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**The Expanding Legislation and Policy Environment
of Adult Education and Training
Brazil - Monograph**

Sérgio Haddad

**Universidade Católica de São Paulo
Centro Ecumênico de Documentação e Informação
São Paulo - SP
Brazil**

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The Expanding Legislation and Policy Environment of Adult Education and Training

Brazil - Monograph

1. Introduction: National historical context related to the whole field of adult education

Brazil is a presidentialist republic located in the central-eastern portion of South America. Its territory covers 8,511,965 km², equivalent to 20.8% of the Americas and 47.7% of South America. It is therefore the 5th largest country in the world. In 1991 it had a population of 146,154,502 inhabitants, 42.5% being concentrated in the Southeastern region of the country - which is also the country's most industrialized region.

Its most recent history has been taken up with the process of political redemocratization in the attempt to overcome the marks left by the military regime which dominated the country from 1964 to 1984. At the same time, after years of economic growth (Brazil was the country in the world with the highest rate of growth during this century, with an average rate of 7% per year after World War II), the 1980s were marked by a severe economic crisis.

In spite of some advances in the 1970s, it was at the beginning of the 1980s, still under the yoke of the military regime, that Brazil began a more effective process of transition to democracy. The 1982 campaign for direct presidential elections reached enormous proportions:

multitudes of over one million people in various cities met in public squares to demand the end of the dictatorship. In spite of the intense popular mobilization, the constitutional amendment to guarantee direct elections was defeated in the national congress. As a consequence, the 1984 presidential elections were still indirect, although a civilian - the first in over 20 years - was elected as president of the republic. This president-elect, Tancredo Neves, took on the commitment to call a national constitutional assembly. He died before taking office, however, and his vice-president-elect, José Sarney, took office under the same basic platform.

In 1986 the national constitutional assembly was convened and in 1988 the new Federal Constitution was promulgated. It institutionalized the democratic advances made till then, guaranteed the right to direct elections at all levels of public administration and consolidated a number of social rights. In 1989 Fernando Collor de Mello won the presidential race in the first direct elections for the nation's highest office. Twenty-nine years had elapsed since the last free national elections.

President Collor began his term of office with a strong social basis of support but he was unable to hold back the tide of accusations of corruption in his administration, and he was impeached by congress in 1992. In his place the vice-president, Itamar Franco, took office. This year, 1994, new elections were held, and the victor was the sociologist Fernando Henrique Cardoso, an enlightened intellectual who lived in exile during part the military regime. He is scheduled to take office on January 1, 1995. Mr. Cardoso was minister of finances during the present administration, and implanted an economic plan which brought him popularity. This plan changed the national currency and brought inflation down to rates of approximately 1 to 3% per month,

following a period with monthly rates of almost 50%. To win the election, his party, organized around a social-democratic profile, made an alliance with a right-wing party, with conservative strongholds in the oligarchic structure of the Northeast, the poorest region of Brazil. In these elections, held in early October, 1994, Cardoso defeated the candidate of a leftist front, led by the Workers's Party, with Lula da Silva as its presidential candidate. Mr. da Silva is a labor leader with national projection due to his long history struggles against the military regime.

In spite of many ups and downs, the political and economic history of the last fifteen years has been characterized by the consolidation of democracy. There have been positive advances in the legal sanctioning of formal rights and the guarantee of freedom of the press. Democracy in popular organization and manifestation have also been attained. However, there are still remnants of the authoritarian system in the spheres of political organization (as well as in the institutional and individual spheres) which betray the institutional fragility of this democracy.

Another important aspect is that this process of redemocratization of the country has not been translated into improved living conditions for the general population. The economic and social crisis is severe. Throughout Latin America, economists refer to the 1980s as "the lost decade." During this period the per capita income fell 5.5% and inflation reached over two thousand percent (exactly 2,359%) per year. As a solution to the crisis, the hegemony of the neoliberal theses, propounded by international organisms aimed at disciplining the economic and tax systems, drastically reduced the social and economic functions of the State. The result has been a recessive economic policy which excludes the majority of the population. The social costs

have been enormous: unemployment and underemployment have grown, salaries have been corroded, the quality of life of the majority of the population has fallen drastically, and violence has increased.

In spite of its vigorous economy (Brazil is presently the world's 10th largest economy) 52% of the economically active population earn US\$ 140 or less per month, while the monthly minimum wage has held steadily at US\$70. This simple fact reveals a perverse situation: Brazil has the worse distribution of income on the planet. In 1989, the richest 10% absorbed 53.2% of the country's income.

Besides this, Brazil presently has one of the highest foreign debts - approximately US\$ 134 billion - contracted during the military regime. In fact, the very legitimacy of this debt has been questioned by many. The option of the governments has been to accept international impositions, in spite of the economic crisis, and pay the high interest rates and amortization of the foreign debt. Between 1977 and 1990 this total service actually paid corresponded to US\$ 222,976 billion. This option has led to a fall in the country's capacity to invest: from 24% of the GNP in the 1970s to 14.5% today.

The economic crisis and the governments' reduced capacity to collect revenue, the payment of the debt and the reduction of the role of the state have produced a fall in the revenue for the functioning of the governmental bureaucratic machine, both for investments and for the services toward the basic needs of the population (health, education, food subsidies, housing, etc.). All of this, allied with the severely skewed income distribution, have placed the social question as a priority for the majority of the Brazilian population.

2. The General Legislative Framework

Brazil is a federative republic composed of the union of its 26 States, 4,892 Municipalities (1992) and the Federal District. The recent 1988 Constitution reaffirmed the system of government as presidentialist; thus the power is exercised by the people through their elected representatives.

The political organization functions through three independent powers, or branches: the legislative, the executive and the judicial.

The legislative function of the Union is exercised basically by the National Congress, made up of two chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, neither of which predominates over the other. The Senate represents the States (3 senators from each) and the Chamber represents the populations of each State (in numbers proportionate to the population of each state). Their attributions are to legislate on matters incumbent on the Union, with the sanction of the President of the Republic. They may also amend the Constitution and inspect and control the other two powers.

The federal executive power is exercised by the President of the Republic, who is the head of State, head of government and responsible for the federal administration. As head of government the president is responsible for naming his direct auxiliaries, the Ministers of State.

The Judicial Power is responsible for the resolution of conflicts of interests through judicial processes, based on the Constitution and the laws, norms and customs.

In each of the states the legislative power is exercised by the state deputies, acting together in the legislative assemblies, while the executive power is exercised by the state governor.

In the municipalities, the legislative power is exercised by the city councilors, elected by the population and acting together in the municipal councils, or chambers; the executive power is exercised by the mayor.

The states may decide on any subject except those expressly limited by the Federal Constitution. The municipalities may decide on all local questions as long as their decisions do not conflict with provisions of the federal and state constitutions.

In the state and municipal chambers, the state deputies and councilpersons legislate on matters within their sphere of responsibility, with the sanction of the state governor or city mayor, respectively.

The 1988 Constitution was drawn up shortly after the end of the military regime, during which the federal sphere concentrated enormous political and economic power. This constitution reaffirmed tendency toward decentralization, whereby states and municipalities now take on greater responsibilities and funds. Basically the federal government has the role of establishing norms for redistributing economic and social opportunities.

3. The Adult Education Scene

3.2.1. A Schema of the National Educational System

Education in Brazil is constitutionally defined as the right of all and the duty of the State (federal, state and municipal governments) and the family. It is structured on four levels: pre-school (before the age of seven) , basic (8 years - also called first level), high or middle school (3 years, also referred to as 2nd level), and higher education.

The public sector is responsible for guaranteeing basic education, which is mandatory and free of charge for everyone, including persons above the usual school age who did not have access to schooling at an earlier age.

In relation to high-school (or middle school), the new constitution has established that the public sector is responsible for providing this general, free, schooling. It must also guarantee day-care centers and pre-schools to children from birth to six years of age, as well as guarantee regular night courses, adequate to the conditions of students who must work during the day.

The public sector is also responsible for assuring access to higher education "according to the capacity of each," in the words of the constitution.

The federal government, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities must organize their school systems in cooperation with one another. It is the responsibility of the federal government to organize and finance the federal educational system (the federal universities and federal technical schools) and to render technical and financial assistance to the states, the Federal District and the municipalities for the development of their school systems,

with priority to obligatory schooling. The municipalities should devote their attention principally to primary and the pre-school education; the states, to primary and high-school education.

The Union must annually apply at least 18% of its revenue from taxes to maintain and develop education, while the states, the federal district and the municipalities must disburse 25%. The distribution of public funds must assure priority to obligatory schooling (basic education).

Public primary education has an additional source of financing, the so-called education salary. This is a tax which all companies must pay by law. They may deduct from this tax any amounts spent on primary education of their employees or employees' dependents.

Besides approving all the determinations mentioned above, the 1988 Constitution also instituted the National Plan for Education, to take effect for several years, aimed at organizing and developing education on its various levels and the integration of public actions toward:

- . Eradication of illiteracy;
- . Universalization of schooling;
- . Improvement of the quality of education;
- . Training of manpower;
- . Human, scientific and technological promotion of the country.

Also according to the 1988 constitution, congress must draw up a new Law of Directives and Principles for Education. The many interests involved in this question, however, particularly the interests of the private sectors involved in education, have managed to block the enactment of these laws, at least to the present (1994). Thus part of the educational systems continue to be governed by the

Educational Law of 1971, which was enacted during the period of military government.

3.2.2. The Provision of Organized Opportunities for Adult Learning and the "System" of Adult Education.

Policies for providing education for young persons and adults who did not have the opportunity to study at the normal age was one of the targets of the federal government at the end of the 1940s. During the 1950s and 1960s emergency-type interventions were prevalent under the form of occasional campaigns for literacy training, the results of which were almost always nil.

The military government repressed movements for popular culture and literacy training for adults carried out by progressive sectors, many of which were inspired by the thinking of Prof. Paulo Freire. During this period, in 1967, the military government set up the Brazilian Movement for Literacy Training (MOBRAL), which was structured outside the educational systems and adopted an extremely centralized and verticalized form of operation. It too had the characteristics of a campaign and established literacy training units in practically all Brazilian municipalities, having at its disposal considerable financial backing obtained basically from taxes on companies. Its main objective had more to do with social control and official propaganda than with basic education, and its results were seriously questioned.

MOBRAL was the target of endless criticisms, and it was discontinued at the end of 1985. In its place, the first civil government following the dictatorship set up the Educate Foundation (Fundação Educar). This foundation

established literacy training programs for young people and adults in a more decentralized form, and it was supported financially and technically by projects of municipal governments and sectors of civil society.

In 1990 Fundação Educar was also discontinued, as part of a policy to reduce the role of the federal government in social services. In that same year the National Program for Literacy Training and Citizenship (PNAC) was created, but terminated one year later without being implanted. Since then the federal government has neither continued nor set up any wide-scale program which could attend to the needs of literacy or post-literacy training for millions of Brazilians.

In line with MOBRAL, which was responsible for providing literacy and post-literacy training programs, the 1971 Law of Education dedicated an entire chapter to adult education, for the first time in the history of Brazilian educational legislation. There, Supplementary Education (Educação Supletiva) for young people and adults who did not have access to Regular Schooling at the normal age, was regulated, its objectives clarified and its areas and systems of operation established.

Supplementary Education was set up as a parallel educational system by the legislation of the period and seen as "a new conception of schools." Through its example, regular schooling itself might become more modernized and there were hopes of mutual influence between the two systems. In the 1971 Law of Education, Supplementary Education was hailed as "the major challenge proposed to Brazilian educators."

Three basic principles can be seen in the documents which finally gave form to Supplementary Education. First, it was defined as part of the national system of education and

culture, in other words, an integrated sector independent of regular education but intimately related to it. The second principle saw Supplementary Education as a factor for national development. This was to take place by the integration of the marginalized labor force through basic schooling and the technical training of workers. The third principle was that Supplementary Education would be organized to attend to the educational needs of great numbers of the population, in terms both of doctrine and methodology. For this to occur, systems of mass communication should be employed.

To comply with these objectives - to provide young people with the schooling they failed to receive at the normal age, to train manpower and to update knowledge - Supplementary Education was organized with four functions: follow-up education, continued education, training and specialization.

Follow up education means providing courses to adolescents and adults who were not able to obtain regular schooling at the normal age by organizing courses equivalent to primary and high school (middle school) courses. This type of education was to have its own characteristics, however, different from those of standard schooling. Besides the courses provided, and independent from them, public examinations can also be given to measure and certify knowledge, thus allowing students to pass to subsequent levels.

Continued education is aimed at those students who have attended regular schools in whole or in part. It is thus intended to provide refresher courses. Its conception comes closest to the idea of permanent education. This is the broadest type of program and can be developed parallel to the courses at all levels of education.

Training is the methodical preparation of the labor force, aimed at students between the ages of 14 and 18, with at least 4 years of schooling. This function is the responsibility of commercial, industrial ~~the~~ names given to the various programs offered by each state. Organs were set up within the education departments of almost all states to attend specifically to supplementary education. Its purpose is basically in the area of primary and high-school education, and rarely in the field of adult literacy training.

In the municipalities, on the other hand, very few specific organs were created for supplementary education, with the exception of some of the more populous state capitals. In general the municipal governments limited themselves to signing contracts, first with MOBRAL and later with the Foundation Educate, to set up literacy training programs. Very few city governments established their own supplementary educational programs for the 1st to the 4th grades of primary school, and fewer yet set up programs for 5th- to 8th-grade or high-school students.

The legislation on supplementary education remains today as the most indicative in the field of education for young people and adults, since, as mentioned above, the new national law of directives and bases of education has not yet been voted upon. New perspectives are opening up, however. The 1988 Constitution extended the right to basic education to youth and adults, free of charge, thus broadening the responsibilities of the public school systems toward this age bracket (the former constitution limited this responsibility to students from 7 to 14 years of age). The constitution also established a period of ten years during which the efforts and resources of government and society civil must be concentrated for the eradication of illiteracy.

4. The Large Adult Education Legislative and Policy Framework

In Brazil the question of schooling for young people and adults is still the most important among the many which comprise the broad universe of adult education. It will therefore be the topic of most of our observations. The more specific question of professional training is better analyzed in Item 5 of this monograph.

The priority which should be given to schooling for adults is explained by the high rates of illiteracy and the still very limited educational opportunities. The most recent data available (the National Home Sampling Survey - 1989) show 17,588,221 illiterates among Brazilians age 15 or older (18.5%) and a still larger contingent who, for having been deprived of access to or permanence in schools during their childhood, have spent less than four years in school (approximately 50%), and these numbers are rising steadily. In the age bracket of 7 to 14 alone, statistics show 6,780,402 illiterate individuals - meaning 24.6% of these children. This demonstrates that the need for more schools for young people and adults will continue to be a serious need on medium and long term in Brazil.

During recent decades basic schooling for young people and adults has been the object of legislation and public policies drawn up by the federal government.

In fact, Article 208 of the 1988 Federal Constitution determines that the State is responsible for guaranteeing "Basic mandatory education, free of charge, including for those who did not have access to schooling at the normal age." This is the formal recognition of the right to education for young people and adults. Besides this, Article 60 of the Transitory Provisions of this same Constitution

establish that "during the first ten years after the promulgation of this Constitution the public authorities will exert efforts to eliminate illiteracy and make basic education universally available by mobilizing all organized sectors of society and by applying at least fifty percent of the funds for education."

One can see, therefore, that on the legislative level, even in the federal constitution, there has been a formal recognition of the right to education of working young people and adults. The movement toward this position began in the 1940s and was formalized for the first time in the Education Act of 1971, which had a specific chapter on the education of youth and adults.

Also on the level of public policies, the basic education of adults has been calling more and more attention of legislators. In the last nine years, six commissions have been named specifically to define policies for basic education for of young people and adults and nine documents have been drawn up by the federal government on policies relative to this sector of the population. Nothing, however, was implanted. Although there are nuances of analyses and differences in style, breadth and approach from one document to another, there is a clear attempt to implement a consistent and long-lasting policy on basic education for adults and an almost unanimous reiteration of the principal guidelines.

In spite of these advances on the legislative level and the number of commissions set up and policies published, in reality the public sectors responsible for this service have been increasingly negligent. This is a clear indication of the insufficiency of guarantees in legislation.

Despite regulations which have been in existence for over 20 years, supplementary education has not yet been adequately structured into the overall educational system as a segment in its own right to provide literacy training for young persons and adults. Conceived as a system parallel to the regular educational courses, the supplementary programs not only lack integration one with the other. They lack human resources, continuity of actions, infra-structure and much more. Few courses are offered and the quality of output is questionable.

On the federal level, less and less importance has been given to education for youth and adults. The federal government's budget for this sector is minimal (less than 1%) and today, in the Ministry of Education's flow chart, it is practically non-existent, without personnel and without funds.

This reduced importance reflects negatively on the action by the states, with the result that the burden falls on the municipalities, which have been the target of pressure from those who want this type of service.

Over recent years the policies for education of young people and adults have been marked by discontinuity, as policies change each time a new government moves in. At the same time the few initiatives in education by public, private and non-governmental organizations frequently overlap. In recent years, national programs have coexisted with those operated by state and municipal departments of education, and each level sets up its system autonomously, in isolation from the others. No attempt seems to be made to establish complementarity and inter-relations among them.

In the states the educational service for youth and adults on the part of public authorities has been either non-

existent or insufficient. Since there is a demand, however, private educational enterprises have moved in, and the poor who need these courses must either pay for them or go without.

It can also be seen that the absence of follow up, evaluation and research in educational programs for young people and adults has prevented a reorientation of courses addressed to the real needs of this sector of the population and geared the its characteristics.

The responses of civil society to this lack of schools and courses have taken place on two levels. On the one hand, pressure is exerted on public authorities. On the other, numerous initiatives have been taken in the field of education for adolescents and adults, in which social segments assume the costs of the programs, acting in partnership with governmental or private sectors and struggling for survival.

With the reduction in the participation of the federal government and the states, the pressures for basic schooling for youth and adults have been exerted mostly on the city governments.

More recently there has been a growing concern, both on the part of the business community and representatives of the workers, as to the need for basic schooling and preparation for work in view of the changes taking place in the systems of production.

This shows another facet of the our society. If it is true that the rights attained on the legislative level are rarely complied with, it is also true that society does mobilize and pressure can be exerted to put into practice what is guaranteed by law.

As a result, now that the Brazilian government is working out a Ten-Year Plan for Education and a new Bill for Directives and Bases of National Education is under consideration in Congress, one can perceive that at least on the legislative level no reversals are likely. There is an almost a unanimous consensus in the main lines taken in the documents mentioned. We would like to call attention to this aspect in the pages that follow.

In the new Bill for Directives and Bases, education for youth and adults must be organically inserted into the national system of education. And to the extent that literacy can only become functional in the so-called post-literacy phase, promotion of education for young people and adults through passing campaigns should be avoided.

Education of adolescents and adults must have its own characteristics, since its clientele is basically composed of students who are already at work in the labor market and whose experience of life is very different from that of younger students frequenting the regular courses, and who are usually not yet working.

It is proposed that the Ministry of Education take on a greater role in education for adolescents and adults and restore its capacity to coordinate policies and actions in this field. Only in this way will it be able to exercise the functions of coordination and technical-financial cooperation on a national level by backing up the states and cities in basic programs. It will thus be fulfilling the federal government's equalizing role and thus contribute toward the reduction of the extreme regional inequalities in the country. The Ministry of Education thus strengthened, it will be able to guarantee financial resources to carry out the programs and assure greater agility in their use.

The municipal level is seen as the most adequate level for analyzing the educational situation of its population, discussing fundamental rights with the community and identifying forms of action which will attend to its needs. It is there that local organizations and leadership can be mobilized toward solving the problems which affect basic education. It is in this sphere that the bases of planning and implanting a national project for education of youth and adults must be established, according to the directives which will guarantee the unity of the national educational system. It thus becomes essential that every municipality proceed to an analysis of its educational reality and its technical and financial capacity, in order to comply with the demands of mandatory education.

The relationship with regular education must be determined, and for this to take place, primary schools must reorient their form of operating to attend to the needs of the population which seeks them out, regardless of age.

It is also necessary that the government define criteria for recognition, incentive and support to non-governmental agencies which are active in the education of young persons and adults. The government must respect these groups, but it must also converge efforts and optimize resources. The convocation to shared responsibility, however, under no circumstance means releasing the state from its obligations in matters of education. From the union of governmental and non-governmental institutions will result the democratic bases of the national movement for education of youth and adults, legitimated by the joint commitment between state and civil society.

If the present policies are disconnected and unrelated to one another in the field of basic education for young people

and adults, the difficulties are even more noticeable in other areas of adult education.

Our study of legislative documents and policies in this area showed that, in general, the organs of the federal administration establish directives, formulate policies and draw up support material for educational actions. But the effective execution of programs remain the responsibility of the state and municipal governments and of institutions and organizations of civil society.

5. The contextual Analysis of the Sectorial Problems

5.1. Environment

The environmental question in Brazil is broad and extremely diversified, especially in function of the country's continental size and the complexities deriving from this fact. It is the country which has the greatest biodiversity on the planet. It has 26 states - some with an area larger than most European countries - divided into 5 regions, with varying climates, ecosystems, cultures and socio-economic landscapes.

The intense and disorganized industrialization and urbanization in the south and southeast of the country brought about severe consequences for the environment. In the State of São Paulo, for example, 93% of the population lives in urban areas - a rate higher than in many industrialized countries. Without adequate infra-structures, without studies on environmental impacts, without investments in the area of environmental preservation, the inevitable result is the degradation of the quality of the air and water and the gradual worsening of the quality of life of the majority of the population.

In the northern, northeastern and central-western regions - where agricultural and extractive activities predominate - there are the serious problems of deforestation and general destruction of natural resources, bringing with it threats to the survival of the forest peoples (Indians, rubber tappers, nut collectors and the like).

In 1981 Congress approved Law N° 6938, which regulated the national environmental policy. After setting down principles

and objectives, the law determined the structure of the national environmental system, as follows:

I - Highest organ: the National Environmental Council (CONAMA).

Function: to assist the President of the Republic in laying down guidelines for the national environmental policy;

II - Central organ: the Special Environmental Office (SEMA, now the Ministry of the Environment).

Function: to promote, regulate and evaluate the implementation of the national environmental policy.

III - Sectorial organs: the organs or agencies which, directly or indirectly, are part of the federal administration, as well as the foundations set up by public authorities. The activities of these agencies and offices are partially or totally dedicated to the preservation of the quality of the environment or to regulating the use of environmental resources;

IV - Regional organs: the organs or agencies responsible for carrying out programs and projects and controlling and inspecting activities which might degrade the quality of the environment;

V - Local organs: the municipal organs or agencies responsible for the control and inspection of these activities in their respective areas.

The states and municipalities, according to law, must draw up supplementary and complementary standards and norms relevant to the environment.

The National Environmental Council is composed of:

- representatives of the state governments;

- the presidents of the National Confederations of Industry, Agriculture and Business and the presidents of the National Confederations of Workers in Industry, Agriculture and Business;

- the presidents of the Brazilian Association of Engineering and the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources;

- representatives of legally constituted associations for the defense of the environment.

On the federal level the organ responsible for the execution of the national environmental policy is the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources.

Presently all states in Brazil have a Department of the Environment and a State Environmental Council with governmental and non-governmental representation.

The law states that one of the instruments of the National Environmental Policy is environmental education. According to the Federal Constitution of 1988 it is the responsibility of public authorities to provide for environmental education at all levels of education. They must also promote public awareness for the preservation of the environment.

The federal Bill for Directives and Bases of Education, presently in discussion in Congress, establishes that environmental education must be considered within the conception of the curriculums of all levels of education without constituting a specific subject matter. Its objective is to develop healthy habits and attitudes of preservation of the environment and respect for nature, beginning with the everyday life of the school and society.

As a measure to provide environmental education in the school systems, the National Environmental Agency, together with the Ministry of Education, has established directives and produced material for teachers. In the line of non-formal environmental education, the National Environmental Agency has directed its state offices to operate in partnership with non-governmental institutes. In general, programs for environmental education have been addressed to children and/or to the training of teachers. There have been very few experiences in environmental education for adults.

5.2. AIDS

In 1993 Brazil occupied 4th place in incidence of Aids in the world and second place in the Americas: 38,073 cases had been reported by May of that year. Of these, 16,071 (42%) resulted in death and of these almost half the victims were between the ages of 20 and 39.

The epidemiologic nature of this disease has brought about a significant acceleration in the number of cases since 1987, accompanied by changes in the type of population affected, meaning a growth in heterosexual transmission. The men/women ratio for cases of Aids advanced from 17:1 in 1986 to 4:1 in 1993.

This increase in the number of cases among women has been accompanied by a rise in transmissions from mother to child.

Another tendency observed is the growth of cases of Aids among the younger population (13 to 25 years of age). As of May, 1993, 7,146 cases of Aids among adolescents and young adults were notified to the Ministry of Health. Although these cases corresponded to 18.8% of the accumulated total,

the significant growth of the disease in this age group is impressive, especially since 1985 (in 1983 there were only 7 cases notified). The main form of contamination by HIV in this age bracket is through sexual relations (45.6% of the cases) and the use of intravenous drugs (40.7%).

To face this question the Ministry of Health set up its Division for Control of Aids and the National Program for Sexually Transmitted Diseases. It also established guidelines for the functioning of these organs.

The Five-Year Health Plan for the 1990-1995 period established a new decentralized model of organization and administration of the health system in Brazil. The result was the Unified Health System (SUS) and a reorganization of the structures of the Ministry of Health in line with the new guidelines. The Aids Control Division thus became a Coordinating Office.

The strategies of the National Department for Control of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (CN-DST/Aids) corresponds to those issued by the Global Program of the World Health Organization (WHO), considering the specific aspects of the country in terms of organization of health services and their respective structure. It also follows the philosophy of decentralization adopted by the Unified Health System in Brazil.

This National Department is presently organized into five units: epidemiologic follow up, institutional development and research, sexually transmitted diseases, and assistance to HIV/Aids carriers, and prevention.

The prevention area is responsible for preventive and informative campaigns on STD and Aids. The program for Aids prevention is addressed to a) the healthy population, b)

seropositive individuals, to slow down the development of the disease, and c) those sick with Aids, to avoid or reduce the incidence of opportunist infections and improve their quality of life.

To develop the preventive activities, basic principles were established which range from guaranteeing the human and civil rights of those affected to directly organizing the various levels of services in the Unified Health System, contact with diverse sectors of society (universities, companies, labor unions and NGOs), all with an eye to the decentralization and democratization of prevention and control.

Prevention operates in four strategic areas: (a) Research on Behavior; (b) Information, Education and Communication; (c) Intervention Regarding Behavior and (d) Counselling.

Item (b), Information, Education and Communication, organizes informative and educational material on the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including Aids, by using communications techniques.

In this area two distinct and complementary types of activities are carried out. The first consists of producing information for the general public, such as preventive and informative campaigns for television, radio and the press.

The second consists of setting up interpersonal channels of contact. It is complementary to the first and includes the production of educational material, such as video and audio tapes, brochures, direct mail and the like.

Parallel to the work carried out by the Unified National Department for Aids and STD (which produces educational campaigns for the media and other support material) there

are educational programs developed by the state and municipal departments of education and by NGOs. But in general, except for projects sometimes carried out by a few state or municipal school systems, the educational services operate very sporadically, usually attending only those who come in search of information.

5.3 Safety in the Workplace

One of the most serious questions which Brazilian society must face is the problem of the precarious conditions in the sphere of labor and laborers, both in the cities and the rural areas. These conditions have caused the death of thousands of workers and maimed millions more, through professional diseases, accidents on the job or coming and going from work, and many other diseases which in one way or another are related to work.

Statistics fail to reveal the full dimensions of the problem because they refer only to registered workers and exclude data relative to rural workers and domestic employees. For this reason, since 1976 only the most serious accidents must be reported, those which result in the worker's being off the job for recuperation.

Even so the numbers are alarming. According to official statistics, between 1970 and 1988 there were 25,934,905 official labor accidents, of which 77,706 resulted in death. The general category "accidents" includes 69,959 cases of occupational diseases. In the years since 1980, more than one million labor accidents were officially recorded per year, with an average of 4,500 deaths and almost 30,000 cases of permanent incapacity.

The federal government's policy on this situation has operated on two levels. On the one hand, it assures the payment of a pension to the worker and, on the other, it seeks to prevent labor accidents and professional diseases.

The Ministry Labor has a Department of Occupational Medicine and Safety, whose responsibility is to set up norms and coordinate and supervise all activities in the area of the safety and health of workers. It also participates in defining the policies of the sector. The function of direct inspection of companies falls to the Ministry's Regional Labor Offices. Besides this, there is the National Foundation for Occupational Safety, Medicine and Health (FUNDACENTRO), another organ of the Labor Ministry, which has the function of production and diffusion of knowledge in this area.

Since 1944 the law has required all companies to maintain a Labor Health and Safety Service (SESMT) composed of physicians, engineers, nurses and other trained professionals. The law also requires that the companies maintain Internal Accident Prevention Committees (CIPAs), made up of representatives of employees and employer.

The Health and Safety Services have the function of promoting the health and safety of the workers in the workplace, while the Accident Committees are intended to observe and report dangerous conditions in the factory, office or other workplace and demand measures to reduce, eliminate or neutralize the risks which exist and instruct the workers on accident prevention.

In general the structures of the Accident Prevention Committees and the information published by FUNDACENTRO, even though they no doubt have positive effects on the prevention of occupational diseases and accidents, create a

situation where it is difficult to seriously question the companies, as the responsibility for health and safety tends to fall on the shoulders of the workers themselves.

5.4. Professional Training

Today the question of professional training is an important theme among businessmen and workers, since the introduction of new technologies and new forms of administration in the companies has made a heavy impact on all areas of production.

The overall process of computerization of the companies and the "total quality and productivity programs" during the present economic recess has brought about mass, chronic and structural unemployment. In 1993, according to estimates of the Labor Ministry, just in the urban areas there were nearly eight million persons who in one way or another were without a job. And of course it is the workers with the least professional qualification who are more susceptible to layoffs.

There are thus two angles to approach the question of professional training. On the one hand, solid professional training must be provided to the young people who will soon be in the job market. On the other, alternatives must be sought which can reduce the difficulties faced by those who are already working, but with limited professional qualification.

In the history of Brazilian education, professional training has been practically independent from regular education and addressed principally to children of the working classes,

while regular education became a set of preparatory courses leading to higher education.

In the 1940s two nation-wide institutions dedicated to professional training were established by law: SENAI - National Service for Industrial Training, and SENAC - National Service for Commercial Training. Since then these two institutions, maintained by the National Confederations of Industry and of Commerce, respectively, run the largest networks of professional schools in Brazil. Besides them there are professional training schools maintained by state school systems and a network of trade schools operated by the federal government. And throughout the country there are professional training schools run by private institutions.

The federal Education Act of 1971 defined directives and bases of Brazilian education and sought to do away with this duality of school systems. It thus established universal and obligatory professional training in primary and secondary curriculums. In primary schools this legal requirement was to take the form of aptitude tests and initiation for work, while in secondary schools it was to be in the form of direct professional training. This universal and obligatory training on the secondary-school level, however, was later seen to be unfeasible for implantation everywhere in the country.

In 1982 the President of the Republic published Law 7044, which altered the provisions of the previous law on professional training on the secondary level. Among the reasons stated for this change were the following:

- "the demand for high-school level technicians has not been occurring at the rate expected at the time the law was enacted;

- "the companies tend to broaden their own mechanisms for rapid training of manpower, according to their most immediate interests;
- "the educational systems are unable to keep up with the constant changes which take place in equipment and production processes;
- "the establishment of professional training demands an appropriate institutional culture."

By this law of 1982 the commitment assumed by the Brazilian educational system in regard to professional training, in terms of the overall objectives of national education which should be attained by primary and secondary education, became characterized as "job preparation." This objective is considered by the law as one "element in the students' overall formation."

It then became the responsibility of the State Councils of Education to legislate for each state regarding the obligatory preparation for work and its form, content and duration.

The Bill of Directives and Bases of Education, presently under discussion in the national congress, states that the principles of national education are (a) the association between education, work and social practices and (b) the assurance of a common basic education to all by the public authorities, prior to or simultaneous with professional education or technical-professional training.

This bill establishes that specific technical and/or professional programs be established for this end. It should usually take place independently from the regular school programs, in specialized institutions or at the workplaces themselves or, when necessary, at the regular establishments of education. The objectives of professional education in

secondary courses will be attained by increasing their duration and class load.

As for professional qualification and re-training of young people and adults, the 1971 legislation on supplementary education is also still in effect. As mentioned above, this legislation sought to deal with professional training, but very little was done, and supplementary education became basically dedicated to general formation. There are also occasional, short-term policies, carried out by both federal and state governments, and there are programs implemented by institutions, labor unions, churches and other organizations. At least in the state of São Paulo, both the industrial and commercial chains of training schools also maintain professional training programs in the community.

The Trend Analysis on the Expanding Policy and Legislative Environment of Adult Education in Brazil

1. In drafting this paper an attempt was made to study the documents on legislation and public policies on adult education on the federal level, in its broadest understanding, leaving aside the state and municipal levels. Besides the themes of primary schooling and technical training, we sought documentation on Aids, the environment and labor accidents.

2. It was not an easy task to identify federal legislation and policies relative to adult education. The little legislation that has existed is from the 1970s and focuses on outmoded questions such as schools for adolescents and adults who did not have access to it at an earlier age or who were unable to remain in school at the normal age. There is legislation on *professional* training, but no reference is made there concerning specific training or education of *adults*. At the present moment there is a bill in the national congress on environmental education which, although making no specific mention of adult education, does refer to non-formal education, and no legislation was found on education for Aids prevention. This shows that, at least in the fields studied, very little takes place aimed at broader education of adults.

3. To the extent that the illiteracy rates among the population 15 years of age or higher are alarming - 17.5 million illiterates - plus the millions of undereducated persons who failed to complete four years of school (almost 50 million Brazilian citizens), the question of basic schooling for young people and adults is still the most serious among the various topics which fall under the category of education for these age brackets.

4. Besides this, the fact that 20% of the population is illiterate constantly handicaps the carrying out of policies on continuing education. This is exactly the point brought up by the Labor Ministry when treating of the problem of unemployment and the need for professional re-training. The program now under discussion proposes, before professional training as such, a guarantee to the contents of basic education for young people and adults who did not have access to school at early ages.

5. The other themes analyzed here are federal legislation and policies, for two reasons. In the first place, these are problems which demand urgent solutions since they are becoming more and more visible to the public eye. They are also becoming the object of social demands due to their gravity. They put lives at stake and imply economic losses for the country, as is the case of Aids and labor safety. Secondly, because they are problems which place Brazil in the light of international attention and pressure. The country's illiteracy rates, the mortality due to Aids, the high rates of labor accidents and occupational diseases, plus other factors such as the dimensions of deforestation, especially in the Amazon all result in negative images abroad. It is important to observe that the weight exerted by international organisms is far from insignificant. Several governmental programs have their origin in influence from UNESCO, the International Labor Organization and the World Health Organization, namely, the Ten-Year Educational Plan, the National Program for Literacy Training and Citizenship, the Legislation on Accident Prevention and the policy on Aids prevention, respectively.

6. As for the legislation and the policies analyzed, two clear tendencies can be seen, namely, more democracy of participation in decision-making and administrative decentralization.

7. Greater democracy in decision-making is a tendency which has been visible since the end of the period of military dictatorship in the 1980s, not without conflicts and reverses. The broad social movement which helped to restore democracy in Brazil had, among its demands, the implanting of democracy in state organs and their control through the broad participation of all sectors of society, particularly those with little or no access to the basic social services.

8. It was in this spirit that the Federal Constitution of 1988 consecrated the principle of administrative decentralization, attributing new responsibilities to the states and municipalities. Since then the tendency of federal policies has been to issue general guidelines for governmental action in every sector, leaving the execution and often the regulation of the programs to the state and municipal governments or to organizations and institutions of civil society, generally local.

9. It is also to guarantee the recognition of the plurality and the cultural diversity which exists in the country that the responsibility of hearing the local populations is attributed to the states and municipalities. Joint planning, execution and implementation of the policies should also occur at the local level.

10. On the one hand, decentralization has in itself a democratizing character and favors greater approximation between civil society and the govern. On the other, however, it brings with it new problems. The mechanisms of collecting and distributing funds among the three spheres of government referred to in the Constitution has not been adequately complied with. Especially the small municipalities have a reduced direct tax base, and usually do not have adequate pools of human resources prepared for the implementation of

educational programs. Since there has not been a policy of economic support and technical consultants who can help the municipalities perform their new roles, the policy of decentralization and shared responsibility has in most cases functioned like a smoke screen to explain away the omission on the part of the federal government in implementing policies of adult education.

11. The question of resources is a problem which demands close attention. Besides the absence of efficient mechanisms for controlling the tax collection and investments by the states and municipalities, many policies with ambitious goals are drawn up without any guarantee of the funds necessary. In the policy on Aids prevention, for example, the federal government assumed the responsibility to carry out educational campaigns via radio and television. Once again the problem of funds came up. The radio and television networks and stations are concessions of the federal government, but the free broadcasting time reserved for the federal government is insufficient and inadequate for campaigns of this type. The result is that the government ends up having to pay high prices to broadcast its campaigns in the media, even though the stations and networks are its own concessionaires. The same thing is happening with the national policy on environmental education, presently under discussion by Congress.

12. In all recent policies analyzed one can see a strong appeal to setting up partnerships between the state and civil society, and in this aspect there is an important role for non-governmental organizations. They have been decisive for the introduction of themes on the federal government's agenda and are often called in to participate either in the process of drafting the policies or for drawing up and implementing the programs resulting therefrom.

13. Civil society has shown a willingness and even enthusiasm to participate, but its contributions have not always been well-received by the powers that be. Civil society is invited to participate in commissions to draft policies, but these policies are not always implemented. The process of participation thus becomes an instrument of political manipulation of the organized sectors of civil society. This is the feeling expressed in the document issued by the most recent National Commission on the Education of Youth and Adults, set up by the Brazilian federal government: "The National Commission on the Education of Youth and Adults, now being installed, does not intend to be one more phase in the long and tiresome process by which, over the last ten years, the federal administrations have limited themselves to the practice of naming commissions (a total of six) which have impotently had to live side by side with the constant growth of illiteracy." (Recommendations, 1994)

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Terms used to describe the field of Adult Education:

Supplementary Education (Educação Supletiva):

- educational system for young people and adults who did not have access to Regular Schooling at the normal age.

Follow-Up education (suplência):

- one of the four types of Supplementary Education that means providing courses to adolescents and adults who were not able to obtain regular schooling at the normal age by organizing courses equivalent to primary and high school (middle school) courses.

Continued education (suprimento):

- one of the four types of Supplementary Education; is aimed to those who have attended regular schools in whole or in part. It is thus intended to provide refresher courses.

Training (aprendizagem):

- one of the four types of Supplementary Education. Is the methodical preparation of the labor force, aimed at students between the ages of 14 and 18, with at least 4 years of schooling.

Specialization (qualificação):

- one of the four types of Supplementary Education. Is aimed at professional training at the high-school level, without concern for overall education. Its primary objective is the preparation of human resources.