

# **THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION**

**National Report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

**By**

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On the basis of the man-centered Juche idea founded by the great leader of the Korean people President **Kim Il Sung**, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has consistently pursued the policy of putting primary importance to education of young people. In particular, DPRK has long made steady efforts to attain its high goal and objectives for quality education of all young people.

Thanks to the great leader President Kim Il Sung's Juche-oriented ideology on education and energetic guidance of the great leader Comrade **Kim Jong Il**, DPRK introduced the universal compulsory primary education in 1956, the universal compulsory secondary education (7-year) in 1958, and the universal 9-year compulsory technical education in 1967.

Education of all forms has become free since 1959, and the universal 11-year compulsory education system has been in force since 1972, under which all children from the age of 5 to 16 have access to 1-year senior-class course of kindergarten, 4-year primary school course and 6-year secondary school course.

Immediately after the country's independence, the DPRK Government drew up the policy of nationwide anti-illiteracy campaign and provided uniform guidance to it, as a result of which over 2.3 million adult illiterates of both genders gained full literacy in a matter of three years from 1946 to March 1949.

Furthermore, the DPRK Government established a system for advanced adult education, the goal of which was to enable all working people to reach the level of general knowledge equal to, or higher than that of secondary school graduates and have one or more skills. With the successful adult education, workers, peasants and all other working people, both men and women, attained the same or higher level of general knowledge than that of secondary school graduates by the end of 1989.

## **1. The education system at the beginning of the twenty-first century: an overview**

### ***1.1 Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system at the beginning of the twenty-first century***

DPRK adopted the new education law on July 14, 1999, by the Decree No. 847 of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly.

The DPRK Education Law consists of 6 chapters and 52 articles, in which it gives comprehensive provisions on all educational issues, including the purpose of education, fundamental principle of socialist pedagogy, tasks of education, duration of compulsory education, free education, contents and methods of education, educational conditions, guidance and control over education, etc.

All the provisions in the DPRK Education Law constitute a steadfast legal basis for the State policies on EFA. In particular, they reflect the important State education policies at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

At the turn of the century, the DPRK Government pursued a series of education policies for the implementation of the Education Law, in the course of which it has made some remarkable progress.

First of all, the socialist education system in the country has been further consolidated and substantiated so that all people are given learning opportunities.

The following is the structure of the education system at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

- Primary and Secondary Education

Kindergarten (Pre-School Education)	2 years	age 4 ~ 5
Primary School	4 years	age 6 ~ 10
Secondary School	6 years	age 11 ~ 16

Besides, there exist special schools for the blind and deaf, orphanages, and boarding schools for the vulnerable or parentless children.

- Higher Education (post-secondary school education)

Specialized education is given to those who have finished the 11-year compulsory education.

• Formal Higher Education

College	2 ~ 3 years
University and other university-level institutions	4 ~ 5.5 years

• Informal Higher Education (Study-While-Working System)

Factory College	5 years
Farm College	5 years
Fishermen's College	5 years
Evening Course (at formal educational institutions)	5 years
Correspondence Course ( “ )	5 years

• Post-Graduate Course

Master Course (full-time and correspondence)	3 ~ 4 years
Master Course (special)	1 year
Doctorate Course (full-time and correspondence)	2 ~ 3 years
Doctorate Course (special)	1 year

(\* Besides, vocational school education 1 ~ 3 years)

The DPRK Government pays special attention to improving the quality of education decisively and providing better conditions for education to meet the requirements of the new century.

We are making steady efforts to further consolidate and develop to perfection the existing system of training especially talented students in order to produce greater number of young scientists and technicians with high level of scientific and technical qualification.

The Government tries to further developing education at schools of all levels, ranging from primary to university level, in conformity with the demand of the new century.

In particular, the Government directs a great effort to radically strengthening intelligence education, scientific and technical education for young people.

First of all, the Government has taken necessary steps for better one-year compulsory pre-school education at kindergartens.

A series of measures have been taken to improve the contents and methods of pre-school education so that kindergartens comply with the age and psychological characteristics of kindergarteners and lay a solid foundation for primary education.

The Government has also ensured that primary and secondary schools reform their educational program and improve the contents of basic education.

We have improved the school curriculum so that students can give full play to their individual aptitudes and talents. In order to improve the quality of basic science education in conformity with the development trend of modern science and technology, we have changed the content of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and other subjects in such a way that students can prepare themselves to be creative beings required by the development of science in the twenty-first century.

At higher education level, we have raised scientific and theoretical standard of basic and specialized technical education, put more emphasis on designing, improved education in social and basic sciences and activated scientific research at universities to meet the requirements of the IT Age.

At the same time, we have trained more technicians and specialists of different fields by developing the study-while-working system and managing the existing factory, farm and fishermen's colleges in a more rational way. We have also paid consistent attention to lifelong education so that scientists, technicians and working people steadily raise the level of their scientific, cultural and intellectual attainments.

The main purpose of our on-going effort to develop education is to train all young people into independent and creative beings, who will make tangible contributions to the building of a powerful prosperous socialist nation.

The Government has set the following educational objectives and strategies to be carried out in the next few years on the basis of the achievements in the implementation of the national action plan 2000 for quality basic education.

1) Objectives for educational development to be implemented in the new few years

a) Preschool Education

- To expand the network of kindergartens and increase their accommodation capacity to enroll all 4-year-old children for upbringing and education thereof

- To revise kindergarten educational program and textbooks to meet the requirements of the times and the intellectual level of children
- To meet the needs for nurses and kindergarten teachers and improve their qualification one level higher than now
- To build many children's foodstuff and toy factories in different provinces, cities and counties, and normalize their production
- To build and open on a regular basis a creation park, playground and swimming pool at every community unit
- To consolidate scientific research bases for upbringing and education of children and produce comprehensive result of research on mental and physical development of children

#### b) Primary and Secondary Education

- To facilitate intellectual, moral and physical development of all children of both genders, and lay a solid foundation for mental and relevant education among them
- To ensure sustainable attendance rate of school-age children at over 98% in all primary and secondary schools
- To formulate the educational program of primary and secondary schools on a scientific basis and revise all of their textbooks to meet the requirements of the new century
- To widely introduce heuristic teaching method to foster independence and creativity of children and raise audio-video education to a higher level
- To provide textbooks of all subjects to children every year and satisfy their needs for higher quality school-things
- To meet the need for teaching staff by increasing the enrollment to teacher-training colleges and universities of education and improve the qualification of teachers to a higher level

#### c) Higher Education

- To systematically increase the enrollment to the existing formal institutions of higher education
- To make full preparation for opening new informal institutions of higher education, including factory, farm and fishermen's colleges
- To increase the training index and scope of the existing vocational institutions and improve the quality of vocational education to meet the requirements of the economic development in the new century
- To innovate the contents and methods of education at **Kim Il Sung** University and other major higher education institutions on the basis of the latest achievements of scientific and technological development, and intensify post-graduate courses
- To create an example of IT application to education at major universities and lay a solid basis for generalizing the example to the rest of universities, colleges and educational institutions of all other levels

## 2) Strategies for Educational Development

The DPRK Government will implement the following strategies in order to attain the immediate objectives of educational development.

a) Accurate planning for educational development and improvement of educational administration

- To systematically increase the State investment to education every year, make the education budget on a scientific basis and ensure efficiency of investment
- To improve organization, guidance, supervision, control and review for formulation and implementation of educational program, particularly to encourage local educational administrative authorities, as well as those of individual schools and universities, to raise their sense of responsibility and creativity
- To provide better material conditions for education in a responsible manner and take timely administrative measures to ensure combined assistance of the State and community to education

b) Stronger social assistance to education

- To make State organizations, enterprises, cooperatives and social organizations sponsors of their neighboring schools and other educational institutions for social assistance to consolidation of their material foundations  
In particular, schools will be helped furnish good educational environment, for instance, through supply of computers, TV sets, VCRs, projectors, laboratory equipment and apparatuses, etc.
- To establish a strict system, under which publishing houses and other factories give priority to schools in providing new books, machinery and equipment, if they are deemed necessary for education.
- To build in a planned way more children's palaces, halls, camps, libraries and other social educational facilities in every province, city and county, and organize educational activities in different forms and methods in close cooperation with schools
- To strengthen educational function of families, particularly, enhance parents' responsibility for education of their children, encourage parents to give more assistance to school and ensure concerted school and family education
- To ensure that radio and TV, publications and film are conducive to education of young people, and increase the issuing of publications for them
- To ensure that organizations of Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth League, General Federation of Trade Unions, Union of Farmers, Democratic Women's Union and other social entities pay deeper attention to education and perform their role and responsibility to the full for the development of education

c) Higher sense of responsibility and role of teachers

- To improve qualification of teachers to a higher level
  - o To substantiate the system of refreshment courses for teachers, each cycle lasting 3 ~ 5 years, to improve their qualification
  - o To regularly organize demonstrations, seminars, workshops and exchange of experience for teachers, raise the standard of State qualification examination, and improve the qualification of all teachers one level higher than now
- To keep teacher training ahead of others to meet the requirements of educational development

- To better furnish teacher training colleges and universities of education, set the scope teacher training in accordance with the need, and improve the quality of normal education to a higher level
- To establish a social environment for preferential treatment of, and respectful attitude to teachers

d) Closer international cooperation and exchange

- To promote visits, organization of seminars and workshops, exchange of educational information, joint research and other forms of mutual cooperation and exchange with international organizations, including UNESCO, and friendly countries in the world

***1.2 Major achievements, both quantitative and qualitative, and lessons learned from them***

a) Access to Education

Today 1.65 million children and 2.25 million children are learning free of charge at the State expense in 4,948 primary schools and 4,825 secondary schools respectively.

Throughout the country all children of both genders enjoy universal 11-year compulsory education, and the enrollment has reached 100 %.

Already since 48 years ago, the DPRK Government has registered 100 % enrollment. It means that the World Declaration on Education for All has been fully realized in terms of children's access to primary schooling.

According to the Cabinet Resolution "Regulation on Enrollment of School-aged Children" adopted on November 1, 1958, chairpersons of municipal and county (district) people's committees regularly register all the school-aged children under their jurisdiction and designate primary schools for their enrollment.

On the other hand, parents are obliged to send their school-aged children to those designated schools, and if not, are subject to legal punishment.

The country has schools wherever there are children: all children, whether they live in urban or rural areas, in remote mountainous villages or on isolated islands, have free access to primary schools when they reach school age.

Schools are evenly distributed throughout the country, within the range of 2 kilometers, one in each residential block in urban area and one in each *ri* in rural area.

Under the condition that the country is washed by the sea on two sides and more than 80% of its territory is mountainous, we have opened over 1,600 branch schools in remote mountainous areas and on islands, sometimes one school for only 3 or 4 children.

On the other hand, commuting trains, buses, motorboats or cars are provided to the children in remote areas for full enrollment and attendance.

## b) Equality in Education

Article 73 of the DPRK Socialist Constitution reads: “Every citizen shall have the right to education, which shall be guaranteed by the progressive educational system and the people-centered educational policies of the State.”

In reality, all the people now enjoy the equal right to education through universal compulsory and free education system, study-while-working system, and people-centered educational policies of the State.

The Government provides such good conditions for learning that all people – young and old, male and female – have equal opportunities for learning and development.

All the children are brought up and educated free of charge at the expense of the State and society, without knowing what “tuition” is. Students of universities, colleges and specialized schools are studying not only free of charge, but receiving scholarships from the State. Under the universal 11-year compulsory education system, all young people nurture sound ideological and moral traits and master general secondary knowledge and more than one skill.

Through study-while-working system, people in different sectors of socialist construction study to their hearts’ content, according to their hope and aptitudes, without keeping themselves away from their production activities.

The Grand People’s Study House and public libraries, as well as mass media, are widely used for social education of people. Therefore, the country has literally turned into a “land of education”, a “land of learning”, in which all people learn under the care of the State.

Education for vulnerable children gives clear evidence to equality in education.

The Government has established orphanages and boarding schools in each of the provinces for those children who have lost one or both parents in natural disasters. At present, over 1,500 children are nursed in 12 orphanages, and about 5,800 children are enjoying free compulsory education with nothing to worry about in 17 boarding schools.

Besides, there are 11 special schools for the blind, deaf and other disabled children.

The Government pays deep attention to removal of any possible discrimination in education for vulnerable children and preferentially provides conditions for their education and normal daily life. For example, the Government bears the full responsibility for the provision of food, milk, clothes, shoes, school-things and other necessities for the development of vulnerable children.

## c) Quality of education

The country has established a well-regulated system of basic education for the rising generation and all members of society, and accordingly has gained some remarkable success and experience at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in realizing relevance of education to life in order to train all children into fully developed beings with rich knowledge, noble morality and strong physique.

All the children are educated in such a way that they foster the spirit of loyal service to country and people, conscious of their civil obligation.

The laws and regulations of the country are included in the educational programme of all institutions ranging from primary school to university level and are introduced to all students.

At the primary school level, the traffic safety regulations and other rules of social life are briefed to the children in conformity with their psychological characteristics so that they nurture the habit of living as required by the laws and regulations from early years. At the secondary school level, Socialist Morality, Socialist Constitution and State laws and regulations are taught to students so that they abide by the laws and regulations in their work and life after graduation from schools. At higher education level, relevant specialized laws and regulations are included in the curriculum.

Students are also educated to love their motherland fervently, remember their alma maters and respect their teachers.

To that end, the graduates of schools are encouraged to keep contact with their alma maters and express their feeling of gratitude to their teachers. Whenever they have the opportunity to visit their alma maters, they are asked to tell the children about their school days and lessons from their social life as an incentive to their school life.

In order to relate education closely to real life, schools regularly organize excursions and visits to revolutionary historical sites, historical ruins, factories, cooperative farms, exhibitions, museums and scenic spots throughout the country.

On the other hand, the students are actively involved in the activities of different propaganda teams, including Scientific Information Dissemination Team, Hygienic Propaganda Team, etc. They also take an active part in the Do-Laudable-Deeds movement, such as rabbit growing and tree planting.

In order to upgrade the quality of education, the Government directs special efforts to improve the contents and methods of education with a purpose of combining theory more closely with practice.

Improvement of educational contents is an urgent requirement of the new century, in which the amount of information increases radically and the function of education expands steadily.

Therefore, we have reformulated the educational contents to train students into all-roundly developed beings with rich knowledge, noble morality and strong physique, and steadily improved them in keeping with the requirements of the IT age.

We are making great efforts to develop to perfection the educational programmes for primary and secondary schools so that they can give adequate basic knowledge and skills required by the IT age. On the basis of the achievements made in the above efforts, we are stepping up the revision of textbooks.

The challenge in perfecting the educational programmes for primary and secondary schools is how to introduce intensive computer and foreign languages education.

For inclusion of computer and foreign languages education in primary school programme, we are implementing a pilot project with some selected sample units to identify its possibility.

On the other hand, research work is going on to intensify computer and foreign languages education in secondary schools.

We also pay special attention to developing outstanding talents of children systematically.

In order to systematically train talented scientists and technicians from early years, we have rationally improved the teaching programme of the secondary schools No. 1 newly opened in each city and county.

With a view to relating education of secondary schools No. 1 closely to real life, we have abolished the practice of collective after-school classroom work. Instead, all the students are encouraged to read books and participate in different club activities, as well as to listen to the special lectures read by renowned professors and researchers invited from different universities and research institutes.

The central and provincial secondary schools No. 1 now form more and more classes for those talented students who have special interest in mathematics, biology, computer or other subjects. At the same time, contests, quiz, exhibition of craftsmanship, art festival and other events are organized annually on a nation-wide scale to develop the talents of individual children.

For higher quality of education, the Government put special emphasis on training of computer and other IT experts in conformity with the requirements of the IT age.

Through intensive computer education at secondary school level, the children master IT knowledge and increase their application capabilities. At the same time, greater investment is made to training outstandingly talented computer experts.

In addition, IT is widely introduced to education to improve the quality of education steadily to meet the requirements of the development.

Educational software is under active development and the usage of computers increases in education, while education of all subjects is adapted to the introduction of IT.

For quality education, the Government pursues the policy of replacing the dictating teaching method with heuristic teaching method, the teacher-oriented method with pupil-oriented method.

All teachers have been stimulated to apply narration, conversation, debate, visualization and other teaching methods skillfully in keeping with the teaching content and preparedness of the children.

In this way, all the children are induced to possess the creative learning method to rely on their own brains and efforts in study.

A big stride has been made in the introduction of audio-video equipment to education.

Quite a few schools have enough number of VCRs, computers, overhead projectors, tape-recorders and other modern equipment and make efficient use of them in education.

We have set examples of modernization of education and IT application in one demonstration unit for each province and are successfully generalizing them throughout the country.

d) Policy dialogue, partnerships and participation of civil society in the process of educational change

At the turn of the century, the Government has paid deep attention to the promotion of exchange and cooperation with different countries of the world and international organizations, including UNICEF and UNESCO.

In close contact with APEID, UNESCO, we have taken an active part in the regional international conferences and workshops, and promoted cooperation in education with southeast Asian countries, which are geographically near to our country.

With the assistance of UNESCO, we successfully held the national seminar on the formulation of DPRK National Action Plan for EFA, and exchanged teachers, experts and scholars to tighten exchange and cooperation with other countries.

These activities have played a positive role for wide-range exchange of information and experiences on educational matters, including educational policies, educational planning and management, mobilization of resources for education, formulation of curriculum, teacher training, measurement and assessment of students' learning, social assistance to education, relevance of education to social development, etc.

As in the past so also in the future, we will promote cooperation and exchange with different countries of the world and the international organizations, including UNICEF, UNESCO and APEID.

### ***1.3 The main problems and challenges facing the education system at the beginning of the twenty-first century***

The DPRK Government, which has pursued its consistent policy of giving definite priority to education, put forward an important task of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century to consolidate the achievements of the universal 11-year compulsory education and improve the quality of education to a higher level, in full consideration of the history of educational, socio-economical and scientific development and of adaptation of Jomtien Declaration and Dakar Framework for Action to the country's specific reality.

This is the primary task for further development of education on the basis of the system of EFA guaranteed by the universal 11-year compulsory education.

We now face a series of difficulties in improving the quality of education in keeping with the requirements of the new century.

In the mid 1990s, the country's education, along with industry and agriculture, were hit severely by several years of flood, tidal waves, drought and other natural disasters, as well as by the pressure and sanctions imposed by the foreign forces.

For instance, paper mills, production centers of educational equipment and material, and other education-related industries were damaged to such an extent that the country suffered from the shortage of textbooks, notebooks, teaching material and the lack of normal educational conditions.

In order to remove the aftermaths of natural disasters and put education on normal track as soon as possible, the Government increased the budget for education and concentrated the international assistance and domestic human and material resources on it.

The children were preferentially provided with food, uniforms and school-things, and those children who had lost their one or both parents in natural disasters were taken care of at the expense of the State in orphanages and boarding schools opened in each of the provinces. Thanks to these measures, education for school-aged children went on without any interruption.

Yet, the textbooks are not enough for children because of the shortage of paper, and the construction, rehabilitation and management of school buildings are in difficult situation owing to the lack of financial and material resources.

## **2. Quality education for all young people: challenges, trends and priorities**

### ***2.1 Education and gender equality***

Since women account for more than half the population, gender equality is naturally essential in education.

Nevertheless, gender equality is one of the most serious difficulties for most of the countries in the world to overcome in providing the right to education.

It is because of this reason that it has been agreed internationally to eradicate gender discrimination in primary and secondary education by the year 2005 and realize complete and equal quality basic education particularly for women by the year 2015.

In DPRK, gender equality in education has already been realized long time ago.

Article 3 of the North Korean Law on Gender Equality promulgated on July 30, 1946 immediately after the country's independence stipulated: "Women shall have the same right to education as men". Furthermore, Article 77 of the DPRK Socialist Constitution as adopted in 1972 and amended in 1998 reads: "Women shall have the same social status and rights as men."

As stipulated in the Socialist Constitution, women virtually enjoy the same social status and rights as men in DPRK.

This clearly shows that all civil rights mentioned in the Socialist Constitution are fully provided in reality to women taking more than half the population. One of them is the right to education.

In DPRK the equal right of women to education is guaranteed by the progressive educational system and the people-centered educational policies.

First of all, the Government ensures the same right of women to education as men through its progressive educational system.

The existing universal 11-year compulsory education is a popular education system under which all rising generation of both genders receive complete general secondary education until they reach the age of work.

The universal 11-year compulsory education consists of one-year preschool course in the senior class of kindergarten, 4-year primary school course, and 6-year secondary school course.

Under the system girls receive compulsory education without any discrimination in the same classes with boys.

No discrimination is found in educational content, too.

All girls learn the same subjects and content in the uniform educational system ranging from the senior class of kindergarten through primary school to secondary school, and according to the unified teaching program.

Since girls receive completely equal quality education through compulsory system, they have the same opportunities as men to go on to universities or other higher educational institutions when they have finished the secondary school course.

The Government also provides secure and favorable educational environment for girls through popular educational policies.

Thanks to the policy of free education at schools of all levels adopted in April 1959, all the girls have enjoyed the same free education as men without knowing the word “tuition”.

At universities, colleges and specialized schools female students are granted the same scholarships as male students so that they can go on study without any worries.

We are paying deeper attention to providing better educational conditions for female students.

For instance, we are rebuilding hygienic facilities for female students at schools to meet the hygienic standard, particularly in the rural areas.

The Government also tries hard to relieve women from the burden of household chores. In order to enable women to take an active part in social life, the government has established a dense network of kindergartens and nurseries and consistently pursued the policy of upbringing and educating children at the expense of the State and society. In particular, a series of measures have been taken to improve the health and nutrition of female students.

## ***2.2 Education and social inclusion***

Education is an undertaking to train people into powerful beings.

Only through systematic education can people gain the ideological and cultural heritages of humankind, have correct understanding about the nature and society, learn science and technology needed for transforming them and foster the quality and traits to perform responsibility and role as befitting masters of society.

The universal 11-year compulsory education system now in force in DPRK is aimed mainly to train all children into all-roundly developed beings with rich knowledge, noble morality and strong physique until they reach the age work, and therefore, it fully guarantees social inclusion of all children without exception.

First of all, the Government puts emphasis on political and ideological education so as to develop all children into competent beings firmly equipped with the Juche idea of the Party and noble morality.

At the same time, intellectual education, scientific and technical education, are intensified to enable the children to possess high level of general secondary knowledge and more than one modern technique. In addition, through systematic physical culture, the young people build up their bodies and prepare themselves firmly for labor and national defense.

In order to ensure social inclusion of all children, in particular, we have consistently pursued the policy of combining education closely with revolutionary practice. theory with practice, education with production labor.

In this way, we have enabled all children to arm themselves with sound ideology, master rich scientific knowledge, and build up their body before they reach the age of work and are included in society.

When young people finish the compulsory education, the State provides them with secure jobs suitable for each person's hope, talent, gender, age and physical preparedness. Weak people are also given full opportunities to choose the jobs at their own disposal.

Strong among our young people is their commitment to serve the Party, leader, country and people faithfully by volunteering to mines, forestry and other difficult sectors of national economy after finishing the compulsory education. This is an expression of their patriotism.

Girls are also working devotedly for the prosperity and development of the country at different sectors, including education, public health, light industry, sales, service, etc. after compulsory education.

### ***2.3 Education and competencies for life***

All the young people and adults should be given the opportunities to master rich knowledge accumulated by mankind and nurture noble morality and sound physique so that they can take an active part in social life, control themselves in life and build up capacity for continuous learning.

These opportunities are inconceivable without the completion of secondary education.

Therefore, we attach a great significance to the completion of secondary education through the universal 11-year compulsory education system.

While consolidating the qualitative achievements in secondary education, we are putting importance on practical education.

The Government has put forward the policy of reformulate the curriculum of secondary schools in such a way as to ensure appropriate proportion of compulsory subjects to optional subjects and gradually increase the proportion of optional subjects in the senior grades.

Optional subjects are chosen, among engineering, metallurgy, electrical engineering, electronics, forestry, farming, fisheries, foodstuff engineering, garment and textile, by the schools according to the specific features of their regions.

For example, the educational programs have been reformulated for optional subjects so that urban students are given basic industrial technology, whereas rural students are taught basic agricultural technology.

As a result, the young people master basic technical knowledge on computer, electricity, engineering and others related to modern production process and possess skills to operate the most common automatic machines and equipment widely used in production and construction.

The Government also encourages tutoring for individual students to suit their specific preparedness and characteristics. We are planning to intensify group work or tutoring, especially for those subjects that require particular skill and talent, for example, art and sports.

Secondary schools regularly operate clubs for basic scientific subjects, including mathematics, physics and chemistry, and for art and sports so that children can get optional extracurricular education according their aptitude and expectations.

The IT age requires correspondingly high intellectuality of people. Therefore, we put emphasis on increasing the intellectual faculty of children. The educational contents and methods are improved to intensify the intellectual training. Within this framework, we have made model units for excellent intellectual development of children and organized several workshops to generalize the examples throughout the country.

Instead of giving knowledge for the sake of knowledge to children, we now focus our efforts on building up their capacity for volitional observation of the world, making up strategies of problem solving, selection of knowledge input needed specifically for each of them, and synthesis and analysis of information.

In particular, we encourage children to nurture the fundamental capacity for learning in primary and secondary school days in order to lay a solid foundation for life-long learning.

More time is allotted for experiments and practice in the curriculum of schools, with great importance attached to steady improvement of their quality. In this way, children master high skills for computers, IC and other up-to-date scientific and technical devices.

## ***2.4 Quality education and the key role of teachers***

As gardeners grow flowers and trees into full bloom so the teachers are unassuming heroes who nurture the future of the country. The success of education and qualitative composition of the young generation representing the country's future depends on the teachers. The Declaration on the Position and Role of Teachers and the recommendations thereon adopted by the 45<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Education (October 1996, Geneva) retain the significance in enhancing the role of teachers.

In DPRK teachers are entrusted with honorable mission to educate the rising generation to be the successors of revolution.

Accordingly, the Government highly appreciates them as professional revolutionaries and stimulates them to perform their responsibility and role to the full.

Kindergarten and primary school teachers are trained at teacher training colleges, while secondary school teachers are trained at the universities of education. On the other hand, the teachers of universities, colleges and specialized schools are recruited among their own post-graduates. There are 2 ~ 4 universities of education and teacher training colleges in each province, and the number of teachers to be trained is decided by each of the provinces according to the number of children in each of them.

From the point of view that the qualification of teachers determines the quality of education, the Government attaches a great importance to improving the teachers' qualification to a higher grade through refreshment courses.

Universities of education and teacher training colleges organize on a regular basis the refreshment courses for kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers. On the other hand, the intensive teacher retaining centers in each of the provinces, cities and counties organize 15 ~ 20-day-long intensive courses and demonstrations for them during winter and summer vacations.

Technical universities and teacher training institutions also provide correspondence courses to the in-service teachers.

The Government provides good educational conditions to universities of education and teacher training colleges and enlists best teachers and students in order to train highly qualified teachers on a long-term basis.

We are now reformulating the curricula of universities of education and teacher training colleges in such a way as to combine general basic knowledge closely with specialized knowledge, teaching theory with teaching practice with a view to enabling the students of those institutions to prepare themselves firmly to be competent teachers with creative thinking ability and wide range of general and specialized knowledge to suit the teacher qualification standard of the new century.

In particular, we are directing a great effort to intensifying the post-graduate courses of universities to train highly qualified university teachers and scientists on a long-term basis.

The government also pays deep attention to establishing the social atmosphere of respecting teachers.

We find out excellent teachers who are devoting themselves to education to widely introduce them to the public through mass media and honor them with State decorations. In addition, we preferentially provide the teachers with good conditions for their work and life.

## ***2.5 Education for sustainable development***

What is of particular importance in education is how to give uninterrupted life-long education to all members of society from early age to grave.

In DPRK sustainable education for all members of society is firmly guaranteed by the combined system of preschool, school and adult education.

Through preschool and primary education, the children arm themselves with noble morality, master basic knowledge for their intellectual development, increase cultural attainments and build up their bodies.

Through secondary education, the children master the complete secondary knowledge, while through higher education they train themselves into competent revolutionary cadres with firm revolutionary world outlook and rich knowledge of modern science and technology.

At present, schools of all levels, including 310 universities and colleges, are evenly distributed all over the country, as a result of which all young people are given access to education at institutions ranging from primary schools to universities.

Adult education is of special importance in education for sustainable development. Since adult education is the one given to the working people active in socialist construction, it takes an important part in consolidating their revolutionary world outlook and steadily raising the level of their general knowledge, as well as of their technical and cultural attainments.

The Government is consistently developing the study-while-working system, namely, the factory, farm and fishermen's colleges and correspondence and evening courses, and specialized schools.

The informal higher educational institutions of different forms give the working people an easy access to higher education without keeping them away from their work in different sectors of national economy.

DPRK has now hundreds of factory, farm and fishermen's colleges, which enroll hundreds of thousands of working people.

In full consideration of the geographical distribution of the national economy and the specific features of each sector, we are now planning to open more factory, farm and fishermen's colleges and provide better educational conditions for them. At the same time, we are directing great effort to improving the teaching methods suitable to the study-while-working system.

For sustainable development of people, we have consistently pursued the policy of intensifying social education, with the Grand People's Study House and other public libraries as focal points.

In particular, the Grand People's Study House constitutes a comprehensive "correspondence university", an important base for making all members of society intellectuals.

By enhancing the function of the Grand People's Study House, the Government tries to disseminate the latest achievements of scientific and technical development in different forms and methods, retrain the in-service scientists and technicians, and raise the general standard of scientific and cultural attainments of the scientists, technicians, students and working people.

The country has the system, under which all people, whether they work in factories, enterprises, scientific, cultural or educational establishments, study for 2 hours after their day's work. Besides, Saturday is set as "study day".

In addition, technical study is organized on a regular basis at factories, enterprises and farms. Once a year, leaders of different units and establishments receive retraining at relevant schools for one month.

In DPRK there is no one who has not received education or gives up study. All people without exception study for their whole life.

This means that education for sustainable development has reached a remarkably high level in DPRK.

We will further accelerate the intellectualization of all members of society by steadily developing the sustainable life-long education for all.

### **3. Document references used for the preparation of the national report**

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- 4) DPRK National Report on Implementation of the World Declaration for EFA  
(September 1999)
- 5) World declaration on EFA and Framework for Action to Meet basic Learning  
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- 6) Dakar Framework for Action on EFA (April 2000)
- 7) Asia-Pacific Action Program for EFA (January 2000)