

FRP Bulletin

Formative Research Project

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The Formative Research Project is being undertaken by Tribhuvan University, Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) for the Ministry of Education and Sports, His Majesty's Government, Nepal.

Formative Research for Education for All 2004-09

Introduction to FRP for EFA 2004-09 and Its Purpose

FRP Contents

- ❑ Purpose of FRP for EFA 2004-09
- ❑ Formation of FRAG
- ❑ Key Research Questions
- ❑ Ongoing Research Projects
The System Indicator's Study and Case Studies
- ❑ Norwegian Consultants' Visits
- ❑ Organization of Annual Meeting
- ❑ Organization of Workshops and Seminars
- ❑ Sharing of FRP Experiences in Africa

An agreement was signed on 24 September 2004 between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway regarding Education for All 2004-2009. Subsequently, A Memorandum of Understanding between the Royal Ministry of Education and Research, Norway and the Ministry of Education and Sports, HMG was signed on 22 November 2004. An annual meeting of the Formative Research for EFA 2004-09 and Institutional Cooperation between the two ministries—MOES, Nepal and MOER, Norway was held on 24 November 2004 in Oslo, Norway. Accordingly, a contract was signed between MOES and the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University regarding execution of the Formative Research for Education for All 2004-09 on 3 December 2004.

The overall purpose of FRP for EFA is to provide technical support to the Ministry of Education and Sports by bringing forward strategic research-based information on the process of implementation of EFA 2004-09 and by assisting its capacity building initiatives. The specific **objectives** of the project are:

1. To generate research-based information and critical understanding of the process of implementation of EFA.
2. To assist the capacity building of MOES for the utilization of Formative Research as an instrument for programme monitoring and adjustment.
3. To assist a process-based institutional development of MOES and underlying agencies based on working experience and available knowledge and skills.©

Formation of Formative Research Advisory Group (FRAG)



FRAG was formed for supporting and leading the FRP activities in a right direction. It was formed by MOES under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ishwor Prasad Upadhyaya, Former Secretary of MOES on 19 January 2005. FRAG has altogether 15

members including the FRP Coordinator, who is the member-secretary. The other members include representatives of MOES, DOE, DEO, school head teachers, female educationists and indigenous group leaders.

FRAG meetings are being held in a regular manner. The meetings have discussed the progress of the project and provided valuable suggestions concerning selection of research questions, undertaking of research activities, ensuring quality of research, and relating research activities to the basic issues of EFA programmes.©

Identification of Key Research Topics

With the technical support of CERID, MOES has identified key issues and research topics for the year 2004-05.

For identifying the research topics:

- q Meetings were held at DOE and MOES.
- q A workshop was organized for FRP I researchers at CERID.
- q FRP I reports and the Action Steps suggested were reviewed.
- q EFA-related documents, especially the EFA Core Document 2004-09, were thoroughly reviewed. Based on this review, a matrix that included the EFA core areas, area-related programmes and strategies, issues and key questions was developed.

Based on the above activities a total of 14 research areas were identified and four case studies are being undertaken in the following areas:

1. Access of disadvantaged children to education
2. Identification of successful cases of SIP
3. Meeting the learning needs of all children including indigenous and linguistic minorities
4. Disbursement of block grants.

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Ongoing Research Projects

Continuation of: Longitudinal Study on System Indicators



The longitudinal study on system indicators, which was started in the second year of FRP I for the Basic and Primary Education Programme II, was thoroughly reviewed and a decision was made to revise the indicators so that it could include the focus areas and components of EFA. In this regard, a series of interaction sessions were held with FRP I researchers and relevant officials at MOES and DOE. The EFA documents, especially the EFA indicators, were also reviewed in order to revise and readjust them for this study. A set of indicators was thus selected. Based on the previous experiences, the new set of indicators also included information from the VDCs and the communities.

Preparation of a new set of research tools for SIS

Based on the new indicators, the previous research tools were revised and new sets of tools were prepared. Efforts were made to avoid duplication of the information and data collection procedures adopted by DOE.

Development of new guidelines for SIS study

Keeping in view the need for capacity building of the school authorities in maintaining school-related basic data and their use for the development of education in the school and the community, a guideline is being developed. The emphasis is being placed on involving local stakeholders (SMC members, VDC members, head teachers and

teachers) in data collection, data analysis and use of the information obtained for improving the programmes at the local level. So instead of sending the researchers out (from Kathmandu) for collecting data and analyzing them at the center the new modality adopted has established six clusters for undertaking the SIS activities. Each cluster includes 2–3 SIS sample districts and 6-10 schools. In each cluster FRP researchers will organize training programmes on proper collection of data and their analysis and use. The FRP researchers will visit the schools as and when necessary. The data and information collected and analyzed at the local level will be forwarded to the Center and a synthesized report will be drafted for the Ministry's use.

Case Studies:

1. Access of Disadvantaged Children to Education

There has been an increase in the number of primary schools over the years in the country in view of Nepal's basic and primary education for all by 2015. Sixteen percent of school age children (6-10 years of age) from the downtrodden and disadvantaged communities are still deprived of access to primary education.

There are many challenges relating to education for the disadvantaged children. The major challenges include inadequacy of measures to attract the disadvantaged children to school, lack of educational opportunities for remote area dwellers, hardcore groups, dalits, indigenous groups, street children, orphans, and the disabled.

The study 'Access of Disadvantaged Children to Education' intends to identify the disadvantaged children, examine their access to education,

assess the socio-economic and cultural barriers to their education, and find out ways to bring them to school and retain them.

District-level stakeholders, teachers and communities were the important components of the research project. The study procedures were carried out in three steps so that in-depth information could be collected through observations, interviews, FGDs, surveys, discussions, workshops etc.

2. Meeting the Learning Needs of All Children Including Indigenous People and Linguistic Minorities

A good education system not only provides academic and theoretical knowledge to students but also helps them learn different life skills, develop abilities for adaptive and positive behavior, and acquire generic skills related to a variety of areas such as health and social needs.

However, there are enormous challenges to developing multi-facet education in Nepal specifically due to inadequate support for meeting the individual child's learning needs and multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural character of the Nepalese society.

The intent of this research is to study the learning needs of children of indigenous peoples and linguistic minority groups, examine the effectiveness of the educational system in addressing learning needs of the students, identify issues and challenges involved in meeting the learning needs, and find out community perceptions regarding life skill education and their expectations from schools and educational provisions.

As curriculum is the body and soul of the students' learning process, various study tools and processes such as document analysis, process analysis, community survey through observations, and interactions (with the community people and the teachers, local leaders, SMC members and students).

3. Identification of Successful Cases of SIP

SIP has been introduced under BPEP as one of the essential instruments for planning school programmes for promoting innovative reform initiatives in education, especially in primary education. Under the SIP approach, efforts were made to equip stakeholders, SMC members and head teachers with appropriate training and resources for the planning, management and operation of the SIP process at the school level.

SIP, which was extended to secondary schools and the secondary level with the implementation of the Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP), initially covered 5 pilot districts. At present, the SIP coverage has been extended to 12 districts.

The study deals with cases where SIP has been successfully implemented and shown encouraging results. Research questions are related to the strengthening of SIP development process, mechanism of implementation and important features of successful SIPs.

The themes relating to the conditions for the successful implementation of SIP show immediate concern with regard to school context, environment, leadership, school culture, system support, commitment,

technical soundness, resource generation, stakeholders' involvement (in every stage of planning, management and implementation and evaluation), feedback system and result-orientation.

As for the features of a successful SIP, contextuality (need-based), resource support, technical knowledge and backstopping, ownership, quality focus, stakeholders' involvement, school-community linkage and inclusion of local ideas, strategies and interventions have been taken into account.

The study includes different data sources such as interview, discussion, observation and review of school documents and archival records. Activities of the stakeholders and their interactions are observed and reviewed, too.

The strategies for the study include school selection, review of school documents and archival records, observations, interviews with head teachers and teachers, observation of children's notes, and discussions with DOE staff, DEO staff, SMC members, and teachers and parents who are the sources of data.

Discussion guidelines will be prepared for DOE and DEO staff members, SMC members, teachers and parents.

4. Disbursement of Block Grants

The government has been providing various types of grants to public schools for many years. Salary grants constituted the major grants. Public schools needed resources also for various programmes aimed at raising the quality of education. With this in view, the government

decided to support the schools with a number of non-salary grants under various grant categories. The provision of additional grants was taken up as part of the EFA 2004-09 implementation. For streamlining the large number of school grants (previous and new) the Department of Education (DOE) introduced the School Grants Operations Guidelines (SGOG), 2061.

The need for studying the implementation of school grants, particularly the Block Grants (which included SIP Implementation Grant, School Materials Grant and various Performance-related grants), was felt. The key research question was: "How and to what extent are the Block Grants disbursed by the government (DOE) received and utilized by the schools?"

The Objectives of the study are: to determine the issues and challenges

involved in the implementation the block grants scheme (grants to schools); to assess the level of involvement of stakeholders in the implementation of the scheme; to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme; to suggest measures for the successful implementation of the scheme.

The study has used both primary and secondary data sources that cover review of relevant documents, consultation meetings and workshops (with MOES/DOE officials and concerned experts); field study in three districts (Kavre, Kaski and Chitwan) and collection of the finance flow data from three schools in each district; and holding school level meetings (with SMCs, PTAs and schoolteachers) and interviews with DEO, RPs/Supervisors, head teachers, SMC Chairmen, PTA chairmen and parents.©

Visits of Norwegian Experts



The Norwegian team, which was composed of Mr. Hakon Bjornes, Special Advisor of UFD, Ms. Mariann Hjelle, Advisor of UFD and Ms. Fride Tangen, Senior Advisor of the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education, visited Nepal from 14 to 29 of April 2005. The visit was made in connection with the capacity building and institutional

development of MOES and underlying agencies. The team visited MOES, DOE and CERID and had series of meetings with the MOES and DOE personnel and CERID researchers. The team also participated in the FRAG meeting and had fruitful discussions with the FRAG

members. During the visit the team:

- q took stock of relevant analyses, plans and activities regarding institutional development and capacity building.
- q identified needs for institutional development and capacity building that might not be met by the existing plans and activities.

q developed an activity plan for capacity building and institutional development.

The team also participated in the Annual meeting on 22 April 2005 held at MOES where the annual work plan and budget for the year 2005-06 were presented and thoroughly discussed.

Norwegian consultant **Prof. Kristin Tornes** visited Nepal from 16 to 21 June 2005. During her visit she had a series of consultation meetings with the FRP Coordinator and researchers. She also visited MOES where she had a meeting with Mr.



Chuman Singh Basnet, the Secretary, Mr. Ram Sarover Dubey, the Joint Secretary and Mr. Diwaker Dhungel, the Under Secretary. She also paid a visit to the Department of Education where she had a meeting with Mr. Ramsworup Sinha, the Officiating Director General and Ms. Neera Shakya, the Deputy Director. During her visit to MOES and DOE a review of the progress of FRP activities in Nepal was made.

A workshop on “Formative Research for Education for All 2004-09: Basic Principles, Progress and Challenges” was organized on 20 June 2005 at CERID, Balkhu. Prof. Tornes was the key speaker of the workshop. In the workshop she presented her paper—Basic

Principles and Critical Issues of Formative Research. The workshop was participated in by 29 people from MOES, DOE, FRAG and CERID researchers.

The Norwegian experts’ visits were found fruitful in clarifying issues and strengthening the formative research activities and capacity building and institutional development programmes.©

Organization of Annual Meeting

Concerning the Formative Research for EFA 2004-2009 and Institutional Cooperation the Annual Meeting of the Ministry of Education and Sports, Nepal and the Ministry of Education and Research (UFD), Norway was held on 22 April 2005 at MOES, Keshar Mahal, Kathmandu.

The meeting was participated in by Mr. Ram Sarover Dubey, the Joint Secretary, Mr. Diwakar Dhungel, the Under Secretary, Planning and Monitoring Section, Dr. Lava Deo Awasthi, the Under Secretary, Foreign Aid Coordination Section of MOES. Similarly, Mr. Hakon Bjornes, Senior Adviser, Ms. Fride Tangen, Senior Advisor, Ms. Mariann Hjelle, Advisor from UFD, Norway were present in the meeting. Mr. Svein Damsgaard, Counsellor from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kathmandu took part as an observer in the meeting. The meeting was also participated in by Dr. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya, Executive Director and Dr. Kishor Shrestha, FRP

Coordinator from CERID.

In the meeting a review of progress of FRP for EFA year I (Dec 04-July 05) was made. The Annual Work Plan and annual budget for the next fiscal year (15 July 2005 – 14 July 2006) were discussed. An outline for individual and institutional capacity building programme developed by the Norwegian team in consultation with MOES, DOE and CERID was also thoroughly discussed.©

Organization of Workshops and Seminars

In connection with the undertaking of FRP research activities a series of workshops and seminars have been organized both at the central level and the district level.

Under case studies, workshops and seminars were organized in the sample districts to discuss the specific issues relevant to the studies and to share the information and findings of the studies. The district level education workers, teachers, SMC members, parents and community people were involved in these workshops.

For the longitudinal study on system indicators workshops were held at the district level to collect necessary quantitative data from the sample schools and communities. The workshops organized under this project aimed to develop the capacity of the school authorities in maintaining school related basic data and their use for the development of education in the school and the community. The workshops therefore involved head teachers, VDC chairperson or VDC secretary and teachers. The respective DEOs, School Supervisors and the



representative of the Regional Education Directorate also participated in these workshops.

At the central level workshops were organized for identifying the key research questions. These workshops were participated in by officials from MOES, DOE and FRP researchers. Workshops and seminars were also organized under the longitudinal study to review the EFA indicators and revise the indicators for the study.

A high level workshop was organized to clarify the basic principles of FRP and review the achieved progress and the challenges faced by the Formative Research for Education for All 2004-09 project. The workshop was held at CERID, Balkhu, Kathmandu. It was participated in by high level officials from MOES, DOE, FRAG



presented his experience of undertaking FRP in Nepal and referred to what he had said on FRP in the paper which he recently presented in Niger, Africa. The coordinator of FRP Dr. Kishor Shrestha presented a paper on the progress of the project and its challenges. Professor Kristin Tornes, presented a paper on Basic Principles and Critical Issues of Formative Research.

The participants actively took part in the workshop by raising various questions and sharing experiences. ©



members and CERID researchers. In the workshop the Executive Director of CERID Professor Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya

Sharing Formative Research Experience of Nepal in ADEA/WGESA (Working Group on Education Sector Analysis) Seminar on Formative Research in Africa

ADEA/WGESA has decided to consider formative research as a means to improve education delivery in Africa. In this line, a seminar was held from 13-16 June, 2005 in Niamey, the capital of Niger, a country in the central northwest Africa with the support of UNESCO/IIEP, Paris. The purpose of the seminar was to conceptualize and develop a framework for formative research in the context of Africa. The workshop was participated in by Sahel countries and Senegal, Zambia

and Tanzania. Professor Hridaya R. Bajracharya, Executive Director of CERID, was invited to the seminar to present a paper on FRP experiences in Nepal and provide comments on the concept paper presented by African scholars. The paper on Nepal experiences outlined the important lessons learned, the issues and challenges in FRP and the FRP concept as it evolved from actual practice. In gist, formative research in educational reform programme is an approach to

management of research for effective and efficient implementation of the reform process. Formative research helps to monitor progress, develop critical understanding of the difficulties and issues, and generate ways and modalities to address them. In the process formative research unfolds further issues and ways to address them. Collaboration for institutional capacity building for better understanding and use of research and its outcomes is a unique feature of FRP in Nepal. ©



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