1. THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XXI CENTURY: AN OVERALL VISION.

Today’s world, immersed in the globalization tendencies, requires the use of new technologies that implies to increase the complexity of activities. This creates a bigger quantity of employment positions that makes workers better training indispensable in order to carry out operations with sophisticated new technology. At the same time, that tends to diminish the non-qualified or semi-qualified work positions, based mainly on the experience.

Most part of human resources appropriated educational preparation is responsibility of the educational system. This preparation must give the citizens the instruments that allow them to develop within the globalization concepts. All this framed by the constant search of the efficiency and the effectiveness with a view to better resources uses.

As the rest of the Latin American countries, Costa Rica confronts the necessity to adjust its social and economic system to face the changes that take place at international level. In that way, people must be provided with the tools that facilitate them to act successfully in their activities.

The Costa Rican society has been historically characterized by the importance given to the education, what is manifested in the early setting-up of educational centers and the importance the Ministry of Public Education has in the National budget. That allows the development of the processes of teaching learning in all the different educational levels.

The singular social and cultural development attributed to Costa Rica in the Latin American context is largely explained by its educational system. It has looked for high covering levels and quality persistently along many decades. This situation has promoted a true social mobility that has allowed fair distribution of the economic resources and the development of social attendance programs, essential for preserving the consolidated democratic system in the region.

To respond to the new requirements as much as searching for a development style, planning and conduction, educational system must respond appropriately to the problems of distribution of opportunities, efficiency and quality still not reasonably resolved.
Education system is not an isolated and static one. It influences the environment and environment determined it. It is subject to a demand that increases because of the augment on the number of inhabitants. These inhabitants not only need literacy and instruction in concrete aspects, but they mainly need a predisposition for the learning that prepare them for a constant education within a humanist setting which gives as a result conscious and solidary citizens. Citizens prepared to face the demands of the new millennium, in such a way that by means of their acting, they raise the standards of living in the Costa Rica.

Today, more than ever education should have clear politics with a prospective vision accompanied with the attainment of the goals settled down by a society that knows the challenge the world order imposes.

1.1. Main reformations and innovations introduced in the educational system at the beginning of the XXI Century.

1.1.1. Legal basis of education in Costa Rica.

The Political Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica incorporated since 1949 a chapter about education and culture, that not only keeps the achievements of the past, but it enlarges concepts and very important guarantees.

In the Article 78 establishes:

*Pre-scholar and the General Basic Education are compulsory. These and the Diversified Education in the public system are gratuitous and financed by the State. In the public education system, included superior (college) education, the public expense won't be inferior to six percent (6%) annual of the Gross Domestic Product, in accordance with the law... The State will facilitate the prosecution of superior studies to those who lack pecuniary resources. The award of the scholarships and the aids will be in charge of the Ministry of the field, by means of the organism that determines the law.*

Also, the Political Constitution points out in the Title VII, corresponding to education:

*The private initiative in education deserves stimulus, for what the teaching freedom is guaranteed, nevertheless, the private educational centers will be subject to inspection for the State.*

*The State is in the obligation of offering food and dress to the school indigent. The State sponsors and organizes the education of adults, to combat the illiteracy and to provide them cultural opportunities.*

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The Political Constitution settles down the autonomy of the public universities and the obligation of the State of providing them economic resources by means of the establishment of a Special Fund of the Superior Education.

Along its history, the Costa Rican society have adopted philosophical and practical principles that base its educational system to settle down, to conceptualize in what is known as principles and ends of the education, and whose development has been needed a lot of legislation, so much fundamental as specific.

In Costa Rica exists legislation in educational matter that dates before 1949. The most evident case is the Code of Education, which contains the values, the principles and the philosophical-politic decision of the contemporary Costa Rica, which are apparent or tacitly expressed in the juridical order. The philosophy of our Educational System is expressed by means of the Fundamental Law of Education, especially in the chapters where the purposes settle down, and those that provide the global philosophical settles of system, specified in the article 2 of this Law.

According to this, the objectives of the Costa Rican education are:

a) The formation of civic lovers of their Homeland, aware of their rights and of their fundamental freedoms, with deep sense of responsibility and respect to the human dignity;

b) To contribute to the complete development of the human personality;

c) To form citizens for a democracy in which reconcile the individual's interests with those of the community.

d) To stimulate the development of the solidarity and the human understanding; and to conserve and to enlarge the cultural inheritance, imparting knowledge on the man's history, the masterpieces of the literature and the fundamental philosophical concepts.

Specifically, the Costa Rican educational system reproduces the values of the representative democracy, the division of the political powers, the guarantee of the individual, social and political rights; the universal and secret vote; and the respect to the human dignity, among others.

Consequently, the educational system responds to those values and purposes of the constitutional political régime. Therefore, the educational system tend to guarantee the teaching freedom, the thinking freedom, the association freedom, the religion freedom, the respect to the human rights and the respect to the values of the constitutional democratic regimen, strengthening this way the Social Right State.

The Superior Council of Education was created with the purpose of guaranteeing the non-interference of the partisan political world in the education.

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It is the technical organism at constitutional level to which corresponds to direct the State education. It is presided by the Minister of the field. In the year 1951, the Law Nº1362 of October 8th is promulgated to regulate the integration and the concrete functions of the Superior Council of Education.

The General Law of Education was promulgated the 25 of September of 1957 and it was supplemented by the Law Nº 2298 of November 22 1958. It is considered, jointly with the Political Constitution as the mark juridical base of our educational system.

This Law has 49 articles distributed in 10 chapters. The Fundamental Law of Education has the particularity that, except for the Political Constitution it is the one that expressed more thoroughly the philosophical-political alignment of the education in Costa Rica. Also, it offers the axiological and philosophical setting of the National Educational System. Before the promulgation of this Law, our school system lacked of principles, goals and objectives that guided the educators in the educational task and the authorities in a philosophical conception agreed with time.

The different laws that guide the working of the Costa Rican Educational System were conceived (in an intentional way) with a high grade of generality, to leave a wide margin of freedom to the organisms in charge of direct and administer the teaching, so much for technical reasons, like to favor the change that the circumstances demand. It was conceived as a general setting in which the Superior Council of Education could direct the educational process of the Costa Rican nation constitutional trails.

1.1.2. The organization, the structure and the administration of the educational system.

In conformity with the article 7 of the Fundamental Law of Education, the Costa Rican education graduate according to the psychobiological development of the pupils and it includes the following levels:

1. Pre-school education
2. Primary education,
3. Middle (high school) education and
4. Superior education.

The Costa Rican educational structure leans on the division of tasks and the intercommunication between the formal system and the “sub system”, with multiple entrance and exit points between one and other. In order to attend the necessities of the people in formation, that for any reason didn't continue in the formal system, giving them opportunity to return to the formal system and to obtain their diplomas, without losing the credit for the formation and the experience acquired outside. The Costa Rican education has two big educational sectors: formal education and non-formal education.

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The Ministry of Public Education is the Central Government's organism in charge of the conduction of the national education. To administer the Costa Rican educational system there have been organized twenty education regional headships. Each one of those is in charge of a regional director of education, with two defined technical departments, the Educational Development Department and the Administrative Development Department. Also, as smaller jurisdictional units there are the school circuits in charge of an Advisory Supervisor; these school circuits contain educational centers of all the levels and modalities of a territorial environment.

The effective formal structure for the operation of the Central Offices and the Regional instances of the Ministry of Education was established in the Ordinances 23489-MEP and 23490-MEP, published in the Reach Nº25 of The Gazette 144 of July 29, 1994. This structure has been partially modified in different times, with the purpose of responding to the modernization of the processes and a better use of the capacity of administration of the Ministry.

That is how, in the year 2001 the Office of Integral Education of Human Sexuality is created. It has as primordial goal the impulse of strategies and actions that foment the integral education of the human sexuality in the student population of all the levels, cycles and modalities, with the pedagogic mediation of the educators; generating strategies for the educational training and the research of the necessary didactic resources.

In the year 2002, is created the Juridical Division of the Ministry of Education. Its objective is to be the advisory organism in legal matter required by the organs and the institutional and regional authorities and for the organisms that cooperate in the benefit of the educational service.

To promote and to generate the transfer and adaptation of the computer science technologies and the telecommunications to the educational system in the administration environment, the system Computer Administration Division is created in the year 2002. By means of this same executive ordinance, it is moved the “Educational Computer Science National Program” under the responsibility of the Omar Dengo Foundation.

In that same year, a reformation was carried out. The structure and functions of the National Center of the Educational Infrastructure was modified with the purpose that this specialized center could participate actively in the training of the members of the Juntas of Education and office workers for an efficient acting in the procedure of the legal aspects and administrative requirements of the execution of the construction of the infrastructure of the educational centers.

In the year 2003, as an answer to the acquired commitments with the promulgation of the Code of the Childhood and the Adolescence, by means of Executive Ordinance 31579-MEP, the Office of the Rights of the Childhood and the Adolescence of the Ministry of Public Education is created as a dependence of the Bureau of the Academic Vice minister. This

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bureau will be in charge of the coordination and advice of the educational politics that are developed in connection with the rights of the childhood and adolescence in the Pre-school Education, first, second and third cycle of the Basic General Education and in the Diversified Education.

As part of the National Plan of Development in the education topic, it is intended the Quality and Efficiency of the Educational Administration. This searches for the increment of the civic participation, bigger effectiveness of the management of Programs of Justness, gradual deconcentration of functions, and the institutional strengthening.

To improve the conditions of life the inhabitants from Costa Rica is established as general objective by means of the attainment of the best conditions of justness, solidarity and social integration. For which the best efforts will be made and the biggest effectiveness will be offered in the investment of the State in the efficient benefit of the social services, included education of high quality and covering.

The educational service plain development to satisfy the necessities of the society, to produce the population's integral growth in agreement with the modern requirements, to secure the individual's and the society's well-being, makes indispensible the existence of an administration system that propitiates and supports the necessary institutional changes for an efficient and effective achievement of the institutional objectives.

We are searching for the modernization of the administration of the MEP that allows the implementation and normalization in pro of the efficiency, around the formulation of the Strategic Plan of Administrative Improvement and the pursuit in the execution of the different ministerial projects. Inside the high-priority actions they highlight:

- To guarantee school population and student population in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty, in particular in the rural areas, the benefits of the programs of justness in a transparency setting and rationalization. It intends the revision and analysis of the procedures, especially in the selection of beneficiaries.
- More than 6 thousand infrastructure works and 200 thousand desks in the period.
- 548 thousand students assisted in the School Dining rooms.
- 80 thousand students of secondary (high school) with Transport.
- More than 84 thousand students with scholarship.
- More than 109 thousand students with bond.
- Gratuitous transport for handicapped students.
- Strengthen the Regional Addresses of Education, with gradual deconcentration.
- Consolidation of the System of Managerial Information of the MEP (human resources, Budget, Financial).
- Modernization of the administration of the MEP that allows the implementation and normalization in pro of the efficiency, around the formulation of the Strategic Plan of Administrative Improvement and the pursuit in the execution of the different ministerial projects.

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Fulfill the execution of Computer science Strategic Plan.
Revision of Institutional Manual of Posts.

1.1.3. The curricular policy, the content of the education programs, and the strategies of teaching learning.

a) Pre-school Education

The Pre-school Education, like the organic structure of the Costa Rican Educational System, is based on a series of foundations (philosophical, psychological, social, cultural, ecological, biological and pedagogic), on principles of the infantile development, on the characteristics of development of the childhood from the birth until the six years, and in the Costa Rican socio-cultural reality. Starting from all these theoretical pillars the didactic-methodological options are built and they developed in the pedagogic practice.

The principles of the infantile human development that sustain the Pre-school Education are derived of investigations carried out for scholars of the child development and learning. Its setting in practice should consider the characteristics of the childhood as much as the family, the educational and administrative team, the socio-cultural context in which the educational action is developed. The characterization of the human development is a hole, however, for educational purposes it has been traditionally focused by areas, which implies a fragmented boarding that generates the person's visualization as a group of interrelated but independent parts. A different way to approach the human development didactically is to visualize it as the result of the person's evolution in its interrelation with the physical, social, cultural and natural means, in a given historical moment.

This human development begins from the moment of conception and it continues until the death. It is a integral, continuous, and interrelated process characterized by multiple and particular internal and external changes in different moments of people life, that lapses in an orderly and predictable way.

Then, the development takes place integrally as the subject evolves to superior levels in his daily live as a singular being and as a member of a culture. From this perspective, each person is conceived as an active and singular entity creating her/his own reality that interact and transform the context that surrounds him/her.

For that, the characteristics of the childhood should be known if it is desire to propitiate an educational intervention of quality, having clear that they are approximate manifestations. These can be presented before or after the consigned age, depending on multiple factors among which stand out: The maturity, the history bound to the family and the environment, the physical and mental health, the socioeconomic level, the opportunities to use the abilities or knowledge, the interests and desires of the social group and those of the own individual. As well as, the size of the origin family, the patterns of upbringing, the conditions of the childbirth, the personality, the relationships with the grown-ups, smaller or of same age

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persons. This mentioned group of factors is decisive in the directionality of the person's development.

Therefore, the curriculum is defined like an investigation process that understands the individual (integral formation), her/his context (integrated formation), and the relationship between both (integrative formation) to improve the processes of construction of knowledge in the person's formation and the improvement of her/his quality of life, as well as the functioning of the educational institution and the community.

This wide concept is not a traditional curriculum, on the contrary it responds to a theoretical-curricular innovative humanist focus based on a coherent philosophical settle with the integral human development, the socio-cultural context and a position of interactions and constructivist construction of knowledge. From this perspective, it intends the human being dynamic vision. Starting from the curriculum, is constituted in a valuable integral and integrated, open, flexible, significant, and culturally pertinent approach that recaptures the experiences of spontaneous and natural game where the physical, mental, social, and emotional action of the subject with the propitiated atmosphere that surrounds it.

This conceptualization integrates, as active main characters the boy, the girl, the teacher, the director, the family, the community, and the adviser. All of them define the direction of the curriculum that is developed in its interactions.

The above-mentioned guides the curricular action that is developed in the daily practice as meanwhile:

- It overcomes a conception of educational transmitting of knowledge when defining it as manufacturer of the same ones, it is developed permanently, it promotes the development of the children, the girls and it adapts to the educational context.

- It advances from a vision of educational helping in the educational process toward that of an educational interact in the process and of a vertical conception of education to a horizontal conception that supposes the active participation of all the involved subjects (boy, girl, educators, family, community, director, management and it advisors)

- It passes form a homogenized idea of the curriculum to a flexible concept.

- It passes from boys and girls who memorize to a boy and a girl that build knowledge when acting physical, mental, social, and emotionally with the environment, starting from the interaction with physical, social and logical-mathematical objects.

- It passes from a pragmatic and empirical education to a creative and investigating education that knows how to take advantage and to systematize its daily chore to build knowledge permanently.

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It conceives the curriculum and their elements (space, time, materials and planning) as hypothesis that sustains a dialectical conception of the subject-object relationship.

It proposes an intense curriculum that generates participation and the co-work, where the subject as much as the object are considered important.

The topic of the articulation among the Cycle of Transition of the Pre-school Education and the First Grade of the Basic General Education, has deserved the attention of the responsible authorities. It is in the first grade of the Basic General Education where the biggest repeat percentage is presented.

It corresponds to the Educational System to favor the child's integral development like human beings, allowing them to develop in the society, in a creative form during the time that they correspond to live.

The articulation search, for strengthen the continuity that should exist between the two levels, to propitiate the natural and sequential transition of the educational process, responds to the following objectives:

- To satisfy the educational necessities of the boys and the girls from 5 ½ to 8 years, under an active methodology where their integral development is privileged
- To establish effective mechanisms of coordination and communication with the technical and administrative authorities, to unify efforts and to facilitate the articulation
- To promote articulated strategies, evaluative methodology, and the creation of environments that guarantee the continuity of the process
- To propitiate the exchange of knowledge, experiences, or activities among the professionals of both levels

The high-priority actions regarding articulation are summary in:

- The coordination of technical actions and office workers among the Cycle of Transition of the Pre-school Education, and the First Year of the Basic General Education.
- The educational permanent training of both levels for the feedback of the process.
- The reorganization of the first grade classrooms with environments or work areas, and didactic material that constitute a support to the action of the teachers, for the potential of the teaching and learning process.
- Conformation of interdisciplinary teams that offer technical support and training at regional level and of school circuits

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• Systematizing of the experiences lived by the teachers of both levels.

• Construction and reconstruction of such concepts as school, work environments, methodology, learning, teaching, formation, development, and education, among others

b) Primary Education:

In general, the decisions concerning curricular development are impregnated of the positions of the educational politicians and the curricular active. Likewise, it is wise to point out that the approval or authorization of policies is a matter defined by the Superior Council of Education. It is the technical-advisory organ that assures the execution of the interests and the educative project of the State. In this way, it is even more defined the human being concretion and the society that is wanted to form by the educational action.

It is responsibility of the structure of the Ministry of Public Education to translate that vision of the educational agents and to generate the educational curricular planning, which is translated in plans, programs and projects that specify the competition levels. From the serious starting consultations to the bases, they assure a national agreement.

One of those translated considerations in curricular products, are the programs of study for the different disciplines. Once elaborated, they are elevated again to the Superior Council of Education for their approval. This way assures the interpretation and execution of the effective educational and curricular policy, with a view to lowering those technician-pedagogic orientations to the bases of the Costa Rican Educational System. These programs of study are often revised by the technicians specialized in curriculum with the purpose of adapting them to the socio-cultural changes present in the Costa Rican society.


The following situations should be taken in account in their application:

• In the II cycle (fourth, fifth and sixth grades) the first five matters form a group to conform two work areas, each one of them imparted by a teacher and with a weekly attention of fourteen lessons of forty minutes each one.

• The amount of weekly lessons of the previously logged matters is: Mathematical, eight lessons; Scientific Education and Social Studies, four lessons; Spanish, ten lessons and Education Agricultural two lessons.

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- In Foreign Language a lesson is imparted per day, for a total of five weekly lessons.

- Educational Computer Science is imparted in two weekly lessons. It has been implemented a program for the equipment of the laboratories and teacher training, lead by the Omar Dengo Foundation (FOD), who has come promotes the program since 1989.

- They impart the rest of the subjects in two weekly lessons by group.

In the case of the indigenous schools, their plan of studies is compound of two fundamental axes: the Basic National Curriculum applied in the whole national territory and the three components of the program of indigenous studies. That is: the native language (according to the region), the program of indigenous culture, and the program of environmental education.

The native language is imparted in three hours per week by an itinerant teacher; the cultural program is developed in two lessons per week for one member of the community and the regular teacher impart the environmental projects.

Since 2004, there is a new statute for the evaluation of learning. It regulates the process in the interior of the institutions. Also, at organizational level the institution integrates an advisory technical committee, whose purpose is to guide the technical construction of the instruments and its valuation, the evaluation process and the teachers. Nevertheless, this organization is not possible in the multi grade schools. Efforts are made to organize these committees at the level of the school circuit.

Other mechanisms exist in the execution of the study programs, among them the situational technical supervision and the curricular administration that the principals of educational centers. In that way, the process of curricular evaluation that allows taking decisions in all levels is facilitated, with the purpose of modifying forms, procedures, and technician–organizational normative of the action of pedagogic dynamics.

From a dimension macro, the evaluation process is evidently addressed by the educational project of the Educational Sector, for the effective Educational and Curricular Politics's positions, for the relating ones that in the continuity of the Educational Politics's mark toward the XXI Century have been treated from 1994 and for the politicians and strategic actions of the different administrations of Government that together, they define and they configure the orientation of the educational service.

Although the country has opted for a flexible pedagogic practice, characterized by serious contextual procedures and curricular adaptation that have served as inputs in other contexts, the system has privileged a strategy of quality and of standardization of the knowledge. Contents, abilities and dexterities that are summed up in the elaborated national tests and applied by the Division of Control of Quality and Macro Evaluation of the Ministry of Public Education, in a process of evaluation of learning; that are applied at the end of the cycles, that is: Sixth Grade, Ninth Year and Eleventh Year, respectively.

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Among all the effort that the educational authorities have traced, some progressive ideas arise in the different groups and social actors, that facilitate the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work, in the design of the curriculum it offers. It also facilitates the integration and concerted forms and work procedures more attached to the reality and national problems; the truth is that this tendency is spreading more the solution of national problems, the educational sector becomes an excellent support for the promotion of the social change.

Also, Primary Education is aimed toward aspects of great interest for the Costa Rican society; an example is the tendency of universalizing the pre-scholar education, the strength given to the schools that assist the groups of scarcer resources, by means of specific programs, the modernization of unique teacher's schools. The very pertinent dynamics of the leader schools, schools of enlarged schedule and the excellence schools assure that the education of this country tries to concert toward the necessities and interests of the different educational communities.

It is important to mention that the contact with the rest of the world, the development of knowledge and the great technological advances that happen, are available in the educational centers, due to the net of Internet that works in schools, and schools as a form of energizing the work of the educating and educators. The performance of these advances has been endowed to schools and computation teams that allow the improvement of the work reports, as an exercise of the most pertinent pedagogic practice. Nevertheless, the one teacher and two teachers schools are outside of these opportunities. For their enrollment characteristics, schedule and infrastructure is not possible to implement the traditional outline of the Educational Computer Science Program.

Regarding the selection of the contents of the different study disciplines, there is a marked premeditation that they harmonize undoubtedly with the contents of the evaluation subjects from the national tests to the end of each cycle. This way, these contents become the “basic contents”, limiting the creativity of incorporating new inputs to the classroom work and field and laboratory experiences. The emphasis of the work is fundamentally on the basic subjects or those that stimulate the contribution or privilege in its dynamic cognitive aspects.

The rest of subjects completes a challenge of “supplementary” and many times do not get the space and the place in the official curriculum; although in its daily practice the children integral formation its pointed out as the target of Costa Rican education.

The percentages of national covering in the school year of 2003 in the special subjects in public schools, are distributed in the following way: 77% of the registered students receives the subject of Agricultural Education, although it is established that the teacher must impart these lessons; 62% receives Religious Education, 41% receives Musical Education, 36% receives Physical Education, 24% receives Education for the Home, 12% receives plastic arts and only 3.5% receives Industrial Arts.

Continuing with the analysis of the national covering of the special subjects and taking the type of direction of the school as variable, it is valid to point out that the schools with one
teacher and two teachers schools, present the lowest covering percentages, except for the Agricultural Education that is imparted by the own classroom teacher and it is a tradition in the rural area to impart these lessons. They particularly take advantage of the practice of the programs in the school vegetable gardens.

The biggest concentration in the beneficiaries of an enriched curriculum is in the schools with Direction 2, falling the curve slightly in the schools with Direction 5, that for situations as the student population and the infrastructure limitations are forced to contain the increase of the educational offer in these subjects, giving priority to others as the Educational Computer Science and English, as it has been the practice in the last years.

Except for the Agricultural Education, in the rest of the special subjects more than 70% of the children that benefit attend schools located in the urban areas of the country.

Still, it doesn't exist in the country, a general conscience that the official curriculum should be considered as a challenge of integration and we are far away in reaching interdisciplinary efforts and integration. Although, many times the matter has arisen in some educational center innovations. The efforts in this aspect are mentioned however in technical documents which are varied, in the practice it has become a great challenge to impregnate the educational system with this integral current, interdisciplinary and Trans disciplinary.

In connection with the plans of study of the different modalities and cycles of the Costa Rican educational system, they have experienced slight modifications, offering with it to reach bigger curricular relevancy and mainly trying to satisfy necessities and interests of the student community. In this sense they have incorporated those denominated traverse topics of the curriculum, as well as the Superior Council of Education approved the only traverse axis of the Costa Rican Curriculum which is the formation in values.

The traverse topics that are worked in the national curriculum have as purpose to make more flexible this curriculum and to include the emergent topics as: Education of the Health, Environmental Culture and of Sustainable Development, Integral Education of the Sexuality and Education for the Living of the Rights and the Peace. The pedagogic strategy of the “transversely” is properly institutionalized since 2001, when they were carried out the training shops and the consulting of international technical consultants of the UNFPA and the elaboration of the didactic material of support.

In the scenario of the educational centers of I and II cycles, new pedagogic experiences, subjects like French have settled down, and mainly English as a second language. That has rebounded in the opportunities that the boy and the girl obtain in their formation.

The educational computer science has been another inclusion in the chore of the educational centers and the applications of a basic language “Micro world” and “Logo” seeks to energize the pedagogic work, as well as the use of the Internet that facilitates a very pertinent connection with the rest of the world.
c) Secondary Education

i. Public Politics in Youth (2002)

The institution that intervenes as regards youth is the old National Movement of Youths (MNJ), current National Council for the Young Person, which impelled the initiative of the approval of a specific law and the design of a public policies directed to the young since 1998. This policy possesses an inter institutional focus, integral and participative, with the purpose of integrating the state experience and to assure results of quality with the existent resources for this important population.

A first step was the integration of a Group of Sector Work (GTI), composed of around 20 government institutions that offer some service to this population with respect to education, employment, justice, sports and recreation, health services, youth organization, defense of rights; among others.

The following step was the characterization of the public offer, which constituted a study about the way that the State responds to the demands of the adolescents and young, the type of answer, the level of efficiency in its administration and the breaches that have not being closed. Besides the above-mentioned, it was carried out an inventory of the juvenile organizations in the country, with the purpose of taken them into account in the rest of the process of construction of a public policies.

This process has become a novel and participative initiative that seeks to assist the population's sector, with an institutional vision of long term that incorporates them as a human resource with capacities that should be strengthen. Also, the above-mentioned is conceived as an unavoidable right, the right to the social inclusion and the rising responsibility of the State of providing all the necessary tools to assure it.

As a result parallel to this initiative, it was approved on May 20, 2002 the Law Nº 8261, well-known as the Young Person's General Law that is the legal instrument that gives juridical sustenance to the public policies. This law derogates the law of creation of the National Movement of Youths and the National Council of Public Policies of the Young Person. This law possesses a participative, inter institutional and integral focus and facilitates to open the necessary spaces so that the youths intervene in the national decisions that concern them as social group.

This law covers the whole adolescent and young population of the country from the 12 years until the 35 years and it offers the access of this population to all the state services as regards education, health, work, recreation and sport, among others.

The objectives of the State in the field of the education mentioned in the article 6 of this law, are:

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... to stimulate young people so that they participate and remain in the programs of basic, secondary general education, technique education and superior education for university students.

j) To create free courses in the centers of superior education, programmed for the beneficiaries of this law and directed to them.

k) To formulate educational programs specialized in the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of people with addictions.

l) To formulate educational programs specialized in stimulating the expansion of the scientific and technological development.

m) To establish national campaigns to stimulate the knowledge and the promotion of the own culture and of the values and positive attitudes for the national development.

n) To guarantee the education in equal conditions of quality and of the highest level for all the young people.

o) To offer that in all the levels the educational programs are adapted to the necessities of the labor offer and the necessities of integral development of the country.

It is appreciated that an important legal tool that seeks to strength what exists is the one that converts the Ministry of Public Education, in the government's institution in the youth's field. Also, if this Council is used appropriately, it can become a space for the coordination and the articulation of the different sectors of the State and of the institutions of the educational system, that can offer to the youths an integral and appropriate offer to the demands of this social group.

ii. Curriculum Modalities

There are two cycles of Secondary Education in Costa Rica, the Third Cycle that includes three years: seventh, eighth, and ninth. In addition, the Diversified Cycle that includes tenth and eleventh year in the academic branch schools; and tenth, eleventh, and twelfth year in the schools of the technical branch.

This educational offer is given because the students that enroll in secondary school have two possibilities once they graduate: the first is to continue towards superior studies, or in the other hand, to look for a space in the labor market. This is the reason to develop in both groups a series of abilities and skills that facilitate their approaching to these spaces under favorable conditions. It is important to propitiate the constitution of centers of secondary education with specific modalities, among them are:

- **Academic education:** it has the following study modalities, academic, humanist, scientific, laboratory, bilingual experimental, high school by television, virtual schools, sport oriented schools, secondary education at distance, open education.

- **Technical education:** it has the following study modalities; artistic, agricultural, industrial and commercial, and services.

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The Third Cycle of Basic General Education represents a cycle that prepares for the active life. Therefore, it includes many academic matters, to integrate the knowledge around the realities of life in a world marked by technology and the derived specific human problems, and it provides technological interpretation of the humanism at the same time.

Parallel to this Third Cycle of general character, the socioeconomic reality of Costa Rica demands to offer the possibility to acquire, after the first three cycles, knowledge of practical order that allow the youths to incorporate to the work life efficiently for themselves and also beneficial for the local development. The Fourth Cycle or of Diversified Education offers the students diverse options that spread to satisfy their necessities and interests, being divided in three big branches: Academic, Technique and Artistic.

The plan of studies of the Diversified Education is composed of 3 nuclei: Common, Technological and Complementary.

- **The common nucleus:** it is constituted by a group of subjects common to all the branches. It has as main objective to offer to the students a basic vision that allows them to be guided and to be reaffirmed in the different options and study possibilities. This nucleus is composed of the subjects: Spanish, Social Studies, Mathematics, Sciences (Chemistry, Physics and Biology), Foreign Language (English or French), Psychology and Philosophy.

- **The complementary nucleus:** it is constituted by a group of activities of eminently formative and recreational character. Its reason of being lies in the necessity of offering the students possibilities of active participation inside a group of activities where he/she can find positive answer to its civic, moral, sport and artistic restlessness; and to channel them appropriately toward the development of an integral education and of quality.

- **The technological nucleus:** it has different purposes, in this way in the academic branch it offers to the student educational opportunities that allow him to acquire useful abilities for the domestic life, auxiliary techniques for their future professional life and a relative but appropriate training in order to a possible and immediate incorporation to the productive life.

In the technique and artistic branches, the nucleus is constituted by a group of activities and matters you tune to the objectives and nature of this branches. It embraces knowledge, experiences and practical educational of shop and field activities dedicated to offer to the student a convenient solid preparation, and a very laid foundation in a technique or determined art. They prepare basically for the work world.

The education in the technical branch assists the Agricultural, Industrial, and Service modalities. In the mark of the profile of the Technical Education they think about the "Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense"
specific profiles of the modalities, those that include the particular features that characterize the technological formation in each one of the modalities or specialties. The students of the technical schools should study twelfth year (12º year) to obtain half of the technician's title. This year they deepen in the respective specialty for which the student is opting. It is characteristic that in the third quarter of the school year she should carry out a supervised practice or a graduation project. Likewise, they should carry out the national tests that credit them as half technicians and the high school tests that conclude the Diversified Education.

At the moment there are 82 technical schools, distributed in all the Regional Areas in the whole national territory, of which two only work with night schedule, what restricts the possibilities of technical formation to the population that for work conditions, only they can consent in this night schedule.

The artistic schools have as objective to offer bigger spaces in the development of the human being integral development. They propitiate the development of abilities and skills in the different artistic modalities, without detriment of the academic formation. There are two artistic schools, one located in Guanacaste and the other one in Heredia.

The modality of sport schools seeks to achieve the necessary conditions for the development of abilities and skills in the different sport modalities. This experience began with the Sports School of Limon, at the moment also the Liceo León Cortés Castro in Grecia is open.

On the other hand, the academic branch has a two year-old duration in the Diversified Cycle and it concludes with the grant of High school title, for that which the student should approve the national tests of high school.

Inside the academic institutions are the scientific schools which have been created to offer the diversified education an emphasis in the sciences, for the students that have extraordinary aptitudes for the matters related with that field of the knowledge. At the moment 6 scientific schools work. The professors and technical team of these institutions come from the public universities. In 1998 a humanist school was inaugurated, for those students interested in the letters located in Heredia and more recently another in Limon.

A five school model that implement a pilot plan in which the student advances according to their possibilities also exists. It can pass subjects with sufficiency tests, regular attendance, summer courses and tutorships. The number of curses that should be taken reduces since it is based on a credit system that eliminates the degrees or levels in the Fourth Cycle.

Seven bilingual experimental schools propitiate the creation of a better academic preparation in the students, by means of the search of a constant learning for their own development and for the country’s. English's learning as a second language promotes in the student possibilities of social ascent. The students receive 10 English lessons per week,
3 lessons per week for development of talents and 1 lesson per week for the independent reading.

1.1.4. Main objectives and characteristics of the current and future reformations.

The objectives, functions, politics and strategies traced by the Ministry in the different historical periods seek to respond in the best way to that Costa Rican ideal of being a democratic, peaceful, and fair nation. Starting from the year 2002, stands out:

a) The Educational Politics Toward the XXI Century

By means of the agreement N° CS-82-94 of the Superior Council of Education, with date November 8 of 1994, the educational politics are approved by the Costa Rican government. It is the educational system denominated “Educational Politics Toward the XXI Century.”

This educational politics conceived with a long term vision, has as purpose to achieve an integral development of the competitive human resources, preparing them to attack with success the challenges that imposes the new world order of the globalization in the new millennium. This educational politics consider the juridical frame, the prevailing social politics, and focuses on development ethics.

The philosophical sources in which the politics are sustained are constructivism, humanism and rationalism. This politics offer an integral vision of how to understand the educational process and of the aspects that should be considered. That is why the following text is transcribed from page 10 of the document.

“The educational process of quality involves the process and the agreement of the results with the goals. Also, it offers equality of opportunities for the success to those who participate in it and it proposes a coherent offer with the necessities, problems, and the aspirations of the participants connected with the environment.”

Some practical elements present in the educational politics are related with the study plans and programs, the professional development of the students, the evaluation of learning as a process of systematic nature that cooperates in the valuation of the quality of the education, the pedagogic mediation, the managerial intermediation and the didactic resources. It thinks about challenges like the education for the sustainable development, education for the socioeconomic development, and for the person's ethics, as it closes breaches of knowledge, competitiveness, socioeconomic strata and values.

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In an effort to sum up this educational politics, three implementation dimensions have been identified: the dimension of the teaching and learning processes considered as the power station, the dimension of the strategic programs, and the dimension related with the administration.

An approach to the content of each one of these dimensions allows us to point out the following key components. The teaching and learning processes involve the study plans and programs, the strategies of pedagogic mediation, the diagnostic formative and summative evaluation, the didactic resources and texts, the continuity and innovation of the educational actions, the formation, training and continuous education of the students, and especially the educational offers.

The dimension of the strategic programs conceived to give added value to the teaching and learning processes involves, among others, the program of foreign languages, the educational computer science, the PROMECUM schools, the single-teacher schools, the services of information Kiosk, environmental and sustainable development education, social politics in the classroom, the program of invigoration of the technical education, educational training, law reform, among others. Lastly, the dimension of administration supposes the existence of certain conditions and results in the educational administration, among them: the quality of the service that offers the whole structure of the MEP, strengthening of the regional and institutional instances of the educational system -by means of the development of the administrative capacity and the decentralization, the technological modernization, the development of the human resources, and the redraws of the work processes.

It is important to mention that Costa Rica assumes a commitment, in the frame of the Plan of Education For All -a process of evaluation of the educational system under the light of the effective educational politics- with the purpose of to analyze the results and to propose the changes that are required.

b) National Plan of Development “Victor Manuel Sanabria”

The educational plan for this period is one of the six high-priority programs that are part of the Social Plan of the present government administration. It has as general objective “to improve the conditions of life of the Costa Rican, by means of the attainment of the best conditions of justness, solidarity and social integration...” The Ministry of Education pleads for a recovery of the Costa Rican educational system because it is the high-priority axis of the social calendar of the country, in the frame of the combat of poverty and the reduction of the breaches between the rural and the urban areas.

With the purpose of improving the current educational development and to open opportunities for those that have been excluded by different reasons, the MEP has intended concrete goals in four axes of educational development:

- Develop the educational opportunities that allow the access, the permanency, and success at school in equal conditions.

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- Power the knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes and the aptitudes of the students for the sake of strengthening the integral development that allow the balance among the cognitive, the emotional, and the environmental to reach a healthy and responsible coexistence.
- To strengthen the integration mechanisms and the relevancy among the educational offers for the technical formation, the requirements, and the necessities of the national economic development.
- Improvement of the administration of the MEP by means of the achievement of the administrative efficiency, the transparency of the processes, and the assignment, rationality and optimization of resources.

Priorities

a) Quality of the education
To be coherent with the Social Plan 2002-2006 that pursues forming citizens to act in a critical, creative and committed way with the construction of a fair and sustainable social order for the material and spiritual realization of all, it demands an education of quality that facilitates the collective construction of to new social model.

b) Rural education
It refers to the effectiveness of the educative services in the rural sector, allowing to solve the main breaches that exist regarding the educational quality and to impact in aspects like covering, desertion, repeating, and learning.

c) Programs of justness
Focuses in the compensatory programs with the purpose of contributing to improve the impact of the support programs for students of lower income and to assure the program sustainability.

d) Secondary and technical education.
Increase the reach and quality of the secondary education, in particular in the technical modality, with the purpose of contributing to form competitive students in the labor field and to promote the social development.

Strategic Policies

Policy 1: To universalize and Improve the Pre School Education
It looks for the amplification and the invigoration of the initial education. It seeks to base the integral development of children and to assure the school success in the subsequent years. It will increase the covering in the Infantile Maternal Cycle and that of Transition and they will strengthen, in this last one, some components as the teaching of a second language (English), Educational Computer science; as well as the invigoration of the strategy of itinerant pre school teachers.

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Policy 2: Improvement of the quality of the service in the Primary Education, with emphasis in the most depressed communities.

With this Policy priority, we will give the actions that favor the indigenous communities, one teacher schools, the population in social risk and of more vulnerability, as well as schools located in the areas of smaller social development. To achieve this purpose they will carry out actions like the integration of teams itinerant teams of education in the indigenous schools in the basic subjects, the assignment of a teacher or additional teacher support in the one teacher schools with an enrollment of 30 or more children, the incorporation of schools to the program “Worthy School for All”, the invigoration of the program “Open Classroom”, and finally the development and implementation of a curricular proposal that allows to assist the children one teacher schools with the Educational Computer Science in the Classroom.

Policy 3: Increase of the covering and improvement of the quality of the service in the Secondary Education.

The Secondary Education is the educational level that requires the biggest efforts to increase its coverage and quality. With the purpose of forming the human resource that can advance in their superior formation as well as to be inserted successfully in the world of work. It is sought to increase the covering of the formal secondary education.

Policy 4: Invigoration of the open and flexible educational offers that combine study and work for the Youths and Adults.

The economic crisis of the decade of the 80 and principles of the 90 limited the social investment of the country. It affected Costa Rican educational development, in particular in the secondary education; what has caused the existence of an important group of adults that didn't have the opportunity to begin or to finish their studies. Also, it exists a considerable group of Youths that for their economic conditions, among other reasons, should combine study and work, as well as those that were not successful in the formal educational system, so they demand an educational option that adapts to those circumstances. For it, to assist this population an impulse will be given to the education open services of Primary and Secondary.

Policy 5: Invigoration of the educational programs that promotes the inclusive education of people with special educational necessities.

For the sake of making effective the equality of people's opportunities, students with special educative needs must have the right to education. There are goals that strengthen the actions that have been executed and they incorporate priorities, in particular in the Secondary Education and the attention of mature people with incapacity. For this purpose, among other actions, the opening of new services of special education will be given in the different specialties. We will strengthen the program of integration students with special educational necessities associated to some incapacity to the regular classrooms of Primary. It leans on the system of curricular adaptations and specialized services for students of secondary. The Ministry of Education and the Foundation World of Opportunities are creating regional centers of resources and specialized services (vocational and physic therapeutic) for the attention of the socio-labor Program for mature handicapped.
Policy 6: Invigoration of the teaching of Mathematics.
It is high-priority to continue with the promotion of the development of the logical thought and the mathematical reasoning in the student population, in all the educational levels. With this national program of improvement they seek to improve the academic results of the students as much in the processes of evaluation as learning in the classroom and in the macro-evaluation processes.

Policy 7: To guarantee to the school population in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty, the benefits of the Programs of Justness
With the purpose of cooperating with the entrance and the permanency in the educational system of the students under conditions of poverty, you will continue with the invigoration of the programs of justness, among them: School Dining rooms, Voucher for the Education, Scholarships and Transport of Students.

Policy 8: Improvement of the condition of the teachers.
The updating and the educational training are excellent actions for the MEP, contained in the National System of Training. Also important is the support to the formation of educators in strategic areas of curricular renovation by means of the subscription of agreements with the public and private universities. The actions in this sense are guided to Mathematics and Computers Science training and professional development of the teachers, English teachers and the language and indigenous culture teachers. Also, it will be coordinated with the publica and private universities for the opening of university careers in teaching, with priority in the Indigenous formation, Special Education Teaching, English and Mathematics.

Policy 9: Improvement of the conditions of the Infrastructure, Furniture and Educational Materials
To propitiate an appropriate atmosphere to favor the pedagogic practice is also a priority. The children and adolescents should be assisted under good conditions that guarantee the full development of the educational process, characterized to assure their physical integrity, the enjoyment of their environment and the best use of the school day. In this sense the Administration intends the following goals: The financing of infrastructure, endowment of desks to the educational centers, to support the work of the teacher in the classroom, with the endowment of educational materials, in particular to the one and two teachers schools.

Policy 10: System of Macro and Micro evaluation of learning
To improve the system of evaluation of the learning and of the general yield of the educational system, guaranteeing the perspective of the student population's right and favoring the teaching process and learning.

Policy 11: Incorporation in the processes and educational contents of the different perspectives of the human development
With the purpose of harmonizing the action of the learning of knowledge with the person's integral formation, they are implemented a series of programs that allow the impulse of the formation in values and the development of the artistic, physical and recreational capacities of the students.

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Policy 12: Prevention and attention of the situations of violence in and from the educational centers
To promote the organization conditions, climate and necessary participation for the prevention and attention of the situations of violence in and from the educational centers and an education for the peace. It will be necessary to qualify the teachers and the directive body of the educational centers, as well as to support the regional teams that accompany in the work of the institutions.

Policy 13: Formation with sense of responsibility and solidarity toward the duties of Society
It is necessary to modify the cultural pattern of the Costa Rican as for their responsibilities with the State, reflected in the high escape indexes in the payment of the taxes. It intends to incorporate in the curriculum of primary and secondary, the Tributary topic.

Policy 14: Protection and valuation of the atmosphere and rational use of the natural resources
An axis of development content in the National Plan of Development is the one denominated “Harmony with the Atmosphere” that proposes a development in harmony with nature that includes the promotion of the environmental purity and the urban development, support to the forest area, conservation of the biodiversity, energy resources and mining. In consistency with this position, from the educational system we are trying to foment the appreciation, care and use of the resources of the atmosphere, by means of the emphasis of these topics in the curricular contents and in the institutional life.

Policy 15: To universalize Educational Computer Science National Program
To increase the covering of Educational Computer Science Program to a coverage of 80% in I and II Cycles and 100% in III Cycle of secondary by the end of the period. To incorporate 10 schools in the project of Pedagogic Robotics as an opportunity of scientific and technological development.

Policy 16: Promotion of the teaching of a second language, in particular English, in the Primary Education
To increase the covering of the program of the teaching of a second language, in particular English, by means of the opening of new services, with priority in the areas of more tourist development. The goal proposed for the period is to reach to cover 82%.

Policy 17: Curricular proposal for the appropriate technical formation with the necessities of the productive and labor system in the national and local environment
The challenge that imposes the globalize world, for the competitiveness of the productive and labor sector of the country, forces to a revision of the relevancy and quality of this educational offer, as well as to respond to the possibilities and necessities of economic and social development in the local environment. For that it is necessary to implement the following actions: The opening of technical not traditional specialties in the professional technical schools of rural areas, to improve the technological level of the technical specialties, by means
of the equipment of laboratories and specialized shops, to strengthen English's teaching by means of the incorporation of the Conversational English in 8 technical specialties, to establish a system of certification of learning for the technical education that favors the recognition of the informal learning and the lateral exits in the technical formation and to strengthen the innovative strategies of technical formation: Dual Formation in the specialties of Mechanics and Tourism. Norms of Labor Competitions in the specialties of Mechanics of Precision and Agricultural.

Policy 18: Opportunities of technical formation at the night.  
The relevancy of the secondary education is related with the possibility that offers to the students for advancing in its superior formation and in the successful insert in the labor market, for such a reason it becomes imperious to give value added to the educational offers of the night education and the academic one. They are also actions that make more pertinent the secondary education, also avoiding the desertion of the students, for what is sought that 6 Night Schools have to offer technical education and the adaptation of the programs of the technological nucleus to the academic schools.

Policy 19: Gender Justness in the technical formation  
Women participate in the technical specialties that the professional technical schools offers, however in the so called not traditional and well remunerated specialties, this participation is very low. There is not a look to impel the access of woman to the traditional and well remunerate technical specialties, but the enrollment should increase in: Electromechanical, Electro technique, General Electronics, Industrial Electronic, Electronic Repair of Computer Equipment, Mechanics of Precision and Microelectronics.

Policy 20: Opportunities of technical formation to the students with special educational necessities  
Establishment of programs of technical education with labor exits for the students with special educational needs, in 79 technical schools in the period.

Policy 21: Opportunities of technical formation to the most depressed communities  
To favor this communities with the technical formation that allows them to consent to work positions and to improve the quality of life, by means of terminal courses, for terminal programs of technical training will be developed in the 5 cantons of smaller social development.

Policy 22: Invigoration of the Regional Directions of Education  
The administration of the Costa Rican educational system leans on in the regional structures that have as objective to guarantee the educational policy's implementation in the regional, circuital and institutional environment. In the environment of the educational institutions, the auxiliary organs of the administration are “Boards of Education and Administrative Boards”, for the primary and secondary, respectively. The coordination and articulation of functions among these institutional and regional organs are to improve the efficiency of the educational administration, in particular the educational processes and the good use of the resources. In consequence the invigoration of the regional administration of education will be looked by

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means of the endowment of resources and he concentration of functions. The Education and Administrative Boards by means of the training in topics related to the administration of strategic programs as the School Dining and the construction of school buildings.

**Policy 23: System of Administrative Information of Human Resources**

The characteristics of administration of the human resource of the MEP, the organization forms and the operation of the educational service demands a system of efficient information that allows the decision taking with the opportunity required so much for the attention of the educational demand as the opportune remuneration of those workers. I will be looked for the consolidation of the System of Administrative Information of the human resources of the MEP and the execution of the Strategic Plan of Informatics in the MEP.

**Policy 24: Revision of the Manual of Positions**

The Manual of Positions the MEP uses that at the moment it is the one elaborated by the General Civil Service. The effective normative requires the elaboration of institutional manuals that respond to the necessities and characteristic of each public institution. The MEP intends to elaborate the Institutional Manual of Positions that allows to modernize and to adapt the positions to the specialized functions that completes the institution.

**Policy 25: Modernization of the rectory of the Costa Rican Education**

To offer an opportune and quality answer to the demands of the Costa Rican public and private educational system, by means of an efficient and modern organization. It is an obligation and priority of the MEP. For it is necessary to implement plans of improvement and modernization of the rectors of the education: Superior Council of Education and CONESUP.

c) Recovery of the Costa Rican education.

Recovering the Costa Rican education with social justness, means to transform it into the high-priority axis of the social calendar of the country, in the mark of the proposal of the national plan of development and of the social plan “New Life” that has as purpose the will to warp to the poverty, the reduction of the breaches among the educational institutions located in the rural areas and those of the urban area.

In this recovering position of the Costa Rican education, the construction of a country vision is assumed, it allows to eliminate the inequalities and to have a single Costa Rica. There have been defined its strategic areas of work, in which it makes use of the installed capacity of the MEP, an efficient use of the resources and the canalization of possible external resources.

These high-priority areas or emblems of the recovery of the education are: the quality of the education, the rural education, the secondary education, with emphasis the technique and the programs of justness.

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As for the quality of the education, it is required to join efforts at a national level to achieve a bigger and better level in the Costa Rican education that allows to eliminate the inequalities that limit the access, the permanency and the success of the students in the educational system. Inputs of quality are required to the teaching and learning process that make it possible to improve the results of the students' learning: among them the quantity and quality of the infrastructure, the access opportunities, the formation, the training and educational evaluation, the evaluation of the students, the technology and the educational materials. All these inputs are necessary to cooperate in this process of quality; but a solid formation in values is also very important, that is why it also incorporates the “National Programs of Formation in Values”. It promotes an education that foments the daily practice of values, to achieve a better quality of personal, family and social life, that characterizes the Costa Rican society as democratic, pacifist, civil and in close relationship with the environment. It is important to point out that the Superior Council of Education has declared and agreed the topic of those “I am Valuable” as the only traverse axis of the Costa Rican curriculum. To supplement this formation program in values, traverse topics also incorporate the curriculum, among them: the experiencing of human rights for the democracy and the peace, the education for the health, education for an environmental culture for the sustainable development, integral education of the human sexuality, education for a tributary culture to grow as country.

For the invigoration and improvement of the rural education, increasing the reach of the educational services in all levels and educational modalities, arriving to the rural areas and those of more difficult access with inputs of high quality, they open more schools, and tele-high schools in rural areas, improve the access conditions to these services, they strengthen the one-teacher schools with more human resources, and include technology. They have a priority for the construction of classrooms and endowment of desks the educational centers in these communities, articulating this effort with other public and private institutions. A high-priority population in the frame of this priority area is the native inhabitants that still present precarious situations in their development.

The continuous Secondary Education is a challenge for the Costa Rican educational system, although in the last years it has increased its covering; nevertheless, with the spread of the services associated challenges appear; for example the retention and success in this educational level, and the linking of the curricular proposals with the work world, and the continuity of superior studies. It proposes the opening of new secondary schools in the rural areas, The strengthening of the students transportation, and the improvement of the infrastructure conditions and technology. It gives the youths educational innovation at this level. With priority, it strengthens the improvement of the technical education in the existent educational services, enriching the educational offer with innovations like the incorporation of Oral English from the third cycle on, the revision of the technical specialties adjusting them to the local and regional necessities of development and, improving the technological conditions of their laboratories and shops. The access possibilities are also enlarged to the technical formation, with the opening of other institutions in strategic areas for the country.

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To offer bigger educational opportunities for the development of the human capacities, emphasizing the attention of the less favored populations, is also a priority. For this reason, the invigoration of the programs of school dining rooms, student transportation, granting education scholarships and vouchers carrying the best selection of the beneficiaries, and an efficient administration of the resources, are part of the recovery of the education. In this sense, the only valid addressing of these programs of justness, is the selection of the high-priority communities considered national indicators of social development and the ones behind in education and educational centers. These programs are articulated with the strategies of the social plan “New Life.”

d) National Action Plan of Education For All

The education like all the people's fundamental rights, like instrument of social mobility and of full participation in the development, allows the nations of the world the opportunity of improving the conditions of their inhabitants' life, by means of the presentation of educational services offered in the best conditions of justness and quality.

To achieve this aspiration, it requires an enlarged vision of the education that transcends the traditional systems of instruction and that incorporates the renovated commitments of the Education for All, but mainly the commitment with all the Costa Ricans of achieving before the 2015 an “education for all” that overcomes the educational challenges.

It has been presented to the Costa Rican society the most excellent aspects in the World Declaration of Education of Education for All (Jomtien, 1990); Later on a review of the Action Frame of the America appears too (Santo Domingo, 2000), which is very valuable because not only mentions the evaluation of Education for All in the 2000, but it also stands out the commitments acquired by the countries of the region, with an eye toward what would be the Action Frame of Dakar.

With the help of diverse sectors of the population, plus the realization of the Forums of Education for All, the Plan of Action of Education For All was constituted from 2003-2015. This Plan of Action is a remarkable effort facilitated by the National Forum of Education For All, officials of the Ministry of Public Education and more than 1.000 people that participated in the 20 regional forums of Education for All carried out at the end of the year 2002; fulfilling this way the commitments acquired in the year 2000.

1.2. Main quantitative and qualitative achievements, as well as acquired experiences.

1.2.1. Access to the education

As it was mentioned previously, the Ministry of Public Education assists all the educational modalities, from Kinder Garden to the Diversified Education. In the last decades “Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
their efforts have been directed to provide the adult Costa Rica inhabitants access possibilities to the educational levels, to offer the permanency of the students in the system by means of different types of curricular help and of social attendance, and the improvement of the educational quality by means of the incorporation of new students contributing to facilitate their access to the educational and labor opportunities in equality of conditions.

Of the different educational politics have emanated an important quantity of actions tending to increase the access possibilities, permanency and the Costa Rican youths' in the school, success in the different educational levels, which at the same time benefits the immigrant populations, like the case of the Nicaraguans are the most represented foreign group.

i. Preschool Education:

The declaration of the obligatory nature of the preschool education, by means of the reformation to the article 78 of the Political Constitution, in June of 1997, meant an important step in the desire of offering the educational service to the biggest quantity of the Costa Rican population. Starting from then, the Ministry of Education assumes with more power, the commitment of assisting that population; and taking as a base the fundamental positions of the Educational Politicians for the attention and children's education younger than 6 years old, the year 2000 marks the history of the Costa Rican Preschool education, when consolidating the first level of the Educational System, with the opening of the Infantile Maternal Cycle that assists children from their birth until the beginning of the Transition Cycle (5½ to 6½ years).

The spread of this educational cycle has become a priority, particularly in the less favored communities, as the indigenous populations and those located in rural areas and of difficult of access. Taking into account the characteristics of these populations flexible strategies has been designed as the “Itinerant Teacher of Preschool” and the integration of “Heterogeneous Groups.” With the implementation of the itinerant modality two neighboring communities are assisted with an average of 20 students among the two institutions. The modality of Heterogeneous Groups works in educational institutions where the quantity of children is reduced and the distance to the educational centers is long. Children's groups of the Maternal Cycle are integrated as of Transition, to be assisted by an teacher of preschool education.

Also, it strengthens the Transition Cycle with the incorporation of other components as the teaching of a second language, in particular English; Educational Computer science teaching and the incorporation of the indigenous language in the institutions located in those communities.

This year the Ministry of Education in coordination with other institutions of the State, are implementing a Strategy of Family Formation that has the purpose of forming the families of the children to favor their integral development. This strategy is developed particularly in the cantons less developed.

Also, to face the infrastructure deficit and other lacks, and with the purpose of enlarging the covering, the Centers of Integral Attention (CEN–CINAI Program) that belong to the Ministry of Health and Community Homes promoted by the Mixed Institute of Social Help participated too.

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The Ministry has a firm purpose and is working to achieve the spread of Preschool Education; nevertheless, it is conscious that to fulfill this goal it requires more physical infrastructure and the creation of new educational positions (or codes), as well as the creation in new access ways for the population that has not still been inserted to the system.

### Table 1
Rates of Enrollment in Preschool Education
Dependence: Public, Private and Private Subsidized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>GROSS RATE</th>
<th>NET RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Interactive II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Department of Statistic. Division of Educational Planning

**Notes:**
In the periods in those that the net rates of enrollment are not consigned is because there is not data of it for simple ages.
In the Interactive level II before the year 2000 the registration corresponds to the Private Education

### ii. Primary education:

As product of the historical tendency of our country that considers the education as the generating vehicle of personal, socio-cultural and economic growth, the educational institutions have been created in most of the communities, very significant advances have been experienced at this level in covering, registering gross rates above 100%. At the moment the efforts go especially to the improvement of the quality of the service, without neglecting the spread aspect that demands the demographic situation.

It is worth mentioning the Project of Open Classroom that is developed in the educational centers of I and II Cycles, that assists the student population that present the overage condition and whose physical, psychological, and intellectual characteristics differ from those of the rest of the classmates, who demand different strategies for their pedagogic attention.

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
With regard to the indigenous education, it has strengthened in the last years by means of the opening of the Department of Indigenous Education, that has contributed to the invigoration of the maternal language by the increment in the number of teachers of language and culture. A program has also been designed as an integral approach for the attention of these groups that even regrettably don't enjoy the right to the education and who participate in these processes don't do it under the appropriate conditions.

The socioeconomic situation of the country in the last decades has deteriorated the level of revenues of the Costa Rican. It provoked the growth of families in urban marginal communities around the metropolitan area and other important cities. It has required of the government's great effort to give a solution to with the characteristics and educational necessities of this sector of the population. Costa Rica is using two roads: on one hand the formal education, strengthening in the aspects technician–pedagogic, feeding and health, psycho social, and infrastructure and equipment. On the other hand, using modalities of non formal education, especially for the attention of the children younger than 15 years that present severe problems, such as children and living on the street, in abandonment, overage, socioeconomic marginality, abused children, among others, besides the immigrant populations.

We are implementing some programs to assist the population in social and economic disadvantage, among which we can point out: Programs for the Improvement of the Quality of the Education and Life in the Urban Communities of High-priority Attention (PROMECUM) and Program of Open Classroom. Also, as a high-priority action of the present administration a project was designed “Frontal Fights against the Student Desertion”, by means of which is sought that each educational center incorporates in its institutional plan, work that they propitiate the permanency and the success of the students in the educational system. They also receive priority in subsidies and other social services, such as: school voucher, educational basic supply and scholarships, among others.

Most of the educational institutions of the level of primary are located in the rural and disperse areas of the country and they are assisted by an only teacher that must face really difficult situations for its operation, which contribution to the educational field is generally low. We are strengthening administrative, technical and pedagogic strategies that allow to offer an education of justness and quality for all the children that attend those schools, with important achievements. There is the decrease of the range of inferior enrollment, passing from 36 to 31 students, in order to facilitate the grant of a second teacher in the one teacher schools. There are a total of 522 of these schools that already have a second teacher.

The existence of a second teacher allows in turn, to enlarge the day of the children's attention and to enrich the curriculum with subjects that develop the dexterities and the abilities in the arts, music, recreation and in some cases the computer science incorporation in the classroom.

In relation to the education of Young and Adults that didn't conclude their primary school (I and II cycles) the Ministry of Education is using the modality of open education, it promotes projects, so that the student gets ready and complete or carry out the respective cycles.

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
Table 2
Rates of Enrollment in I and II Cycles
Dependence: Public, Private and Private Subsidized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>GROSS RATE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>NET RATE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>I Cycle</td>
<td>II Cycle</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>I Cycle</td>
<td>II Cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>111.2</td>
<td>127.8</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>n.d</td>
<td>n.d</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>110.7</td>
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<td>99.8</td>
<td>91.2</td>
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<td>n.d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>105.9</td>
<td>116.7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>105.7</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>105.1</td>
<td>116.0</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>98.6</td>
<td>104.5</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<td>117.3</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>103.8</td>
<td>80.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>103.7</td>
<td>116.1</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>100.5</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>103.6</td>
<td>115.7</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>100.7</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>114.0</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>101.6</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>103.5</td>
<td>113.9</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>101.8</td>
<td>85.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>104.8</td>
<td>113.2</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>100.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>111.3</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>104.9</td>
<td>110.3</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>104.8</td>
<td>109.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>103.7</td>
<td>109.5</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>100.6</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Department of Statistic. Division of Educational Planning

iii. Secondary education:

The interest of the Costa Rican State to expand the educational system was evidenced once again when in the years 50 and 60 of the XX century a process of opening educational institutions of secondary began for the whole national territory. In the decade of 70’s, the desire for the total coverage of this educational level had a very important impulse. However, this rhythm of growth was affected negatively by the effects of the economic crisis that the country lived in the 80’s, which has been one of the biggest in its history, rebounding visibly the Costa Rican population's socioeconomic and psychic conditions. With this crisis the exhaustion of the development strategy was evidenced, in its context, the main social indicators were very low. The employment sources diminished, the income levels and the purchasing power of the families decreased significantly. Those families whose revenues hardly reached to satisfy their basic necessities, fell below the line of poverty, this forced many youths to left attending schools. In the same way, the deterioration of the public finances reduced the possibilities of the State for the assignment of resources toward the areas of social interest; putting in danger the advance obtained specially in education and health.

Between the years 1980 and 1985 a percentage decrease of 1% was presented in the total enrollment rate, this decrease caused that the enrollment in III Cycle and Diversified Education lowered in almost 40 thousand students, which represented a decrease of 20% for the total enrollment rate in that teaching level and a problem of important justness in the educational service.

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This situation generated a great concern, specially considering that the enlargement of the coverage in secondary is a key factor for the increment in the economically active population's education in the medium and long term.

To solve the covering problems in this level, the Ministry of Public Education, starting in the 90's, has guided important part of their resources and actions toward the creation of schools, so much in urban areas as rural where it exists bigger demographic pressure or places with dispersed population. Thanks to this, in secondary formal the covering has come winning land reaching in the in 2003 68.8% of enrolment, product of the creation of new institutions and the reinforcement in the study plans in general.

The efforts carried out have also allowed the establishement of alternative programs, like tele high school, that cover very far communities and of difficult access, (only in the 2003 17 have been authorized), and the Program of New Educational Opportunities for Young (PNOEJ) that is a new alternative for the young that have abandoned the classrooms. And, for those young and adults that have not been able to conclude the Third Cycle of the Basic General Education, the III cycle of Open Basic General Education has been created, where the student goes getting ready according to his needs and possibilities, taking into account the available time and capacity.

One of the main purposes of the Education is to form the citizens so that they are inserted in the market labor, better preparations and with a remuneration levels that allows them to improve their quality of life. In the MEP they exist alternatives, so much in the formal subsystem as in the non formal subsystem, of formation for the work. In the subsystem of formal education Academic Schools they impart the subjects of Industrial Arts and Home Education in the III Cycle of the Basic General Education, while in the IV Cycle they receive the technological nucleus. In the Night Schools they are incorporating: Conversational English, calculation, accounting, managerial administration, vial security and office techniques; the Technical Education offers professional careers of medium degree.

The different subsystems have necessities that it are important to cover so that they can fulfill their tasks. The Technical Education has 81 schools and offers 32 specialties at the moment, the necessity requires of modernizing the equipment, since the revenues of the institutions for concept of the Law 7372 are not enough to pay the requirements and the process of formation of the human resource should also be concluded. It is important to point out, nevertheless that enrolment in this level and educational modality showed a bigger growth than expected in 2002. This growth can be explained by the improvements that have been carried out to the programs of study of the different specialties, to the improvements in the equipment of work shops and to the biggest possibilities for the graduates to incorporate themselves to the labor market.

The efforts that are carried out to face the population's educational demands, in all the levels and modalities, are wide and important, however, they are still momentous aspects as it is the problem of the student desertion that in secondary and mainly in seventh year. Desertion constitutes one of the main challenges of the rectors of the system; who have considered in the present Administration conveniently one of the high-priority challenges to formulate and to implement “Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
the National Program of Combat to the Desertion. This program seeks to offer, in the institutional environment a series of conditions that motivate the student and they offer him the necessary conditions for their permanency and success in the formal educational system.

Table 3
Rates of Enrolment in III Cycle and Diversified Education
Dependence: Public, Private and Private Subsidized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>GROSS RATE</th>
<th>NET RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>68.2</td>
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<td>72.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Department of Statistic. Division of Educational Planning

Notes: The Net Rates of the years previous to 1994, indicated in the chart, were not considered because they don't have the enrolment data by simple ages.

The national effort to offer the educational service to the whole population, strengthens with the competition of the Professional Institutes of Community Education (IPEC) and the Integrated Centers of Permanent Education (CINDEA) that offer useful learning for life and work, by means of the development of free courses, of different duration and in answer to the population's specific demands. This education modality represents new alternatives for children’s education and literacy, young people and adults that don't have access for some reason or they are hindered to use the formal modality of education; however, conscience has been that for the achievement of the quantitative goals as qualitative, it requires to strengthen the previous programs and to develop new strategies with the participation of teachers, parents, family mothers and in some measure, of the community.

Taking into account these and the other educational offers, the covering reaches important rates in each educational level during the last five year period, like the following table demonstrates.

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
and strengthened the actions that are executing. For this purpose, they have been impelled, among
opportunities for the handicapped, in their right to education, they have incorporated priorities
to make a mention separated, although this has relationship with all the educational levels. As it
Because of the characteristics and importance that the special education contains, it is convenient

iv. Special education

Because of the characteristics and importance that the special education contains, it is convenient
to make a mention separated, although this has relationship with all the educational levels. As it
was mentioned in previous pages, with the desire of making effective the equality of people's
opportunities for the handicapped, in their right to education, they have incorporated priorities
and strengthened the actions that are executing. For this purpose, they have been impelled, among

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
other actions, the opening of new services of special education in the different specialties, the
invigoration of the program of integration students with special educational necessities associated
to some incapacity to the regular classrooms, supreme interest has been lent to the invigoration of
the system of curricular adaptations and specialized services for students of secondary, and with
the Foundation World of Opportunities, it is promoted the creation of regional centers of
resources and specialized services (vocational and physic therapeutic) for the attention of the
Socio-labor Program for mature people with handicap.

In consequence, the Special Education has become one of the priorities of the educational system,
for the population with special educational necessities, associated with incapacity that is assisted
in the centers of special education, integrated classrooms, prevocational workshops, vocational
and in the socio-labor workshops for adults. There was an enrolment of 15 663 students in 2003,
and it was possible to finance the opening of 355 services of special education, of which 20% is
dedicated to the attention in the specialized centers of special education and in the prevocational
and vocational shops, the other part is used to support the integration program of students of
primary and secondary to the regular classrooms and the attention of the socio-labor program for
mature people with handicap.

### Table 5

**Rates of Enrolment in Special Education**  
Dependence: Public, Private and Private Subsidized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>GROSS RATES</th>
<th>NET RATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactive II</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III cycle</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educ. Div.</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Statistic, MEP

### 1.2.2. Justness in the education

In the last years, the Costa Rican Educational System has compared the formal educational
covering, between boys and girls, with the purpose that all the people in school age that live
inside the national territory, has the same educational opportunities, independently of its sex, its
context, its socioeconomic condition, its ethnus, its religion, its sexual preference and its
nationality, among others.

In accordance with the last Report of the Region (1999), in Central America the value of the
Index of Human Development (IDH), descends when one examines the inequality that the
women suffer in education, health and income, being Costa Rica the Central American country
with the biggest IDH which is 1.08 times minor that the country with bigger value of IDH in the
world. Gradually, the disparities decrease in the distribution of the educational opportunities

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
between men and women, recognizing so, the assignment of resources to an education of quality for all are one of the best investments that can be made in any country.

As for the compensatory programs for the attention of the children, the girls and the youth that are in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty, stand out those related with Voucher for the Education, School Alimentary Program, Free Transportation for Students and the Scholarships. These programs have always been present in the policies and strategic actions that have been executing in the last administrations, with the purpose of assuring the access and permanency of students in the educational system. They have been many studies and efforts to try to improve the efficiency in the benefit of these recipient, in the selection of the beneficiaries of the programs and in the opportunity and quality of the products; nevertheless, it still continues being a challenge for the educational administration, to optimize the use of these resources, to improve the selection of the beneficiaries and to increase the resources.

It is of considering the relevance that the educational policy toward incorporation must assure the justness in the education, in a wider social policy that is guided to impact in the determination of solutions to the causes of the social problems, generally characterized by the privation of the development of the appropriate capacities of people for their full social insert. This social Policy that bears a fundamental premise of to improve the quality of people's life and to combat the poverty, is a long term effort, directed to eliminate the generating causes that impede the social mobility and causes poverty.

According to the previous position, the development of the human capacities is one of the fundamental pillars of the National Plan of Educational Development of the present Administration, for the period 2002-2006, with the firm conviction that education is the main mechanism to improve the conditions of people's life and for the diminution of poverty, that is the maximum aspiration and concrete goal of this Government.

Given the character of universality of the educational politicians, all the policies and strategic actions go to the population in general, making emphasis in the populations most depressed and it constitutes a high-priority program in the mark of the Plan Social New Life that impels this Administration, to arrive the communities of smaller indexes of social development.

i. Justness in the Curricular Development

At curriculum level, it exists a series of programs that allow to assure the access to the educational services to the whole population, in particular to the most vulnerable populations. Among them they are mentioned:

1. Program of Special Education
2. Program of Indigenous Education
3. Program of Justness of Gender
4. It programs Social in the Classroom

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
1) Program of Special Education

The Law 7600 of Equality of Opportunities for People with Incapacity in Costa Rica was promulgated in 1998. In its Title II, Chapter I, establishes the access to the education, with a series of demands to the National Educational System and the Executive Ordinance Not. 26831–MEP, 1998 and the Regulation of this law. It regulates all the related with the commitment of assisting the students with special educational necessities associated to incapacity. Equally important of mentioning is the Agreement. 18-97 of the Superior Council of Education that approves the Normative for the Access to the Education of the Students with Special Educational Necessities.

On the topic of educational policy, the guideline 27-2000 of the President of the Republic that in its article 2, I incise to), it outlines: “to Include contents on incapacity in the remark of the diversity, as traverse axis of the curriculum in the programs of preschool, primary and secondary education.”

To impel a process of invigoration of the educational quality for the students that present special necessities in their educational process, the Department of Special Education of the Ministry of Public Education, intrudes in several actions and projects to mobilize the educational system in a such way that the necessary supports are guaranteed for the attention to the diversity of students, assuring this way the conditions of equality and quality.

The incorporation is achieved to the regular education of the children and young with special educational necessities associated to incapacity, by means of the Program of Integration. It arises the necessity to facilitate the processes of attention to strategies and precise supports in each case equally, guides to the student and the teacher, the parents and the educational center.

Another of the demands consists on improving the educational attention for the students that require permanent or lingering supports and they should be educated in a more restricted media as they are it the Centers of Special Education, Integrated Classrooms, Third and Quarter Cycles of Special Education (Prevocational and Vocational Workshops) and Centers of Integral Attention to mature people with incapacity.

The main actions carried out to respond to the student population's different demands with special educational necessities, are:

- Elaboration and proposal of the document “Policy, Normative and Procedures for the Access to the Education of the Students with Special Educational Necessities.”
- Elaboration of the document: “Limits for the attention of the curricular not significant adaptations in regarding the national tests.”
- Regional Itinerant Teams, as an organ that works under the coordination of the corresponding Regional Consultant of Special Education and that it is conformed by an psychologist, a social worker, an Special Education teacher and a Basic General Education teacher.
- Committee of Educational Support: institutional organ of advisory character.

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
- Servicios de Soporte: especializados servicios que ofertan a estudiantes con necesidades educativas especiales asociadas a incapacidad, insertas en salas de clases regulares de la Educación General Básica y la Educación Diversificada. Trabajan en dos modalidades, servicios de soporte fijo y servicio de soporte itinerante. El primero se refiere al trabajo de un educador de educación especial que actúa como asesor de los procesos educativos de los estudiantes con necesidades asociadas a incapacidad. El segundo, es un servicio que ofrece un educador que es responsable de las necesidades educativas de los estudiantes en las salas de clases regulares, inscritos preferiblemente en varios institutos cercanos. En el momento actual, 631 maestros trabajan en estas modalidades, con una cobertura de 24.014 estudiantes.

- Planes de estudio para Institutos de Educación Especial y Proyectos Curriculares.

- Planes de estudio para estudiantes inscritos en salas de clases regulares que presentan Retraso Mental y Multiple Incapacidad. En el caso de los estudiantes sordos, utilizan el Plan de Estudios de I y II ciclo con las pertinentes adaptaciones, siendo complementado con materias específicas: Lectura-facial, Estímulos Auditivos y Articulación.

- Planes de estudios de Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, aplicados a estudiantes graduados de las salas de clases integradas de Retraso Mental, Multiple Incapacidad y sordos. El plan de estudios está diseñado para 5 años, de tal manera que el Tercer Ciclo es de 3 años, definido como un primer ciclo de formación profesional y la Educación Diversificada de 2 años concebido como ciclo de formación profesional. Este plan está asistido por un profesor de Educación Especial y dos profesores del área técnica, quienes lo realizan de manera rotatoria en 12 grupos.

- Un centro educativo para adultos sordos en la Unidad Pedagógica México, dirigido a la atención educativa de la población no oyente, que cubre aproximadamente a 60 jóvenes y adultos con programas de Educación Abierta, de Educación para Adultos de Literacia a Bachillerato para Adultos.

- Centros de Atención Integral a adultos mayores con incapacidad, dirigidos a los 18 años de estudiantes y adultos que requieren de soporte temporal o permanente, un camino personal, social, ocupacional y productivo.

- Apoyo en secundaria para estudiantes sordos, consiste en ofrecer asistencia a los profesores que imparten los temas básicos del plan de estudios del Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica en el Séptimo Año.

- Los estudiantes' del Tercer Ciclo de Inclusión y Ciclo Diversificado de Educación Especial en los servicios de Educación Técnica, que tienen como objetivo el mejoramiento cualitativo de los dexteridades de los estudiantes con necesidades asociadas a incapacidad cognitiva, para su incorporación a futuros programas de formación profesional y ocupación.

- Secundaria para estudiantes con retraso mental, destinado a mejorar la calidad de la atención educativa de los estudiantes con necesidades educativas asociadas a retraso mental.

- Atención a estudiantes sordos en secundaria, es un plan de estudio con un enfoque bilingüe, dirigido a la población estudiantil que se desarrolla en un contexto bicultural, la cultura sorda y la cultura del oyente, donde dos lenguajes y el lenguaje de señas (LESCO).

“Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
b) Curricular Adaptations

The curricular adaptations are made for those students that present some educational necessity. These students are those that for any cause, have bigger difficulties that the rest of the students to consent to the learning that are determined in the curriculum that corresponds them according to their age. This way they require to compensate this difficulties of access adaptations, not significant or significant, in several areas of the curriculum. This is a student's type that requires the curricular adaptations.

This way, a curricular adaptation is “... the accommodation or adjustment of the educational offer to the characteristics and each student's necessities. It is a strategy of planning and educational performance to assist the individual differences of the students.” The Objective of the curricular adaptations is: “To give support to the students with Special Educational Necessities.”

The curricular adaptations of access: They are the “modifications or forecast of space resources, materials or of communication, to facilitate that some students (especially those that present motor, visual or audible deficiencies). They have access to the regular curriculum or in their case to the adapted curriculum”.

The curricular not significant adaptations: they are those adaptations that don't modify the programming of the regular education substantially. “They constitute the actions that the teacher carry out to offer appropriate learning experiences with the purpose of assisting the educational necessities of the students. These actions constitute methodological adjustments and evaluation, as well as the priority of objectives and contains, in accordance with the necessities, characteristic and interests of the students.”

The significant curricular adaptations: they are those that “consist mainly on the modification or elimination of contents and objectives that are considered essential in the different subjects and the rising repercussion in the evaluation approaches. In this type of adaptations there should be much care, since they are not simple adaptations in the methodology or in the evaluation, but rather they represent substantial modifications of the general curriculum.”

During 2002, the biggest quantity in adaptations was presented in the students of I and II Cycles, in the level of Primary, with 70,433 adaptations and the smallest number corresponded to the night primary schools, with a total of 121 adaptations. Nevertheless, it should take into account the enrolment differences in these two types of educational centers and the type of incorporation of the families to this process, that it is different en each case, because the family support is indispensable in the application of these adaptations.

The curricular adaptations of significant character, represent 0.54% of the population's total enrollment, however they only have curricular adaptations of non significant type. In the case of the access adaptations they are applied to 1.54% of the student population.
In the school year 2001, they carried out 82,935 curricular adaptations in the whole educational system, what evidences an increment of almost 14% regarding the year 2002. In the three types of adaptations the increment was presented, but mainly in the non significant adaptations.

For the implementation of the curricular adaptations the Ministry of Public Education has created a structure that allows to the educational context to assist in a better way the student diversity. Besides this support type others that are explained exist:

A) The support teachers: They are 1050 teachers, that assist students with educational necessities associated to different incapacities, with a challenge of listing the professionals in Special Education and adjust them to the new paradigm of educational attention. The support with specialized human resource is contributed by the Ministry of Public Education for students with Mental Delay, Problems of Behavior, Deafness, Problems of the Language, Visual Incapacity, Problems of Learning, Multiple Incapacities and neuro degenerative illnesses.

B) The Committees of Educational Support: Another important innovation is the creation in all the educational public and private centers of the country of a Committee of Educational Support (they are committees that settle in all the educational institutions, to make decisions related to the students with educational necessities), to promote adjustments to the curriculum that favor the attention to the diversity, guaranteeing this way, the equality of opportunities and an attention of quality for all the students. However, the integration of these committees is not viable in the one teacher schools and in some two teachers schools, since they don't have the personnel that is recommended in this committee, so the regional teams should support this work. These committees have the following functions:

- To determine the supports that the students enrolled in the institution require, base on their special educational necessities.
- To advise the director of the Institution, educators, administrative personnel and support staff on the access adaptations to the curriculum, curricular and support services for each student with special educational necessities.
- To supervise the quality of the education that they offer to each student with special educational necessities and to give pursuit to the application of the significant curricular adaptations in coordination with the Advisory Technical Committee.
- To facilitate the participation of the students with special educational necessities and of their parents or in charge in the educational process.
- To receive in audience the student, the parents, as well as to the corresponding teacher, interested in the definition and satisfaction of their educational necessities.
- To inform and to guide the student and the parents on the registration process in the different educational services for the students with special educational necessities.

C) The Regional Itinerant Team: the Regional Itinerant Teams has been created in the 20 Regional of Education (constituted by an educational psychologist, a social

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worker, a special teacher and a teacher of the regular education who in coordination with the regional adviser of Special Education support the students with incapacity and their families). These Teams have as main function to support the Committees of Educational Support in the process of application of the curricular adaptations and together with the regional adviser of Special Education, to approve the significant curricular adaptations.

In connection with the special educational necessities of the students of high capacity, in spite of the absence of limits and of ministerial proposals on the attention to the educational necessities of the students of high capacity, the Ministry of Public Education organizes events that facilitate this population's possibilities. Some examples of those events are:

1. The National Festival of Science and Technology
2. The Festival of the Creativity
3. The Olympiads of Mathematics
4. The Competition of Oratorical
5. The Regional Encounter of Student Leaders
6. The Student Sport Games
7. The Competition of Geography “Bee”
8. The Annual Seminar of Sciences

**c) Program of Indigenous Education**

The Department of Indigenous Education (DIE-MEP), it is the instance of the Ministry of Public Education attributed to the Division of Curricular Development, in charge of “looking after the attention and quality of the education in the indigenous territories of the country, to achieve coherent educational offers in all the levels and models of the formal education, of agreement with the necessities of development of these population, it must be assumed like pedagogic theoretical foundation, the focus educational intercultural and bilingual.”

There are 24 indigenous territories in Costa Rica, with a total of 27.032 people, according to the Census 2002 of the National Institute of Statistic and Censuses who represent the 8 existent autochthothonous indigenous cultures. They practice 6 indigenous languages (extinct 2 of them). The 27.032 natives only represent 42% of Costa Rican indigenous population's real total, the one that ascends 67.687 people (100%). The remaining 58% lives are assisted educationally without considering its expectations and necessities pluri and intercultural.

The indigenous population preserve cultural and philosophically a series of principles, values and own wisdom that it is important for them to diffuse, to preserve and to enrich in a pertinent way, through the formal and not formal educational processes. Beginning with the invigoration and systematizing of their local language, the habits, traditions and customs, and the evaluation, consolidation and transmission of their values and fundamental cultural elements, so that the education is a suitable vehicle that facilitates the social, cultural and economic development, in conditions of justness and opportunity before other cultures.

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It is important to point out that the legal foundation, the normative, and the existent juridical-educational dispositions determine and restrict the curricular application of the educational program of the Department of Indigenous Education to the indigenous inhabitants of the reservations. It evidences that the application and pertinent curricular adaptation for the indigenous communities and national multicultural nature, as the intercultural and bilingual focus, lacks jurisdiction and application for other sectors of the society that requires it.

For the Legislative Ordinance No. 23072 of 1993, the Subsystem of Indigenous Education is conceived with the correspondent Department of the same name, to assist the indigenous population in these territories. In the country exist 7 Education Regional Directions depending on the type of population: Limón, Turrialba, Pérez Zeledón, Coto, Nicoya, San Carlos, and Puriscal. The languages that are taught are: Bribri, Cabécar, Guaymí or Gnobe, Malekú, Boruca and Térraba.

Since 1995, the educational process in indigenous communities has experienced a series of curricular applications that try to improve the educational situation of these communities because they are located between the indexes and indicators of limited spread and effectiveness at a national level. These educational indicative are shown in all the regions and educational districts where aborigines are, and also they impact positively the substantial formative aspects of the process, like the educational quality, the relevancy for the development, and the human well-being.

The most important actions undertaken in summary are:

1. Curricular context setting for all the levels and subjects of the formal education.
2. Implementation of Language and Indigenous Culture Programs, through itinerant teachers with particular and appropriate programs of teaching modalities to the local indigenous conditions.
3. Curricular adjustment that implies the inclusion of pedagogic treatment of traverse topics that try to set nature and sustainable development, through productive projects, and/or adaptation of pertinent curricular alternatives in accordance with the levels and/or educational cycles in which the Indigenous Environmental Education should be implemented.
4. Implementation of the traverse topics on the curricular axis of the values, demonstrated in language, culture, environmental, human rights, legislation, and practical traditional education, among others.
5. Inclusion of those topics and contents that recognize and diffuse the contributions made by the national indigenous cultures for the conformation and development of the identity, the self-identity, and the national human development.
6. Elaboration of educational materials, texts and documents that succeed in the pedagogic action and curricular development of the initiatives that must be supplemented and reinforced with the optimization of some other elements of the curriculum like educators profession and interaction of the community in the educational action, among others.

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The theoretical, referential, conceptual, and methodological frame that sustains the curricular actions that this program develops, is the Bilingual Intercultural Educational Focus (EIB). As a result of it appear the educational materials related to the pedagogic action and the curricular development.

The most excellent statistics are presented on the current situation of the indigenous education in the country, among them, quantity of institutions, quantity of teachers, registration per educational level, and per Education Regional Direction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>Transition and Interactive II</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limón</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turrialba</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pérez Zeledón</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coto</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicoya</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Carlos</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puriscal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Indigenous Education,

Although in the last years an important effort has been made to enlarge the educational services in the indigenous communities, by the creation of an average of 10 schools per year, it is still insufficient and a more aggressive action is required to achieve it, joined to the necessity of strengthening the existent educational centers with the appropriate infrastructure and the pertinent educational materials.

d) Social Policy in the Classroom

The social Policy in the classroom has the mission of improving the school access and permanency of the students in Primary and Secondary Education, specially those that come from families of low economic resources from the whole country.

The programs that compose this policy are:

i) To give basic education: it has the legal sustenance in the article 82 of the Political Constitution that dictates “the State will provide food and dress to the school indigent according to the Law.” The program offers a subsidy in school materials that serves like complement to the family’s income. In this way, trying to elevate the levels of successful enrollment of children from families with scarce economic resources.

ii) Program of Student Public Health: Its purpose is to guarantee the access to the services of health to the whole student population younger than 18 years that attend

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public educational institutions, in the mark of the general strategy of promoting this population's greater permanency in the school system and of universalizing the services of primary attention to the health.

iii) **Programs of Student Scholarships**: It consists of an economic support for the students of Primary and Secondary, from families presenting conditions of poverty, to stimulate the permanency or reinsertion of the students that have deserted from the educational system. The program is developed with economic resources of the Fund of Social Development and Family Assignments (FODESAF) and the Central Government's contribution, by means of a transfer of resources to the FONABE on the part of the Ministry of Education.

iv) **Program of Free Transportation for Students**: This program has two components, the transport of students with incapacity, either by means of the recruiting of routes of transport to the Centers of Special Education or by means of transferring resources to the Administrative Boards of the educational centers, to subsidize the payment of the fuels. This component is financed with resources of the FODESAF. The other component and the most important, for the quantity of beneficiaries, is the Transport of Students of Secondary. It is a fundamental strategy to guarantee the access to the educational services of secondary to the dispersed rural population, transporting them to the nearest educational centers.

v) **Program of Feeding and Nutrition of the Scholar and the Adolescent**: by means of this program they offer a complementary basic feeding to that student population of families under conditions of poverty and of extreme poverty. It allows to reduce the illnesses that would originate on nutritional deficiencies, and in this way, to improve the internal efficiency of the educational system reducing the desertion, the absenteeism and to repeat the school year.

d.1. **Program of School Cafeterias and School Vegetable Gardens**

It is a program that was consolidated in 1974 with the promulgation of the Law 5662: The Creation of the Social Development and Family Assignments Fund (FODESAF). It allows the use of the resources coming from this Fund for financing approximately 4000 school cafeterias in the whole country. Explicitly it thinks about the program’s non selectivity, trying to not stigmatize the beneficiaries of low economic revenues. In spite of it, starting from the crisis of the 80’s that reduced the resources of the program substantially, they have been in high-priority of the necessities of the schools, rural schools, and institutions located in urban-marginal areas, following the premise that the efforts that are carried out to strengthen the feeding and the nutrition of the students will have an improvement of their quality of life and in this way a positive impact in the education.

Although this program is universal, it presents certain focuses when differentiating among the educational centers depending on their geographical location. It offers breakfast and lunch to
100% of the students that attend urban high-priority schools, one-teacher schools, and the educational centers located in cantons that, according to the results of the Census of Weight and Height of 1997, the student population present serious nutritional problems.

Besides the money to cover the feeding service, the educational centers also receive resources to equip and give maintenance to the school cafeterias, as well as for recruiting cooks to be in charge of preparing and serving the food to the students. Nevertheless, it has been a Policy of the Program in the last years to settle as an obligatory requirement for the opening of a new school cafeteria that the community finances the payment of a cook. This intends to dedicate more resources to feed of the children. The cooks that are not paid by the program, are financed with resources obtained from the School Patronages or Education Meetings of each educational center and they can be substituted with community volunteer work.

To open a School Cafeteria, the educational institutions should demonstrate that they have the following requirements:
- Appropriate physic-sanitary infrastructure for the School Cafeteria.
- A cook for preparing and serving the food.
- An Education or Administrative Meeting properly constituted.
- A report of a specialist of the nutritional state of the students that will receive the service.

The distribution of the funds to the educational institutions is done at the beginning of every month. They are deposited in the bank account of each Education or Administrative Meeting, by the administration of the Department of Education and Administrative Meetings of the General Financial Office, based in the proposal that carries the Division of Feeding and Nutrition of the Scholar and the Adolescent. The following table samples the growth of the expense and the budget for the service of school cafeterias during the period between 2001 and 2004:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Expenses for School Feeding (in millions of colones)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5.130.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>6.614.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>6.569.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>9.9654.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Institutional Memory. MEP 2004

In the present school year a total of 515.684 students assist to the school cafeterias, with an investment of 9.964. million colones.

In 1997, a Census of Weight and Height in First Degree schools was carried out, with the purpose of knowing the nutritional state of the students. The student population was constituted for approximately 100.000 students of which a sample of 8.000 was selected to be measured and weighed. These children were between 6 and a half, 9 and 13 years old.

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Two weight indicators were used for size and age. According to the indicator for age, 7% of the scholars were moderately and severely behind in size, 26,4% lightly, 0,7% highly and 65,9% were normal.

In accordance with the results of the weight indicator for size, 1,8% of the children presented moderate and severe malnutrition, 8,8% light malnutrition, 8,4% overweight and in 80,9% the nutritional condition was normal.

As one of the objectives of this census was to determine the geographical areas and the educational centers that presented bigger nutritional deterioration, the obtained results allowed to direct the efforts to implement in 2001 a fortified diet in 413 institutions to improve the feeding was offered to the children of the institutions with the most adverse results. These are students from the cantons La Cruz, Los Chiles, Upala, Limón (city), Talamanca, Buenos Aires, Coto Brus, Aserrí and León Cortés.

This information of the degree scholars' malnutrition carried out in 1997 is also supplemented with other strategies, as the census of problems of health in the Public Primary Education, carried out in the school course of 2002 that demonstrates according to the registrations of information the existence of other associate problems. As it was detailed in the section dedicated to the Primary Education, the children presented problems of Oral Health in 5.5%, followed by 4% of the children with Vision Problems and 3.2% with Weight problems, respectively.

The Program of School Vegetable gardens is also developed with the purpose of fomenting the production of foods for the school cafeteria and increase in our children the love for the earth and for the conservation of our natural resources. It is an activity promoted by the institution principals with the support of the family and of officials from other national institutions as the MAG, GOING, CNP, and other.

Regrettably since 1998, the FODESAF suspends the resources to finance this Program, this is why, in the last years, its continuity has been possible thanks to the support of the Ministry of Public Education, the family, and the help of officials of other institutions (MAG, GOING, CNP and other).

In accordance with the Article 2 of the Law 5662 of Social Development and Family Assignments, the beneficiaries of this program are the Costa Ricans of scarce economic resources.

Continuing with the program of School Cafeterias, the approaches to carry out the focus in the educational centers are detailed next with the definition of the school categories:

Category 1: The student population located in the educational centers of marginal areas, smaller development, and/or difficult access, such as the case of the schools assisted by the Program for the Improvement of the Quality of the Education in the Communities of High-priority Attention - PROMECUM", One-teacher Schools, Indigenous, Tele- high schools, “Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
and the Educational Centers located in the cantons incorporated to the program "New Life Plan." They offer the students breakfast and lunch, what means a quota of ₡120 per child. At the moment it assists 145,579 beneficiaries.

Category 2: This category includes the student population of the educational centers that work with enlarged schedule. They offer lunch service, with a daily quota of ₡85. The beneficiaries are a total of 121,733 students.

Category 3: it includes the youths of the educational primary and secondary centers located in the administrative districts that, according to the development classification carried out by the Ministry of Planning (MIDEPLAN), have an index of medium social development. These students are offered a refreshment, what implies a quota of ₡65. It is important to highlight that in some cases with the additional contribution of the community, lunch service is given. In this category, the beneficiaries are a total of 241,222 students.

d.2 Student card for the Public Health access

This program intends to guarantee the access to the health services for the whole student population, younger than 18 years old, of the public educational centers, in the frame of the universalization of the primary attention services. It tries to prevent, promote, protect and recover the integral health of Costa Rican children and youth.

The program of Student Card allows the student to receive the services of health offered by the institutions of the Costa Rican Office of Public Health, began in 1995 being of benefit to more than 700,000 students of all the educational cycles in the 20 Teaching Regional Directions.

The Student Card is carried out by both the Costa Rican Office of Public Health (that contributes the financial resources) and the Ministry of Public Education that carries out the distribution.

d.3 Program of Books and Materials

This project seeks to endow different printed and audiovisual resources for the student in the institutions of General Basic Teaching, which contribute to the most significant, pertinent, and durable learning achievement that propitiate the improvement of the Costa Rican education.

In 1997 the distribution of the didactic material began “Toward the XXI Century”, which consists of text books, notebooks of activities, and guides for the student, which serve as

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didactic support to the teachers and students of I, II and III cycles of the General Basic Education in the rural areas and in the urban sectors under adverse socioeconomic conditions.

The equality of opportunities in the classroom finds a fundamental support in the distribution and use of the text books and free didactic materials offered to all the students of 65% of the educational centers in the country. The accumulative figure of delivery of books reached in the year 2000 a total of 2,532,000 books and 25 million didactic records.

Among the most important achievements that this activity has generated is the elaboration and distribution of texts and didactic records to institutions of the whole country of I, II and III cycles of the General Basic Education in the four basic subjects, and the creation of the editorial fund; however, it doesn't work.

The use of the text books has presented some difficulties; for example: the lack of a popularization campaign to identify the student with the text; and the existence of a strong competition of the editorials of the country that publish the text books. Also, it is necessary to point out that operative weakness exists in the administration mechanisms and control.

d.3 Scholarships for Students

The program of scholarships for students of scarce economic resources is in charge of the National Fund of Scholarships (FONABE), it is an entity of maximum independence of the Ministry of Public Education which, in turn, is profiled as an institution that regards the education scholarships. The financing of these scholarships comes from two main sources, the FODESAF and the Ministry of Education, both for strengthening the Secondary Education as to support to the Primary Education, in particular with the assignment of resources for the children that have to combine the study with work.

FONABE has put together its own objectives in consonance with those prepared in the National Plan of Development and in coordination with the Ministry of Public Education, looking to focus the assignment and distribution of the scholarships among the population's more vulnerable sectors. Recently the Constitutional Room of the Supreme Court of Justice ruled in favor of the grant of scholarships to the foreign population. This vote constitutes a true challenge for the educational system, as for the necessity of looking for new resources to strengthen the program. It fits to point out that at the moment they are almost 45 thousand foreign students assisting school in Costa Rica. Most of them are from Nicaragua, more than 80%. This student population presents big shortages, so they are supposed to be subjects of economic help.

FONABE settles down as high-priority, the grant of scholarships in the public educational centers, located in the cantons of smaller socioeconomic development, identified starting from the Index of Social Development (IDS) that establishes the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Politics.

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For the school year of 2003, the Management of Investigation and Development of the FONABE has applied a technical model of assignment of scholarships, in accordance with some variables that combine the budgetary assignment with the Index of Social Development, by districts, the student enrollment, the desertion rates for institutions and the geographical location area, mainly. With this model it is looked to support the institutions with more difficulties as for their socioeconomic environment and rates of academic results, with the purpose of coming closer to the social justness and the achievement of an objective distribution of schoolarships with the available economic resources.

Also, taking into account that the school desertion in Seventh and Ninth Year affects to a high percentage of the student population enrolled in the public education, it’s attention is assumed as high-priority. That’s the reason why it is requested to the institutions of secondary, to concentrate a significant number of scholarships on these levels, so much for the academic area as the technique one.

During the school year of 2004, it has been possible to grant a total of 46,983 scholarships, with an annual investment of 3,269.00 million colones.

Table Nº 7
Description of the Special Projects
National Fund of Scholarships (FONABE) 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Objective Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers in social risk</td>
<td>Women (under 25 years) pregnant and/or mothers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and adolescents in social risk</td>
<td>Those in danger of consumption of drugs, family abandonment or sexual abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working adolescents</td>
<td>Who should combine the study with work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population with special educational necessities</td>
<td>People with incapacities that attend some support or educational development program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to indigenous population</td>
<td>Indigenous population inserted in the educational system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Post secondary</td>
<td>University students or pear university students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students for teaching of the Mathematics</td>
<td>Faculty's students in the teaching of the Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in French's teaching</td>
<td>Faculty's students in French's teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Those not included in the institutional scholarships of the GID: Open Classroom, High school for Maturity, Programs of New Educational Opportunities and others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The historical behavior of the quantity of beneficiaries of the Program of Student Scholarships is shown and the carried out investment, for the period that goes from the year 1997 to 2004.

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d.3 Bonus for Education

The objective of this program is to facilitate the access and the permanency inside the educational system of the student population coming from families under conditions of poverty and extreme poverty, by means of the delivery of an economic subsidy that serves as a complement to the family income for the acquisition of uniforms, shoes and useful school material. It does special emphasis to the rural educational centers and in areas with scarce social development.

During 1993, year in which this benefit is instituted, they surrendered 40.895 bonus, favoring 63.905 students coming from 2.050 educational centers. The maximum amount was fixed in five thousand colones, for those families that only had a son attending an educational center. This program continued during the year 1994, being increased the number of beneficiaries.

Starting from 1995, the School Bonus is changed by the Educational Basic Supply that provided uniform, shoes, socks and a package of useful school material to children of scarce economic resources. This Program lasted until 1998. Priority was given to the children coming from one teacher schools, urban schools of high-priority attention and of other institutions that are located in areas of extreme poverty.

In 1999 the School Bonus was used again, benefiting 84.554 students. In the years 2000 and 2001 89.233 and 92.456 students benefited respectively with the bonus. This bonus surrenders in the entrance moment to the school year, to the children and young coming from families of very scarce resources.
Next a historical series is shown that reveals the investment carried out in the Program of Bonus for the Education, for the period 1999-2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quantity of Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Amount of the Bonus</th>
<th>Annual investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>84,554</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>676,432,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>89,233</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>903,097,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>89,255</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>892,550,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>63,933</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>630,938,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>70,713</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>707,130,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department Plans and Programs–Division of Planning and Educational Development - MEP

The selection mechanism is in charge of the Committee of Selection, which is conformed in each institution and integrated by the Principal of the school, a Member of the Board of Education, a Member of the School Patronage and one or two teachers.

The Committee of Selection has as purpose the selecting the possible beneficiaries of the Program in an objective and transparent way,. They revise the socio-economic situation of the families of the students of I and II cycles of Basic Education, with the objective of preparing a preliminary list of possible beneficiaries coming from families of scarce economic resources.

The committee prepare the payroll of beneficiaries to be remitted to the Financial Department and this carries out the assignment with the following priority: Plan New Life, Schools PROMECUM, Indigenous Schools and one teacher schools and Other schools.

The Financial Department carries out a transfer through a negotiation with the National Bank, it remits the payrolls approved by the department to each Regional Direction and each supervisor makes the delivery through the director of the educational center to the family. He or she presents with the identification of identity to the window of the Bank and takes the amount assigned by concept of school bonus.

d.4 Student Transportation

The Ministry of Public Education provides free transportation to the students of areas where there are not facilities to attend a near educational center, in view of that which the youths should move to educational centers outside of its jurisdiction.
With such an end diverse routes have settled down along the country that are financed by means of the budget of the Ministry of Public Education. This program assists students of Third Cycle and Diversified Education, of the Academic branch and Technical.

The following table shows the investment that has been carried out in students' transport between 1998 and 2003. These resources are incorporated in the budget of the Ministry of Education. The administration of the program is carried out in the Unit of Transport of Students of the General Financial Direction of the MEP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quantity of Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Quantity of Routes</th>
<th>Annual investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>36,740</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>1,900.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>39,095</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>2,333.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>46,500</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>3,199.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>51,783</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>3,683.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>58,212</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>4,681.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: General Financial Direction, MEP

One of the limitations of the Program of Transport of Students is the budget, in spite of having experienced an important growth in the last two years, it still does not cover the entirety of the demand for this service.

As for the administration of the program many inconveniences have appeared, in particular in the tender processes for the recruiting of the routes of transport, in many cases they are declared deserted because there are not offerents or those that present their offer, do not fulfill the fixed requirements. That is the reason for the transitory measure to not affect the service: transfer the economic resources to the Administrative Meetings of the schools so that in that instance is carried the recruiting of the services.

A factor of success for the quality of the services constitutes the internal classification of the processes and the writing of the price regulations.

1.2.3. Quality of the education

To elevate the quality of the educational services and that they are translated in the reach of educational achievements for all the students of the different educational levels has been a premise captured in all of the Educational Policies, plans, and programs that develop the Ministry of Education.

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For this reason it is important to stand out the creation of programs which have stability and permanent institutional evaluation. Among them:
- National Center of School Infrastructure (CENIFE)
- Program of Improvement of the Quality of the Preschool and General Basic Education (PROMECE)
- Division of Feeding and Nutrition for the Scholar and the Adolescent (DANEA)
- Meetings of Education and School Patronages that support the education at an institutional and local level.
- Service of transport to students
- System of Improvement of the Education (SIMED) that counts with such projects as “The schools of Educational Excellency”, the “Program of One-teacher Schools”, Program of Rural Education and the Program of Improvement of the Education and Quality of Life in Communities of High-priority Attention (PROMECUM), Program of Foreign Languages, among others.
- Programs of Educational Computer science (PIE-MEP)
- National consultanship of Indigenous Education.

The Costa Rican education crosses a transformation in search of a better quality, taking into account the four pillars: to learn how to know, to learn how to make, to learn how to live together, to learn how to be; including in this process the student, collaborators, teachers and facilitators. This way, the results of the Report of the UNESCO, directed by Jacques Delors under the title “The Education Contains a Treasure” (1996), became a guiding element for the Costa Rican educational system.

Responding to this philosophy and in accordance with the effective Educational Politics, it has established that the Costa Rican education responds to three philosophical currents, that are: rationalism, constructivism and humanism. These currents should impregnate cohesively so much to the contents, the cognitive processes and the values of the education.

It establishes in the Educational Policies the guidelines and limits of the Ministry of Public Education that all the educational actors (students, parents, community and teachers) are involved in the process teaching-learning of the students. Nevertheless, it has suffered a disassociation between the parents and the educational center, situation that is reinforced in primary and secondary; because a great majority register their children in the schools, send them to class, and leave the teachings in the guiding hands of the teachers, and finally they receive the grades. The participation spaces and support to the process become scarce for this population, for that the Ministry of Education has impelled such participation strategies as “School for Parents” and the Department of Orientation and Student Life, actions of prevention of such situations as drugs, abuse and violence, among other; besides the support to the teaching process and their children's learning by means of fascicles, modules and trainings for the parents.

In the search of the quality of the education different programs and projects have been implemented and have diversified the alternatives of educational administration and the attention

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of the student educational necessities, as well as the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics that the educational communities present.

1.2.4. Content of the education.

The national curriculum does not allow flexibility for the application of actions to transform it or adapt it to the national, regional or local reality: what is denominated to set in context the curriculum, also the spaces for setting in context and the flexibility of the current curriculum according to the circumstances and local conditions are scarce.

Nevertheless, the effective Educational Policies establish the necessity to execute the following actions:
- Actions to transform the educational centers into units of academic excellence by means of the enrichment of the basic national curriculum.
- The design of the programming should evidence the participative focus and to promote the regional curricular set into context.
- The activity of the educational centers must be the unit base for the context of a basic national curriculum and for the evaluation of the quality of the educational process (decentralization of the educational offer)
- Different efforts have been made by actions tending to improve the quality and the achievement of learning, by means of focuses as the transversely.

Transversely

It is an educational focus that takes advantage of the opportunities that the curriculum offers, incorporating in the design processes, development, evaluation and administration of the curriculum, certain learning for life, integrative and significant, directed to the improvement of the quality of the individual and social life.

This focus has an holistic character, axiologic, interdisciplinary and set in context. It is sustained in the following principles: Integration, Recurrence, Gradualism, Coherence, Appropriation and Participation.

The traverse topics are:
- Living the human rights for the democracy and the peace
- Education for the health
- Environmental culture for the sustainable development
- Integral education of the human sexuality

Besides the mentioned topics, the Education has settled down in Values as the traverse axis of the whole curriculum.

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1.2.5. Political dialogue, association nets and participation of the civil society in the process of educational change.

1.2.5.1 Politics and normative

In the existent policy, it is recognized explicitly that the education is a task shared between the State and the Civil Society. The Plan of Educational Development, period 2002-2006 propose as a strategy for the attainment of the goals, the participation of the society, proclaiming that the education is a responsibility of all, without avoiding the protagonism that corresponds to the Ministry of Education like rector entity of the Costa Rican Educational Sector.

In connection with the formulation of educational policies, carried out by means of consultation processes and agreement between the State and the Civil Society, there have been work shops that have been carried out in previous years, for example the consultation process for the elaboration of the diagnosis that took to the Educational Politics’ formulation Toward the XXI Century, in 1994; in that sense the same politics settled down in the considering c), point 2. that:

“The educational politicians, anchored in the historical context that the country lives, and in the legal sources that guide them, they should transcend the years of a government's administration. The short term vision when reacting to different situations should be replaced by a prospective vision of long term that demands of the political authorities, of the professionals of the education, of the family parents and of the community, a commitment TODAY with the integral development of the mature youths of the XXI century.”

Therefore, the same effective Educational Politics opens the spaces so that the communities and parents participate and support the educational process of the students. This commitment extends to assure an education of quality for the future generations.

An example of this participation was presented in 1999 when it was carried out a diagnosis to determine the problem of the Secondary Education. Equally in the Regional Forums of Education for All, in the 2002, the opportunity has been offered so that participate as much the State as the Civil Society.

In 1999 a document was written directed to reach an Education with Excellency and Justness, in the same fundamental aspects were recaptured as the strategic planning, the reactivation of the special subjects, the evaluation of the educational process, the attention to the cultural diversity, the didactic constructivist, the integration of the family and the articulation among cycles.
1.2.5.2 Political and financial support for the programs of non Formal Education, that has strong participation of the Civil Society

In this respect in the Educational System in Costa Rica, it exists great political and financial support for these programs, mainly in what is denominated Open Education, specially directed to young and adults. In some of these programs they offers accreditation, like it is the case of the Basic General Education for Sufficiency, High school for Maturity, Basic Education for Radio (at distance), the Professional Institutes of Community Education (IPEC). Other educational services as literacy and communal training are directed to young and adults. We can also mention here the training for work program, carried out by the National Institute of Learning, in which there are a learning cycle and formation in the company. In what concerns to informal education we can mention the SINART, National System of Radio and Television which belongs to the State and bill with their assigned budget. This System is directed to the society in general giving emphasis to the promotion and diffusion of the culture, the recreation and the sports, besides the preservation, transmission and development of the historical and cultural patrimony.

1.2.5.3. Cooperative Program for Student

This program allows to promote the participation of the children and adolescents in strategies for the social and economic well-being of people by means of a democratic organization, participative and with solidarity. This way and starting from these values it is sought to create conscience in the students of the importance of the participation in the national development.

The cooperatives are associations that involve the producers, consumers and workers in the use and generation of goods and services. This way, students create and work in cooperatives that impel the saving among the associates.

The student cooperatives take as the base the cooperative doctrine that offers the learning of the values and principles like a practical living of an economic and social model.

The cooperatives promote the taking of decisions in a consensus way, in a democratic atmosphere. They learn how to be organized internally, to generate policies and they propitiate the fair and solidarism and the distribution of the goods taken place by the association. Another of the aspects that they also promote is the work in group, that is essential for the achievement of goals and objectives, the above-mentioned in the mark of the participation of all the associates.

The above-mentioned have importance because these values are promoted from the childhood and adolescence. The families are also involved in this type of initiatives and in some way the participation is promoted having like general base the educational centers.
This program is implemented through a diversity of activities that are carried out every year, as forums, camps, associates' general assemblies, among others. In these activities the debate of ideas, the criticism, the cooperation effort is used, the work in teams, everything by means of a participative and interactive methodology of learning. In the same way, experiences are shared with other cooperatives and organisms that support the chore of this type of student association.

1.2.5.4. Program of Student Governments

This program was created in 1983 and its objective is to guarantee the living of democracy in the internal of the educational centers, to reach an environment of freedom that allows to practice the justice, the free thought, the freedom of speech, the equality of opportunities, the responsibility, the participation, the human solidarity and the peace.

Starting from the ratification, on the part of the Government of the Republic, of the Convention of the Children Rights with the Law Not. 7189 of August 9 1990; this program is devoted to disclose to the students governments the rights and duties of the childhood and the adolescence, this process included to all the Regional Educational Directions of the country.

With the approval of the Law Not. 7739 of February of 1998, Code of the Childhood and the Adolescence and with the participation of diverse institutions, it has been given emphasis to the knowledge of this Code and of advising students of primary and secondary; the same ones then become multipliers that transmit the message to other children and adolescents.

In 1993, the Superior Council of Education approved a Regulation of the Student Community and an Electoral Code, both normative documents, contemplate and they disclose these rights. This program allows to promote a civic conscience in the students, of participation and of free expression, fundamental so that they denounce situations that injure these rights. Equally the families are involved in the institutional chore, as they are in activities of student elections and others.

1.2.5.5. Education and Administrative Boards and the School Patronages

There are Boards of Education and School Patronages that participate in the administration of the educational centers. The same ones were regulated in first instance by the Code of Education of 1944 and the Fundamental Law of Education of 1957; later on they were supplemented with the respective Regulation that was published in the Ordinance No.31024-MEP published in The Gazette of March 12 the 2003.

This last version of the Regulation defines these Boards like: “... delegations of the municipalities and auxiliary organisms of the Public Administration that serve, at the same time, as agencies to assure the integration of the community and the educational center.”
These Meetings possess artificial personify and they have own patrimony, nevertheless their to work is subordinate to the effective Educational Policies limits, that is to say that the guidelines emanate of the authorities of the Ministry of Education as for the use and destination of the state goods that are under their administration; equally, the distribution and the investment of the resources that the Ministry gives.

1.2.5.6 Participation of the families of children and adolescents with special educational necessities

The Law 7600 of Equality of Educational Opportunities for People with Incapacity in Costa Rica, in the volume II: Access to the Education, Chapter I, article 43, I incise b) that says to the letter:

“It incorporates in the support committee from the centers of third cycle a representative of the parents and family of students with special educational necessities.”

In the Normative Policy and Procedures for the Access to the Special Education, in the political VL, page 10, it points that “... the family and parents participate in the enrollment of their children, they will also be able to collaborate in the planning, organization and evaluation of their son's educational program.” This normative was approved by the Superior Council of Education in session 18-97 of March 11, 1997.

1.2.5.7. Project of Self evaluation and Institutional Improvement

The objectives of this project are the development and the consolidation of an evaluation culture, so that in this process all the actors that are involved in the institutional administration participate that is to say, the students, the teachers, the institutional director, the community and the parents. For such effect, several guides have been elaborated directed to the participants before mentioned, a proposal for the registration, analysis and interpretation of the data, as well as the design of strategies to share the results with the whole educational community. This project parts of the premise that the evaluation has as purpose the institutional improvement, by means of the formulation of a plan of improvement with the participation of all the actors. In the mark of this project, the educational center elaborates its institutional project with the widest participation and assuming responsibilities.

This experience begins in the school year of 2002, with the auspice of the Organization of the American States. However at the moment the work is attributed as high-priority project in the Department of Plans and Programs of the Division of Planning and Educational Development, in which participate almost 100 schools in the different stages.
1.2.5.8. Other strategies of participation of the educational community

One of the most common practices for the construction of school infrastructure, is when a community negotiates the creation of an educational center; in general it is the same community the one that is organized and it uses the different communal spaces as development associations, municipality, political support, among other to look for resources and to request the construction of the center.

In some cases they organize activities to gather money, they look for donations, patronages with companies, among others with the purpose of looking for the physical space of construction. The property then is passed over to the Ministry of Public Education who takes charge of the construction of the infrastructure in many cases, when the community has been limited in the attainment of these works. The support of the community in this stage is decisive for the endowment of educational services in the communities.

Another of the equally common practices is the participation of the communities in their educational centers, especially in the attainment of resources that facilitate the normal development of the institution. This way they organize social activities, they look for patronages of companies, donations, among other; what facilitates the opening of services, such as those of Educational Computer science, libraries, construction of classrooms, school cafeteria and payment of public services as electricity, water, telephone, among others.

1.2.5.9. Inclusion of measures to facilitate the participation of the Civil Society in the education and to promote the social debate

In Costa Rica the effective legislation contemplates the numeral one 11 of the Law of Radio and Television, reformed with the law June of 1996, that brings a weekly space so that the Ministry of Education develops and carry out educational spaces, at the moment the unions and the associations of educators participate in the production of the programs.

It also exists a group of intellectuals say on the educational chore, that make different proposals through the media, such as radio, television, newspaper and others. Many are teachers, presidents of unions, educators' unions, educational university students, and investigators, who analyze the situation of the education from different spaces, manifest their opinion and in some way they contribute valuable recommendations that support the improvement of the Costa Rican education.

1.3 Biggest problems and challenges that the educational system faces at the beginning of the XXI Century.

For some years, it has been a concern of the Ministry of Public Education, to coordinate with the universities the aspects of the real necessities of the teachers in the classroom and the programs and contents of the career of Pre School Education.

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In such a sense, the challenge is to generate effective processes using different mechanisms to strengthen the plans of educational formation in the public and private universities with three fundamental axes: emphasis in infantile human development, contributions of excellence and pertinent scientific investigations and curricular integration of the component family and community.

Inside the Mark of Action of the Education for All, the Costa Rican State should look so that before the year 2015 all the children, and mainly the children that are in difficult situations and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to a gratuitous and obligatory primary teaching of good quality and that they finish it.

In spite of the efforts carried out in the last years, the covering of the secondary education continues being a concern for the educational authorities, mainly in the Diversified Education, for what is necessary to elaborate new strategies that allow to elevate the reached levels.

It should be continued with the elaboration and application of different policies that allow to elevate the efficiency of the Costa Rican educational system, mainly in connection with the desertion indexes in secondary, the indexes of students that repeat years and postponement.

The Costa Rican educational reality evidences problems in the formation of the teachers. In such a sense, it is necessary to coordinate with the National Council of the Private Superior Education (CONESUP) and the National Council of Rectors (CONARE). Those coordination levels don't exist between the state, private universities and the Ministry of Public Education, to adapt the programs of the different careers in education, to the new demands and demands of the national educational reality. It is not that the Ministry of Education, as the main employer, defines the programs, they need establish communication levels to analyze the problem and to make propositions on the whole.

2. EDUCATION OF QUALITY FOR ALL THE YOUTHS: CHALLENGES, TENDENCIES AND PRIORITIES.

2.1 Education and equality for all

2.1.1 Main concerns about gender and education.

In this sense, the Division of Control of Quality and Macro evaluation of the Ministry of Education, in their Third Report of Indicators of Justness of Gender, Promotion, Repeating, Intra-annual Desertion, Literacy and Coverage of the Costa Rican Educational System, of July of the 2003, conclude the following:

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- The population of women was higher in secondary, in the agricultural and industrial modalities the males prevailed, however, the population of women in these specialties is increasing.

- The men desert with more frequency of the educational system, so much in primary as in secondary, especially in the seventh year (23%).

- 95% of the women and the men were alphabetized, according to the IX National Census of Population and of Housing 2000. The difference between sexes is imperceptible, not more than 0.5%.

- The men repeat years with more frequency, so much in primary as in secondary, particularly at 13 years old in primary and at 14 in secondary. In the condition of having reproved and postponed, the highest percentages correspond the males.

- In primary of each a hundred women and a hundred men, approved 87 and 83 respectively. In secondary, the percentages were smaller: 58 women and 51 men in academic schools.

- The promotion in formal high school is quite homogeneous between women and males, however they a bigger number of women are presented to take this tests, what indicates that there are more women in high schools than males.

This report, recommends the necessity to investigate in the causes of these differences in later studies. Also, to supplement these data with qualitative information, to detect if gender inequality exists in other dimensions of the educational system as: the school atmosphere, the didactic resources, the national curriculum and the evaluation of the learning, among others.

2.1.2. Political as regards gender.

The setting in execution of a Strategic Plan of Action of Justness of Gender allowed to incorporate this focus in the pertinent processes of the construction of an equal culture of gender in the National Educational System.

It is sought by means of strategic actions, to perm the educational system with this focus of gender justness and to achieve an education that values in an equitable way the interests, necessities and expectations of both sexes.

The program is guided toward a gender focus that claims the analytic look and the action that defines the characteristics between men and women in reason of its gender identity. The above-mentioned by means of the setting-up of a pedagogic model of traverse character, by means of which is possible to incorporate this principle of justness in the whole educational system.
The actions promoted in the execution of the Plan of Action for an Equal Culture of Gender in the Costa Rican Educational System, are:

- To promote and to offer opportunities so that the pregnant adolescents and mothers complete their educational cycle in the different levels and modalities, by means of flexible educational offers.
- The women's incorporation in diverse and competitive professional technical specialties.
- To incorporate women of the Program Growing Together, in the different educational offers that the Ministry of Public Education offers.
- To elaborate support modules to the programs of study of I and II Cycle and Diversified Cycle of Sciences, Spanish, Mathematical, Social Studies and Psychology.
- To diminish the risks of VIH-AIDS in children and adolescents that are inserted in the educational system.
- To implement a system of gender indicators.

2.1.3. Specific measures to promote the equality of gender

- The strategies incorporate to aware men and women about the mechanisms by means of which the discrimination and the women's subordination stays and reproduces.

- It strengthens in all the public and private spaces the participation of women, as a measure to face the gender subordination.

- To discharge the pregnant adolescents and mothers of the payment of tests of Open Education

- Application of an economic incentive to some pregnant adolescents and incorporate mothers to the educational projects

- Visits to women's groups in condition of extreme poverty to disclose the educational offers.

- Actions are implemented to strengthen the identity of the women's gender and their capacity to be subject of right.

- The empowerment of women is fomented from very diverse spaces, looking for the improvement of their capacities and that they become in actors of its own process of change.

- Sensitization to officials of the Regional Directions on the Program.

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- Five Regional Directions applying the plan of action of sensitization to promote the insertion of women to diverse and competitive careers.

- Insert of 30% of the women in condition of poverty to the educational offers

- Sensitization and training in educational centers on the program for the sake of the construction of a culture of equality.

- Distribution of the module of justness and gender to the national advisers.

- To implement a system of indicators of gender of the sector

- In the 2000, the Ministry with INAMU hired a consultancy that with the collaboration of the national advisers of Academic Education, carried out the revision of the study programs from the gender vision in Mathematical, Sciences, Social Studies and Psychology in all the levels.

- Recently the new study programs have been concluded. They will be implemented in the year 2005, the observations and recommendations have been incorporated in these new programs.

- In the 2002 with support of the INAMU, eleven modules of non sexist education were elaborated under a participative methodology with gender perspective and considering the characteristics of the methodology from the education at distance. There are 10.000 copies of the document to begin the training of teachers in November.

- It is coordinating with the Union of Costa Rican Educators the implementation of this module to the educational personnel of the one teacher schools that conform 47% of the educational centers of the country.

- A commission was conformed to elaborate the Policy of gender of the Ministry, this with the purpose of strengthening the processes directed to implement the permanent actions to the advance and institutionalization of the gender justness, so much in the benefit of services like in the labor relationships.

2.2. Education and social inclusion

2.2.1. Challenges to assure the social inclusion

Among the challenges to assure the social inclusion are considered:

- Attention to the population of the cantons that present higher indexes of illiteracy in the cantons of the Cruz, Upala, Guatuso, Los Chiles, Talamanca and Coto.

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-Attention to the indigenous population in their context and diversing more the educational service, involving the community in general in a consequent and respectful process with the self-determination and the necessities of each town and bringing them near to the national culture.

-To enlarge the coverage in Pre School with the opening of the Infantile Maternal Cycle and designing more flexible strategies as “Itinerant Teacher of Pre School” and the integration of “Heterogeneous Groups”, incorporating to the Cycle of Transition a second language, the indigenous language and the Educational Computer science teaching. Besides implementing the strategy of “Family Formation” that has as purpose to form the families so that they contribute in the integral development of the childhood.

-Attention of children under 15 years old that present severe problems as: children in the street, in abandonment, over aged, in socioeconomic marginality, abused children, immigrants, etc.

-Attention by means of diverse projects to young and adults that didn't conclude the I, II and III Cycles of the Education

-Attention to the student population with special educational necessities.

2.2.2. Groups of population considered as the most vulnerable, facing several forms of social exclusion

Groups of population considered as the most vulnerable in front of the several forms of social exclusion are:

- Sectors in condition of poverty and extreme poverty
- Border areas
- Coastal areas
- Indigenous areas
- Urban-marginal areas
- Shelters for addicted to drugs
- Private of freedom
- Rural establishments
- Pure illiterates
- Illiterate for disuse
- Illiterate with the incomplete basic general education
- Immigrants
- Rural areas
- Student population with over age
- Children and adolescents of the street

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2.2.3. Specific measures been taken so that the education system assists the most vulnerable groups

- Creation of the program denominated National Center of Resources for the Educational Inclusion (instance that has a group of specialized technical supports for the satisfaction of the demands of the educators, parents, students, investigators, members of the community and other professionals to favor the process of the teaching and learning for students with incapacities that attend regular schools or of special education). Decree Executive 30224 of February 19, 2002.

- The promulgation of the Law 7600 about Equality of Opportunities and its regulation guarantees the educational options for the integration of people with incapacity to the regular school.

- The Superior Council of Education approves the Normative for the access to education of the students with Special Educational Necessities. Agreement Not 18-97 of March 11, 1997.

- The integration of the Administrative Technical Council constituted by the Minister of Education, Director of the Department of Special Education of the MEP, Executive Director of the National Council of Rehabilitation and Special Education, Director of the National Center of Special Education, Director of the National Center of Special Education Fernando Centeno Guell, President of the Foundation World of Opportunities and representative of affiliated resources.

- The Department of Training of the National Center of Resources for the Educational Inclusion offers the option of updating and training for the teacher’s attention of students from the perspective of the inclusive education, it is sought to coordinate with instances of the MEP and other institutions.

- The National Center of Affiliated Resources has promoted seven masterful conferences during the period 2002-2003 on the thematic of the inclusive education.

- Some public and private universities have developed reflections around the topics of inclusive education.

- The School of Graduates and Professors promote training environment to the attention to the diversity.
The Department of Special Education of the MEP has begun with the transformation of services of teachers of integrated classrooms integrated to teachers of fixed educational support or itinerant that allow the attendance of students with mental retard to the regular classrooms with the pertinent supports.

The Department of Special Education of the MEP is giving educational supports to students with significant curricular adaptations in secondary.

The pilot plan of the III Cycle of Special Education began with inclusive focus in regular schools.

Project PLANALFA 2000 that assists the population by means of different methods and didactic materials financed by Taiwan.

Literacy program and adults' complementary education (PAECA) directed to the excluded population of our country.

ALFA/MUJER program develops strategies for the illiterate woman's promotion integrating different government or not government organisms to the program.

RENALF program identifies successful experiences and literacy innovators and community education to enlarge its action radio.

Three fundamental axes were included in the National Curriculum: Environmental Education, Language and Indigenous Culture with the purpose of rescuing the identity culture of these towns.

Opening of the Infantile Maternal Cycle that assists children from their birth until the Cycle of Transition.

Project of Open Classroom assists student population with over age that demand different strategies for their pedagogic attention and characteristics.

Program of Open Education uses different modalities with the purpose that young and adults complete the I and II Cycle.

Tele secondary for young of dispersed communities and of difficult access that need to conclude the diversified education.

Program New Opportunities for young and adults that abandoned the classrooms.

III Cycle of the Opened Basic General Education in which the student get ready according to their needs, taking into account the available time and the capacity.

Technical education that has 81 schools and offers 38 specialties.

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- Professional institutes of Community Education and the Integrated Centers of Permanent Education that offer useful learning for the life and work giving free courses.

- Program of School Bonus that consists on a subsidy that serves the family to supplement the income for the purchase of uniforms, shoes and useful school material.

- Universal Program of School Food, from the Pre School Education through the Diversified Education. The SISVAN that consists on a system to know the nutritional state of the students permanently.

- Program of Free Transportation to secondary students that live in far away areas and with dispersed population.

- Program of scholarships for students of pre school, primary, secondary, special education. Project Tierra Blanca, special students, pre vocational, young mothers, nocturne education and integrated classroom.

2.2.4. Adaptation of educational opportunities to particular situations

It has been possible to identify the most vulnerable groups of youths, coordinating with government and not government institutions, also by means of the different projects and programs that the Ministry of Education has developed.

2.2.5. Access of these groups to the regular education

Table Nº12
Enrollment in Pre School Education
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycles and Groups of Age</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Babies I and II</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal I</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal II</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive I</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive II</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle of Transition</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,609</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

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### Table N°13

Pre School Education by area and sex  
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

### Table N°14

Primary education by area and sex  
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
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Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

### Table N°15

Composition of the enrollment in the Secondary Education  
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modalities</th>
<th>Registration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It offers educational Academic and Technique</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open education</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Educational Opportunities for Young</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPEC AND CINDEAS</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

### Table N°16

Secondary education by area and sex  
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

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"Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense"
Table N°17
Formal offer for young and adults
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Offer</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>11,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Night school</td>
<td>1,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary for sufficiency</td>
<td>7,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINDEÁ</td>
<td>20,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPEC</td>
<td>22,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Night school</td>
<td>31,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Cycle for sufficiency</td>
<td>9,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school for Maturity</td>
<td>2,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversified education at Distance</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Educational Opportunities for Young</td>
<td>15,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn without opposite</td>
<td>18 projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>123,182</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

Table N°18
Enrollment in Indigenous Educational Centers
2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preescolar</td>
<td>737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>8,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,263</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnosis of the Costa Rican Education

2.3. Education and competitions for life

2.3.1. Renovation of the secondary education system.

The interest of the Costa Rican State to expand the educational system has evidenced an important impulse starting from the 50’s and 60’s of the XX century, when a process of opening secondary educational institutions began in the whole national territory. Starting from then, except for the decade of the 80’s, when because of the economic crisis an important deterioration of the public finances was generated and reduced the possibilities of the State for the assignment of resources toward the areas of social interest, endangering the advances obtained in education. The Ministry of Education has guided important part of its resources and actions toward the creation of schools, both in urban and rural areas, where bigger demographic pressure exists or there are places with dispersed population.

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The access, the permanency, and the school success in the secondary level are a priority and a commitment that the present administration has assumed in the Frame of the Recovery of the Education, taking into account the youths between 13 and 18 years old, and the adults that did not have the opportunity to conclude their studies in that educational level. This purpose is reached by the implementation of a formal and very diversified offer so that it adjusts to the necessities and particularities of the students, and to the national, regional and local development. Among these educational offers are the academic schools, the technical, professional, artistic, sport, Tele-highschools, Tele-bachellor degree, the Integral Centers of Adult Education (CINDEA), the Professional Institutes of Community Education (IPEC), The Program of New Opportunities and the Open Education.

The denominated educational strategy “Recovery of the Costa Rican Education” recaptures the challenges and priorities settled in the National Plan of Development, in the National Plan of Education for All and in the Plan New Life for the Overcoming of Poverty. It visualizes the education as the main mechanism of social mobility to break with the conditions of inequality, exclusion and poverty. It has the purpose of reducing the breaches among the rural and urban education, of strengthening the programs of justness, the improvement the educational quality, increasing and improving the secondary education, in particular the technical, taking advantage of the installed capacity of the MEP.

They settle and reinforce programs that are appropriate for the National Plan of Development and that have as part of their purpose to increase the level of the population's schooling and to diminish the illiteracy.

In the 2003 the gross and net rates of Secondary Education covering, taking into account the academic, technical, Open Education, New Educational Opportunities for Young, IPEC, CINDEAS and Special Education offers, registered values of 79.2% and 66.2% respectively. For the period 1999–2003 it showed a growth of 11.2 percentage points in the net rate, which represents an absolute growth in the registration of about 86 thousand students.

In Formal Secondary the established goal for the 2003 was of 68% covering and 72.6% was reached, the goal being surpassed in 3.5%. All this is appropriate with the purposes of the administration that carries out all the possible efforts for the opening of institutions and to offer the educational service to the biggest quantity of young people.

It has achieved important advances in the programs of educational justness, the educational development, and the programs for supporting the social policies in the classroom. The challenge is the improvement of the justness and the quality of the education closing breaches among the public and private education, among the rural and urban education and, among the day and night education.

The programs of educational justness as the bonus for the education, school cafeterias, scholarships and students' transportation, have been constituted in strategic elements to reach the justness in the Educational System, for that every year an important investment of the
budget is made to assist the different necessities and to offer a better educational service to the Costa Rican youths.

One of the problems that the educational system faces is the lack of permanency of the youths in the formal education, with the result that starting from the school year of 2003 as an effort to combat the desertion, the Ministry of Education formulated the project of “Frontal Fights Against the Student Desertion”, which looks to establish actions of improvement in pedagogic, methodological, evaluative and administrative aspects and to guarantee the educational opportunities in equality of conditions to the whole population. In that context, the project contemplates actions of preventive character and of intervention that are executed in each educational center. That together with the invigoration of the programs of justness like the scholarships and the student transportation, contribute to obtain a positive result in the reduction of the desertion percentage in the secondary education in the last year.

Regarding Educational Computer science, important efforts are being made to offer the access to the advances of the technology and the computer tools as means for the construction of the knowledge and as preparation for work. This program is pioneer in the Costa Rican educational reformation, incorporated to the daily pedagogic practice of classroom as an opportunity to generate the transformations that the development of the curriculum require. As a result, the III Cycle of the Secondary Education achieved in the 2003 a covering of 72.9%, which serves the purpose of arriving to 100% in 2006. It should be indicated that for that objective the Ministry of Education has recently signed an agreement with the company Microsoft.

In connection with the Technical Education it has been settled as policies of this administration, to guarantee that the plans of the professional technical formation are appropriate with the necessities of the productive and labor system in the national environment. The present government has intended to generate the integration mechanisms for making effective and successful the labor insertion of the students graduated from the different specialties. For that, it has intended the transformation of these technical schools in excellence centers.

To achieve this excellence level in the technical formation it was necessary, in first place, to carry out an exhaustive revision of the Plans and study Programs that gave a new proposal. As a result it incorporates:

- A Third Cycle that allows to develop in the students both vocational exploration and the domain of a second language.
- A Fourth Cycle or Diversified Cycle that restructures the technological area of the specialties and the academic subjects, giving emphasis to those that promote the domain of a second language. This consolidates a plan of studies that contemplates three years of technological formation, eliminating the denominated “Offer Option Two” which structure allowed student to finish his/her studies once the Eleventh Year was concluded.

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Besides these improvements to the curricular proposal that were properly endorsed by the Superior Council of Education, other complementary strategic actions have also been pointed out to achieve this excellence, among them:

- To improve the quality of the technical education and to elevate the entering of the students in the different specialties, leaving of the institutional evaluation and the formulation of improvement plans as a managerial tool.
- Equipment of the laboratories that propitiate the knowledge and generic skills to operate equipment, by means of the distribution and efficient use of the resources coming from the Law 7372.

The revision and permanent adjustment of the specialties that are offered by the technical schools has allowed the opening of non traditional specialties, particularly in the rural areas of the country. Among these specialties they are: Ecological Tourism, Secretariat with orientation of Customer Service, Occupational Health, Tourism in Hotels and Special Events, Electronic Repair of Computation Equipment. It looks to promote the relevancy of the offers of the technical schools with the local economic development. In the 2003 the opening of these specialties overcame the proposed goal.

Also, in the technical Education an important impulse has not been given to the woman's incorporation in the traditional technical specialties, registering in 2003 a registration equivalent to 21.82% of the total of that educational modality.

- The articulation of the professional technical education with the educational proposals that offer the State University Schools, in such a way that the graduates of the different specialties can continue their studies in these university schools.

The Technical education and the Costa Rican Professional are offered by means of 82 technical schools located in the whole national territory, that offer 32 specialties in Commercial and Services, Agricultural and Industrial modalities.

All the above mentioned that highlights the budgetary invigoration, the improvements in the equipment of the shops and improvement of the educational offer of the technical schools has promoted an increment of the registration demand in that modality and it has benefited a considerable quantity of Costa Rican youths.

2.3.2. Flexible opportunities of learning and of development of abilities for life

There exist in the country population sectors that have been limited in the access to the educational service that traditionally has offered the Ministry of Education for diverse circumstances. It has for some years caused the interest of the different government administrations to create educational offers that assist those particularities.

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Given the characteristics of the development of the country, it has not been possible to solve their problematic entirety, since in spite of the efforts, the presence of those populational sectors that demand flexible educational offers that allow to the youths, as well as to the adults that have not been able to advance in its academic formation, to develop its educational process to an appropriate rhythm with their circumstances. Before that, the efforts carried out by the Ministry of Education have allowed the establishment of alternative programs that favor the amplification of the educational covering in the level of secondary education, among them one is for example, the program of Tele-high school that has been strengthened for the sake of facilitating a real access of the youths of communities of rural areas and of difficult access; the Program of New Educational Opportunities for Young People is an alternative for the youths that have abandoned the classrooms of the formal system for some reason. The III Cycle of Open Basic General Education has also been created, for those youths and adults that have not been able to conclude that educational level. This option allows the student to get ready according to what suits him, taking into account the available time and capacity.

One of the main purposes of the Education is to form the citizens so that they are inserted in the market labor, better prepared and with the possibility of a remuneration level that allows them to improve their quality of life. That is the reason for which the MEP has proposed formation alternatives for the work, so much in the formal subsystem as in the informal. In the Subsystem of Formal Education the Academic schools impart the subjects of Industrial Arts and Education for the Home in the III Cycle of the Basic General Education, while in the IV Cycle they receive the technological nucleus. In the Night Schools are incorporating Oral English, calculus, accounting, managerial administration, street security and office technical.

By means of the program of Open Education, the III Cycle arrived to a covering of 22246 students, overcoming in 111% the goal proposed in the National Plan of Development for the year 2003 that was of 10500. Equally, at high school level the goal was overcame in 12% covering 2944 students, of an annual goal of 2625.

In connection with the population with special educational necessities a new position has been formulated for their attention, which refers to the educational inclusion and it supposes all those people that share spaces having technical, educational, informative, and other supports that will develop inclusion attitudes and participation where all contribute and they learn permanently. For their implementation among others actions have been developed the following ones:

- Creation of the Program denominated National Center of Resources for the Educational Inclusion. This instance has a group of specialized technical supports for the satisfaction of the demands of the educators, family, students, investigators, community and other professionals to favor the process of the handicapped students' that attend regular educational centers or of special education.
- Promulgation of the Law 7600 on Equality of Opportunities and their Regulation, which guarantees the educational options, as well as the integration of handicapped people in the regular school.

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The Superior Council of Education, by means of the Agreement Not. 18-97 of March 1997, approves the Normative for the access to the education of the students with special Educational Necessities.

The Department of Special Education of the Ministry of Education is giving educational support to students with significant curricular adaptations in secondary.

With the desire of making effective the equality of handicapped people opportunities in the enjoyment of the right to the education, they have incorporated priorities and strengthened the actions. For this purpose, they have been impelled, among other, the opening of new services of special education in the different specialties, the invigoration of the program of students' integration with special educational necessities to the regular classrooms, great interest has been put to the invigoration of the system of curricular adaptations and specialized services for students of secondary and jointly with the World Foundation of Opportunities, the creation of specialized services is promoted (vocational and physio-therapeutical) for the attention of the Partner-labor Program for handicapped mature people.

As you can observe, the Special Education has become one of the priorities of the Educational System. The population with special educational necessities, is assisted in the centers of special education, integrated classrooms, vocational and socio-labor shops for adults.

2.3.3. Common base of values among the youth, in order to develop bigger capacities for the intercultural dialogue and the tolerance.

The interest of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) to implement a curriculum that assists the Costa Rican youths integrally has been put on order in the National Plan of Development. The policy is “to incorporate the different perspectives of the human development in the processes and educational contents, with the purpose of being able to harmonize the action of the learning of knowledge with the person's integral formation.”

In that sense MEP impelled at level of the whole educational system the National Program in Values under the focus of the student's educational living in the daily work in the classroom and in the educational center. It’s purpose is to contribute with the person's integral formation and the living of the values in the national and regional environment and in all the educational centers of the country.

This program of values strengthened with the agreement of the Superior Council of Education, in which declares the values like the unique traverse axis of the Costa Rican curriculum, that has implied an important effort of the specialists of the curricular development of the MEP, to make it effective and mainly, to qualify the teachers so that they implement it in the daily work of the classroom.

The goal is to perm the institutional life of the educational centers with the daily work and examples of values, those that have bigger meaning in the improvement of the quality of
personal, family and social life; characterizing the Costa Rican society as democratic, pacifist and civilist.

For the operation of this program of values they created an office attributed to the Minister's Office. It was conformed to guarantee and qualify the conceptual and methodological foundations of the program, supporting the Regional Teams who should accompany the circuit and institutional teams in the development of the activities proposed in the program.

As necessary element for this purpose of integral formation they have strengthened the teaching of the arts and the physical education. The programs of Attention and Prevention of the Violence were also impelled from and in the educational centers and of Education for a Tributary culture.

Also, it is implemented in all the educational institutions the National Plan of Combat to Drugs and Alcohol, outlining concrete actions in areas like: work in the classroom by means of chats and didactic guides, training to teachers for the work with the students, communal projection of the educational center by means of the organization of activities with the participation of the parents and the family.

2.4. Education and the key role of teachers

The teachers in Costa Rica have a high degree of professional diplomas product, partly, of a concern characteristic of the individual and on the other hand, of the State. In such sense, it is important to begin this section exposing that the professional status of teachers in the country has been one of permanent concern.

Along history, this concern has been reflected in the deep commitment with the formation of teachers. A glance of this history shows that such characteristic began in the beginnings of the country’s republican life. It was modeled with more force toward the end of the XIX Century, when the first formation actions are generated in the country.

It has always been highlighted the mystic and the identification with the pedagogic, philosophical and scientific principles that have guided the formation process. In connection with the curricular pattern, each one of the state universities, and later on the private ones, has created its agreement with the orientations product of the inspiration of educators, professors and the requirements of the Costa Rican society in particular.

As part of the actions for the improvement of the quality of education, the Costa Rican State, as well as the different Governments, has been worried for finding strategies that allow them to offer better labor conditions to the technical and educational personnel of the Ministry of Public Education. Since it is considered that the country requires motivated and personnel that will committee with their chore, in order to obtain good results in the teaching and learning process.

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In the peculiar case of the officials that work for the Ministry of Public Education, in particular those who occupy classes of positions of the denominated Title II of the Descriptive Manual of Classes of the Civil Service, present a specific structure and composition. It puts in evidence the specificity of education, in the case of wages and incentives of the rest of the Administration. This specificity tries to respond to the characteristics of the educational centers and the organization of the educational services in all the educational levels, taking in consideration, in an excellent way, the variable enrollment that guides most of the positions. Enrollment of students became the main reason of the differences in wages among educators.

The Descriptive Manual of Classes of Positions, in your Title II, establishes the classes of positions, referring to three groups:

a) Teachers: It refers to the classes of positions whose nature of functions corresponds to the direct and pedagogic attention of the students, in the different educational levels.

b) Educational technician: It refers to the professionals whose functions, without assisting directly or constantly to the students, are linked directly with the support of the educational tasks. They are, for example, student orientation services, advisors, supervisors and librarians in the educational system, among others.

c) Administrative Professionals: It refers to the classes of positions characteristic of the administration of the educational services, in the assistance field and specific tasks.

In spite of the specificity of the positions that they conform, the groups described continue being very generic. They don't respond to the new organization demands and complexity of the educational service, in particular of the teaching process. That's why the Ministry of Education, is facing the challenge of beginning, as soon as possible, the elaboration of their own institutional manual of positions. This manual would come to improve the bases of calculation of the wages, among other aspects, keeping a coherent and integral relationship for all the positions that fit the occupational structure. It would also eliminate the salary breaches that are present among classes of positions and that have a direct hierarchical relationship in many cases.

2.4.1. A brief description of salary components and common incentives for the administration of the Costa Rican Educational System.

1. The scale of wages of the positions of the Title II of the Descriptive Manual of Positions of the General Bureau of Civil Service, that is the institution in charge of regulating and recruiting of the personnel for the State, shows the amount of the wage corresponding to the bases for professional group. It is authorized for each position class each semester.

2. In addition to the wage bases specified in the scale of wages mentioned, they incorporate the components that are detailed next, in order to calculate the total salary to the officials of the Title II of the Ministry of Education.
Components of General Order: they are items that are also recognized to the rest of the personnel of government that work of the Public Administration.

i. Annual increases: The Law of Wages of the Public Administration (Nº 6835, published on 12/12/82) establishes the payment of annuities to the public officials, by virtue of that the personnel of this ministry enjoy this item. This item corresponds to the calculation of 1.94% of the base wage of the class that corresponds, for each year that the person has work.

ii. Professional career: This component settles down in the Law Nº 6010 and Executive Ordinance Nº 4949-P with date 06-23-75, and it is paid to the personnel that have an academic degree of Bachelor, as minimum, and work in the specialty of the diploma, in a professional position, including the educational personnel. In the year 1995, a modification to the normative established was carried out by means of the resolution D60-79-95, published in the official newspaper “The Gazette” number 216-95. In this resolution, the government settles down the definition of the Professional Career and the norms for the application of it. The Professional Career is defined as an economic incentive of the Administration of Human Resources of the State. It is applicable to the educational servants, understood by the Article 54 of the Statute of Civil Service - Title II of the Educational Career, when they act as titled professors and possess as minimum University Bachelor title in the area of Sciences of the Education with its respective specialty or kindred. The ponder factors for the recognition of the benefit for Educational Professional Career are the following:
1. Academic degrees
2. Training activities
3. Experience in the execution of works of professional level:
   - In institutions of the State
   - In international public organisms
   - Carried out publications
   - Contributions to the National Educational System
4. The average of the factors will be carried out by means of the assignment of points, which are established for each one of the agreement factors with the normative in mention.

iii. Exclusive dedication: The exclusive dedication is applied as the Law Nº 7055 (12-18-86) and Resolution DG-003-86 (1-4-83) of the Civil Service establish. This dedication is recognized to the positions classified as professional; it does not include the educational personnel, for the present time. For a University Bachelor the payment corresponds to 20% of the wage base and for the degree of Licentiate, the payment corresponds to 55% of the wage base.

Component of Specific Order, we want to present a brief description of the personnel's more representative bonuses. It is paid to the personnel that works in educational centers of the country, in all the different educational levels

i. Alternating schedule: By means of the implementation of this salary plus, the Administration offers the attention of the total registration of I and II Cycles of the Basic General Education. It looks for achieving a balance among the conformation of the sections,
readiness of plant physics and the endowment of human resources. In this way, it is paid if a teacher assists two or three sections of same or different level, for a module schedule selected properly and authorized by the Ministry of Education, according to type and size of the school institution. The remuneration corresponds to a bonus of 50% of the wage base of a Professor of Basic General Teaching class 1.

ii. Overcharge of functions: by means of the overcharge of functions, that in none of the cases overcomes 50% on the wage bases, the State remunerates the following educational services:
- Services of Pre School Education: It is used for attending the registration of the Pre School children. Some teachers attend two groups of children. The remuneration corresponds to a bonus of 50% of the wage base of a Professor of Pre School class.

iii. Double and Triple Journey: By means of the Resolution Nº 132 of the General Civil Service, the payment established for this concept is exclusive for the positions of technical directors of educational centers of primary and the school directors. This bonus recognizes the overtime labor on ordinary days, resultant of the impossibility of the complete assistance of the enrolment at the same time in a single day. It usually happens for the lack of an adequate physical plant to gather all the sections of students. The remuneration corresponds to a bonus of 30% and 50% of the wage base of the class of the teacher. The first percentage is recognized in the educational centers of primary and secondary that work with the denominated double journey and consequently they work daily schedule of 8 hours. On the her hand, the second percentage of 50% proceeds in the schools that should implement the lamentable triple journey, that implies a daily schedule from 7 in the morning until 6 in the afternoon and the assistance on Saturday.

iii. Projects of Literacy and Primary for Sufficiency: It’s related to the literacy of adult’s services and primary for sufficiency for young and mature people. They teach these modes at national level with the denominated Open Education. The remuneration corresponds to a bonus of 30% of the wage base of a Professor of Basic General Teaching class 1. The traditional primary education is also to be teaching in night schools, meaning overcharge of functions; in these cases a bonus of 50% of the wage base of the class counts.

iv. Classroom Appeal: The attention of children of First Cycle of the Basic General Education, facing problems of reading, writing or calculation, bad behavior or lack of communication (Learning Disabilities) that serves from support to the regular teacher's educational work.

v. Enlarged Schedule Program: There is a bonus to recognize the teachers that work in schools with enlarged schedule. This program requires additional permanency in the institution (up to 2 o'clock p.m.) to support the process of the children's learning in the different subjects of the curriculum authorized for the schools that implement this educational offer. The remuneration corresponds to a bonus of 20% of the wage base of the class.

vi. Tele-secondary Programs: It refers to the recognition of a bonus to the secondary education personnel that stands out in the administration and implementation of this program.

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Only one professor imparts the educational offer, with the use of television programs and textbooks. The remuneration corresponds to a bonus of 50% of the wage base on 40 lessons of a class Professor of secondary education.

vii. Computer science laboratories: By means of the recognition of 50% on the wage base of a professor of basic general teaching, are the assistants of the computer science laboratories installed in the educational centers of primary, via overcharge of functions. It is financially impossible to hire a professor of Educational Computer science with specific dedication in these educational centers. In the case of the educational centers of primary that have a specific resource and when the quantity of lessons is enough so that the teacher works up to 45 lessons (they assist 22 sections and a planning lesson), the ministry recognizes a bonus of 50% of the wage base of Professor of Professional Technical Teaching, Computer specialty.

Besides the bonus listed above, there are different incentives paid to the personnel that work in Education. We are going to describe the main incentives in a brief form. They pay them to the personnel of the Ministry of Public Education, in particular those who work in the educational institutions.

1. Incentive for the Development of Teaching: Economic benefit that is recognized to all the personnel that occupy positions of the Title II of the Descriptive Manual of Classes of Positions of the General Civil Service. It constitutes 8.3% of the total of the wage of the educator, defined according to resolution Nº DG - 018-94 (02-14-94). It is important to point out that this incentive was conceived with the spirit of cooperating with the teacher and the teaching and learning process, in the acquisition of small inputs to the service. Nevertheless, this incentive is general to all servants that occupy positions of the denominated Title II, either they are related or not directly, with the attention of the students.

2. Incentive for Full Accomplishment of the School Year: It is the recognition of 168% of the total wage of the educational personnel that works in schools in a permanent way during a school year. It means that the teachers work during 200 days in a year. It is important to point out that this incentive had a gradually factor in the payment, being in permanent form since the year 2001. They have also defined a series of approaches of sensitization for this recognition, because; for diverse circumstances the teachers do not always fulfill completely these 200 effective days of class. The recognition of this incentive and the effectiveness of the 200 days of school, have been a topic of many discussions and demands at national level. It has been impossible to measure the impact that this incentive should make in the quality of the education, and in public finances. As for the legal demands, the Constitutional Room of the Supreme Court of Justice of the country made a declaration on the sense that it is compulsory for the State to guarantee a school year of 200 days to the student population.

3. Incentive for working in Areas of Lower Development: They base it in two major components, the index of Social Development, in the grades Low and Very Low index of Social Development that corresponds to 50% of the incentive (40% in areas of under social development and 50% in areas of very low social development). The other component is the

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Professional Group that should correspond as minimum to University Bachelor Degree. The amount of this incentive depends of the average of these two components. The spirit of this incentive is to give special conditions for the permanency of qualified teachers in the educational centers located in the most depressed areas, for the sake of improving the justness and the quality of the educational service that they offer. This way, this incentive is recognized in all the educational centers of the different educational levels, to teachers and educational technicians and corresponds to a maximum of 100% of the total wage of the person. It is payable only once during the school year, traditionally and for agreement with the unions of educators, in the month of June.

4. Incentive for Voluntary Certification: It has the purpose to recognize to teachers of Third Cycle and Diversified Education, their interest to stay modernized as for knowledge, pedagogic mediation, evaluation approaches and in general the integral domain of their work in the classroom. The professors that certify to the Ministry that take courses for actualization and posses the academic degree of University Bachelor, will receive during the two following years 10% of their wage base per month; in the case of the professors that don't have the previous title, they will receive 5% of the wage base.

5. Zone: It is a fixed amount determined by executive ordinance, proposed by the Commission of Zones of the Ministry of Education, product of the technical studies carried out by the Division of Planning and Educational Development and the National Center of Educational Physical Infrastructure, for the educational centers with diverse degrees of access annoyance. Those educational and not educational servants that are working in these schools will receive this amount, according to Executive Ordinance N° 13082 – H (10-31-81). This amount is affected by two reasons. The first one is the automatic revaluation that they make to the economic value of the point of the inconvenience, assigned to each educational center. It responds mainly to the variation of the index of Prices to the Consumer and should be made every year. The second one is due for the adjustment of the total of points assigned to each educational center. The legislation settles down that the technical studies should be revised every to years, in order to define the quantity of points assigned. They respond in a strict way to the conditions of the variables of annoyance and unhealthy conditions that characterized these educational centers.

For the weaknesses that the Costa Rican System of Evaluation of the Educational Personnel and of the educational centers in general, there is not a link between the recognition of these incentives and the results of the educational administration, in particular in the conditions of teacher’s formation and students' education. Rather, these incentives are associated to conditions of the environment or the requirements that should guarantee the working environment of the teachers.

2.4.1. Teachers Training

The Executive Ordinance N° created the National Center of Didactics (CENADI) 18752-MEP, published in the Gazette Nº 17 (24 of January of 1989). Carried out studies, reflected the “Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense”
deterioration of the quality of learning in Costa Rican students. Among the causes that generate this problem, it was considered the serious and growing abandonment in which Costa Rican teachers are. This lack of attention is in all aspects of their professional life, also in the formation process that has been insufficient in important sectors of the teaching staff. Therefore, it was considered indispensable the creation of a specialized organ that starting from a systematic study, would design, make and diffuse the means and materials that cooperate with learning. They should promote the institutional coordination for the development of the personnel in service. Since 1989, the National Center of Didactics becomes the entity rector of teachers training at national level.

CENADI as the entity that rules the educator’s training at national level has the obligation of looking after the training processes and up date the knowledge that are carried out in the different educational regions of the country, and in all the dependences of the Ministry of Education.

CENADI is the entity in charge of coordinating the actions related with the processes of educators’ permanent formation, training and up dating for the educational and administrative personnel of the Ministry of Public Education.

During 2003, CENADI was in charge of making a new planning of the process of detection of the training necessities and professional up dating. They must work in the establishment of a national plan of training and up dating program. The above-mentioned product emanated from the recommendations of the General Controllers of the Republic.

This year, the Minister of Public Education also gave precise instructions to all the hierarchies of the different dependences of the Ministry of Education, so much in the central administration and in the regional staff, with the purpose of ordering and subordinate these training processes and bring up to date the dependences that carry out similar processes. As a result, the National Center of Didactic became the instance that will have the responsibility of elaborating this national plan of training and of coordinating to the execution of the needed actions.

He also instructed the Division of Planning and Educational Development to formulate an evaluation proposal and monitoring program to this national plan of training. This will bring up to date all the information, besides guaranteeing the pursuit to the execution of the proposed actions, verify the coherence of this plan with the effective educational politics, in particular the related with the formation, training and up dating activities. This pursuit proposal and monitoring program are at the moment in study for the corresponding sanction on part of the authorities of the Superior Council of Education.

On the other hand, CENADI elaborated a proposal for the application of a diagnosis of training necessities. It is in the Superior Council of Education, for their knowledge and approval. It is expected that this proposal is taken to the practice in the second semester of 2004.

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Another challenge in this field is the evaluation of the impact of this national plan of training, as was recommended by the General Controllers of the Republic. For this reason, the Division of Planning and Educational Development, through its specialized dependence of Educational Investigation, has elaborated a proposal of a Model of Evaluation of the Educational Policy. One of its main components is training and up dating of the teachers. This proposal is also in the Superior Council of Education for their study and approval.

3. EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education is the most suitable instrument for the construction of an environmental culture in individuals and societies, as a way for reaching sustainable human development. In Costa Rica, the Public Educational System, includes effectively in the study programs, the denominated traverse topic: “Environmental Culture for the Sustainable Development” and inside this topic they are four components. One of them is the Sustainable Human Development.

The entity promotes this traverse topic, inside the school curriculum. There is the Office of Environmental Education of the Ministry of Public Education, whose responsibility is to veil for the accomplishment of educational policy, in this sense, to complete and to coordinate with other external, government instances, international organizations, in order to get support and to work with a common objective.

The boarding of this traverse topic is visualized, in Costa Rican educational centers, with contents of attitude without denying the conceptual ones. Contrary to specific teaching, their development should transcend the merely informative and institutional matters, to become a resource that promotes feelings, thoughts and acts in the person. It must be the mean to achieve a new lifestyle, a development in which they reconcile the person, the society and the universe.

The traverse topic: “Environmental Culture for the Sustainable Development”, with their component Sustainable Human Development contemplates the following contents:

- Relationship among population, atmosphere and development.
- Good quality of life.
- Commitment with the atmosphere.
- Gender, ethnical and opportunity justness.
- National identity.
- Education for the co-management and self-management.
- Civic participation.
- Principles and values of the Letter for the Earth
- Ethics of the development.
- Education in population.
- Migrations.
- Urban and rural population.

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• Social demography.
• Cultural and ethnic diversity.

These contents are present in all the subjects and they are the drivers of the school activity. As well as, for example, in Spanish, there are dispositions of the Superior Council of Education, about “recommended obligatory readings” for certain levels, such: “Unica looking to the sea”, “Mom Yunai” and “The crazy lady of Gandoca”, among others. They contemplate the environmental topic of Costa Rica from different angles. Its reading raises queries and necessities: the protection of the ecosystem. At writing level, they take advantage of the programmatic objectives that also incite the focus of environmental aspects.

These contents also enlarge the horizons of the disciplines, achieving more motivation to the students, since they assist sociological questions in the development of the curriculum and they allow a form of consciences of the interdependence with the environment. Starting from the development of attitudes “critical–reflexive” of the immediate reality, as far as biophysical and social, economic, politics and cultural.

The contents of Social Studies, characteristic of the subject, are lent to highlight the component “A sustainable development” in all the cycles and teaching levels.

3.1. Themes and contents of the Subject Social Studies, for cycle and year with their values and attitudes that make strong the component “A Sustainable Development.”

I CYCLE

First Year.

Theme: The community of my school and the district.
Contents: Socioeconomic Characterization of the district of my school, occupations of the inhabitants, public and private services, means of transport and ethnic diversity.
Values and Attitudes: Collaboration in the rational and appropriate use of the public and private services, electricity, water fonts, telephone service, emergencies, health care and public transportations.

Theme: The district of the School as a part of a county.
Contents: Protection of the environment and prevention of the natural disasters in the county.
Value and Attitudes: Defense and preservation of the natural resources.

Second Year

Theme: We are important boys and girls.

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Contents: My duties: responsibility for my acts, respect for the rights and other people's differences, execution of rules and assigned tasks, uses and care of the public services and protection of nature.
Value and Attitudes: rational use of public services, given by the Water Company, Line 911 and the Social Security System.

Third Year:
Theme: the County where my School is, as a part of my country.
Contents: Physical Characterization: relief-forms, use of the natural resources: flora and fauna and water supplies.
- National-parks and biological reservations; function and importance.
- Rational and irrational-use of the natural resources in the county.
Value and attitudes: Defense of the natural resources as the basic element of the quality of life.
Responsible use of different types of public and private services in the county and more interest for the environmental problems of the country.

II CYCLE
Forth Year
Theme: Valleys, plains and hydrograph of my country.
Contents: Importance of rivers for the human being, potable water, communications, tourism, extraction of materials, fishing, watering fields and hydroelectric energy.
Value and attitudes: Interest to conserve the hydrograph basins of my community.

Theme: Climate and conservation Areas in Costa Rica.
Value and Attitudes: appreciation of the importance and wealth of the conservation areas as means to preserve our biodiversity. Attention to the danger that threaten the existence of the conservation areas.

Theme: See shores of my country.
Contents: physical and socioeconomic characteristics. Socioeconomic importance. Tourism, fishing, communications and coastal traffic activities, international trade.
Value and attitudes: Responsible performance of the use of marine resources, to preserve and to renovate them.
Valuation of the potential of the aquifer resource, as development factor and improvement of our quality of life in the future.

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Fifth Year:

Theme: Natural Phenomena disasters
Contents: Prevention and mitigation of the phenomenon and natural disasters before, during and after.
Value and Attitudes: Participation in communal projects of prevention and mitigation of the phenomena and disasters, organized by the National Commission of Emergencies and the Red Cross.

Theme: Civic Values of Costa Rican citizens.
Contents: Environmental values regarding all form of life and all natural elements, conservation and modern use of the resources, the legacy of nature.
Value and Attitudes: Defense of the community and the environmental values.

Sixth Year:

Theme: Socioeconomic regions of Costa Rica.
Contents: Localization of the Central, North Pacific and Atlantic regions.
Value and Attitudes: Defense of the environment in the different socioeconomic regions of the country.

III CYCLE

Seventh Year

Theme: Cartographic generalities in teaching Social Studies.
Contents: Generalities of the Costa Rican relief.
Environmental –problems: types and characteristic.
Value and Attitudes: Responsibility in the use of the resources that the geographical media offer to the human being.
Responsibility in the organization for the prevention and mitigation of environmental problems and disasters, natural phenomena and vulnerability.

Eight Year:

Contents: The use of the earth: Problems regarding environmental activities and characteristics.
Value and Attitudes: Tenacity to contribute to the attention of the environmental problems.

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Ninth Year

Contents: World problems and perspectives.
Environmental problems. -Health and feeding.
Value and attitudes: Sensibility to the consequences of urban growth in the world.
-Valuation of the rational use of water, facing the shortage in next years.

The other subject that contemplates the Sustainable Development in the curriculum is the study of Sciences. It starts gradually from the First Cycle to the Diversified Cycle. In the program of studies of Chemistry for X and XI year, all the contents try to insert attitudes and values for the conservation of the atmosphere. For example:

Value:
- Critical nature for judging the impact of chemical products in the atmosphere and in daily life.
- Critical reflection in connection with application of nuclear energy in different areas of science.
- Respect for the present harmony in nature, consciousness of been a part of it.
- Interest to look for solutions to environmental problems.
- Solidarity for the live beings, especially of their need of “clean” water, indispensable for their survival.

Attitudes:
- Responsibility for the appropriate handling of chemical products of daily use and respect for the measures of security.
- Respect for life, health and the atmosphere.
- Capacity for the rational use of raw materials and natural resources.
- Interest for balance of the nature and the importance of its conservation in a sustainable level.
- Critical attitude facing the services that offer the different water sources and their importance in the quality of Costa Rican life.

3.2. Guidelines and Supports.

In the current administration, guidelines of the Offices are of obligatory observance. That indicates that Environmental Education should be visualized in the didactic planning. The advisers and circuit supervisors have the responsibility of making that these dispositions are accepted. And the directors of the institutions should veil for the teachers not just include it in their didactic planning but rather the contents are also developed in the classrooms.

The circular “DVM-1582-2002”, sent by the Academic Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education to the School Directors and Regional Directors, communicates the disposition of the Office that all the activities that are developed in the educational centers are related to the Environmental Education and they should be aimed by means of the Office of Environmental Education and endorsed by the office. The same establishes the contents that must be considered.

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The circular “DVM-DR-091-04” mentions the technical delivery of the document “Transverse theme in the Costa Rican Educational System” to the Regional Directors, according to the included listing.

During the year 2003, this topic was reinforced by different activities, among which are mentioned:

- Festival of the ecological song.
- Course of school security.
- Convocation to Advisory Regional of Sciences on the topic: “Toward a Culture of Prevention of Disasters.”
- Workshops on “Natural Risks and Perception” A coordination of the MEP-IDESPO and OVSICORI.
- National project of Education in Organic Agriculture.
- Practice in Handling of Plagues without chemical in the Regional of Nicoya, Liberia, Upala and Cañas.

In the Office of Environmental Education of the MEP, diverse materials have been worked for the use with the children. They are comics that generate taking of conscience of the theme and whose titles are:

- Adventures in a Near Planet.
- Prevention of Disasters.
- Moving away the Threats.
- It is better to prevent.

They also exist, at level of secondary, schools that specialize in environmental matters with a curricular proposal based on an environmental culture for the sustainable development. They are:

- Colegio Ambientalista El Roble, El Roble, Alajuela.
- Colegio Ambientalista Ing. Alejandro Quesada, Tres Ríos, Cartago.
- Colegio Ambientalista Llano Bonito, Guápiles, Limón.
- Colegio Ambientalista Isaías Retana Arias, Pedregoso, San Isidro de El General, Pérez Zeledón.

For this traverse theme, the Office of Environmental Education of the Ministry of Public Education is responsible for qualifying the National Advisors, Regional Advisors, Supervisors of Circuit, Directors of Institutions and teachers.

It corresponds to the National Advisers of Sciences and of Social Studies to assure the programmatic executions, to suggest ideas and projects to favor the environmental inclusion of the thematic as part of the curriculum. Many of the teaching-learning strategies used by the teachers in the classroom are of participative type, such as: narration of experiences, gathering of information, studies of cases, moral dilemmas, games, cartoons, songs, readings, reflections, thoughts, debates, brain storms, simulations, tours, and audiovisual material, among others.

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