

# Template No. 6 . . . . .

*Early Childhood Counts*

## Primary School Programs

### QUESTIONS

### DISCUSSION

#### CHILDREN SERVED

Who would the program serve?

Presumably all the children in a community should have access to primary school. All should be encouraged to attend.

#### LOGISTICS

Where is the school located?

It should be located within easy walking distance of the majority of the children.

#### TEACHER

Who is the teacher?

If possible they should be from the community or a nearby location to facilitate both their ability to be available and their understanding of the community.

What training is she/he provided?

The teacher should be fully trained (Certificate level) before beginning teaching. Then there should be periodic refresher courses to update the teacher's skills and knowledge.

What are her/his conditions of work?

Most teachers are under-paid and under-valued so they have little commitment to their work. If parents and the community are supportive of the teacher this helps to improve morale and the quality of teaching.

#### CURRICULUM

What curriculum should be taught?

In most contexts there is a government curriculum that teachers need to follow. In many instances there is a need for curricular reform to:

- bring together academics and skills
- bring school in line with the cultural milieu
- bring school in line with the socio-economic development of community
- make learning more relevant and active for children.

## CURRICULUM (continued)

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What materials are available?

Many teachers are asked to teach without appropriate books and learning aides. This increases the probability that they will dictate what children are to learn. Textbooks and supportive materials need to be made available.

## METHODOLOGY

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How are children being taught?

The majority of teachers teach through a rote memorization process. Children are not actively involved in learning, nor engaged in problem-solving and thinking. Teachers need to be encouraged to change their teaching methods to promote more active involvement of the children.

There needs to be a linkage between children's earlier experiences (at home or in an ECCD program) and the primary school to facilitate children's transitions.

## EVALUATION

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How do we want to evaluate children's primary school experience?

Some indirect indicators of the quality of the primary school include:

- Repetition rates
- Drop-out rates
- Children's ability to get into secondary school

More direct evaluation would be to compare achievement scores of children from the community primary school with children attending others schools in the area and nationally.