

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, Government of Nepal.

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Case studies completed in 2006

1. Life Skill Education: Nature of Issues and Their Linkage to System Provision

'Education for All' focuses on life skill education. The Ministry of Education and Sports is committed to achieve the goals of EFA. In this context, the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) has incorporated life skill education components in the Health and Population Education curriculum. This study is intended to examine the nature of issues related to life skill education and their linkage with the system provision. It is based on the information and data collected from 11 schools in five districts (Morang,

Sunsari, Kapilvastu, Rasuwa and Kavre).

Major Findings

- Discrepancy was found between the concepts of life skill in the main documents— the 'Thematic Report' of EFA, the CDC 'Curriculum' and the proposed 'National Curriculum Framework for School Education'.
- Teacher's manual on life skills education was provided only in the pilot phase but not during program implementation (at the national level).
- The manual was distributed only in four UNICEF DACAW districts. However, teachers did not have any support material, training or orientation necessary for the operation of life skill education at the national level.
- Life skill education was considered only in the Health and Population Education subject.

Teachers were not fully able to transfer the training inputs/skills into the classroom.

- Regular monitoring, removal of shortcomings, progress recording, process of the new curriculum, and coordination of the activities of CDC, NCED and UNICEF Nepal were virtually absent.

Recommendations

- The policy on what constitutes life skill education should be explained in workshops organized at national and regional levels.
- Teacher's manual and support materials on life skill education should be supplied to all the teachers.
- Life skill education should be included in other subjects as well.
- Teachers need to be adequately orientated on the revised curriculum. They should be trained



in pedagogical approaches to teaching life skill education.

- Coordination of CDC, NCED, UNICEF Nepal and other concerned agencies should be maintained for the successful implementation of the life skill education program.

2. Effectiveness of School/Community-based Monitoring System

The Education for All (EFA) core document is the guide for the development of basic education in the country. The document proposes several initiatives and reforms. Community involvement and empowerment based on decentralization constitute the main thrust of the program. The program will incorporate a number of strategies for improving the efficiency and capacity of educational institutions running primary education. To this end, the study attempted to understand the current monitoring practices in schools and tried to explore the possibilities of enhancing their managerial capabilities in order to help MOES initiate policy reforms for an effective schooling system in the country. The study is based on the information and data collected from 4 schools (one each from Syangja, Parsa, Chitwan and Ilam district).



Major Findings

- There was no conceptual clarity about monitoring at different levels *viz.* Department of

Education, District Education Office and school.

- Local communities were not as monitoring-sensitive as they were expected to be about their roles and responsibilities towards the school, since school/community-based monitoring was not incorporated comprehensively in the School Management and SIP training programs for HT and SMC members.
- However, Chitwan School maintained a portfolio of every student of each grade. The progress of the students was reviewed—together with the parents.
- Similarly, Syngja School was found undertaking various self-initiated monitoring activities by involving the stakeholders of the school catchment areas for the execution of school-based plans and programs including monitoring.

Recommendations

- Basic indicators for school/community-based monitoring should be developed.
- School/Community-based monitoring components should be adequately included in the management and SIP training programs.
- School and community initiatives must be promoted to conduct field-based monitoring, to assess school performance.
- Process of maintaining student portfolios in schools must be initiated.
- Good examples of local stakeholders' involvement in school monitoring should be disseminated for replication.

3. Gender Equality and Gender friendly Environment in Primary Schools

Of the six goals of EFA, one (crucial) goal is gender equality. It is stipulated in the EFA document that gender equality in education will be achieved by the year 2015.

This study analyzed the case of 30 schools (6 each from Dhankuta, Kavre, Kapilvastu, Morang and Lalitpur districts) to find out the determinants of girls-friendly and female- teachers-friendly environment in the schools and the basic reasons why remote schools do not have female teachers.



Major Findings

- Even in the schools where there were primary level female teachers, the school environment was not found congenial to the girls and female teachers.
- High concentrations of female teachers were seen in the schools located at the district headquarters and around.
- There was no consistency in the policy governing recruitment of female teachers. In one statement it was 33%, in another it was 50%.
- The government's policy to provide scholarships to 50% girls enrolled in the school was not found justifiable because all the girls in the school belonged to the lowest economic stratum. The amount of scholarship money was

too small to meet the direct and indirect costs of schooling.

Recommendations

- A clear-cut policy regarding what percentage of female teachers to recruit for the schools needs to be adopted.
- The existing policy of scholarship distribution, which is limited only to 50% girls, should be revised and a new policy should be adopted based on the identification of the actual numbers of economically deprived girls in the school.
- Increment must be made on the amount of the scholarship money so that it could help the beneficiary meet the annual cost of schooling.
- Female teachers should be deputed in remote-area schools and they should be provided proper residential facilities, security measures and additional incentives.
- Gender-friendly facilities should be created in the school such as separate toilets for girls (with running water), suitable sports materials and appropriate school dress code.
- The practice of recruiting male teachers in the positions allocated for female teachers must be ruled out. Local female candidates should be encouraged to apply as far as possible.
- In rural/remote areas awareness programs such as Ghar Dailo, orientation, workshop and interaction theming on the importance of education for girls must be launched from time to time.

4. Comparative Study of the Effectiveness of School-based and Community-based ECD Programs and the Role of NGOs/INGOs in the Implementation of ECD Program

Community-based Early Childhood Development (CBECD) centers and School-based Early Childhood Development (SBECD) centers are being run throughout the country in order to expand the ECD program in a rapid way as targeted by EFA-NPA Nepal 2001–2015. This study compares the CBECD and SBECD centers in terms of: formation of Management Committee (MC); effective mutuality of community, parent and ECD center; environment of ECD centers; and activities undertaken in these centers. It also proposes an appropriate mode of NGOs/INGOs partnership for the effective implementation of the ECD program. Thirty eight (38) CBECD and SBECD centers from Ilam, Lalitpur, Kavre, Banke and Kailali districts were selected for this study.



Major Findings

- The relationship between the community and the CBECD centers was found satisfactory. The centers received financial and non-financial supports from the community. But it was not so with most of the SBECD centers. Hence, the financial and non-financial supports they received were less.

- The CBECD and SBECD centers supported by the government commenced with community gatherings in which MC was formed. However, most of the SBECD centers did not have MC.

- The learning environment in the CBECD centers was better than that in the SBECD centers mainly because of community, parent and INGO support, monitoring, and creation of the learning environment as per the ECD principles. In the SBECD centers, the activities of the facilitators had stamps of subject teaching.

Recommendations

- Organization of the MC should be made mandatory for each SBECD centre.
- Either DEOs or NGOs should do the monitoring of CBECD and SBECD centers, to see whether they have formed MC.
- MCs should be formed in wider community gatherings representing cross-sections of the community including Dalits and females.
- Facilitators should organize parental education programs (once every week) in the ECD center.
- Central level experts should prepare GO/NGOs officials as master trainers (MTs), who should prepare the teachers of nearby schools as trainers.
- Representatives of all the INGOs working in the field of ECD should be included in the National ECD Council.
- The present District ECD Committee should include representatives of NGOs and INGOs working in the field of ECD.

5. Situation of Inclusive Classroom in Nepal

Inclusive Education (IE) is a relatively new concept in Nepal. It emerged with the initiation of the Education for All (EFA) program and from the experiences of and the lessons learnt from 4 pilot districts in 2000. It was introduced in 60 schools of 8 districts in the initial year of the program. In 2005, 210 schools of 22 more districts were added. There is a target of including 500 schools in the IE program by the year 2009.

This study tried to record the improvement of IE program in 15 schools of Jhapa, Dadeldhura, Banke, Chitwan and Kavre districts.



Major Findings

- The Assessment Center (AC) concentrated only on identifying the children suitable for the Resource Class (RC).
- The AC coordinator's qualification set for the identification of children with varying disabilities was less than required.
- DEOs themselves assumed the position of AC chairpersons but they were not able to perform the required task effectively because of time constraint.
- Teachers were not able to conduct the IE classes properly because they had no knowledge and skills necessary for the effective operation of such classes.

- The 'Welcome to School' program did help to bring children to school. But for want of physical and other facilities the school could not meet the needs of the growing number of children.

Recommendations

- For IE, a proper mechanism must be devised for identifying children with diverse degrees of disabilities.
- Selection of IE children should be made on the basis of the severity of the disabilities so that they could be accommodated to the resource class or the IE class as required.
- Teachers' qualification for the position of the AC coordinator must be one like Bachelor in Special Needs Education.
- Integrated special education training and IE training should be provided to teachers to enable them to identify children with differing disabilities and to conduct the IE class effectively.
- Functional coordination of AC, IE class and RC should be ensured with the development of a time frame for organizing cluster meetings.

6. Linking Madrasa with Mainstream Education in Nepal

BPEP/MOE had listed Muslims as an educationally disadvantaged group and implemented a special incentive scheme for educating Muslim children, on a trial basis, in three VDCs of Rupandehi district. The FRP first phase study (2003) conducted in that district reported that the BPEP special incentive scheme had not been successful to attract Muslim children towards the mainstream education properly. The second phase study pointed out the

need of linking the Madrasa with the mainstream education.

The present study was intended to find out ways to linking the Madrasas with the mainstream school education and to identify the curricular, administrative and financial measures for this linkage on the basis of the information collected from Madrasas, five each from Kapilvastu and Rautahat districts.



Major Findings

- Madrasas had good numbers of teachers for teaching the Islamic courses. But the numbers of teachers for teaching the mainstream subjects were too small.
- Physical facilities in Madrasas such as classrooms, furniture items and instructional materials were not adequate.
- Madrasas mainly used Indian textbooks written in Urdu. There was only one book in Urdu written by a Nepalese writer. Some Madrasas were using books published by the Indian Education Board.

Recommendations

- Madarsas must be assisted with physical facilities adequate for introducing the general education curricula.
- Multi-grade pedagogic skills should be provided to the Madrasa teachers.
- Intensive orientation should be given to the Maulavis to enable

them to teach the general education subjects.

- A Madrasa Board should be constituted, at the central level, to frame policies and look after the management of Madrasa education. The Board should comprise leading Muslim intellectuals and social/religious leaders.
- The Madrasa curriculum should be developed at the central level through seminars involving Muslim intellectuals and social/religious leaders and educationists.

7. Education of Internally Displaced Children: Provisions and Challenges

Education has been accepted as the primary means to the all-round development of the country. A country can develop only when available resources are used optimally by linking education to the national reality and accepting the concepts of 'education for all' and 'education for development'. Several efforts have been made at improving access to education in the country. This study attempts to deal with the education



of internally displaced children with specific reference to the existing provisions and challenges. The study is based on the information and data collected from 6 schools, 3 each from Banke and Dang districts.

Major Findings

- There was a problem in identifying the real internally displaced persons

because there were no specific identification criteria.

- It was found that the roles of the government, organizations/institutions and groups of people had not been identified. Such a situation created problems in supporting the IDPs and their children.
- The major institutions providing support were DOCFA, Red Cross, SAFE Nepal and BASE. They supported IDCs for school uniforms and books and bags, and sometimes also provided cash. However, these supports were not regular and not even sufficient for the IDCs.

Recommendations

- Some criteria/indicators with verification measures must be developed for identifying the IDP children. The measures may include recommendation from a local elected body.
- To avoid duplication and identify missing IDP children, support from different sources should be pooled up and distributed through a single (one-door) distribution system.
- The roles of GOs, local bodies, I/ NGO, CBOs and other IDP support organizations including journalists, professional organizations, the civil society and the school community (HT, Teachers, SMC, and PTA) should be clarified.

Meetings and Workshops

FRAG Meetings

Two Formative Research Advisory Group (FRAG) meetings were held. The meeting held on July 30, 2006 reviewed the progress of project activities and the reports thereon, and discussed the action steps, the suggested work and plan for 2006/07 and the budget. The other meeting

held on September 17, 2006 deliberated on similar themes. In this meeting Mr. Hakon with his Norwegian team was present. Dr. Ishwar Prasad Upadhyaya chaired both the meetings.

Workshop on Capacity Building

Two workshops, "FRP for EFA 2004-09: Capacity Building Workshop on Utilization of Action Steps" and "FRP for EFA 2004-09: Capacity Building Workshop on Communication" were organized, one on September 28, 2006 and the other on October 18-19, 2006.

In the first workshop 18 persons representing the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), Department of Education (DOE), National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) and Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) took part. The workshop focused on these agenda: Review of the Action Steps suggested by FRP, Overview of the on-going capacity building activities under FRP for EFA and the Institutional Linkage Program, and the listing of capacity building activities for the current year.

The second workshop on "FRP for EFA 2004-09: Capacity Building Workshop on Communication" was facilitated by Mr. Egil Knudsen, Head of Communication, Ministry of Education and Research (MOER), Norway. It was participated in by Mr. Dankert Vedeler, Director, International Cooperation; Mr.



Halfdan Farstad, Senior Adviser of MOER, Norway, officials from MOES, DOE and CERID, and selected Head teachers of the FRP sample schools of Kavre district.

On October 18, 2006, the opening session began with the introduction of the participants. The main features were: Expected outcomes of the workshop and Discussion on the program schedule (both by Dr. Kishor Shrestha) and the Presentation 'What important information a head teacher needs, to implement the reform program?' (by two HTs involved in the Longitudinal Study on System Indicators). In the second session, the same day, Dr. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya introduced the Capacity Building Program under FRP for EFA 2004-09. Similarly, Mr. Diwakar Dhungel from MOES and Mr. Halfdan Farstad from MOER discussed and shared views on the principles, practices and challenges of communication in MOES/Nepal and MOER/Norway respectively. Finally, there was a Group Work on 'Development of a communication plan for reform of EFA program implementation,' which was followed by a panel discussion.

The next day, the final session started with the continuation of the Group Work and Group Presentation on 'Problems/Challenges and Strategies of the Communication System in MOES'. It was followed by a plenary discussion leading to a sum-up of observations, findings and

recommendations. At the end, Mr. Egil Knudsen, Mr. Halfdan Farstad, Mr. Dankert Vedeler and Mr. Arjun Bahadur Bhandari delivered their concluding remarks.

Visits to and from Norway



A Norwegian team composed of Mr. Halfdan Farstad, Mr. Dankert Vedeler and Mr. Egil Knudsen visited Nepal from October 14-21, 2006. The purpose of their visit was to review the FRP Evaluation Report and discuss it with MOES, CERID and the Norwegian Embassy, and to plan MOES' and CERID's official visit to Norway under the capacity building program of FRP. Mr. Egil Knudsen facilitated the two-day workshop on *FRP for EFA 2004-09: Capacity Building Workshop on Communication*. The Norwegian team also met the Honorable Minister of Education and Sports Prof. Mangal Siddhi Manandhar. At the end of the visit, a debriefing and concluding discussion on FRP activities took place.

A team of government officials composed of Mr. Balananda Paudel, Secretary of MOES; Mr. Diwakar Dhungel, Under-Secretary (Monitoring and Evaluation Section); Mr. Arjun Bahadur Bhandari, Joint-Secretary (Planning Division) of MOES; Mr. Mahashram Sharma, Director, DOE; and Ms. Usha Dixit, Deputy Director, DOE (Gender Equality Section), and Dr. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya, Executive Director of CERID/TU visited Norway under the Capacity Building Program of FRP. The team left for Norway on November 9 and was back on November 17, 2006. However, Dr. Bajracharya continued his tour until November 23, 2006 to accomplish some other important tasks. He visited NIFU for discussion on the longitudinal system indicators study and NIFU-CERID research collaboration and for the exploration of documents and research materials. He met Professor Lars Monsen and the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Lillehammer College to discuss the research collaboration between CERID and Lillehammer. In Oslo, a discussion on overview of FRP activities and preparation of FRP Anthology took place between him and Prof. Kristin Tornes. A meeting was also held with Ms. Marit Vedeld and Mr. Hakon Bjornes at NORAD for an overview of the FRP activities and for a discussion on the FRP Anthology.



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