

**EDUCATION
OF
BLIND
CHILDREN
IN
CEYLON**

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Survey Report
On
The Education of Blind Children
In
Ceylon

BY

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PROPOSALS
OF THE
AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR OVERSEAS
BLIND

1. It is proposed that the American Foundation for Overseas Blind should send on educational consultant for a three year period in order to :
 - (a) develop and establish a teacher training program for certain of the current teachers as well as newly recruited teachers for future employment in the schools for the blind and in integrated programs for blind children;
 - (b) organize seminars and meetings for the orientation of educational officers (administrators);
 - (c) establish a system for braille publishing and distribution among the several schools and integrated programs;
 - (d) participate in the development of long term plans for education of blind children including expected growth in the integrated programs;
 - (e) organize surveys to locate blind children.
2. It is proposed that the American Foundation for Overseas Blind should provide consultative assistance :
 - (a) in the preparation of a coordinated rehabilitation plan with a bias toward preparing more of the blind adults for employment in industry and commerce;
 - (b) in training local staff in the areas of industrial vocational training and placement, and in orientation and mobility.

3. It is proposed that the American Foundation for Overseas Blind should provide machinery and tools for such vocational training.

The above proposals will depend upon certain courses of action taken by the Ceylon Government agreed upon by the Ministries of Education and Social Services and the American Foundation for Overseas Blind. Participation by national agencies (such as the National Council for the Deaf and the Blind) and international agencies (such as UNICEF) should also be agreed upon in advance.

FOREWORD

During his two visits to Ceylon in October 1962 and October 1965, the Director of the Far East Regional Office of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, held discussions with many persons concerned directly and indirectly with services to blind persons. An interest was expressed by the Minister of Education and others in the integrated system of education for blind children which has been successfully operating many years in certain western countries and which has recently been introduced into certain African and Asian countries.

An invitation was extended by the Ministry of Education and the National Council for the Deaf and the Blind to the AFOB to send an educational consultant to Ceylon. The consultant would review the existing facilities for blind children and make recommendations concerning improvement or expansion—with particular reference to the advisability of introducing integration of blind children in Ceylon. The interest shown by the Ministry of Education is particularly significant in view of Resolution No. 1.211 passed at the General Conference of UNESCO in 1964 which specifically urged governments to prepare plans for the education of the handicapped, including the blind.

Accordingly, Dr. Jeanne R. Kenmore, AFOB Consultant in Education, was sent to Ceylon for one month beginning March 5, 1966. The following report was made possible by the exceptional cooperation offered by all persons involved in the education and rehabilitation of the blind.

INTRODUCTION

Ceylon is justly proud of a system of education which is free through the university level. Although students buy books, supplies, uniforms, and transportation (if needed), there is no cost to them for tuition. A higher proportion of students are, therefore, able to continue in school for more years than would otherwise be the case. Nationalization of schools and the adoption of official national languages have contributed to more uniform standards among the schools. New texts with material appropriate for Ceylon have appeared frequently in the last 15 years. Creative leadership has sought to make education not only free, but of high quality.

Schools for handicapped children have not thus far been included in full measure. While many of the statements to be made in this report might apply to facilities serving many types of handicapped children, the discussion will be restricted to those serving blind children.

Although the Ministry of Education is able to provide some teachers on the basis of average attendance of blind children in registered special schools for the blind, and the Ministry of Social Services is able to give occasional grants for buildings, as well as Rs. 25 per month per child for maintenance, the largest portion of the expense is left to religious groups, private citizens, or socially-minded organizations.

As a result, each school for blind children is autonomous, responsible only to the committee, board, or organization bearing the major part of the cost. The minimal visits of governmental inspectors in reality provide no communication between the Ministries and the schools for it would seem that any standards of instruction or child care are acceptable to inspectors knowing little about handicapped children. The seven schools for the blind currently enrolling 332 children need and want guidance and support beyond the present amount available to them.

Ceylon has many critical problems in general education which might be deemed of more importance than the education of a few children who are blind. Yet, special education for those children who have exceptional needs (estimated at 12% of the child population) is a vital part of any country's total

educational program, since without education such children can create an unnecessary drain upon the country's economy. Less than 1% of the estimated number of blind children are now in school in Ceylon, whereas the vast majority of "normal" children are in school. The present involvement of the Ministries of Education and Social Services in the education of the blind would seem to indicate their belief in the rights of all children, as well as the constitutionality of governmental support and concern for the handicapped.

NUMBER OF BLIND CHILDREN IN CEYLON

No accurate survey of the number of blind persons has been done. It is, however, possible to estimate the number by using the ratio of blind to sighted found in other countries where wider services have developed for blind people.

A conservative world-wide ratio is 450 blind individuals per 100,000 general population.* Ceylon with roughly 10 million total population would have about 45,000 blind people. Among those who are blind, from 10% to 15% would be children. Thus, there are probably between 4,500 and 6,750 blind children on the island.

Some of the blind children would not be totally blind, but would have a very small amount of vision enabling them to lead a comparatively normal life in their villages providing they were not required to read or do close work. The majority would need special schooling and job training in order to develop some degree of independence as adults.

THE SEVEN SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND

For about 35 years after its beginning in 1912 the Mount Lavinia School for the Deaf and the Blind at Ratmalana was the only school for blind children. Although it was sponsored by an Anglican Board of Governors, it admitted children of any religion.

In the recent years the school was divided into two separate establishments—one for the deaf and one for the blind.

About 1948 the St. Joseph's Catholic School for the Deaf and the Blind was established at Ragama under the guidance of Belgian nuns.

Between 1958 and 1962 five Buddhist schools developed through the diligence of Mr. Rienzi Alagiyavanna:

* Figure given by the World Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, New York, 1964.

Sivi Raja School for the Deaf and the Blind, Mahawewa
 Senkadagala School for the Deaf and the Blind,
 Dodanwela, Kandy

Yasodara School for the Deaf and the Blind, Balangoda
 Sivi Raja School for the Deaf and the Blind, Anuradhapura
 Rohana School for the Deaf and the Blind, Hittetiya,
 Matara.

The schools vary in size considerably :

Location of School	Boys	Girls	Total
Ratmalana	123	88	211
Mahawewa	35	25	60
Balangoda	10	7	17
Kandy	7	9	16
Ragama	5	8	13
Anuradhapura	4	6	10
Matara	5	0	5
	<hr/> 189	<hr/> 143	<hr/> 332

Each of the schools has its own distinctive character and its own problems. Nevertheless, there are many problems common to all seven schools, or to the majority of them. We shall look briefly at four of the newest schools which are still very small (Balangoda, Kandy, Anuradhapura, and Matara) for they are the most similar to each other. Then we shall discuss briefly the fifth very small school (Ragama). Finally, we shall look at the two largest schools (Mahawewa and Ratmalana).

A. *The Small New Schools*

Matara

The Rohana School opened in February 1964. It is lodged in an old house with classes, sleeping accommodations for students, and quarters for part of the staff in the same building. The facilities are extremely humble.

The five pupils are theoretically in the same ungraded class because they are all beginning students.

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
Ungraded	5	0	5	10 to 22	15.2

The boys are 10, 10, 13, 21, and 22 years of age. One of the 10-year-old boys is stunted in growth and has deformed legs. Four of the boys can see a little but have had no medical care since the onset of the cause of their vision losses.

There is a headmistress who teaches and two male teachers. All three staff members work with all of the children whether deaf or blind. The teacher who works mostly with the blind boys is himself blind. His training has consisted of completion of the 8th Standard at the Mt. Lavinia School for the Blind, plus two years in a secondary school with sighted students.

Anuradhapura

The students at Anuradhapura have obviously transferred there from another school for they are all in the upper standards. Seven of the ten have some usable vision.

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
5	0	3	3	10 to 14	12.5
6	2	1	3	10 to 17	13.3
7	2	2	4	14 to 17	15.7
			<hr/> 10		

In addition to the teaching principal there are three teachers, one of whom is blind. Qualifications are as follows :

Teacher	Qualifications	Amount of Vision
Male (Prin.)	Sinhala Training, 1st Grade	Normal
Male	Sinhala Senior	Blind
Female	Sinhala Senior	Normal
Female	Sinhala Training 1st Grade	Normal

The buildings are quite new and good, but equipment for them is extremely limited or non-existent.

Kandy

Attendance at the Senkadagala School at Kandy seems to be irregular with children going home for a weekend and staying

a month or two. Although 25 blind children are on the roll, there were 16 children in the school at the time of the visit of the AFOB Consultant.

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
1	1	1	2	8 to 9	8.5
2	1	3	4	10	10
3	2	1	3	10 to 14	11.6
4	2	2	4	12 to 14	13
7	1	2	3	14 to 17	15
			<hr/> 16		

For the 25 blind children and 60 deaf there are five government-approved teachers and two unapproved ones.

Teacher	Qualifications	Amount of Vision
Male (Prin.)	English Trained	Normal
Male (Priest)	B.A. Sinhala	Normal
Male	High School Certificate	Normal
Male	G.C.E. (Ordinary)	Blind
Female	S.S.C.	Normal
Female	S.S.C.	Normal
Female	G.C.E. (Weaving)	Normal

The house serving as school and hostel for 85 children is better than the garage where the school was started in 1962. Classes are so close together that it is difficult for a visitor to judge by looking where one class stops and another begins. The blind children are generally on the porch where the light is the best. The deaf children who can learn only by using their eyes are placed in the inner rooms which are dark and sunless. It might be helpful to the deaf to have them switch places with the blind.

Balangoda

The Yasodara School at Balangoda was opened in 1960. At present there are 17 blind children.

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
2	1	4	5	6 to 16	11.6
3	2	0	2	10 to 12	11
4	2	2	4	12	12
5	2	0	2	12 to 15	14
8 (J.S.C.)	3	1	4	16 to 17	16.8
			<hr/> 17		

The school has four teachers who work with the deaf as well as the blind children.

Teacher	Qualifications	Amount of Vision
Male (Prin.)	Trained, 1st Class	Normal
Male	G.C.E. (Ordinary)	Blind
Male	S.S.C. (English)	Blind
Female	S.S.C. (Sinhalese)	Normal

Summary of the Small New Schools (Balangoda, Kandy, Matara, Anuradhapura)

School Boards ... Each school is run by a society or board of local citizens willing to aid the school financially by making up the deficit left after expenditure of monies received from the Ministries of Education and Social Services. The members of the boards are responsible to no one and may make any decisions they see fit regarding the schools. Having no educators among their members, the boards may make arbitrary judgments not in the best interests of education.

It is of much credit to these board members that they see the need to educate handicapped children and that they make personal contributions to the children's welfare. Their help might have even more impact if each board were to include an advisor from the Ministry of Education, a social services officer from the area, and an educator from the school concerned.

It is to be hoped that the Ministry of Education will shortly assume full responsibility for the schools for the blind. Already the government is putting up the great majority of the funds used for running the schools. Last year, for example, the school at Kandy had a total operating budget of Rs.18,000. The grants from the Ministries of Education and Social Services totaled Rs.24,000 making an over-payment of Rs.6,000. Yet the school has almost no equipment and provides a meagre education for the blind children enrolled. Under government supervision the schools might all be upgraded a substantial degree. The existing school boards might then become auxiliary organizations under a government code of regulations governing their participation.

Dual Schools ... Each of the schools has both deaf and blind children and, as would be expected, the deaf far outnumber

the blind. Because the schools are so small, the staff members have multiple duties. Each teacher teaches blind children part of the day and deaf the rest of the day. Many of the teachers are very much interested in the children and try to do a good job. Still, it is asking the impossible to require a teacher to be perceptive enough to work partly with children having only visual concepts of the world and partly with children having only aural and tactual concepts.

Even if a school for the deaf and a school for the blind must share one campus, the facilities should be as separate as possible because the learning problems of the two groups of children are completely different, and communication between them even for recreational purposes is difficult.

There are plans to separate the deaf and blind sections at some time in the future. It would be possible and advisable to do so **now** by merely making some schools entirely for the deaf and some entirely for the blind.

Curriculum ... An earnest attempt is made to adhere to the curriculum in schools for the sighted. However, the goal falls short of reality for several reasons, and a mere skeleton of the declared curriculum is presented to the children.

- (a) Equipment is practically non-existent. Anuradhupura has half a dozen copies of one book in braille. Otherwise, the schools have no braille books. There is so little paper that the blind teachers who know braille are not able to make books, or even daily lessons, in braille.

The four schools have a few slates for the children on loan from Mahawewa, but only Matara has enough for one per child.

There are no materials for handicrafts except for the little that the teachers buy out of their own salaries. There are no materials for arithmetic or geography.

Therefore, although the curriculum supposedly includes reading, arithmetic, handicrafts, etc., the type of instruction involving mainly lectures or discussions and

requiring little active participation from the students limits the extent of the curriculum.

- (b) The teachers trying to work under many difficulties have lost enthusiasm. They *could* secure scrap paper from one source or another; they *could* make materials in braille for all the subjects in the curriculum; they *could* use simple things such as flour and water or clay to make raised maps; they *could* collect interesting and simple things to use for arithmetic—such as smooth stones, bottle caps, odd buttons, bits of sanded wood.
- (c) The teachers have not had much training in the field of education. The blind teachers who give the greater part of the instruction to the blind children have had no training for teaching any child. It is impossible for a blind person who wishes to secure training in education to be admitted to a teacher training institution in Ceylon.
- (d) Each “class” has children with such wide ranges of age and ability that much attention would have to be paid to individual differences in order to accomplish minimal goals for each child. There is no evidence that the teachers understand any solutions to the problem of working with a small group of children whose ages and ability levels are so different that they hardly constitute a “group” but are rather a congregation of individuals.
- (e) None of the blind teachers has textbooks in braille from which he can draw knowledge to give to the children. Each blind teacher teaches “from his head” depending upon his own knowledge of the many subjects he teaches at many grade levels.

After-school Activities ... There is no equipment for indoor or outdoor recreational activities. At Kandy, school is out at 12:20 for the 1st Standard and 1:30 for the rest of the school. Except for meals, the remainder of the day is spent in idleness. The staff takes turns organizing improvised games. The only equipment is a pack of cards and some dice loaned to the children by the blind staff member.

At Balangoda the children are taken on walks. At Anuradhapura the staff is not permitted by the board to supervise or assist after the end of the school day. The matron supervises the idleness.

Medical Care ... There are no provisions for regular check-ups of the children, for supervision of practices to safeguard child health, or for isolation and care of children who become ill. Through persistence, the principals have occasionally been able to get eye care for a few of the children. Many more seem to need it.

Financing ... The Ministry of Education provides the salaries of some of the teachers based upon the attendance of the children. The boards pay the rest. The difference in what the two groups of teachers earn is demoralizing. Some of the teachers paid by the boards earn as little as Rs.30 a month, while those paid by the Ministry may make 3 to 5 times as much. Often the boards are months behind in paying the salaries. It is amazing that there is any esprit de corps among the staff members.

The money allotted by the Ministry of Social Services is spent according to the determination of the boards. Building grants from the government have been spent by the boards with no supervision or advice from outside their membership.

Equipment requested by the teachers is seldom considered important by the boards.

Inasmuch as the Ministries of Education and Social Services are investing funds in the schools, it would seem to be prudent to check up on the expenditure of those funds.

B. *The Small School at Ragama*

The St. Joseph's Catholic School has one part-time and 12 full-time students.

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
1	1	2	3	7 to 9	8
2	1	1	2	9	9
4	2	2	4	9 to 14	12.1
6	1	2	3	12 to 13	13
Post 6th	0	1 (part time)	1	16	16
			<hr/> 13		

The part-time student completed 6th Standard last year. Having low mental ability, she probably could not benefit from further academic work. This year she has a program of half study and half work. It is a policy of the school to keep boys only until they are 15. After that age, some of the boys have gone to Ratmalana to complete their education. Girls have sometimes stayed at St. Joseph's indefinitely when they had no homes.

The blind children constitute a very small proportion of the total school population. The nuns, having had training in Europe in the education of the deaf, teach the deaf children. The teachers of the blind are two lay women who happen to be sisters (siblings, not nuns), a former pupil who completed 8th Standard and now teaches 4th Standard, and another former pupil who serves as a classroom helper with the small children. The most senior of these teachers had experience with sighted children prior to coming to St. Joseph's 18 years ago. The others have no qualifications to teach.

Curriculum ... In addition to a curriculum roughly approximating that for sighted children, the blind children have a good opportunity to learn gardening, caring for animals, cooking and all the chores which are necessary to care for the school and the living quarters. There being no servants, the staff and the children do whatever must be done. Each child has tasks which fit his age and ability. When classes are not in session, the school seems to become one large family where each has his responsibilities.

The minimal background of the staff teaching blind children narrows the scope of the curriculum. However, there is a little more equipment for the children than in the new schools. The fair supply of braille books in English collect dust because Sinhalese must be used in schoolwork. Only a handful of braille books have been made in Sinhalese by the teachers. There are slates and a few arithmetic materials, some teacher-made teaching aids, and a few toys. Music plays its part in the recreational hours although there are few instruments for them to learn to play.

After-school Activities ... Besides performing duties about the school, the children have game periods supervised and participated in by the teaching staff. Still, the equipment is minimal.

Medical Care... ...The staff makes a good effort to care for the health of the children at school and through medical examinations. It is, however, difficult to take the time from teaching to accompany children to the free clinics. It would be better if a physician could be brought periodically to the school to check all the children. This is especially needed because several of the children have suffered from malnutrition and are sickly. Ophthalmological care is needed beyond that secured for possible emergencies.

Financing ... As the rest of the schools do, St. Joseph's receives funds from the Ministries of Social Services and Education. The school is mainly supported, however, by the Colombo Catholic Diocese.

C. *Mahawewa and Ratmalana, Two Largest Schools*

Below is a brief description of their students and staffs, followed by a discussion of their separate and common problems.

Mahawewa

This school is much larger than the other Buddhist schools. It has 60 blind students and a proportionately larger number of deaf students.

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
1	3	2	5	5 to 10	8.3
2	6	2	8	7 to 11	9.5
3	5	5	10	8 to 13	10.8
4	4	2	6	10 to 16	12.5
5	5	6	11	11 to 18	14.2
6	1	1	2	15 to 16	15.5
7	4	2	6	11 to 16	14
8	4	3	7	14 to 20	17
9 (Senior Prep.)	3	2	5	14 to 18	16
			—		
			60		

The qualifications of the staff are as follows :

Teacher	Qualifications	Amount of Vision
Male (Prin.)	English Teacher's Certificate	Blind
	One year training in education	

	of the blind, Germany	
Male	G.C.E. Advanced level	Normal
	G.C.E. Ord. level English	
	Two years training, Kottawa	
Male	S.S.C.	Blind
Male	S.S.C.	Normal
Male	2nd Exam. Oriental Music	Blind
Male	S.S.C.	Blind
Female	S.S.C., Sinhalese	Normal
Female	S.S.C.	Normal
Female	S.S.C.	Normal

Four of the nine teachers are blind, completely or nearly so. Five have normal vision.

Dual School ... Mahawewa is a dual school with deaf and blind children in the same school. The head teacher of the deaf department had training overseas. He is, therefore, using an oral approach in teaching the deaf. This is excellent for the deaf, but hard on the blind for the noise of deaf children learning to talk is abnormally high. As the deaf and the blind are crowded together in sections of the same classrooms, the blind pupils are at a severe disadvantage.

New dormitories are being built a considerable distance from the classroom buildings. It is unfortunate that these buildings cannot be used to divide the school immediately into two facilities : one for the deaf and one for the blind with no overlap between the two. Indefinite plans for the future lie in this direction. It is too bad that the separation cannot be now.

Financing ... Just about the same pattern that exists for the four small new schools is used at Mahawewa. A board of local citizens governs the school and makes up the financial deficit.

Ratmalana

The Mt. Lavinia School for the Blind has two streams of children : those who speak Sinhalese and those who speak Tamil. Only nine children comprise the group using Tamil as their basic language.

Sinhalese

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total	Age Range	Average Age
Lower Kdgn.	4	5	9	6 to 8	7
Middle Kdgn.	5	4	9	5 to 11	7.6
Upper Kdgn. (A)	9	2	11	8 to 11	10
Upper Kdgn. (B)	5	2	7	8 to 12	9.6
2	5	6	11	9 to 13	11
3	6	6	12	8 to 13	12
4 (A)	4	6	10	11 to 17	14.7
4 (B)	5	4	9		
5	6	6	12	11 to 15	13.8
Special Class	6	2	8	6 to 15	13
6	4	10	14	11 to 18	15.6
7	11	2	13	14 to 20	16.3
8 (J.S.C.)	12	0	12	13 to 18	16.4
G.C.E. Prep.	8	9	17	14 to 21	18.3
G.C.E. I	10	8	18	16 to 19	18.3
G.C.E. II	16	10	26	15 to 23	20.22

Tamil

Kdgn.	1	1	2	8	8
3	1	0	1	15	15
4	1	2	3	13	13
8 (J.S.C.)	1	2	3	14 to 21	17

Retarded Persons

Ungraded	2	2	4	18 to 38	25
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The four retarded persons are not actually taking classes, but they must be listed here as students as they are carried on the roll book. Two women, aged 25 and 38, are severely retarded and are incapable of doing any kind of work. The two young men, aged 18 and 19, are deaf-blind and are functioning at a very low level. One of them is also severely crippled.

Of the 26 teachers on the staff, 15 are paid by the Ministry of Education. Excluding the principal, the salary range is from Rs.30 to Rs.260 with an average of Rs.90 per month. Nine

teachers are blind. Their average salary is Rs.79 compared with Rs.99 for the sighted. The difference is to be expected because the blind teachers are less well qualified in general.

Six of the staff had experience with sighted children before coming to Mt. Lavinia.

Teacher	Qualifications	Amount of Vision
Male (Prin.)	B.A. (Lon.) 1st. Cl. English Tr. Diploma for Teachers of Blind	Normal
Male	1st Cl. Sinhala Tr.	Normal
Male	1st Cl. Sinhala Tr.	Normal
Male	S.S.C. (Sinh.)	Normal
Male	S.S.C. (Eng.)	Blind
Male	Oriental Music	Normal
Male	S.S.C. (Sinh.)	Normal
Male	S.S.C. (Sinh.)	Normal
Male	Weaving Certificate	Blind
Male	Canework Certificate	Blind
Female	None for sighted Special Cert. for Teachers of the Blind	Normal
Female	3rd Class (Eng. Training)	Normal
Female	L.T.C.M. (Music)	Normal
Female	1st Class (Sinh. Tr.)	Normal
Female	1st Class (Sinh. Tr.)	Normal
Female	3rd Class (Eng. Tr. Cert.)	Blind
Female	S.S.C. (Sinh.)	Normal
Female	S.S.C. (Sinh. and Eng.)	Normal
Female	3rd Class (Eng. Tr. Cert.)	Blind
Female	S.S.C.	Normal
Female	L.T.C.L. (Music) Diploma for Teachers of the Blind	Blind
Female	S.S.C. (Sinh.)	Normal
Female	J.S.C.	Blind
Female	J.S.C.	Blind
Female	Coirwork Cert.	Normal
Female	Pottery Cert.	Normal

Problems of Mahawewa and Ratmalana

The two larger schools have several problems in common. Under new, dynamic leadership both schools are struggling to find ways of solving their many difficulties. The faculties like all other teachers in the special schools seem genuinely interested in the welfare of the children they teach, and are kind, gracious people.

Age of Students ... Knowing the desparate conditions of some of the homes of blind children, both schools have admitted young children below school age and have kept some students beyond normal school age. Ratmalana has 20 students who are between 20 and 38. To date Mahawewa has just one student over 20. However, several are in their late teens and will probably remain a few more years at school.

It would seem to be wise to establish a policy concerning the function of the schools. If they are to be educational institutions, then the children should be admitted at 5 or 6 and kept only until they have completed as much schooling as their abilities dictate. Under no conditions should students be kept beyond the age of 18 or 19.

It is recognized that pre-school blind children have special needs which their families may not understand. Similarly, young adults of 18 to 25 have special needs if they have sat at home neglected all their lives. Slow learning students of 15 or so who have completed as much school as they are able to do also have special needs for they are too young to enter institutions for rehabilitation designed for adults.

However, the schools for blind children should not be required to meet the needs of such groups of blind individuals. Other facilities should be developed.

Age Range in Classes ... Many blind children enter school late, either because they are newly blind or because they have not been brought earlier to the special schools. Such children make grouping difficult within a school. Their needs can be cared for, but creative planning is necessary.

One poor practice has been to place children of any ages together if they happen to start school at the same time.

Another questionable practice is to keep a child in the same grade or standard year after year if he seems to make no progress.

The schools at Ratmalana and Mahawewa seem to have three kinds of children: (a) those who begin school at the proper time and make normal progress, (b) those who enter late and make good progress, (c) those who seem to be retarded. Included in the latter group are children of any age, and it is usually impossible to determine ahead of time those who will be permanently retarded. Neglect, lack of opportunities for learning, and ill health may cause children to function as though they were severely retarded mentally. Only after giving neglected children a better environment and teaching them for some time can we eventually hazard a guess as to their potential functioning.

Very small schools have no choice but to teach on almost an individual basis, but the larger schools have enough children to group and regroup often according to the children's rate of progress. Ratmalana has children from 6 to 12 in kindergarten. The 36 children in kindergarten might be better grouped. There is a "special class" of 8 children with ages 6 to 15 but what does a 6-year-old have in common with a 15-year-old, even if they are both functionally retarded?

Would it not be possible for Ratmalana and Mahawewa to regroup according to the three kinds of children discussed above? By giving more attention to individual children beginning school late, it might be possible to help them catch up by doing the work of two standards in one year, or three standards in two years. By devising a different curriculum for retarded children, the staff might be able to prepare them better for their lives after school. Such a curriculum would not merely mean simplified academics, but a practical curriculum including instruction in daily living skills.

Partially Seeing Children ... There is little recognition of the fact that there are many degrees and kinds of vision between the two extremes of total blindness and normal sight. In general, children are considered to be totally blind at all the schools for blind children.

It is possible that the many children with considerable vision at Ratmalana and Mahawewa could **not** be helped by glasses. Certain types of eye problems do not lend themselves to improvement by eye glasses. It is also possible that proper glasses might give some of the children enough sight to function in regular classes with sighted children, and others enough sight to function mainly visually as partially sighted individuals within the special school.

Therefore, two things might help the children with a little sight : Recognition of the value of even a small amount of vision; and adequate ophthalmological care.

It would seem to be appropriate for Ceylon to determine its own definition of blindness for purposes of admitting children to special schools or adults to special programs of rehabilitation. Consideration could be given to the definition which the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind adopted at the First Asian Conference on Work for the Blind in Tokyo in 1955. One common reason for a definition of blindness is its necessity for assessing degree of injury or loss of vision under the terms of a Workmen's Compensation Act.

Equipment ... Ratmalana has a library of braille books in English which have been rarely used for over fifteen years. It has almost no braille books in Sinhalese or Tamil. Similarly, Mahawewa has no braille books. It is difficult to understand how this situation has been tolerated so many years. The few books produced by generous volunteer braille transcribers have not eased the situation to any significant degree. Of first importance in the equipment needs are braille books.

Other equipment needs are slates and styluses, raised maps, items for recreational activities, musical instruments, paper, arithmetic devices, and materials for handcrafts.

Curriculum ... Many of the points made about the curriculum in the small schools also apply to the larger schools. The curriculum is presented in bare form. For example, when children have no arithmetic books, no lessons in braille, and the teacher takes class time to dictate problems to children who write them down with slates, the amount of work covered is a small propor-

tion of what might be done if the children had braille materials. When children have no books to carry outside the classroom for independent study, much less is accomplished. The teaching methods used as a result of, or in conjunction with, poor equipment reduce the quality of education.

The Place of Handcrafts ... At the present time a large number of blind adults make a living through handcrafts: weaving, coirwork and caning. After completion of their formal schooling, they received training in these skills. They will spend most of their waking hours for their entire adult lives performing them. For this reason, if for no other, blind children in school ought to be taught completely *different* skills. When they leave school the young people will have plenty of time to learn the crafts which will earn them a living. The crafts are simple arts, not ones which take a lifetime to learn, such as playing a violin.

In school handcrafts can be different from caning, weaving, and coirwork. All the children might learn to work in clay, to make holiday decorations out of paper, to explore the possibilities of wood, wire, metal, cloth, cork, plastic. Those with some sight might enjoy crayons and paint, cutting colored pictures out of scrap paper to make booklets. Girls might learn more about sewing than they do now; boys might learn workwork. The materials can be obtained free from sources of scrap materials. A good crafts program does not have to be expensive; it has to be imaginative. From such a program children would learn to be more aware tactually of what is in their environment, to use their hands in many ways, to begin and finish projects, to be creative. When it is time for them to learn the crafts by which they must earn a living, they would be used to using their hands and would learn faster. Part of the reason for the extended training now needed in the adult crafts is the accumulated boredom from years of doing the same things in school.

Blind Teachers ... It is good for blind children to know well functioning, independent blind adults. It is good to have some blind teachers in a school for blind children. However, a blind teacher should never be hired merely to give him a decent job. It would seem that some of the blind teachers at the two larger schools, as well as at the smaller schools, were hired for

such a purpose. A re-examination of the reasons for hiring them and a policy for future hiring of blind persons might be considered, particularly as it is impossible for blind persons to get training as teachers at colleges in Ceylon.

Recreational Activities ... At present the teaching staff, of necessity, also handles after-school activities. As Ratmalana has a staff of 26, it is possible for the teachers to take turns. At Mahawewa and the other 5 schools the teachers must work longer hours. It is not good for teachers to serve also as directors of recreation, nurses for sick children, even matrons and housefathers of the dormitories. Such requirements allow the teaching staff little time to prepare lessons or materials and to refresh their spirits.

Noise ... Blind children must be able to hear their teacher and their classmates in order to learn. With many classes in the same rooms, the noise level is such that most of the instruction loses its effectiveness. Although it would be unusual to do so, would it not be possible to separate the classes by having some meet in the dormitories? The piano practicing at Ratmalana, and the speech practising of the deaf at Mahawewa must be incredibly distracting to children and teachers alike.

REHABILITATION TRAINING FOR YOUNG ADULTS

It was not the purpose of the visiting AFOB consultant to survey the rehabilitative workshops to make recommendations. Those visits which were made were the outgrowth of expressed interest in the relationship between the educational programs and training for jobs. However, even cursory visits showed that the rehabilitative training is extremely limited in scope. The trainees are given extended training, even up to four years, and yet can only be home workers in a few handcraft trades. There seem to be no opportunities for training along lines which would prepare capable blind adults for jobs in open industry or business.

While two or three bright young blind students have managed to compete in liberal arts courses in college or university, their years will have gained them little because the only jobs open are in handcrafts. With the teacher training

colleges closing their doors to blind applicants, those blind persons who end up teaching at schools for the blind will be untrained and can scarcely hope to provide the next generation with better education than they had.

The relationship between education and rehabilitation is inescapable. There would be little point in improving the schools or running experimental educational programs if the opportunities for young adults should continue to be meagre. For this reason this report mentions rehabilitation in one or two places, and a suggestion is made that AFOB provide some consultative assistance and enough equipment to try to increase the rehabilitative services and to broaden them.

In the near future AFOB will have a team of consultants on rehabilitation at its Far East Regional headquarters. This team, consisting of a mobility and orientation consultant and a vocational training and placement consultant, will conduct training courses for "items" from rehabilitation agencies. Later the AFOB team will visit the local teams and give on-the-spot consultative service for short periods. A plan is now being prepared by the AFOB incorporating the use of the rehabilitation team and will be submitted to the Director of Social Services shortly.

RECOMMENDATIONS : EXISTING FACILITIES

1. As soon as possible the Ministry of Education should safeguard the governmental monies already allocated to the schools for the blind and upgrade the standard of education of blind children by assuming the full responsibility for the schools.
2. Administration, record keeping and handling of finances should be held to the standard required of schools for the sighted.
3. Dual schools should be separated so that schools for the deaf are on different compuses from schools for the blind with principals in charge who know the education of the group for which they are responsible.
4. The smaller schools should be combined. For example, the 106 blind pupils at Mahawewa, Balangoda, Kandy, Anuradhapura, and Matara could be grouped together in one school to be located either at Mahawewa or farther north. Even a school of 106 students, ranging in age from 5 to 19 years, is a very small school in terms of developing an adequate curriculum.
5. The blind children at Ragama might be placed in the Catholic School for sighted children which is within walking distance of the school for the blind. The present two sighted teachers might serve as helpers to the children, making braille materials for them and reading to them in the dormitories after school hours, so that the children might be able to keep up with their sighted classmates.
6. Only teachers who are qualified to teach in regular schools should be hired in the schools for the blind. They should receive the same governmental concessions as teachers in other schools do; namely, rent allowances, hospital care, railway warrants, etc.
7. It should be made possible for blind persons to enroll in regular teacher training courses even if there is a waiting list for sighted candidates. Thus blind persons now teaching

could become qualified and regain their positions or get others.

8. Staff, other than the teachers, should be provided to handle after-school activities.
9. Blind students should be integrated as much as possible into regular secondary schools. Those blind students who do not have the ability to compete with sighted people should not be given continued academic work at the schools for the blind, but should be given transitional programs to get them ready for rehabilitation training.
10. Enrollment at the schools for the blind should be restricted to children of school age. Overage students should be referred to rehabilitation agencies.
11. Equipment should be secured for reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, handicrafts, music and recreation.
12. A system of producing and distributing braille books and materials should be developed. The National Council for the Deaf and the Blind could coordinate the efforts of paid braillists and volunteer transcribers.
13. The children within each school should be re-grouped according to age and ability level. Special classes for retarded children should be developed.
14. More attention should be given to helping the children develop efficient living skills.
15. The crafts program should be completely changed to activities more appropriate for children. Instruction in the handicrafts serving as job training should be left to the rehabilitation institutions.
16. Arrangements should be made for better medical care for the children, particularly ophthalmological care.
17. School facilities should be renovated with attention given to better lighting as a large number of the children have useable vision.

18. Review should be made of the money paid by the Ministry of Social Services to families of blind children. It is the opinion of several members of the faculties in certain schools that the money encourages families to keep their children at home rather than to send them to school.
19. Those staff members who have received training in the education of blind children should be encouraged to give in-service training courses to other faculty members until such time as a training program is developed for teachers of the blind in Ceylon.

RECOMMENDATIONS: EXPANDED SERVICES

Training of Staff

1. Present teachers of blind children could be given in-service training, partly during the academic year and partly during extended holiday periods.
2. A program of specialized teacher training courses might be established at a university to handle such in-service training as well as the preparation of newly recruited teachers to work with blind children.
3. All teacher training colleges should include in their curriculums a course about exceptional children (children with exceptional needs because of physical, mental or emotional differences).
4. Short term workshops could be planned for supervisors and administrators new to the education of blind children.
5. Short term workshops could be planned for administrators presently working with blind children.

Research

1. A pilot project to integrate blind children into schools for sighted children could be introduced.
2. Various means of conducting surveys to locate blind children should be tried.
3. A definition of blindness needs to be developed.

Delineation of Roles

1. Roles of persons within various organizations might be reassessed.
2. Relationship among organizations and agencies might be more clearly specified.

3. Distinction might be made between functions of schools and rehabilitation agencies serving blind persons to prevent overlap.

Development of Materials

1. Professional materials for use of teachers of blind children need to be developed, perhaps as a series of small hand-books.
2. Teaching materials for use with blind children need to be developed.
3. Information booklets for regular school administrators and teachers would be of value.

INTEGRATED EDUCATION FOR BLIND CHILDREN

In this century integrated education for blind children has become established as one of the important means of educating these children. It has proved to be a complementary system to the special residential schools, making it possible to expend educational facilities for blind children quickly and economically. Once considered a second rate emergency measure, it has since proved to be a first class method of educating the blind on a par with the best special schools for blind children anywhere in the world.

How It Works ... A blind child is enrolled in a regular school near his home. He goes to classes with sighted children, does the same lessons, takes the same examinations, and progresses according to his abilities.

A specially trained teacher gives him some tutoring in skills he needs in order to get along in his regular class, prepares materials in braille for him, makes raised maps or other three dimensional learning aids, counsels him according to his needs and confers with his regular classroom teacher.

For example, a six-year-old blind student just beginning school would spend part of his day in the regular class and part with the special teacher. In the regular class he would participate in the following periods:

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|--|----------------------|
| — opening exercises | — physical education |
| — oral language development | — religion |
| — oral arithmetic involving the counting and manipulation of objects | — social studies |
| — music | — handcrafts |

From the special teacher he would learn:

- | | |
|--|---|
| — to read and write the braille code | — how to go by himself around the school (mobility) |
| — how to use any specialized equipment | — how to handle academic or social problems he might have |

He might spend two 40-minute periods a day with the special teacher if he were a capable child. He might spend half of the day with the special teacher if he were less capable. His needs as an individual would be considered in planning his program. The goal would be increasing independence and increasing skill in getting along with sighted children in regular class activities.

A child in Fourth Standard, as another example, would know his braille skills and the use of his equipment. Still, he would need help from the special teacher in additional mobility skills, in learning to work rapidly so that he would be able to keep up with his classmates. He would receive some tutoring in any subject where he was deficient.

A student in secondary school would need some instruction on taking notes in braille, on speed reading, on handling his sighted readers, on short cuts in studying. He might need further instruction in mobility. He would most certainly need a great deal of material prepared for him in braille. He would need instruction in typing.

Variations in Integrated Programs ... One of the strengths of the integrated system of education for blind children is that it can take many forms. One pattern has been called the *resource program*. Under that pattern a special teacher is assigned to one school. Several blind children from neighboring areas in a city or small town travel to the central school where the *resource teacher* is available. From six to ten blind children would come to the one centrally located school. They would attend regular classes, of course. When they needed help or materials, they could conveniently go to the small room assigned to the resource teacher. This plan means that some of the children may have to travel considerable distances to get to school. They may walk with elder brothers and sisters, use a local bus, or make other arrangements.

A second pattern has been called the *itinerant program*. Under this plan each blind child goes to the closest school. The special teacher, called the *itinerant teacher*, does not stay in any one building. Instead he travels to the schools where the blind children are enrolled, spends a certain amount of time each week

working with each child and conferring with his teacher. The itinerant program requires that the teacher be mobile so as not to waste time traveling which could be spent teaching.

Sometimes one teacher works in a combination of the two programs. He might have a resource room at one school where perhaps five blind children are enrolled. On certain mornings and/or afternoons he becomes an itinerant teacher and visits three to five other children in other schools. This combination program has been especially successful when the special teacher helps some blind youngsters in the lower standards as well as a few in upper standards or even secondary school.

Countries Using Integrated Education Plans ... Several western countries have been using variations of integrated education for blind children for a long time; for example, America, England, and Sweden. More recently, programs have grown in certain African countries and in the following Asian countries: Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Taiwan. Korea and India also have isolated integrated programs. This latter country has now officially agreed to establish two pilot projects in Delhi and Kerala.

None of the Asian integrated programs is a direct copy of existing ones in western countries. The adaptations which have been made in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, for example, demonstrate how any country may adopt what it wishes from western philosophy and practices and yet tailor a program to fit its own needs.

The Philippines have over 7,000 islands with a widely scattered population. Bringing blind children to centrally located schools for resource programs was not as practical as establishing well organized itinerant programs with specially trained teachers of the blind traveling to the neighborhoods where the children live. Throughout the Philippines itinerant teachers use available local materials for making any specialized educational aids the blind children need (such as raised maps). Very little is imported.

A classroom teacher who will have a blind child in her class receives concentrated instruction from an itinerant teacher before the blind child is enrolled. She learns ways of including the blind

child in the activities of the sighted children and of meeting the few special needs of that particular child. The frequent visits of the itinerant teacher are valuable thereafter not only to the blind child who is given some tutoring, but also to the classroom teacher who gains ideas and encouragement. Many classroom teachers learn braille and even prepare some of the braille lessons needed by the child.

Malaysia with a population gravitating to more densely populated communities makes use of the resource plan. To date, itinerant teachers have not been used, but will be sent into rural areas soon. While the Philippines integrate blind children from first standard successfully, Malaysia prefers to wait until secondary school in general.

Thailand uses the resource program for Bangkok, its only large city. Both elementary and secondary pupils are enrolled. Itinerant teachers will shortly start the first programs in the rural provinces. The School for the Blind allows secondary students to continue living there while attending school full time with sighted children in Bangkok, for many of the blind children are abandoned youngsters.

Thus, it may be seen, the types of programs vary according to needs and interests of the countries concerned. Itinerant teachers in America use cars to go from school to school. In Asia itinerant teachers use motor scooters, bicycles, or boats depending upon the terrain. The philosophy is much the same, but the implementation differs.

Specialized materials are important. A very small amount is imported by Asian countries when the equipment is not currently available locally—such as slates and styluses. Mostly, however, the materials needed come from the government—sponsored braille press, organized volunteers and the trained itinerant teachers.

The training of the special teachers varies also in the three countries mentioned above. In each case it is a full academic year in length, but the trainees are graduates of two-year teacher training institutes in one country; of two to four-year institutes in another; and candidates for a master's degree in the third.

The plans have developed within the framework of general education for all children and, therefore, reflect aspects of the education systems for sighted children.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrated Education. ...

In a strange way the advantages and disadvantages are but two sides of a coin. For example, in order to educate a blind child in a regular school you must have plenty of braille materials so that he has braille copies of nearly everything used by sighted children. This is a disadvantage because it means someone has to get busy and prepare the materials. The child cannot just sit and get an oral education. This is also an advantage for the child gets a better, richer education from all the materials.

It is necessary to have a specially trained resource or itinerant teacher. The disadvantage is that the program won't work very well with just any person serving as the special teacher. It must be someone with good training. This means that a teacher training program is necessary. But this disadvantage is actually an advantage for a better trained teacher means a better educated child.

When special schools for blind children are partially or fully supported by private organizations, the financial investment of the government may not be large. In an integrated education system the government has to supply money for new budgetary items:

- (1) A teacher education program,
- (2) Specialized material, such as braille books and raised maps,
- (3) Salaries of newly trained resource or itinerant teachers.

It would, therefore, seem to cost a government more to have an integrated system of education.

In a short period the integrated program proves to be cheaper because:

- (1) Additional special schools do not need to be built,
- (2) Children do not need to be boarded,

- (3) The economy of the country is not drained by a surfeit of uneducated, non-contributing blind adults.

Regular teachers must learn a little about children with exceptional needs, and this may necessitate some additional meetings or workshops. Actually, this turns out to be a good thing, for the teachers generally become better teachers of normal children by learning about exceptional children.

Blind children have to learn to work and play with sighted children at a very young age to compete with normal individuals. This, too, becomes an advantage, for in learning to meet regular standards through their early lives, blind persons more easily fit into family and community life as adults. Being blind does not mean that one cannot compete with sighted people. It only means that one needs some special help in learning to make the necessary adjustments.

PILOT INTEGRATION PROJECT

It is suggested that Ceylon consider plans for a pilot project in integrated education for blind children. The American Foundation for Overseas Blind would be pleased to participate in such plans and, if requested by the Ministry of Education, would consider assigning, under certain conditions, an educational consultant for a period of three years. In addition the AFOB would make a grant of educational equipment and professional materials.

A pilot project would probably involve:

- (1) Establishment of a teacher training program for future teachers of blind children,
- (2) A survey to locate blind children,
- (3) Demonstration programs of integrated education,
- (4) Development of an adequate system of braille publication.

Teacher Training ... Basic to any system of education is a dynamic teacher education program. Resource or itinerant teachers for blind children need to be well-trained and experienced teachers of sighted children. An additional year of specialized courses should carry them well beyond the knowledge of other teachers. Such a training program should be at an institution of higher learning where both undergraduate and graduate degrees are offered, where the staff is interested in research, and where the library already contains substantial material on child development and exceptional children.

The University at Kandy seems to be just such a place. Having an undergraduate program to train teachers of younger children and a graduate program for future teachers of secondary students and for administrators, the University would be a good setting for the several types of courses and workshops to be offered under a pilot project.

Schools for the blind might spare some of their staff members to take the courses, and there would be new recruits for the

new integrated programs. The courses would be designed to train teachers for both residential schools and for integrated programs. Administrators in various schools for the blind, in public schools, supervisors in the Ministry of Education, and other appropriate people might take short-term courses designed to meet their needs for information on modern practices in educating blind children. The University of Kandy could accommodate all such courses.

The courses for new recruits might be organized in several ways. In general, the following topics should be included somewhere in the training program. The grouping below is by broad areas such as communication, rather than by specific courses which might be designed to include the several methods of communication.

1. Introduction to Exceptional Children

Groups to be discussed :

Mentally retarded

Gifted

Emotionally disturbed and socially maladjusted

Hearing handicapped, including speech handicapped

Visually handicapped

Physically handicapped, including cerebral palsy, post-polio, anomalies

Topics discussed under each group :

Description, measure of "difference", causes, medical care, prognosis

Parent-child relationships

Educational problems and ways of handling them

Common misunderstandings

What happens after secondary school

Children with multiple handicaps

2. Communication for Blind Persons

Braille : Sinhalese, Tamil, English, mathematics code

Braille equipment : Use of braille writers, slates and styluses; sources of supplies, binding braille books, size of books for various ages

Editing of print books for braille transcription

Training volunteer braillists

Tape recording materials for blind students

Typing

Handwriting for blind children

3. Structure and Function of the Eye with Educational Implementation of Certain Conditions

Anatomy of the eye

Normal visual functioning

What can go wrong : diseases, accidents, anomalies

Educational implications of eye conditions

Vision screening

4. The Low-Visioned Child

Visual efficiency (the increasing of visual skills through wise use)

Assessment of visual functioning in classroom settings

Visual aids

Preparation of specialized materials

5. Psychological and Sociological Implications of Blindness

Myths and legends about blind people

What blind people can and cannot do

The needs of blind people : in the family, in the community

What blind people say are their needs

Similarities and differences in development of normal and blind children

- Parent-child relationships
- Pre-school years : effects of deprivation of experience
- Attitudes toward blindness
- Cultural patterns which give additional problems to blind people
- Famous blind people
- The school age blind child—6 to 14
- Psychological assessment
- Multiply handicapped blind children
- Employment
- Agencies interested in blind people; local, regional, international
- School and community readiness for change

6. School Programs

- History of educational programs
- Types of integrated programs
- Relation of integrated programs
- Adaptation of school subjects : reading, arithmetic, crafts, physical education, geography, written communication, secondary school subjects
- Efficient living skills : self care, grooming, social skills
- Specialized equipment
- Responsibilities of teachers to blind children
- Making experiences "real" to blind children
- Development of original materials
- Volunteer services, reader service
- The older blind child
- Job preparation, planning the future

7. Mobility

- Ways in which blind people travel
- Importance of physical independence

Specific techniques which may be taught blind persons of any age

Experience under a blindfold for the trainee

8. Organization and Administration

Ways to make an integrated program succeed

Dealing with other teachers, with administrators

Procuring braille books, other supplies

Finding blind children

Public relations

9. Supervised Observation and Practicum

Opportunities to get acquainted with blind children outside formal learning situations

Opportunities to visit residential schools and demonstration resource and/or itinerant programs with evaluations of the observations discussed with the consultant

Opportunities to teach blind children under supervision, to make materials actually to be used by the children for specific lessons

Opportunities to sit in on conferences with regular classroom teachers, administrators, parents of blind children, or to see blind or low-visioned children evaluated for readiness for school.

The AFOB consultant would teach certain courses. Local citizens with appropriate background might teach others. Certainly many guest speakers with intimate knowledge of Ceylon, its system of education, and its history of services to blind persons would be of great value.

The students for these courses would be individually selected as a means of obtaining the best qualified and most suitable candidates.

After completion of their training, the students should have some recognition of their achievement and efforts. Their status should be raised above that of teachers qualified to teach only sighted children.

Demonstration Programs ... A demonstration resource and/or itinerant program should be set up with the help and continued guidance of the consultant so that even the first group of trainees would be able to see integration in practice as well as hearing about it in theory.

It might also be interesting to set up some demonstration classes in one or two of the schools for the blind where experimentation and research into newer methods might be conducted.

Survey to Locate Blind Children ... When parents of blind children do not know that it is possible to educate a blind child, they do not make known to the proper authorities the presence of their child. Until the general public becomes aware of the needs and potentialities of handicapped citizens, surveys will have to be done to find handicapped children while they are still young and pliable enough for education. Therefore, a serious attempt to find blind children would have to be made. It cannot be overemphasized that the children do exist. It is a matter of finding them.

In Asian countries instigating integrated programs for blind children, one successful way of conducting a survey has been to give the teacher training candidates partial training and then send them to the districts from which they were originally selected to look. Upon their return to the college, the candidates have not only completed their coursework but have helped to plan the development of the integrated programs in their districts. The teacher trainees with only part of their training completed know enough concerning where to look, how to assess the capabilities of the blind children they have found, and how to get an educational program started. Ceylon, also, might try this method of finding children until a better way is devised.

Braille Publishing ... The resource or itinerant teachers in the integrated programs usually prepare some materials in

braille for the students. Usually, these are the tests or last minute assignments put on the blackboard. Texts, reference books, or other standard works are too long for teachers to braille and still have time to teach. Hence, a workable system of braille publishing is necessary. Usually this involves the selfless efforts of volunteer braille transcribers in addition to a full time paid staff of braillists. It also involves a small paid staff who are responsible for guiding the work of the volunteers so that books can be done accurately and by the time the children need them. The AFOB consultant might help in developing such a service.

Supervision of Field Programs ... Part of the pilot project would be the supervision of the beginning integrated programs and the training of staff for such supervision.

Long Term Planning ... Those people connected with the pilot project should participate in evaluations of progress and in long term planning for the future. One part of the long term planning would be the consideration of sending a few people overseas for further training after training in Ceylon and experience in the pilot project.

Benefits of Integrated Education to the Schools for the Blind ... There are several direct and indirect benefits to the schools for blind children to be accrued from integrated education for blind children: (1) surveys to find blind children locate youngsters for both integrated programs and the schools for the blind for only certain children can be included in a pilot project; (2) teacher training programs may include among the trainees some teachers from the schools for the blind; (3) braille publishing makes books available to the schools for the blind as well as to integrated programs; (4) in-service training is made available to the schools for the blind; (5) special workshops for administrators result in better understanding of the needs of the schools; (6) with the attention paid to the integrated programs, more attention is similarly paid to the schools for the blind; (7) there is much exchange of knowledge among the programs and the schools; (8) increased public understanding is of value to all people concerned with improved services to blind children.

RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COOPERATING AGENCIES

It would seem to be unwise to attempt new programs or experimental projects without the full knowledge, cooperation, and assistance of appropriate organizations. Part of the strength of such programs comes from making the best use of already available talent, already available resources. Part of the challenge of experimental projects is to learn the relationships among the various organizations and to delineate the responsibilities each can carry in such clear terms that misunderstanding and overlapping of services do not occur. The following suggestions represent a mere outline of points to be discussed during an extended planning period. It is understood that changes and adjustments would continue to be made during the planning. The following list is only tentative.

- The Ministry of Education** — would provide appropriate guidance and assistance,
- would participate in the planning of the pilot project in integrated education for blind children.
 - would help select and provide the salaries of persons to receive training as counterparts to the AFOB consultant,
 - would provide the salaries of teachers in training during their year of training,
 - would provide the salaries and government concessions for trained teachers working in integrated programs on the same basis as all other government teachers except for some special recognition of their additional training.

The Ministry of Social Services

- would be concerned with aspects of institutional living and child care as would be appropriate, would divorce itself from concern over the educational part of any program for blind children in school.

National Council for the Deaf and the Blind

- would participate in the planning of the pilot project, would provide assistance as possible in several forms, would encourage and promote a system of braille publishing.

The Schools for the Blind

- would participate in the planning of the pilot project, would release teachers (no more than one per school) to be enrolled in the teacher training courses, would permit visits from teacher trainees, would cooperate in research projects.

The American Foundation for Overseas Blind

- would participate in planning the pilot project in integrated education for blind children, would provide an educational consultant for a period up to three years, would provide professional materials and some equipment for the pilot project.

would provide consultative assistance in preparation of a co-ordinated rehabilitation plan,

would provide machinery and tools for a vocational training program to prepare blind adults for employment in industry and commerce,

would seek the financial assistance of other international organizations for the provision of additional equipment for the pilot project.

- The University of Kandy** — would serve as the base for the teacher education program,
- would provide classroom space for the courses,
- would agree to having a demonstration resource program for perhaps three blind children in the demonstration school,
- would provide office space for the consultant,
- would arrange for the specialized courses to count toward a special certificate on the teaching of blind children,
- would handle the enrollment of the trainees on a basis similar to that of other students, according them the same privileges and responsibilities,
- would permit the trainee to enroll in a few other appropriate

courses on campus according to the suggestions of the consultant,

would permit use of the library and other campus facilities by the trainees and the consultant.

Rehabilitation Organizations

— would cooperate in the planning and development of new rehabilitation workshops designed to train blind adults for jobs in industry and commerce,

would participate in conferences with organizations concerned with the education of blind youth for the purpose of defining clearly the roles and responsibilities of education and rehabilitation,

would permit teacher trainees to visit.

SUGGESTED TIME SCHEDULE

October to November 1966	Official request for AFOB educational consultant
January to March 1967	Meetings to plan the pilot project
August 1967	Arrival of the education consultant Establishment of braille publishing
January 1968	Beginning of the teacher training program Instigation of demonstration programs and classes
Later in 1968	Special workshops Survey to find blind children
January 1969	First field programs Second group of teacher trainees begins college courses
Later in 1969	Special workshops Survey to find blind children
January 1970	Second group of field programs Third group of teacher trainees begins college courses Two or three people go overseas for training
Later in 1970	Special workshops Survey to find blind children

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The present system of education for blind children in Ceylon has shown considerable growth in recent years along traditional lines. However desirable special schools for the blind may be, continued proliferation would be very expensive. There would seem to be need for other forms of development as even the increased services now available touch the lives of less than 1% of the blind children on the island.

A pilot project to integrate blind children with the sighted might not only result in many more blind children receiving some education but also in improvements in present schools. The high interest and enthusiasm in those schools for experimentation and growth would suggest that full cooperation would be given.

The rehabilitation training now offered to young blind adults limits not only their futures but the school lives of blind children. More doors need to be opened to avenues of employment. A new type of training which would get blind workers into open industry would be worth trying.

The resources of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind are limited, but everything possible would be done providing there was enough interest and cooperation among the appropriate bodies.

SPECIAL MENTION

The AFOB wishes to express gratitude to the following individuals and organizations and others who extended a most cordial welcome and unqualified cooperation during the brief visit of its educational consultant, Dr. Jeanne R. Kenmore.

The Governor General His Excellency, Mr. William Gopallawa

The Honorable Minister of Education Mr. I. M. R. A. Iriyagolla

The Honorable Minister of Social Services Mr. Asoka Karunaratne

The United States Ambassador The Honorable Cecil B. Lyon and Mrs. Lyon

The Ministry of Education

Mr. M. J. Perera, Permanent Secretary

Dr. A. W. Guruge, Senior Assistant Secretary

Mr. D. M. Hettiarachchy, Deputy Director of Education

The Ministry of Social Services

Dr. R. L. Tiruchelvan, Director of Social Services

Mr. G. Ediriweera, Assistant Secretary to the Minister of Social Services

The National Council for the Deaf and the Blind

Sir Cyril de Zoysa, President

Mrs. L. J. de S. Seneviratne, Honorable Secretary

Miss Rita Kalpage, Organizing Secretary

Mr. Alexander Hogg

Mrs. H.C.H. Soysa

Mrs. Thomas Amarasuriya

Mrs. S. W. Pieris

Mrs. T. L. C. Rajapakse

Mrs. Errol Jayawickrema

Mr. Kingsley Dassanaikie

Mrs. M. Tiruchelvan

The All Ceylon Union of the Blind

Mr. Rienzi Alagiyavanna, President

Mr. S. M. Benjamin, General Secretary

Mr. M. S. A. Jaleel, Honorary Treasurer

The All Ceylon Women's Buddhist Association

Mrs. A. E. B. Kiriella, President

Mrs. A. N. S. Kulasinghe and Mrs. Kusuma de Silva,
Joint Secretaries

Mrs. T. H. Pandithagunwardene and Mrs. L. Piyasena,
Treasurers

Mrs. H. S. Basanayske, Chairman of the Home

Mrs. S. W. Pieris

Mrs. D. S. Jayawickreme

**The All Ceylon Association of Teachers for the Handicapped
Officers and Members**

The Central Council of Social Services

Officers and Members

Schools for the Blind

Mr. C. H. Gunewardene, Principal, Mt. Lavinia School for
the Blind, Ratmalana

Rev. Sister M. Antoinette, Principal, St. Joseph's School
for the Deaf and Blind, Ragama

Mr. R. Alagiyavanna, Principal, Sivi Raja School for the
Deaf and Blind, Mahawewa

Mr. D. B. Kapuwatte, Principal, Senkadagala School for
the Deaf and Blind, Kandy

Mr. W. M. S. Ranasinghe, Principal, Siva Raja School
for the Deaf and Blind, Anuradhapura

Mr. Mallikaratne, Principal, Yasodara School for the
Deaf and Blind, Balangoda

Mrs. L. A. de S. Abeygunaratne, Principal, Rohana School
for the Deaf and Blind, Matara

