

**PROGRESS REPORT OF THE “IN-SERVICE TEACHERS’ TRAINING USING  
ACTIVE LEARNING METHODOLOGIES” IN TWO EXPERIMENTAL  
PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS IN REPUBLIKA SRPSKA**

**-- Preliminary Version --**

**SEPTEMBER 2000**

## I. INTRODUCTION:

The Ministry of Education of Republika Srpska has initiated a wide-range sectoral reform, with the aims of following the current active learning system. The current curriculum has been partially revised and has been initiated on an experimental basis since the 1998-99 school year. A new version of the 0-8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum is to be implemented soon. Six experimental primary schools and two secondary schools have been selected by the Government authorities to begin the implementation of those curriculum changes. Using the cascade approach, a small number of schools have begun using the active learning methodologies, with the intention to expand to additional schools during the next couple of years. The process, through co-ordinating changes in the curriculum, textbooks and teaching practices, has the potential to make a significant impact on pupils' educational experiences and teachers' professional development. The initial stages have been met with considerable enthusiasm and commitment from many of the personnel involved.






The "In-service teachers' training using Active Learning methodologies" initiative supported by UNICEF started at the end of 1999. Professors from Bishop Grosseteste University College provided external technical assistance to support the overall direction of on-going reforms while adding dimensions which would be hard to generate locally. The adopted approach provides a 'bottom-up' model, where the main focus of each input is the work generated from each particular school. It aims to complement the theoretical seminars supported by the authorities by providing alternative models of practice through workshops situated within the schools themselves and study tours in the UK. Participation of staff from the Pedagogical Institutes of Republika Srpska (both—but not exclusively- from Banja Luka and Prijedor) will participate in the workshops to guarantee the dissemination of information to other schools, in other parts of the Republika Srpska, and the four experimental schools covered by the experience initiated by the Ministry of Education of Republika Srpska. Also, Professors, and students in their final year of school at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Banja Luka are encouraged to participate in the school-based workshops with the aim to guarantee dissemination to pre-service teachers' training.

Out of the six primary experimental schools in the Republika Srpska, two were selected for the starting phase: one is located in Banja Luka region and the other in Prijedor region<sup>1</sup>. The training involves both, the main schools and their satellite schools at every stage, together with the RPIs, University of Banja Luka professors and the students in their final year of school.

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<sup>1</sup> Profile of the schools in Annex III

### **The aims of the UNICEF supported activities are:**

-  to influence the classroom organisation and teaching methodology used by teachers in the schools;
-  to support the directors and senior staff of the two schools in planning and evaluating whole-school developments throughout the project;
-  to instigate a practice review of the initial and continued training of teachers within both the University of Banja Luka and the Pedagogical Institutes;
-  to contribute to plans for disseminating the work of the project into the immediate school communities and more widely through Republika Srpska;
-  to provide further professional support to the Ministry of Education when required including, for example, access to resources such as alternative models of the curriculum, textbooks, teachers' support materials, assessment activities, etc.

## **II METHODOLOGY:**

The progress report of the “In-service teachers’ training using active learning methodologies” in two main experimental primary schools in Republika Srpska focussed on the progress, achievements and obstacles of the initiative so far and documented suggestions and proposals by counterparts, children and parents related to continuation and sustainability. The report focuses only on the experience in two main experimental schools (Petar Kocic and Borislav Stankovic) and their satellite schools, which benefited from the technical support from BGUC and UNICEF.

The progress report was conducted at five different levels:

- Two experimental schools and its staff including teachers, pedagogues, psycho-pedagogues and directors;
- Students and parents from the two experimental schools in Banja Luka and Prijedor;
- The Pedagogical Institute Deputy Director in Banja Luka and the Pedagogical Institute (RPI) Inspector in Prijedor;
- The Dean of Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Banja Luka (UBL) and Professor from the Pedagogy Department;
- The RS Minister of Education and Assistant Minister for Primary Education.<sup>2</sup>

The progress report addressed the following aspects:

### *A. CHANGES IN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES:*

- Physical layout of classrooms
- Children's display areas in school and classrooms
- Schedule

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<sup>2</sup> List attached in Annex I

- Method of class planning
- Exchanging of Resource and Educational Materials
- Communication patterns
- Instructional practices using active learning methodologies
- Changes in assessment of children's learning outcomes
- Extra-curricular activities

**B. *CHANGES IN SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT:***

- School-based development teams with teachers, students and parents
- Parents' role and participation in school
- Children's role and participation in school
- Relationship of school director and teachers; school director and parents

**C. *CHANGES IN LEARNING OUTCOMES, ATTENDANCE RATES, BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES:***

**D. *BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS TO CHANGE, SOLUTIONS FOUND:***

***RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS:***

- At different levels of the system
- Increased parent involvement
- For strengthening the role of the RPI
- For strengthening the role of the UBL

The study was conducted through personal interviews using as a tool a detailed questionnaire incorporating all the above mentioned criteria<sup>3</sup>. The ideas and opinions mentioned in this report reflect those of the interviewed groups and also the reports prepared by BGUC after the school-based workshops and visits to RS.

Special thanks to Najwa Kefaya, Slavenka Grahovac, Miodrag Jungic, Lynn Cohen, Ahmed Novo and Amela Radmilovic who devoted a considerable amount of time and effort to prepare this progress report.

**III. MAIN FINDINGS:**

**A. *CHANGES IN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES***

**Physical layout of classrooms and schools**

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3 Questionnaire attached in Annex II

- In contrast with the traditional/conventional approach to teaching, all interviewed acknowledged that the experimental schools are more active, in addition to more visually appealing than in the past.
- Children's movement between classes, their activity within the class, their enthusiasm, the decorative display panels and their active involvement, is dynamic. Both the children and teachers prefer this environment, rather than the way it was in past, when teachers were the central focus of the class and expected the students to accept all information with no opportunity for argument or discussion.
- The opportunity to exchange experiences during classroom breaks and in between classes has motivated the students, as well as prevented boredom which was a problem when students were in one classroom for 4-5 hours a day.
- In many classrooms, the chairs and desks are rearranged, often in a U, circle or other shapes. These arrangements are more enjoyable, less formal and more conducive to open uninhibited interaction and better communication and small group and pair work.
- Interaction enhances motivation and better learning outcomes. Also, it encourages better performance on the part of weaker students because it is more useful for them to participate within a small group, than individually or in big group.

### **Children's display areas in the schools and classrooms**

- The work displayed illustrates different issues such as nature, environment, science, etc. Children's display areas meet the schools' motto: "What did I learn". They teach children the significance of what they are learning, illustrate how it is done and demonstrate how the knowledge can be applied in everyday life.
- Students like these areas because they can share their work with their parents and other students; it is also a source of achievement for the children to produce work that can be on display for all to see. In addition, the children's work makes the school look more vibrant and alive.
- A good way to discover hidden talents is to provide introverted children with a way express themselves in an artistic manner. This is a method that enhances positive and constructive competition.
- According to the children's opinions, in the old conventional classrooms, class activity was one sided, directed solely by the teacher with little or no input from children. According to interviewed children classes before were boring, cold, dull and unexciting.
- Currently, children are very satisfied with the classrooms and the changes in instructional practices and couldn't think of any better way to change them. This new approach enhances an interactive, warm and informal class environment, compared to the old monotonous classical set-up, where students looked at each other's backs and assumed a negative role.

### **Approaches to teaching and learning**

- In the past system, firmness and strictness were adopted by the teacher and total obedience and respect was expected from the students. The teachers' involvement in

the school was restricted to instruction and grading exams. Although some students think that their teachers are still “tough”, others say they allow opportunity for student interventions and group work.

- Although students still have to rely on the textbooks to learn, which is reminiscent of the past, they now also learn through group activities.
- Previously, a “top down” method was used for teaching. Today’s approach to interactive teaching occurs three ways, amongst the students, amongst the teachers, and finally between both the students and teachers.
- Previously, the teacher was the centre of the classroom. The teacher stood at the far end of the classroom and lectured using a textbook. The book and the blackboard were their only teaching tool. Student assumed a passive role, which included listening and memorisation of material without actually understanding the basic principles or any of the analytical and practical skills.
- Before, the students depended on the teacher for acquiring knowledge. But with the use of active learning methodologies, students are more alive, independent, learn by themselves through experiencing and experimenting, where previously the focus was put on the content rather than on the process learning. The new role of the teacher is to enhance interaction to facilitate the learning process. Students now learn at school and create at home, which is then exhibited in school.
- In the past, teaching relied only on lecturing and tools such as the blackboard, books and notepads. Today, teaching is more effective because teachers have to be more creative and encourage methodologies that stimulate the students’ interest and promote involvement by making learning more interesting through drawing, painting, group work and discussions, etc. Today’s teaching is more appealing for the teachers too, but it has its drawbacks, it means that their working hours have increased because of time spent preparing the activities.
- Although the past curricula was revised, the teachers still think the curricula is still too heavy, intensive and much of it is obsolete.
- Taking into consideration the curricula (irrelevant and heavy), and the shortage of teaching aids, the teachers have made great efforts in order to create an interactive teaching-learning process, which motivates students and enhances analytical and practical skills.
- Past educational methods didn’t meet the requirements of modern life. Studying (or rather memorising) and doing homework was time-consuming, tedious and frustrating for students. Success rates today are much better than before.
- Active Learning methodologies are not used in “all” subjects. Some subjects have to be conducted in the “traditional” way, such as languages.
- One advantage of the introduction of the new curriculum and consequently the use of more Active Learning methodologies is that English (and not Russian or German like before) is the foreign language being introduced and at an early stage which is very useful.
- Introducing Active Learning methodologies in the preparatory class (pre-school) reduced the tension pre-school children used to suffer from after having to change from learning through play at kindergartens, to traditional teaching in first grade. This was quite a traumatic experience that made children dislike school from the very beginning.

- Now, as the AL schools are becoming more popular, because of the use of new teaching and learning methodologies, more support is needed to keep up with the higher demand and increasing number of students.

### **Changes in class planning**

- Because the previous heavy curricula is still used, more or less, within the two experimental schools, there is not much room in the teaching schedule for accommodating active learning sufficiently. Teachers and directors said they have tried to make the schedule flexible enough to accommodate as much as possible the “additional” subjects, group techniques, and extracurricular activities.
- Teachers daily lesson planning within the experimental schools is less content oriented and more process oriented. Planning focus on HOW to conduct a lesson and what participatory techniques can they use to enhance the maximum children’s interaction and positive learning outcomes. Prior to the introduction of active learning methodologies, the same teachers planned only WHAT their lessons would focus on related to content.
- Overall, school planning is more inclusive, through teachers and children actively participating in the process. In the Petar Kocic primary school, an end-of the year evaluation took place as well as the planning for the subsequent school year. The teachers, children, and some parents carried out both activities. Before the introduction of the new methodologies, the school pedagogues did all the school planning.
- Schools now have a kind of “generic” work plan for the year and are on their way to do active and participatory planning compared to how plans were made before. However, these plans need much polishing and redefining in order to incorporate measurable objectives and form adequate tools, which include new teaching and learning methodologies.

### **Exchanging of Resource and Educational Materials**

- Before the use of active learning methodologies was introduced, resources were either monopolised or restricted. Usage was limited in order to preserve resources. Today, resources are available to all teachers and mobilised for all students.

### **Constraints**

- Due to the scarcity of resources in the two experimental schools, teachers have had to borrow from each other and children have had to share amongst themselves.
- Due to the limited funds for the provision of school resources, students have to bring their own from home. For example, often children bring their own basic school supplies including paper, notebooks, pens and pencils.
- There is scarcity of some instructional equipment. For example, in one of the “Informatics” class, there are only 6 computers for 39 students. So while only 6 students are working 33 are watching or doing nothing.

### **Teachers-pupils communication patterns**

- Although a number of children expressed their desire to have some of their present teachers changed, in general, students believe that today's teachers are more tolerant, friendly and more open to discussing and debating issues with the students.
- Some teachers said that more children approach them related to personal problems, as well as for academic support. In this way, changes are occurring in teacher-student relations. Previous teacher/student relations were achieved through fear, not necessarily respect.
- Children with learning and emotional challenges, who participate in small work groups, are better able to express themselves because they are less inhibited by small group discussions. Previously, these children were more or less excluded from the class and felt intimidated by the stronger students, which caused them to feel alienated and be unmotivated to learn.
- In the past teachers got upset very easily. Since then teachers have become more patient, tolerant and talk more freely with students and the other teachers. They are significantly more aware of their behaviour and how it influences the children.
- Students now are more confident, can express themselves more easily and freely, and take the initiative to communicate better with their teachers and classmates.
- Communication between schools and the RPI could be strengthened. Visits to schools will be helpful for schoolteachers, in regards to the use of new teaching and learning methodologies. Joint participation in the in-service training for teachers will provide a better knowledge of practices in the experimental schools and will enable them to utilise and disseminate the new innovations, changes and latest developments in Education to all schools in the Republika Srpska.
- Since the introduction of active learning methodologies, teachers know more about their students, their talents, weaknesses, problems etc.
- Children share more with their parents about what is happening in school, such as events, activities, and displays, much more than they had in the past. Simply because before they never existed.

### **Changes in Assessment of Children's Learning Outcomes**

- There has been little change in this respect. According to RPI personnel, assessment is still a problem. Short tests are conducted on regular basis after each class, which focuses on academic/theoretical knowledge.
- It is easier at present to assess the artistic and innovative skills among the students through their artwork and other practical innovations. However, in general assessment is still based on pupils' academic achievements, using the existing curricula as a yardstick.
- Both students and teachers are still experimenting in this initiative and proper assessment is pre-mature.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

- Extra-curricula activities are limited to a choir, woodworking, Informatics, music, and language courses (mainly English).
- There are two schools, in one of the schools there are after-school activities where the students engage in the activities following school classes. In the second school, the children aren't able to participate in extra curricular activities because their sports hall is rented out to a sports club in the afternoons.
- The choir, in one of the Banja Luka schools, is one of the best in the Region.
- The students produce a monthly magazine, which is well appreciated by students, teaching staff, and parents alike.
- There is more need for social activities such as, drama classes, sports, intellectual competitions, and creative literature.
- Students enjoy extra-curricular activities because it keeps them busy and entertained.

### ***B. CHANGES IN SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT***

- Parents' role in the school continues to be minimal and restricted only to meetings and economic support. Parents are burdened with other responsibilities and believe that the school should make all the decisions pertaining to education. Meanwhile, there are serious efforts being made by the teachers, the directors and the UBL to design strategies to enhance a more active and effective role of the parents in the school.
- Although parents are more informed now than before about their children's grades, behaviour, etc, their role is still limited to attending parents meetings and providing financial support to their children in schools. In some cases, parents contribute their labour to facilitate renovating the school.
- Parents are better informed of their children's development in school through the monthly school report, which is prepared for each child and sent to the parents. Parents are very satisfied with this new procedure.
- The school is trying to involve parents more through inviting parents who are professionals, for example; doctors, health professionals, etc, to speak to students about their professions. More parents can be seen in the school premises now than ever before.
- School staff treats the students as friends, occasionally they spend time together playing football. However, children still do not take an active role in the planning and management of their classes or in designing activities related to them.
- School staff interacts more for planning purposes, evaluation, and to share different new responsibilities.
- Students have "community class meetings", where certain concerns are raised and suggestions made. But only those, which do not entail financial implications, are addressed by the school administration due to the shortage of funds.

- Children are now more attached to their school. Recently some parents tried to change the school their children attended because it far from home, but the children refused.
- With the ability to choose their additional “electives” and extracurricular classes, students are able to make decisions relevant to their needs and interests.
- Students feel their worth and very adjusted to the new system that they refuse to go back to the old system.
- Through active learning methodologies there has been a process of “democratisation” in the school and the classroom, which is a contrast to the previous authoritarian system. Today’s students interact with their teachers and with each other, when in the past children assumed the role of the passive recipients in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the teachers participate more actively with the director in the planning and decision-making processes.
- The director was the major decision-maker in matters related to the school and the teaching process as well as the sole planner for the overall policy and teaching schedule. The director in addition to other teachers knew little about the problems, or talents of their students. The director still is in charge of making the overall policy plan, but is now more open to discussions and allows flexibility. He is not the source of authority as he was before, but is looked at as great source of support by his staff. His door is always open for anybody.
- When the director changed, everything changed. They are now more ready and willing to receive anybody with suggestions or complaints than previously. Furthermore, the directors are always available to meet with parents.
- The Director contacts parents now if their child is having any problem.
- All students interviewed said they like to come to school now more than before. Some parents said their children wanted to come to school even if they were sick. Teachers commented that the students in the past had inflicted lots of damage to the school walls and furniture and had a less positive attitude towards the school in general and the teaching staff. Today these students have developed a very tolerant and amiable attitude towards the school. Absenteeism has been reduced and vandalism against the school happens much less than before.
- Students also expressed their wish for teachers to be “more fun” and “less old-fashioned”.
- Teachers’ camaraderie has improved, as well as the ability to network with other teaching groups.

***CHANGES IN LEARNING OUTCOMES, ATTENDANCE RATES, BEHAVIORAL CHANGES and IMPROVEMENT IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE***

- Number of students increased jointly with the level of enthusiasm.
- Success rates increased and the children’s communication and inter-personal skills have developed substantially.
- Fewer students have to take re-takes.
- Students are less aggressive; fewer students are being reprimanded.
- Children are closer to each other, share more and are more accommodating.

#### ***D. BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS TO CHANGE***

##### Barriers

- Resistance of some teaching and administrative staff to innovation in instructional practices.
- Lack of financial incentives.
- Shortage of funds for the provision of needed equipment, teaching aids and other materials needed to engage students in physical activity and enhance the display areas.
- School staff believes that the RPI could be more involved and possibly could be one of the main counterparts in the process.
- School staff feels that more training in supervision related to use of the new teaching and learning methodologies is needed to better accompany the progresses of the school-based approach and to support the teachers' professional development.
- Active participation in school workshops would enable RPI staff to provide more support to school directors and teachers, particularly in the experimental schools.
- Overall co-ordination among the different counterparts such as the RPI, UBL and MoE must be strengthened.
- According to school staff, the school curriculum is based on the old model, even with some revisions undertaken by the RPI, UBL and the MoE. At this time, implementation of curriculum changes is only occurring in the first grade. Additionally, teachers believe they should have more of a role in the curriculum revision process.
- Teachers' claim that it is more difficult creating active classrooms given the curriculum constraints, current classes, schools schedules, and the addition of new subject areas.
- Audio-visual aids available were used only on a limited basis.
- With the schools working on a multiple-shift basis the teachers have increased responsibilities, some teachers believe that new teaching and learning methodologies are more difficult to achieve under these conditions.
- Additional activities and subjects introduced to the already heavy curriculum increases teachers' workload and results in a very heavy schedule for both staff and students. This, added to lack of sufficient financial motivation, is creating much frustration among the staff.
- Time allocated for additional activities and classes is too short.
- Future graduate teachers at the UBL will not be aware of the new teaching and learning methodologies because lack of involvement of the students in their final year of school, also because of the school placement by the Pedagogy Department at UBL.
- New teaching and learning methodologies are used in classes with old curricula, which is contradictory and confuses teachers and students alike.
- Support from the municipalities is nonexistent since they maintain that the schools are the legal responsibility of the MoE.

## **Solutions adopted**

- A raise of 10% was assigned by the MoE-RS to the teachers in the six experimental schools to compensate for their additional efforts and workload. Though the teachers believe this is not enough to deal with the frustration of the new workload. Their main question is in regards to the sustainability and expansion of the initiative by the Government to future schools.
- Teachers tried through AL to minimise the trauma of the students caused by the war, by trying to make learning as enjoyable and motivating as possible.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS**

### **Changes to be introduced at the different levels of the system:**

- Only through joint efforts and work of the MoE, UBL and RPI will enable faster and steadily dissemination of the changes and experiences in pre-service and in-service training of teachers.
- Although it is too early to judge regarding the academic performance of the students, there are many positive indicators on the successes of the AL approach. Hence, co-ordination should continue to maintain and expand AL to secondary schools, so students will have less of an “academic shock” when they move up to secondary levels.
- The percentage of experimental schools in comparison to the overall number is too small (5%). Involvement of other schools should be considered.
- Experience should expand to the other experimental schools and their participation in the workshops is strongly recommended.
- The school magazine activity should include all grades, in an attempt to promote AL at all levels of the schools.
- Teaching is still predominantly verbal and theoretical in the main science subjects. Basic laboratory equipment is lacking, and should be made available to the AL schools. At present, simple experiments like chemical analysis can't be performed in school. Equipment is also needed for language classes.
- More training material, resources, publications, books, periodicals, and videotapes are needed to keep teachers up to date on AL techniques.
- The AL Centre available at the UBL should be used and opened to the students from the UBL and other interested professionals.
- Establish a library in each school.
- Future plans should focus on a “holistic” assessment of the student, which involves behaviour and personality characteristics, in addition to academic achievement.
- Reduce curricula content and introduce Informatics as a mandatory subject.
- The school should be regarded as the core of the area/community and should attract the involvement of the community.
- Teachers recommended organising more training visits to the UK involving as many of the schools personnel as possible.

### **Recommendations for parents' involvement:**

- The schools has to make additional efforts to include parents in the general meetings, discuss AL, and highlight the importance of parents' involvement in AL process.
- Parents should be invited to attend classes and encouraged to make suggestions about the AL methodology.
- Strengthen interaction between school and parents by increasing visits by the school to the family homes of the students, and holding more social activities/gatherings at schools for the parents.
- More involvement of media which allows for quicker dissemination of the positive changes in the school system and practices.

### **Recommendations for strengthening the role and involvement of the RPIs:**

- Advisors and supervisors from the RPIs should actively participate in the workshops and other in-service training organised in the experimental schools.
- Active participation of the RPI supervisors and advisors in school practices and workshops will improve their leadership and make supporting staff easier in the schools (experimental and other).
- Curriculum has to be seriously revised, the contents reduced and adjusted properly to meet the modern changes in the field of Education. This process has to be participatory, where schools, parents, RPI, UBL, and MoE staff are all involved. In the revision process, similar subjects could be grouped together.

### **Recommendations for strengthening the role of UBL:**

- Participation of the students and staff from the UBL should be more active in the school-based workshops in order to facilitate dissemination for the pre-service teachers' training.
- Teachers would like to have more leaders in the school to co-ordinate the introduction and use of new teaching and learning methodologies. UBL trainees from the Teacher Training departments were recommended to participate in the AL training.
- Seminars and workshops should be organised differently. Previous seminars held by the UBL continued for 8 hours daily, teachers felt that listening to monotonous lecturing, without group-work or any practical activity was too difficult.
- UBL should be more serious about planned seminars. The one planned for June has yet to materialise.
- Further strengthen and use of the resource centre created by the UBL with training manuals and learning materials, to be used by teachers, students and the public.

**Attachments:**

**ANNEX I**

List of interviewees:

**Prijedor, 4 September 2000**

**1000 “Petar Kocic” Primary School**

Mr. Slobodan Rokvic - Director  
Ms. Nada Ribic – Psychopedagogue  
Ms. Tatjana Dragonjic- Teacher 1-4 grades  
Ms. Kristijana Vuruna- Teacher 5-8 grades  
Two children from 4-5-8 grades (each)  
Parents

**1400 RPI Prijedor**

Prof. Aleksandar Milic- RPI Prijedor, Inspector

**Banja Luka, 7 September 2000**

**0830 Ministry of Education and RPI Banja Luka**

Prof. Svetozar Licina- RPI Advisor  
Prof. Petar Djakovic- Assistant to the Minister for Primary Education

**1000 “Borisav Stankovic” Primary School**

Mr. Predrag Damjanovic - Director  
Mr. Milos Kasic - Psychopedagogue  
Ms. Jovanka Djakovic - Teacher 1-4 grades  
Ms. Stana Gajic - Teacher 5-8 grades  
Two children from 4-5-8 grades (each)  
Parents

**1400 University of Banja Luka**

Prof. Svetozar Milijevic - Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Pedagogy  
Prof. Drago Brankovic - Faculty of Philosophy, Dean

**Banja Luka, 8 September 2000**

**Ministry of Education**

**1300** Prof. Nenad Suzic - Minister

**ANNEX II**

## **QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR THE ASSESSMENT ON ACTIVE LEARNING PRACTICES IN UNICEF-SUPPORTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Information provided by Primary Schools (staff, children and parents), Pedagogical Institutes, Ministry of Education, University of Banja Luka

### **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SCHOOL: NUMBER OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS, STAFF, CLASSES, SCHEDULE, ETC.**

*Pls. find attached form to be used and filled in jointly with schools.*

### **2. CHANGES IN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES:**

Physical layout of classrooms:

*Could you describe how did the school looked before starting with the training conducted by Bishop?*

*What type of changes has been introduced since then, the objectives and what are the results achieved?*

*How do you like your school? What else would you like to do regarding the physical changes in your classroom?*

Children's display areas in school and classrooms:

*Why the children's displays areas have been introduced? Pls. explain.*

*How does it relate to the learning process? What are the benefits in relation to the children's learning process? Suggestions for the future?*

*What are the children's opinions? What kind of works has been displayed and what else would you like to display?*

Schedule:

*Has the school changed the schedule to accommodate the new methods? Pls. explain.*

*How often AL classes are taught? What are the constraints being experienced?*

*What kind of suggestions would you like to make for the future?*

Method of planning for classes (e.g. joint planning)

*Could you pls. describe the current planning process of the classes? Pls. explain. Is there any difference comparing with what was experienced three years ago? Pls. explain.*

*Which would be the suggestions for the future?*

Sharing of resources and educational materials

*Could you pls. describe the current use of the resources in the school/classroom and compare if there is any difference with the previous practice?*

*How do you feel with the changes (if any)? Pls. explain.*

*How do you feel in the class with the availability and sharing of materials during classes? Pls. explain.*

#### Communication patterns

*Has the communication process changed in the school? How? Could you pls. explain and give examples? How do you feel about those changes?*

*Does the communication with the teachers and other staff from the school have changed? How? Can you explain?*

*Does the relation with the RPIs and advisors change? How? Pls. explain.*

*How does it reflect in the relation with the parents?*

Instructional practices with active learning: activities, co-operative learning with small groups and pairs, projects, games, tasks, etc.

*What kind of new activities have been introduced? Could you pls. explain and give one concrete example?*

*How are children learning now? Could you pls. compare and explain?*

*How do you like the classes now? What are the positive and the negative aspects?*

*What is your opinion about the new activities in your class? Pls. explain?*

#### Changes in assessment of children's learning outcomes

*How assessment is done now? Which learning areas are assessed and how often?*

#### Extra-curricular activities

*Have new extra-curricular activities been introduced? Which ones? Pls. explain.*

*According to your opinion, what are the positive and the negative aspects?*

*Do parents participate? How? Pls. explain.*

*Did you notice new extra-curricular activities? How do you like them?*

### **3. CHANGES IN SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT:**

School-based development teams with teachers, students and parents

*How the new experience has changed the relation between the schools and the parents with respect to the decisions the affect the entire school?*

#### Parents role and participation in school

*How parents participate in the life of the school? (excluding the financial part). Pls. explain*

*How often parents participate in the school meetings and for what issues?*

#### Children's role and participation in school

*How often and for what issues?*

Relationship of school director and teachers; school director and parents

*Pls. explain and give two concrete examples.*

### **4. CHANGES IN LEARNING OUTCOMES, ATTENDANCE RATES, BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS:**

*Pls. explain children's performance, motivation and behavioural changes. Compare positive and negative aspects with experience using previous teaching methods.*

**5. BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS TO CHANGE:**

*What have been the barriers and/or constraints to change using active learning in school?  
What approaches have you used to overcome any barriers and constraints?*

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION OR NEXT STEPS:**

*What kind of changes would you like to introduce (at different levels of the system, for example)?  
What kind of parents' involvement could be done to strengthen the school-community linkage?  
How can the role of the RPI be strengthening through this in-service practice in schools?  
How can the role of the UBL be strengthening through the teaching practice in the experimental schools?*

ANNEX III

(Tables with the profile of the two experimental schools)

**GLOSSARY:**

AL: Active learning methodologies

BGUC: Bishop Grosseteste University College, UK

MoE-RS: Ministry of Education of Republika Srpska

RPI: Pedagogical Institute of Republika Srpska

RS: Republika Srpska

UBL: University of Banja Luka

26-Sep-00