

Management Transfer of Public Schools



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Acknowledgement

Since the restoration of democracy in the country, decentralization policy reform has increasingly become the concern of planners and policy-makers in regard to the management and implementation of the local development programmes. In line with this reform process, efforts were made to enhance participation of the grassroots people and organizations in educational management and development. Transfer of the management of public schools to the community is an attempt to involve community members in the management and operation of local educational activities.

This report is an outcome of the study on Management Transfer of Public Schools. The study reviews the process of management transfer and throws light on the status of community-managed schools. I hope the issues raised by this study will be useful for improving the process of management transfer and related matters.

I express my sincere thanks to parents, SMC members, teachers, members of local bodies DEO and DOE staff members, and other for the kind cooperation they extended to me in connection with this study. Special thanks must go to CERID for giving me the privilege to conduct this study.

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Abbreviations Used

BPEP II	Basic and Primary Education Program
CBO	Community-based Organization
CMS	Community Managed School(s)
CT	Certificate Training
DDC	District Development Committee
DEC	District Education Committee
DEO	District Education Officer
DOE	Department of Education
EFA	Education for All
GO	Government Organizations
HM	Headmaster
HMG	His Majesty's Government
INGO	International Non-government Organizations
LSS	Lower Secondary School
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MTR	Mid-term Review
NGO	Non-government Organization
PS	Primary School
RC	Resource Centre
RP	Resource Person
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Managing Committee
SS	Secondary school
VDC	Village Development Committee
VEC	Village Education Committee
VEP	Village Education Plan

Management Transfer of Public Schools Executive Summary

Background

In the Ninth Plan, emphasis was laid on capacity building for self-governance of local bodies and making them accountable to the local people in matters of delivery of services. The Plan therefore introduced decentralization policy for enhancing local participation in the management and operation of educational institutes and transferring the management of the schools to local bodies. Recently, the government decided to transfer the management of public schools to the community. In this connection, the government has developed and brought out directives for these schools that to arouse their interest in the matters of management transfers. So far (up to 2002/0/10), the government has given approval to 100 schools for the management transfer and 39 schools have already come within the fold. These 39 schools are now looked upon as community schools.

Objective

The objective of this research work was to study the issues of management transfer and to highlight the status of community-managed school.

Study Process

CMS Operation Directives, Education Act and Local Self-Governance Act were reviewed.

The districts of Ilam and Morang were selected. From each of these districts, two schools that fall under the agreement of the government were selected for study.

Discussions were held with HMs, teachers, SMC members of CMS, parents of selected schools, local authority and local organizations (working in the school area), DEOs, selected school supervisors of the sample districts and RPs of the selected school clusters.

A discussion with the central level staff was held after field visit.

School minutes, supervision diaries, administrative reports, letters, etc. were observed to get relevant information.

As the data were unquantifiable, the theme discussed; in other words, the data were analyzed qualitatively.

Issues of Management Transfer

Management transfer did not spontaneously evolve from the grassroots people or community.

No preparation was made for the management transfers.

Only primary schools got approval to turn into CMS

To the management transfer of public schools, local bodies become indifferent.

SMCs did not demonstrate any capability to run the CMS.

Management transfer did not make CMS independent.

Local monitoring has not been evolved yet.

CMS was not very different from a public school.

Focus of decentralization is not similar; it differs from one document to another. (LSGA, Education Act and CMS Operation Directives).

Action Required (suggested)

Streamline the CMS Operation Directives, the Education Act and the Local Self-Governance Act to facilitate decentralization at the village level.

Orient the SMC members, school community, local level community leaders and parents on management transfer.

Empower SMC to make decisions on all the school affairs including teachers recruitment and transfer.

Involve local bodies for the management of schools and resources mobilization in order to supplement the government grant.

Include the secondary level also in the process of management transfer.

Conduct further research study to work out better strategies for the improvement and strengthening of the community managed schools.

Table of Contents

Chapter	page
Acknowledgement	ii
Executive Summary	v
Chapter I	1
Introduction	1
Background	1
Objective of the Study	2
Study Process	2
Preparation and Use of the Tools	2
Coverage of the Study	2
Data Analysis	2
Chapter II	3
Objectives and Process of Management Transfer	3
Necessity of Management Transfer	3
Objectives of Management Transfer	3
Process of Management Transfer	4
Legal Arrangements	4
Chapter III	7
Status of Community Schools	7
Classrooms	7
Teachers	7
Teachers' Training	8
SMCs	8
Parent's Involvement	9
Reflections	9
Funding	10
Reflections	10
Monitoring of Community Schools	11
Reflections	11
Involvement of Local Bodies	11
Reflections	12
Chapter IV	13
Issues of Management Transfer	13
Bibliography	15

Chapter I Introduction

Background

In order to strengthen democratic norms and institutions, and to consolidate development from the bottom, people's sovereignty in public policy has been felt essential. For this, reflection on people's needs and aspirations in the policy discourse and in the development efforts of the country are crucial. It therefore calls for the capacitation local leadership and enhancement of people's participation in local governance. This move is likely to empower local people, possibly including the deprived and the disadvantaged to play effective roles in the social and economic development process. In this context, the importance of decentralization is very important. For this purpose, the policy reform process, which allows devolving the authority and providing resources to the local bodies and local organizations, is essential. This approach will tend ultimately to enhance effective participation of the grassroots people. Necessarily, the reform process should prioritize equity and effectiveness by emphasizing mutual cooperation as well as inclusion of the weaker segment of the society. This again requires redefinition of the relationship between the central authority and the local bodies as well as reorganization of their functions.

It is in view of the importance of decentralization that the government adopted the policy of decentralization. In the Ninth Plan, emphasis was laid on capacity building for self-governance of local bodies and making them accountable to the local people in matters of delivery of services. The Plan paved the ways for the introduction of decentralization for enhancing local participation in the management and operation of educational institutes and for transferring the management of the schools to the local bodies by bringing the Local Self-Governance Act, 1998 into force. The Act entrusted to VDCs and Municipalities the responsibilities to develop, manage and supervise basic and primary education programmes. According to the Act, DDCs are responsible for formulating policies and working out strategies for the operation of educational programmes in the districts. Moreover, the seventh amendment of the Education Act empowers SMCs by vesting in them power and authority in regard to decision-making. Similarly, the Tenth Plan repeat the commitment that decentralization policy reform will be continued and that local bodies and local community will be involved in the planning, management and operation of the educational programmes of the local level. All these indicate the government's priority to shift the school management responsibilities to local bodies and communities.

In compliance with the spirit of decentralization policy, attempts are now being made to focus on decentralized management of primary education by involving local people and organizations. Similarly, emphasis has been given to local capacity building and to the promotion of micro-planning process. Recently, the government made a decision to transfer the management of public schools to the community. In this connection, the government has developed and produced directives for these schools so that they show their interest in the matters of management transfer. So far (up to 2002/0/10), the government has approved the management transfer to 100 schools and 39 schools have been transferred. These 39 schools have now become as community schools.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this research was to study the issues of management transfer and to highlight the status of community-managed school.

Study Process

At the outset, CMS Operation Directives, Education Act and Local Self-Governance Act were reviewed to underline the legal status of CMS and the provisions made in this direction.

For the study of the status of community-managed schools, the districts of Ilam and Morang were selected. From each district, two schools under the purview of the agreement of the government were selected for study.

HMs, teachers, SMC members of CMS and parents were contacted for discussion. Besides, local bodies of the school area and local organizations working in the area were also contacted for the purpose. Discussions were also held with DEOs and selected school supervisors of the sample districts and the RPs of the selected cluster. A separate discussion with the central level staff was also held after field visit.

Moreover, the school minutes, supervision diaries, administrative reports, letters, etc. were observed for obtaining relevant information.

Preparation and Use of the Tools

Discussion guidelines were prepared for holding discussions with parents, teachers and HMs, SMC members and local authorities, local organizations, DEOs and supervisors/RPs.

Coverage of the Study

District	2
DEOs	2
Supervisor/RPs	20
Schools	4
SMC members	32
HMs/Teachers	25
Parents	40
Local bodies	3 (6 persons)
Local Clubs	2

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed qualitatively. As the nature of data was unquantifiable, a discussion on the theme was made. Attempts were made to triangulate opinions and perceptions of the respondents with the information available at the schools and the observations of the researcher.

Chapter II

Objectives and Process of Management Transfer

Necessity of Management Transfer

As mentioned earlier, management transfer of public schools to the local communities is an effort to involve local stakeholders in the management and operation of the school programmes. It is certainly a decentralization move. However, the stakeholders have their own opinion about the matters. DEO and school supervisors of Ilam held the view that the local community could better manage the school than the DEO office located far. As the children of the local people participated in the community school and the community members showed more concern for the education of their children, effective involvement of community members in the management is essential for the betterment of the school. Moreover, local community members could constantly supervise and monitor the school activities that contribute to improving the quality of education. DEO and supervisors were of the opinion that this effort would likely help mobilize locally available resources -man, money and materials- for the development of local schools. And it would create and enhance stakeholders' feelings of ownership of the local schools. DEO anticipated that this move would naturally encourage the local people to provide elementary education to their children. DEO office would thus be able to reduce its role and confine to providing technical support. But the DEO of Morang District was not very much positive about this new move. DEO and the technical staff of Morang District admitted that they were not aware of it. These persons were not oriented on the matter. They thought that it was a routine program not any special one. They were skeptical about any changes the management transfer could bring about. In fact, the management transfer affair was the move of the centre, not of the district or VDC or the community. They assumed that the centre targeted 20 schools to turn into CMS in Morang district and directed the district accordingly. So the district persuaded SMC to turn the public schools into the community ones. It indicated that the whole affair of management transfer was the concern of the centre, so it did not reflect the desire of the local people.

In contrast to the opinion of the DEO and staff of Morang, HMs and teachers reported that the management transfer would ultimately create in parents a feeling of ownership of the school, because it gradually increased parents' involvement in school affairs. But they could not sense how the feeling of ownership would develop in the local parents. The SMC members of Sharada PS stated that they wanted to upgrade the level of school, primary to lower secondary. DEO did not allow it and the size of the teacher's quota would not increase. If the school went over to the community, SMC could hire teachers for the secondary level. Moreover, the school has 7 teachers and SMC wanted to upgrade the level availing the service of spare teachers. SMC members believed that teacher redeployment would not affect the size of the teaching staff. It indicates that management transfer did not evolve from the local level. Different people had different perceptions on matters of the management transfer.

Objectives of Management Transfer

With the restoration of democracy, the country has modified its paradigm of development and administration. The old centralized system did not comply with the social, economic, cultural and geographic reality of the country. Under this system, achieving the goal of EFA is almost difficult. In fact, involving stakeholders

was felt necessary for the effective operation of any program. It will be possible only if the local people feel they do own the school and school programmes. Keeping all these things in account, DOE took the initiative for management transfer of public primary schools.

No doubt, the prime objective of the management transfer is to implement decentralized policy reform in the education sector. The other objectives are:

to enhance local participation in local school affairs and its development

to create the feeling of ownership of the local schools in local people and local stakeholders

to promote partnership in and cost sharing for the school operation and development

to encourage the mobilization of locally available resources for primary education.

Process of Management Transfer

Management transfer is a very formal job. Schools that are interested in the transfer should apply to the DEO office for the purpose. DEO would send their applications to the Department. If the Department approves them, the school is considered as eligible. After the approval, the school should organize parent's conference for getting parents' approval. SMC should also approve it. Similarly, the local body (VDC or Municipality) where the school is located should give its consent. Then only DEO invites the school for an agreement. On the agreement signed between the DEO and the school, the management is formally taken as transferred to the community. The agreement included the following terms and conditions:

The government shall make regular and lumpsum grants available on time.

If the post of a teacher lies vacant in the school, the government will provide a permanent teacher to the school on the recommendation of SMC.

The school will abide by the Education Act 2028, the Education Regulations 2002 and the Directives.

The school will obey the directives and directions of HMG and MOES.

The terms of agreement do not reveal anything special about the school regarding the transfer of management to the community. The government did not make any commitment other than that of providing lump-sum grants (i.e. Rs. 100 thousand, once) to the schools. On the other hand, it is mandatory for the school to obey the directives of MOES/HMG.

Legal Arrangements

To provide managerial authority over public schools to the community and specifies the supervision and evaluation roles and functions to the agencies concerned in CMS, Community Managed School Operation Directive 2002 was published. The Directive intends to transfer the management of any public school, irrespective of grade and level, to the local bodies or SMC of the school, not to the NGO or any private organization. The public schools eligible for the transfer require to receive regular grants from HMG, SMC formed and functioning in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act. Moreover, written approval of the concerned local body and parents is also required. In the Directive, SMC has been authorized to appoint HM and teachers (on school resources) and monitor and evaluate their performance. SMC is made responsible for the preparation and implementation of

periodic and annual plans and their monitoring, and for signing agreements with GOs, NGOs and other agencies in favour of the school, for organizing parents' conferences and forming committees and sub-committees to look after school matters. SMC is also authorized to develop by-laws on educational, financial and managerial matters and implement them on the approval of the parents' conference. Parents are made responsible for the monitoring and evaluation. Thus the parents' conference may form committees and implement their recommendations.

In the Directive, HM's role is confined to teacher management and pure educational

Description	CMS Directives	Education Act	LSGA
Community School	whose management is handed to the community (SMC)	all public schools turned community schools	not specified
Headmaster's appointment	by SMC	DEO (under given criteria)	not defined
Teacher's appointment	by SMC (only temporary teachers)	Teacher Service Commission, DEO	not defined
Autonomy of SMC	not given full freedom in decision-making	SMC follows the rules and regulations	not defined SMC
Role of local body	not at all if it is not transferred to local bodies, major if it is transferred to local bodies	not defined	major role
Role of VEC	not at all	tried to define -but only for VDC, not for municipality	no provision of VEC
Role of parents	tried to involve in school management	does not define any specific role other than SMC formation	focus only on elected representatives
Role of CBOs/ NGOs	no provision of responsibility sharing	does not define any role	not defined for education
Monitoring of school program	SMC	supervisors, RPs	local bodies
Focus of decentralization	SMC, parents	VEC, DEC (DEO)	VDC, DDC

matters. SMC has given the authority to monitor and supervise HM's performances, and DEO to monitor and evaluate the SMC's performances. SMC has also been authorized to define the terms and conditions regarding the service of the teacher and implement them on the approval of the parents' conference. However, the teachers who were appointed as permanent teachers in pursuance of the Education Act would not be deprived of the benefits provided by the government. A teacher would get the benefit of transfer to another school, if he or she wanted to. Teachers having received the teaching license can be appointed on a competitive manner. CMS gets government grant what it is currently getting -teachers salary according to the approved quota, stationery and school operation expenses. It also is provided lumpsum grants, and involved in SIP programmes conducted by BPEP II and other agencies. The community has to mobilize resources for development and maintenance of school facilities.

A comparison of the Directives with Education Act and LSGA showed several flaws in the Directives. A comparative matrix is given below:

In the Directives developed for the community-managed schools, DEO and the technical staff pointed out several anomalies, some of which are as follows:

The Directives do not define community.

It assumes that SMC is the executive body of the community. It does not say who will assume the responsibility if SMC is dissolved after the transfer of management.

The Directives contradicts the Education Act 2028 in case of the appointment of headmaster. The Directives vests power in SMC for the appointment of HM while the Act specifies conditions for the eligibility of HM. In a community school of Morang District, SMC appointed HM without considering the conditions mentioned in the Act.

The Directives does not specify the roles and responsibilities of local bodies. In the decentralized reform process, involvement of local bodies in the management and operation of local affairs including education is essential. LSGA 1999 has also given local bodies power and responsibility. But the Directives overlooked them.

DEO and the technical staff members reported that these contradictions in the Directives did not pursuit schools to get expected support from parents and local bodies. Moreover, the absence of local representatives also makes the schools unable to get any support from the local bodies. But the school authorities, SMCs, teachers and HMs, as well as local stakeholders were unaware of these contradictions. They were not oriented on the matters. In fact, the move of management transfer to the community was highsounding. The reality is that CMS did not have significant authority or any freedom to run the school as a self managed autonomous institute.

Chapter III

Status of Community Schools

During school visits, attempts were made to examine the existing status of community schools with respect to facility, teachers, resources and other pertinent aspects.

Students

As regards the students, most of them came from poor families. In both the schools of Ilam district, the children of wage earners (labourers) were currently studying in the schools. Adarsh Primary School in Ilam Municipality had children working as house labourers. Similarly, children studying in Sharda Primary School in Morang District went to work in a nearby brick factory. It reveals that parent of these children are indifferent to the education of the children. They did not care to see if the schools were run by the government or the community. Further, the parents were not able to make financial contributions to the schools.

As most of the children of these schools came from the poor and illiterate communities, the schools are crowded. Especially in grade I, the children's enrolment is relatively high.

Gradewise Enrolment of Children in Community School

School	Grade					
	I	II	III	IV	V	Total
Sharada Primary School	145	70	64	57	52	388
Bhanu Primary School	43	31	45	27	29	175
Adarsh Primary School	70	57	40	55	49	271
Navin Pragati Primary School	19	12	21	20	15	87

The students attendance was not satisfactory in these schools, especially in Sharda Primary School. On the day of school visit, there were 62 students in grade I, 21 in grade II, 18 in grade III, 20 in grade IV and 12 in grade V.

Classrooms

Every school allotted 5 rooms for conducting the primary grades. Sharda Primary Schools has 7 rooms, of which 2 were allotted to grade I. To the other grades, 4 rooms were allotted. In one of the classrooms, the children of Shishu Kaksha and grade I were studying together. Similarly, Adarsh Primary School allotted 6 rooms, 2 for grade I. The school has 11 rooms. As the size of the classrooms is relatively small, these classes were overcrowded. Sharada Primary School has conducted the construction of additional 2 classrooms with the help of Plan International. Other schools did not have any plan to renovate the existing facilities or to create new ones. In Navin Pragati Primary School of Ilam, classrooms were not suitable for learning on the part of the children.

Teachers

In all the schools except Bhanu Primary School, there were 7 teachers each. In Bhanu Primary School, there were only 4 teachers, but the number of grades was 5. Two teachers of each school were placed in other schools in Ilam. New teachers had not been supplied. HMs and SMCs thought that redeployment did not cut the number

of teachers presently working in these schools. Besides, HM and SMC members of Bhanu Primary School of Morang said that DEO had assured to provide one additional teacher. As a matter of fact, school authorities considered that redeployment policy did not affect the community schools. Moreover, these authorities believed that DEO would provide priority to the community schools which wanted teachers. In contrast, DEO and DEO staff stated that the number of teachers might increase or decrease even in the community schools even if DEO started to implement teacher's redeployment policy. The notion of DEO and staff members did not comply with the Directives circulated for community schools because the Directives assumes that whatever facility the community schools are receiving will be continued. Even though most of the teachers (22 out of 25) were appointed on permanent basis, they were not given any option about whether they would continue in the same school or go to another school in the process of management transfer.

During the interaction with DEO and the staff of Morang, it was found that teachers and their unions did not support the change of the public schools into the community schools; rather they resisted very concept of this. They thought that teachers did not desire to work under the community members even though their salary and other benefits were assured. If they come under it, they should abide by the rules and regulations that will be made by the community.

Teachers' Training

A picture of the status of trained teachers is given in the following table:

School	No. of Teacher	Trained Teachers	Remarks
Sharda PS	7	1	
Bhanu PS	4	1	
Adarsh PS	7	2	2 teacher sparticipating in CT
Navin Pragati PS	7	1	3 teachers participating in CT
Total	25	5 (20%)	

The table reveals that there were only a few trained teachers in the schools whose management has been transferred to the communities. In those schools, the proportion of untrained teachers were high.

SMCs

As SMC is formed of people from the community, the role of SMCs is important. It is SMC that decides the whole affairs of management transfer and school management. During the visit, it was found that SMCs played activate role in the management transfer, but later did not make any plans or programmes for the advancement of schools.

During discussions, HMs and SMC members admitted that they had not developed any plans yet, but had plan's blue prints in mind. However, SMC members could not explain what they really were, and how they should proceed creatively for the advancement of school activities. After the management transfer, the SMCs did not develop any rules and regulations for school operation nor did they prepare any code of conduct for teachers and students. The schools were running as previously. So, one could not segregate the community schools from public schools. They were expecting funding from different sources but they did not have any concrete plan in

black and white. The schools of Ilam had developed their SIPs even before the management transfer, but they were not implemented. The community schools of Morang district had not designed any plan at all.

As a matter of fact, SMC members, teachers and stakeholders did not get any orientation. Some of the SMC members reported that they were confused about what they should do. They did not know even the fact that government did not provide any additional support except that were the current regular grants. During discussions, it was obvious that SMC members were not knowledgeable enough about and skilled in preparing plans for the advancement of the schools. They did not have any idea of evaluating the performance of HMs and teachers. As they were not oriented and trained, they were unable to monitor the school's programmes. In fact, the ability and efficiency level of the community and SMCs were never examined before the management transfers. Therefore, capacity building is essential for the SMC members.

DEOs and their staff members commented that the decision was made in haste and that DOE did not conduct any survey or study before making the decision of management transfer. They stated that SMCs wanted to get the authority of appointing teachers. Therefore, most of the schools which had many temporary teachers applied for the management transfer. The schools which had many permanent teachers did not opt for the transfer of management. They wanted their schools to remain government schools. DEO and the staff reported that some schools expected they could receive grants if their schools went to the community. But these schools did not know the grants would be provided only once. However, the government has till now not released any fund or grant.

Parent's Involvement

In discussion the parents, said that they look the move of the management transfer positively. The community people have now started to think of the problems and prospects of the schools located in their locality. They were also motivated to contribute financially to the schools. Adarsh Chiyabari Primary School of Ilam had started receiving money from the parents during the time of their children's admission. The parents did not resist the school's decision. Moreover, parents also sought information about the school so that they might help it as far as they could. This indicates that the parents are gradually getting involved in school affairs. But this will be possible only when the parents got the opportunity to interact with teachers, HMs and SMCs in meetings and gatherings on school occasions. Mother parents generally were not familiar with school affairs. Therefore, they needed orientation on the school operation and parental role.

Reflections

The students of community school come from poor families (wage earners, labour class).

In community schools, classrooms are overcrowded.

Students' attendance is low.

The number of teachers is above 5 in most schools.

The proportion of untrained teachers is high in community schools. This is likely to affect the quality of community schools.

Teachers do not get a choice whether to continue, remain in the same school or go to another school.

Teachers and teacher's unions do not like the idea of management transfer, they opposed it.

Community schools did not have any plan for their betterment.

SMCs were not capable enough to design any plan because they are not trained in developing plans.

The decision of management transfer was made without assessing the capacity of SMCs and community people. No survey or study was made prior to the decision.

SMCs must be capacitated in terms of school operation; teacher's evaluation; fund mobilization; rapport building with parents, CBOs, NGOs and local bodies; and the monitoring of school affairs.

Parents need to be oriented and empowered.

Funding

One of the objectives of the management transfer is to make school able to generate resources locally for the development activities of the school. During the survey of schools, it was found that schools did not generate any fund by themselves depended upon the government. The following table shows the major sources of school funds in the year 2002:

School	Sources of funds (in Rs)			
	HMG	School's Income	Local bodies	Other
Sharda Primary school, Morang	428710.00	-	-	-
Bhanu Primary school, Morang	309673.30	26389.30	-	-
Adarsh Primary school, Ilam	357762.00	-	-	-
Navin Pragati Primary school, Ilam	385090.27	-	-	-

The above table reveals that HMG is the major donor. The school did not receive any funds from the local bodies and institutions. Sharada Primary School received Rs. 465000/- from an INGO and generated around Rs. 100 thousand as the matching fund. But these amounts were not recorded. These funds were used mainly for constructing buildings. Asked about the contribution of the local bodies, HMs, and SMC members said that these bodies promised some amount which have not been received. In fact, local bodies did not make any commitment as regards making funds available to the school even though they had supported the management transfer. The absence of local representatives in VDCs further made schools difficult to hold discussion and talk with the local bodies and to maintain rapport in getting support of these bodies.

Reflections

HMG is the major donor for conducting school affairs.

Schools hardly generate any fund and receive grant or donation from local people and organizations.

Local bodies did not make any support commitment even after the management transfer.

Monitoring of Community Schools

One of the objectives of the management transfer is to involve SMC and local parents in observing teachers' activities and monitoring school affairs. In other words, the process intends to promote participatory monitoring.

During schools visits, it was found that monitoring was not given due attention. SMC members reported they visited the schools frequently. HMs and teachers also supported this response, but it was not clear whether they visited the schools for the monitoring purpose. The school authorities stated that parental visit was limited. But the school record did not reveal whether SMC members or parents visited the schools, or even showed their concern in regard to school affairs. Moreover, it was not known what suggestions they had for the school and the teachers. In fact, community people did not monitor the school affairs. They were not trained in the matter.

The monitoring visits of RPs were also limited. In Ilam, RP visited one school two times and another school only once in the current year. From the observation of the supervision diaries, it was found that RP visited for the continuous assessment of students (CAS) and for the Interactive Radio Instruction Program. RPs have also suggested for increasing in students' attendance, reduction of dropout and repetition and motivation for cycle completion and maintenance of school records. In Morang, RP visited the school only once and gave general suggestions regarding the school improvement. It was doubtful if these suggestions would be implemented or not. In fact, there was no tradition of follow up of suggestions. In an interaction session, RPs accepted that they could not visit the schools more often because of their involvement in other jobs. They had to engage in training, workshops and other programmes. According to them, management transfer was essential because community people looked after the school affairs in general and teachers' and students' attendance in particular.

Reflections

Supervision and monitoring have been given little attention.

RP visited schools, but not frequently.

The suggestions made during the previous visit were not generally followed.

RP confine their duties to supervising teaching learning activities.

SMC and local stakeholders were not oriented and trained in the monitoring of school affairs.

Involvement of Local Bodies

In decentralized governance system, local bodies have significant roles in local affairs including education. In fact, local bodies command and conduct all affairs of local development. When the concept of management transfer was introduced, it was assumed that the effort would lead to decentralization and thereby enhance local participation in conducting school affairs. It was envisaged that local bodies would be involved in the following activities during the process of management transfer:

Local bodies would assist local people own local schools.

Local bodies themselves could own local schools.

They would involve themselves in development of schools facilities.

Local bodies involve themselves in the monitoring and supervision of school.

They would provide resources required for the schools.

During the school survey, it was found that local bodies' involvement was quite limited. It was confined only to recommending the transfer of management. As DOE requires to get the consent of concerned VDC or Municipality before deciding on the management transfer, it was extended that local bodies would consent.

The Executive Officer of Ilam Municipality stated that previously Ilam requested DOE for shifting the ownership of schools running within its territory to the Municipality. The Municipal Council had already passed a resolution for the purpose. But management was transferred to the SMCs, not to the Municipality. So the Municipality did not make any commitment, it only recommended the transfer of management to SMC. It was SMC's responsibility to mobilize resources and other things required for the schools. The officer, however, assured that the Municipality would provide some grants to these schools in the future.

As a matter of fact, the local bodies did not take up the matter seriously, even though LSGA had vested them with power and responsibility concerning local schools. The local bodies even did not form VECs or Municipal Education Committee to deal with education-related matters, because they were not familiar with local educational matters. They needed orientation.

Reflections

Local bodies did not involve themselves in school affairs.

They did not make any commitment and only recommended the management transfer.

They did not form VECs/MECs to deal with education-related matters.

The management transfer process did not enhance involvement of local bodies in the affairs of community schools.

Chapter IV

Issues of Management Transfer

Management transfer, as one of the strategies adopted for implementing decentralization reform policy in education, did not spontaneously evolve from the grassroots people or community. In fact, it was imposed from the centre. DOE directed DEO, DEO persuaded SMCs and SMCs organized parents' conference and applied for the transfer.

No preparation was made for the management transfer. The schools, which applied for the management transfer (and got approval) were turned into CMS. SMCs, school authorities, DEO staff members were not oriented. They were not clear about: who appoints HMs, who approves the teacher quota, the areas lumpsum grants have to be used, who evaluates the teachers' performance and so on. DEOs tend to think that teachers' redeployment would lead to a cut on the number of additional teachers even in CMS, but SMCs and HMs viewed that the redeployment policy could not reduce the existing number of the teachers. Moreover, no study or evaluation was made prior the approval of management transfer.

Even though the management transfer was open for each and every school irrespective of level, only primary schools got the approval to turn into CMS. Some secondary schools which had applied wanted the transfer only for the primary levels. Some schools did not want to sign the agreement. In fact, the management transfer move could not attract the schools. They were skeptical about the policy. They did not believe that the new move lasted for long.

To the management transfer of public schools, local bodies become indifferent. It was SMCs, which took the initiative. Local bodies merely gave their consent to the management transfer. They did not make any commitment for providing any kind of support to the CMS, nor did they make any attempt to own the public schools. Involvement of local bodies was not considered necessary before and after the management transfer.

Even though parents' attitude was positive towards the matter, SMC was looked upon as the authority to run the CMS. However, SMCs did not demonstrate any capability in this direction. In fact, they did not have any idea of running CMS as an organized institutes. They did not prepare any plan, program, by-laws, or code of conduct regarding school and school operation. They were not trained to assess the performance of HMs, teachers and monitor the school's programmes.

Management transfer did not make CMS independent. CMS were still dependent upon government for conducting their regular and development programmes. They were not able to generate resources for financing their programmes. Government made grants-in-aid available to school and assured of CMS providing permanent teachers if they requested.

Local monitoring has not been evolved yet. SMCs and local stakeholders were not oriented or trained to monitor the school programmes. Moreover, RPs visits to CMS were also few and far behind. Thus, monitoring did not receive due attention.

In fact, CMS was not very different from a public school. The contract paper which designed did not have any special provision so that CMS could appear a different school. As the resource base of CMS was not impressive, it could not run its programmes without the support of the government. Moreover, CMS did not have autonomy and freedom to recruit permanent teachers or terminate those teachers

whose services were not satisfactory. No doubt, SMC can appoint HM, but this does not agree with the provisions given in the Education Act.

In the three documents- LSGA, Education Act and CMS Operation Directives- focus of decentralization is not similar; it differs from one document to another. For example, CMS Operation Directive regards SMC as the focus of decentralization, while the Education Act considers VEC and DEC as the focus. Similarly, LSGA assumes VDC and DDC as the core of decentralization.

The issues need the following action steps for their resolution:

Streamline the CMS Operation Directives, the Education Act and the Local Self-Governance Act to facilitate decentralization at the village level.

Orient the SMC members, school community, local level community leaders and parents on management transfer.

Empower SMC to make critical decisions on all the school affairs including teachers recruitment and transfer.

Involve local bodies for the management of schools and resources mobilization in order to supplement the government grant.

Include the secondary level also in the process of management transfer.

Conduct further research study to work out better strategies for the improvement and strengthening of the community managed schools.

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