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Formative Research Project

Study Report 15

Enhancing Education Reform Process:
A Study on Operation of System and Structural Provisions at Implementation Levels

Tribhuvan University
Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID)
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Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
Balkhu, Kathmandu, Nepal
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Abbreviations

BPEP	:	Basic Primary Education Program
CBO	:	Community Based Organization
CERID	:	Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development
CMS	:	Community Managed School
DAG	:	Disadvantaged Group
DDC	:	District Development Committee
DEC	:	District Education Committee
DEO	:	District Education Office
DEP	:	District Education Plan
DOE	:	Department of Education
DTCO	:	District Treasury Controller Office
EFA	:	Education for All
EMIS	:	Education Management Information System
FCGO	:	Finance Controller General Office
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
FRP	:	Formative Research Project
GO	:	Government Organization
HT	:	Head Teacher
INGO	:	International Non-government Organization
LDO	:	Local Development Officer
LSS	:	Lower Secondary School
MEP	:	Municipal Education Plan
MOES	:	Ministry of Education and Sports
NGO	:	Non-Government Organization
NPC	:	National Planning Commission
PPSECANFE	:	Planning, Program, Extra Curricular Activities and Non-Formal Education
PTA	:	Parent Teacher Association
RC	:	Resource Centre
RED	:	Regional Education Directorate
RP	:	Resource Person
SAFAE	:	School Administration, Financial Administration and Examination
SESP	:	Secondary Education Support Program

SGOG	:	School Grants Operation Guidelines
SIP	:	School Improvement Plan
SMC	:	School Management Committee
SS	:	School Supervisor
VDC	:	Village Development Committee
VEC	:	Village Education Committee
VEP	:	Village Education Plan

Acknowledgement

Educational reform has been the main agenda of the Ministry of Education and Sports since the implementation of BPEP in 1992. Many policies and programs are being formulated in this regard. Certainly, such programs are likely to demand additional structural provisions of institutions and infrastructural development in terms of financing, staffing, capacity building, etc, from central authority to the local agencies. The present research attempts to evaluate these factors with regard to scholarship, decentralized management and quality education. There is ground to hope that the outcome of this study will assist in the planning and implementation of the future reform programs.

July 2007   Narendra Phuyal
                                                                Researcher

Executive summary

Introduction

Educational reform has been the main agenda of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) since the beginning of BPEP in 1992. Many policies and programs are being implemented in this regard. This has created extra roles and responsibilities for the reform process and so requires structural provisions for the local implementation level. Consequently, institutional capacity will be a major component in advancing of the reform activities.

MOES has initiated various educational reform programs with these names: DEP, SIP, VEP, Inclusive Education, Block Grant, Earmark Grant, Scholarship, Teacher Training, Physical infrastructure and Welcome to School. These are the major reform programs being implemented for the development of primary education under EFA.

The present work is basically confined to access, decentralized management, and teacher support. So it concentrates mainly on the following research questions:

Research Questions

- Are the local level institutional system and structural provisions enough for reform planners to undertake different components/aspects of educational reform mainly with reference to infrastructure, orientation/ training, finance and staffing?

- How is the reform program communicated?

- What mechanism and practices exist for reciprocity of feedback?

Study Method

The study was based primarily on qualitative method. The field work was confined to Ilam, Nuwakot, Jumla, Kanchanpur and Mustang districts. The research team visited five DEOs, five DDCs, five DTCOs, ten RCs, ten schools, ten VDCs/Municipalities, three assessment centers and three resource classes.

Findings

DEO, RC, and school, which the study considered as three major local level program implementing institutions, have operated reform programs guided by central level policies and programs.

It was found that the sample districts prepared ASIP, using the flash report statistics and with little regard for the DEP document and SIP documents.

The districts were practicing decentralization, using various approaches. For example, some of them were working in coordination with DDCs, INGOs/NGOs to execute the educational reform programs and others were working in complete isolation.

The DEO staffs had no defined responsibilities, which consequently hindered the preparation of the planning documents such as SIP and DEP.

DEO had no trained manpower to execute the reform programs as required. As a result implementation of reform activities has not attained optimum level. In one district the level of office regularity was very low.

School supervisors were not working as required by the structural provision. For instance, they did not organize any meeting/ orientation nor did they issue any instructions to the RCs and schools of their clusters.

Scholarships for the disabled were distributed as per the central guidelines. The distribution of other scholarships such as dalit and girls was regular but monitoring of the distribution was nearly absent.

Recommendations

This study has made the following recommendations:

1. The Bottom-up planning approach should be used by the local level agencies (DEO, RC and School). DEP and SIP should maximally address the local needs.

2. The centrally controlled management should be decentralized. Emphasis should be laid on to school-based planning and management collaborating with local CBOs and NGO.

3. The work responsibility of DEO should be shifted to the school supervisor so that the supervisor could mobilize RP. School supervisor should delegate authority to RP.

4. Jobs for local level implementers including DEO should be clearly specified and a mechanism for internal communication within the DE office should be developed.

5. The monitoring of reform programs related to SIP formulation, scholarship distribution and quality education program should be made effective and the program benefits should be assessed.

6. The yearly orientation/training for SS, RP, HT, SMC members and other stakeholders should be conducted at RC level.

7. There should be two-way communication between DE office and school for the effective implementation of reform programs. For this SS and RP should be made efficient and effective.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Introduction

Educational reform has been the main agenda of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) from the beginning of BPEP in 1992. Many policies and programs are being implemented in this regard. This adds extra roles and responsibilities to the system and requires structural provisions at the local implementation level. Consequently, institutional capacity will remain a major agenda in advancing the reform activities.

DEP, SIP, VEP, Inclusive Education, Block Grant, Earmarked Grant, Scholarship, Teacher Training, Physical infrastructure and Welcome to School are the major reform programs which are being implemented for the development of primary education under EFA.

The thematic reports of EFA action plan 2003 have specified various roles and responsibilities for the local level institutions/ actors. DEO, RC, VEC, SMC, DDC, VDC, NGO are the local level Implementing institutions responsible for the reform of the local level educational planning and programs. Similarly, DEO, RP, Focal persons, supervisors, head teachers, teachers and local level committees are the major actors to conduct the reform programs at grassroots level. MOES is advancing the education reform program by developing the capacity of the local level institutions and the responsible individuals. Therefore, the study has included local level programs, institutions and responsible individuals to assess the local level institutional system and the structural provision, which contribute to the enhancement of the education reform initiatives.

History of Basic Educational Reform

MOES has initiated a number of strategies and reform programs including the implementation of BPEP II (1999-2004) on a nation wide basis to achieve universal access to quality primary education. BPEP II is built on the experiences of Education for Rural Development project (1980-1990), Primary Education Project (1985-91), BPEP I (1992-1999) and PEDP (1992-1999) -- all implemented by the MOES. Other initiatives are proposals for the revision of the Education Act to boost the accountability of school management to parents and communities, to form a National Teacher Service Commission (NTSC), to ensure the selection of efficient teachers, and to effectuate the school feeding program to increase nutritional status of children (ASIP 2001).

MOES/DOE is committed to implement the government's strategic policy of extending basic education from grades 1 to 5 to 1 to 8. This extension would help develop in children basic competencies required to cope with the new challenges brought about by globalisation of education and by the fast development of information technology. It is therefore, necessary to explore the possibilities of introducing information technology (IT) into our curricula at the basic level. It is possible to increase access to a great extent through the use of IT. MOES/DOE would initiate preparatory activities with a detailed assessment of all implications including resource needs to implement this policy in the near future (ASIP, 2001).

Rationale of the Study

Government of Nepal has launched various types of programs in primary education with objective of achieving access, quality and institutional capacity from the very beginning of the restoration of democracy in 1990. Around this time, program implementers and policy makers did not seem to be responding to educational findings. Due to this, programs and policy revision processes had remained almost stagnant. The starting of formative research in 2001 was to overcome this sort of difficulty. Formative research helped bring coordination between program implementers, policy makers and researchers for improvement in programs and policies. The percentage of disadvantaged (out-of-school) children reduced from 30 to 16 can be cited as one of the contributing factors of the formative research program. In the same way, formative research has contributed to improvement of quality of education and of capacity building process. But this improvement is far from satisfactory.

Formative research reports help specific programs at the micro level by giving feedback to the policy makers and program implementers to reform the program and policy. As for example, there was change in the policy on the access of the disadvantaged children after the implementation of the EFA program. The pilot programs for girls' and the special focus group, which were found inappropriate, were excluded from the program. The first FRP study on access raised a big question on the utilization of the incentive amount. The study recommended an increase in the quota for the primary school girls and dalit scholarships. Now, MOES has decided to provide scholarship to all dalits of primary school age (5-9 years) children and to 50 percent of girls of primary level under the EFA program. All the first phase studies on access showed lack of coordination between the NGOs and the government. At present, a networking is being set up. For example, a coordinator in DE Office is appointed to look after the nutrition program in the district. There is a cell established in the DE Office for this task. In the past, this program was conducted by the World Food Program (WFP). The Phase I study recommended the involvement of local government, CBOs and NGOs to expedite activities to ensure the access of the disadvantaged children to education. In pursuance of the suggestions, Student Enrolment and Welcome to School were started earlier this year under the EFA program. The local CBOs and NGOs were instrumental in these activities. The Phase I study (Access to Education for the Disadvantaged Children) suggested the recruitment of local teachers, especially female, from the dalit, indigenous and disadvantaged communities. The EFA Core Document (2004-09) reflected this recommendation in the appointment of teachers.

An analysis of the process of educational reform pointed out a gap between the central level authority and the implementation actors. The core reason for this gap is still unknown. The apparent reason may include unawareness of the local level stakeholders, lack of local institutional efficiencies, and inappropriate system of program operation or unmanaged structural provisions. Therefore, a study on structural provision and operation system is necessary if the effective implementation of the program at local level is to be desired.

Issues

Studies have shown that, although current policies and programs hold significant reform components, serious flaws at the implementation level are obvious. (After analyzing the enhancement of the educational reform process, several studies have

found that the gap still exists between central level policy and programs and their implementation at the grassroots level. The root cause of this very gap is still unknown. The cause of this may be due to the unawareness of the local level stakeholders, lack of local level institutional efficiencies, and inappropriate system of program operation or unmanaged structural provisions.)

Key Questions:

- Are the local level institutional system and structural provisions enough for reform planners to undertake different components/aspects of educational reform mainly with reference to infrastructure, orientation/ training, finance and staffing?

- How is the reform program communicated?

- What mechanism and practices exist for the reciprocity of feedback?

Focus

The following are the major focus areas of the study:

- To analyze institutional system and structural provisions for the development of infrastructure, orientation, training, financing and staffing.

- To examine the system and provisions of communication of   EFA implementation strategy practiced for the reform programs at local level

- To assess the level of local awareness and of individuals and communities on their educational problems

- To explore the existing mechanism and practices of feedback system for improvement of the program implementation.

- To provide suggestions for enhancing the quality of the educational reform process.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

This chapter presents the review of literature on education reform in terms of scholarship, decentralized management and teacher support system. In presenting the review, the chapter has been organized as follows. First, it presents related studies conducted in developing countries including Nepal. Second, it sums up current plans, policies and programs of the government of Nepal. Finally, it attempts to link previous FRP studies to the present study.

Related Studies

A Complexity Theory Analysis of Educational Reform in Benin

Emmanuel David-Gnahoui. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society (45th. Washington D C, March 14-18, 2001)

This paper deals with the newly introduced curriculum called "new study program" in the reform of the primary school system in Benin. The government of Benin designed and developed this program with the assistance of foreign consultants and implemented it in 30 public schools for 6 years. This paper provides an explanation of why educational reform is so difficult and what makes an educational reform successful.

The paper says that education reforms are often judged feasible and implemented on the basis of their soundness and their goodness of objectives. Reforms often fail because they are generally conceived and imposed top down. The flaw in this approach is that local structure built along the years cannot depart overnight for new miracle solutions.

What makes a reform successful? Emmanuel verifies this question with six criteria developed by Healey and De Stefano. He concludes that the reform in Benin appeared successful with the first two criteria that included the reform that addressed a well- understood local need and catered to a significant local demand for reform. But with the third criterion that the reform should be locally derived he both agrees and disagrees because reform is designed by foreign consultants and implemented by local personnel. About two other criteria, "Is it championed by one or more 'messiahs'?" and, "Is there widespread ownership of the reform?" he does not seem to be positive. He expresses doubt with the criteria that the reform should be adequately financed, because he finds no good reason for the continuation of foreign resources.

Decentralization of Education

Community Financing

Mark Bray The World Bank, Washington D C The USA, 1996

This study of community financing of education concludes that there is no appropriate model for decentralization that can be recommended as universally applicable.

The study states that where governments are prosperous, community financing seems to attract little attention, but where governments are hard-pressed, it is given more reorganization. Talking on a case study of Ghana, the study highlights the role

of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) in raising development funds for schools and organizing community leadership but PTAs are discouraged from becoming involved in management because they are considered as non-professional supervisors. In recent years, the Ghanaian government has involved community leaders in the selection of the head teacher. The report argues that the case of Ghana seems to have a wider applicability but the long-term effect of these activities remains to be evaluated.

Finally, the report suggests different decentralized policies for different communities, regions and schools (primary/ secondary).

Nepal Priorities for Education Reform

Human Development Unit, South Asia Region, Document of the World Bank July 18, 2001

A World Bank document states that the educational system in Nepal has achieved increased access to primary school (65 percent of the children in relevant age group), higher literacy rate (50 percent of the population) and developed infrastructure for secondary and tertiary education. Hence, it shows concern and pressure for educational equity and quality.

The objective of the document is to analyze equity and quality aspects of the education system to help the government as required.

The document points out these problems in the education system of Nepal: highly politicized teaching force, recurrent transfer of district education officers, frequent changes in education rules and regulations, little community control over the school, weak educational leadership, current education encouraging social disparities, and counter-productive free education.

The document underlines these as areas for intervention: ensure that in the coming decades all children are enrolled and complete a five year primary education while developing an eight-year basic cycle of schooling, develop a system for teacher education, training and service conditions, decentralize the education system, and improve the modalities of financing education reform with a focus on reducing inequalities and discouraging inefficiencies.

In conclusion, the document puts forward four major principles to guide the process of educational reform in Nepal: (1) equitable access to all levels, (2) raising the quality of education outcome, (3) development of education management in terms of organizational structure, institutional capacity and governance, and (4) more equitable structure of public finance.

Capacity Building for Educational Improvement: An Institutional Analysis of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) of Nepal
Min Bahadur Bista & Stephen Carney, Danish University of Education International Program for Education and Development, Study and Resource Centre, Kathmandu, 2001

The study has two main objectives: to assess the overall capacity of MOES, its staff and constituent bodies in relation to their mandates, roles and responsibilities and to make an effort to guide the conceptualization and preparation of a human resource development plan for MOES to support the central goal of quality improvement under BPEP II.

The study is based on qualitative and quantitative analysis. The data for the study were collected by questionnaires that were administered to MOES agencies, regional and district units, and schools within the Central and Western Regions in the year 2000.

The study gives several findings on the institutional capacity at central, regional, district, cluster and school district level. The findings related to the district, cluster and school district levels are presented below.

The study finds that there has been relatively little decentralization in the work of District Education Office and Officer. The District Education Officers work in an unassuming environment which further complicates the relationship between central and local accountability and ownership.

The study concludes that only small number of schools have become effective and that a vast majority suffer from a lack of resources, weak leadership, qualified staff, materials and facilities. Likewise, the finding shows that inadequate resources and confused leadership affect the Resource Centre system.

The study suggests following measures for capacity building at the district, cluster and school levels: strengthen the District Education Office, stop appointing District Education Officer on acting basis, introduce a comprehensive package for decentralized planning, appoint planning officers in District Education Offices, establish school districts, redefine the role of school supervisors, define clearly the relationship between DDC and DEO, involve the district staff in designing and implementing plans and programs, change the focus in the RP job description, strengthen the capacity of RPs, make school administration site-based, shift focus from RPs to head teachers, redefine the relationship of RPs with the head teacher of the host school, introduce school improvement planning and school evaluation, hold schools and teachers accountable for their performance, bring in a system of providing output-based funding to schools, develop a separate package to support chronically low-performing schools, establish a strong governance structure, strengthen the educational leadership role of the head teachers, introduce the system of selecting head teachers through open competition, allow parents to organize their own associations, and encourage teachers to form professional associations.

Tirth Raj Khaniya, (2004-04-14 05:59:20) Reform in primary education, eKantipur .com

Educational reforms are undertaken in the expectation that students receiving quality education will acquire expected skills and abilities. There is no connection, however, between investments in educational quality and improved learning outcomes. Nepal has seen only a little improvement in the classroom, curriculum, textbook distribution, teacher training packages, administration and supervision, school management, and community involvement in school management before and after the reform projects.

The reform initiatives have undertaken a wide range of activities with regard to curriculum reform, provision of textbooks and instructional materials, institutionalization of teacher support system, improvement in access to and management of education, and improved facilities for the Ministry of Education, development of training programs for teacher and managers, establishment of teacher training centers, and improvement of school facilities. Nepal has therefore achieved substantially in the supply side of the reform which includes a new primary curriculum and textbooks, provision of curriculum dissemination and in-

service training for teachers, provision of resource center mechanism, training for supervisors and head teachers, and improved facility for the Ministry.

The reform process would not yield better results unless quality of education is understood well and programs are designed accordingly by the agencies involved. Evaluation of the reform should also be based on the learning achievement of students. This is what the government and the donors must bear in mind if they are really serious about the quality of learning. If a project has no impact at all on student achievement, the tremendous expenditures made on education cannot be justified, nor can the country afford to keep trying the conventional approach, i.e. input verses output- model forever without much convincing results.

Disbursement of Block Grants
Tribhuvan University, Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), 2005

The 'Disbursement of Block Grant' study was carried out by CERID as a part of the Formative Research Project. The government of Nepal introduced the larger and diversified provision of public grants to school in 2061/62 by issuing the School Grants Operation Guidelines 2061(2004). With regard to this provision, the study set the following objectives to examine the issues in implementing the grants: to identify the issues and challenges faced in the disbursement and the implementation of block grant scheme, to assess the level of involvement of the stakeholders in the implementation, to look into the strength and weakness of the scheme, and to suggest measures for successful implementation.

The outcome of the study is based on a field survey conducted in 9 schools of 3 districts. The conclusions of the study are as follows:

There is a very little awareness about the block grant and its purpose in the teachers and SMC members. Schools only use the earmarked grants but they do not take any decision regarding priorities. The main problems in implementation are: no/ limited awareness about the grant system, delayed release of funds, lack of monitoring and follow-up, and schools not prepared as required by the system. Strengths of the block grant system: the block grant promoted preparation of SIP, strengthened the power of SMCs and provided resources to poorer primary schools for educational materials. Weaknesses of the system: it demands several conditions, the grant provision is complex (particularly, the accreditation section), and the grants criteria can hardly be met by most primary schools.

The study made these recommendations: dissemination of the information about the block grants, providing information on specific purposes of grants, compulsory reporting by schools on the use of grants money, monitoring on the use, reducing delay in disbursement, orientation on the process of accreditation, follow-up study SMC meetings, account keeping in school, strengthening financing management in DEOs, provision of scholarship guidelines to schools, and support to DEO for developing, monitoring and enhancing school capacity.

Effectiveness of Incentive/Scholarship Programs for Girls and Disadvantaged Children
Tribhuvan University, Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2003

This study examines the various types of scholarship programs for girls and disadvantaged children, launched by MOES through Women Education Section of

the Department of Education, with the objective of increasing their participation in education. The study focuses on the educational incentive program for girls (EIPG), Dalit scholarship, and primary school scholarship for all girls. EIPG is the piloting program and the rest are regular programs.

Objectives of the Study:

- To calculate the participation of girls and disadvantaged children in education

- To identify the incentives necessary for girls and disadvantaged children

- To identify the gaps in the implementation of incentives/scholarship distribution and reasons for the gaps

- To generate effective mechanisms of incentives/scholarship distribution for girls and disadvantaged children

- To study the impact of incentive/scholarship programs on enrolment and retention

- To be acquainted with the experiences of NGO-supported incentive programs in primary schools in the sample districts.

The findings of the study are based on the field work carried out in Parsa, Nawalparasi and Khotang districts. This study concludes that the participation of girls and disadvantaged children is low for these reasons: parents want their daughters to get married rather than send them to school; Muslims prefer Madarasas, failure and repeater rates in grade I are very high, school age children prefer working as porters to going to school, inadequate physical facility, insufficient classroom space, inadequate teacher supply, and uncalculated teacher-student ratio.

The study gives separate suggestions for girls and Dalit and for the primary school scholarship for all girls. Suggestions for girls are: increase participation of girls and disadvantaged children, expand social involvement, introduce integrated programs, reduce the gap and improve the distribution mechanism and management system. For Dalits : involve Dalits in the distribution of the scholarship, integrate income generating program activities (parental incentive), manage tutors for disadvantaged children (within the community), encourage the parents of most disadvantaged groups to engage in income-generating activities, conduct door-to-door awareness programs, make the community people responsible for the education of their girl children, form mother groups and mobilize them for creating awareness, develop the monitoring schedule (centre to VDC), allocate budget for awareness advocacy program, form a Dalit Committee involving Dalits in incentive management, provide scholarships, physical facilities and human resources in an integrated way, make VDC assist in providing local teachers for the school. Suggestions for primary school scholarship for all girls: encourage the parents of most disadvantaged groups for income-generating activities, conduct door-to-door awareness programs, provide incentive programs, physical facilities and human resources in an integrated way, form mother groups and mobilize them for creating awareness, develop the monitoring schedule (centre to VDC) and allocate budget for the awareness activities advocacy program.

Situation of Inclusive classroom in Nepal
Tribhuvan University, Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2006

This study states that after the initiation of EFA program, inclusive education was started with the concept of integrating all types of children including the disabled in one common educational environment. So, the study focuses on inclusive classroom and intends to identify practices that have led to inclusion of students from various cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, language groups, disabilities and other differing characteristics.

The major objectives of the study are as follows:

- To explore the system and mechanism that has been used in identifying the differing needs of children in the classroom
- To assess teachers' awareness of and sensitivity towards special needs children.
- To evaluate teachers' capacity in meeting the learning needs of special needs children.
- To find out the effectiveness of the Welcome to School program in relation to the inclusive classroom, to retain children in school.

The study was carried out in 21 of 210 inclusive schools of Dadeldhura, Banke, Chitwan, Kavre and Jhapa districts, which represented 22 inclusive -education-program-districts.

Findings of the study: The assessment center (AC) has not been effective in identifying special need children, the District Education Officer has not able to pay attention to AC, there is no co-ordination between AC, the resource class and the inclusive education school, severely disabled children are debarred from receiving education, IE teachers are not clear about the concept of IE even after having a six day long training and failed to treat the special needs children for lack of practical knowledge and capability to meet these children's learning needs.

The study concludes that the Welcome to School program has helped to increase the number of children in Jhapa, Banke, Kavre and Dadeldhura but in Chitwan it has not been so effective and the problem of retaining them is becoming crucial . Muslim children in schools have not benefited from the government's scholarship policy.

The study has made these recommendations: training on identifying the special needs children should be provided to the teachers, coordination should bond AC, IE class and RC, qualified AC coordinators should be appointed, school management should be capable of including the IE concept in SIP, data necessary for the IE concept should be collected, good experiences of the IE pilot program should be included in the IE training manual, children enrolled under the Welcome to School program should be managed according to the IE philosophy, teachers should be authorized to identify and select children for the incentive/scholarship, the present scholarship should include all the 13 types of children identified by DOE as IE children, and the teachers should be trained on the continuous assessment system (CAS).

Development and Implementation of District Education Plan
Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal, May 2002

The report in its introductory background states that each district has a District Education Plan (DEP) as BPEP II had shifted planning and implementation responsibilities to the district to ensure the participatory planning.

The specifics objective of this research are:

- to review the existing planning process and methods

- to review the policy, objectives, priorities, resources and program components of DEP and their implementation

- to review the role of District Education Committee, DEOs, RPs, headmasters, supervisors, local bodies, NGOs and other stakeholders in preparing and implementing DEP

- to underline the skills required for developing and implementing the DEP

- to examine the linkage established and the coordination maintained in developing and implementing DEP

- to review the DEP implementing strategies

- to review the monitoring and reporting of the DEP implementation.

The study collected field data from the districts of Ilam, Morang, Rasuwa, Kaski and Rupandehi.

Findings of the study: DEP planning has been affected by the limited expertise, DEP has been prepared by a group of persons without participation and contribution of a cross-section of the district population (this has resulted in a weak feeling of ownership), DEP planning process has been able to initiate steps for a vision of improvement and development of education at the district, DEP mainly focuses on covering the program components of BPEP II regardless of priorities and specific requirements of the district, it has yet to emerge as a professional and participatory plan reflecting the aspirations and specific requirements of the district, most of the stakeholders such as school teachers, headmasters, members of the local bodies and local organization representatives are only involved in the advisers in the preparation of DEP, DEP has been used as a rolling plan, it has been dictated by the resource allocation from the centre, DEP does not clearly specify the role and responsibility of local bodies in program management and resource sharing, it has been developed but programs have been implemented in isolation, effective monitoring and reporting mechanism for DEP has not been developed yet, LSGA, Education Act (seventh amendment) and Education Regulations, 2002 contradict each other.

School Improvement Plan and Its Implementation
Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development, Tribhuvan University, 2003

The main objective of this report is to study the nature and extent of people's participation in the planning, management and implementation of the basic and primary education at the local level. The specific objectives are:

- to review the policy commitment and legal framework related to SIP

- to record the evolution of SIP process under BPEP II

- to study the status of SIP design and implementation

- to review the contents of SIP

- to study the resource availability and resource mobilization for SIP

- to review the monitoring mechanism for SIP implementation

- to suggest appropriate elements/contents for SIP (if necessary).

Findings of the study: SIP has been regarded and followed as a decentralization reform process in improving school affairs; SIPs have not been formally discussed and officially approved by SMCs.; SIP gradually evolved as quality-focused and school-based development plan; formulation of technically sound SIP has become the concern of all; SIP initiated planning exercises at the school level; SIP initiated creating vision of school development at the local level; SIP preparation lacks appropriate expertise; SIP process became instrumental for involving the municipality in the local educational affair; SIP is not regarded as significant for school improvement; SIP implementation suffers from mismanagement of time; SIP process was not appropriately piloted; SIP was driven by the components of BPEP II rather than by the local ideas and strategies; SIP process did not address the needs of women and hardcore groups; SIP focused more on primary education and physical facility development; it has less financial implications; SIP implementation depended largely upon government resources; prompt communication between centre and district and between district and RC, and the school has not been initiated, monitoring of SIP did not receive due attention.

Plan, policies and programs: Tenth Plan 2002-2007
His Majesty's Government National Planning Commission Nepal, 2002

The main objective of the Tenth Plan is to develop education as a more effective means to reduce poverty.

The Plan has found the enrolment of school age children from backward communities low and the progress in the decentralization of school management slow. It has considered these as challenges of primary education.

One of the objectives of the Plan is to make a special provision to increase the access of women and people with disabilities to the opportunities of education. The strategy related to this objective is to develop an integrated and inclusive education system in line with the concept of special needs education. The policies and action plans aim to ensure access, develop a framework for scholarship distribution, decentralize the education system clarifying the role of local bodies and implement SIP, VEP, DEP related programs, and encourage teaching in the mother tongue.

Education for All National Plans of Action
Ministry of Education and Sports, Nepal National Commission for UNESCO
In Collaboration with UNESCO, Kathmandu, 2002

For the translation of Education for All National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) into action, the government should prepare an annual implementation program that provides further specification to program activities. For the implementation of the EFA/NPA the roles and responsibilities of various agencies should be specified. For example, each district will review its DEP to incorporate programs to meet the EFA goals. DEO will take educational leadership to accomplish this task. DDCs, Municipalities and VDCs will be made responsible to plan EFA activities in their respective fields. At school level, SIP will be prepared in line with the EFA goals.

Several instruments for attaining the goals of decentralized planning have been used. District planning guidelines, basic statistics and district plans for all the 75 districts are available.

The EFA/NPA document has assigned roles to education authorities and agencies as follows:

a. DEO: decentralized planning, school improvement planning, preparation and costing of educational plans, programs and budget.

b. RC: planning of recurrent/refresher training course, convening professional meetings, workshops and seminars, conductiing community survey and community mobilization.

c. VEC: coordinating SMCs, schools and educational programs within the VDC, preparation of education plans for VDC, advising VDC on educational matters.

d. SMC: preparation of SIP and programs, recruitment of teachers, monitoring school and teacher performances, mobilizing resources for school development, overseeing general functioning of the school, mobilizing the community for the preparation and execution of SIP, rewards and punishment for teachers, managing school fund and property, controlling school finance.

e. Local bodies (DDC,VDC, Municipalities): preparing plans and programs to ensure quality basic and primary education within their territories, generating resources to support education programs, monitoring education activities to ensure benefit, providing support to program implementation, building relationship with the agencies.

Vulnerable Communities Development Plan (Draft) for Education for All 2004-2009 program, 27 February 2004

The Vulnerable Communities Development Plan (VCDP) addresses social exclusion in primary education and its effects and implications for vulnerable people as mentioned in the EFA Core Document, 2004-2009. The social objective of the EFA core document is to foster a genuinely inclusive education environment in Nepal.

The central goal of VCDP is to assess the capacity of the Nepal's Education for All program to offer inclusive education to meet the learning needs of all disadvantaged communities in the Nepalese society, including girls and women, ethnic minorities, Dalits and indigenous people, and linguistic minorities through equal access to educational resources.

The study concludes that a number of groups—specifically girls, indigenous people and occupational castes—continued to be excluded from the main stream of primary education despite of the promising program set by the EFA core document for more inclusive education based on interventions and decentralization of school management. The challenges here relate to: conceptual clarity on inclusive education and analysis of why children from some groups do not go to school, modalities and concrete mechanism for implementation, representation of women and ethnic minorities at all management levels, commitment to free primary education, participatory planning and evaluation, mechanisms to increase incentives for the inclusion of Dalits, recruiting teachers speaking indigenous languages, mother tongue and bilingual education, and explicit budget for the development of indigenous communities and ethnic languages.

VCDP has made following recommendations: (a) actions (by the central level) to increase non-salary recurrent budgets for schools through block grants to SMCs, provision of two women teachers for every primary school that has a quota of at least 5 teachers, at least one female teacher speaking the local language for areas with significant non- Nepali speaking populations, gradual increase in the role of the private sector in textbook printing and distribution, implementation of ten action points outlined in gender audit of the education sector, incentives for increasing

Dalits and girl's attendance, and curriculum revision; (b) actions at village level for higher level of funding to SMCs conditional on partnership with community groups to achieve the NEFAP inclusive education goals and carry out social mapping of the school catchment area, increase in social diversity in SMCs, social audit, documentation of local knowledge pertaining to curriculum development, identification of local women teachers, community-based educational management information system, advocacy against discriminatory practices; home-to-school language transition for non-Nepali speaking children (here the community will be responsible for employing bilingual women teachers from the local communities), collecting and documenting information on local history and culture for use in the national curriculum and textbooks, and EMIS disaggregated data.

Three-Year Interim Education Plan
Ministry of Education and Sports, (2064/065- 2066/67) , Second Draft, Falgun 30, 2063

The three-year interim education plan is formulated in the form of a re-unified, re-constructed, re-established and re-adjusted document to ensure access and quality of education at school level and higher level including technical education. The Plan is guided by the feeling expressed in Democratic Movement II, EFA, MDG and Nepal's commitment in different international forums.   It intends to make education life-skill-oriented relevant, employment-oriented and productive.

The targets of the Plan relevant to primary education are: enrolment rate at Grade I with ECD experience 60 percent, GER 104 percent, NER 96 percent, NER of girl 50 percent and 100 percent   trained teacher in school.

The Plan has stated these challenges to the education sector: national conflict, slow process of decentralization and minimum physical and educational materials at most schools.

The Interim Plan's long-run strategies related to education reform are: (a) give the responsibility of the formation of education plan and management to the local unit and the responsibility of school operation to SMC within the framework of decentralization; (b) restructure grade 1-8 as basic education for developing school education on the inclusive concept; (c) increase access of Dalit, disabled etc. conducting selected programs such as scholarship, hostel etc.

One of the objectives of the plan is to work out minimum pre-requisites for providing equality-based basic education and make this education free, accessible and (gradually) compulsory.

To meet the above objective, the plan intends to make the local unit and the civil society responsible for undertaking reestablishment and reconstruction of educational institutions.   Likewise, it has the strategies of distribution of scholarships, release of block grant fund based on VEP/MEP and SIP, release of booster grant, and training.

The overall objective of educational decentralization is to make the school autonomous for the purpose of good governance, management, resource mobilization and quality assurance. Local units such as VDC and Municipalities will be made responsible for the planning and management of basic education. In all these inclusiveness will be accepted as a common strategy.   In the operation and management of the school special attention will be given to the participation of Dalit,

minority, disabled and disadvantaged groups. Teachers will be taken in from local communities depending upon their availability.

The plan has introduced the above programs for the basic level education. As the basic level education cover Grades 1-8, the state will be responsible to provide this level of education to all. Hence, acquisition of it will be the right of all children. The amount of school grants and scholarship will be increased. The right to have basic education in the mother tongue will be assured gradually. At this level, schools will receive allocated funds and educational programs will be of the same quality level throughout the country.

Nepal Education Sector: Planning for Reform in an Unstable Setting
Ram Balak Singh, Deputy Director, Department of Education, Karsten Jensen, Chief Technical Advisor, DANIDA/ESAT, http:/www.mfdr.org/sourcebook/6-91Nepal Education Sector .pdf file html edition

This paper finds that Nepal has remained firm in its commitment to increase access and enhance the quality of education through decentralization of the heavily centralized school system. For this transformation, it explains the positive roles played by the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP).

ASIP, which is built upon partnership, organizes strategies and specific measures proposed for district level activities. It gives comprehensive pictures of the on-going programs. ASIP is supported by an up-to-date Education Management Information System (EMIS), which is getting larger and becoming move reliable for information-based decision making.

Finally, the paper argues on Nepal's experiences that planning and budgeting of education can be shifted from an entirely state-run central planning to an inclusive data-driven mode even in a highly adverse condition.

Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) 2006-2007
Department of Education, Ministry of Education, Bhaktapur, 2006

The Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) has adopted a holistic sector wide approach in the comprehensive school reform initiatives. This document is based on the overall objectives of access, quality and capacity building that are stated in the core document of EFA and SESP. The key objectives of the ASIP 2006-2007 are drawn from the vision of the school sector education reform. The following are the main focus coverage of ASIP related to primary education.

- Increase school participation especially of disadvantaged communities and also reduce drop-out and repetition in the first three grades

- Enhance the learning achievement quality of students

- Build the capacity of key stakeholders

- Use SIP for ensuring ownership and transparency at school/ community level.

The following policy directions are seen contributing to realizing the ASIP vision: school-based management, devolution of school management to communities, intensive school mapping, accreditation of schools, student tracking system, continuation of performance grants and liberal promotion policy.

ASIP has set decentralization, inclusion, capacity building and conflict mitigation and post-conflict reconstruction as main strategies. The strategies relevant to decentralization, inclusive education and capacity building programs are as follows:

Measures for increasing school autonomy, continuation of grants (earmarked, block and performance) to SMCs; clarification and clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of SMCs, PTAs and other stakeholders; continuation of VEP, SIP; participation of the civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of activities at least at the grass root level through the SIP process; access of community stakeholders to school governance (by intensifying the process of transferring the school management authority to community).

In inclusive education, following measures will be taken: mapping of school facilities to ensure access to all including ethnic groups; inclusion of educational institutes run by minority and religious groups such as Madarasas, Gumbas etc. in the main stream; disaggregation of EMIS for ascertaining the level of participation of girls, Dalits and Janajatis in education; priority to improve relevance of education to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; provision of bilingual female teachers; and priority to disadvantaged groups in teacher recruitment.

In capacity building, the SMC/PTA and head teachers will be targeted for orienting these to issues like inclusive education, gender sensitization, conflict sensitivity and peace building including maximizing utilization of school resources.

Ensuring Access

The following activities are given priority for ensuring access of and participation in education by all children: construction and furnishing of 3918 new class rooms, rehabilitation of 1150 classrooms; improvement of the external environments of 400 schools (a holistic package of drinking water, toilets and fencing); school mapping; local planning (DEP/VEP/MEP/SIP); and networking and coordination with NGO/organizations.Teacher organization, Media and Journalists to work for children; enrolment campaign and other social mobilizing activities.

Inclusive education

In inclusive education the following activities will be emphasized: IE approaches will be emphasized in teacher training; resource classes will be further strengthened considering the need for deaf and mentally retarded (MR) children; integrated approach will be adopted for blind children and children with disabilities; special pedagogy based on life skills will be endeavored; networking of NGOs will be strengthened; assessment centres will be equipped and strengthened, and provision of scholarships for children with disabilities will be continued.

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This paper finds that Nepal has been persistent with its commitment for access and quality of education through decentralization. For this, it explains the positive role played by the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP).

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Finally, the paper argues that planning and budgeting of education can be shifted from an entirely state-run central planning to an inclusive data-driven mode even in highly adverse conditions.

Program Implementation Manual 2063
Department of Education, Bhaktapur, Bhadra 2063

DOE has brought out the Program Implementation Manual (PIM), 2063 to provide support to program implementation activity. The concept of PIM is to clearly identify the concept, objectives, strategies about the programs so that the concerned stakeholders (center to school) will develop a clear understanding of the programs for effective implementation.

PIM has the following objectives:

- To help the concerned stakeholders have a clear understanding of programs such as EFA and of the secondary education support program, community school support program, and higher education project.

- To develop the feeling of ownership and responsibility by identifying the roles of different units in plan formulation, execution and monitoring.

- To achieve the desired goal on time through the effective implementation of the programs.

- To give a clear idea about the process of program implementation and resource mobilization.

PIM has formulated the following strategies to achieve the above objectives:

- Functional format of decentralization

- Capacity increase at local level

- Inclusive education

- Gender equi-development

- Partnership and coordination

- Resource finding at local level

- Transparency

- Need-based program

- Public auditing

- Additional grant based on achievement

- Classification of schools

The principal educational programs related to the study include:

(a) Education for All (2004-2009)

    The government of Nepal has implemented the EFA program in 2061/2062, accepting it as a master document for primary level education.

(b) Community School Support Program (2003-2005)

    The transfer of community schools to SMC was begun in 2059/60. This activity was completed with 1936 primary, 276 lower secondary and 107 secondary

schools by the end of Bhadra, 2063. The objectives of this program are: to promote the participation of students and parents in the community schools; to boost access, quality and capacity of community schools and to increase the feeling of ownership by increasing transparency in school related activities.

(c) Special Program targeted to Karnali Zone

In Karnali, the program to distribute scholarships to all girl students studying at primary level has continued to this year. It was initiated in 2062/63. A girl receives Rs. 100/- monthly for 10 months as special scholarship.

(d) School Physical Improvement Program (2003-2005)

There are no new programs under it. However, the construction of classrooms, development of external school environment are on-going in the primary schools of 12 districts. The construction of buildings for the resource centers will be continued.

Program: Education for All (district level)

Program components, No 2 and No 6, are related to this study. This components are as follows:

Component No 2: Ensuring of Access for All

This component includes: formulation of Village/Municipality Education Plan, school physical facility improvement, education for special needs children.

Objectives: to enroll out-of-school children for primary education, to improve school physical facilities on the basis of student number, increase of access to education for special needs children.

Programs included in this component: formulation of VEP/ MEP (incorporating SIP) in selected VDC/Municipalities; launching of enrolment campaign from 2064 Baisakha, 2064; formation of Student Enrolment and Welcome to School committees in collaboration with NGO, PTA, and teacher's union; operation of Resource Class and Assessment Center; and distribution of scholarships on proper identification.

Component 6: Quality Education

This component includes: block grant for SIP implementation Rs 275, Rs 300 and Rs 325 (per student per year) for Terai, Valley, and Hills and Mountains districts respectively), grant for school management (Rs 11000 per school), block grant for the resource center, planning and management training (2 days), orientation on Flash Reports I and II to resource persons, block grant to community-managed school, school accreditation, child tracking and up-to-date record of particular students.

Objectives: The objectives of the programs conducted under this component is to disseminate school level educational statistics after installation; make available school level statistics for planning; increase institutional capacity building; make educational information simple, effective and manageable, bring school age children to school as per their situations, and develop an environment to retain the children in school.

Programs included in this component: block grant for SIP implementation; school management grant; stationery grant as per the number of teachers; block grant for operating RC; planning and management training for HT, chairperson of SMC and other stakeholders; dissemination of Class 2 new curriculum and textbooks; orientation for resource persons; school level educational statistics; RC-wise function

research; progress report by DEO; formulation, printing and dissemination of annual strategic implementation plan by DEO; computer training and internet service for DEO, block grant for community managed schools; piloting of school accreditation; child tracking and up-to-date record of particular students; and school-based training by RC and the school.

Guidelines for School Improvement Plan
Department of Education, Bhaktapur, 2061

To make the school prepare, execute and monitor a plan that reflects local needs, the government of Nepal developed the concept of School Improvement Plan (SIP), which is one of the programs to meet the goal of Education for All, and this the government did by assuring supply of sources and resources.

The SIP guidelines stated eight objectives and four strategies. Besides, it introduced some important considerations for inclusion in the plan. The objectives, strategies are summarized as follows.

Objectives: active participation of local stakeholders in the development of school activities in order to develop the feeling of school ownership; to develop skill and ability necessary for plan formulation; implementation, reformation, execution and monitoring at local level; to create an environment of self-confidence by adopting transparency measures for resource allocation; to identify, mobilize and use local resources for maximum achievement, to develop the practice to plan and execute school programs in a systematic way, to develop a feeling of 'community for school and school for community'; to enable the community to prepare an education plan ensuring community benefits; and to provide quality education for all.

Strategies: to increase the ability of local level authority, to decentralize authority at local level, to develop transparency in every activity, and generate local resources.

The data to be incorporated in the plan: school education statistics, local level decisions on four questions visions, program strategies, targets and costs.

School Grants Operation Guidelines (First Amendment) And School Accreditation Form
Department of Education, Budget and Program Section, Bhaktapur, 2063

The department of Education brought out the School Grants Operation Guidelines (SGOG) 2061 (2004) for regulating the use of the grants-in-aid in the community (public) schools. Accordingly, community schools began to receive grants from FY 2061/62(2004/2005). The government had introduced SGOG to ensure the involvement of the stakeholders in all processes of school improvement (planning to evaluation) based on the needs of local communities within the framework of decentralization. SGOG was amended for the first time in 2063.

SGOG has following objectives:

- To provide SMC flexibility to use school resources

- To ensure attainment of higher education by all students of the school as expected by the curriculum

- To ensure the enrolment of all children within the VDC/Municipality defined catchment area with emphasis on school-school coordination

- To arrange for teaching in the local language at pre-primary and primary levels

- To provide grants to schools based on their educational achievement indicators

- To promote mobilization of additional resources only on an effective use of the block grants

- To provide additional resources to schools in order to attain the basic level

- To encourage schools to self-monitoring and evaluation in conjunction with the stakeholders (through the system of grants).

Kinds of School Grants and Norms of Expenses

Under SGOG, government allocates budget to schools in the form of earmarked grants and block grants.

The earmarked grants are to be expended for specific purposes but they will continue to the next year if an activity such as construction of classroom could not be completed in the current year. Block grants are to be expended as per the decision of SMC based on SIP. The title and norms of grants to primary education are given below.

(A) **Earmarked grants:** the title and norms of expenditure are as follows:

   (i) Salary of primary teachers

   Monthly salaries allowances and other facilities of primary teachers-salary, allowances will be given as per the regulations of the government of Nepal.

   (ii) Donation for teachers from the side of the program

   Rahat (relief) for teachers donation as per annual approval.

   (iii) Scholarships

Scholarships for 50 percent of girl students studying in community school (per girl Rs 350/- per annum; the date of distribution: Jestha 4 and Falgun 7).

Scholarships for primary level Dalit students (per student Rs 350 per annum; distribution on Jestha 4 and Falgun 7).

Scholarships for primary level students studying in Karnali Zone:Rs 1000 for 10 months at the rate of Rs 100 per month.

Scholarships for remote mountain hostel students: Rs 12000 for ten months at the rate of Rs 1200 per month.

Scholarship for the disabled of various categories: 'A' category: Rs 10000 for ten months at the rate of Rs 1000 per month; 'B' category: Rs 5000 for ten months at the rate of Rs 500 per month; 'C' category: Rs 3000 for ten months at the rate of Rs 300 per month; 'D' category: Rs 500 for ten months at the rate of Rs 50 per month.

(B) Block grants

The title and expenditure norms are as follows:

   (i) General grants: These grants are available only to approved community schools. The school should spend these grants by fixing priority (based on SIP) and on approval by SMC.

   o Administrative expenditure: The per annum grant for each primary school is Rs 11000.

o Stationery expenditure: The amount of this grant per teacher per annum for a primary school is Rs 300.

(ii) **SIP-based block grants**: These grants are available for both approved and proposed schools. They are provided to ensure availability of primary level textbooks. The remaining amount is expended on SIP on approval by SMC. The amounts are allocated as follows:

- Rs 325 per student per academic year in the Himalaya region

- Rs 300 per student per academic year in the Hill region

- Rs 275 per student per academic year in the Terai and Valley regions.

(iii) **Performance grant (booster grant):** This grant is given for educational achievement and aims to raise the performance level. Even VDCs/VECs and Municipalities are entitled to receive it.

Student Enrolment for Certainty and Welcome to School Program
Department of Education, Ministry of Education and Sports, 2063

The Department of Education (DOE) has been operating the Student Enrolment Weekly Campaign for the past 3 years. The program intends to enroll and retain and provide quality education to children who are out of school for reasons of disability, conflict and poverty. It also includes remote area, dwellers and street children. This program was carried out in 2063 for the remote area with the following objectives:

- To bring school age children, particularly girl, disabled, Dalit, backward community's children, to the mainstream of school education.

- To cut down dropout from Class 1

- To provide quality education to all.

For preparation, execution and evaluation of the program different committees have been formed at central, department, region, district, resource center and school levels.

Ministerial Level Decision on the Management of Community School
School Administration Section, Ministry of Education and Sports, Circular No 567, Date: 2059/8/9

The Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) sent the minister level decision to the Department of Education (DOE), stating the following particulars about the ownership transfer of schools to the community.

(a) Additional conditions necessary for the rights and benefit of the school can be included in the contract letter during transfer of school management as per the school operation guidelines (community managed), 2059.

(b) The Education Act 2028(seventh amendment) has made the provision of SMC in each school. The Local Self Government Act 2055 (G 2 of parts 28 and 96) provides basis for the school management and operation committee at Village and Municipality levels. Thus, schools including transferred schools should form SMCs and form other committees as required.

(c) The local unit responsible for school management will have these roles: continuously monitor the school academic environment; implement the reports

received from SMC; distribute resources; provide support for education materials and physical facility; conduct teacher training; provide salaries and allowances to teachers; and conduct programs to encourage teachers.

Direction regarding the issue of effective Implementation of Education Act 2028 and Education Regulations 2059
School Administration Section, Ministry of Education and Sports, Circular No 111, Date: 2059/4/28

The Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) released the following directions to the Department of Education (DOE) regarding the effective Implementation of the Education Act 2028 and the Education Regulations 2059.

(a) Form SMC immediately for effect.

(b) Fix the number of female teachers in the total teacher quota for the primary level

(c) DEO is to accredit (classify) school through a committee that includes SS and one member of the District Education Committee.

(d) Select the chairperson of PTA in the presence of the members of the parent-teacher executive committee.

Nepal Government's Policies & Programs for Fiscal Year 2006
Friday, 14 July 2006, 10:18 am Opinion: Siddhi B. Ranjitkar

Deputy Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli presented the 34-point policy and program document [1] of the government of Nepal for the fiscal year 2006 (2063) in the House of Representatives on Sunday, July 9, 2006.

Under this program the government of Nepal will continue the 'Education for All' program to ensure access to and enhance the quality of primary education and make provisions of scholarships for all girl students of classes 1-10 in the Karnali Zone and for 50 percent of girl students in primary schools in the 70 districts of other zones. It will provide scholarships, as incentives, for the students from Dalit families and the communities living below the poverty line. Special arrangements will be made for the improvement in the quality of school education, special education and higher education.

The government lay emphasis on skill development and introduces legal reforms in law to make foreign employment dignified, manageable and transparent. It will pay special attention to human resource development to generate self-employment opportunities within the country and to enhance the quality of foreign employment. It will make provisions for scholarships for the children of disadvantaged communities and children of martyrs to ensure their participation in technical education and children vocational training.

Concept Paper on School Sector Reform Program (School Sector Approach) (Draft)
Ministry of Education and Sports, February 2007

The concept paper on School Sector Approach (SSA) argues that the current ten years of schooling, including five years of primary education, is not adequate for coping with the emerging knowledge and skills needed for the expanding global society. In this context, the proposed policy defines Grade 8 as the end of basic education. Schools for basic education (classes 1 to 8) and secondary education (classes 9 to 12)

will operate as separate entities in terms of management, administration and financing.

School education will be decentralized under a framework that assigns school management function to SMC and other functions to local bodies. Local bodies such as VDCs /Municipalities will be responsible for the planning and management of basic education and for the dissemination and advocacy of government policies and programs; DDCs/Municipalities will be responsible for the planning and management of secondary education too.

SSA will follow the inclusion strategy. Special attention will be given to increasing the participation of women, Dalits, ethnic minorities and disabled and marginalized groups in the governance and management of the school. Provision will be made to increase the number of students and teachers from these groups. Up to class 3 mother tongue will be employed as the medium of instruction. SMC will recruit teachers and appoint the head teacher on a contract basis. The head teachers will be selected from the teachers with leadership potential and promise.

The core document will be finalized for appraisal in December, 2007.

Conclusion of the Review

The review of the study of the developing country Benin shows that education reform should be judged on four criteria: local need, locally planned support, ownership and financing. The study of another developing country Ghana shows that the parent-teacher association (PTA) can play a significant role in raising fund for the school but the involvement of the association's members in the school management has been discouraging because they are generally considered non-professional supervisors.

The study of Priorities of Education Reform and Capacity Building in Educational Improvement points out that the education reform in Nepal has been marred by political high-handedness, frequent transfer of DEO, nominal decentralization, adverse environment in DEO, frequent changes in education rules and regulations, weak educational leadership, little role of communities, unavailability of resources and qualified staff, confused leadership and management, petty resources in the resource center.

The FRP studies have different conclusions, for these studies are related to specific subjects of the educational reform launched in Nepal. These studies show that there is little awareness in the teachers and SMC members about block grants and their purpose. Participation of girls and disadvantaged children has been low despite the provision of scholarships and other incentives. The purpose of the district education plan (DEP) and the school improvement plan (SIP), which are as viewed as part of decentralization, has not been served mainly for lack of infrastructure /resources and technical expertise.

The Tenth Plan, EFA, VCDP, Three Year Interim Plan, and ASIP 2006-2007 have emphasized decentralization in education. They all endorse inclusive education, release of block grant (based on VEP/MEP and SIP), and booster grant, capacity building of SMC/PTA and head teacher and conflict mitigation and post-conflict reconstruction. Singh and Karsten have argued that ASIP has contributed to shift planning and budgeting of education from an entirely state run central planning to inclusive data driven mode.

To institutionalize educational reform, the Department of Education has brought out the Program Implementation Manual, 2063, Guidelines for School Improvement Plan 2061, and School Grants Operation Guidelines, 2063. The Department has also been implementing the 'Student Enrolment for Certainty and Welcome to School' programs for the past several years. Besides, the Ministry of Education and Sports has facilitated the management transfer of schools to the community. It has also laid emphasis on effective implemention of the Education Act, 2028 and the Education Regulations, 2059. In policy and programs for FY 2006, the government has claimed that it is committed to implement the EFA program. To promote access and to introduce the 1 to 8 and 9 to 12 system the government is going to finalize a concept paper on school sector reform program by December 2007.

CHAPTER III

Study Design

Study Framework

This study mainly used the qualitative approach for collecting information on educational reform in terms of scholarship, decentralized management and teacher support. Fieldwork was primarily carried out in districts, resource centres and schools. Apart from that, the perspectives of policy makers and implementers were gathered through consultation meetings and workshops. Researchers' perspectives were shaped after revisit and analysis of the documents, consultative meetings and workshops and on field data. Similar questions were put to different types of interviewees to check the reliability and validity of the collected data. What follows was the major focus:

- Institutional operation system and structural provisions

- System and provisions of communication for the implementation of EFA at the local level

- Communication and feedback system for improvement in program implementation.

The framework of the study is diagrammatically presented below:

Study framework
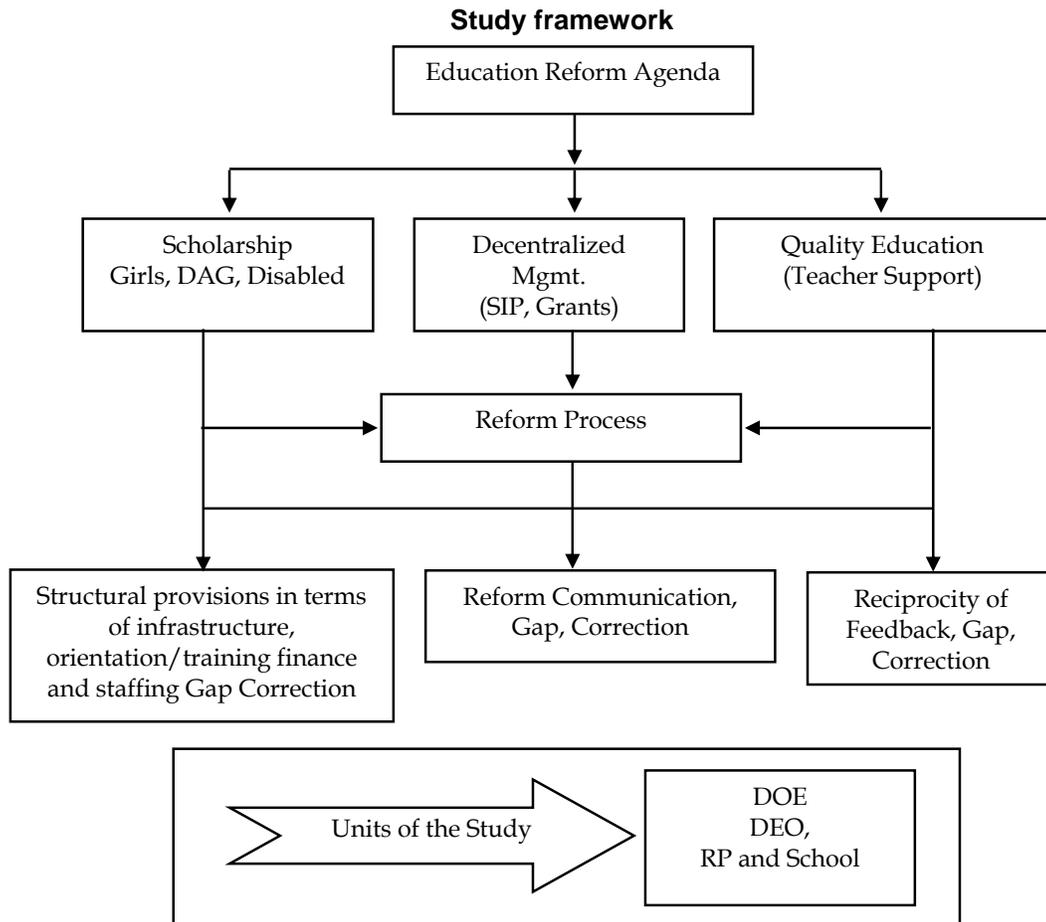
Sample

Five districts were selected on geographical and development region basis. The districts represented remote and rural pockets of Mountain, Hills and Terai. The research team visited five DEOs, five DDCs, five DTCOs, ten RCs, ten schools, ten VDCs/Municipalities, three assessment centers and three resource classes. The details of the sampled districts are given below.

Sample districts

Development Region	Geographical Region	No. of schools	RC	District
Eastern	Hill	2	2	Ilam
Central	Hill	2	2	Nuwakot
Western	Mountain	2	2	Mustang
Mid-Western	Mountain	2	2	Jumla
Far-Western	Tarai	2	2	Kanchanpur

Sample Population

The population for the study comprised district-level stakeholders, resource persons, supervisors, SMC members, PTA members, VEC members, teachers, district program managers and program implementers. Information was collected through observation, interview, FGD of local level agencies and their implementers. DEOs, LDOs, head teachers, teachers, SMC members, and VDC/community members, VEC and PTA members were involved in research activities. Required information was collected, using individual interview, pod group discussion, FGD, seminar, implementing guidelines and related papers and on the spot enquiry. Components such as infrastructure development, implementation procedure, provisions for training/orientation, financing and staffing were observed during field study. The following table presents the list of respondents and of tools used in the collection of information.

List of respondents and study tools

Respondents	Study Tools	Respondents per district	Total
DEO	Interview	1	5
LDO	Interview	1	5
District Education Committee	Interview	1	5
District Scholarship Committee members	Interview	3	15
District/Local management	FGD	7	35
Resource person	Interview	2	10
Program officer	Interview	1	5
Head teachers	Interview	2	10
Teachers	Interview	4	20
Supervisor	Interview	3	15
SMC members	Group interview	1-3	30
VDC/Community members	FGD	10	50

Study Procedure

Since the study used the qualitative research approach, it drew information from district-level stakeholders, resource persons, supervisors, SMCs, members of PTA, teachers and community people. The study procedures followed are as follows.

- Literature review

- Organization of consultative meetings at the central level to identify system and structural provisions at the implementation levels

- Development of study tools

- Organization of workshops at the district and local levels to identify system and structural provisions at the implementation levels

- Field visit

- Organization of district level workshops

- Data analysis and interpretation

- Report writing

- Organization of dissemination seminar

- Preparation of action steps for improvement in the EFA program modality.

A brief explanation of the various activities undertaken in the course of fieldwork is presented below.

Activities undertaken in District Education Office (DEO):

The study team made an attempt to find out the institutional system and structural provisions for educational access, decentralized management and teacher support. For this, the team visited sections and units of the DEO offices, collected office organization charts, attendance records, and conducted interviews with section officers, school supervisors and unit chiefs of the account sections. The team looked into all EFA programs (of this year) related to access, decentralized management and quality education. Similarly, the team discussed with the accountant to find facts related to fund flow mechanism of the district and the school. Discussions were also concentrated on how the fund flowed from DEO to RC and the school. Besides, the team carried out the activities of observing the daily activities of DEO office. A focus group discussion (FGD) was held in the meeting hall of DEO office, in which stakeholders. DEO/acting DEO, section officer, accountant, chief of the DTCO, and representative of DDC participated. Finally, a workshop was organized at DEO office to verify the information obtained from individuals and FGD.

Activities undertaken in District Treasury Control Office (DTCO):

To explain the fund flow mechanism, the team called on DTCO. A discussion with the chief of DTCO was held to record information on the fund flow mechanism at the district level.

Activities undertaken in Resource Center (RC):

Two RCs of each sampled districts were visited (on the recommendation of DEO.) Observation was carried out in all RCs. Interview was organized with RPs. Finally, a FGD was organized in all resource centers with the participation of resource center management committee members, head teachers, teachers and SMC chairpersons.

Activities undertaken in District Development Committee (DDC):

The research team visited DDCs of all sampled districts to understand the existing practices of decentralized management system at the district level. In each DDC, discussion was held with the section chief of Human Resource Development Unit and with the coordinator of Social Development Unit. Discussion was also carried out with the accountant.

Activities undertaken in VDC/Municipality:

To record information on co-ordination between DEO and VDCs/Municipalities, the research team also visited VDCs/Municipalities in each sampled district. The team visited three Municipalities and five VDCs. In each VDC/Municipality, a focus group discussion was held with the VDC secretary/municipality officer, social leaders and teachers. The discussion revealed that no co-ordination network had yet been established to facilitate the on-going educational reform process.

Activities undertaken in INGO/NGO:

It was learnt from the discussion with DEO officials that NGOs and INGOs were not involved in the education sector in four sampled districts. Thus, the team did not make any consultation with them.

In Jumla, three NGOs – Development Project Service Center (DPROSC) World Vision, Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) – were consulted to record their involvement in the education sector.

Activities undertaken in School:

The team visited two schools in each sample district. The total was ten schools (2 primary, 4 lower secondary and 4 higher secondary). Three of them had operated resource classes for the deaf (1) and the mentally retarded (2). These schools were selected in consultation with DEO.

Interviews were conducted with the head teachers and teachers of all the schools. Observation was carried out in each school. In the schools which operated resource classes the teacher of the resource class was interviewed and class observation was made. Finally, a FGD was organized in all schools, in which SMC chairpersons and members, head teachers, teachers and RPs participated. The selection of the resource center and school was made on the suggestion of the DEO.

Activities undertaken for cross - verification of information:

A cross verification activity for tracing the existing institutional system and institutional provisions related to fund flow mechanism, program flow system, communication practice and feed back was made by visiting programs and account sections of DEO, DTCO, RC, sampled schools and related VDCs/Municipalities. The details of verifying activities are given below.

(a)   For verifying the fund flow mechanism of scholarship, the team visited the programs and the account sections of DEO and the sampled schools (resources classes included). The study covered scholarships for girls, Dalits and the disabled.

(b)   For inclusive education, the team visited the program section of DEO to review the operation of resource classes in the districts. Later, information on teacher's salaries, Aaya's salaries and scholarships for the disabled children was drawn

from the account section. Finally, flow of programs and funds were verified by visiting the resource classes.

For verifying the SIP fund flow, the team visited the program and account sections of DEO, sampled schools and VDCs/Municipalities.

(a)   For verifying the fund flow of school grants the team visited the program and account sections of DEO and the sampled schools. A visit to DTCO further verified information collected on the fund flow mechanism.

(b)   In order to find out the program flow for teacher support preliminary information was obtained from the program sections, which was later verified by visiting schools and RCs.

Scope of the Study

Educational reform has been one main agenda of the national development program. The reform effort will continue because several policies and programs are being implemented to achieve its objectives.

There are only a few studies made on educational reform programs. However, there is no study that analyzes the functions of local level implementers and scholarship, decentralized management and quality education efforts. Thus, the outcome of this study may be valuable to planners, policy makers and program implementers. Although the present study is only confined to the five districts of the country, it is natural to expect that the findings will be applicable to other districts.

CHAPTER IV

Institutional Operation System and Structural Provisions

This chapter presents the findings on the operation system and structural provisions of the local level institutions involved in educational reform. In analyzing the institutional operation system, the study has primarily concentrated on organization, job description, regularity of staffs, and working of the local level institutions. The study has analyzed physical infrastructural support and capacity building under the rubric of structural provision.

The study is primarily focused on district education offices of the sampled districts. Besides, it includes resource centers and schools.

Institutional Operation System

The analysis of institutional operational system has been presented delving into organization, job description, and regularity of staff and working of the local level institutions.

Organization and Job Description in Deo

Field discussions revealed that the third quarterly fund related to EFA had not been released to the sampled DEO (till Jestha last week). As said, this situation had emerged mainly because the authority letter from FCGO was not received by DTCO. In case of foreign aid such as that for EFA it is obligatory to have authority from FCGO to release the fund, but for regular fund the authorization from DOE is enough and, accordingly, the fund is released without waiting for the FCGO letter to arrive.

It was known from the discussions held in the sampled districts that the fund for the salary of primary school teachers was released to the account section of the District Development Committee (DDC) and other funds to the account section of DEO. DDC then transferred all salary amounts to DEO. However, in Kanchanpur the funds for primary schools (in two model VDCs) was released from DDC to VDC and from VDC to the schools.

DDC transfers the salary amount for primary teachers to the account of DEO without doing any homework. The Kanchanpur district was an exception to this. In matters of fund flow the reporting of DDC was analogous to that of DTCO.

There were three sections and six units under the District Education Office in Kanchanpur. The work responsibility of school administration, financial administration and examination section (SAFAE) was assigned to one section officer. Likewise, the responsibility of planning, program, statistics, extra curricular activities and non-formal education section (PPSECANFE) was given to another section officer. However, the responsibility of supervision and training section was undertaken by the school supervisor. School administration was divided in two units, viz. secondary/lower secondary and primary. There were three units for planning, program, EMIS, extra curricular activities and non-formal education sections: planning and EMIS unit; extra curricular activity unit and the account unit.

In Ilam, the DEO office was composed of three sections and six units. Two section officers oversee two sections – the school administration, internal administration and examination section, and the planning program, statistics, extra curricular activities

and non-formal education section. There were seven units under these two sections. The other supervision and training section was assigned to five school supervisors. These supervisors coordinated and supervised fourteen resource centers of the district.

The school administration and examination section was divided into the lower secondary/secondary unit, primary unit, examination unit and administration, and store property unit which included registration and dispatch of letters. The responsibility of the first three units was assigned to technical assistants and the last one was assigned to a Nayab Subba.

There were three units in the planning section. The planning and statistical unit, the extracurricular activity unit and the non-formal education unit was entrusted to technical assistants whereas the account unit had one accountant and two sub-accountants.

DEO of Nuwakot had three sections and seven units. Two section officers looked after two sections, viz. the school administration, internal administration and examination section, and the planning program, statistics, extra curricular activities and non-formal education section. There are seven units under these two sections. The other section, supervision and training, was assigned to seven school supervisors, who coordinated and supervised thirteen resource centers of the district.

The school administration and examination section was divided into the lower secondary/secondary unit, the primary unit, the examination unit, and the administration, store property unit which included registration and dispatch of letters. The first three units were assigned to technical assistants and the last one was assigned to a Kharidar.

There are three units in the planning section. The responsibility of planning and statistics, extra curricular activity and non-formal education was given to technical assistant, and the account unit had one accountant and one primary teacher.

In Jumla and Mustang districts, there are only two sections in the District Education Office – the school administration, internal administration, planning, program and examination section and the supervision and training section. The former was headed by a section officer and the latter was assisted by a non-gazetted second class staff. The supervision and training section had two supervisors instead of as per the three provisions. Under it, ten RPs were working in their respective RCs. The units working in the District Education Office in Jumla are: secondary/lower secondary (technical assistant); primary (technical assistant); examination and extra-curricular activity (currently lying vacant); administration, store and registration (non-gazetted second); account (one accountant for the regular budget, and one non-gazetted second class for the development budget); planning and program (technical assistant); typing (two typists).

In the Kanchanpur District Education Office, the responsibility of the section on school administration, financial administration and examination section (SAFAE) was assigned to one section officer. Likewise, the responsibility of the section on planning, program, statistics, extra curricular activities and non-formal education (PPSECANFE) was given to another section officer. However, the responsibility of the section on supervision and training was given to a school supervisor.

In Kanchanpur, again, the school administration was divided in two units, viz. secondary/lower secondary unit and the primary unit. These units appointed,

dismissed transferred and promoted teachers and gave permission to open new schools. These units were authorized to write to the account unit to release the fund for teacher salary. The examination unit provided support to Lower Secondary examination and SLC examination.

Three units– planning and statistical, extracurricular activity and account were run under one section officer. The planning and EMIS unit compiled data for Flash reports I and II (for the district purpose) and prepared the annual program based on Flash indicators. The unit also prepared ASIP and AWPPV to be submitted to DOE. The extra curricular activity unit performed the activities decided on in the meeting of non-formal education committee. The account unit had three accountants with separate responsibilities. The first worked for primary teachers' salary and operated the DEC fund (internal income earned from the issue of transfer certificate, approval of new schools, equivalent certificate fees). The second released salaries for lower secondary and secondary schools and gave payments to the examination committee. The third handled all the financial activities related to EFA and SESP.

The supervision and training section carried out such activities as school supervision, class observation including approval, and monitoring of the activities related to the programs of the resource center. The section also conducted training programs of short and long term nature.

The job description of Kanchpur district was similar to that of Ilam and Nuwakot because all these districts had three sections each. However, the number of units run under these sections differed. In Jumla and Mustang districts, there were only two sections; the tasks other than those of supervision and training section were placed under only one section. The nature of job responsibility of the supervision and training section was similar in all five sampled districts. However, in case of Jumla and Mustang this responsibility was similar to that of other districts.

Regularity of Staffs and Working System in DEO

In Kanchanpur, 20 staffs were working in the District Education Office. Of them only DEO and two section officers and three SSs were gazetted officers and the rest were non-gazetted staffs. The account section had three accountants.

There were altogether 21 staffs working in District Education Office of Ilam. DEO, two section officers, six technical assistants, two accountants and three Kharidars were assigned the jobs of educational administration, financial administration and general administration. Five school supervisors were working in the supervision and training section.

In the District Education office of Nuwakot, 17 staffs (out of 21) were working. DEO, two section officers, six technical assistants, two accountants and one Kharidar were assigned the job responsibility of educational administration, financial administration and general administration. Seven school supervisors were working in the supervision and training section.

In Jumla, the regularity of staffs was found quite low. On the first day of DEO observation, the research team found two technical assistants and one Mukhiya and one typist were only working in the office. On the third day, two more staffs were present – one SS and one accountant. During the ten days of the visit only 6 staffs (out of 17) were found regular. Since staffs of the office were found unbelievably irregular, the team decided to read the attendance record and noted these facts. The

District Education Officer was on deputation to Katmandu for submitting marks of the SLC practical examination after attending the RED workshop in Nepalgunj and the section officer had gone for a workshop in Kathmandu. Likewise, TA was on leave. The accountant and school supervisor had gone for a seminar and the assistant accountant was out for collecting office stationery. The attendance particulars are presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1

Attendance particulars of DE office in Jumla in 2063

Position	Duration in months	Leave in days	Deputation in days	comments
DEO	8	66	127	Joined eight months before
SO	10	no	92	Local
SS	12	119	161	Outside the district
SS	12	42	182	Outside the district
TA	6	42	no	Local
TA	12	25	144	
TA	12	6	56	
Accountant	12	17	133	

Source: Attendance Register of DEO office, Jumla. Field data 2064

The former DEO had been transferred eight months before. The attendance record showed that he was present only for six days within a period of one month before his transfer from the district. The attendance record of the DEO showed that the present District Education Officer was present for only 24 days in 8 months of his working period. Similarly, deputation of other staffs was high (see Table 4.1 above).

In the District Education office of Mustang, 12 staffs (out of 14) were working.

The staff irregularity was highest in Jumla. In other districts, it was nearly normal. However, the staffs of Nuwakot including the District Education Officer came to office late on Sundays and left early on Fridays as most of the staffs were inclined to spend the weekly end time in Kathmandu Valley. The district of Nuwakot is only four hours' drive from Kathmandu.

The working systems of all Education Offices are more or less similar. It was found through observation that in all the sample districts the District Education Officer, the chief of the planning section and the accountant had heavy workload. The Officer was found busy dealing, for example, with appointment and transfer, upgrading of classes, construction of new buildings and classrooms, and national political debate. He had to meet teachers, head teachers, local political workers, chairpersons and members of SMC, parents and others (range: 100-200 visitors each day). Clearly, he was unable to give time for planning and programs for quality education. Thus, he had less time for key task areas.

The section chief of the planning was equally busy in the office. The planning chief devoted his time to Flash reports I and II, district level ASIP, scholarship quota and SIP-based funding, etc. In short, he handled all the programs of EFA, secondary education support program and planning-related activities. He thus appeared to be busy throughout the day. However, the workload of the school administration section was light. Similarly, the account unit was found busier than other units as it was to release several kinds of funds to the schools. This gives the impression that

only the head of planning section and the accountant are over busy. This underlines the issue of job balancing in the DE office.

The District Education Offices of Ilam and Nuwakot were disturbed by the teachers' union. District Education Officers in these offices had to deal with pressure groups. The office work was found normal in other sampled districts.

Structural Provisions in DEO

Physical Facility Support

The structural provisions have been analyzed with reference to physical infrastructure, capacity building, finance and staffing.

In Kanchapur the research team found that the District Education Office had all necessary physical facilities such as office buildings, computers and telephone lines. Computers were given to the planning and account units and one computer was placed for general use. There were two telephone lines in the office.

The planning unit did not use the computer. The account unit had data on fund release to the schools stored in the computer.

The DEO of Ilam had essential infrastructure of physical facility support. There were five computers, two of them out of order. Two computers were used by account and program units and one had been placed for common use. Likewise, the office had two telephone lines, one of them linked to the residential quarter of the District Education Officer. The DEO building was big enough for daily work operation. The office support system was satisfactory, except that the furniture of the office appeared inadequate and were old and uncomfortable.

Discussions and observations showed that the computer of the planning section was used for preparing Flashes I and II and the district education plan. The account section used its computer only to make an entry of the budget by programs of the district. The computer kept for common use was used for writing official letters to DOE and other district level offices.

Since the computers were used for limited purposes, the research team inquired about the operational qualification of the concerned staffs. None of them had any computer training. One computer operator was previously a typist. He was not willing to take any computer courses because he was about to retire. The planning chief and accountant worked with the computer on personal practice.

The research team found that the DEO of Nuwakot had the essential infrastructure. It had four computers, two of them used by the account and program units and one used by the computer operator. One computer was kept aside. Likewise, the office owned two telephone lines. The office building of DEO was big enough for daily work. The office had an annex used as a room for seminars, meetings and examinations.

The computer of the planning section was used for preparing Flashes I and II and the district education plan. The account section used its computer only to make an entry of the budget by programs of the district. The computer operator used his computer for various purposes such as preparation of Flash I and II, planning, programming, account keeping and typing official letters. Thus, the operator alone handled all computer-related activities of the office. The operator inserted all official records in the computer.

The operator used the computer efficiently. Asked about his qualification, he said he had received formal training in programming. He worked actively but was still on temporary appointment. The other staffs such as District Education Officer, planning officer and accountant were only computer literate and took help from him.

There were five computers (including printers) in the DEO of Jumla. It was going to have six new sets in the near future. Photocopy service was also available. Despite this physical set-up, the office had not entered any information about scholarships and grants into the computer. Even though the accountant was given computer training for a period of three months, he did not seem to have the skill to operate the computers for record keeping. Again, the power supply was irregular and, much more, its supply fell below the required voltage. The DEO lacked the telephone facility.

More than two hundred people visited the DEO every day in Jumla, most of whom were school teachers, SMC chairpersons, and parents. Because of the shortage of staff teachers searched the files themselves for the official process regarding their individual problems (e.g. grade adjustment) and school problems (e.g. release of quarterly grants).

Visit of community members and contractors were very common in the DEO of Jumla because most of the NGOs were actively involved in physical improvement of the schools such as construction of new buildings and classrooms. The NGOs launched the construction and supply programs in coordination with the DEO.

The DEO of Mustang had all necessary physical facility support: office buildings, furniture, computers and telephone lines. It had four computers, one telephone line and necessary furniture. The computers were used by the planning unit and the account unit but the account unit had not stored any information regarding the fund release to the school.

Capacity Building in DEO

The study also attempted to assess the working capacity of the DEO staffs and their ability to use of office equipment to plan and operate the educational reform programs.

In all sampled districts it was found that the District Education Officer, the section officer of the planning section and the accountant were involved in the ASIP-orientation program conducted twice a year by the Department of Education. This had, to some extent, helped the operation of the annual programs at the district level. However, in the absence of section officer, the other staffs could not work on the annual programs because there was no communication system between the staffs of District Education Office.

In all sampled districts except Nuwakot, computers were used for limited purposes only. The concerned staffs did not have any training. The planning chief and accountant worked with the computer on sheer practice.

The computer of the planning section was used for preparing Flashes I and II and ASIP. The account unit used the computer only to make an entry of the budget by programs of the district. The fund release details were not recorded in computers. The operator used the computer for typing official letters.

In Jumla the accountant had been given computer training of three months. Even then he could not use the computers for account keeping.

In Nuwakot that the computer operator was efficient. Asked about his qualification, he stated that he had taken formal training in programming. He was in many respects active in the performance of the regular official works but he disclosed the fact that he was still working on temporary basis. The other staffs such as district education officer, planning officer and accountant were just computer literate and took frequent help from the operator to do their jobs.

As mentioned in the methodology section, ten resource centers were selected for an analysis of their institutional operation system and structural provisions.

The study team visited Niglasaini and Shree Krishna RCs in Kanchanpur. These RCs have their own building blocks. Niglasaini RC covered 66 schools. It had developed an annual plan for subjectwise teaching-learning based on the curriculum. For this purpose, the RC had collected Rs 100 from the concerned schools. The RP claimed that this activity could be considered as an innovative work for quality education. However, in the Shree Krishna RC this was not done.

In Ilam, the research team visited two RCs; Laxmipur and Barbote . The Laxmipur RC has encompassed 25 schools of two VDCs. Similarly, the Barbote RC covered 27 schools of two VDCs and one Municipality. Both the RCs have their own office blocks but the office block of the Barbote RC had been used by Amber Higher Secondary School.

In Nuwakot, the research team visited two RCs: Trisuli and Devighat. The Trisuli RC covered 55 schools of one Municipality and two VDCs. It had an office block of its own. Similarly, the Devighat RC embraced 39 schools of three VDCs. However, it did not have its own office block because the change in the RP system had made it mandatory to shift RC from primary school to a secondary school. In other words, RC can be located only in secondary/ higher secondary school in the new system.

In Jumla, ten RPs were catered for the needs of 128 schools. From the ten RCs, Chandannath and Lamda RCs were selected for the study. These RCs did not have their own building blocks.

In Mustang, Janahit Higher Secondary School (Jomsom) and Janasanti Secondary School (Kagbeni) resource centers were selected from a total of five RCs. The Jomsom RC did not have its own building block. The building of the Kagbeni RC was used as a residential quarter for the school teachers.

In the present system, it appears that RPs have been working under the coordination of the school supervisor. However, it was found in the sampled districts that the RPs were doing their work under the direct direction of the RC head teacher. The monthly work plan of RP requires to be endorsed by the RC head teacher before its submission to the school supervisor. Thus, the school supervisor is only seen as a nominal head to direct the RPs in all sampled districts except Kanchanpur. However, in Kanchanpur the RP had submitted the monthly work plan to DEO without having it endorsed by the supervisor. Here, school supervisor was given the responsibility of administrative supervision and the RP academic responsibility.

The RPs said that they were more responsible to the RC head teacher than to the school supervisors (of DEO) since they could be hired and fired by the RC head teacher.

The RPs of all sampled districts had published their annual education calendars, using the money raised from schools. The calendars were distributed to the respective schools. However, this activity was not carried out in Jumla. The calendar

included information on such agenda as head teachers' meeting, orientation to chairpersons of SMC, awareness programs dates of Welcome to School, scholarship distribution, examination, distribution and collection of Flash reports, collection and distribution of the performance evaluation form and so on.

The RPs reported that they were not given any written authority by the school supervisors or DEO. So they, upon their own initiation, collected necessary information from DEO and communicated it to the schools. They argued that this was essential because schools made queries on several important issues such as scholarship and SIP-based funding. So the teachers in Nuwakot and Mustang preferred to remain teachers to being RPs. As a result, there were only 7 RPs (out of 13) appointed in Nuwakot and 3 (out of 5) in Mustang. In this regard, the District Education Officer said teachers were misguided about the role of the RP and considered it as a low profile job (without any important administrative authority). Teachers could not perceive the restructured role of the RC as anticipated by the new system for lack of orientation.

In discussions, the RPs stated that they were given the following mandates: convene monthly meetings in the respective RCs; carry out monthly supervision of schools of the respective RCs; conduct 2-day management training for HTs and SMC chairperson (in Ilam) and collect Flash I and II forms. However, all the RPs grudged that they had not been given any authority (in writing) by the DEO. A query about the monthly work plan was made to the RPs of Barbote RC of Ilam. In response, the RPs presented the following work plan for the month of Jestha, 2064.

- Do homework to prepare work plan for the month
- Attend district meeting
- Conduct training to teachers
- Attend training
- Arrange HT meeting
- Call SMC meeting
- Do school supervision

The RPs said that there was no system of giving any written information to RPs on SIP based funding, block grants and scholarship programs. DEO or the RC school were both silent. A similar response was made by the RPs of Nuwakot. They reported that no written information on SIP-based funding, block grants and scholarship programs was provided to them by the DEO. In this respect, RPs themselves collected necessary information from DEO to communicate it to the school. The RPs thought that it was essential because schools made queries on these issues during their visits.

Institutional Operation System and Structural Provisions of Sampled Schools

As stated earlier, 10 schools were selected to analyze the institutional operation system and structural provisions in the five sampled districts.   The management of four (of the ten) schools, two schools each from Ilam and one school from Mustang and Nuwakot was already handed over to the community.

The team visited Niglasaini Higher Secondary School at Gobariya and Shree Krishana Higer Secondary School at Jhalari in Kanchanpur. The Niglasaini school

also operated a resource class for deaf students. There are 19 children studying in the resource class.

In Ilam, Sidhyeshori Primary School of Barabote VDC-5, and Nanda Primary School of Godak VDC-2 were studied for this purpose. The longitudinal study of the Formative Research Project was also carried out in the Sidhyeshori Primary School. Both of them were proposed lower secondary schools and the management of these schools has been transferred to the community.

Prithivi Lower Secondary School of Bidur Municipality-3, and Ranabhubaneshori Higher Secondary School of Khadgabhanjang VDC-5 were the study schools in Nuwakot. The management of Prithivi Lower Secondary School has been handed over to the community. A resource class was in operation in Ranabhubaneshori School.

In Jumala, Shree primary Shree Dhuska of Dhuska and Malika Lower Secondary School of Acharyabada were included in the study. A resource class was in operation in Malika Lower Secondary School. However, not one school management was transferred to the community. The HTs and teachers of the sampled schools openly admitted that they were against the community-managed school because they considered it a government trick to burden the local community.

In Mustang Janahit Higher Secondary School of Jomsom and Janasanti Secondary School of Kagbeni, were selected for the study. The management of the latter has been handed over to the community.

Of the ten sample schools, two schools of Ilam and two of Nuwakot operated with assistance from the local CBO and NGO and the local government. These schools were unique because the participation of SMC, parents and teachers was very encouraging. The study has, therefore, presented their institutional operation system and structural provision for an analysis.

In Sidheshori Primary School of Ilam, there were seven teachers, three of them private teachers. These three private teachers are paid from two different sources, from the interest earned from the balance money received during the management transfer and from the money raised through parents in the leadership of the Educational Awareness Youth Association (EAYA). EAYA is a community-based organization that collects money from parents without issuing any receipts. This school looked quite advanced. It had prepared school calendars, annual programs and job descriptions of the teaching staff. It had mobilized the Mothers Group, a local community-based organization to keep the school neat and clean. The job responsibility as prepared by the school teachers is shown in the box given below.

Teacher-1, administration, fund collection and coordination
Teacher-2, cleanliness (school and students), construction and renovation of physical property, sports and education materials development.
Teacher-3, analysis and display, office management and discipline
Teacher-4, games, physical training, educational tour and survey of school catchment area.
Teacher-5, paper work, literature, debate and gardening
Teacher-6, wall magazines, class room management, quiz, computer setting and development of educational materials

This school has been conducting household surveys of the school catchment area for the last five years. As reported by the teachers based on their survey findings, the

birth rate in the school cathcment area was decreasing year by year, resulting in a decrease in the number of children for school in each subsequent year.

In Nanda Primary School of Ilam, there were seven teachers two of whom were privately financed-the school collected Rs 500 from the parents whose children were studying in the school. Few parents showed disagreement with this fee collecting system. This amount was collected at the beginning of the school year but without issuing receipts. The school spared some of the interest earned on the money received during management transfer. The money was lent only to the school teachers at Rs 15 per Rs 100. As revealed in a group discussion of parents, teachers and SMC members, the other stakeholders were deprived of the borrowing opportunity because it was assumed that they could not refund the money with interest on time. The school only paid half the money to the teachers it had employed from the *rahat* (relief) quota and set the other half aside for private teachers.

This school also looked quite advanced in terms of operation and management. It had prepared school calendars, annual programs, job descriptions of the teaching staff. However, this school had not mobilized any local community-based organization but had been working with Sungava Club (unofficially formed by DEO). The club organized training for teachers and SMC members and charged money to the school. A group discussion revealed that this training was irrelevant to the teachers and they considered it simply as a trick of DEO to support the NGO.

The job responsibility worked out for the schoolteachers is shown in the box.

> Teacher-1, administration, management, community mobilization and finance
> Teacher-2, extracurricular activities, health and physical education
> Teacher-3, extracurricular activity
> Teacher-4, civic education and sports
> Teacher-5, first aid and school decoration
> Teacher-6, office management and support for administration
> Teacher-7, management of school compound and cleanliness

The annual program of this school included, among others: updating of SIP, class observation by HT, and social audit. Updating of SIP and social audit are linked to decentralized management and class observation to the quality of education. Thus, the inclusion of such activities in the annual calendar indicated a high level of local awareness regarding decentralization and quality management.

In Prithivi lower secondary school of Nuwakot, there were ten teachers. Three were private teachers. The three private teachers taught the lower secondary level. The school charged Rs 100 per a new enrollee (irrespective of class) at the time of admission. This school had no work division for the teachers. All the teachers worked under the direction of the head teacher.

There were five teachers for the primary level in Ranabhubaneshori Higher Secondary School of Nuwakot**,** two of them financed from the private sources. The school delivered primary education free of cost. However, the school charged Rs 100 for Classes 6 and 7 and Rs 150 for Classes 8-10, annually. This amount was collected at the time of admission.

This school appeared rich in physical facilities. It had four buildings with spacious classrooms, staff rooms and a separate office room for the head teacher. There were

separate toilets for boys and girls. The drinking water supply was good. The school had a set of computers and a set of telephone lines. However, the computers were used only for printing official letters and not for the purpose of account and Flash report.

The school has also been operating one resource class since 2059 under the inclusive education program. There are ten mentally retarded students in the class aged between 8 and 14. All these students were given hostel facility run within the school compound.

Resource classes were observed in Kanchanpur, Jumla and Nuwakot. The operation system was more or less similar in all the districts. The recommendation of a FRP study on inclusive education, 2004 had noted similarity in operation of the resource chases. However, one resource class in Nuwakot appeared to be better in terms of physical facility. It had all necessary equipment including radio sets, musical instruments and educational materials. The students were found neat and clean and enthusiastic. The resource classes in the other two districts lacked facilities like radio and musical instruments. Likewise, they were not as neat and clean as that of Nuwakot. Thus, the Resource teacher and Aaya had made sincere efforts to develop teaching-learning environment in the resource classes of Nuwakot district.

Fig. 4.1

Fund flow for Girls and Dalit Scholarships
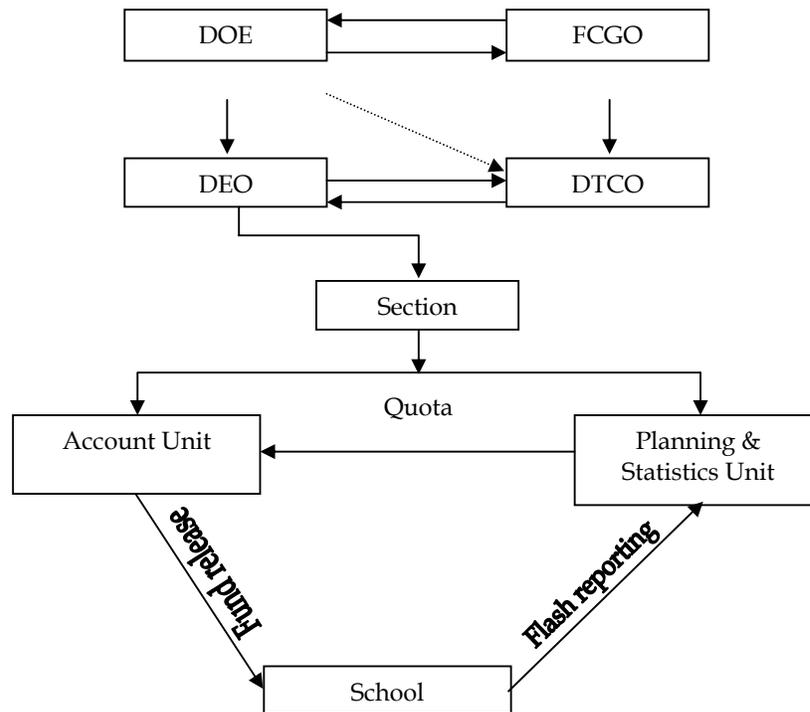
Gaps

The following gaps have been noted on the basis of the above analysis.

1. The present organizational system of DEO is not conducive to timely dissemination of information to the schools.

2. The present organizational system has made only the section officer aware of the programs implemented in the districts.

3. Job description is limited to DOEonly; it has not been initiated at the DEO.

4. The absence of senior staffs at the DEO of Jumla has obstructed the smooth running of the annual programs in the district.

5. The purpose of computer keeping has not been fulfilled because of the absence of the operator; DEO does his jobs mentally and manually.

Barriers

The following barriers were observed in relation to the above gaps:

1. The present structural provision of delegating more power to the section officer than to school supervisor and more power to school supervisor than to resource person   has developed power bitterness among the office staffs. For example, SSs and RPs showed their resentment on the ground that they were in practice treated as below the section officer. They claimed that they were officers of the same rank in the present organization. In essence, SSs claimed that this mechanism had almost ruined the local level operation system.

2. The present organization had kept the school supervisors and resource persons bereft of their main responsibility.

3. DEO has not built up its capacity necessary for district level planning.

4. Newly appointed RPs are not aware of their responsibility for want of training/orientation.

Fig. 4.2

Fund flow for Inclusive Education
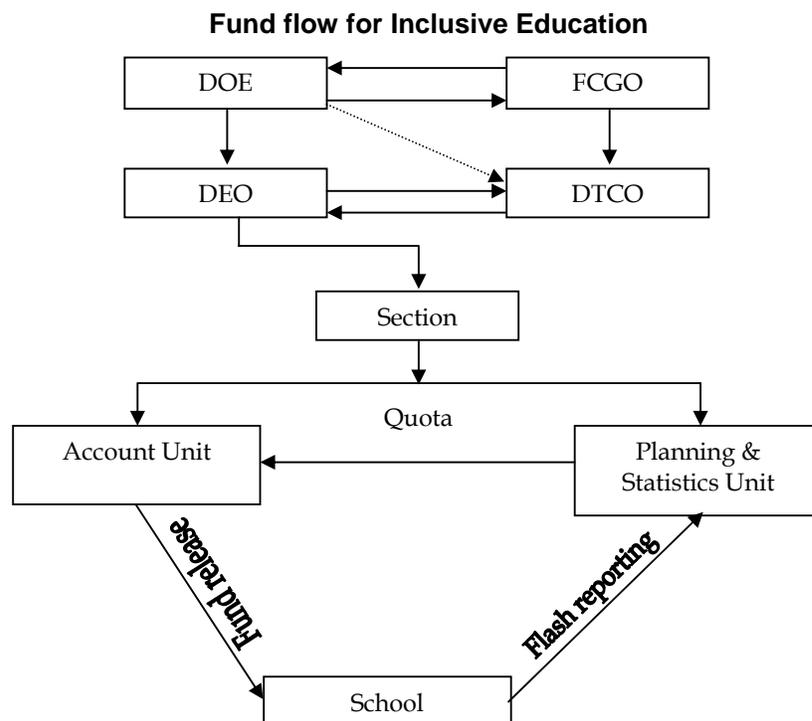
CHAPTER V

Local Level Implementation Strategy of the Reform Programs

This chapter presents an analysis of educational reform programs that have been implemented at local grassroots level. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) has initiated numerous local level educational reform programs since the implementation of BPEP. However, as illustrated in the conceptual framework of the study, this analysis is confined only to three program areas: scholarship, decentralized management and teacher support.

MOES has developed policies and programs to guide these reforms at the local level implementation. A brief introduction to these policies and programs is presented prior to the analysis.

Scholarship

The Program Implementation Manual, 2063 of DOE has clearly mentioned that the Dalit and 50 percent girls scholarships should be distributed in two installments (second installment in Falgun 7, 2063 at the rate of Rs 250 per student and first installment in Jestha 4, 2064 at the rate of Rs 100 per student).

Likewise, the School Grants Operation Guidelines (first amendment), 2063 have stated that girl students studying in Karnali Zone should receive Rs 1000 as scholarship per year for 10 months (at the rate of Rs 100 per month). The guidelines have also specified scholarships for the disabled children of various categories: 'A' category-Rs 10000 for 10 months at the rate of Rs 1000 per month; 'B' category-Rs 5000 for 10 months at the rate of Rs 500 per month; 'C' category-Rs 3000 for 10 months at the rate of Rs 300 per month; 'D' category-Rs 500 for 10 months at the rate of Rs 50 per month. These scholarships should be distributed in all quarterly months of the year.

The District Education Office and the school management committee are the responsible units to execute the scholarship program.

The scholarships were, however, not distributed as per the norms stated in the Manual and Guidelines in the schools of the sampled districts. Thus, the beneficiaries neither received the stated amount nor were the amount distributed at the scheduled time.

The planning and statistics unit and the account unit working under the planning, program, statistics, extracurricular activities and non-formal education section (PPSECANFE) had assumed the responsibility of scholarship distribution in Kanchanpur.

As reported by the PPSECANFE section chief of Kanchanpur, the planning and statistics unit compiles the Flash report and prepares ASIP. Based on the compiled Flash report, the PPSECANFE section prepares documents for scholarships and, accordingly, DEO makes a demand for the scholarship program to the Department of Education (DOE). DEO distributes the scholarships girls, Dalit and disabled scholarships to the schools. Thus, two working units, DEO and schools, are involved in scholarship distribution.

For scholarship of the disabled children, DEO had released fund to Nigalasaini Higher Secondary School of Kanchanpur on quarterly basis. DEO had allocated Rs

1000 per month per student for 10 months. Eighteen deaf children benefited from the scholarship. Of these 18 students, 11 students were in hostel and the remaining 7 came from home every day. As directed by DEO, the school had divided the disabled students into four catagories and distributed the scholarship accordingly. It appeared that the school management had operated this activity independently with a spirit full ownership of the program.

The research team observed the concerned units to record the office support equipment available for the scholarship program in Kanchanpur. The units had the computer facility but the EMIS record for scholarship had not been updated.

There were three accountants in the account unit. One of them worked for the EFA program. He had been working for the program for two years. He said in a discussion that he had not received any orientation or training on EFA. However, the section chief involved with EFA had received orientation. His assistant working in the planning and account unit had not received any training.

According to the accountant, this unit only released fund to the schools but the section had not carried out any monitoring activity since he joined office. Thus, he had no idea about how the allocated fund was expended by the school. As said by the HT of Shree Krishna Higher Secondary School, he was confused about the procedures of the scholarship programs. He was not clear about who the beneficiaries were and what the actual amount to be distributed was. As a result, he neither drew money from the bank nor did he distribute in the year budget was allocated. However, he spent that amount on school improvement drawing following year.

In Ilam, scholarships were distributed on Education Day (Falgun 12) and Children's Day (Bhadra 4) in the sample schools. One of the schools distributed the Dalit and girls scholarship at the rate of Rs 350 per student and another distributed only Rs 250 per student. The head teacher, who distributed only Rs 250 per student, expressed his ignorance about the size of scholarship amount. However, the DEO had clearly instructed to distribute Rs 350 as mentioned in the annual program and the budget document dispatched to each individual school. Generally, all Dalit students were included in the Dalit scholarship program. But, it was not so in the case of 50 percent girls scholarship. Approximately one girl out of four benefited from this scholarship program. The scholarship distribution system of this year differed from that of the last year. Last year, all girl students of the sample schools received the same amount regardless of the quota but this year it was distributed after selecting students as per the quota. In Ilam the section chief of the planning section took the decision regarding the scholarship quota. Quotas were decided only after analyzing the Flash Report submitted by the schools. The account unit released fund to the school based on the approved quota. The statistical unit and account unit had separate computers. However, these computers were not used for the scholarship distribution. Both the program units did manual work for distributing the scholarship. The concerned section and units of DEO were found confused about the objectives and use of the scholarship. This was also true of the school. This situation had prevailed because there was no mechanism to make the stakeholders aware.

Prithivi Lower Secondary School of Nuwakot distributed four types of scholarships to primary level students. These included scholarship for the disabled, Dalits, 50 percent girls and the conflict-affected. The school distributed the Dalit scholarship and 50 percent girl's scholarship in three installments and the scholarship for the

conflict-affected in one installment. The last installment of the Dalit scholarship was so small that it was distributed at the rate of Rs. 18. 72 per quota.

In Nuwakot district the section chief of the planning section took decisions on the scholarship quotas. Quotas were decided after an analysis of the Flash Report submitted by the schools. Later, the account unit released fund to the account of concerned school based on the approved quota.

In Nuwakot, the flow of information from the District Education Office was rather weak. Only after planning section decided on the scholarship quota (based on the budget provided by DOE), it would forward information to the account unit. Then the account unit released the fund to the schools account without sending any back-up information. The account unit however put the information of the total amount on the notice board, which in practice appears to be the principal source of disseminating the information.

The sample schools and RCs of Nuwakot revealed that it was difficult to distribute scholarships based on the information kept on the notice board since it did not give any particular information on the size and quota of the scholarship. Thus, complete and reliable information was obtained only by visiting the concerned units of DEO. Asked why DEO followed this short-cut and obscure mechanism for information dissemination, officials said in a discussion that the office staff was too small to go through the other way. The District Education Officer said that he had been planning to send copies of scholarship programs to each school from the next year. But here also he saw problems because the office lacked staffs and resources.

In Nuwakot, RCs were not given any responsibility in matters of scholarship. However, RPs had taken this responsibility on their own because they had to be able to answer the queries made by the concerned schools. Thus, RPs usually collected photocopy sheets of the scholarship quota from DEO before going to the schools. This type of reporting by RPs was correct, according to the stakeholders of sample schools. Schools obtained information regarding scholarship quotas and amounts from the RPs, not from the DEO office.

The statistical unit and account unit had separate computers. However, these computers were not used for scholarship matters. Both the units worked manually.

In Nuwakot, the DEO was found clear about the objectives and use of the scholarship. But RPs, head teachers, and SMC- chairpersons were not clear about the scholarship quota and the scholarship distribution mechanism. The sampled schools stated that they distributed scholarships, using an alternative method. Accordingly, the girls who received scholarships last year were excluded this year. As a rule, each girl receive should the scholarship irrespective of their family background and individual performance. In Nuwakot the scholarships were not distributed at the scheduled time. According to DEO, the scholarship quota for girls was inadequate whereas the scholarship quota for Dalits exceeded the number of Dalit students.

In Jumla, the planning and statistics unit and the account unit had assumed the responsibility of distributing scholarships. The former unit decided the scholarship quota for each individual school based on the Flash indicators and the latter unit released fund to the account of individual school. Teachers of concerned schools should come to DEO to get information about the scholarship quota and its amount.

DEO had disbursed scholarship amounts based on the Flash Report but it did not circulate any guidelines with regard to the distribution procedure. The account unit had sent scholarships to schools as decided by the planning and program unit. However, it was revealed in a discussion that the accountant himself was not confirmedly clear about how much cash he was allocating in one quota per student. DOE had also created confusion. It had authorized the programs of Component 5.2 (50 percent girls scholarship) which should be 5.3 (Karnali special package).

The account unit of DEO had kept the record of fund disbursement to each individual school in its ledger. The account ledgers of both the sampled schools are illustrated in Table 5.1 and 5.2.

Table 5.1

Ledger of Shree Dhuska Primary School for the FY 2063/2064

Date	Particulars	Budget number	Debit (Rs)
2063/5/30	First quarterly fund release	-	212936
2063/7/27	50 percent girls scholarship	116 quota	34800
2063/7/27	Administrative expenses	-	11000
2063/7/27	Miscellaneous	-	1500
2063/9/4	Second quarterly fund release	-	172351
2063/12/29	Dalit/textbooks		55250

Note: dash (-) means information not available.
Source: DEO Account unit, Jumla; Field survey, 2064

Table 5.2

Account ledger of Malika Lower Secondary School, for FY 2063/2064

Date	Particulars	Budget number	Debit (Rs)
2063/6/6	First quarterly fund release	-	290420
2063/7/16	Extracurricular activities for the disabled students		1666
2063/7/27	Textbooks for dalit and poor students	-	15555
2063/7/27	Extracurricular activities for the disabled students	-	2590
2063/7/27	50 percent girls scholarship	148 quota	44,400
2063/7/27	Class operation cost for the disabled student	-	33,500
2063/7/27	Disabled student scholarship	-	44500
2063/7/27	Miscellaneous	-	1800
2063/9/4	Second quarterly fund release	-	242900
2063/12/29	Full scholarship	-	16128
2063/12/29	Dalit/textbooks	-	50425

Note: dash (-) means information not available.
Sourc: DEO Account unit, Jumla; Field survey, 2064.

As shown in Table 5.1, DEO had allocated 116 quotas to Shree Dhuska Primary School as 50 percent girls scholarship but there were only 158 girls in the school. Thus, the number of quotas and the number of students did not match. Likewise, Table 5.2 shows that DEO had allocated 148 quota to Malika Lower Secondary School for 50 percent girls scholarship but there were only 86 girls at the primary level and 27 girls at the lower secondary level. In Malika School, the number of quotas

exceeded the number of students and in Shree Dhuska Primary School the students number exceeded the available quotas.

In Mustang district the scholarship distribution mechanism was similar to that in Jumla; the same units had distributed scholarships following the same procedure. Mustang had received 412 quotas for Dalit scholarship, which appears to be more than the student number. In the case of 50 percent girl students scholarship, it was numberwise reasonable. The DEO had released scholarship fund of F/Y 2063/64 in the second week of Falgun and the sample schools distributed it in the first week of Falgun.

Only DEOs of Kanchanpur and Ilam had issued instructions to the schools for scholarship distribution.

The fund flow mechanism adopted for distribution of girls and Dalit scholarships is shown in Fig 5.1. This figure explains the general fund flow mechanism for girls and Dalit scholarships in the sample districts.

Fig 5.1

Scholarship distribution for Girls and Dalits
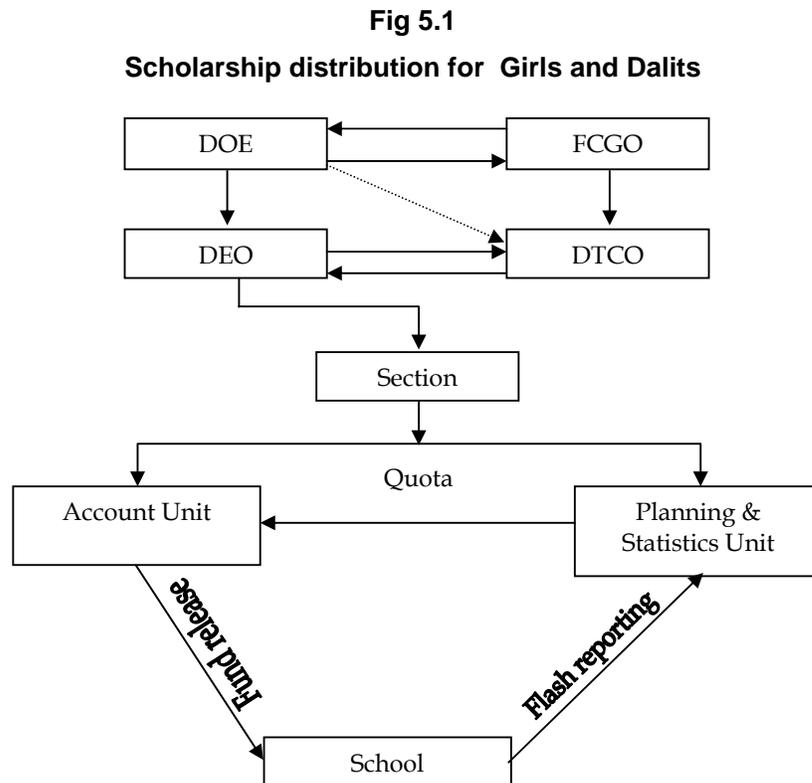
Decentralized Management

As this study concentrates on the operation of the school improvement plan (SIP), district education plan (DEP), and SIP-based block grants under decentralized management as one of the key components, an analysis of data has been presented below.

The plan of actions for decentralized management targeted to provide the reform program a momentum are: decentralization of educational planning and implementation through DEPs, VEPs and SIPs to address local needs related to children's access to schooling; developing clear visions of and strategies for resolving access-related and other educational issues; establishment of libraries; and providing

computers to schools; implementing SIP-based grants to schools for activities on quality improvement; and transferring school management to the community.

The principles of bottom-up planning (SIP, VEP, DEP) are taken as means to decentralization. The School Improvement Plan is a tool for improving access, quality and management of educational processes in the school and the community. Therefore, the government is committed to respond positively to the needs of local people through VEPs, MEPs and DEPs prepared in consultation with the local stakeholders. To highlight the need of local level planning, DOE published the SIP Guidelines in 2061.

DEO is taking responsibilities of educational leadership to execute the district level EFA programs. DDCs, Municipalities and VDCs are responsible to plan for EFA activities in their respective areas. The school level SIP is prepared in all schools of the nation. The policy of school autonomy is already in field. The continuation of school grants is made to SMCs to meet the goal of decentralization. The Education Act and Regulations have given different roles and responsibilities to SMCs, PTAs and other local stakeholders. Participation of the civil society in the formulation of SIP is a positive exercise for the start of decentralized management. Community stakeholders' involvement in school management is one of the important foundations of decentralized management. The process of transferring the school management to the community is no less important for decentralization.

Decentralization is thus taken as the main implementation strategy for EFA 2004-2009, which is in line with the spirit of LSGA 1999. It demands a strategic shift from a centralized and bureaucracy-controlled management to community-controlled and school-based planning and management involving different partners including local bodies, NGOs, INGOs, CBOs and other private organizations.

Regarding the SIP-based block grants, the School Grants Operational Guidelines (first amendment), 2063, have stated that the grants will be available to both the approved and the proposed schools. The amounts of grants money are allocated as follows:

Rs 325 per student per academic year in the Himalaya region, Rs 300 per student per academic year in the Hill region, and Rs 275 per student per academic year in the Terai belt and the Valley.

The availability of primary level textbooks have been ensured and the residue amount is expended on SIP with the approval of SMC. The Figure 5.2 show how the SIP fund flows from center to school.

Based on the above (background) information, the findings of the sample districts are presented below.

The schools of sample districts made little use of SIP. They neither prepared annual plans as per their SIPs nor did they demand any programs from DEO as per their SIPs. Even the SIP-based fundings were not claimed. The schools preferred locking up the SIP documents in the cupboard not using them as base documents for the rolling plans. Thus, no schools in the districts updated their SIPs each year, even though they are considered as master documents to guide the VEC/Municipality and district level planning.

Two schools of Ilam had mentioned updating of SIPs in their annual plans but they had not updated them. So DEOs did not release the SIP funds to the schools. The planning sections of DEOs had collected the SIPs but the SIPs, however, were not

used for official purposes such as scholarship distribution, construction works, etc. There were no separate desks and staffs to analyze and use the SIP documents. As revealed by the section chiefs, copies of the SIP documents were often given the visitors who wanted to know the history of the schools. The DEOs said they prepared ASIP instead of SIP.

It is found from a discussion that DDCs and VDCs were not aware of SIP, the Local Self Government Act, 1999 and the Education Regulations, 2028 which underlined decentralization of education.

The role of DEO seems to be limited within the framework of decentralized management. In this respect, the salaries and allowances of primary teachers go via DDC to DEO. As reported in the districts, this practice has added unnecessary burden to DDC and delayed the fund flow by two weeks. This partly hindered decentralization.

From the decentralization point of view the case of Kanchanpur appeared encouraging but confusing. Here, DDC directly released primary teachers' salaries for the schools of Kalika and Dodhara VDC. But for other schools, it transferred the fund it received from the DTCO to DEO. The fund was later released to the school by DEO. However, the SIP-grants and schools grants for other schools were directly released to DEO by the DTCO. Thus, it seemed that DDC was making an effort to support decentralized management but its functioning did not seem to be proactive to decentralization.

The district of Nuwakot had initiated its own framework of decentralized management. DDC and Municipality of Nuwakot were financing the schools in co-ordination with DEO. For example, the DDC of Nuwakot released Rs 354,3917 in F/Y 2062/63, Rs. 129,4893 in F/Y 2061/62 and Rs 298,7676 in F/Y 2060/61 to the schools. These amounts were released under the budget titles for furniture, building construction, roofing, science lab, computer facility and teachers' salaries. The schools obtained these funds directly from DDC with a recommendation letter from DEO. The DDC had also been helping the proposed schools by releasing funds at the rate of Rs 30,000 for primary, Rs 60,000 for lower secondary, Rs 120,000 for secondary and Rs 2, 00000 for higher secondary schools for teachers' salaries.

DDC not only released the funds to the schools but also did the supervision and monitoring work. This responsibility was taken by the social development unit of human resource development section in DDC. Thus, DDC had facilitated the education sector on the recommendation of DEO. Likewise, DEO had also coordinated local CBOs and NGOs that were involved in the Dalit scholarship in the district.

Mobilization of NGO through DEO was noticed in Jumla. Visits of community members as well as contractors was a common feature. It was because most of the NGOs were found to have been actively involved in physical facility improvement of the schools, e.g. construction of new buildings, addition of classrooms and roofing and flooring of classrooms. The NGOs participating in such activities had launched the programs in coordination with DEO. In Jumla, NGOs such as Development Project Services Center (DPROSC), World Vision, Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) have been working in collaboration with DEO.

The case of Mustang was completely different from that of Nuwakot or Jumla. Here a myriad of INGOs/ NGOs were involved in the education sector but without informing, and collaborating with, DEO. So DEO had no idea about the education programs launched in the district by the NGOs. DDC also did not provide any information to DEO about the education program conducted in the district. Thus, DEO had no official record of the education activities launched by the local government and INGOs/NGOs.

The research team came to know that the sampled schools were confused about the purpose of SIP-based grants. Some schools considered it as the funding available only for textbooks. Once this amount was spent on buying textbooks, schools never claimed SIP-based grants. The other schools had the notion that the amount of money saved after buying the textbooks could be used for teachers' salaries.

Official records of SIP-based and school grants were kept in the computer of the account unit in Kanchanpur. This unit prepared the records of the funds it released to the school. This job was given to the accountant who also looked after the scholarship programs. He operated the funds for the schools, even though he had not been oriented/trained on this matter. Because only one staff to look after these affairs and there was none to monitor the programs at school level, there was no monitoring record in DEO. Since DEO of Kanchapur did not receive the SIP-fund in time, it managed to allocate Rs 100 per student to the schools from other budget headings of DEO. This was reported by the section chief of PSECANFE. This was communicated to all schools through the notice board at DEO.

In Kanchanpur, the research team also visited sampled schools to gather information on the institutional operation of the SIP-based grants. In this issue, consultation was made with the head teachers, teachers and SMC and PTA members. According to head teachers of the schools, SIP-funds were operated as per the decision of SMC. But SMCs and head teachers had not received any decentralized management training so they did not know how to utilize the SIP-based funding. For this reason, the schools in general did not make use of the fund as required by the budget. For example, the head teacher of Shree Krishna Higher Secondary School said that the amount allocated to his school was not drawn from the bank immediately; instead, it remained in the bank throughout the year. It was withdrawn the next year for expenditure as per the decision of SMC. The head teachers reported that they addressed the SIP-based issue differently. According to one head teacher, his school received Rs 100 per student for textbooks. Another revealed that his school received Rs 150 for textbooks. In their opinion this amount was given to their schools for textbooks as required by the budget heading Textbook. In reality, they were not aware that this fund came under the SIP heading.

The DEO of Ilam had issued a clear instruction on how to spend the SIP-based fund. This instruction was there in the annual program and the budget release document which was circulated to each school as early as the second week of Ashar. The document included the instruction that the saving form the purchase of textbooks could be spent on other items. The head teachers of the sample schools said that they performed their work in compliance with the instruction in the documents. Here, the DEO released fund in time and the school expended it as per the instruction.

In Nuwakot also SIP-based funding was released to the schools on time. In both the sample schools of Nuwakot, SIP-based funding was expended as per the decision of SMC. In one school, the amount saved from buying textbooks was spent for other

purposes. The school also spent this amount on buying furniture (drawer) and meeting the teacher's salary. Thus, the SIP-based funding was also used to meet the regular expenditure and physical facility development.

In Jumla, the schools considered SIP-grants as funds for textbooks only. Once this amount covered the expenditure for buying textbooks, the schools never claimed SIP grants (as per their student number). They could have spent the remaining amount for other improvement activities of the school.

In the sample schools of Jumla that HTs had conducted all the activities related to SIP- grants and scholarships. When asked, the teachers said that they did not know how these activities were taking place in the school. Asked about the textbooks, the teachers said that DEO had not sent the books to the schools. This implied that they were not aware of the structural provision of the textbook distribution. In some cases, HTs consulted with the SMC chairpersons but the teachers said in one voice that such activities fell within the Jurisdictions of HTs and chairpersons of SMCs only.

In Jumla, the school had opened on Marga 26 but students had no textbooks at all. For the textbooks, the DEO had released the fund for the textbooks only in the second week of Baishakh. The students were using old textbooks available from secondary sources.

DEO of Jumla released the SIP-fund to the schools in the third week of Baishakh. It did not release this fund on the basis of the student number. Rather, DEO divided the SIP amount in proportion to the student number in the school. As the SIP-fund is primarily used for buying textbooks, it should be made available in the beginning of the academic session. In Jumla, the academic session of this year begun in Marga 26, 2063, unlike in the other districts where it starts on the first of Baishakh. Thus, in Jumla students were without textbooks for four months. In a discussion, the HTs suggested that in Jumla the academic year should start in the month of Falgun to fully meet the requirement of an academic year. If it started in Baishakh, there would be a long vacation and holidays just before the final examination. For example, students should sit for the final examination immediately after Dashain and Tihar holidays because the snowfall starts in Marga and continues till the end of Falgun. Because of this difficulty, the schools of Jumla adopted the new academic session in the last week of Marga since this year. But DEO could not release the SIP fund at the beginning of the academic session. This forced the students to go school without textbooks for a period of four months (Marga-Baisakh). The HTs said that they were not happy with this inconvenient situation.

The SIP-based funding of Mustang was similar to that of Ilam and Nuwakot. The fund was made available to schools on time. The teachers of the sample schools of Mustang informed that they were planning to begin the academic session in Falgun more or less for the same reason (as in Jumla).

In a focus group discussion, the RPs and school supervisors reported that they were not involved in SIP-fund flow mechanism. DEO neither provided any formal information to them nor was there any mechanism for sharing the SIP-based funding program with the concerned schools. Generally, schools made queries about the SIP-based grants to the RP and SSs but they could not deal with the issue owing to their ignorance of it.

The fund flow system of SIP based funding is illustrated in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5. 2

Fund Flow of SIP-based funding
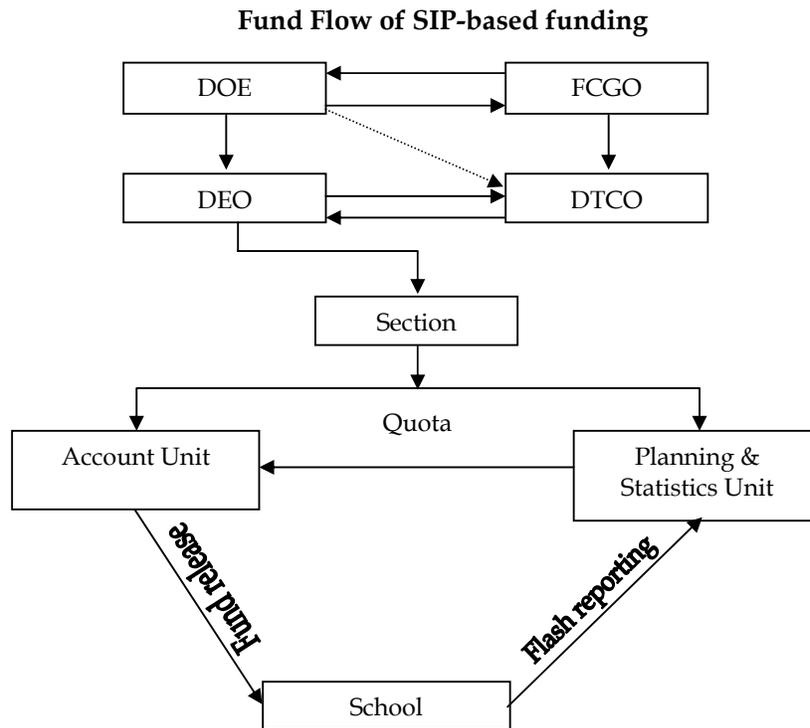
Quality Education

This study has analyzed some major programs included in the Program Implementation Manual, 2063. The following 8 programs from Component 6 of the Manual were studied:

1. School management grant DEO is to release Rs 300 per annum (on the basis of the permanent teacher quota) to the approved primary schools in the first quarter of the fiscal year.

2. Stationery DEO is to release for stationery Rs 300 per teacher per annum (on the basis of the approved primary teacher quota) for stationery to approved primary schools in the first quarter of the fiscal year.

3. Planning and management training DEO/RC is to conduct a two-day workshop (2 times- in the first quarter and the third quarter) for HTs, SMC chairpersons, leaders, females, Dalits, and other stakeholders to familiarize them with the programs that are being implemented in the district.

4. Orientation to resource person DEO is to organize training programs for resource persons to develop in them skills required for school supervision, teacher assistance and academic service in the first quarter of the fiscal year.

5. School level educational statistics DEO, RC and the school are to orient all academic institutions (communities, Madarasas, Gumbas etc) on Flash I and Flash II in the first and third quarters of the year.

6. Situation (progress) report DEO is to prepare a progress report of all the programs conducted in the year and another report explaining the educational situation of the district (for DOE).

7. Block grant to RC DEO is to release block grants to RCs in all quarters of the fiscal year.

8. RCwise action research DEO is to release funds to RCs for action research in the second and third quarters of the fiscal year.

School management was included as an input in the training/orientation for head teachers and SMC chairpersons. Similarly, capacity building was included in the orientation/training of teachers.

The Program Implementation Manual, 2063 states that DEO/RC should conduct a 2-day (2-times) workshop for HTs, chairpersons of SMC, leaders, females, Dalits and other stakeholders to introduce to them the programs that are being implemented in the district.

For assessing the quality component of the education system the study collected information on the above stated eight quality-related programs from the sample districts. The findings of the study are presented below:

School management grants, stationery grants, block grants were timely released to the RCs and schools of all the districts. But in the case of block grants to RCs, it was found in Ilam that the amount fixed by the center was reallocated by the district so that some RCs received more than RS 10,000 and other RCs less than that. The program of RCwise action research was not conducted in any RC.

RPs of all the sampled districts were found engaged in (collecting and) submitting Flashes I and II to the district education offices but none of them had prepared and displayed the annual statistics of their catchment areas in their RCs. Likewise, Madarasas and Gumbas were oriented/ trained by RC/ DEO for Flashes I and II of the sample districts.

The newly appointed RPs had not, been oriented by DEO in any district.

The findings of other programs, which differed from district to district, are presented hereunder:

In Kanchanpur, DEO organized trainings/orientations for HTs and SMC chairpersons. but had no program for teacher's training. The DEO had two school supervisors, who reported that they had been given the responsibility of making recommendations for the approval of new schools and upgrading the existing schools. They had visited the schools only for the above purposes. There were seven RCs in the district. RC buildings were constructed in Kanchanpur. The study team visited the Niglasaini and Shree Krsishna RCs. The Niglasaini RC had developed an annual plan on subjectwise teaching learning programs based on the curriculum. For this purpose the RC had collected Rs 100 from the concerned schools. RP claimed that such an activity could be considered an innovative work for the promotion of quality education. However, in the Shree Krishna RC, such programs were absent. RPs revealed in a discussion that they had not carried out any activity related to quality of education.

Unlike in Kanchanpur, RPs were, to some extent, active in Ilam. They were involved in operating a two-day training for teachers and chairpersons of SMCs, following the

direction of DEO. Besides, they extended their help for the development of local teaching materials.

RPs of Nuwakot were actively involved in enhancing the quality of education. Basically, they were involved in operating a two-day training for teachers and chairpersons of SMCs, as directed by DEO. They had also developed operation calendar for their respective RCs by collecting Rs 100 from each school. Both the RPs strongly argued that the schools of their catchment areas had followed the calendar. The research team found that the schools of the respective catchment area had followed the calendar for their daily activities.

Structural provisions (physical set up, capacity building, financing and staffing): It was found that one of the RCs owned an office block but the other RC was running in an RC school. In Jumla and Mustang DEOs themselves organized planning and management training for HTs and SMC chairpersons.

Gaps

The following gaps are drawn by the study:

1. Scholarship is not distributed in accordance with the center level guidelines. The center does not release funds as per the Flash Reporting. Scholarship is not distributed (on the day) as stated in the Program Implementation Guidelines.

2. SIP has stood as a mere document -uninstitutionalized for lack of orientation.

3. School has not developed SIP as a means to formulate annual plans for the on-going programs as required by the SIP guidelines.

4. There is a no clear central level guideline on how to use the SIP grants. For example, the school has no idea where to spend the amount remaining after the purchase of textbooks. Some schools consider it as only money for buying books and others consider it as a grant, which can be used as teacher's salary.

5. RP/SS have not been involved in the process of decentralization system.

6. Contradictions are found between the Education Act and LSGA about implementing decentralization.

7. The planning and management training has not covered all the stakeholders as mentioned in the Guidelines.

Barriers

1. The Program Implementation Guidelines are not disbursed to local level stakeholders.

2. Lack of knowledge in the district level stakeholders of the annual district plan and the implementation guidelines have caused difficulty.

CHAPTER VI

Provision of Communication for Education Reform

This chapter discusses the provision of communication for education reform programs. EFA has laid emphasis on the role of communication in its various programs. So, the provision of communication is explained in terms of scholarship, decentralized management and quality education.

ASIP 2006 has stated that communication will be made effective for informing the target groups regarding the government reform initiatives for increased access of disadvantaged groups to education.

The earlier FRP studies have shown that the communication and feed back reciprocity have been inadequate and ineffective. Supervisors and resource persons are the key informants for the school, community and the District Education Office. Studies have revealed that monitoring and supervision components of the program were rather weak. and that communication gaps between the centre and the implementation levels were the major hindrances for EFA. Likewise, research studies under FRP have further shown that the implementation level did not accept the central level guidelines. This created information gaps between the policy level and the implementation level.

On the above background, this study intends to examine the provision of communication for the reform programs at the local level, focusing on the structural provision and institutional operation system.

District Education Office of Kanchanpur basically used three different means to communicate the education reform initiatives and activities in the district. First, official letters were sent to schools, which gave expenditure particulars and instructions on how to spend the allocated amount. A letter model is presented in the box below. Besides, information on the quarterly programs and the budget amount allocated to the school was communicated through the notice board at the DEO. Second, DEO office printed and distributed the annul calendar that outlined the district level EFA programs. This practice was in effect in the F/Y 2062/63 and 2063/64. Third, the annual programs were displayed in a chart produce by the planning and program section.

Model letter

Expenditure particulars:

Primary teachers' salaries and allowances

Lower secondary and secondary teachers' salaries and allowances

Rahat (additional teacher support) teachers' salary and allowances

Miscellaneous

Administrative expenditure

Expenditure under EFA

Primary school girls scholarship

Dalit scholarship

Residential disabled scholarship

Expenditure for the operation of resource class

SIP implementation grant

School management grant

Miscellaneous expenditure for teachers

Grants for community-managed school

Salaries for RC substitute teacher

Construction of new classroom

Rehabilitation of school

Development of school's external environment

Instructions to expend allocated amount

In the case of primary scholarship that covers 50 percent poor students, give priority to extremely poor students (without duplication) based on the decision of SMC and distribute the cash in a special program organize in the school.

The amount related to inclusive education should be expended on developing conducive learning environments for the able and disabled students as per the decision of SMC.

Expenditures on the salary of the substitute teacher of the resource class, the remuneration of Aaya and others should be made as fixed.

In residential scholarship, distribute cash to students as per their classification. A resource teacher operating residence could expend as per the norm.

The amount allocated for SIP implementation should be spent on buying textbooks for all students of classes 1-5 and the amount saved should be spent on the programs related to the improvement of education quality and on the programs of school improvement on the basis of priority devised for this year.

Miscellaneous for teacher and the school management grants should be expended on buying miscellaneous items for the effective teaching-learning situation.

The school transfer (to community) amount should be deposited in the Aakshaya Kosh (fixed deposit account) and if this amount is to be used as per the decision of SMC, the school should submit programs to DEO for approval.

Submit a report to this office about the particulars of textbook and scholarship distribution in F/Y 2062/63 at the end of the quarterly budget.

The DEO of Ilam had issued a clear instruction on how to spend the school grants. This instruction was given in the annual program and budget release document circulated to the schools as early as the second week of Ashar. The document has instructed that the saving from the purchase of textbooks should be spent on other items. Asked about their understanding of the document, the schools said that they worked in accordance with the instruction in the document. The DEO of Ilam reported that they used several communication media to disseminate information about the scholarship program. The media included the FM radio and the local newspaper. They also circulated the annual program and budget release document to each school. Despite these efforts, the scholarship was not distributed on specified time and the cash amount of quota scholarship also differed school to school. DEO admitted that it was not easy to distribute scholarship in time because the distribution mechanism often failed to work as envisaged.

Information Flow System

The flow of information from the Nuwakot District Education Office was rather weak. DEO did not issue any instruction regarding the expenditure of scholarship cash and SIP-based funding. The planning section took decision on the scholarship quota based on the allocated budget and it forwarded this information to the account unit. Then the account unit would release the fund to school account without any prior information. The account unit would pin-up this information on its own notice board. This practice appears to be the principal source of disseminating information to the school through the HT or a teachers who visited the DEO.

The sample schools and RCs revealed that it was difficult to distribute scholarships in compliance with the information kept on the notice board because it did not tell specifically about the size and quota of the scholarship. Thus, in Nuwakot complete information was obtained only by visiting the concerned units of DEO. Asked why DEO followed this short-cut and obscure method of information dissemination, the officials said that the office was under staffed. DEO said that he had been planning to send programs to each school from the next year.

RCs were not given any responsibility in matters of scholarship and SIP-based funding. However, RPs had taken this responsibility on their own initiation, for they were tiringly asked by the schools of their catchment. Thus, RPs usually collected photocopy sheets of the scholarship quota from the DEO before they went to schools. In a discussion the stakeholders of the sample schools admitted that they obtained information about the scholarship quota and amount from RPs, not from the DEO office because there still was no reliable system of the information flow from DEO to the schools.

The DEO office of Jumla had developed two ways of communication system to avoid the confusion about how to distribute scholarships. First, it instructed the schools to distribute scholarship through official letters sent by post. Second, it also displayed a copy of the letter on the notice board. However, the sample schools reported differently. The Head teachers said DEO did not send any letter by post; they themselves visited the DEO to collect such letters. On their visit, they were given the authorization letters. For example, in 2064 the head teachers of the schools collected the authorization letters pertaining with previous year 2063. It appeared natural that owing to the lack of regularity of the staffs of the DEO, HT/ teachers did not hope for coordination of any form.

RPs did not communicate about the programs. SSs were not used as desk officers either. None of them worked as communication agents. Besides, there were no guidelines circulated in the district. The research team found that there was no transparency with regard to SIP and school grants. Teachers and parents of the sample schools also reported this.

Thus, in Jumla there was no communication between DEO and the schools on how to use the SIP grants. For example, the schools had no idea where to spend the money saved from the purchase of textbooks. In one of the schools there was confusion about the size of the amount. The head teacher was pleading that the SIP amount per student was Rs 150.

There was communication gap between the schools and DEO of Ilam too. For example, one school distributed Rs 250 for girls scholarship and the other distributed Rs 300 for the same.

In Mustang communication was good. Since all of the VDCs in the district had telephone lines the DEO used the telephone facility to communicate with the schools. Likewise, it dispatched letter to schools on quarterly basis to provide information on fund release. This letter was also put up in the DEO-notice board. The letter contained dates and particulars of the programs.

Thus, clearly there was communication gap between the internal units of DEO of the sample districts because only the section officers of the planning sections, had an idea about the EFA programs run in the district. So, official works lay pending in his absence. Even the units that worked on school administration were ignorant of the student number in the district.

In all sampled districts, RCs were not involved in scholarship and SIP-based funding matters. DEOs directly informed the schools about the programs and the schools had the practice of directly submitting their expenditure reports to the account units of DEOs.

The accounts unit had not developed any mechanism to monitor how the amounts were used by the schools. This unit only made use of the expenditure report to release the next quarterly budget.

Fig. 6.1

Information flow system
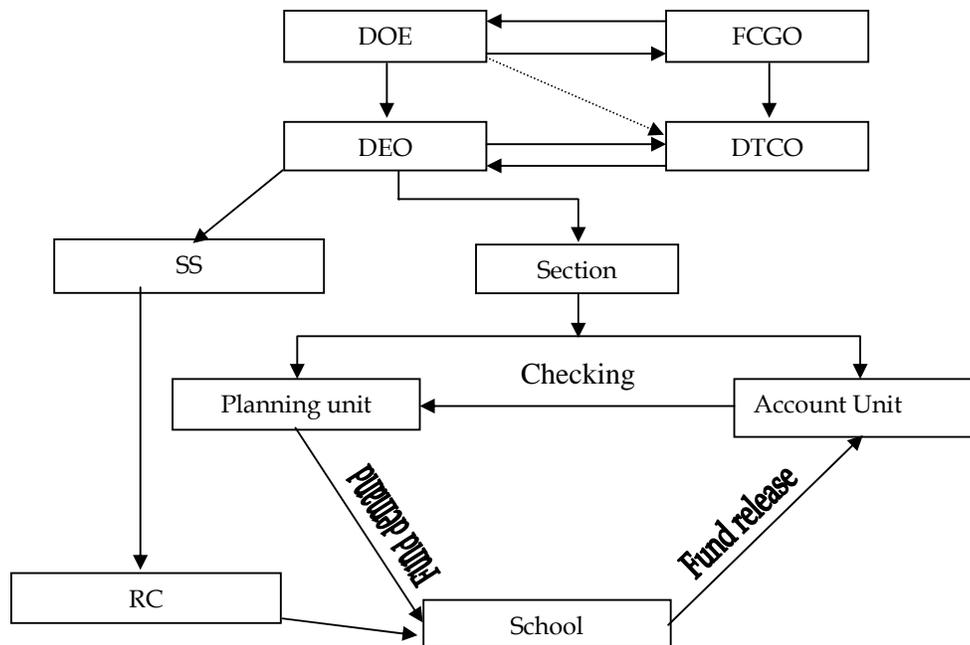
Gaps

1. There was a gap between the purpose of SIP and the local level stakeholders' view on SIP. For example, the local level stakeholders knew that if they proposed ten million in the SIP they would receive one million rupees only. Thus, SIP has been a ritual document rather than a planning document.

2. There is communication gap between the internal units of DEO. The unit that works for school administration does not even know the total student number of the districts.

3. District education officials are confused about the 'heading' for the scholarship because DOE releases the fund on the heading of '50 percent girls scholarship' under special package for Karnali.

4. There is a gap between the central level and district level authorities in matters connected with the beginning of the school session. The center assumes that the school session starts in Baishakh throughout the country. The district of Jumla has changed session time. So now it is from Marga 26.

5. There is information gap between DEO, RC, and school. DEO sends information directly to school, the RC set aside.

Barriers

1. Lack of orientation for SSs, RPs, HTs and SMCs on the reform programs.

2. The centre views every district through the same lens. In facts, Mountain districts are to be viewed differently before the operation of educational programs.

CHAPTER VII

Feedback Mechanism and Practices

This chapter deals with the mechanism and practices of feed back in relation to the operation of educational reform programs introduced at the local level. Like the preceding chapter, this chapter attempts to examine the three components in terms of scholarship, decentralization and quality education.

ASIP, 2007 has stated that regular monitoring must focus on helping MOES/DOE develop, review and amend national policies to ensure that the reform goals are attained in all districts as soon as possible. Keeping this in view, DOE will strengthen its monitoring system to ascertain that the program activities are implemented as planned. It will provide a basis on which to diagnose deviations during the implementation and suggest timely for corrective measures in a formative way. Developing monitoring indicators for educational activities and strengthening regular monitoring will significantly contribute to enhancing quality. For regular monitoring, empowering the local community to undertake monitoring activities and involving local NGOs and CBOs will be a key priority. School Improvement Plans with in-built monitoring mechanisms will be prioritized and provided with a specific channel for reporting and feedback on sound formats.

The earlier FRP studies have shown that the feedback reciprocity in the operation of educational reform process has been poor. Considering this, the present study has made an effort to see if the feed back system has improved over the time or not. In this regard, questions were asked about the existing practices of reciprocity of feedback to local level implementing agencies such as DEO, RC, school, DDC, VDC and local CBOs and NGOs. The findings are presented as follows.

There was a scheduled meeting of DOE and DEOs of the sampled districts. DOE organized regional workshops twice a year where it asked for district level   annual programs and budgets. However, in this workshop DOE itself gave the district level program components and budget ceiling without listening to the problems tabled by the participating districts. So the districts were compelled to accept the directions of DOE, which did not include their problems. According to the DEOs of the districts, this explains that the district level educational programs were prepared as the DOE liked. Even if the annual programs were formulated as per the operational guidelines, DOE would not consider the problems encountered during program implementation. DOE did not care to see if the scholarship quota adequate for the student number and SIP-based funding was not released on time as reported by the sampled districts. For example, DEO officials had complained the inadequacy of the funding for SIP and school grants in the workshop with regard to the Flash indicator. DOE released fund to DEO not as specified by the Flash indicator. Finally, DEO distributed the available amount to schools in proportion to student number. Thus, reciprocity of feed back system did not exist between DOE and DEO.

The RPs of the sampled districts reported that they were not involved in the agenda of educational reform programs. In practice, it was found that RPs did not even know about the annual programs run in the schools within their purviews. Since RPs were kept uniformed about the programs, it was meaningless to expect any feedback from them.

VECs had not been formulated in any sample districts. However, it was in process in one of the VDCs of Mustang. Thus, the possibility of feedback appeared almost impossible.

DDC and VDC had made investments in educational programs only in Mustang and Nuwakot. In these districts, DDC and VDC had not worked for the reciprocity of feedback. Thus, programs were justified in isolation.

There was no reciprocity of feedback between the school and DEO. For example, schools of the sample districts made use of whatever fund they received from DEOs without grudging even if the fund was inadequate. Likewise, DEO had not developed any feedback system regarding the distribution and utilization of the scholarship amounts.

The SSs of sampled districts were used as desk officers, not as field workers. They were given the responsibility of monitoring and supervision of administration aspects. They visited the schools only for approving teachers' license, approving new schools, upgrading the classes and evaluation of teachers for promotion. Thus, they were excluded from the jobs pertaining to scholarship, decentralization and quality education, which are directly related to teaching-learning activities.

Some specific cases of feedback reciprocity in the districts are explained below.

DEOs of Kanchanpur, Ilam and Nuwakot were mainly concerned with collecting the receipts of scholarships from the schools. It was necessary to collect the receipts for the next quarterly budget release by DEO. Schools distributed the scholarships after two weeks of budget release with the approval of SMC. However, none of the local level stakeholders collected feedback on the pros and cons of the program. Thus, there was no feedback exchange between DEO, RC, SMC and target groups.

In Jumla, DEO, RC and schools had no feedback mechanism. Feedback was not provided even during the explanation of the purpose of Flashes I and II. Thus, RPs and, schools were misguided and this encouraged the schools to inflate the student number during the Flash report fill-up. As reported by RPs and head teachers of the schools, it was a safe to increase the student numbers to keep up quota of teachers and scholarships.

The district of Mustang seemed to be making an effort to develop the feedback mechanism in spite of its being in a mountainous region. In this regard, the activities of DEO had appeared commendable. All the schools were asked for the program feedback in the quarterly letter from the DEO. Besides, it had established co-ordination with the schools that operated near the district headquarter. DEO and SSs frequently visited these schools to observe their school-programs.

Gaps

1. There is a gap in Flash reporting. For example, school inflates the student number during Flash report fill-up.

2. There is gap in reciprocity of feedback – from school to DOE and from DOE to school.

Barriers

1. No system has yet been introduced for promoting exchange of feedback.

CHAPTER VIII

Findings of the Study

This chapter draws the outcome of the study from the reviews and field study. In the review, educational reform in terms of scholarship, decentralized management and teacher support were analyzed. Findings from related studies were also included for comparison. Current plans, policies and programs of the government of Nepal, program operation and implementation, and structural provisions were studied. The review also refers to the previous FRP studies on educational reform (implementation level).

Policy makers and local level implementers were the key respondents. From them the research team collected required information during fieldwork. The respondents included DEOs, LDOs, head teachers, teachers, SMC members, and VDC/community members, VEC and PTA members from the five sampled districts Flow of. Fund at the district level was traced out by visiting DEOs, DTCOs, DDCs, RCs and schools.

The major findings of the study are given below.

Institutional Operation System

- DEO workload was heavy to three officials – the District Education Officer, the chief of the planning section and the accountant. The Officer was busy dealing with aspects such as teachers' transfer, teachers' appointment, upgrading of classes, construction of new buildings and classrooms, and conflict issue. In dealing with these agenda, DEO had to encounter mainly teachers, head teachers, local political workers, chairpersons and members of SMC, parents and others. On an average, more than 100 visitors came to DEO each day. Thus, the Officers said that they were unable to spare time for plans and programs for quality education.

- It appears that RPs have been working in coordination with school supervisors. In practice, they were working primarily under the RC-head teacher. For example, the monthly work plan of RP requires endorsement by RC-head teacher prior to its submission to the school supervisor.

- RC does not have its own office block because the change in the RP system moved it to a secondary school (from a lower secondary or primary school). In Jumla, there was no building block anywhere in the district.

- One of the sample schools of Ilam looked quite advanced. It had formulated school calendars, annual programs and specific job descriptions for the teaching cadre. This school had also mobilized the Mothers Group, a local community based organization to keep the school and the school children neat and clean.

Structural Provisions

- RPs of the two sample districts said that they had not been given any written job description (by DEO). The newly appointed (in Srawan 2063) RPs were confused about their roles since they were not oriented/trained.

- The present structural provision of delegating more power to the section officer than to the school supervisor (similarly, school supervisor to resource person) has resulted in power clash among the staffs.

- People in Nuwakot and Mustang preferred being teachers to being RPs. As a result, only 7 RPs (out of 13) and two RPs (out of 5) had been appointed in Nuwakot and Mustang respectively. Thus, teachers had a misconceptions about the role of RP and considered it as a low profile job.

- The workload of RP was inordinate in Kanchanpur. There were 66 schools under the Niglasaini Gobariya RC. This overload was detrimental to capacity and efficiency building.

- RPs were not mentally prepared to assist DEO because they considered themselves responsible towards HTs rather than to DEO. As a result, they could not develop harmony relation between DEO and the schools.

Scholarship

- The District Education Office and the school management committee are the units responsible to execute the scholarship program. However, these units did not distribute scholarships as per the norms specified in the Manual and the Guidelines. Hence, neither the beneficiaries received the stated amounts nor were the amounts distributed at the scheduled time.

- In Nuwakot and Jumla the information flow from the District Education Office was rather weak on the issue of scholarship distribution. The account unit released the scholarship fund to the school account without sending any information to the school. The account unit however puts the information of the total amount in the notice board. The schools and RCs of these districts said that it was difficult to distribute scholarships as per the information displayed in the notice board because it did not give any specific information on the size and quota of the scholarship. In other districts, the scholarship distribution mechanism was better.

Decentralized Management

- 'Use of SIP' system had not been developed in the schools of the sample districts. The schools did not prepare their annual plans as required by the instruction of their SIP documents, neither did they demand any programs from DEO (as per their SIPs). Even SIP-based funding was not sought. Eventually, DEO also did not release the SIP-based funds to the schools.

- The research team came to know that the sampled schools were confused about the purpose of SIP-based grants. 50 percent of the schools considered it as fund for textbooks. The other schools considered that the saving after the purchase of textbooks could be spent on teacher's salary and the like.

- The role of DDC seems to be quite limited within the framework of decentralized management. In this respect, only the salaries and allowances of primary teachers go via DDC to DEO. As reported in the districts, this practice has added unnecessary burden to DDC by delaying in the fund flow.

- The case of mobilization of NGOs differed district to district. In Jumla, and Nuwakot, NGOs had been working in collaboration with DEO. However, the case of Mustang was completely different from that of Nuwakot and Jumla.

Here a myriad of INGOs/NGOs were involved in the education sector but without informing the DEO about their work.

- RPs had not been involved in SIP-based funding. Schools directly submitted the expenditure reports to the account unit of DEO. But this unit had not developed any monitoring mechanism regarding the use of SIP-based funding, nor had it suggested others to do so.

Quality Education

- School management grants and stationery grants were released on time. Likewise, RCs received block grants on time in all the districts. But in Ilam, the RC-block grant was found reallocated by the district.

- RPs of all the sampled districts were used in collecting and submitting Flashes I and II but none of them had prepared and displayed the annual statistics of their catchment areas in their RCs.

- RPs of Nuwakot and Ilam were more active. Basically, they were involved in organizing a two-day training for teachers and chairpersons of SMCs (under the direction of DEO). Besides, they had developed operation calendars for their RCs by collecting Rs 100 from each school.

Communication

- It appeared that there was no effective communication between the units of the DEO. In all the districts, the school administration section only looked after teacher records. The statistics section dealt only with programs and student enrolment. Finally, the account unit worked only for financial transactions.

- DEO, RC and schools are the main local level educational reform program implementors. In this respect, these institutions are supposed to have good communication between them. In the sample districts communication between DEOs and schools was in low profile and the existence of RCs was found almost out of track.

- RPs are instructed to assist in instructional improvement in the schools of their catchment area. However the study revealed the need to enable them to perform their roles effectively.

- The DEO of Ilam used several means of communication for information about the scholarship program, which included the FM radio and local newspaper. It also circulated the annual program and budget release document to each school.

- There is communication gap between DEO and the schools on how to use the SIP grants. For example, the school has no idea where to spend the 'residue amount' accruing after the expenditure on textbooks. In one of the sample schools, confusion about the size of the amount was noted because the head teacher of the school was pleading that the SIP amount per student was Rs 150.

- There was no separate desk for the SIP-based funding in DEO to help to promote communication between DEO and the schools.

- There is communication gap in the internal units of DEO. The unit that works for school administration has no idea of the total student number in the district.

- DEO of Ilam reported that his office used different communication media to disseminate information about the scholarship program. The media included the FM radio and the local newspaper. It also circulated the annual program and budget release document to each school. Despite these efforts, the scholarship was not distributed in specified time and the quota cash differed in size school to school. The DEO admitted that it was not easy to distribute scholarships in time because the distribution mechanism often failed to work as expected.

- There was no communication between the schools and DEO. For example, one school distributed Rs 250 each in girls scholarship and another Rs 300 each for the same.

- Snowfall starts in the month of Marga and ends in the month of Falgun in Himali districts. Because of this difficulty, the schools of Jumla starts the new academic session in the fourth week of Marga but DEO cannot release the SIP fund for the academic session. So the students went to school without textbooks for as many as four months (Magha to Baishakh). The HTs said that they were worried about this inconvenience.

Feedback

- Dalit and 50 percent girls scholarships should be distributed on Jestha 4 and Falgun 7 at the rate of Rs 350 per quota as mentioned in the Operation Guidelines. Likewise, all girls' scholarships for Karnali Zone should be distributed Rs 100 per month for 10 months. DOE sends scholarship programs to DEO in the first week of Bhadra. However, funds for scholarships were released through DTCO on quarterly basis, causing delaying in the distribution.

- Even though RC is considered an intermediary between DEO and the school, it has not been given any feedback-related role. Likewise SSs are also not involved in feedback exchange.

- Feedback related to scholarship does not exist in Kanchapur because RPs and SSs are only two reliable service agents for the scholarship programs. But the research team did not at all find their involvement in the program. RPs and SSs stated that they were not informed about the scholarship program (by DEO).

- In Nuwakot, RCs were in a defunct state because DEO had not been able to appoint RPs. Thus, schools were found isolated (from DEO) in the absence of the intermediate role of RCs.

- No co-ordination network had yet been built to facilitate the on-going educational reform process.

- There is a provision for submitting the quarterly expenditure report to the DEO but there is no system to report how the funds were in fact distributed to the schools. For example, the schools used SIP and block grants as per their needs but submitted reports in the prescribed format of DEO. Similarly, sample schools had distributed 50 percent girls scholarship to all girls students but they had submitted the receipts as per the quota granted to them.

CHAPTER IX

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The conclusions are based on the major findings presented in preceding chapter. The recommendations are derived from the conclusions.

Conclusions

With regard to DEO, RC, and school, which the study considered as three major local level program implementing agencies, the study concludes that their operation was chiefly guided by the central level policies and programs. Even though the thrust of the Local Self Government Act and the Education Act is to promote local level planning, this planning was not exercised in any sample district except Ilam. The DEO of Ilam had introduced a new concept for educational reform at the district level and the schools had used this new concept in school management with stress on the mobilization of local communities.

BPEP II had developed the concept of DEP and SIP, and since then DEO and the schools are making use of these plan documents as the means to bring the anticipated reform in education. EFA also supported these planning tools for fund allocation. All these contributed to develop the concept of bottom up planning. The present practice is that districts make ASIP and the center allocates the funds. All sampled districts prepared the ASIP, using the flash report statistics and regardless of the DEP document. The SIP document was dumped.

The sampled districts were practicing decentralization using various approaches. In Nuwakot, DDC and NGOs had launched educational programs in co-ordination with DEO. So DEO knew what programs were being implemented in the schools. This was so in Jumla too. However, the DEO of Mustang did not have any information on what types of educational programs were being conducted by DDC and NGOs/INGOs in the district.

The staffs of DEO had not been given any specific job description. The job description that was available seemed to be imbalanced. So it kept the planning and account unit more occupied than other units. As a result, the planning unit had no separate desk for SIP and DEP. The sample districts had collected SIP documents from all the schools. However, these documents were not used and analyzed for SIP-based funding and planning.

DEOs had no trained computer operators (Nuwakot excepted). Thus, official records and statistics had not been stored in the computers. In Jumla regularity of officials was quite low. The officials of Nuwakot went to Kathmandu on Friday mornings and came back to office on Sunday afternoons. This hindered official works in the districts.

The record keeping was poor in the sampled districts. School documents lay strewn on the racks. When the teachers were asked to submit their records, they ransacked the racks.

RPs had been recruited for instructional improvement in the beginning of EFA program. They were brought under school supervisors for quality development. They were to conduct management trainings, head teacher's meetings, and RC level action research. DEOs did not conduct orientations training for the newly appointed

RPs nor did they convene the monthly meetings at the district. They had not assigned any job responsibility (in writing) to RPs. In absence of these regulations/instructions RPs were finding it difficulty to perform their jobs responsibly.

DEO, RC and the school, kept RCs isolated from the programs and ignorant of fund flow. It was because DEOs sent programs and funds directly to the schools without giving any information to RCs and, hence, RCs did not know what programs were running in the schools.

EFA re-defined the roles and responsibilities of school supervisors. The EFA structure kept the school supervisor above RP and gave the supervisors the responsibility of supervising RCs and the schools. In the sample districts the school supervisors were not working according to this structural provision. For example, school supervisors of the sampled districts had not organized any meeting/orientation nor had they issued any instructions to RCs and the schools under their jurisdictions.

The FRP studies concluded that the management of scholarships would need further improvement and strengthening. FRP study had suggested to distribute disabled children scholarships as per the severity of disability. The distribution of other scholarships such as Dalit and girls was smooth but the distribution was never monitored.

Recommendations

On the findings and conclusions given above, the study makes the following recommendations.

2. The bottom-up planning approach stated in the EFA program document should be followed. For this, DEP and SIP should strongly address local needs.

3. The centrally controlled management should change to school-based planning and management (in collaboration with local CBOs, NGOs).

4. Some of the work responsibility of DEO should go to the school supervisor. For this, separate offices should be established in different constituencies of the district. The school supervisor should mobilize RP and empower RC.

5. The officials of local level implementers, including DEO, should be given definite jobs and the mechanism for internal communication within the DEO should be developed.

6. The monitoring of scholarship distribution system should be effective. It should be able to asses the benefits.

7. The yearly orientation/training for SSs, RPs, HTs, SMC members and other stakeholders should be conducted in the districts to familiarize them with the EFA programs.

8. There should be two-way communication between DEO and the school for the effective implementation of the reform programs.

9. DEO should balance the workloads of the different units/sections in his office.

ANNEX 1

Workshop Report

A one day workshop on "Enhancing educational reform process: A study on operation of system and structural provision at the implementation level" was held at CERID on 26 chaitra 26, 2063.

The workshop was chaired by Prof. Dr. Hridaya Ratna Brajacharya, Executive Director of CERID. It had 19 participants comprising education specialists and high profile personnel working in the Department of Education and the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The workshop was expected to arrive at meaningful conclusions regarding the focus area of this research study.

Dr. Mana P. Wagley (educationist) said that the researcher should first mention the reform agenda and then explain the operational process to go in line with the structural provision. He also emphasized the need to frame the process of communication for reform and reciprocity of feedback. Finally, he identified MOE, DOE, DEO, HT as units of the study with DEO as the special focus.

Dr. Lawa Deo Awasthi said that this study should try to find out the gaps between the reform executing units and identify the school reform problems.

Prof. Dr. B. D. Kafle, (inclusive education specialist) expressed that the research should give emphasis to examine the capacity of DEO in terms of the reform process. He also pointed out the need to identify and remove the barriers to reform.

Hari Lamsal, Deputy Director of the Department of Education, suggested that the study should include the issues in quality of education in terms of teacher support.

Finally, Dr Brajacharya, (chairperson, laid stress on the mapping and operational aspects of the educational reform and presented a summary of discussions. He suggested the following as focus areas for the research.

- Access with focus on exclusion (scholarship of girls/DAG)
- Decentralized management (SIP, school grants)
- Quality of education in terms of teacher support.

ANNEX 2

Expert's Meeting

Outcome of the second meeting held on Baisakh 31, 2064

The following components need to be added to the field work done in Ilam and Nuwakot:

1. Concepts, roles and functions of local level institutions

2. Job volume (whether functional/operational or not)

1. Provision in terms of

    - Infrastructure

    - Staff (number, responsibility including that of follow-up, additional responsibility)

    - Technical support (capacity)

    - Budget/financing

(Judge whether the system has been facilitated on the above grounds)

2. See whether the provision for Flash report is adequate.

3. Why is DEO inefficient? Which provision does not work? Why it failed to work?

4. Do the following:

    - Count the total number of programs in DEO

    - Give the names of the institutions /offices responsible to oversee the programs under study and analyze their way and style of operation. Assess the spirit of the programs.

    - See if the programs are overloaded (in DEO).

    - Observe the working desks and activities (meeting etc.) in order to deduce flaws in the system (mention weaknesses of the programs and present the causes of program failure).

    - Observe how time is allocated for regular work and EFA

    - Find faults (in DOE or DEO).

1. State whether DOE knows what problems exist in his office and RCs.

ANNEX 3

Fund Flow

School Grants

Earmarked Grants
- Teacher Salaries
- Free Textbooks
- Scholarships

Block Grants
- Administrative
- School Improvement
- Educational Materials
- Support to local schools run by community

SIP Grants
- SIP Implementation
- School

Performance Grants
- Indicator Based (Indicative for management transfer)
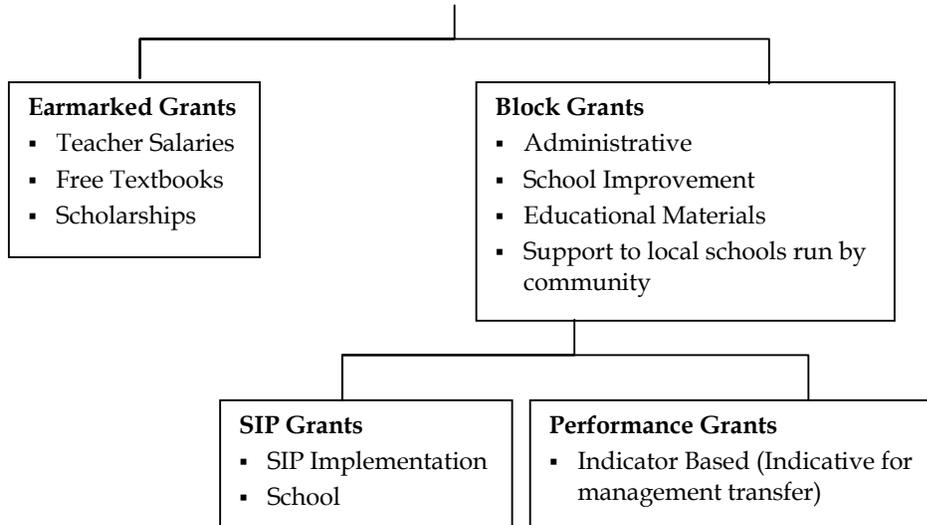
ANNEX 4

Disbursements of Regular Grants

Ministry of Finance

↓

Department of Education

↓

District Treasury Controller Office

Annex 5

↓

District Education Fund

↓

District Education Office

↓
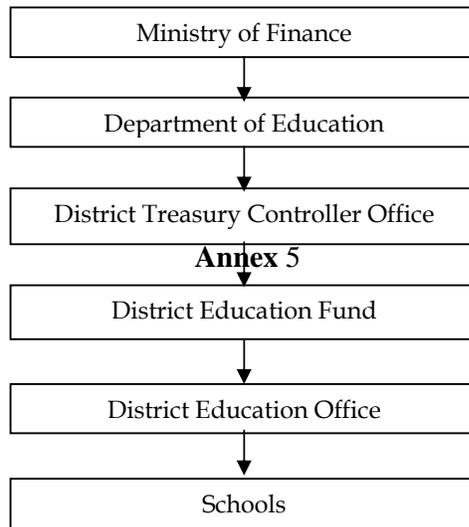
Schools

ANNEX 5

Disbursements of School Grants

Ministry of Finance   Ministry of Education and Sports

| MOF | | MOES |

Presentation of Budget/Program
Approval of Budget. Allocation (RED book)

| FCGO | | DOE |

Authorization
Reporting

| DTCO | | DEOs |

Requests for Funds
Release of Fund (Approved)

| DEOs | | Schools |

Fund Disbursement
Request for Funds
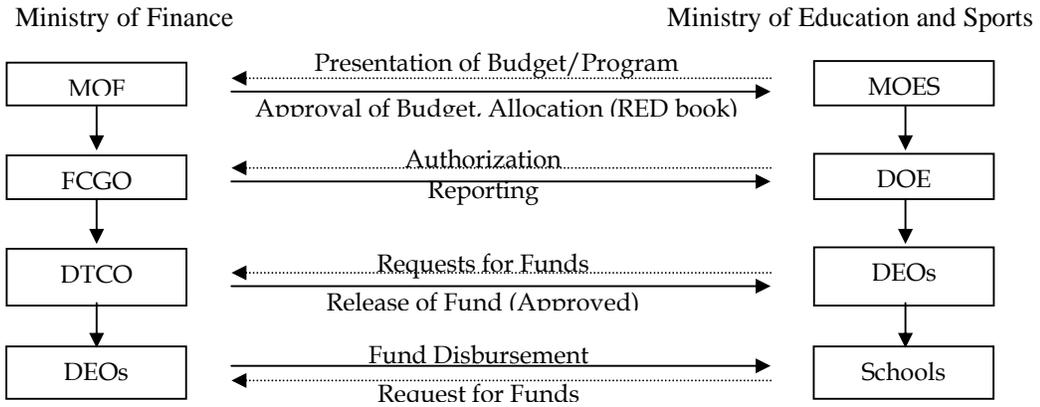
Note: Arrows indicate the type of action (related agency).

ANNEX 6

Fund Flow at District Level

Ministry of Finance

Authorization Letter

FCGO

MOES

Reporting   Authorization

DTCOI   DTCO75

DOE

Reporting   Authorization

| DEOI | DEO75 | Central Level Cost Centers |

——— Reporting/Coordination
━━━ Fund Flow
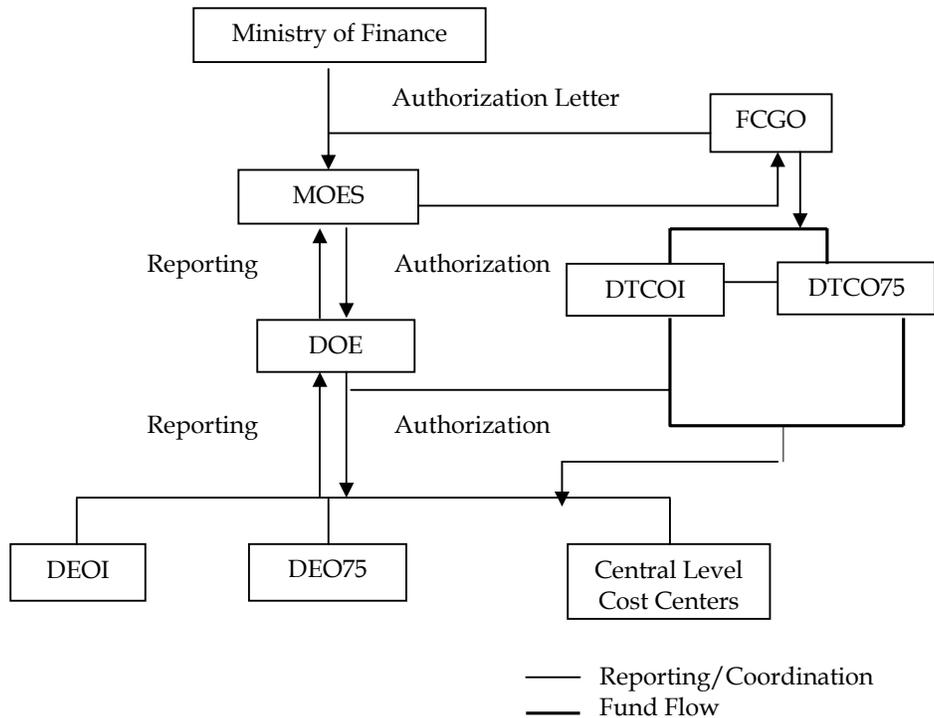
DTCO=District Treasury Controller Office
FCGO=Finance Controller General Office

ANNEX 7

Fund Flow Mechanism

```
                    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
                    │  National Planning Commission    │
                    └──────────────────────────────────┘
                    │                              │
                    ▼                              ▼
    ┌──────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────┐
    │ Ministry of Education & Sports│   │     Ministry of Finance      │
    └──────────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────────┘
                    │                              │
                    ▼                              ▼
    ┌──────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
    │   Department of Education     │   │ Financial Comptroller General's  │
    │                              │◄──│           Office                 │
    └──────────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────────────┘
                    │                              │
                    ▼                              │
    ┌──────────────────────────────┐              │
    │   District Education Office   │◄──┐          │
    │  Program and Planning Section │   │          │
    │  Account Section, EMIS Section│   │          │
    └──────────────────────────────┘   │          │
                    │            ┌──────┴──────────▼────────────┐
                    │            │ District Treasury Comptroller │
                    │            │           Office              │
                    │            └───────────────────────────────┘
                    │                 │
                    ▼                 ▼
    ┌──────────────┐  ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
    │   Schools    │◄►│   Village Development Committee     │
    └──────────────┘  └────────────────────────────────────┘
```
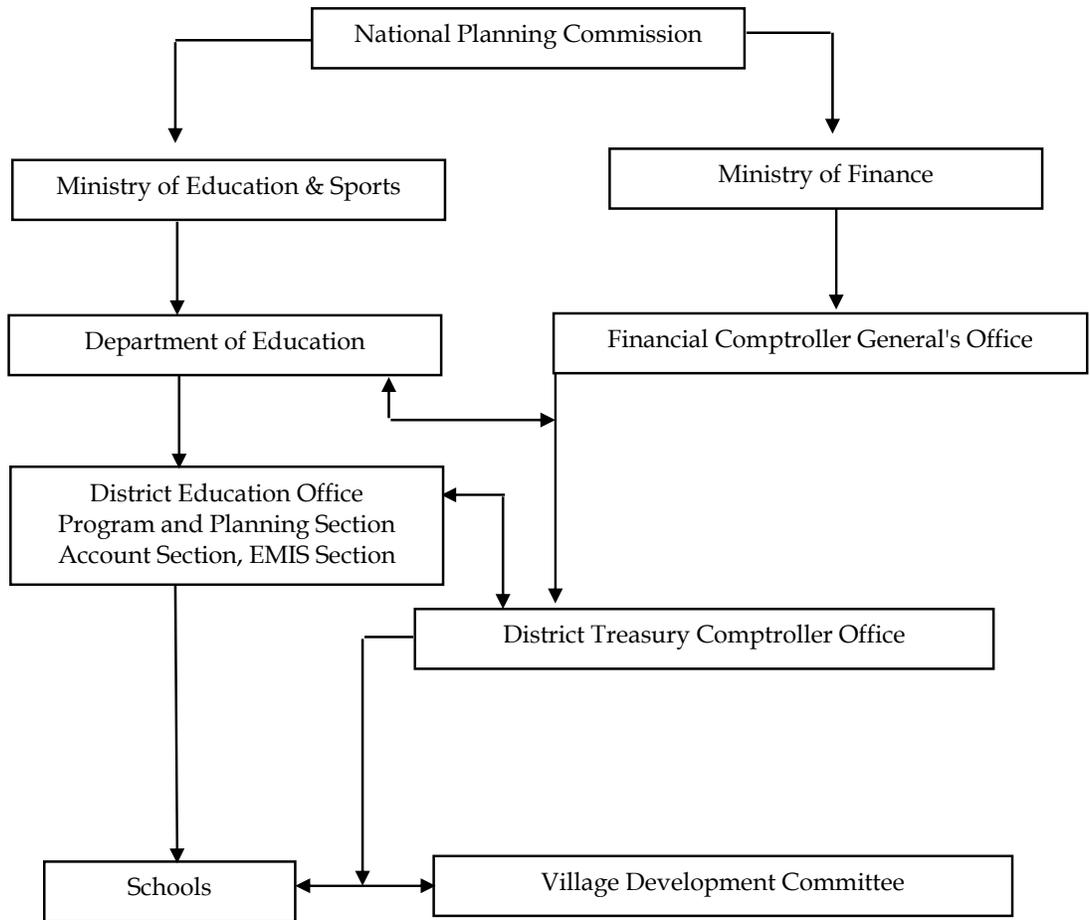
ANNEX 8

Girls and Dalit Scholarship

```
                        ┌──────┐
                        │ NPC  │
                        └──────┘
              ┌────────────┴────────────┐
          ┌──────┐                  ┌──────┐
          │ MOF  │                  │ MOES │
          └──────┘                  └──────┘
              │                          │
          ┌──────┐   Authorization letter │
          │ FCGO │◄───────────────────   Request
          └──────┘                          │
              │                        ┌──────┐
              └────────────────────────│ DOE  │
                                       └──────┘
```
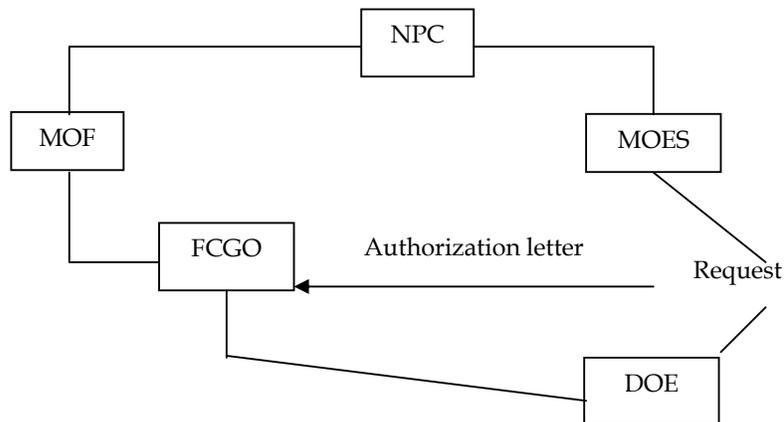
ANNEX 9

Teacher Support System

```
            ┌───────┐
            │  DEO  │
            └───┬───┘
                ↓
            ┌───────┐
            │  PC   │
            └───┬───┘
                ↓
            ┌───────┐
            │  RC   │
            └───┬───┘
```

┌──────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────┐
│   Recurrent   │   │   Refresher   │
│ (Gender, equity, inclusive,│   │ (Gender, equity, inclusive,│
│   bilingual)   │   │   bilingual)   │
└──────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────┘

```
            ┌────────┐
            │ School │
            └────────┘


       ┌─────────────────────┐
       │ Teacher Training Unit│
       └──────────┬──────────┘
          ┌───────┴───────┐
          ↓               ↓
      ┌───────┐       ┌───────┐
      │ FOES  │       │ NCED  │
      └───────┘       └───────┘
```
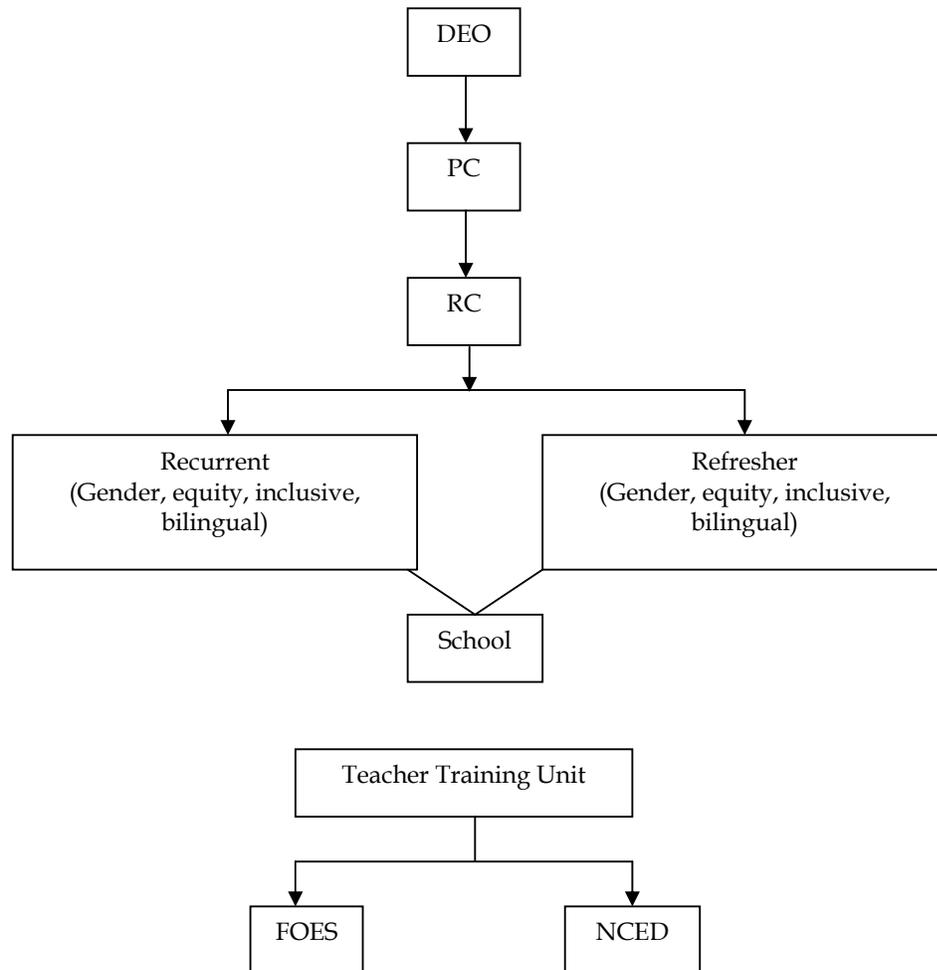
ANNEX 10

DEO Operation System in Jumla

```
┌─────────────┐         ┌─────────────┐
│     DOE     │◄────────│    FCGO     │
│             │────────►│             │
└─────────────┘         └─────────────┘
      │        ╲               │
      ▼         ╲              ▼
┌─────────────┐  ╲     ┌─────────────┐
│     DEO     │───────►│    DTCO     │
│             │◄───────│             │
└─────────────┘        └─────────────┘
      │
      ▼
```

```
        ┌──────────────────────┬────────────────────────┐
        ▼                                                ▼
┌─────────────┐                              ┌──────────────────────┐
│   Section   │                              │     Supervision      │
│             │                              │   Training Section   │
└─────────────┘                              └──────────────────────┘
        │                                                │
        ▼                                    ┌───────────┼───────────┐
                                             ▼           ▼           ▼
                                         ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐
                                         │  SS  │   │  SS  │   │  SS  │
                                         └──────┘   └──────┘   └──────┘
                                             │           │           │
                                             ▼           ▼           ▼
                                         ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐
                                         │ RC-4 │   │ RC-3 │   │ RC-3 │
                                         └──────┘   └──────┘   └──────┘
                                             │           │           │
                                             ▼           ▼           ▼
                                         ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐
                                         │School│   │School│   │School│
                                         └──────┘   └──────┘   └──────┘
```

Administration, Store Unit	Account Unit
Secondary/LS Unit	EFA General
Primary Unit	Planning Statistics
Examination/Extra Curricular Unit	Nutrition Unit

School
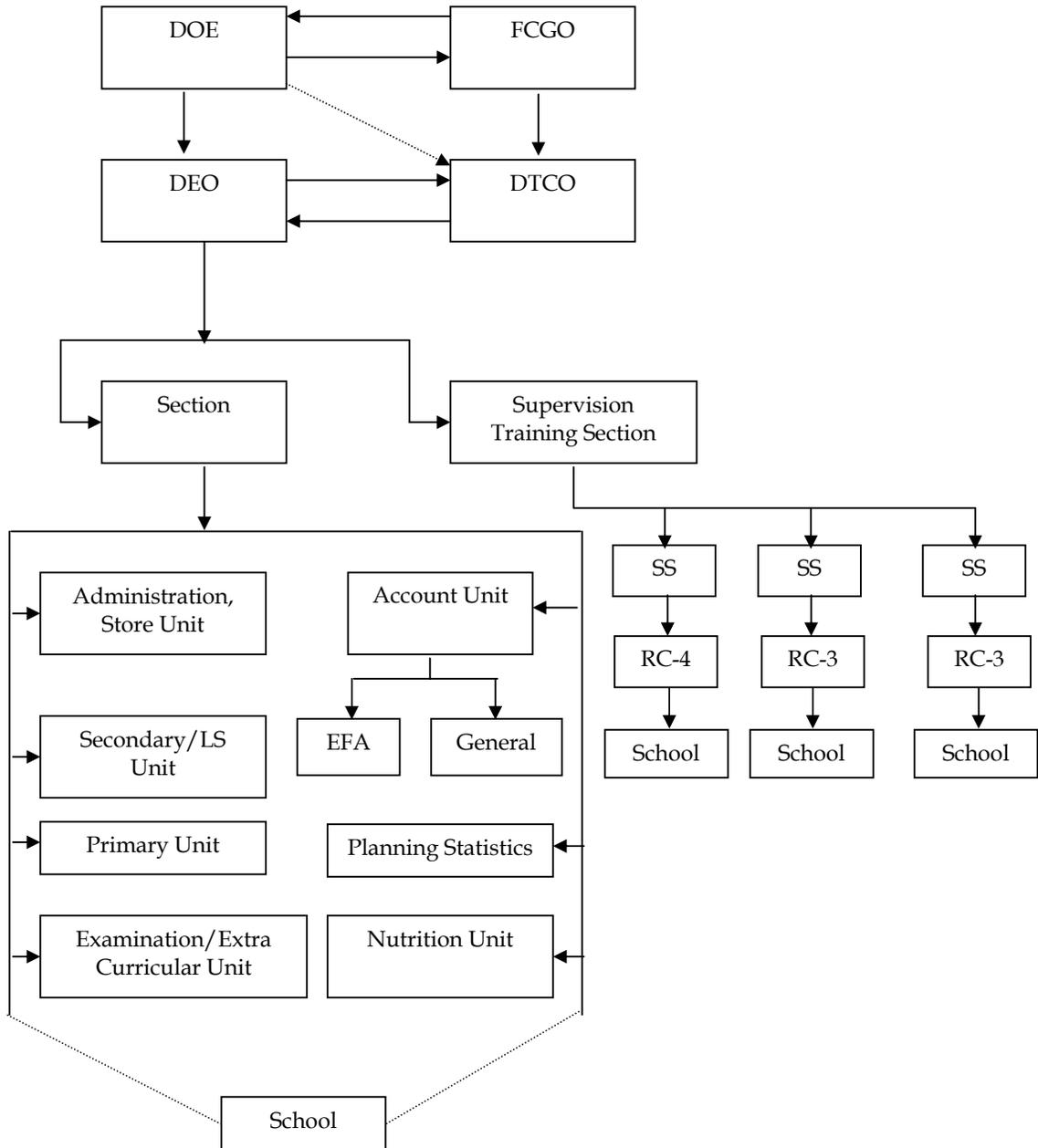
ANNEX 11

Fund Flow for Inclusive Education

```
  ┌─────────┐ ←──────── ┌─────────┐
  │   DOE   │ ────────→ │  FCGO   │
  └─────────┘           └─────────┘
       │        ·····┐        │
       ↓            ↓         ↓
  ┌─────────┐ ────────→ ┌─────────┐
  │   DEO   │ ←──────── │  DTCO   │
  └─────────┘           └─────────┘
       │
       └──────────┐
                  ↓
            ┌───────────┐
            │  Section  │
            └───────────┘
```

Quota

```
  ┌──────────────┐            ┌──────────────────┐
  │ Account Unit │ ←───────── │   Planning &     │
  │              │            │ Statistics Unit  │
  └──────────────┘            └──────────────────┘
         \                            ↑
     Fund release              Flash reporting
           \                        /
          ┌──────────────┐
          │    School    │
          └──────────────┘
```
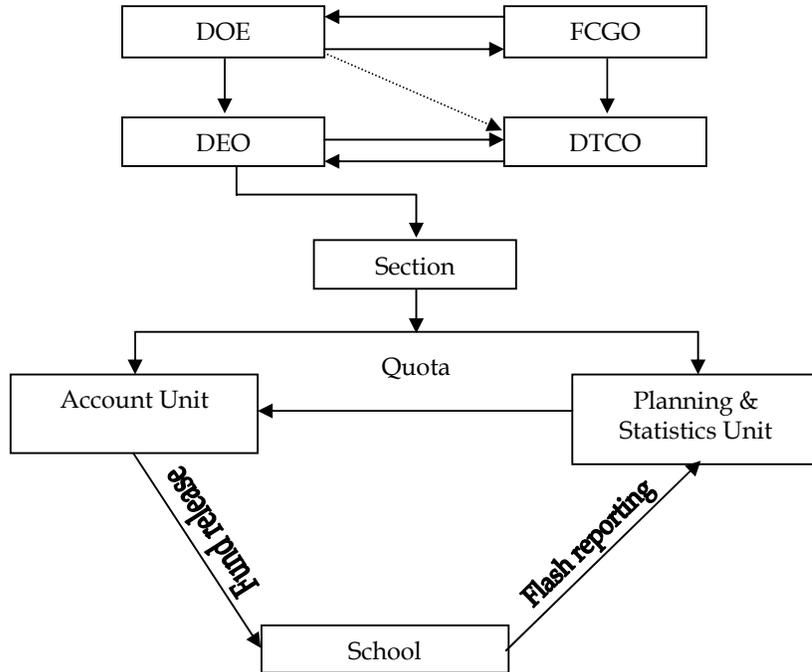
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