

Title: Feasibility Study of the Adoption of Education Technology from India to Ethiopia. (February 2000)

Objective: To assess the feasibility of adapting the educational technology of the Rishi Valley Rural Education Centre to Western Wollega Bethel Synod, Ethiopia.

Abbreviations used:

EECMY:	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
PC (USA):	Presbyterian Church (USA)
PW:	Presbyterian Women
SVP:	Susquehanna Valley Presbytery
WWBS:	Western Wollega Bethel Synod

Feasibility Study Team:

Rev. Woreti Gelalcha, Executive Secretary, WWBS
Mr. Teferi Dina, Development Director, WWBS
Mrs. Doris White, Elder, SVP
Dr. Mary Rhodes, Elder, SVP

Site Visit: The feasibility study team visited the Rishi Valley Education Centre, Madanapalle, Chittor District, Andra Pradesh, India, February 19-26, 2000.

Background of Feasibility Study: Western Wollega Bethel Synod is the first Presbyterian church in Ethiopia. The inception of WWBS was marked by the evangelical and medical work started in 1919 in Dembi Dollo by the Presbyterian Missionary, Dr. Tom Lambie. WWBS joined the EECMY in 1974. EECMY is the fastest growing church in Africa; its 20,000 membership at its founding in 1959 has grown to 2,593,000 in 1998.

Holistic ministry to serve the whole person has been a hallmark of EECMY since its beginning. Holistic ministry includes spiritual (proclamation of the Gospel) and physical (social and economic development) aspects. Aside from evangelism work, WWBS carries out work in schools, orphanages, social health services, a medical clinic, relief work, water development, an integrated rural development project, a women's horticultural project, HIV/AIDS prevention, Majangir communities project and other micro projects in collaboration with overseas partners, donor agencies, missions, and local government line ministries.

The partnership of WWBS and PC(USA) that dates from 1919 was reasserted in 1996 with the signed partnership agreement of WWBS and SVP. The 1996 partnership has engaged in activities including improving the radio communication system, constructing an office in a WWBS presbytery that had none, and constructing a multipurpose building that will serve the synod for training and women's development activities. In 1999 SVP approved the Ethiopian Partnership Subcommittee's initiative to apply for a PW grant to implement the Rishi Valley model in Ethiopia, pending a decision by WWBS to proceed with the project.

Background of Rishi Valley: Rishi Valley Education Centre is located in a chronic drought area in the rural interior of South India. The population consists of marginal farmers and shepherds. The location in a degraded landscape has brought to the people at Rishi Valley the challenge of a long-range agenda for regeneration through education.

At the center of the program is the typical one-room village school that serves most of India's largely rural population. Situated in tree-filled plots that have been landscaped to conserve water and prevent erosion, each school is meant to be a resource center for its village.

The satellite school program began in 1986 and now consists of 16 schools. Each village provides land for its satellite school, and the community gives whatever help it can in constructing a rustic building on the site, with one classroom and storage space for teaching materials.

Each school is equipped with a field-tested elementary education kit. Children learn from study cards that the teacher has made as part of his or her training course. The teacher guides the students through the material. Classes are vertically grouped, with children of various ages and abilities sitting together to study one or several subjects individually or in cooperative learning groups.

- The kit is relevant for broad application; it can be used by "barefoot teachers" as well as experienced educators, and it can be used in formal as well as non-formal schools.
- The kit is low cost and more economical than individual textbooks.
- The kit is simple and renders each step of learning maximally concrete and facilitates a hands-on approach for both student and teachers.
- The kit is effective; it has been tested with first generation learners in the satellite schools. Students regularly clear the Grade Five examination in four years. An evaluation by the Education Department of the Andhra Pradesh State Government documented that novice teachers with three weeks of training were able to bring their students from zero to Grade One level in six weeks with an average success rate of 95 percent in one district.
- Local youth are trained to work in schools in or near their own villages, thus assuring their commitment and accountability.
- Workshops and seminars keep teachers current with new developments

Methodology: The participants undertook the following:

1. Made a site visit to Rishi Valley Education Centre where they gathered information from administrators of the rural education program and from teachers in the satellite schools, and observed the operation of a model school and three rural satellite schools.
2. Gathered information about social, economic environmental, and educational aspects of the program.
3. Examined accessibility, quality of education, and drop out rate of Rishi Valley rural schools.
4. Observed programs to address adult illiteracy and women's issues in local communities.
5. Gathered information about the required standards for teachers in the satellite schools.
6. Gathered information on training required for teachers in multi-grade, multi-level schools.
7. Examined the cost and cost effectiveness of Rishi Valley satellite schools and the adaptability of the Rishi Valley educational technology to WWBS.
8. Attended the second annual National Workshop on Planning and Implementation of Multi-Grade Multi-Level Programmes.
9. Prepared the feasibility study report for submission to WWBS and SVP.

Action Plan:

Activity	Who	When	How	Financial Resources
1. Establish Core Group	WWBS	Mar. 2000	Executive Committee action	None
2. Preliminary assessment	WWBS Department of Development and Core Group	Sept. 30, 2000	Base line study: 1) Educational, social, environmental needs and priorities. 2) Impact assessment. 3) Resources for curriculum. 4) Strengths and weaknesses.	WWBS. SVP (PW grant)
3. Consultancy	Rishi Valley experts. 1) Rural Education Centre directors including expert on women's issues. 2) Environmental restoration expert	Dec. 2000	Site visit to WWBS	World Bank (air fare and consultant fees)
4. Develop curriculum	1) Core Group. 2) Two Rishi Valley rural education directors. 3) Two Rishi Valley senior teachers. 4) SVP representative.	To be decided	Use facilities and resources of Rishi Valley	UNICEF (design materials; training for rural schools)
5. Prepare final project document	Core Group	#4 plus 2 months	Based on gathered data	WWBS. SVP (PW grant)
6. Implementation	1) WWBS. 2) Ethiopian experts. 3) Two Rishi Valley senior teachers.	Aug. 2001	Train teachers. Start model school.	\$800 + 10% contingency. UNICEF (training for rural schools). SVP (PW grant).
7. Monitor model school	Core Group	Quarterly	Interview teacher. Monitor records. Visit school.	WWBS.
8. Evaluate program.	1) WWBS. 2) External: a) Rishi Valley expert; b) SVP.	June. 2002	Interview teachers. Monitor records. Visit school. Assess outcomes using indicators.	World Bank (air fare and consultant fees)
9. Establish satellite school	WWBS	By Sept. 2002		\$800 + 10% contingency: Local community. WWBS (\$800 salary and \$1000 materials + 10% contingency)

Estimated Costs of Selected Items:

Cost to establish model school in Ethiopia		Operational costs per year	
\$ 800	Building*	\$ 800	Teacher's salary
\$ 800	Teacher's salary	<u>\$ 350</u>	Educational materials**
<u>\$ 1,000</u>	Educational materials**	\$ 1,150	
\$ 2,600		<u>\$ 115</u>	10% contingency
<u>\$ 260</u>	10% contingency	\$ 1,265	Total
\$ 2,860	Total		

Establish a small nursery

\$ 2,000	Components of nursery
<u>\$ 200</u>	10% contingency
\$ 2,200	Total

* Model school building would be an expensive item due to location. School building to be located near Resource Center. Future rural school building would be located in local community, with most building materials and labor provided by the community.

** Educational materials represent higher initial cost with the life of materials extending over three years. Cost per year represents need for changes and additional materials.

Recommendations:

1. The Feasibility Study Team recommends to proceed according to the Action Plan.
2. Initiate early exploration of funding to enhance implementation of the plan.
3. The base line study is crucial to assess potential resources without duplication of existing government projects, assess constraints, identify areas of felt need, and to increase community participation in regard to the school site and community economic, social, and cultural issues.
4. Integrate environmental, social, and cultural issues into the educational program.
5. Adult education for women and men should be a component to increase accessibility to education.

Acknowledgments: The feasibility study team wishes to thank Western Wollega Bethel Synod for its administrative and spiritual support, especially Administrative Committee members, and Solomon Nega; and Susquehanna Valley Presbytery for its administrative and spiritual support, especially the Ethiopian Partnership Subcommittee and First Presbyterian Church, Ithaca, NY for its generous travel grant.

The feasibility study team wishes to give very special thanks to Dr. Radhika Herzberger, Rama Rao, Y. A. Padmanabha Rao, M. S. Sailendran, and the entire staff of the Rishi Valley Education Centre for their flexibility, patience, warm hospitality, and generosity of time and information.

Sources Consulted in Preparation of this Report:

Publications:

1. "Rishi Valley Education Kit Project," http://www.rvs.org/rv_today/ruraled.htm
2. *National Workshop on Multi-grade/Multi-level Teaching Experiences of Agencies Collaborating with the Rishi Valley Educational Centre*, Rishi Valley, March 12-13, 1999.

Individuals:

1. Dr. Radhika Herzberger, Director, Rishi Valley Education Centre
2. Rama Rao, Director, Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources (RIVER)
3. Y. A. Padmanhabha Rao, Director, Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources (RIVER)
4. M. S. Sailendran, Bursar, Rishi Valley Education Centre
5. Latha Menon, Project Officer, UNICEF
6. Bharath Agarwal, Project Officer, UNICEF
7. Suman Bhatnagar, Project Officer, UNICEF