclusive education and as such are typically targeted only to children with no prospects of entering the formal system. Country-level examples include Uganda and Kenya:

- The alternative basic education for the Karaimojong, a semi-nomadic people living in a fragile and precarious ecological environment in north-eastern Uganda, was officially launched in September 1998. It provides an alternative and appropriate educational option for children who, as a result of various economic, environmental and social problems, have had no access to conventional primary school education in Karamoja. The targeted number of

children to benefit from the initiative during this pilot phase is 35,000. Currently, 8,000 children are enrolled in the program.

- The Kenya Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund initiative is designed to equip street children with literacy skills, vocational skills and general knowledge, delivered at their own pace. It integrates many different pedagogical models, e.g., role-play, theatre, free association and demonstration, helping to ensure that the diverse learning needs of this group are met. The program is designed to promote the dignity self-esteem of street children, both essential to the process of rehabilitation.

Table 2. A summary of policy options introducing flexible schooling for working children

Policy option	Description	Lessons learned
(a) Flexible delivery modes	Measures designed to make schooling more accommodative of children's work schedules	• Ethical issues associated with attempting to accommodate rather than combat children's work; forms of work that are harmful should not be accommodated but rather targeted for elimination. • Identifying appropriate balance between work and school, so that work does not interfere unduly with the time and energy children have for study. • Requires strong community participation to ensure flexibility measures reflect local conditions • Resource and administrative implications of introducing extra shifts and other flexibility measures
(b) Adaptive curricula	Special adaptations of course contents to make more relevant to the needs and interests of disadvantaged children	• Capacity of teachers, many lacking training in even basic teaching skills, to introduce specialized course contents and lessons. • Requires development of localized learning materials
(c) Non-formal substitute education	Designed to provide disadvantaged children, and particularly working children, with basic literacy, numeracy and life skills, but not directly linked to the formal education system.	• Risk becoming parallel, inferior education systems for disadvantaged children; often insufficient to meet children's educational needs • Where such programs are run by the employers of children, they run the risk of providing a stamp of legitimacy on child work. • Counter to broad strategies of mainstreaming and inclusive education being pursued by the government

3.3 Lessons learned

19. *Legitimization of child labor*: Ethical issues associated with attempting to accommodate rather than combat children's work need to be looked at closely when introducing flexible schooling measures, in order to avoid legitimizing child labor. Agreements with employers, for example, to free their child workers for a few hours each week for remedial learning is likely to have very limited educational benefit and risks being seen by employers as a stamp of approval for their use of child workers. This is a particular concern for forms of work that pose threats to children's health and safety, such as the traditional handicrafts industry, where such employer agreements have been reached in several countries. Along a similar line, flexible school scheduling and other efforts designed to make it easier for children to combine school and work should only be applied to benign forms of work. Other, hazardous, forms of work should be targeted for elimination.

20. *Balance between "earning" and "learning":* The effect of any flexible schooling initiative on the balance between work and school, or between a child's right to learn and a family's need to earn, also needs to be considered carefully. It is important that

children who want and need to work should be able to do so at levels and in situations where they can still participate in education and be protected from harm. Children's time on work, whatever form this work takes, should not interfere unduly with the time and energy children have for study or with children's right to leisure.

21. *Institutional capacity*: Introducing extra shifts and other flexible delivery modes has resource and administrative implications which need to be looked at closely. Developing locally-relative course curricula and pedagogic materials is human resource intensive and dependent on successfully marshalling local expertise. The capacity of teachers, many lacking basic training, to introduce specialized course contents and lessons grounded in participatory methods and tailored to the unique learning needs of working children also needs to be examined.

4. STRENGTHENING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ON NFE AND CHILD LABOR: RESEARCH ISSUES OF RELEVANCE TO POLICY DESIGN

22. The previous sections briefly illustrated some of the programs that have been employed in the area of non formal education for child laborers. This section briefly examines some of the research priorities and information gaps that need to be filled in order to ensure informed policy in this area.

23.   In this section, we emphasize research gaps not linked to the characteristics of program delivery, but rather to the role of non formal education as a strategy against the negative effects of child labour and to its links with the formal education system. As we stressed in the introduction, the number of children who could benefit from non formal education is very large, and we believe that some attention should be paid to the actual potential of non formal education to reach such large numbers.

24.   Beyond the technical details of project implementation, is necessary to assess the actual impact of non formal education and the issues that its scaling up might pose. In fact, we would see as an outcome of the research priorities outlined below an answer to the more general question of whether non formal education is the correct instrument to address the need of such large number of children or whether its role should be limited to special situations.

4.1 Program "mapping" and identification of good practices

25. A systematic mapping of the wide variety of policy and program experiences in both transitional education and flexible schooling is needed as a first step towards the identification of good practices. These NFE programs have taken a wide variety of forms, either because of trying to address different needs or because of using different approaches to address the same need. There is now a substantial body of program experience that could be used to compile a set of good practices and/or guidelines for action.

26. Such a mapping would need to examine program documentation with an eye towards bringing together information on a wide variety of variables, including:

- geographical distribution

- classification of program by type of provider (e.g. community/faith-based, private, public or mixed);

- pedagogical approach; geographic coverage;

- beneficiary population; number of teachers/instructors;

- per unit costs;

- education programs and other services provided (e.g. accelerated "catch-up" learning, specific skills training, basic literacy and numeracy, etc.);

- physical facilities and instructional materials;

- management structure; and

- stakeholder involvement.

27. The mapping of NFE programs should also aim at providing an assessment of the relative dimension of the programs, in order to obtain a picture not only of the instruments used, but also of the distribution of resources invested. It would useful to compare the amount of resources invested in NFE with those utilized in other strategies to cope with the needs of working children.

28. The next step, following the systematic and concise mapping, would be to try to identify good practices within the different approaches utilized. On obvious source of information would be the program documentation and reports compiled by international agencies, bilateral donors and major NGOs. However, a direct approach might also prove necessary, e.g., by identifying the evaluation reports of (a sample of) the different programs.

4.2 Evaluation and assessment

29. Many of the non-formal education initiatives targeting child laborers are insufficiently documented and evaluated. For this reason, they remain like "black boxes" in terms of the difference they are making in reducing the exclusion from education of this vulnerable group of children. Little systematic information is available about what is happening inside this box, about which and how many child laborers are being reached, and with what impact. This limits the lessons that current NFE efforts offer in terms of which policy approaches are most effective or are best candidates for broad-scale replication.

30.   As evaluations are relatively scarce, there is little room here for review studies. More attention should be given to piloting methodologically-sound studies. As it is well known, methodological approaches are essential to perform a correct evaluation. Particular attention should be paid to an impact assessment of selected program(s). Impact assessment requires data that allow for correct statistical inference about the effects of a program. Such data are not readily available. There are two main directions that the researcher could follow: a) look for existing data that, through matching with program information, would allow reliable estimate; b) try to address the issue at the source by designing and implementing the necessary data collection jointly with the implementation of a program. While care is necessary in designing such data collection, the costs of the research are not necessarily large. Treatment and control groups can be limited in size, especially if the program is also of limited scope (e.g. limited coverage area, small target group, etc.), but still convey very useful quantitative information on the impact of the program.

31. Evaluation criteria could include the following:

- *program sustainability*: look in to the issue of sustainability of programs, with special attention to the issue of integration with the main education system or through other institutional channels;

- *replicability*: the extent to which the approach followed is dependent of local factors, thereby limiting its applicability to other contexts;

- *curriculum relevance*: the extent to which curricula respond to local learning needs and local socio-cultural realities;

- *learning outcomes*: student achievement tests of content knowledge provide one indicator of impact. In the context of remedial education, changes, positive or negative, in the outcomes of other, non-beneficiary students, should also be looked at; and

- *school survival:* the extent to which NFE programs succeed in retaining child laborers in the education system.

4.3 Integration (consistency) with the formal education system

32. Avoiding the creation of parallel non-formal lines of education should be an over-riding consideration in the design of supply-side interventions. Many NFE initiatives have been criticized for creating a second, inferior, education track for working children, and not acting as bridges to (re)entry into the formal system. While stand-alone NFE programs may be appropriate for older, long-term drop-outs, there seems to be some consensus that the overarching emphasis of informal and remedial education programs should be equipping children to enter and succeed in regular schooling.

33. A critical review of the work and experiences that have led to this consensus and, eventually, a critical reappraisal of its main conclusion would be of interest. This should possibly lead to an assessment of the role of NFE vis-à-vis the formal education system and to a clear identification of the relative roles of the two systems. It would be of interest to identify the situations in which experience and theory shows that the best interest of the children and youth is achieved without mainstreaming NFE in the formal education system (e.g. older children, children that have suffered severe physical or psychological health damages, children that need reintegration also from traumatic experiences like child soldiers).

4.4 Scaling up

34. Transitional education and flexible schooling programs tend to be, with few exceptions, of relatively small scale, particularly viewed against the large size of the out of school population. While piloting should ideally be short-term and catalytic, testing models which can then be mainstreamed into national policies and replicated on a broader scale, this mainstreaming and replication does not appear to be occurring in the case of many NFE pilot programs for working children. Why are NFE programs typically of limited coverage? Answering this question will be critical to assessing the potential of NFE as a vehicle for addressing the education rights of out-of-school working children. The following areas of research seem of particular relevance in this context:

- identification of the approaches suitable for scaling up, also looking at international experience on the few large scale programs;

- the challenges of scaling up: bottlenecks, institutional constraints, political constraints, the need for community mobilization, the need for systematic evaluation of pilot experience to guide scaling up, etc;

- links between non formal education, vocational training and labor market outcomes

- cost of extensive non formal education. Two case studies one relative to a country with relatively few beneficiaries and the other with a large population of uneducated children/youth. It would be important to assess the resource needs for covering most of the beneficiaries and assess the budgetary feasibility.

- how to address the issue of the links between the formal and non formal education systems when the latter is of large scale.

4.5 Impact on labor market outcomes

35. much more difficult to assess in the absence of panel data… if education systems are to attract children from marginalized social groups, there must be an immediate benefit in terms of the transition from school to work.

36. Research could focus on the long-term effects of CP interventions. Compensatory programs seek to decrease poverty and inequality. If long-term data became available that followed CP students through adulthood, that data could show whether CPs decrease poverty and inequality among adults.

37. ■ Research could also conduct qualitative evaluation of the effect of CP support on parents and community involvement in education. CPs may inspire parents to more strongly support public education in ways that affect student participation andachievement; if so, capitalizing on the potential support of parents could magnify the effect of CPs.

ANNEX 1. REACHING CHILD LABORERS WITH EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES: SELECTED INTERNATIONAL POLICY EXPERIENCE

Table 1. Selected international policy experience: REMEDIAL EDUCATION

Country	Date	Project/Organisation	General description
			Remedial education
Bangladesh	1997	Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Children/Government in collaboration with UNICEF	It provides 2-year basic literacy education to working children living in urban slums. .It consists in a two-year course, two hours a day, six days a week. At the end of the course children achieve an equivalency of grade 3 and can be admitted to mainstream education. It covers 351,000 working children, who are between the ages of 8-14 years, in 6 major cities of Bangladesh
Brazil	1998	Program for Accelerated Learning/Government	It designs special classes to advance children quickly through earlier grades so that they can become enrolled in the classes that are appropriate for their age. In 1998, the program enrolled 1.2 million students in the classes.
Honduras		María Auxiliadora Institute and Save the Children Honduras	They provide informal education and vocational training to adolescents in domestic service in Tegucigalpa. Comayaguela, and other cities in the country.
India		National Child Labor Projects (NCLPs)/ Government	Under NCLP projects, 1800 non-formal schools have been opened and approximately 105,000 children have been enrolled in these schools. In response to lessons learned and budget constraints, some NCLP centers are being consolidated by increasing funding to areas with high levels of child labor and other under-utilized centers are being closed.
India		M.Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MV Foundation)	The M.V. Foundation, was established in 1981. It began work in the area of child labor in 1991 and has grown into a complex organization employing a wide range of strategies to achieve its twin objectives of eradicating all forms of child labor and universalizing education. The organization set up a residential camp to prepare children of nine years and above for formal education. Bridge courses were devised to help the children achieve competency levels appropriate to their age. After the course, they were enrolled in formal schools in classes appropriate for their age.
India	1998	Janshala/Government in association with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO and ILO,	Started in 1998, the program now covers nine states – Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orrissa and Maharashtra. In the initial stage, every state program carried out intensive micro-planning exercises to identify the issues of out-of-school children, primary school infrastructure and to generate awareness in the community. Following this, Village Education Committees (VECs) were formed/reorganized. These VECs are actively involved in school improvement and other activities for universal enrollment and retention of children in primary and alternative schools. Some of the major activities include training of teachers, setting up of alternative schools in small remote habitations, conducting camps for identification of children with disabilities and the necessary strategy of the rehabilitation and therapy, and setting up of bridge courses.

Country	Date	Project/Organisation	General description
			Remedial education (cont'd)
India	2003	Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project/Government-World Bank	The project will also finance bridge schools which will run short- and long-term remedial courses to prepare out-of-school children and school dropouts between ages 7-14 to enter the formal education system. Sixty-four residential schools for 560 girl children per school primarily of scheduled castes, for admission between ages 9-14 will be constructed and completed by March 2004. These schools will ensure that girls who graduate from the bridge camps at grade five continue their schooling at secondary level. In the absence of such residential facilities, these girls are at risk of dropping out of the education system and reverting to work, due to absence of upper primary schools close to their homes, lack of security, and cultural factors.
Indonesia	2001	Integrated Approach of Non-Formal Education to Combat Child Labor/ Ministry of National Education and ILO	The ILO launched a program to provide 19.2 million children with improved basic education by improving the non-formal education system to suit the needs of working children. The program first started in the three provinces of West Java, East Java and South Sulawesi.
Lesotho		Non-Formal Education Project/Government-UNICEF	The Non-Formal Education Project, run by the Lesotho Distance Teaching Center (LDTC), promotes non-formal learning opportunities in the country. The LDTC's Basic Education Unit coordinates literacy and numeracy courses and non-formal education for children and adults. Herdboys represent a large portion of the children that benefit from this program.
Nicaragua		Extra Age/Ministry of Education	The Ministry of Education and other government and non-governmental entities have taken measures to expand educational opportunities, such as opening "extra-age" classrooms in urban elementary schools.
Nigeria		Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare in collaboration with UNICEF and the Center for Non-Formal Education and Training (CENFET)	The three institutions have worked on a non-formal education curriculum for girls, children without access to school, and school dropouts, particularly those from Koranic schools where girls account for 60 percent of all dropouts. These efforts have contributed to an increase in enrollment, particularly among girls, and enhanced opportunities for non-formal and nomadic education. In a pilot project in Sokoto state in Northern Nigeria, enrollment in basic education rose from 914 pupils in 1996 to 115,525 pupils in 2000, of which 73,291 had passed their exams. The project recorded a less than 0.2 percent dropout rate, with fewer girls dropping out than boys.
Peru		Boys, Girls and Adolescent Street Workers program/ Instituto Nacional de Bienestar Familiar (INABIF)	The program offers services including school support, housing, reinsertion into the government school system, reinsertion into the family, and vocational training. From April to June 2001, the program provided services to approximately 7,000 children and adolescents a month in 17 cities.
Philippines	Late 1980s	Project from the Bureau of Non Formal Education (BNFE) of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)	The aim is to reduce the number of dropouts and improve achievement in elementary schools. It consists of teaching modules for out-of-school working children in order they can re-enter formal schools and complete the basic education cycle and qualify for secondary education or vocational training. In 1999, BNFE began a non-formal education accreditation and equivalency system (NFE A&E) to help children over the age of 15 who drop out of school to gain school certification so that they can enter post-secondary education levels of education.

Tanzania	1999	COBET (Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania)/Ministry of Education and Culture with support from UNICEF	The program was initiated to provide basic education to children, girls in particular, who have either never had the chance to enter primary education or who have dropped out-of-school. Under normal circumstances, primary education in Tanzania takes seven years. However, the COBET curriculum has been compressed to fit into just a three-year period after which the children qualify for entry examinations into secondary schools just like those who went through the seven-year period. Characteristic of COBET is that there are no direct costs involved, the children do not wear uniform and the school days are shorter, leaving time for other activities such as household chores or income generating activities. In COBET, child-friendly teaching and learning methods are used and corporal punishment is not allowed.
Uganda		Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) program	In nomadic areas of Moroto and Kotido (Karamoja) the program is focusing its activities on bringing literacy to children who are not in formal schools. These children are taught in their manyattas (homes) at their convenient time, using instructors from their communities. The program reached over 9,200 children in 1999, of which 67 percent were girls.
Zambia			One approach being used in Zambia to address the needs of vulnerable children who cannot otherwise access schooling is the establishment of community schools, which condense the regular seven-year curriculum found in government schools into four years in order to help children who have fallen behind their peers to catch up. The number of community schools has risen from 20 in 1990 to over 350 in 2000. Children in these schools are also not required to pay for school fees or uniforms. Teachers for these community schools are usually supported by NGOs, and as a standard for classroom instruction, many teachers use the SPARK (School, Participation, Access and Relevant Knowledge) manual developed by the Zambian Community School Secretariat (ZCSS).

Table 2. Selected international policy experience: FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES

Country	Date	Project/Organisation	General description
Flexible schedules			
Bolivia		Alternative Youth Education program (EJA)/Vice-Ministry of Alternative Education	It targets girls, street children, children and adolescent workers, and at-risk youth. The program is designed to keep children and adolescents in school by offering them night classes with specially designed curricula that are flexible and adapted to the population's specific needs.
Guatemala	1997	Different governmental programs	Different programs based on a flexible teaching structure oriented to the students in order to make school schedules compatible with those of working children in rural areas (missing school hours are supplied with additional independent study). For example, one program allows students to complete 1,000 hours of school with no time restriction to get primary school certification. Another program involves mail correspondence education with no time restrictions for completion.
Mexico		Program from PRONJAG	It provides increased access to basic education for children of migrant farm workers that live away from their place of origin for several months a year. It offers educational modules enabling migrant children to complete a grade without attending the same school for an entire academic year.
Peru		Ministry of Education	Offers three shifts during the day (morning, noon, night) and includes a flexible curriculum to working children permitting teachers to adapt instruction to their needs and interests. The school directors are responsible for checking to make sure that work does not affect school attendance and performance. They are also responsible for periodically informing the proper authority about the performance levels of the student-workers.
Philippines		Project from the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)	Offers a work-study program in which children attend school in the morning and report for work in the afternoon. Child workers are at the same time directed to less dangerous work.
Uganda		Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education (COPE) initiative	It targets children aged 10-16 years that have never attended school or dropped out before acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills. A practical curriculum and shorter instruction time of three to four hours a day allows children to combine schooling with other demands on their time. The program reaches over 3,600 children in four districts.